

**OUTLAND
YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
PROGRAM**

**JOURNEY OF THE
1000**

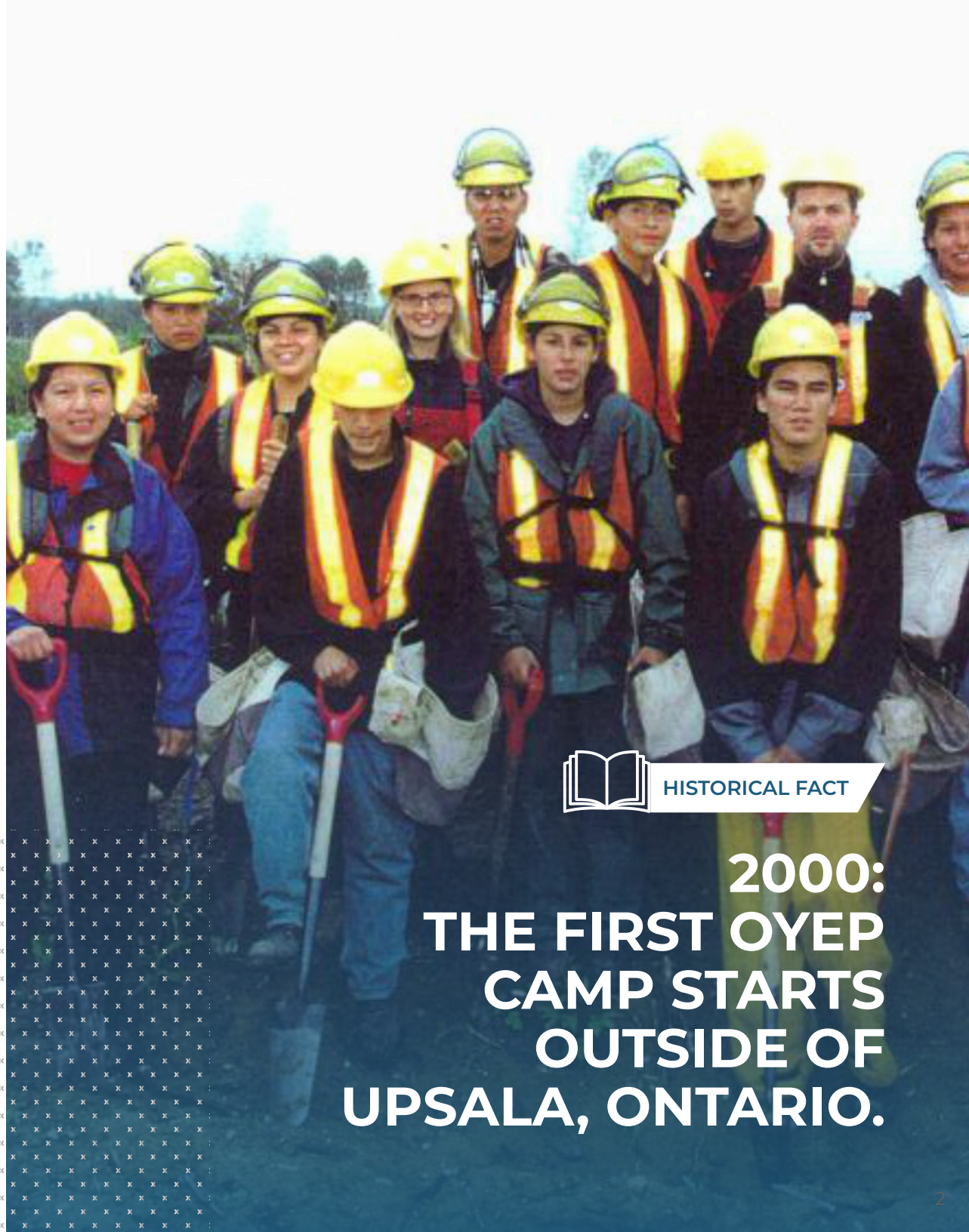
2024 NATIONAL REPORT



WHAT IS OYEP?

Objective: Equity and Opportunity for Indigenous Youth

The Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) is the flagship program of the Dexterra Community Initiatives not-for-profit organization. OYEP is a national network of innovative education, training, and work opportunities for Indigenous Youth. It includes award winning, six-week experiential summer programs and year-round wrap around support services. OYEP has supported Indigenous Youth in breaking down barriers and building brighter futures since 2000.



