awareness
education
connection

GORD DOWNIE & CHANIE WENJACK FUND

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

The Strong Water Singers perform for students at Scotiabank Arena for National Indigenous Peoples Day 2023.

Contents

Land Acknowledgment.....2

A Message from Our President and CEO 3

A Message from the Downie and Wenjack Families 4

About Chanie.....5

About Gord.....5

Leadership 6

Our Work.....6

Our Programs.....8

Our Events 18

Financial Overview.....22

Our Partners.....23

Land Acknowledgment

The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund (DWF) operates programs throughout Canada in what many Indigenous people call Turtle Island.

Our main office is located on the traditional territory of many nations including the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat Peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people.

We also acknowledge that the area is covered by Treaty 13, signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and is located within Dish With One Spoon Treaty Territory and as such, we commit to honouring the spirit and responsibilities that are outlined in those agreements as we do our work.

DWF's employees are also located throughout Canada on different treaty and unceded territories. We recognize and are privileged to have connections to various Indigenous lands and the communities that live on and care for them.

The Wenjack and Downie families grant DWF full permission to share the experiences of their beloved family members, Chanie and Gord, with you.

A Message from Our President and CEO

I am so proud of all that the DWF team accomplished in 2023-24 to continue to move reconciliation forward.

2023 marked 8 years since the release of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada's final report. Overall, only 13 of 94 Calls to Action have been completed and no Calls to Action were completed in 2023.

This lack of progress on the 94 Calls to Action can be discouraging, but on the ground, the work DWF's supporters are doing every day brings a great deal of hope. In 2023-24, thousands of people joined the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund in moving reconciliation forward in their classrooms, homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

This year, we reached 8,312 educators through the Legacy Schools program, supporting them in teaching an estimated 207,800 students about not only Canada's dark history, but the richness, strength, and diversity of Indigenous Peoples; we held A DAY TO LISTEN for the third year in a row with nearly 500 radio stations all over Canada amplifying the voices of Indigenous people on the theme of Mino Bimaadiziwin: Honouring Indigenous Identity; and, with the help of key partners, we brought 105 Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth together for 4 weeks over the summer to learn to become champions of reconciliation in their communities.

I invite you to continue reading to learn more about the incredible work accomplished in 2023-24.

Marsi for joining us on the path toward reconciliation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Midanik
President and CEO
Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

"We hope you will honour their legacies and act to make their dream of making Canada a better, more equitable country, a reality. Join us on the path to reconciliation."
- The Wenjack and Downie Families

A Message from the Downie and Wenjack Families

Since beginning this journey, we have seen tremendous changes in public awareness of the history and ongoing impacts of the residential school system. While we know there is a long way to go, we are so proud of the work we have seen accomplished by DWF's supporters.

Whether through raising awareness of Canada's true history, taking reconciliACTION in your local communities, or raising funds to support DWF's work, we appreciate the continued dedication to moving reconciliation forward.

We look forward to continuing on the path toward reconciliation alongside you.

Chi miigwetch, thank you.

Mike Downie
Founding Member

Harriet Visitor
Founding Member

About Chanie

Chanie Wenjack was born on January 19, 1954, in Marten Falls First Nation, also known as Ogoki Post – an Anishinaabe community in Northwestern Ontario.

In 1963, at nine years old, Chanie and his sisters were forced to attend Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School in Kenora, Ontario. In 1966, at 12 years old, Chanie ran away from Cecilia Jeffrey, attempting to reunite with his family 600 kilometres away in Ogoki Post. Nine other children ran away that day, but all were caught within 24 hours. Chanie's body was found beside the railway tracks on October 22, 1966, a week after he fled. He succumbed to starvation and exposure. In his pocket was nothing but a glass jar with seven wooden matches. Chanie's story, tragically, is like so many stories of Indigenous children in this country.

To learn more about Chanie Wenjack and Gord Downie, visit, downiewenjack.ca.

About Gord

Gord Downie was a non-Indigenous, Canadian rock star, storyteller, and poet. He was the frontman and lyricist for The Tragically Hip from 1984 until his passing in 2017.

In August 2016, Gord asked everyone in Canada to look at the true history of this country and to "Do Something" to improve Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations. Following that, Gord released his last solo project, *Secret Path*, which includes an album, graphic novel, and film. It tells the story of Chanie Wenjack and calls attention to the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples as a result of Canada's residential school system. In December 2016 at the Assembly of First Nations in Gatineau, Québec, National Chief Perry Bellegarde honoured Gord with an eagle feather, a symbol of the Creator, for his support of Indigenous Peoples. Gord was also given an honourary Indigenous name, Wicapi Omani, which is Lakota for "man who walks among the stars." On October 17, 2017, Gord Downie passed away surrounded by his children and family. Gord's legacy to create lasting, positive change in Canada lives on through all of us.

