



**NOSM**  
UNIVERSITY

# INTEGRITY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – FALL 2022

FOUNDATION

ETHICS VALUE  
TRUTH FAIR  
VALUE MORALS  
MORALS TRUTH  
ACCOUNTABILITY  
HONESTY ETHICS





## Integrity

*"If you have integrity, nothing else matters.  
If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters."*

— Alan K. Simpson

Integrity is nothing if not in the doing.

It's the ongoing tally of what we do: support, advocate, work. But it's also a state of mind: what we weigh, consider and feel.

It's action after action that demonstrate our character and moral rectitude. That's what counts.

At NOSM University, integrity is the foundation of everything we do. Social accountability is in our DNA; equity, diversity and inclusion have been our aim. But, as you'll learn in Dr. Joseph LeBlanc's feature piece, we can and must go further, and must constantly learn and learn anew.

To instill and mobilize what we learn as we continue to teach, research and work is a matter of integrity.

In fact, it is the very least we owe to our friends and neighbours in Northern Ontario.

At the heart of it, integrity is what defines us as a University. And we'll keep learning and doing what we think is right; it's the only integrity move.

Miigwetch, thank you, marsi, merci,

### **Dr. Sarita Verma**

President, Vice Chancellor, Dean and CEO  
NOSM University



NOSM University respectfully acknowledges that the entirety of the School's wider campus of Northern Ontario is on the homelands of First Nations and Métis Peoples.

SEPTEMBER 30

# NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION



**SHOP | DONATE | WATCH**



## Honouring the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Each year, NOSM University honours the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and the orange shirt movement. This year's artwork reminds us of interconnectedness; everything we do now, has an impact seven generations from today. The heart represents learning the harsh Truth with an open heart and accepting the knowledge shared by Survivors. The three feathers represent the number of years we've been acknowledging this day at NOSM University and are a gentle reminder to keep one's mind, body, and Spirit in balance. The harsh Truth we acknowledge is that

thousands of children died while at residential school; this knowledge and learning is heavy-hearted work.

Please join us on September 30 for a special presentation being live-streamed on YouTube. All donations and 100% of the proceeds from the sales of these orange shirts will go to the Truth Award; a bursary for Indigenous medical students in Northern Ontario. Learn more at [nosm.ca/ndtr](https://nosm.ca/ndtr).

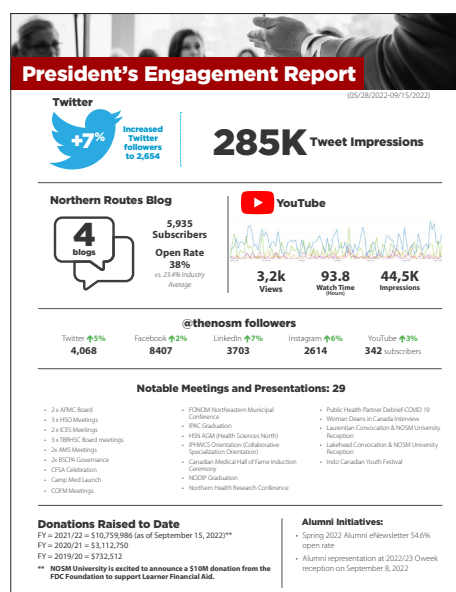
# Performance goals

## President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO\*

- Implementing the new Strategic Plan with evidence of progress through key performance indicators and data to support outcomes from the UME and PGME accreditations and IQAP process.
- Increasing advancement activity, building our brand and reputation and new revenue generating projects such as medical school expansion in order to ensure financial sustainability.
- Making strides with NOSM University stakeholders in developing social accountability, equity and inclusion especially in creating education, research and clinical networks across Northern Ontario communities including the Academic Health Science Centres (AHSCs).
- Leading innovation in new models of education and curricula, in the context of the continuum of education from recruitment/admissions through UME and PGME into CEPD and Faculty Development for clinical faculty including an emphasis on pathways in rural generalism, Indigenous practitioners and Francophone health.
- Giving evidence of the development and implementation research strategies that promote our social accountability mandate with an emphasis on community engaged research across Northern Ontario.

\* Approved by the Board of Governors September 30, 2020

For an update on the Dr. Sarita Verma's activities, please open this *President's Engagement Report*.







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## Editorial Team

Dr. Sarita Verma, **President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO**  
Joanne Musico, **Director, Communications and External Relations**  
Danielle Barbeau-Rodrigue, **Director, Francophone Affairs**  
Kimberley Larkin, **Manager, Communications**  
Jason Lind, **Digital Media Specialist**  
Tara Hawkes, **Graphic Designer**  
Alexandra Poling, **Marketing Communications Officer**  
Jessica Pope, **Public Affairs Specialist**





# We're like nothing else in the world

*Dr. Joseph LeBlanc on social justice in medical education, what NOSM University is getting right on that score—and what he says has to happen next.*

The Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion at NOSM University is frank, unfazed and unequivocal: it's long past time to draw the line on racism in health care—and it starts with medical education and research.

"We have to create an environment where acts of racism are consistently and appropriately confronted," says Dr. Joseph LeBlanc, "and future health professionals are taught to address systemic challenges caused by racism and colonialism."