**2000:
THE FIRST OYEP
CAMP STARTS
OUTSIDE OF
UPSALA, ONTARIO.**



Joe Thompson pointing to a sign with his name carved in it from OYEP's inaugural program

FUN FACT

Joe Thompson, a graduate of the inaugural OYEP camp, exemplifies the national network we strive to build. With 25 years of experience, Joe remains a valued mentor, providing guidance, delivering training, and inspiring younger cohorts. Today, you'll still find him in the hallways of our Thunder Bay office, proudly contributing to the Outland team.

“

Adversity was the main takeaway from my first year with the Outland family. Dealing with adversity is a life lesson I still use every day. It feels amazing to know our Ranger family spans the entire country. I'm forever grateful for every single person involved in keeping this amazing program alive. Miigwech.

– **Joe Thompson**, AKA Ranger #1,
Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek



In 2024, OYEP operated in six locations across Canada!

Happy 25th Anniversary OYEP!

Since 2000, OYEP has been working towards equity and opportunity for Indigenous Youth. Here's to another 25!

Dexterra Community Initiatives:

OYEP is the cornerstone program of Dexterra Community Initiatives, a not-for-profit incorporated to inspire action and develop opportunities with and for communities wherever Dexterra Group Inc. operates or has partnerships.



Quesnel, BC



Crownsnest Pass, AB



Lubicon Lake, AB



Birch River, MB



Mink Lake, ON



Esker Lakes ON

OVERVIEW OF IMPACTS SINCE 2000:

Since 2000, OYEP has been working towards equity and opportunity for Indigenous Youth through experiential learning.



HISTORICAL FACT

2018: The First Nations Natural Resources Youth Employment Program is officially renamed to the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP).

FUN FACT

Sponsored by Trans Canada Trail, Canfor, and Dexterra Group, They Media spent the summer of 2024 traveling across Canada to visit six OYEP sites, capturing the program's impact and celebrating its 25-year legacy.



2024 STATS

71 Indigenous Communities Represented



118,080 Trees Planted



591 Certifications Earned



40,000+ Hours Worked



120 Participants



50% Indigenous Management



+350 Co-operative Education Credits granted



STATS SINCE 2000

500K

Hours Worked

2.72
Million

Trees Planted

1,031

Participant Graduates

2,071

High School Credits Earned



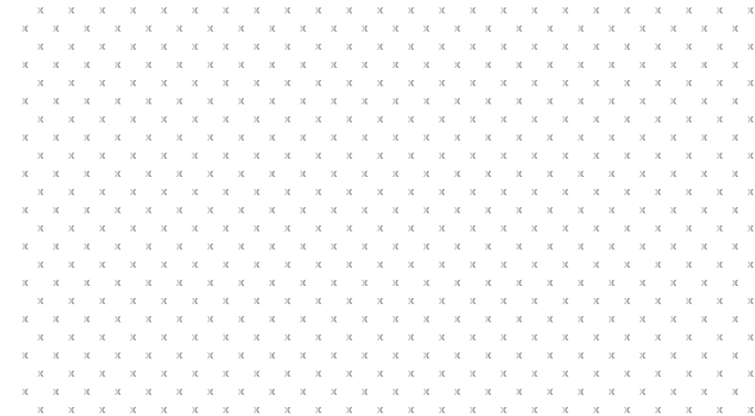
COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED BY OYEP PARTICIPANTS IN 2024

From a single camp in Ontario, OYEP has grown into a national network with camp locations and opportunities across Canada, connecting Indigenous Youth from 188 communities. Our national footprint offers more opportunity than ever for Indigenous Youth to build skills and confidence rooted in land and community.



FUN FACT

Since 2000, OYEP has had participants from 188 Indigenous Communities across Canada.



HISTORICAL FACT

JP Gladu, Principal and Director of Mokwateh and former President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business, has been a steadfast supporter of OYEP for 25 years. He delivered the keynote address at our very first Closing Ceremony in 2000 and returned as the keynote speaker for our 20th Anniversary Celebration in 2020. Thank you, JP, for your enduring dedication to this program and its mission!

2024 OYEP PARTICIPANTS' COMMUNITIES

ONTARIO

- Gakjiwanong Anishinaabe Nation
- Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation
- Seine River First Nation
- Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation
- Grassy Narrows First Nation
- Whitesand First Nation
- Nibinamik First Nation
- Aroland First Nation
- Sandy Lake First Nation
- Eagle Lake First Nation
- Gull Bay First Nation
- Fort William First Nation
- Mishkeegogamang
- Temagami First Nation
- Mattagami First Nation
- Timiskaming First Nation
- Kashechewan First Nation
- Apitipi Anicinapek Nation
- Adeles Bears Band
- Nipissing First Nation
- Attawapiskat First Nation
- Webequie First Nation
- Beausoleil First Nation
- Fort Albany First Nation
- Taykwa Tagamou Nation
- Moose Cree First Nation
- Abitibiwinni First Nation

