



# 2025 Annual Report





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# MESSAGE FROM THE TRACKS TEAM

## **Aaniin!**

It's been a transformative year here at TRACKS filled with learning, connection, and community. This year, we've run new school workshops, hosted a March Break Camp during sunny 15°C weather, gone voyageur canoeing with our summer Trailblazers, and strengthened our community connections to grow our summer camp programming. We have been continually awestruck by the passion, curiosity, and excitement of our participants and community. Chi miigwech to everyone who made our 2025 year an unforgettable one!

It was one of our busiest School Program seasons ever! We continued to offer experiential and land-based workshops that weave Indigenous knowledge and western science to schools throughout the Peterborough region. We also developed and ran new workshops that focused on the relationships and responsibilities that we share as modern technology and AI become bigger parts of our lives.

We ran P.A. Day camps, a full March Break Camp, and summer camps both on Trent's campus and in community. Our campers connected with the land, braided Indigenous Knowledges and western science, and learned from our Instructors and one another. Whether it was fire/ishkode teachings, roasting marshmallows, coding robots, or playing water games, campers came away with full hearts and new understandings of the world around them.

Our Oshkwazin Trailblazer youth program was another big success this past summer. The Trailblazers built their bundles, grew in their gifts, and learned how to be incredible environmental leaders in their community. Miigwech to Actua for supporting the Trailblazers through their accreditation.

Through all our programs, it's amazing to see youth learn, but it was also a privilege to see our staff act as such amazing role models and future leaders for the campers. Chi miigwech/thank you to all our staff, placement students, and volunteers for their hard work this year! We'd like to extend our gratitude as well to our Steering Team and Advisory Committee for their guidance and dedication in 2025. Thank you as well to our donors, funders, and sponsors, for their support and belief in TRACKS. 2025 was a year to remember, and we can't wait for what 2026 brings!

# ABOUT TRACKS






TRACKS is an experiential program that braids multiple knowledges by centring Indigenous ways of knowing and being. We are based on Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg territory, hosted by Trent University within the Indigenous Environmental Studies and Sciences Program (IESS)

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

TRACKS facilitates dynamic, land-based youth programming that braids multiple scientific approaches by centering Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

## PROGRAM INTENTIONS

-  To offer youth opportunities to actively engage with a multitude of worldviews to further understand and develop their personal skills, gifts, and tools.
-  To contribute to hands-on InSTEAM (Indigenous Science Technology Engineering Art and Math) learning opportunities from the elementary to post-secondary level.
-  To facilitate spaces where intergenerational knowledge can be shared and mentoring relationships can be nurtured.
-  To provide spaces where youth can be empowered to build relationships, learn together, and grow as leaders while honouring their diverse identities and backgrounds.
-  To encourage youth to deepen reciprocal relationships with their environments and embody understandings of their responsibilities to the land.
-  To collaborate with Indigenous Peoples, school boards and community organizations to strengthen relationships and activate culturally responsive learning opportunities.
-  To foster meaningful employment and volunteer experiences for young people interested in land-centric and InSTEAM work.

A network  
member of

**actúa**

# TRACKS STEERING TEAM

The Steering Team provides advice and direction to TRACKS to support the delivery and development of TRACKS School, Camp, and Youth Programs, as well as to ensure long-term trust and continuity in the leadership of the program.

**Chris Furgal** (Co-Director, Indigenous Environmental Studies and Sciences Program)

**Margaret Zou** (Executive Director, Kawartha World Issues Centre)

**Kelli Marshall** (Indigenous Enrolment Advisor, First Peoples House of Learning)



# TRACKS ADVISORY CIRCLE

The TRACKS Advisory Circle is a group of community members who bring unique perspectives, skills and knowledges to advise and inform the direction of TRACKS programs. Over the last 15 years, TRACKS has grown larger in impact and reach than was ever imagined, but the program has not swayed from its original vision and practice: to offer culturally-relevant, land-based programming to youth interested in the braiding of multiple sciences and worldviews.

The Advisory Circle represents the incredibly supportive and knowledgeable community which has surrounded the program for the last decade. We extend our deepest thanks to them for their continued involvement.