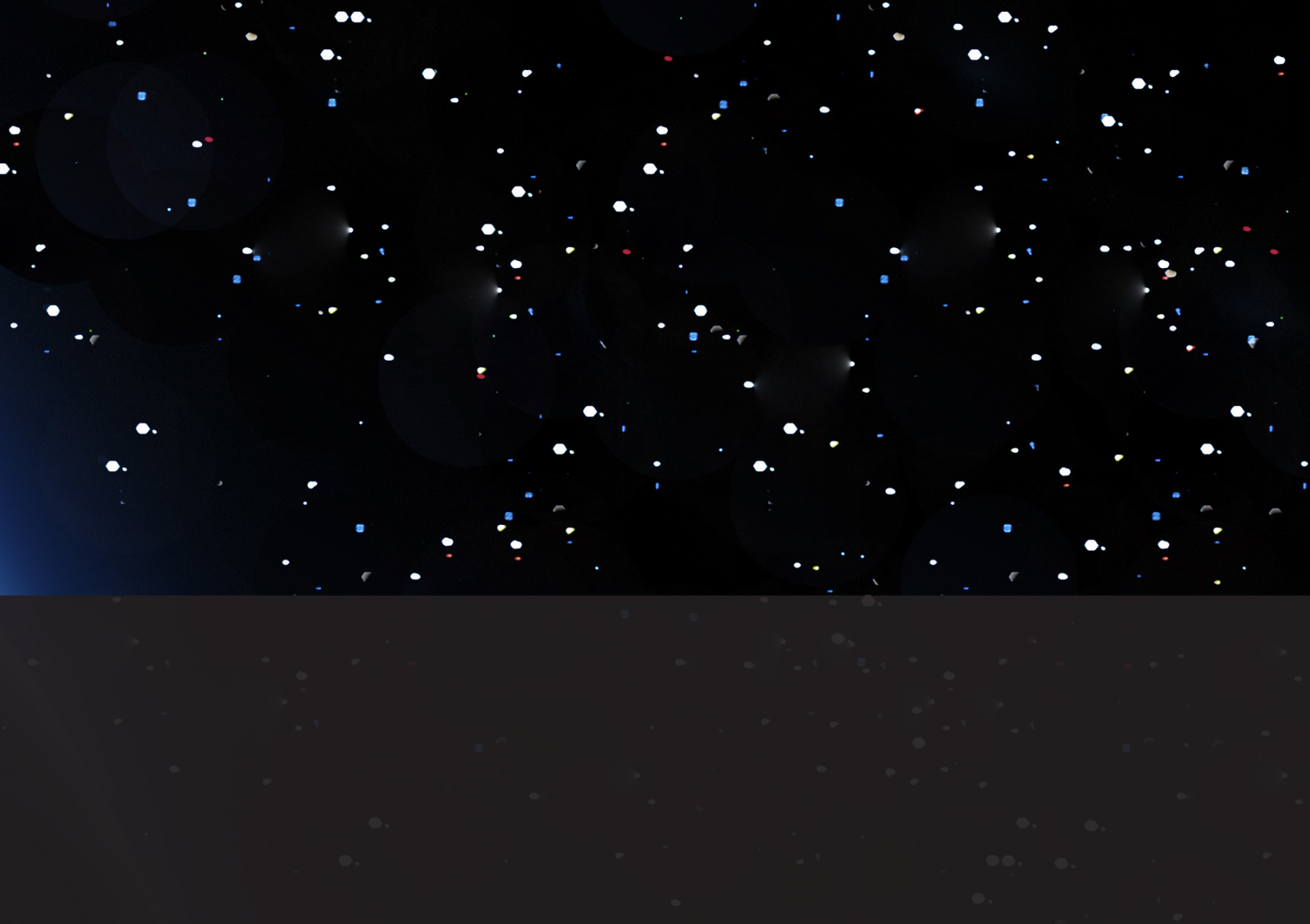
As of 2020, Dr. LeBlanc is the first person to be appointed to his inaugural portfolio, which was created to help promote equity, increase diversity, and strengthen the culture of inclusion among faculty, staff, learners and alumni.

His mandate covers everything from anti-racist policy-making to addressing Francophone language rights in health-care education and accessibility, to amplifying issues around sexism, ableism and LGBTQQ2S+ rights.

"We ultimately created this portfolio to address some very serious and pervasive health-care injustices in the North and beyond," says Dr. Sarita Verma, President, Vice Chancellor, Dean and CEO of NOSM University.

"We know that racialized and other marginalized people have a harder time accessing safe and competent health care," she continues. "We know that people of colour, especially women, are more likely to live in poverty and face more stigma as a result. This is **real life**. NOSM University works





hard to make sure that every doctor we graduate is acutely aware of the health inequities currently baked into the system, and is a compassionate care provider who will lead with—and model—an attitude of social justice. That is what defines us as a university.”

Dr. LeBlanc applauds the groundbreaking efforts made by NOSM University to date. “NOSM University has made space for diverse academic leadership and participation. For example, he says, nowhere else has a **Chair in the History of Indigenous Health and Traditional Medicine.**”

“We’ve also established the Academic Indigenous Health Education Committee (AIHEC),” Dr. LeBlanc continues. “It was established as part of the University’s Academic Council [now the University

Senate], which is so crucial; it’s a seat and a voice at the head table when it comes to what and how learners are taught with respect to Indigenous health education.”

“We also now offer an Indigenous Peoples’ Health and Wellness Collaborative Specialization, and it’s the first of its kind in Canada. The first eight medical students enrolled have just finished their first year, which is incredible.”