Gord asked everyone in Canada to look at the true history of this country and to "Do Something"

"Chanie" by DWF Artist Ambassador, Blake Angeconeb, October 2023.

Leadership

DWF is an Indigenous-led organization whose work is rooted in the Seven Grandfather Teachings – **Honesty, Wisdom, Respect, Humility, Courage, Love,** and **Truth**. DWF is governed by a Board of Directors made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders.

Bob Watts
Chair,
Mohawk and Ojibway,
Six Nations

Harriet Visitor
Wenjack Family Member,
Anishinaabekwe

Mike Downie
Downie Family Member,
Ally

Sarah Midanik
President & CEO of DWF,
Métis Nation of Alberta

Brad Baker
Squamish Nation

Stuart Coxe
Secretary,
Ally

Dr. Alika Lafontaine
Anishinaabe, Cree,
Métis and Pacific Islander,
Treaty 4 Territory

Hillary Thatcher
Métis

Kory Wilson
We Wai Kai Nation

Our Work

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action urge corporations, governments, educational and religious institutions, foundations, organizations, civil society groups, and all people throughout Canada to actively participate in actions that move reconciliation forward. Educating all people in Canada on the history and lasting impact of residential schools and other colonial policies is a necessary and important component of reconciliation.

Reconciliation is not just an Indigenous issue — it is a Canadian issue. DWF provides education on the true history of Canada and the continuing contributions of Indigenous Peoples to Turtle Island. We encourage participation in reconciliation initiatives, through programming, partnerships, campaigns, and events.

Our work is based on the pillars of Awareness, Education, and Connection & Action.

Awareness

DWF raises awareness through events and national campaigns like Secret Path Week and Indigenous History Month.

Education

DWF provides access to education and free resources through the Legacy Schools and Legacy Spaces programs.

Connection & Action

DWF connects people throughout Canada to encourage dialogue about issues impacting Indigenous people, communities, and the country's true history of residential schools and calls on all people in Canada to take action through reconciliACTION.

MISSION

Inspired by Chanie's story and Gord's call to action to build a better Canada, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund (DWF) builds cultural understanding and creates a path toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

VISION

Improving the lives of Indigenous people by building awareness, education, and connections between all peoples in Canada.

PURPOSE

The impact of residential schools and other colonial policies is still felt today. Colonization continues to affect the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples and heighten inequalities throughout the country. Reconciliation is critical to healing this rift and ensuring the well-being and prosperity of all people in Canada.

VALUES

Community-Led

DWF's programming is co-designed with Indigenous community members and leaders to achieve the stated objectives of awareness, education, action, and connection.

Collaboration

DWF is an organization with the power to bring leaders together, create impactful partnerships, and engage with everyone— regardless of where they are on their reconciliation journey. Collaboration increases support and awareness of both DWF and our partners, in addition to delivering upon our collective goals.

Empowerment

DWF responds to conversations Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities are having on the path towards reconciliation. We leverage our strengths to convene, influence, elevate, and innovate solutions.

Quality

DWF continuously refines our programs to ensure they align with our mission and vision and are the optimal way to deploy resources.

Our Programs

Legacy Schools

The Legacy Schools program is a national initiative that engages Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, clubs, groups, staff, and students in conversations about reconciliation in all provinces and territories, including schools in rural, remote, northern, and urban communities.

By providing free educational tools, resources, and program development to educators, DWF is not only able to teach people about residential schools but also educate people on the interests, rights, and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples and communities throughout Canada.