# THIS YEAR IN NUMBERS

## Youth Engagement

3,464

Total # of youth engaged

356

Indigenous\* youth

182

workshops

## Educator & Parent Engagement

232

Total # of educators trained by TRACKS

170

classroom teachers or educators engaged

91

parents engaged

## Employee Engagement

29

Total # of staff employed

16

Indigenous\* staff employed

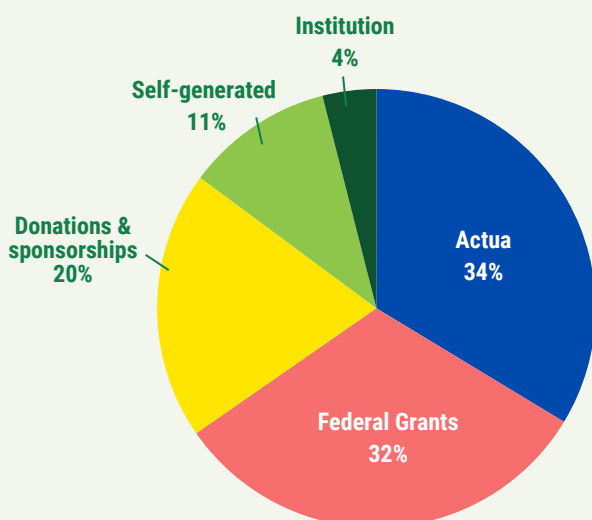
15

University / College students employed

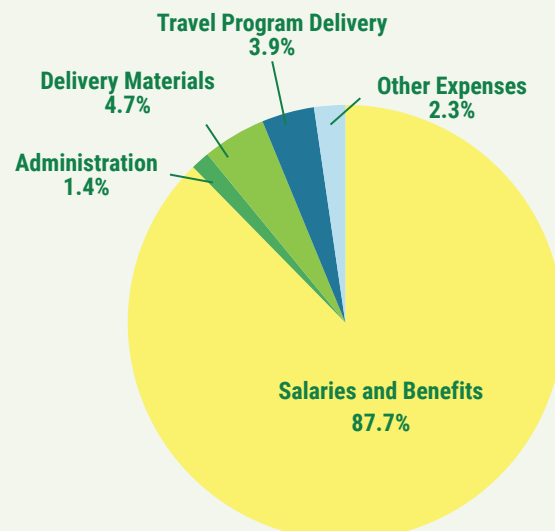
8

Highschool students employed

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES



\* Self identified

# THIS YEAR'S IMPACT

## SCHOOLS



98%

of teachers **agreed** or **strongly agreed** students enjoyed the workshop



100%

of teachers **agreed** or **strongly agreed** students learned about multiple science systems, including Indigenous Knowledges



93%

of teachers are interested in working with TRACKS again

### After our school workshops..



733

(52%) students are more interested in STEM

911

(64%) students recognize they know more about STEM



940

(66%) students recognize they learned Indigenous Knowledge with us



836

(59%) students said they learned how Indigenous Knowledge and science can work together

# THIS YEAR'S IMPACT

## CAMPS

After attending camp with TRACKS...



73%

of campers recognized they increased their understanding of science



80%

of campers shared one thing they learned from Indigenous Knowledge



92%

of parents **agreed** or **strongly agreed** their campers learned about their relationship w/ nature



95%

of parents **agreed** or **strongly agreed** their campers learned Indigenous Knowledge

The top 3 things campers liked the most about camp



Games



Arts & Crafts



Connection



The top 3 things parents liked the most about camp



Indigenous Knowledge



Outdoor activities



Happy camper

# THIS YEAR'S IMPACT

## TRAILBLAZERS

Throughout the summer, Trailblazers' confidence in the following skills increased by...

30%

in leadership skills

22%

in leadership skills to solve environmental problems

28%

in STEM skills

The top 3 leadership skills they built with us:



Confidence



Communication



Time management



The top 3 new leadership skills they acquired:



Project management



Confidence



Initiative

After the summer...

83%

strongly agreed they developed their gifts & traditional knowledge

100%

agreed or strongly agreed they increased their confidence in their gifts and who they are

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 SCHOOL PROGRAMS

It was a year of innovation for School Programs. Our Instructors travelled throughout the Peterborough region to deliver workshops to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in schools, libraries and with community groups. We led old favourites like Toppling Towers and Manoomin Coding Connections. We also ran a new 3-workshop series funded by **TELUS, TELUS Friendly Future Foundation** and **TD FEF** that teaches Anishinaabemowin, relationships with forest beings, and coding.

Thanks to funding from **Actua** via the Government of Canada's Cancode program, we were able to offer several Indigenous science & digital skills-based workshops for free. With their help we also developed two new workshops:

- **AI and Us:** explore how humans, as part of the natural world, affect the environment in negative and positive ways when we use AI.
- **Feasting Frenzy:** students learn how Indigenous food systems are connected to the land, water, weather, and animal life and how modern tools like AI can both support and harm community decision-making.



