



## June/July 2018 Newsletter Mino Bimaadiziwin Partnership

[Visit our website](#)

[Follow us on Facebook](#)



### Kudos to Mino Bimaadiziwin Students from Island Lake for winning best presentation awards at the H2O Conference

There are still many houses without piped sewer and water in Garden Hill and Wasagamack according to



community research work. Lakeisha Barkman is in the Access engineering program at University of Manitoba. She conducted a survey last year of 384 households as part of her community work with Garden Hill's Employment and Training department with her director



### 2018 Indigenous Food Sovereignty Summit By, For & With Indigenous People: Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership presentation

Indigenous Food Sovereignty Summit 2018 was a very inspiring educational conference held from June 19 to

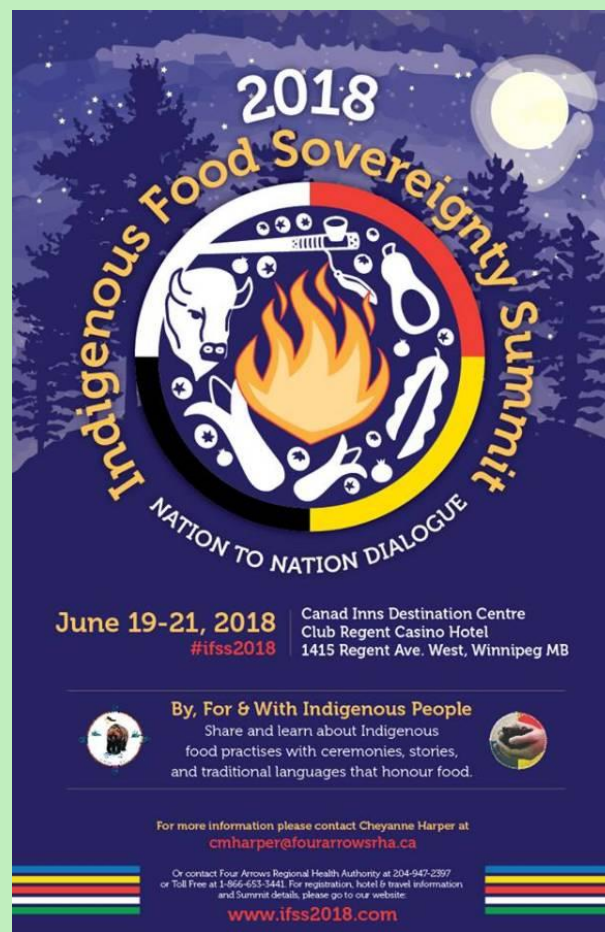
Elsie Monias. This year Lakeisha with Dr. Thompson analyzed this data as part of her Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership internship. Lakeisha showed how 21% of households of the Garden Hill households surveyed still used buckets for sewer and water. **See Garden Hill First Nation housing, water and sewer graphs in the presentation by Lakeisha and Dr. Thompson.** Clearly there are lots of housing issues that include poor quality housing, particularly those built in the last 5 to 10 years, as well as problems with cisterns. On top of these housing issues, 81 of the 384 households surveyed still have to use slop pails for their sewage and haul water in buckets. Lakeisha's survey also found extremely low employment of youth (ages 15 to 35 years of age) at 16% for the 384 households surveyed.

Jerome Harper is a first year student from Wasagamack who researched the water and sewer upgrade project that occurred from 2010-2014 in Island Lake. Jerome is in the recreation program at University of Manitoba and eventually wants to give back to his community organized recreational programming for youth. With few jobs and organized activities for youth and young adults in Island Lake, the need for recreational programs as well as community education programs is great.



Jerome Harper and Dr. Thompson's presentation showed how the sewage and water program got local people working and reduced the number of households using buckets for water and sewer. Across Island Lake's four communities there were 769 housing units that were successfully retrofitted with water and sewer. These retrofits were completed in

21st, 2018. The stories and importance of the spiritual and cultural aspects of food was shared. The Indigenous storytelling, elders and music made this a heartwarming and truly memorable event. As well, conference participants were able to sample "1491" dishes with each break featuring either Oji-Cree, Dene, Cree, Dakota or Anishinaabe peoples in Manitoba. This exquisite menu was called "1491" because its ingredients were only those used prior to colonization and included caribou, white-fish and wild rice.



