



**FIRST NATIONS
UNIVERSITY
OF CANADA**

MEDIA RELEASE

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FNUUniv Elders Christmas Dinner Marks a Joyful Start to the Holiday Season

Regina, SK— The First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv) Regina Campus Elders Office hosted its annual Elders Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, welcoming Elders, students, staff, children, families, and members of the public for a meaningful day of connection and togetherness.

What began many years ago as a small Christmas dinner hosted by Elders has grown into a cherished FNUUniv tradition that brings the campus and community together each year. The Elders Christmas Dinner brought together members of the FNUUniv community, families from the pamināwasowin Child Care Centre, and members of the general public to share a meal and spend time with one another during the holiday season.

The day opened with Elder Dennis Omeasoo lifting the pipe and offering prayers and blessings for everyone throughout the holiday season, setting a reflective and respectful tone for the gathering.

Following the ceremony, nearly 200 guests gathered for the annual Elders Christmas Dinner despite winter weather conditions. A turkey meal with all the fixings, catered by Bone & Broth, was served by volunteers from the Regina Police Service.

During the meal, children from the pamināwasowin Child Care Centre sang Christmas songs and shared performances they had been practicing in the weeks leading up to the event, adding to the festive atmosphere. Guests also enjoyed live entertainment by local First Nations singer and entertainer Terri-Anne Strongarm. Santa Claus made a special visit to distribute gifts and candy bags, creating memorable moments for guests of all ages. Local craft vendors were also welcomed into the space, offering handmade items and creating opportunities to support community artists and makers.

The Elders Office also continued its “Fill the Tipi” initiative, inviting Regina Campus employees to donate small gifts earlier in December. Donations were shared during the event to ensure

that everyone in attendance left with a small reminder of the generosity and care within the FNUniv community.

“This dinner is about coming together and being with each other,” said Roland Kaye, oskapewis (Elders Helper) at FNUniv. “It reminds us of the importance of community, especially at this time of year. The holiday season can be a difficult time for some people, and gatherings like this help create a space where everyone feels welcomed, supported, and connected. Being together, sharing a meal, and taking time to acknowledge one another is what this day is really about.”

“The Annual Elders Christmas Dinner is important because it creates space for students, staff, faculty, and community members to simply be together,” said Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, President of FNUniv. “Sharing food and time in this way strengthens relationships and builds a sense of belonging. Especially during the winter season, gatherings like this remind us that community is carried through care, connection, and showing up for one another.”

The Elders Office extends sincere thanks to the event sponsors and supporters, including Casinos Regina & Moose Jaw, SaskTel, the Regina Students’ Association, University Relations, Student Success Services, the Regina Campus Social Committee, and the many staff and volunteers who helped make the event possible. The evening was also supported through generous contributions of gifts, desserts, and beverages from FNUniv staff, faculty, and students, whose kindness helped ensure the gathering remained a warm and memorable celebration for all in attendance.

The annual Elders Christmas Dinner continues to be a meaningful FNUniv tradition, grounded in togetherness, generosity, and community connection.

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About First Nations University of Canada

The First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv) was founded in 1976 and is a unique national First Nations owned and operated post-secondary institution that aspires to have transformative impact by bridging ceremonies, knowledge keepers, languages, and traditions with the delivery of high-quality post-secondary education that will lead to the pride and

success of all Indigenous and communities. FNUniv has campuses in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert, and provides programming nationally. For more information about FNUniv, please visit fnuniv.ca