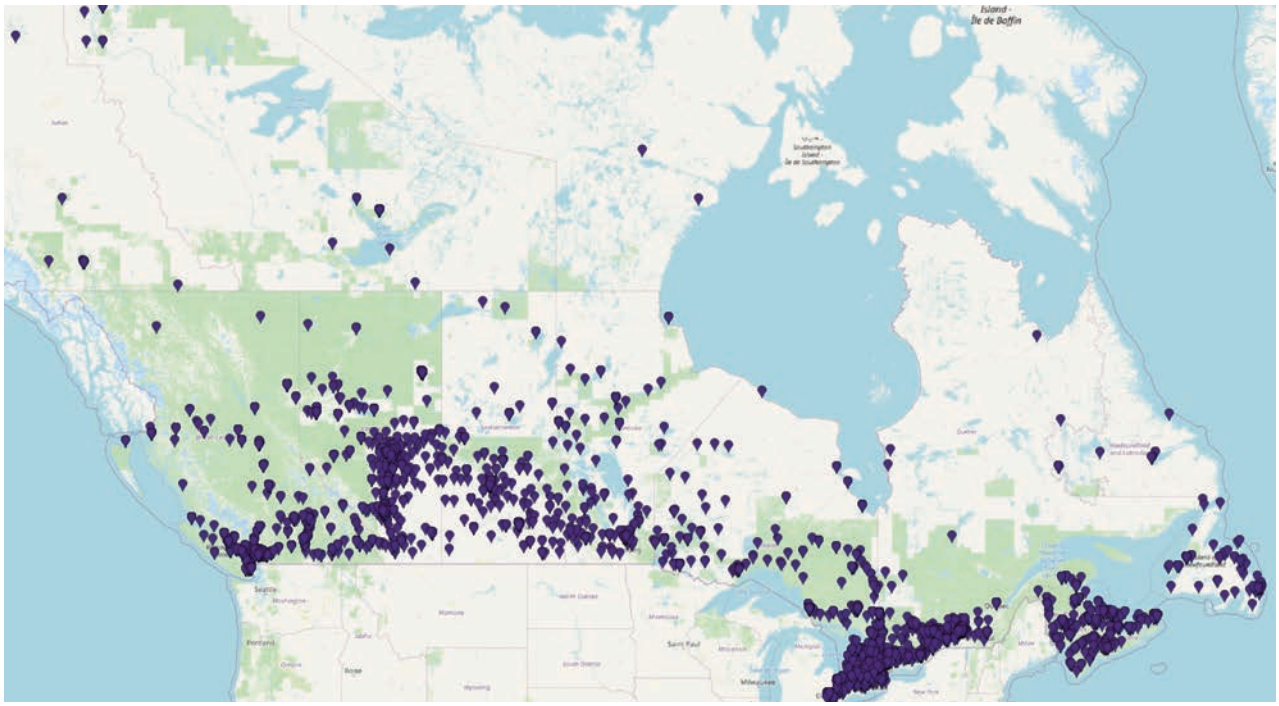
Legacy Schools Program Highlights:

8,312 educators

6,525 active unique schools/clubs (multiple educators can sign up at the same school)

8,311 total booster & toolkits sent out for the 2023-2024 school year

Current Legacy Schools



Learn more about the Legacy Schools program at LegacySchools.ca.

Educator Advisory Committee

The Educator Advisory Committee consists of First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and non-Indigenous educators who help ensure the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples are recognized and explored in schools throughout Canada. Each year, DWF and the Educator Advisory Committee review and enhance the resources and materials provided in the Legacy Schools toolkit to ensure the content is relevant and accurate.

Educator Advisory Committee 2023 - 2024:

Pearl Achneepineskum
Marten Falls, ON

Stacy Anne Allen
Farnham, QC

Sabrina Angeconeb
Thunder Bay, ON

Mark Barranger-Mitchell
Trenton, ON

Sophie Bass
Sherbrooke, QC

Christopher Britt
Pemberton, BC

Sherry Downing
Woodstock, ON

Andrea Eby
Brampton, ON

Robin Elson
Fort McMurray, AB

Cara Figliomeni
Schrieber, ON

Natalie Goodlet
Toronto, ON

Wade Houle
Dauphin, MB

Johna Hupfield
Parry Sound, ON

Kayleigh Jordan-MacGregor
Toronto, ON

Jen Karpiuk
Medicine Hat, AB

Danielle Larry
Miramichi, NB

Stephanie Maki
Capilano, BC

Sarah Mazzei
North Vancouver, BC

Jon Patry
Calgary, AB

Tamara Rondeau
Winnipeg, MB

Danielle Root
Mi'kma'ki, NS

Kirsten Ryan
Kincardine, ON

Krista Sherman
Regina, SK

Christina Silzer
Yellowknife, NT

Joy Skanes
St. John's, NL

Christina Sylliboy
Whycocomagh, NS

Harriet Visitor
Thunder Bay, ON

Lindsay Webb
Cocagne, NB

Legacy Schools Partners

We are so grateful for the support from our partners who help make the Legacy Schools program possible.

Artist Ambassador Program

The Artist Ambassador program connects Indigenous and non-Indigenous creators, Knowledge Keepers, and experts with DWF's audiences through a variety of engagements and activations. This program is one of the many ways we inspire others to answer Gord's call to "Do Something" to move reconciliation forward.

Artist Ambassadors share their teachings in the form of artwork, readings, workshops, and performances through Legacy Schools and Legacy Spaces engagements, DWF LIVE, and community events.

In the 2023 - 2024 school year, DWF hosted 25 virtual and 5 in-person sessions with Artist Ambassadors and the Wenjack sisters visiting schools in rural, remote, and urban areas. Each DWF LIVE session runs between 30-60 minutes and is open to all ages and viewers.

Learn more about the Artist Ambassador program.

Youth Ambassador Program

The summer of 2023 marked the third year of DWF's Youth Ambassador program in partnership with RBC Future Launch. This program offers youth participants the opportunity to gain practical work experience, leadership experience, and network while learning about DWF and Canada's true history with residential schools.

Throughout the 4-week leadership training program, 105 Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth throughout Canada engaged in online, part-time work that supports them to become champions of reconciliation in their schools and communities.

PROUD SPONSORS: RBC Foundation THE HOME DEPOT

Learn more about the Youth Ambassador program.