The Mino Bimaadiziwin Partnership was very proud to be one of the sponsors for this summit, attend and as a group give a presentation. Many of the Mino Bimaadiziwin partners attended. Some of the partnership members that attended the conference are shown in the photo above (from left to right): Patricia Harnes from University of Manitoba, Ivan Harper from Garden Hill First Nation, Jerome Harper from Wasagamack, Byron Beardy conference organizer from Four Arrows Regional Health Authority, Shirley Thompson from University of Manitoba and Norah Whiteway from Wasagamack.



four years instead of the planned five years . However, the program did not result in people succeeding in apprenticeship programs due to lack of testing and training in the communities - which is an issue that a new Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership hopes to resolve with its future carpentry program. As well, as non-CMHC houses in Wasagamack were not eligible for sewer and water program upgrades many households still have to carry water and sewage, without having any piped delivery.

Another issue is that not enough sewage and water trucks are available in the community and so people frequently run out of water and have to ration water. According to Jerome: "There are currently two sewage trucks and two water trucks operating in Wasagamack. Each one can only service 10 houses per day as it takes roughly an hour for each, which would add up to 100 houses per week on average. There are certain areas of the reserve where service trucks are having trouble accessing due to poor conditions of some driveways." See Jerome's award [winning presentation by clicking this link.](#)

[Read more about housing linkages to water and sewer issues by clicking this link.](#) This article describes how at the household level people turn on the tap and have our craps. It is hard to imagine living without pipes and having to carry pails for sewage and water.

Clearly, these students are doing important research that can make a difference in the communities with the new housing programs of Mino Bimaadiziwin. So kudos to Lakeisha Barman and Jerome Harper for winning the two best presentation awards at this year's H2O Conference. Island Lake should be congratulated for taking all the prizes. These two first year students at University of Manitoba won the audience over because they were not just researching the problems but the solutions. This consideration of community solutions was a key reason why these two young students outcompeted the many doctoral and master students presenting. Both of their presentations effectively made the link between water and sewage problems and housing policies and programs in First Nations but also showed how they were working towards solutions. Check the UofM today article about Lakeisha and Jerome at [<http://First Nation and Students Collaborate on Cleaner Water>]First Nation and Students Collaborate on Cleaner Water.

See the film detailing the housing crisis at: [Wasagamack Housing Crisis.](#)  
SJT

In the conference sessions, Norah Whiteway and Ivan Harper lead a lively discussion about what a community-led food sovereignty post-secondary education program in their Island Lake communities should include. Key aspects of a community college program to build Indigenous Food Sovereignty in youth were identified as including: wilderness survival, low impact camping on the land, canoeing, water safety, hunting, trapping, ice fishing, fishing using nets, harvesting ceremonies, harvesting songs, medicines, gardening, cooking healthy foods, animal production and permaculture.

Ivan Harper explained how permaculture is part of the red road and self-determination. Ivan participated and co-taught with Dr. Thompson an International Design Certificate course at University of Manitoba in the spring of 2017. As well, four other Island Lake participants achieved their International Design Certificate along with many University of Manitoba students. Permaculture promotes the design of human systems based on natural ecosystems. Permaculture requires examining and following nature's patterns to create permanent culture. Permaculture is based on Indigenous culture to design and create sustainable living systems.



Many community members had ideas about what Indigenous food sovereignty education program should include. Ernie Harper and Elder Terry Little as well as 10 students from Island Lake contributed and participated in this discussion. Some partners from universities discussed how they what they could do to help create post-secondary education program including Brandon University's Serena Petrella and Patricia Harnes and University of Manitoba's Shirley Thompson, Marleny Bonnycastle and Jerome Harper

(also from Wasagamack). **SJT**



# **Mino Bimaadiziwin Partnership**

*Reconciliation in Action*