“We’re like nothing else in the world,” he says. “But, if we were completely equitable,” Dr. LeBlanc posits, “we wouldn’t need an equity strategy.”

## Equity Strategy

Dr. LeBlanc and his colleagues are defining that new strategy, and he says that both philosophically and in concrete terms, the plan will mark a significant systemic shift.

“The current winds are actually blowing away from ‘Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)’ into anti-racism,” he explains. “I want us to move into decolonization and anti-racism.”

### Terms

**Active Offer:** “the overt and active offer of health services in French... the regular and permanent offer of services to the Francophone population”<sup>1</sup> as required by Ontario’s French Language Services Act.

**Anti-racism:** “The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.”<sup>2</sup>

**Colonialism:** “Colonialism in Canada may be best understood as Indigenous peoples’ forced disconnection from land, culture and community by another group.”<sup>3</sup> Also: “The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another [place], occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.”<sup>4</sup>

**Cultural Safety:** “An outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the health care system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving health care.”<sup>5</sup>

**Decolonisation:** “Once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting [and active rejection] of colonial power.”<sup>6</sup>

**Equity:** “‘Equity’ is the fair and respectful treatment of all people and involves the creation of opportunities and reduction of disparities in opportunities and outcomes for diverse communities. It also acknowledges that these disparities are rooted in historical and contemporary injustices and disadvantages.”<sup>7</sup>

1 The active offer of French Language Health Services. (n.d.) Réseau des services de santé en français de l’Est de l’Ontario. Retrieved from: Réseau RSSFE - Active Offer.

2 Anti-racism. NAC International Perspectives: Women and Global Solidarity. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Anti-racism - CSHA

3 Colonialism and its Impacts. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Colonialism and its Impacts

4 Chapter 1 Terminology. University of Saskatchewan. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Chapter 1 - Teaching and Learning | University of Saskatchewan

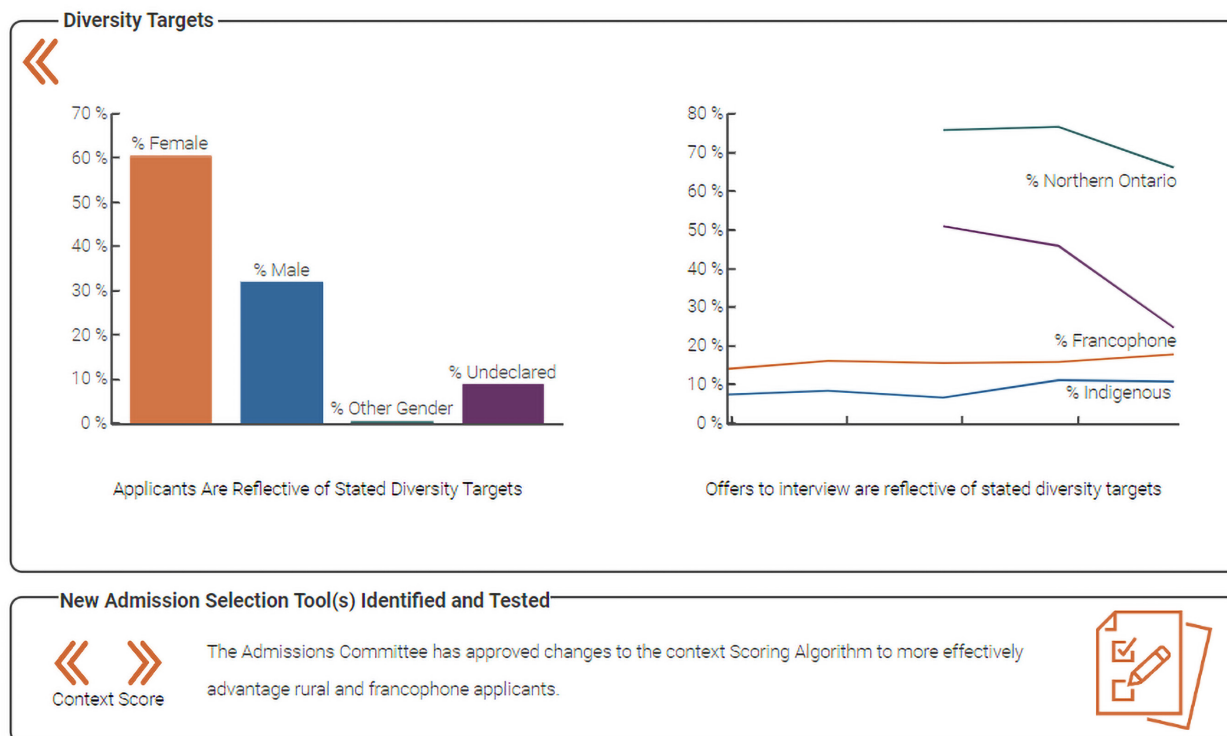
5 Cultural Safety and Humility. First Nations Health Authority. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Cultural Safety and Humility

6 A Brief Definition of Decolonization and Indigenization. Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (n.d.) Retrieved from: A Brief Definition of Decolonization and Indigenization

7 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. University of Toronto. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion | VPRI



## Admission standards and processes are reflective of Northern Ontario



On the continuum of becoming truly anti-racist, Dr. LeBlanc says an EDI approach is a step in the right direction, but doesn't often "make waves" or actually require the necessary work to become fully inclusive.