Youth Advisory Committee

Following the Youth Ambassador program, youth are given an opportunity to use their voice and play a direct role in DWF programming and resources through the Youth Ambassador Committee. In 2023, 41 youth from various program cohorts volunteered their time to join the committee and continue building their skillset.

Oshki Wupoowane | The Blanket Fund

Oshki Wupoowane | The Blanket Fund launched on September 30, 2022, with an initial $1 million investment from Hudson's Bay Foundation and a commitment to direct 100% of net proceeds from the sale of all HBC Point Blankets to The Blanket Fund moving forward.

Together, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund & Hudson's Bay Foundation were pleased to announce the first Reconciliation Action Grant & Capacity Building Grant recipients. The Capacity Building Grant recipients were selected through an innovative participatory granting process.

In the past year, The Blanket Fund has made significant strides in fostering understanding and collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Number of Organizations Supported: 47 organizations benefited directly from granting initiatives, ranging from grassroots community groups to established non-profits. This includes 37 Reconciliation Action Grant recipients, 3 Capacity Building Grant recipients, and 7 additional organizations who took part in the participatory granting process.

Total Dollars Disbursed: $742,000 in grants disbursed by March 2023, empowering organizations to implement impactful projects and programs.

Beyond the financial support provided, The Blanket Fund serves as a catalyst for cultural exchange, providing opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to come together to advance reconciliation.

In bringing together diverse stakeholders and fostering partnerships, we amplify the impact of each grant, creating a ripple effect.

Learn more about Oshki Wupoowane | The Blanket Fund.

215+ Pledge

After the recovery of the remains of 215 children at the former Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia in 2021, there was an outpouring of grief that left many people wondering what to do next. In response, DWF created the 215+ Pledge — a growing coalition for reconciliation and action. With the goal of ensuring no missing child who died at a residential school is ever forgotten, the 215+ Pledge aims to honour the experiences of all affected by residential schools.

15,470 people have taken the 215+ Pledge and committed themselves to reconciliation. No matter where you are on the path to reconciliation, there is always an opportunity to further your commitment through education, awareness, action, and connection.

Take the 215+ Pledge.

No matter where you are on the path to reconciliation, there is always an opportunity to further your commitment through education, awareness, action, and connection.

Rogers Communications' Legacy Space, Moncton, NB

Legacy Spaces

Legacy Spaces are safe, welcoming places where conversations and education about Indigenous history — and our collective journey towards reconciliation — are encouraged and supported.

They also serve as symbols and reminders of the important work each of us needs to undertake, particularly employers, in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

Through an annual investment, this program is an opportunity for organizations large and small to participate in their own reconciliACTIONs.

Visit a Legacy Space Today!

Legacy Spaces Program Highlights:

70 Legacy Spaces Partners

63 open Legacy Spaces with more than 100 set to open

Across **39** cities, **8** provinces & **1** territory

The following Legacy Spaces are open to the public during regular hours:

Abbotsford Arts Council
Abbotsford, BC

Burlington Performing Arts Centre
Burlington, ON

FirstOntario Arts Centre Milton
Milton, ON

FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre
St. Catharines, ON

No. 9 Gardens
Rideau Lakes, ON

Peterborough Public Library
Peterborough, ON

Scotiabank
392 Bay Street
Toronto, ON

Scotiabank
5102 Franklin Avenue
Yellowknife, NT

St. Lawrence College
Kingston, ON

Steam Whistle Brewing
Toronto, ON

The Barrington Steakhouse & Oyster Bar
Halifax, NS

The Rose
Brampton, ON

Walmer Road Baptist Church
Toronto, ON

Learn more about the Legacy Spaces program.

Legacy Spaces Partners

Migizi
(mih-gih-zee) Eagle

accenture · CIBC · FUSE CREATE · Gibson Energy · GWL Realty Advisors · The Home Depot · Hudson's Bay Foundation · hydro one · KPMG · MacKenzie Investments · Ontario Teachers' · Dundas Yonge Square

Mooz
(moaz) Moose

Bimbo Canada · HSBC Bank · Manulife · NBCUniversal · Nova Scotia Power An Emera Company · RBC · tas with Walmer · Universal Music Canada

Amik
(ah-mik) Beaver

Abbotsford Arts Council · Active International · The Barrington Steakhouse & Oyster Bar · BMO · Bruce County · bullfrogpower · The Burlington Performing Arts Centre · Canada · CIFAR · Clearwater Cares · Corby · Dalhousie University · Dalton Associates · Danone · Deloitte. · Equifax · Express Scripts · Fengate Asset Management · Festival Hall · FirstOntario Arts Centre Milton · FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre · gm · Glenn Davis Group · Global University Systems Canada · GroupHealth · Halifax · IG Wealth Management · Live Nation Canada · Loyalist College · MSIKU · Nelson · 9 · Northcrest · nwmo · Oatley Vigmond · Peterborough Public Library · pwc · Rogers · RVH Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre · Scotiabank · St. Lawrence College · Steam Whistle · Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre · Sysco At the heart of food and service · teknion · The County Museums · Brampton On Stage · theturnlab · Union · Wilcox Door Service Inc.