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- Upper Nicola Band
- Nazko First Nation
- Halfway River First Nation
- Lake Babine Nation
- Kwadacha Nation
- Atikameg First Nation
- Ts'msyen First Nation
- Ulkatcho First Nation
- O'Chiese First Nation
- Esdilahg First Nation
- Métis
- Tl'azt'en First Nation

MANITOBA

- Misipawistik Cree Nation
- Opaskwayak Cree Nation
- Chemawawin Cree Nation
- Norway House Cree Nation
- Barren Lands First Nation
- Montreal Lake Cree Nation
- Tataskweyak Cree Nation
- York Factory First Nation
- Garden Hill First Nation
- Peguis First Nation
- Waywayseecappo First Nation
- God's Lake Narrows
- Mathias Colomb Cree Nation

ALBERTA

- Saddle Lake First Nation
- Garden River First Nation
- Frog Lake First Nation
- Little Red River Cree Nation
- Louis Bull Tribe
- Alexis First Nation
- Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
- Lubicon Lake Band
- Peerless Trout First Nation
- Sandy Bay First Nation
- Tulita Dene First Nation
- Kawacatoose First Nation
- Louis Bull First Nation
- Fort McKay First Nation
- Woodland Cree First Nation
- Piikani First Nation
- Beaver Dam First Nation
- Swan River First Nation
- Ermineskin Cree Nation
- Kainai Nation
- Chiniki First Nation
- Bearspaw First Nation
- Bigstone First Nation
- Tsuut'ina First Nation
- Sunchild First Nation
- Montana First Nation
- Siksika First Nation
- Samson Cree Nation
- Inuit

CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT 2024

At OYEP, we work alongside Indigenous Communities and Elders to integrate traditional knowledge and practices into the programming, creating a space where Youth feel connected and empowered.



HISTORICAL FACT

2018: In partnership with McLeod Lake Indian Band, OYEP opens its first camp outside of Ontario with the launch of its inaugural program in Prince George, BC.



I think OYEP is a life changing program that gives kids from all walks of life a chance to see and explore themselves and the surrounding areas they never knew existed. It's truly a blessing and it's been very exciting to see it grow exponentially within a very short timeline.

– **Steve Feyereisen**, Cultural Knowledge Keeper, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Manitoba

Each year, OYEP collaborates with local community Elders and individuals to provide culturally safe programming. Additionally, Youth participants are encouraged to lead workshops themselves, sharing their skills and interests with their peers.