He says that in practice, becoming an overtly, intentionally anti-racist institution will be unsettling to some people: it's a direct and open rebuke of a white-centered, colonialist worldview and its corollary—endemic, institutionalized white privilege.

For example, in a fully transformed educational institution, Dr. LeBlanc believes that admissions wouldn't focus on diversity numbers so much as see diversity as an "institutionalized asset" that helps to "restore a sense of community and mutual caring."<sup>8</sup>

"That's very different from, 'Let's find admission targets that we're comfortable with.'"

Dr. LeBlanc acknowledges that NOSM University's diverse admissions goals are important to **advancing social accountability** as part of its current strategic plan. At the same time, he wants to see an updated overhaul to the admissions process through an anti-racist, anti-colonial, radically inclusive lens.

"There is an open door for Indigenous students to NOSM University," he says. "Look at the percentages: we're at 17 per cent again in this class, and our goal is to have 20 per cent of each MD class be Indigenous. But it's about more than numbers. We need to have a good look at ourselves—and the curriculum—and do the hard work of changing."

8 Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist, Multicultural Institution. (n.d.) Retrieved from: Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist, Multicultural Institution



### **The 'Front Door'**

Dr. LeBlanc likens the admissions process to NOSM University's "front door," and says that the admissions team must be among those empowered to "red flag" applicants who don't meet new criteria, or fail to demonstrate an anti-racist attitude and understanding of the University's social justice mandate.

"With an anti-racist shift," he says, "now we look at the rest of the class. Who are they? Are they racist? And is there any evidence that we can remediate racism? There isn't."

"So what does a decolonial, anti-racist school, do?" he continues. "It is required to look at 100 per cent of the class and consider what is their aptitude towards anti-racism and decolonization."

"Often I think admissions thinks about, 'Who's going to complete the course? Who's going to do well in the courses?'"

"No," says Dr. LeBlanc. "The question should be, 'Who's gonna do harm in the world?'"

"This 'house'," he continues, "values Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) training and Active Offer to the point that we're not going to expect you to do it sometime while you're here."

"Next year, we are requiring all incoming medical students to submit one of three ICS certificates and the Active Offer at the same time as they submit their vaccinations and First Aid certificate."

"This is a big one," he says. "If you don't want to take three hours to learn about French language service rights as a health provider in Northern Ontario... that's a major problem."

Dr. LeBlanc says future NOSM University applicants can also expect a social media scan and a mandatory Professionalism Agreement upon entry.

"That is explicitly related to racism and explicitly related to sexism and ableism and other things," he says. "So if, in the future, you do something like make a post in a Facebook group that cuts down Muslim students, for example, you can expect consequences for those actions."



## **'Actionism'**

An important philosophical piece of the vision laid out by Dr. LeBlanc and his colleagues is instilling an attitude of “actionism” into future physicians.

NOSM University-trained doctors are taught about the importance of physician advocacy, and that is an important element of doing what's right in the service of social justice, says Dr. LeBlanc.

“But whereas activist advocacy—perhaps standing up in front of a microphone and using the weight of your white coat to ask the public and government for support for a cause or health issue—is a professional competency, the actionist advocate position instead asks doctors to assume direct ownership over what they can change,” he says.

For example, he continues, “Actionism is, you're a doctor in a remote community, and you get to know the people running the community garden. You say to them, ‘Hey, I'm flying back in an empty plane—can I bring anything back that would help you or the garden?’”

“Taking action—being an actionist advocate—in this example will help people in the community to have a better garden, perhaps, and that will help them to be healthier overall. Isn't that the role of a doctor? To help people be healthy? In the current construct of what defines a physician, doing something like this would never be captured in the metrics. But that's what an actionist does.”

## **Moving Forward**

Dr. LeBlanc presented the Equity Strategy to the Board in December 2021. Aside from the recommendations on recruitment and admissions, Dr. LeBlanc and his colleagues advise that there are three other areas upon which the University must be “laser-focused” with an anti-racist bent: curricular development, advocacy and public education, and research.

Dr. LeBlanc notes that the Board accepted the recommendations in full, and that much of the work outlined in the plan is already underway.

As for NOSM University's official buy-in, it's “all systems go.”

In its motion to approve, the Board writes, “The University must ensure equity initiatives are treated as a high priority in future priority-based budgeting actions,” and “NOSM University must engage in a continual process of self-reflection, and ensure that this commitment is enshrined.”

“NOSM University will do the work to become a fully transformed institution,” says Dr. Verma. “It's already in our DNA. There is no harm in critically examining the systems that define an institution; to the contrary, there can be great harm in not doing so.”

“I see these recommendations as directives,” she adds. “It is no longer about ‘aspiring’ to be fully inclusive. It's about getting there.”



## Collaborative Specializations

### What they are, and why they matter so much

Racism in medicine, physician shortages, and lack of access to French-language health care is fueling a new group of medical students—future doctors who will be committed to improving health outcomes in Northern Ontario.

In 2021, NOSM University introduced new Collaborative Specializations in Indigenous health and rural generalism and launched a pilot project for Francophone health—all specializations taken concurrently with the MD program. Guided by NOSM University faculty across the region, these programs are ideal for medical students who have an interest in, and commitment to, Indigenous, Francophone and rural generalist care.

Pictured above (left to right) are Randy Msheekohn Trudeau, Jiiskewenini, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory; Dr. Marion Maar, Professor, NOSM University; and, Dr. Lorrilee McGregor, Assistant Professor of Indigenous Health, NOSM University.