“During TRACKS I learned how to code. And how to have fun and learn. I loved learning ‘ojibway’ and laughing with my friends. I learned how to say tree, snake, deer and cedar. It was very fun and thrilling doing all the games and having fun. I am so excited for next week. Thank you!”

- Student



“I’ve had the opportunity to work with TRACKS on several occasions, and their workshops are always well-prepared, engaging, and informative. They provide content that is both relevant and meaningful for children and educators alike.

I look forward to continuing this valuable partnership.”

- Teacher



“My students were all engaged! They could not wait for the second workshop!

They remembered what they learned when the instructors asked them questions during the second session.”

- Teacher

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 SCHOOL PROGRAMS

TRACKS partnered with the Trent School of Education to teach prospective teachers how to bring Indigenous Knowledge to the classroom, as well as the environmental and social impacts of Artificial Intelligence.

We worked again with the TEACH Outside the Box program, a unique opportunity for teacher candidates and community educators to participate in a series of interactive workshops centred around social justice. TRACKS shared their knowledge of Indigenous ways of teaching and knowing and hosted community placement students.



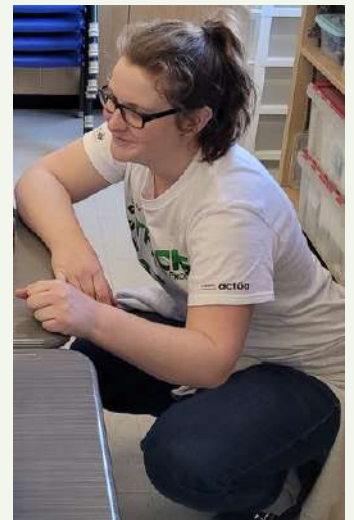
“The most memorable part was the Indigenous teachings. It was nice to relate land to our own experience as I feel understanding Indigenous knowledge is also about understanding where we come from, who we are and how we can relate.”  
- Participant

In October, TRACKS participated in a Land-Based Learning Conference hosted by Durham District School Board and Beedahbin Peltier. The goal was to support teachers who wish to further their journey in incorporating Indigenous Land Based Learning into their practice, while being mindful of cultural appropriation and recognizing the western institution in which they work.



“My experience at TRACKS has gone beyond my expectations. I’ve learned so much, from the youth we worked with and the other instructors - including the importance of leading with heart and building meaningful connections when braiding knowledge systems and working with youth. I’ve also had so much fun!”

- TRACKS Instructor



# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 CAMP PROGRAMS

In 2025, TRACKS ran a March Break camp, two 5-day summer camps, and 4 P.A. Day Camps for 6-to-12 year old children in Peterborough. Two of these P.A. Day Camps were done in collaboration with community partners: **Boodweh Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Languages** joined us for our April P.A. Day Camp and **Diverse Nature Collective** for our Black youth in STEM P.A. Day.

During our camps, we explained how Indigenous Knowledge and western science can work together with hands on activities and games such as the 3 Sisters, soil, Water Teachings, Shkode and Ode'min.



“My children were skeptical about this camp, trying to figure out how anything science could be fun. However, by the end of it, they both had developed new skills and had lots of things they learned. My youngest said he really wanted to come back to TRACKS next year.”

- Parent



“We continue to appreciate as a family the opportunity to engage with Indigenous knowledge and the environment.

As a parent, I value how the program allows my daughter to feel recognized and celebrated as an Indigenous person.

As a camper, my daughter values the continuous opportunity to connect with others and learn a multitude of interesting things about the natural world.”

- Parent



“TRACKS is outside and I get to explore nature. We do fun games and activities. I get to meet new people and see friends I met before.”

- Camper

# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 CAMP PROGRAMS

As we do every year, TRACKS hosted camps in First Nation communities near Peterborough. This year we visited Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, and Curve Lake First Nation. In these camps we ran activities where campers learned about coding and Anishinaabemowin, the relationships between different beings in the forest, the Three Sisters, and other themes.



**Miigwech**

To the guests that came to our different camps: Zhaawnong Webb who shared Fire Teachings with us, the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre who taught us about turtle species, and Kyle Moes who taught us about cattail & fire bushcraft.