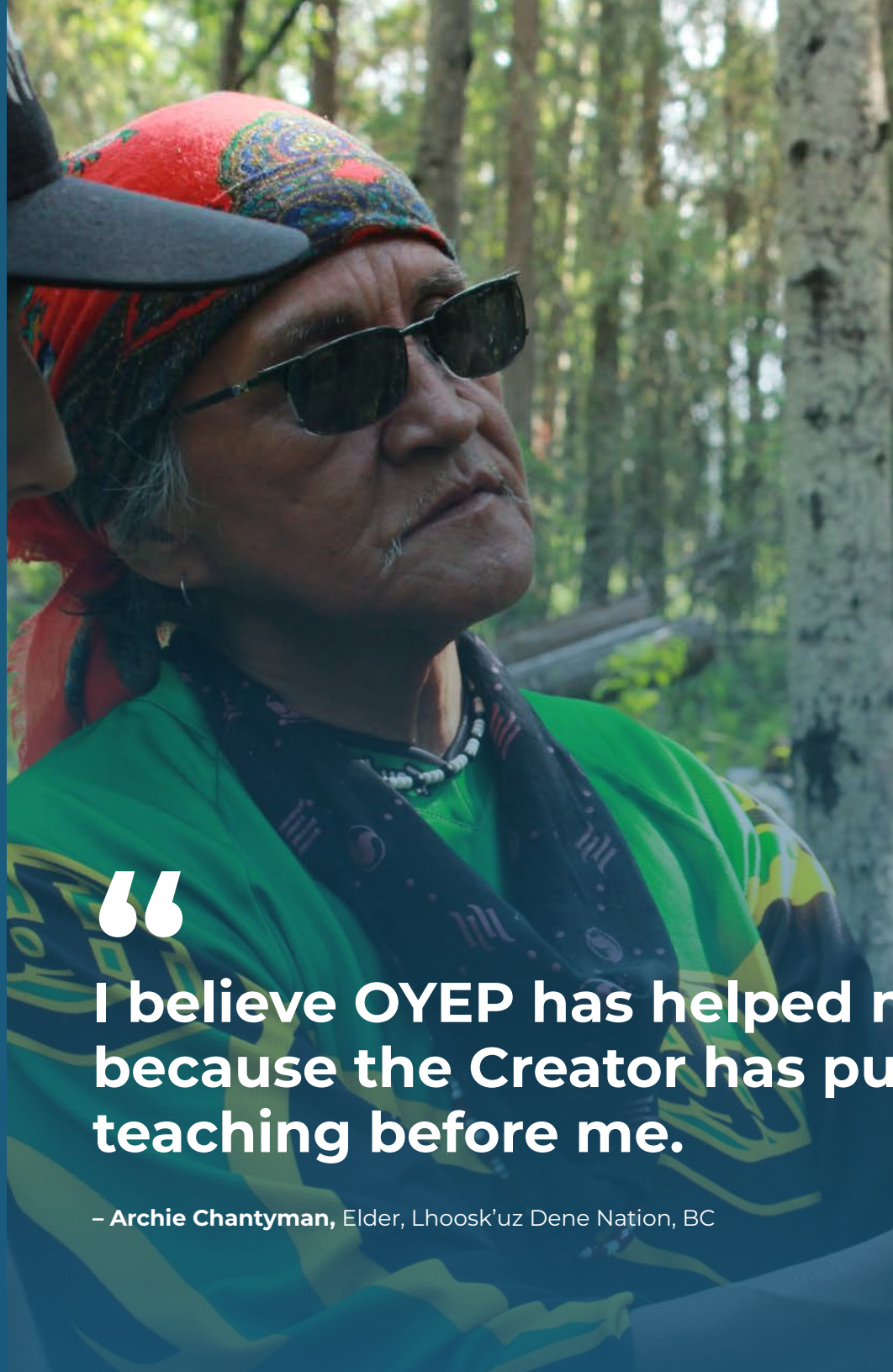


“

This past spring, we came in contact with the Outland Youth Employment Program and discussed opportunities and workshops that we could offer. We finalized our plans and headed out to meet with the Youth who were working in Mink Lake, Ontario. We provided Financial Literacy as well as a Drum-building and Bracelet-making Workshop. While the LHF team was there the impact this camp has had on the Youth was evident. Many of the Youth were eager to explain their role within the camp and shared the new relationships they had made while there. While my time within the camp was short, OYEP has made a lasting impression on me, and I truly can say I wish I had that opportunity to attend when I was a Youth. I will always speak highly of OYEP because it's a fantastic program!

- Tara Devlin, LHF Community Engagement Officer





“

I believe OYEP has helped me because the Creator has put this teaching before me.

– Archie Chantyman, Elder, Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation, BC



Manitoba net fishing and caribou hide tufting – Clearwater Lake Provincial Park, Manitoba.



BC drum making – Led by Archie Chantyman, Lhoosk'uz Elder – Puntchesakut Lake Camp, BC.



BC drum making – Led by Archie Chantyman, Lhoosk'uz Elder – Puntchesakut Lake Camp, BC.



Alberta South drum making – Led by Tsuut'ina Elders.

STEM WEEK AND TRADES WEEK:

Participants spend five days living on campus at a post-secondary institution, immersing themselves in the experience of student life. During this time, they explore a range of science and trades programs offered by the institution, gaining hands-on exposure to in-demand fields of expertise within the region. The program aims to inspire and attract future students to pursue these vital career paths.



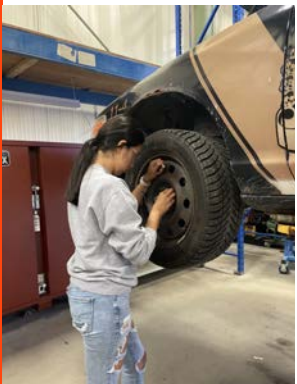
HISTORICAL FACT

2005: STEM Week is introduced as a major addition to the OYEP curriculum, hosted at Confederation College to enhance learning opportunities.



STEM/TRADES PARTNERS

According to the Conference Board of Canada, only about 1% of Indigenous students in Canada pursue a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)-related post-secondary degree, compared to the national average of 10% for non-Indigenous students. Through hands-on training and culturally relevant learning experiences, OYEP is narrowing this gap by fostering pathways to high-demand careers and empowering Indigenous Youth with skills grounded in both modern science and traditional knowledge.





TRANS CANADA TRAIL

Trail building provides Indigenous Youth with skills in environmental stewardship and sustainable land use. Through OYEP's partnership with Trans Canada Trail (TCT), Youth develop career-ready skills, connect to the land, and contribute to recreational spaces that benefit communities for generations.