These specializations provide unique opportunities to complement what future physicians are learning in the NOSM University curriculum, and students must successfully complete both programs to graduate with an MD and specialization.

#### **Indigenous Peoples' Health and Wellness Collaborative Specialization**

There are many vibrant Indigenous cultures, people and communities in Northern Ontario, and many of them have been actively teaching and hosting NOSM students. However, racism and health disparities still permeate much of the health-care system in Canada.



In Northern Ontario, and across the country, Indigenous peoples experience worse health outcomes than non-Indigenous peoples. This is made worse by lower socio-economic status, food insecurity, lack of access to safe drinking water, intergenerational effects of **The Residential School System, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, The Sixties Scoop** and other colonial effects. Many Indigenous peoples also lack access to culturally safe health services, especially in remote or fly-in Northern communities.

*Out of Sight*, a report released after an inquest into the death of 45-year-old Brian Sinclair, details systemic failures at many levels. Sinclair, a First Nations man, was ignored for 34 hours in the emergency department of a hospital in Winnipeg.

The inquest found that medical staff made incorrect assumptions about his personal circumstances—including that he was intoxicated or homeless and looking for a place to sleep—and they ignored his health emergency based on stereotypes. Sinclair died waiting in his wheelchair as a direct result.

His autopsy showed that he had a treatable bladder infection when he arrived at the hospital, but succumbed to sepsis without the treatment he needed.

In the 14 years since Sinclair's death, many **similar stories of racism in medicine** have emerged across the country.

To improve care for Indigenous patients, in September 2021, NOSM University welcomed eight first-year medical students to a new academic program that welcomes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who seek additional training on how to provide

culturally safe care to Indigenous patients. More students will start each autumn. This specialization—the first of its kind in Canada—is designed to address the health-care needs of Indigenous peoples using community-engaged Indigenous teachings to enhance students' competency to provide safe, compassionate care.

Students complete all required courses for the MD program and write and pass all the same exams. In addition, students will participate in experiential and participatory learning activities in northern, rural and remote contexts focused on the following topics:

- Foundational teachings in Indigenous Knowledge and healing
- Mentorship with Indigenous physicians and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers
- Trauma-informed care
- Interprofessional collaboration for Indigenous health
- Advocacy and leadership



Hear more about why the program was created, and what drew four future NOSM University graduates to this program.

Knowledge keepers, faculty and students are already beginning to create a community of practice who are connected through their passion for Indigenous health and wellness. It is hoped that the ripple effects of this specialization will go beyond those who are directly involved in receiving this training and their future patients, by helping to improve systems and where graduates become leaders and advocates.

### **Rural Generalist Collaborative Specialization**

In communities across Northern Ontario, the impact of physician shortages is unmistakable. Many rural and remote communities have long struggled with finding and keeping doctors. The lack of these physicians has left Northern people with greater difficulty accessing primary care and other medical services.

Recognizing the ongoing need to effectively train a “fit for purpose” workforce to move rural health systems from fragile to flourishing, the **Rural Generalist Pathway** was recently launched at NOSM University. The Rural Generalist Collaborative Specialization was also launched as a portion of the pathway during MD training.

This specialization provides enriched learning experiences for MD students who have a desire to become a rural generalist family physician. Through mentorship, targeted skills development, priority placements in rural communities, and opportunities to explore the complex and changing nature of and influences on rural practice, future physicians will learn and be prepared for what it takes to be a rural generalist family physician— physicians who provide comprehensive primary-care as well as work in rural hospitals, ERs, and provide other enhanced services.

The specific requirements of rural generalists may differ depending on the unique context of rural communities. Graduates from the rural generalist collaborative specialization will have an understanding of their role in communities and the ability to be agile and adapt to changing community needs.

A broad scope of practice, excellent clinical skills, the humility to work with and to understand community needs and to seek to collaborate are the keys to becoming a rural generalist. At NOSM University, there is an emphasis on developing relationships and learning in community and clinical settings where graduates might someday choose to practise.

### **Francophone Curriculum Pilot**

French language service rights through much of Northern Ontario are enshrined in the province’s French Language Services Act. That’s in part because people who speak a minority language must be able to communicate as effectively as possible with health care practitioners. An inability to share and receive critical information about one’s health can have dangerous and even deadly outcomes.

Medical students who enroll in the Voie vers la médecine en français pilot (Francophone Curriculum Pilot) demonstrate a commitment to improving health outcomes for all Franco-Ontarians.

Curriculum renewal to embed socially accountable content, research into disease determinants, and advances in models of health-care delivery in Francophone, Indigenous, rural and remote areas.

To meet the evolving health-care needs of Northern Ontario, our curriculum will evolve. Curriculum renewal will take into consideration new technologies, social accountability, and remote learning in the context of improving health-care delivery in Francophone, Indigenous, rural and remote areas. Our graduates will be proficient in advances of health-care delivery and the research into disease determinants to feel that they have the skills, knowledge and confidence to practice in areas of need in Northern Ontario.



Throughout the MD four-year program, students participate in enriched learning and experiences that emphasize the importance of offering and delivering health services in French.

