



# Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 2, 2024

## ***FNUniv Welcomed New Faculty Members to the Regina and Northern Campuses***

**Regina, Saskatchewan** – The First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv) welcomed six new faculty members to the Regina and Northern Campus communities on July 1, 2024.

The new faculty joined our Indigenous Studies, Indigenous Education, Indigenous Languages, Indigenous Literatures in English, and Indigenous Health programs.

**Jeremy Desjarlais**, a Vanier scholar and Ph.D. candidate, is a Lecturer in Indigenous Literatures in English at the Regina Campus. His current dissertation combines Canadian and Indigenous strains of the long poem, focussing on the genre's representations of the home. Jeremy is a registered member of Cowessess First Nation, Treaty 4 Territory, Saskatchewan.

**Misti Big Eagle**, an Ocean Man First Nations member in SE Saskatchewan, brings a wealth of experience and a passion for Indigenous Education to the First Nations University of Canada as a Lecturer at the Regina Campus. With 26 years of experience in Education and Administration, exhibits Misti's dedication to the community.

Misti's academic journey began with classroom teaching from grade 1 through grade 6, when she transitioned to middle years and high school, where she developed a passion for curriculum and instruction. Over the years, she has coached many athletic teams, including cross-country running, track and field, badminton, volleyball, and curling. As she started her career in administration, she furthered her education by completing a Master of Indigenous Education. In the South East Cornerstone School division, Misti was an executive member of our local association and a Councillor within the Saskatchewan Teacher Federation. She currently sits on the Indigenous Leadership Advisory Committee for the Federation.

Outside of work, Misti enjoys time at the cottage, creating pottery in my studio, and activities with her family. These activities provide her with a well-rounded perspective and inspiration for her work. Misti looks forward to engaging with her new colleagues and the broader university community to contribute to our success.

**Denise Kennedy**, an Anihšināpēkwē from Pasqua First Nation, SK. Denise is a Lecturer in Indigenous Languages at the Regina Campus.

Denise is a mother to four children, three sons, one daughter and a wife to her loving husband. For the past 15 years, Denise has taught Anihšināpēmowin to the children of Pasqua First Nation from Pre-kindergarten to Grade 12. She received her MEd from the University of Regina in 2021, focusing on Indigenous language revitalization. This accomplishment has allowed Denise to become a sessional instructor for Nish courses at this University. Denise is completing her PhD coursework to become a PhD candidate, again focusing on Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous pedagogy in research.

**David Still** joins the Regina Campus as a Lecturer in the Indigenous Education program.

**Victoria Olayinka** is thrilled to join the Indigenous Health faculty at the Regina Campus. She brings her passion for Indigenous Health and a solid commitment to community service and education. Currently concluding her Ph.D. in Health Policy and Management at York University, Victoria's research interests blend sociological insights with health policies and practices.

Victoria's areas of interest and expertise include health policy analysis, gerontology, and the intersection of community health and social equity. Her work has focused on identifying and addressing the social determinants of health that impact vulnerable populations, particularly within Indigenous communities. She has conducted extensive research on aging, healthcare access, and the development of culturally sensitive health interventions. Victoria is passionate about applying her research to create practical solutions that improve health outcomes and promote equity in healthcare systems. She looks forward to continuing her research at First Nations University of Canada and contributing to meaningful advancements in Indigenous health.

**Colleen Charles** is a Lecturer in Indigenous Studies at the Northern Campus in Prince Albert.

- 30 -

### **About First Nations University of Canada**

Established in 1976, the First Nations University of Canada is Canada's *only* national First Nations-owned post-secondary institution. FNU is a unique educational institution of higher learning specializing in Indigenous Education for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of all cultural backgrounds. Our Vision is to aspire to have a transformative impact by bridging our ceremonies, knowledge keepers, languages, and traditions with the delivery of high-quality post-secondary education. For more information, please visit [www.fnuniv.ca](http://www.fnuniv.ca).

#### **For media inquiries only, please contact:**

Communications

First Nations University of Canada

Phone: 306.790.5950 ext. 2518 or 2510

Email: [comm@firstnationsuniversity.ca](mailto:comm@firstnationsuniversity.ca)