HISTORICAL FACT

2021: OYEP signs a Memorandum of Understanding with TCT to bring their 'Trail Week' experiences and more to OYEP participants across Canada.

FUN FACT

In 2024, 50% of OYEP participants named TCT as their favourite program activity — out of the dozens offered!

Thanks to the TCT partnership, OYEP Youth have built or maintained over 60km of trail across Canada.



We are proud to support the development of Canada's future trail builders, planners, and stewards through our partnership with OYEP. Our instructors consistently share positive feedback about the impressive work, enthusiasm, and dedication of OYEP participants. Their efforts during Trail Week creates lasting positive impacts on the trails and future trail users"

- Janice Valant, Coordinator, Education and Inclusion Initiatives, Trans Canada Trail





Meghan Jourdain,
Fort William First Nation

WORLD TRAILS CONFERENCE Ottawa 2024



OYEP was honoured to present on 'Engaging Youth in the Trail Building Sector' at the 2024 World Trails Conference in Ottawa, Ontario. The session was led by OYEP alumna Meghan Jourdain, whose powerful words and valuable insights captivated the audience. OYEP is excited to continue this journey and look forward to attending the next World Trails Conference in Perth, Australia, in 2026!

20KM

Total Trails Built or
Maintained in 2024



The Trans Canada Trail is the longest multi-use trail system in the world, and it is always growing.

- TCT Website

FORESTRY

OYEP's collaborations with the forestry sector create valuable employment opportunities for Indigenous Youth, providing them with hands-on experience and a direct pathway to careers. We are grateful for our partners' contributions, which help equip Youth with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in a thriving industry.



HISTORICAL FACT

2019: A multi-year funding agreement with the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta enables OYEP to expand into Alberta, where opportunities continue to grow today!



FUN FACT

In 2024 OYEP teamed up with 30 forestry and forest products partners.



As a proud sponsor of OYEP, we believe in empowering Indigenous Youth with practical skills in the natural resource sectors. This program not only introduces Indigenous Youth to sustainable forestry practices but also inspires future Indigenous leaders who will drive positive change in our industry. Supporting OYEP and the Indigenous Youth that participate is an investment in resilience and sustainability for our forests and communities.