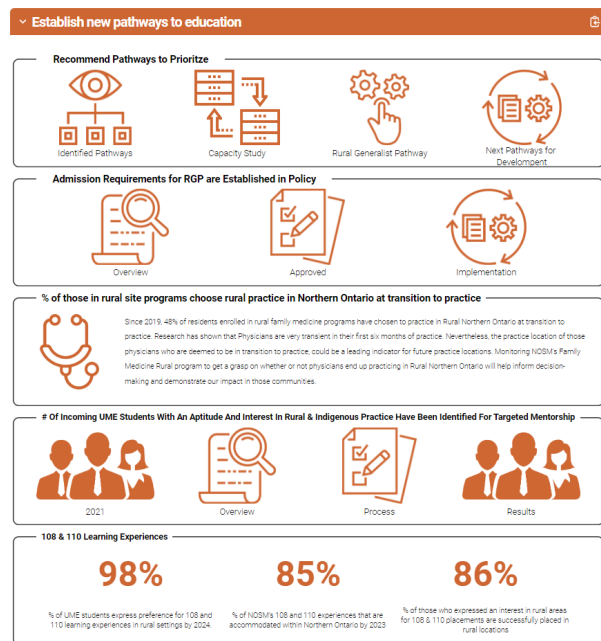
This pilot program, launched in September 2022, integrates dedicated learning experiences throughout the four-year program that will contribute to preserving and solidifying Francophone students' cultural and linguistic identity, while they build their confidence in becoming highly competent Francophone physicians.

The Voie vers la médecine en français pilot will also identify Francophone faculty members who can provide guidance and on-going mentorship to NOSM University medical students across the region. In parallel, both physician faculty and students can build a strong advocacy and leadership network in support of a sustainable approach to patient-centered and culturally safe care for all Francophones.

Students participating in the pilot this year will practice interacting with and taking a patient's history in French, learn medical terminology, and engage in group learning sessions in French.

Future learning and experiences include:

- Structured mentoring opportunities with practising Francophone physicians;
- Priority access to clinical placements in Francophone settings;
- Increased focus on advocacy for Francophone patients and communities to identify unique challenges related to the delivery of French-language health services;



- Targeted development of leadership skills needed to understand and influence health systems; and,
- Increased opportunities for French-language experiences of interprofessional, multicultural and immersive learning, integrated into urban, rural and remote contexts.

The integration of the Voie vers la médecine en français pilot into NOSM University's MD curriculum is a transformative approach to educating French-speaking physicians; increasing French language health human resources will also lead to improved access to care for Francophone patients.

The curriculum is grounded in an ethical and collaborative space that respects Francophone culture, integrates evidence-based and practise-informed strategies that mitigate health-care gaps and ultimately produces physicians committed to supporting the provision of safe care for all Franco-Ontarians.



## NOSM University's response to the TRC Calls to Action

We remain steadfast in our commitment to address the **94 Calls to Action** of the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada**. We are making strides, and our work towards reconciliation continues.

Many measures have been put in place to increase the number of Indigenous medical students at the University, as well as educate non-Indigenous students about the culture and history of Indigenous peoples on these lands.

To reduce cultural and regional barriers to medical school, NOSM University's admissions reflect the demographics that the health-care system serves in Northern Ontario. Ten years ago, only two per cent of applicants were Indigenous. The number has now doubled to four per cent Indigenous applicants to NOSM University.

In 2021, **17 per cent** of NOSM University's incoming class of medical students were Indigenous compared to a previous average of seven per cent. This September, another 11

Indigenous students will begin their first-year studies at NOSM University. Since 2009, 65 MDs who self-identify as Indigenous have graduated.

To increase the applicant pool, the University's Indigenous Affairs Unit has partnered with First Nation communities across Northern Ontario to host **health sciences camps** for Indigenous youth. There are also other partnerships with communities and organizations underway.

New pathways to medical education are also being implemented at NOSM University to encourage further growth, including a new Indigenous Peoples' Health and Wellness Collaborative Specialization. Incoming medical students may choose to apply to this optional four-year program that runs concurrently with the MD program and is co-designed by Indigenous faculty, physicians, and Knowledge Keepers.

Education at NOSM University, including the MD program and dietetic internship, requires Indigenous cultural safety training. Teachings

provide many opportunities for students to learn about Indigenous history and culture and the tools to become more culturally competent physicians and dietitians.

Each year, NOSM University medical students complete a first-year placement in what is called Integrated Community Experience. This is a mandatory four-week placement in a First Nation community, a Métis organization, or an Indigenous health organization in Northern Ontario.

Prior to living and learning in the First Nations community, students attend compulsory sessions to help facilitate increased understanding of the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in the region. Students experience the realities of life in the rural and remote Indigenous community, and the focus of this placement is cultural immersion, not clinical experience. These preparatory sessions are led by Indigenous faculty and members of the Indigenous Affairs Unit.

Once MD students graduate and transition to residency, they may choose to apply to NOSM

University's **Family Medicine Remote First Nations Stream**. Community immersion in Eabametoong First Nation allows residents to become embedded in Indigenous culture and traditional practices and experience the rewards and challenges of delivering health care in remote First Nations communities. Other diverse opportunities exist to encounter, immerse in and deliver health care to First Nation peoples within Northern Indigenous communities in the Matawa Tribal Council Area.

In addition to core Family Medicine training, resident doctors learn about traditional healing and medicine therapies from Elders and Knowledge Keepers and undertake academic curriculum designed around Indigenous health competencies.

Medical students are learning about systemic racism in Canadian health care, including an overview of the ***In Plain Sight*** report, which describes the calls to action for improved cultural safety in health care and efforts to increase Indigenous leadership in health services, regulation, and education.


