



Ganootamaage "speaking for"

SEPTEMBER 1998 will mark the realization of a five-year dream for Winnipeg's Aboriginal community when the Aboriginal Ganootamaage Justice Services of Winnipeg Inc. begins to process criminal court cases.

Based on a similar urban court diversion model in Toronto, "Ganootamaage" hopes to process about 15 cases per month beginning in September 1998. This three-year pilot project may be the broadest urban court diversion program in the country, in terms of the number and types of cases it will deal with.

Program goals include the provision of more effective judicial services for Aboriginal people, reduction of incarceration rates and recidi-

visism among Aboriginal people and improvement of public safety.

The program hopes to accomplish this by ordering healing plans for certain offenders instead of sending them to jail.

Elders will be involved in all aspects of programming and will conduct teachings at a Sweatlodge site donated to Ganootamaage. Located near the edge of Winnipeg, the Sweatlodge site houses a tipi constructed by members of the Native Brotherhood within the nearby Stony Mountain Federal Institution.

Funding for the \$2.5 million program is provided by Manitoba Justice and Justice Canada. *Contact: Kathy Mallet (204) 943-3342*

RCMP conferencing guide update

THE RCMP Aboriginal Policing Branch regrets to inform the LINK readership of a production delay of the *Community Justice Forum, Canadian Resource Guide*.

This publication is undergoing final editing and will be ready for distribution in a couple of months.

The RCMP wishes to thank all those who responded to the prior article. They will be notified when the Guide is completed. Please note the Guide is only one tool of a larger training package and, in the interests of maintaining continuity of that training, distribution will be limited to participants of the Forum/ Conferencing training process.

Contact: Corp. Doug Reti (613) 993-8442

Back to school for alternative justice

IN what might be the only academic course of its type in the country, Managing Alternative Justice Systems is a 13-week program, now heading into its third year at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta.

An average class size of 12 to 15 students will examine issues involved in developing alternative justice systems in Canada with a primary focus on those changes which are taking place in Aboriginal communities. Course instructor Dr. Kate Chiste says each student is expected to examine a separate justice initiative and provide a complete analysis of their research from the initial community survey to the results of what that particular initiative accomplished.

Dr. Chiste says this course offers the rare opportunity for students to practice what they learn.

"People can take the ideas and examples of this class and take it right back to their communities," says Dr. Chiste, who has already seen examples where students have done this. *Contact: Dr. Kate Chiste (403) 329-2139*

Québec native women's conference

RENOWNED author Rupert Ross along with Dr. Eduardo Duran, a psychologist from Albuquerque, New Mexico, are just a couple of the people who will be taking part in the 1998 Pimadiziwin Conference hosted by the Québec Native Women Inc.

The Conference, scheduled for November 11-13, 1998 in Montreal is expected to attract at least 600 people from across the country.

Topics for this year's event will include several aspects of community justice as well as victim and healing services. A representative from the Aboriginal Healing Fund group will also be there to provide the delegates with an update on the program and to answer questions.

Conference organizer Christine Sioui says the event is open to all Aboriginal people as well as to those who provide justice-related services to Aboriginal people and communities.

Contact: Christine Sioui (514) 954-0512

B.C. law school cultural camp

THE Tsartlip Reserve on Vancouver Island will become a hands-on learning centre this October when a group of about 50 law students, lawyers, judges and police officers will live the ways of the Coast Salish people for four days.

The Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Camp is organized through the University of Victoria Law School. This will be the third year the camp has brought a group of justice professionals and students together to learn about the Coast Salish people in a traditional way. This year, for the first time, reserve elders invited the campers to reside in the Long House, the most sacred site on the reserve.

Organizer Anne Roberts says the camp is designed to provide those who attend a chance to listen and speak to elders about how to more effectively provide justice for Canada's First Peoples.

Activities include building and participating in sweat lodges, a canoe trip, salmon smoking, ocean dipping and many others.

Organizers hope the tremendous impact of the camp will influence other law schools throughout Canada to adopt similar cultural training initiatives.

Contact: Anne Roberts (250) 370-0395

New AJLN national coordinator: Mary Tobin Oates

AS the new national coordinator of the Aboriginal Justice Learning Network, I look forward to working with our recently created Elders and Advisory committees in taking the work of the Learning Network to its next level.

It's been a very busy summer putting our committees in place, but now that it's been done, the coming year promises to be an exciting one.

As an urban Inuk and lawyer, I look forward to building upon the relationships we've already established among our various constituency groups. However, there's an ever-growing number of groups, institutions and individuals who share our vision of more culturally-appropriate justice processes for Aboriginal people, and so we also hope to establish many new part-

nerships in the coming year.

Of course, the work of exchanging information and ideas will continue through the usual media formats, and keep an eye out for our web page currently under construction! Our Internet address as well as a formal introduction of our committee members will be available in the very near future.