– Adam Schneidmiller, West Fraser – Alberta Indigenous Relations Lead



118,080

Trees Planted in 2024

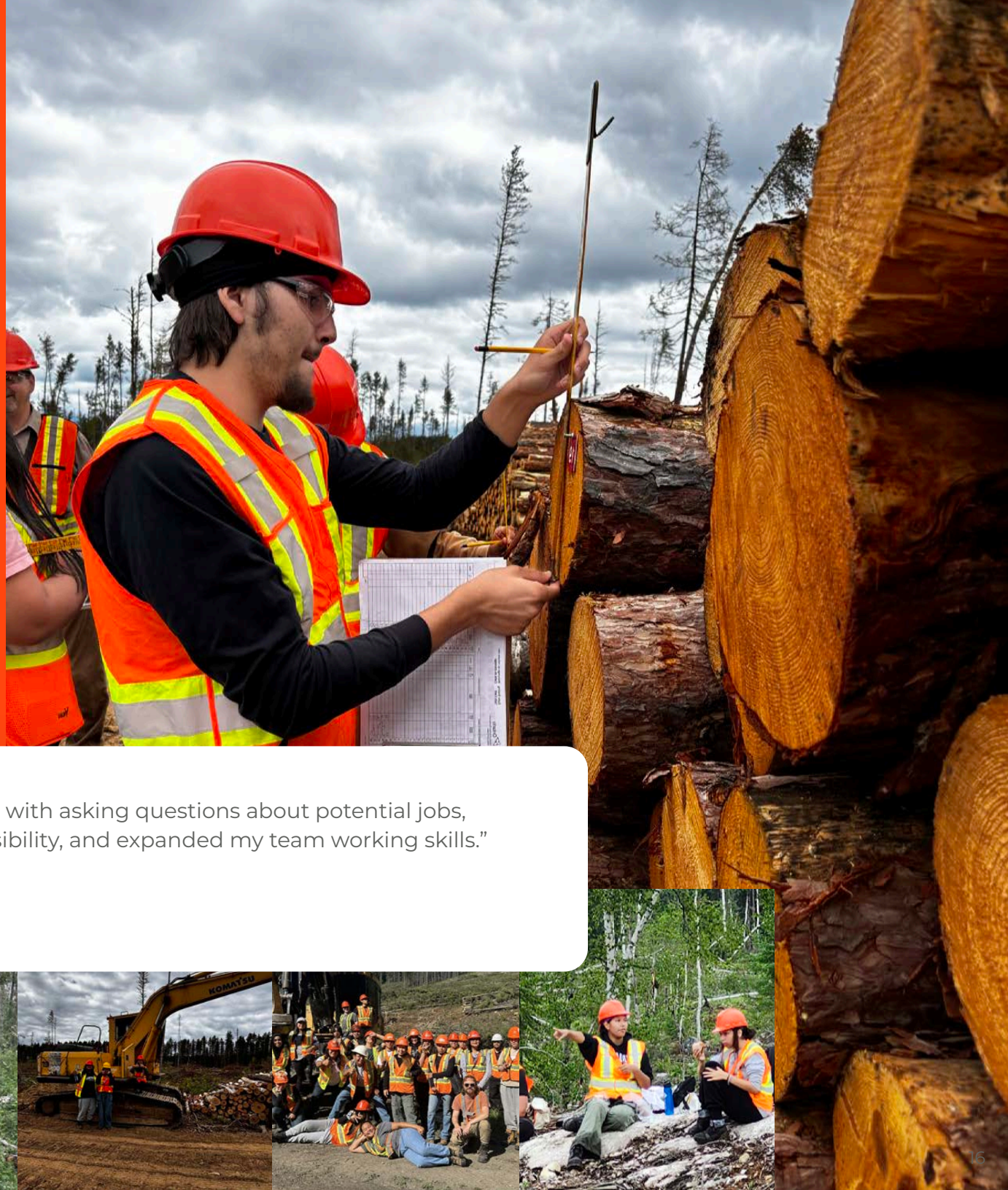
2.72

Million Trees Planted
Since 2000

In addition to tree planting, Youth earn valuable entry-level certifications in forest firefighting, boosting their skills while playing a key role in supporting a sustainable, circular forestry economy.

“The work projects helped me with asking questions about potential jobs, further developed my responsibility, and expanded my team working skills.”

-Marcus, Eagle Lake 148



MINING

OYEP's mining education and partnerships offer Indigenous Youth real-world experience and access to relevant job opportunities in a crucial industry. From the copper in our phones to the aluminum in our cars, mining is behind so many everyday products we rely on. We are thankful for our partners, whose support helps equip Indigenous Youth with the skills to succeed in this fast-growing field and build long-term careers.



HISTORICAL FACT

2006: As Canada's mining sector was experiencing a boom in global demand, OYEP made mining a major curriculum focus. This move helped position OYEP participants to take advantage of the growing opportunities in the mining industry.



FUN FACT

OYEP participants received an exclusive look at Kidd Creek, home to Kidd Mine, the world's deepest base-metal mine, reaching an incredible 9,800 feet below sea level, with the shaft bottom at 9,889 feet.



Thanks to new funding from the Ontario Innovation Network, OYEP has increased mining programming to focus on the critical minerals sector. This is a key part of Ontario's push to power a green and digital economy, both at home and globally.



Wyloo Lunch and Learn

Clyde Moonias, former OYEP Participant and current Coordinator for Community Relations at Wyloo, provided insights and engagements on the mining industry, his own career journey that led him here, and how it was kicked-off with his graduation from OYEP!



Laurentian University
Université **Laurentienne**

GOODMAN School of Mines
École des mines

OYEP Youth immersed themselves in the fascinating world of benthic ecosystems! They learned about the unique organisms and habitats that flourish at the bottom of lakes, rivers, and oceans.

Through hands-on activities, they gained valuable knowledge that enhanced their education.

ENERGY

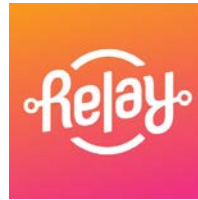
Through OYEP's partnerships with the energy sector, Indigenous Youth gain valuable skills and hands-on experience that open career opportunities in a field that powers everything from our homes to the technologies we rely on. Whether it's renewable energy or traditional sources, the energy industry plays a key role in shaping our future. We're grateful for the support of our partners, who are helping OYEP Youth build successful careers while contributing to an industry that keeps us moving forward.



HISTORICAL FACT

2019: OYEP signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative, strengthening its ability to expand and provide vital education and access for Indigenous Youth to Canada's forestry sector.

In 2018, TC Energy's Coastal Gas Link sponsored the establishment of the BC program. They continue to be a significant contributor to this day.



Renewable energy education workshop –
Led by RELAY Education – Esker Lake, Ontario



FUN FACT

More than 20 OYEP graduates worked on the groundbreaking Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project in Northwestern Ontario.



**OPG Atikokan Tour –
BIOMASS – Mink Lake**

Atikokan Generating Station was converted from burning coal into the largest 100% biomass-fuelled plant in North America.