Lead advocacy and community engagement that is grounded in the community under a true co-creation model.

Hire an Indigenous Learner Support & Recruitment Coordinator

« »

On March 15, 2021, the Indigenous Affairs Unit hired a Learner & Recruitment Coordinator.

New Hire




Establish the Academic Indigenous Health Education Committee

« »

The Academic Indigenous Health Education Committee (AIHEC) was formed and had their first meeting October 13 2020. The committee met monthly for the first six months and are now meeting quarterly or as needed.

Overview




Relationship Accord with Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN)

« »

On March 24, 2021, a Relationship Accord was signed between NAN and NOSM.

Relationship



Address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the Expert Panel Review

We respect the knowledge, time, and energy that created these documents and will implement the recommendations that apply to NOSM in the spirit of reconciliation and reparations.

NOSM **commits to taking responsibility** and looking for actionable ways to make a difference with communities across Northern Ontario. The University's 2021-2025 strategic plan challenges discrimination, engages in anti-racist language, and addresses inequity. To lead the university in this work, Dr. Joseph LeBlanc was appointed **NOSM University's inaugural Associate Dean, Equity and Inclusion** in 2020.

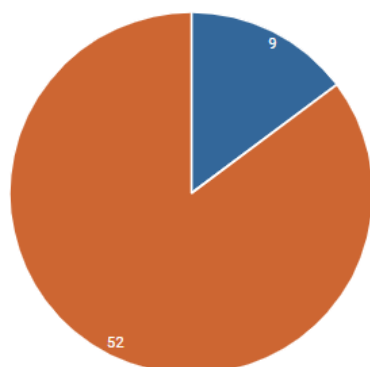
Also in 2020, **Dr. Darrel Maniwababi** was appointed the University's first NOSM-AMS Hannah Chair in the History of Indigenous Health and Indigenous Traditional Medicine. Dr. Maniwababi works to promote the discussion of the inherent, constitutional, Treaty and



✓ Establish defined outreach to Northern Ontario communities and schools at primary, secondary and postsecondary levels.

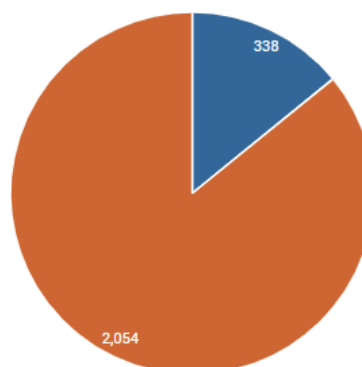


# Of Indigenous And Francophone Affairs Events That Target The Recruitment Of Students From Northern Ontario Universities



# of Events

■ Indigenous Affairs  
■ Francophone Affairs



# of Participants

#### Further Insight



With great success and interest Indigenous Affairs hosted over fifty unique virtual recruitment and engagement events. Sessions were completed in partnership with Science North and Lakehead University Achievement and ActiveU Programs, First Nation lead community organizations and local/regional schools. Programming included Home STEM kits, My Maskiki, My Medicine presentations and Science Days. 80% of the participants attending the Francophone Affairs events were from Northern Ontario.

international rights of all Indigenous Peoples and communities and the protection of traditional knowledge and medicines from appropriation. His research focus, as the Chair, is in the history of Indigenous Health and he contributes to NOSM University's role in leading scholarly activity in the history of Indigenous Health.

Thanks to a **\$1 million donation** from the Slaight Family Foundation, a first-of-its-kind entrance scholarship specifically for BIPOC women has been established. These scholarships will provide

\$25,000 each to 10 women entering NOSM University's MD program each year, over a period of four years.

An update from Dr. LeBlanc on NOSM University's Response to the TRC Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is available at [nosm.ca](https://nosm.ca).

## Food insecurity impacts health of Northerners

Rosette Moore knows that food insecurity in the North is a multifaceted problem with serious consequences.

Having lived in Canada for the past 12 years, Rosette grew up in Barbados where she also has citizenship. She has an Honours B.Sc. in Nutrition and Dietetics from Brescia University College and completed the Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program (NODIP) at NOSM University. As a Registered Dietitian, she is working at the Sault Area Hospital and two long-term care homes in Sault Ste. Marie.

Rosette and her fellow NODIP graduates have gained a firsthand perspective of how the social determinants of health impact nutrition through community placements across the region. .

"We know that food insecurity and malnutrition are a leading cause of complex chronic disease in the North," says Dr. Sarita Verma, NOSM University President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO. "We are working to ensure the NODIP curriculum includes culturally sensitive food teachings alongside the knowledge that not everyone has the means or ability to buy the best food."



Many Indigenous communities in Northern Canada are experiencing a food security crisis with serious implications for health and well-being. Food is simply more expensive in Northern Ontario. Remote Northern communities face the consequences of skyrocketing food transportation costs at sometimes triple the price.

As Registered Dietitians, Rosette and her colleagues are trained to understand that reality, and to translate the complex science of nutrition into terms everyone can understand to support healthy living as much as possible, and advocate for improved access to nutritious food.

"Access to Registered Dietitians—a primary source for nutrition information—is limited," Rosette says. "But we cannot expect individuals who are struggling financially to properly utilize nutrition education in the first place. The isolation of smaller, remote towns impacts food security. And, the global climate crisis is changing the migratory pattern and reproduction of many animals that Indigenous communities and other Northerners hunt. Food insecurity is ultimately costing people their health."