Our Impact

Legacy Schools:

8,312 educators

6,525 schools and clubs

8,311 total booster & toolkits sent out for the 23/24 school year

Across all provinces and territories

Legacy Spaces:

70 Legacy Spaces partners

63 open Legacy Spaces with a total of 100 set to open

Across **39** cities, **8** provinces & **1** territory

Newsletters:

32,000+ newsletter subscribers

15,000+ subscribed to the 215+ Pledge

7,000+ Legacy Schools newsletter subscribers

Our Strategic Objectives

Our work is guided by three strategic objectives, in addition to maintaining smooth operational processes: growing sustainable revenue, amplifying our voice, and knowing and telling our story through data. We use data to tell the story and impact of our work, to guide program design and decision-making, and to illustrate how the work of DWF and our stakeholders is making an impact through reconciliACTIONs.

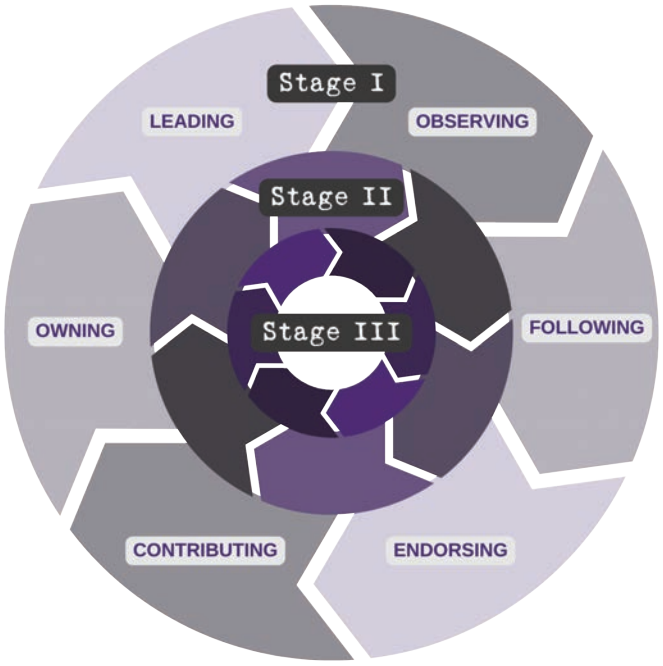
We measure our progress toward our mission through six key performance indicators (KPIs) and clear goals.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	GOAL	STATUS
Growing Sustainable Revenue	Grow revenue to support DWF programs by 10%	ACHIEVED
Amplifying our Voice	Position DWF as a thought leader by increasing engagement by 10%	ACHIEVED
Amplifying our Voice	Increase reach of Legacy Schools program by 15%	ACHIEVED
Knowing and Telling our Story through Data	Increase participants in ReconciliACTIONs by 10%	ACHIEVED
Knowing and Telling our Story through Data	Increase number of ReconciliACTION initiatives by 10%	ACHIEVED
Operations	Disburse a minimum of $675,000 through Oshki Wupoowane | The Blanket Fund	ACHIEVED