Special thanks to Craig Murray for guiding a visit to Trent's Experimental Farm and Weather Station



# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 YOUTH PROGRAMS

During the summer of 2025, our Youth Programs team grew with the addition of 8 Indigenous high school Trailblazers! Our Trailblazer Summer Employment program provides part-time summer employment for Indigenous youth during July and August. They also receive teachings and mentorship from TRACKS staff, local Indigenous Elders, and Knowledge Holders. This year, Trailblazers participated in a 4-day land-based Medicine Camp, with teachings from Edna Manitowabi and Beedahbin Peltier.

By the end of the summer, the youth took some of the knowledge they learned, and with support from TRACKS staff, they paired up to prepare land camps for other Indigenous youth in their community. All land camps are based around a Traditional Knowledge topic with teachings shared by an invited Elder or Knowledge Holders, as well as a craft or hands-on activity. In 2025, the topics were:



**BIRCH TEACHINGS**



**INDIGENOUS ART**



**ANIMAL CLANS**



**WATER**



**MEDICINE WHEEL**

*"Entertaining to be here. Really fun job. I don't do a lot in the summer so it's great to be outside, connect with the land, be with peers. It has been the highlight of my summer!"*

- 2025 Trailblazer

## TRAILBLAZERS & ACTUA

Our Trailblazers were eligible for a high school course credit (GPP30) through the Ontario Ministry of Education via our network membership with Actua, taking an important step towards their futures as leaders in their communities!



# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025 YOUTH PROGRAMS

In 2025, TRACKS ran exciting and immersive Youth Programs including an Anishinaabemowin & coding activity at the Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival, the Peterborough Regional Science Fair and the Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration at the Ontario Science Center. We also ran our River Race workshop at the Peterborough Children's Water Festival, Durham Water Festival, and during the Lessons from The Land event organized by the New Canadians Centre. We also connected with Indigenous Youth at the Urban Indigenous Health Fair.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

## TIPI CANVAS REPLACEMENT

With support from the **Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough**, our tipi canvas was replaced in June by Sewn Home. TRACKS and Camp Kawartha teams were involved during the process and learned more about how to care for our tipi.

After all the hard work, we hosted a small gathering with community partners, donors and staff to celebrate the space!



# MIIGWECH

to Elders, Knowledge Holders and community members



Ashley Lamothe, Beedahbin Peltier, Dan Longboat, Edna Manitowabi, Jack Hoggarth, Jaida Ponce, John Wager, Kyle Moes, Matt Levac, Michelle Hennessey, Tabitha Lamoureux and Zhaawnong Webb



For sharing your knowledge with TRACKS!

# THE TRACKS TEAM

## SEASONAL STAFF



**TEAGAN DE LARONDE**  
Youth Coordinator



**TANEZ SANDERS-NAKOCEE**  
Trailblazer Supervisor



**WILLOW GRAHAM-DES VIGNES**  
Camp Coordinator



**MADISON WEBER**  
Camp Instructor &  
Camp Coordinator



**JESSICA COOK**  
School Instructor



**LAUREN MACLACHLAN**  
School Instructor



**ABBEY MCINTYRE**  
School & Summer  
Camp Instructor



**DIONOVAN GROSBECK**  
School & Summer  
Camp Instructor



**TALIA WELLER**  
Camp Instructor



**CHEYENNE HOUGH**  
Camp Instructor



**LAILA MCKENZIE**  
Camp Instructor



**ELIAS MALCOLM**  
Camp Instructor

# THE TRACKS TEAM

## SEASONAL STAFF



**NIKKITA WYNNE**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**JACOB KNOTT**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**KOLE MACKENZIE**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**LACHLYNN HARTWICK**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**BENISHI TRYON**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**ROWEN LANDS**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**ALLIE PATTERSON**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer



**ZIMMARI CARLOW**

Oshkwazin Trailblazer

## CORE STAFF



**SARAH MACLEOD-BEAVER**

Manager of Programs (Mar-Jul)



**RACHEL GILHAM**

School Programs Coordinator & Co-Manager (Jul- Dec)



**MONTSERRAT ESCOBEDO**

Development Coordinator & Co-Manager (Jul- Dec)

## PLACEMENT STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS

**MALLORY HUDSON**

**JULIANA TERRANOVA**

**HALLEY WIDDOP**

**ERIN BLAINE**

**REESE ANDISON**



# CHI MIIGWECH EVERYONE!



# Miigwech for your support

A network member of **actua**

Actua is a leading Canadian science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) youth outreach organization. Each year, the Actua network engages over 500,000 youth in 600 communities across Canada in transformative STEM learning experiences that build critical skills and confidence. Please visit [www.actua.ca](http://www.actua.ca).

2025-26 Actua National Funders

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# TRACKS YOUTH PROGRAM

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