



Sault College News Release

For immediate release

Help Project ALLY Connect and Heal Community

(Sault Ste. Marie, ON March 24, 2016)The Social Service Worker - Native Specialization (SSW-NS) program at Sault College is excited to announce the 3rd annual Project ALLY: Aboriginal Leaders Liberating Youth event on **Tuesday, April 5 at Northern Grand Gardens**. The event is about connecting and teaming up to 100 aboriginal youth with a benevolent aboriginal mentor for an evening of culture, fun, empowerment and reciprocity. Facilitated by the faculty and students of the SSW-NS program, in partnership with the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre, the activity-filled event involves the development of trust, self-worth, cultural identity, confidence and more to reduce risk and promote wellness. A youth participant from last year said, "I had the best time of my life." The pasta and meatball dinner, carnival games and a youth showcase highlighting each young person's gifts, strengths and areas of mastery contribute to this experience. Fun and games are balanced with traditional teachings and a strong spiritual aspect with elder involvement, an Anishinaabemowin language activity and drumming.

This event is made possible by generous donations from Sault North Rotary Club and contributions from the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, and Sault College Native Education Department.

"Our communities struggle to cope with impacts of historic trauma that has left too many of our youth with fragmented identities and spirits, and it is time for collective healing," says Stephanie Stephens, Professor, Social Service Worker-Native Specialization at Sault College.

"Project ALLY is an empowering, inter-relational experience of reconnection where we provide

an opportunity for mentors to fulfill their inherent, traditional roles as family and community leaders. Adult mentors experience their own transformative healing as their spirits are awakened to a feeling of freedom and wellness. In Anishinaabe worldview, the determinants of wealth and freedom relate to ones' ability to fulfill their clan responsibilities that contribute to the betterment of community."

"At Project ALLY, youth receive Anishinaabe teachings of wellness surrounded by mentors who inspire them, role modeling kindness and culturally resilient behaviours," says Louis Neveau, SSW-NS Student.

Non-Aboriginal community members are encouraged to become 'allies' and supporters of this grassroots, community capacity building event. "We are seeking generous sponsorships and giveaway donations from citizens, organizations and businesses to help youth attend this powerful and healing experience April 5th, as well as to keep this going year after year," explains SSW-NS student Wendy Dubois.

To donate, mentor or sign up an Aboriginal youth age 10 – 15 for Project ALLY visit: [The Project ALLY website](#) or contact Stephanie Stephens at stephanie.stephens@saultcollege.ca or call 705-759-2554 ext. 2483.



About Sault College:

The vision of Sault College is to provide a transformative life experience through empowering those who study with us to think and learn in progressive, innovative ways, including those we have not yet imagined. Ranked #1 in the province for two years in a row with a score of 88.6% in overall student satisfaction by students themselves, Sault College grants Ontario College certificates, diplomas, advanced diplomas, graduate certificates, and degrees to its graduates. The College is one of the largest deliverer of apprenticeship training in all of Northern Ontario. Educating over 3,900 students each year, Sault College has a significant economic impact on the community, with spin-offs in excess of \$158 million. Over \$1.8 million dollars in scholarships, bursaries and awards are distributed annually to students at the College. Located on the border to the United States and situated in the middle of three of the largest great lakes on the planet, Sault College is one of 24 publicly-funded colleges in the province of Ontario. Visit our website at www.saultcollege.ca to learn more.

Please contact: Stephanie Stephens at stephanie.stephens@saultcollege.ca or call 705-759-2554 ext. 2483.