Rosette Moore (left) says meeting Dr. Sarita Verma at this summer's dietetic graduation was one of the highlights of her year. For Rosette, shaking the hand of NOSM University's President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO—also a woman of colour—gave her the encouragement she needed to believe that she too can break through any barriers in her way. "To compliment my graduation speech and shake my hand felt like an endorsement of sorts; a symbol that I too can flourish," says Rosette. "I now feel like I can make a difference in Northern Ontario."





## It takes a village

Wasaya Airways and partners support NOSM University students' second annual menstrual product drive

Ashley Perreault and Lucie Ménard, medical students at NOSM University, have wrapped-up their second annual menstrual product drive—this year for the fly-in community of Kingfisher Lake First Nation. In February 2022, they set a goal to raise \$10,000 to cover the costs of the menstrual products, cleaning supplies, and shipping. They reached their goal by May 2022, raising a total of \$10,003.21. Funds were raised through their **GoFundMe** campaign, as well as generous donations from RBC, Dollarama, and NOSM University's Indigenous Affairs Unit.

"Similar to last year, we relied heavily on social media to help raise awareness for the project," says Ashley. "It's always a bit disappointing to learn how many people are oblivious to the high costs and scarcity of menstrual products in Indigenous communities."

"This year," she continues, "we also took the opportunity to highlight the partnership made

between Shoppers Drug Mart and the Ontario Government to provide free menstrual products to provincially run school boards for the next three years. Unfortunately, this private donation did not extend to federally-run Indigenous school boards which further exacerbates the health inequities these communities face."

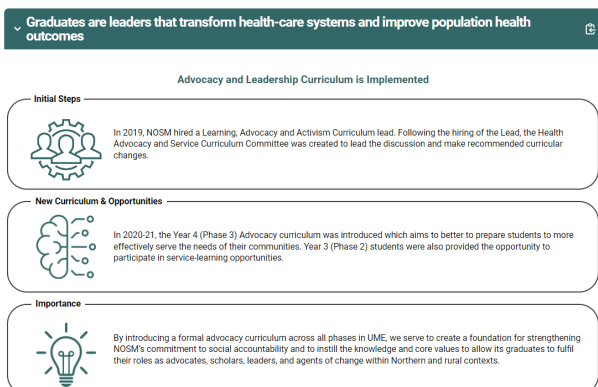
Support for the community was identified by Sam Senecal, Indigenous Community Coordinator, who is responsible for arranging all aspects of learner placements in Indigenous communities in their first year of medical school at NOSM University. The students consulted with Kingfisher Lake's Health Director to determine which menstrual products would be the most appropriate for the community. The community requested reusable cloth pads, period/incontinence underwear, and single-use tampons. Currently, costs of menstrual products in this community average \$10.50 for 16 tampons and \$15.00 for 32 tampons—triple the cost of products purchased in urban centers or online.



This year, the students partnered with five padmakers located across Canada: **Amie Pads**, **Cozy Reusables (Cozy Clams)**, **Lady Crimson Cloth Emporium**, **Soft Taco Reusables** and **While She Naps Creations** who generously donated their time to make reusable cloth pads. The funds raised were used to make 150 menstrual kits—enough for every menstruator in the community. All kits included: five reusable pads; a waterproof wet bag discounted from Colibri Canada; a container of Oxi-All; and instructions on how to wash the pads.

Again this year, **Wasaya Airways** has generously committed to covering all the shipping costs to deliver the products to the fly-in community. This allowed for additional purchases of: three Diva Cups, 24 packages of feminine wipes, 2132 tampons (918 donated from **Bleed the North**), 124 single use pads, 60 pantyliners, 66 pairs of period/incontinence underwear, and 25 kits of TruEarth eco strips.

The position of Local Officer of Reproductive and Sexual Health at NOSM University is an elected student position with a one-year term. As they complete two years in this position, Ashley and Lucie hope future students will continue this advocacy initiative and continue raising awareness regarding period poverty.







## Awards

(May 10 - August 31, 2022)

There are many outstanding faculty, learners and staff at NOSM University who make a difference in their community. Miigwetch, merci and thank you for your ongoing work and commitment.

- **Dr. Ranjit Baboolal**, Assistant Professor, received the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) Professional Staff Award.
- **Brittany Best**, NOSM University medical student, was recognized for her abstract titled Learning impact of virtual CPR education of seniors at the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians (CAEP) Conference.
- **Dr. Nisha Nigil Haroon**, Assistant Professor, received a distinguished alumni award from her alma mater, Trivandrum Medical College.
- **Dr. Laura Power**, Assistant Professor, received the Community Votes Thunder Bay - Physicians and Surgeons award.
- **Nusha Ramsoondar**, NOSM University medical student, received the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame (CMHF) Award for 2022.
- **Dr. Shannon Wiebe**, Assistant Professor, received the Emergency Physicians of the Year award from CAEP.
- **Tara Wilson** and **Ryan McConnell**, NOSM University medical students, received the CIBC Indigenous Learner Leadership Award for 2022.
- **NOSM University** is the recent recipient of the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario Award of Recognition honouring community partners for their contributions and efforts to improve access to, and equity of, French-language services.
- **Dr. Sarita Verma**, President, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and CEO, was honoured for her commitment to outstanding humanitarian services, accomplishments and leadership in health promotion and medical education by the Sudbury Multicultural Folk Arts Association.