Goal-setting workshop and Renewable energy workshop – Led by Iron and Earth, north Alberta



Enbridge pipeline pumping station tour

Hosted by Enbridge. Nathan Racher shakes hands with Enbridge host. – BC Program – Quesnel, BC



Superior Propane facility tour

Hosted by Superior Propane – Grande Prairie, Alberta – Alberta North Program.



Having the opportunity to collaborate and work with OYEP in Alberta was an extremely rewarding experience for us at Iron & Earth as we share common goals of positively impacting Indigenous Youth. It enabled us to put together new introductory training programs in a short amount of time. ‘Insightful, very important, and extremely meaningful’ were amongst the feedback we received from the participants. Our instructors highlighted how important these special and specific skill-building programs are to Indigenous Youth during their many weeks of summer camp and that the growth they show from when they started the program is tremendous. These successful programs show that there is high potential to scale up this initiative and we look forward to renewing and expanding this partnership across all OYEP Summer Camps.

Marion Ada, Iron and Earth, Renewable Skills Project Manager

INDIGENOUS YOUTH LEADERSHIP

OYEP's Management in Training stream encourages OYEP participants to develop critical leadership and mentorship skills by providing opportunities to oversee projects, manage teams, and guide their peers. Through hands-on training and mentorship, Youth gain valuable experience in problem-solving, communication, and decision-making.



HISTORICAL FACT

2022: The first OYEP participant progresses through the Management in Training leadership program and supervises a site.



FUN FACT

More than half of OYEP's field management is Indigenous, many of whom are proud alumni of the program. For them, working with OYEP isn't just a job – it's a leadership opportunity that reflects the program's commitment to fostering growth from within.

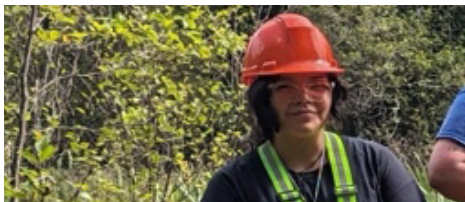
Leadership Opportunities

After two years participating as Rangers, Youth can apply for Junior Management positions or Crew Leaders in Training. Here, they have the opportunity to mentor Youth joining the program. Furthermore, Youth can then apply as Crew Leaders, who supervise and mentor all Youth throughout the summer months. The final stage of the leadership progression is becoming a site Supervisor!



**NEEPIN COOK
MISIPAWISTIK CREE NATION**

The 2024 season marks Neepin Cook's fifth year working with OYEP, after having fast-tracked to Crew Leader in recognition of her incredible competence, hard work, and sense of responsibility. Neepin is now at the University of Winnipeg, working on her second year of the Pathways to Graduate Studies program.



"At OYEP I enhanced my skills and expanded my network paving the way to my current career with Horizon North".

- **Daisha,**
Crew Leader in Training



**BLAZE HEAD
OPASKWAYAK CREE NATION**

This past summer, Blaze marked his fifth year with OYEP. His journey includes two years as a Ranger, a year as a Crew Leader in Training, and two years as a Crew Leader. Currently, Blaze is putting his skills to use as a Core Technician for Frequency Geophysics in Thompson, Manitoba.

One of the biggest barriers to Youth participating in larger leadership roles at OYEP or across the workforce is a driver's licence. OYEP supports and assists Youth who show interest and dedication to the process in obtaining their learners licence during the program.

In 2024, seven Youth across Canada successfully obtained their learners licence with the help of OYEP.



I want to go into the Forestry industry and OYEP helped me make this plan.

- **Colby,** Garden River First Nation

YOUTH TESTIMONIALS

At OYEP, we prioritize building strong, supportive relationships with Indigenous Youth where we truly listen to their needs and experiences. Through these trusted connections, we're able to create programming that reflects their aspirations and helps them succeed. This genuine approach fosters an environment where Youth feel comfortable sharing, knowing their voices are heard and valued.



HISTORICAL FACT

As of 2024, 1,031 Indigenous Youth have graduated from OYEP since its launch in 2000, contributing to a growing network of friendship, and opportunity for future generations.



FUN FACT

2018: The Canadian Council for Indigenous Business and Indspire each release separate and independent research studies released on the social and economic impacts of OYEP .



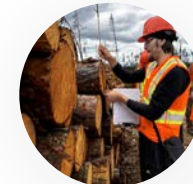
"OYEP has had a major impact on my career. It has taught me to always work as hard as I can, it will pay off. It's opened doors for me to other job opportunities and has taught me to keep a positive attitude and stay disciplined."