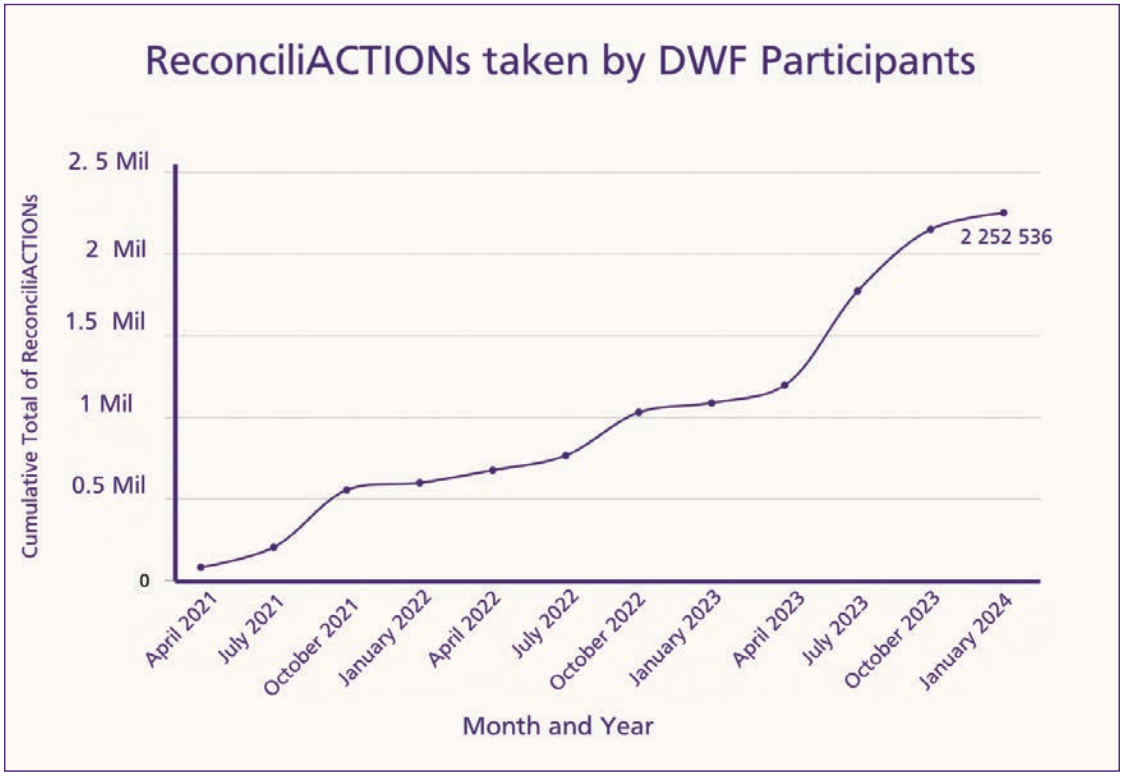
Measuring our Impact

DWF programs are evaluated by a third-party using surveys and interviews, data such as our KPIs and metrics, and through stories and reconciliACTIONs. Each person who takes reconciliACTION contributes to the collective journey toward reconciliation. Each reconciliACTION has an immediate impact on the person or people involved, and their community. Through this model, we begin to see how a person, community, or organization moves through the Reconciliation Spectrum.

The graph below illustrates the growth of reconciliACTIONs year over year. Since 2021, reconciliACTIONs are growing.



Submit your ReconciliACTIONs.

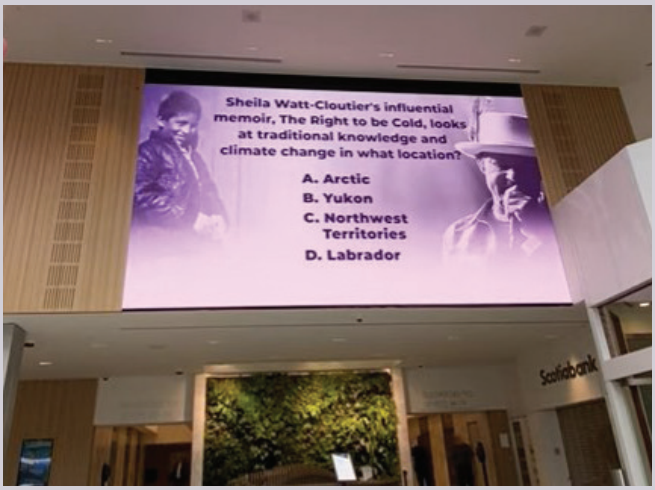


Each person who takes reconciliACTION contributes to the collective journey toward reconciliation. Each reconciliACTION has an immediate impact on the person or people involved, and their community.

ReconciliACTIONs Examples

The La Ronge Ice Wolves hockey team honoured the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with commemorative orange warm-up jerseys. The Ice Wolves logo was translated to Cree for these special jerseys and included the DWF purple hat. The team also joined local Legacy School, Churchill Community High School, in a Walk for Wenjack on September 28.

Bloorview School is a small school located inside Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto. All students are clients at the hospital and come from all over Ontario. This year, their school joined the Legacy Schools program and student leaders have been introduced to the story of Chanie Wenjack and learned about Gord Downie's call to action. They came up with a list of reconciliACTIONs and displayed those 16 Actions on a wall in the hospital's foyer with the Every Child Matters Flag, the story of Chanie, a representation of the railway, and the 7 matches. The students have been busy raising awareness by encouraging staff and visitors at the school and the hospital to engage in acts of reconciliation and offered everyone a small orange shirt to sign and display on the wall to show their commitment.



GWL Realty Advisors (GWLRA) found a unique way to engage their team and surrounding communities by utilizing the screens at their properties throughout Canada. "As a leading real estate organization, we are approaching the Legacy Spaces program in a slightly different way. The office buildings that we manage are busy hubs to thousands of businesses and visitors. We believe that the lobbies of these buildings offer a tremendous opportunity to share important messages with the community," shared Glenn Way, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. If you have screens in your workplace, we encourage you to visit our YouTube channel and subscribe to our newsletter to learn about upcoming virtual events. We can also support you in creating personalized content.

Regina Mundi Catholic College held a school wide assembly where student leaders shared Chanie's story, the importance of Walk for Wenjack, and what it represents. After the assembly students and staff joined together for their own Walk for Wenjack.

Many partners have created lending libraries inside their Legacy Spaces to ensure that educational resources are accessible to all staff. Some partners, like Hydro One, have purchased additional literature for their libraries, including children's books that employees are encouraged to borrow and share with their families at home. A few organizations have also created an Indigenous book club in their office!

