



**FIRST NATIONS
UNIVERSITY
OF CANADA**



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FNUUniv forms groundbreaking partnership to offer the first Mohawk Language Certificate Program

Regina, Saskatchewan – Today, the Ontario-based Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FENFC), First Nations University of Canada (FNUUniv), and University of Regina (U of R) signed a partnership agreement that will see FNUUniv offer its first Mohawk Language Certificate Program – the result of a close collaboration between FNUUniv and FENFC. The program, *Yonkwatkontahkwenhatye* (We are Continuing in Mohawk), will launch at FNUUniv in Fall 2023.

“This program is a credit to the Mohawk Language students of the FENFC’s *Kén:tho tsi kateweyénhstha*: (I Study Here in Mohawk). Many of them have advanced to the point of requesting further learning and so FENFC approached FNUUniv to offer the Mohawk Language Certificate,” said Samuel Hill, Program Coordinator, *Kén:tho tsi kateweyénhstha*: (I Study Here in Mohawk) Language Program, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre.

The two-year online Certificate of Mohawk I program is developed and delivered in partnership between FNUUniv and FENFC. The program is the first-of-its-kind, comprised of 15 credit-hours of Mohawk Language courses and general courses in accordance with FNUUniv Language Certificate requirements. Through this new partnership, Mohawk language students will be able to continue to study Mohawk and advance their proficiency in the language while earning a Certificate of Mohawk I from FNUUniv.

“We’re honoured to be partnering with the First Nations University of Canada to bring university-level classes in Mohawk, the most widely spoken of the six Haudenosaunee languages. We are hopeful about our continued partnership and for a future where all of the Haudenosaunee languages are taught at First Nations University,” said Jennifer Dockstader, Executive Director, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre.

Jacqueline Ottmann, President of FNUUniv, speaks to the importance of Indigenous language programming.

“Language teaching is critically important, especially as many Indigenous languages are or are becoming endangered. At FNUUniv, as Canada’s only national Indigenous university, we strive to protect and preserve Indigenous languages, which are inextricably tied to our cultures and our identities as First Nations people. By collaborating with FENFC in Ontario to expand our language programming to include Mohawk, we are continuing our work to teach more languages that are representative of more nations across turtle island — and that’s something we’re very proud of,” said Jacqueline Ottmann, President, FNUUniv.



The funders who helped make this possible include the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural and Educational Programs (FNCCEC) and the Ministry of Canadian Heritage.

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Backgrounder

- The Mohawk language is one of the six Haudenosaunee Languages along with Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora – also known as Six Nations Confederacy
- Mohawk is the largest speaking Haudenosaunee language and the Mohawk people are the largest populated of the Six Nations Confederacy, which includes First Nations and territories such as: Six Nations, Tyendinaga, Akwesasne, Kanasatake, Kahnawake and Wahta
- The Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre provides language and cultural learning in all six of the Haudenosuanee Languages and Ojibwe

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. FNUniv is a unique educational institution of higher learning specialising 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.

About Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre

The Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre, located in the Niagara region's Fort Erie, Ontario has a rich history which includes reestablishing our traditions and culture. For decades, Indigenous people were restricted in practicing our ways and performing our ceremonies, which led to many of our people losing this knowledge. The Fort Erie Friendship Centre aims to correct this by helping our communities to heal and reclaim their identity.

Our mission is "to enhance all aspects of native life while extending friendship to the community." With our values of tradition, friendship, respect, professionalism, compassion, integrity and honesty we will continue to move forward with helping our community to not only heal but to allow its members to prosper, becoming the persons who they were meant to be. For more information, please visit www.fenfc.org.

About the University of Regina



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Set in the heart of the Canadian prairies we are a comprehensive, mid-sized university where the opportunities are as limitless as the horizon. Our campuses are on Treaty 4 and 6 territories - the homelands of the nêhiyawak, Anihšînāpēk, Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda peoples, and Michif/Métis nation. It is our responsibility to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities to build a more inclusive future for all. Our three federated colleges, 10 faculties, 25 academic departments, and 18 research centres foster innovative research with practical and theoretical applications. We are committed to cultivating the potential of our 16,000 students and supporting their health and well-being. We take learning beyond the classroom through work and volunteer experiences to develop career-ready graduates.