Daisy
Sunchild First Nation



"The projects we did, helped me in being a lot more open and gave me a lot of skills that would be good in a job site. It helped me be more motivated, reflective, and helped me survive in wildlife conditions."

Stephan
Gull Bay First Nation



"The work projects helped me with asking questions about potential jobs, further developed my responsibility and expanded my team working skills."

Marcus
Eagle Lake 148



"I learned that I really enjoy forestry and would eventually like to work in this industry."



Alexa
Whitesand First Nation



"I learn about teamwork, helping others, listening to others about what they think about the matter of the projects."



Dakota
Sandy Lake First Nation



"OYEP contributed by helping with my sense of self and wellbeing, along with my professional growth by providing me with certifications preferred by employers."



Tia
Mishkeegogamang
First Nation



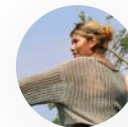
"I want to go into the forestry industry and OYEP helped me make this plan."



Colby
Garden River
First Nation



"I have been eating more, sleeping more, exercising more, being outside more, etc. A lot of things have improved from my home life after being at camp for these six weeks, so I'm excited to continue on these habits when I'm back home!"



Leila
Lac La Croix
First Nation

WRAP AROUND SERVICES AND FINANCIALS

OYEP's wrap around services provide ongoing support and communication, ensuring that Youth have the resources they need to stay on track and reach their goals. Sustained guidance, through mentorship and career planning, helps boost confidence, reduce barriers, and increase long-term success, leading to better outcomes in education, employment, and personal development.

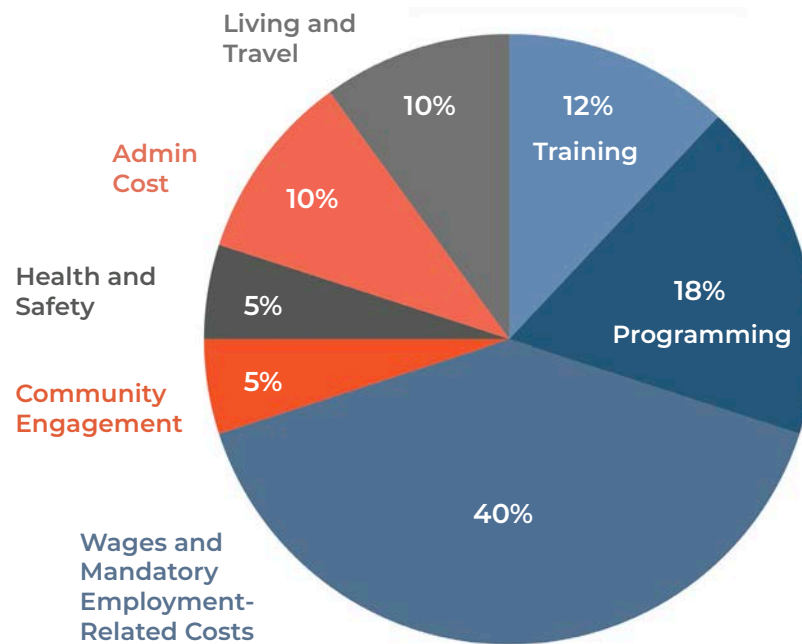
HISTORICAL FACT

2021: Dexterra Community Initiatives (DCI) is founded as a dedicated not-for-profit organization to oversee and expand the impact of OYEP, ensuring its growth and success for years to come.

2024: DCI wins Eco-Canada's Community Impact Award and Employment and Social Development Canada's Sector Distinction Employment Equity Achievement Award.

In addition to the six-week summer program, OYEP provides opportunities and support to Youth all year round, to ensure continuity to success.

Participating in conferences, career fairs, speaking panels, and local community event enables Youth to speak to their experiences at OYEP to a wide range of potential supporters. By sharing their stories, graduates are helping demonstrate the value of the program, which helps OYEP to provide opportunities year after year.



2024 FUNDING BREAKDOWN:

17% Charities/
NPOs/
Foundations

16% Community

27% Government

40% Private



Level Up skilled trades career fair –
Thunder Bay, Ontario - September
26, 2024.

“

**Being a Crew
Leader in Training
is awesome; I get to
see the Youth grow.**

– Zander, Long Lake #58



Forward Summit includes speakers
from industry and Indigenous
leadership, working towards
economic Reconciliation for
Indigenous peoples.

Grey Eagle Resort Conference
Centre, Calgary Alberta



OUR PARTNERS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



DIAMOND PARTNERS



PLATINUM PARTNERS



GOLD PARTNERS



OUR PARTNERS

SILVER PARTNERS



BRONZE PARTNERS



OTHER PARTNERS





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