After launching two Legacy Spaces inside their Toronto office, Hudson's Bay Foundation called on all employees to join them in a unique Walk for Wenjack initiative that spans their flagship cities throughout Canada. So far, their staff have created seven customized maps with educational checkpoints along each of the routes. During the walk, employees from retail stores, regional offices, and logistics centres set out with their maps and pause at different locations that have a connection to Indigenous history and culture in the area. These are moments of reflection that encourage us to get curious about the land where we live and work.

Grace 2, a registered third-party fundraiser and The Tragically Hip cover band raised $20,000 for DWF in 2023. They hosted multiple fundraising concerts throughout Ontario with merchandise sales, raffles, and more. A big thank you to all the folks who came to sing, dance, and remember the music of The Tragically Hip while honouring Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack.

Our Events

Ziigwan Indigenous Music and Arts Festival – March 2023

Ziigwan was a three-day Indigenous music and arts festival in Toronto. In partnership with the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA), and in collaboration with ELMNT FM Radio, Red Music Rising, Canada's Music Incubator, and Music Tourism, Ziigwan began with a Legacy Schools takeover at Yonge-Dundas Square, where students enjoyed a concert with DWF Artist Ambassadors, and visited learning stations around the square to engage in teachings on Indigenous music, food, language, and art. The rest of the weekend was dedicated to a music festival highlighting emerging and established Indigenous talent and included many artisan and food vendor stations, as well as two immersive art exhibitions and installations.

Ziigwan, (SEE-gwon) the Anishnaabemowin word for springtime, celebrates the healing and learning power of music and art, the rebirth of spring, and the collective awakening as we walk together on the path toward reconciliation.

Indigenous History Month Campaign Highlights:

18 Indigenous artists, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members featured from throughout Canada

548,032 social media reach

20,066 social media engagements

590 new followers across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok

2,080 votes in Trivia Tuesday on Instagram

106 mentions and replies on Twitter and stories

Indigenous History Month – June 2023

June 2023 marked Indigenous History Month, and DWF's theme was Indigenous Excellence: Past, Present, and Future. To celebrate the achievements of Indigenous people and communities, DWF highlighted stories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis change makers and leaders from coast to coast to coast.

National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 22, 2023

Highlights:

1,445 students and educators registered to attend in person

7,191 students and educators registered to participate virtually

21 learning station activations

In partnership with Scotiabank and MLSE, DWF invited thousands of students from the Legacy Schools program and MLSE's School Day Network for a half-day of education and celebration for National Indigenous Peoples Day.

On June 22, 2023, at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto, ON, students were invited to watch a series of musical performances from local Indigenous artists and other special guests, followed by a *Learning Market* where youth visited different learning stations and participated in meaningful discussions about Indigenous knowledge, language, and culture. Schools that were unable to attend in person watched the concert virtually through a live stream on DWF's YouTube channel.

Truth and Reconciliation Week

In 2023, DWF hosted the first-ever Truth and Reconciliation Week, a week dedicated to in-person, virtual, and hybrid events in honour of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Programming during this week included two virtual screenings with accompanying lesson plans, in-person events including a reconciliACTION-inspired market, and DWF's annual radio takeover, A DAY TO LISTEN.

The virtual screenings were distributed to DWF stakeholders (Legacy Schools educators, corporate and foundation partners, and newsletter subscribers), along with a discussion guide (available in English and French) to support conversations and reflections after the screenings. The screenings aired on DWF's YouTube and Facebook on September 25 and October 2, and continued to gain views into October, surpassing our views from 2022 by more than 145%.

ReconciliACTION Market and Secret Path Exhibition at St. Lawrence Market, Toronto (Sept. 24, 2023)

DWF kicked off Truth and Reconciliation Week with the ReconciliACTION Market at St. Lawrence Market, an economic reconciliation-based event with nine artisan vendors, two food vendors, and four musical and dance performances by DWF Artist Ambassadors. Over 1,000 people attended the market.

DWF also showcased the Secret Path Exhibition from September 17 – November 5 at St. Lawrence Market, attracting hundreds of visitors a day.

Learn with Your Head, Lead from the Heart & Speak Your Truth: Teaching Young Children about Residential Schools (Sept. 25, 2023)

Highlights:

1,252 registrations

1,472 views

On September 25, we heard from educators, early childhood caregivers, parents, youth, and Artist Ambassador Isaac Murdoch about how they tackle the hard truths in teaching young learners about residential schools. A lesson plan was provided, in French and English, with accompanying resources and guides for educators to bring to their classrooms and for parents to their children.

Intergenerational Resilience: Sharing Stories from Families of Residential School Survivors (Oct. 2, 2023)

On October 2, we heard the stories and reflections from three generations of the Cardinal Family, who shared with viewers the impact of the residential school system on their family and how love and reconnecting to culture has facilitated their healing and resilience. This feature was also accompanied by a guide with additional resources.

Highlights:

618 registrations

28,733 views

A Day to Listen 2023

In recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund proudly partnered once again with major media outlets and 478 radio stations throughout Canada on A DAY TO LISTEN 2023 - a day to amplify, elevate, listen to, and learn from Indigenous voices.

A DAY TO LISTEN 2023 centered on the theme, Mino Bimaadiziwin: Honouring Indigenous Identity, and featured stories about Indigenous identity through conversations about representation in sports and entertainment, the fusion of traditional and contemporary music, land protection and the impacts of climate change, and more.

This year, in addition to the live broadcast, we featured longer podcast episodes where listeners heard more of the conversation between the speakers and hosts, Aysanabee, Shoshona Kish, and William Prince.

Mino Bimaadiziwin means ‘the good life’ in Anishinabemowin. By celebrating the diversity of Indigenous identity, we are honouring the good way of life.

Guest Speakers & Artists

Banakonda Bell
Cindy Blackstock
Amy Cardinal Christianson
Jeremy Dutcher
Alan Greyeyes
Victoria LaBillois
Louise Lahache
Sandra Laronde
Buffy Sainte-Marie
Jean Teillet, IPC, OMN, MSC, (BFA, LLB, LLM)
Jordin Tootoo
Ilona Verley
Jared Visitor

Secret Path Week 2023 – October 17-22

This year marked the sixth annual Secret Path Week. The focus of Secret Path Week 2023 was to engage people through accessible, educational content and community events that would inspire grassroots reconciliACTIONs. From October 17-22, DWF hosted four virtual and hybrid DWF LIVE events, launched the *This is Chanie* campaign, participated in community Walk for Wenjack and Secret Path Week fundraising events, and hosted *An Evening with Waubgeshig Rice*.

Highlights:

4 virtual events
650 registered
8 speakers
24,843 views

During the four DWF LIVE events, Legacy Schools and the general DWF audience heard from leading Indigenous artists, singers, authors, filmmakers, legal experts, and more. Legacy Schools joined the online streams via video or through the online chat forums so students could engage directly with the speakers and general audience. A special in-person event with the Wenjack and Downie families took place at Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Walk for Wenjack

DWF called upon all people to #DoSomething by participating in or planning their own Walk for Wenjack. Launched as a self-guided peer-to-peer fundraising initiative, people in Canada had the opportunity to register as a team or as individuals to participate. Free resources were made available on DWF's website.

Highlights:

$89,183 raised
1,079 donations received
54,265+ km walked by 15,000+ participants

Financial Overview

Statement of Financial Position as of March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	**$ 606,885**	$ 988,531
Accounts receivable	**102,744**	67,349
Harmonized Sales Tax recoverable	**73,473**	104,077
	783,102	1,159,957
CAPITAL ASSETS	**20,073**	27,150
INVESTMENTS	**13,907,365**	11,888,947
	$ 14,710,540	$ 13,076,054
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**$ 112,979**	$ 302,825
Current portion of deferred contributions	**2,010,252**	1,501,903
	2,123,231	1,804,728
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS	**-**	9,000
	2,123,231	1,813,728
NET ASSETS		
UNRESTRICTED	**7,339,367**	6,014,384
INTERNALLY RESTRICTED	**5,247,942**	5,247,942
	12,587,309	11,262,326
	$ 14,710,540	$ 13,076,054

The complete audited financial statements are available upon request.
Charitable Registration Number: 7840 55915 RR0001

Our Partners

TRANSFORMATION

HUDSON'S BAY FOUNDATION

CHAMPION

RBC Foundation

CONVERSATION

Fidelity Investments

FUSE CREATE

The Joyce Family Foundation

Scotiabank

Union

wine rack — Your neighbourhood wine spot

FRIEND

Beer Store

CIBC

Canada

The Home Depot

hydro one

Loyalty Industry Canada

MLSE

Northbridge — a FAIRFAX company | Une société de FAIRFAX

nwmo — Nuclear Waste Management Organization / Société de gestion des déchets nucléaires

Optimize Wealth Management

The Schroeder Foundation

Sobey MacGregor Foundation

Sun Life

TD READY COMMITMENT

Valard

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Amicus Foundation	ATCO Ltd.	The Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited	Canadian Tire Corporation
Conor McCreery	The Core Mutual Foundation	Deloitte Canada	Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area
Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP	Flynn Group of Companies	Grace, 2	Howard Lee
Jays Care Foundation	Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	RFA Bank of Canada	RPK Ltd.
Shaw Communications	Toronto Rock Lacrosse	Vena Solutions Inc.	Weiner Art Inc.
	Wesco Distribution Canada		

GORD DOWNIE & CHANIE WENJACK FUND

@downiewenjack

PO Box 749
Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0
staff@downiewenjack.ca | downiewenjack.ca