

ABORIGINAL  
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# NEWSLETTER

## FALL 2025



## The Ceremonial and Cultural Space: A New Chapter Begins

A transformative partnership between the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) and The Confluence Historic Site & Parkland is on the cusp of a significant milestone.

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# THE CEREMONIAL AND CULTURAL SPACE: A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

## A Transformative Partnership Between the AFCC and The Confluence Brings a Vision of Reconciliation and Community Healing to Life



A transformative partnership between the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) and The Confluence Historic Site & Parkland is on the cusp of a significant milestone. The vision for a new ceremonial and cultural space, a tangible symbol of reconciliation and community healing, is becoming a reality.

Located within the Fort Calgary Barracks, the project is a collaborative effort to provide Indigenous peoples with a dedicated, no-cost space for ceremony, cultural events, and community gatherings. Renovations to the site include new washrooms, a kitchenette, and a separate exterior entrance.

Landscaping will also connect the space to the future site of Calgary's Residential School Memorial, extending the vision of cultural revitalization on these historic lands.

For the AFCC, this initiative represents a continuation of their advocacy for safe and accessible places for ceremony in the heart of Calgary. Guided by Elders, the space is being designed and cared for in a way that honors tradition and spiritual practice.

With construction moving swiftly, the final touches are now being added to the gathering room. New art is being hung, a unique drum-shaped light fixture is set for installation, and blinds are in place. The space is nearly ready to welcome the community.

A traditional naming ceremony is planned to mark the official opening, ensuring the space is blessed and honored in a good way.

Once complete, this will be a place where Indigenous ceremony, culture, and connection can flourish for generations to come, fulfilling a promise made on this historic land.



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the  
confluence  
HISTORIC SITE & PARKLAND  
I'áámito'Iááqittsiliv'ol



# FROM OUTREACH TO OUTCOMES: THE ENCAMPMENT TEAM'S SEASON OF IMPACT



This spring, you met our new Encampment Support & Transitions Program (ESTP) team. Since then, their dedicated street outreach has translated into profound, life-altering outcomes. By building relationships grounded in compassion and cultural safety, they are creating real paths to a place to call home.

## Impact By The Numbers (April – August)

- 153 unique individuals engaged
- 381 safety & well-being checks conducted
- 188 strategic referrals to vital services
- 50 people connected to housing supports
- 33 people connected to cultural supports



## Real Change: From Streets to Stability

The trust built through hundreds of outreach interactions has led to incredible results:

- 16 individuals are now HOME, having moved directly from encampments into housing.
- 23 others were supported into safer settings like transitional shelters, taking the next step on their journey.

"We are ending homelessness, one relationship at a time. This culturally-safe, Indigenous-led model creates lasting, positive change in our community." As the colder months approach, the need for this vital work only grows. Your support helps our team continue providing the essential supplies and connections that foster hope and transform lives.



To support this work, please visit [www.afccalgary.org/donate](http://www.afccalgary.org/donate).



# A DAY OF HEALING AND REMEMBRANCE AT THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL RED DRESS POWWOW

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary hosted its 2nd Annual Red Dress Traditional Powwow, uniting community members in healing, remembrance, and commitment to justice for Missing, Murdered, and Exploited Indigenous Peoples.



The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) recently hosted its 2nd Annual Missing, Murdered, and Exploited Indigenous Peoples (MMEIP) Red Dress Traditional Powwow, a day filled with healing, remembrance, and the powerful spirit of community.

The event brought together Elders, Knowledge Keepers, drummers, dancers, sponsors, dignitaries, vendors, and community members in a shared commitment to honour those whose voices have been silenced. The red dresses that adorned the space stood as a solemn reminder of the lives lost and the urgent need to continue the fight for justice and awareness.

## **A Gathering of Community and Spirit**

The powwow opened with an emotional healing ceremony that set the tone for the day. Guided by Elders and Knowledge Keepers, the gathering became a place of reflection, remembrance, and collective strength. Grandfather Clement offered the Opening Prayer, and Grandmother Leanne closed the day with words of wisdom, ensuring that the event was carried in the spirit of tradition and respect.

Mayor Jyoti Gondek delivered opening remarks, recognizing the importance of the day and the resilience of the Indigenous community.





The powwow was also honoured by the presence of leaders and advocates including Rachelle Venne from the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Dr. Tyler White from the First Nations Health Consortium and OKAKI, Karen Young from the United Way of Calgary, Patricia Jones from the Calgary Homeless Foundation, Tiffany Pompana from Inn from the Cold, Umida Sobirova from the Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth, Lindsie Bruns from The Confluence, and Lowa Beebe representing the 2027 North American Indigenous Games.

Their presence, alongside many others, underscored a united call for action and remembrance.

### Music, Dance, and Tribute

Throughout the day, the powwow was filled with the heartbeat of the drums and the beauty of traditional dance. These performances were not only expressions of culture but also acts of remembrance and resilience. A special tribute by Sings Many Songs Women added depth and emotion, offering healing through song and connecting those present to the voices and spirits of those who are no longer with us.

Vendors, community organizations, and volunteers contributed to the event's success, offering resources, crafts, and food that further strengthened the sense of togetherness.



PHOTOS BY ALBERT WOO PHOTOGRAPHY

### Gratitude and Commitment

The AFCC extends heartfelt gratitude to everyone who helped bring this day to life. Sponsors, dignitaries, MCs, drummers, dancers, vendors, and the dedicated AFCC board, staff, and volunteers all played an essential role in creating a space of honour and remembrance.

Most importantly, thanks are due to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers who guided the gathering with wisdom and prayer. Their leadership ensured that the event was carried out in a way that respected tradition and brought healing to all in attendance.



The Red Dress Powwow was more than a single day of remembrance. It was a call to action, a reminder that the work of addressing the crisis of Missing, Murdered, and Exploited Indigenous Peoples is far from over.



For those who gathered, it reinforced a collective responsibility: to remember, to fight for justice, and to create a future where Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit peoples are safe, valued, and free from violence and exploitation.



PHOTOS BY ALBERT WOO PHOTOGRAPHY

As the drums faded and the prayers closed, what remained was a deep sense of community and determination. The AFCC is committed to carrying this work forward, standing alongside families, survivors, and allies to honour the memory of those lost and to fight for a better tomorrow.





# HONOURING LOVE, INCLUSION, & TWO SPIRIT

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) recently gathered with community members, Mayor Jyoti Gondek Nattoyipittakii, Holy Eagle Woman, and 2SLGBTQIA+ kin for a day of love, inclusion, and respect. The event highlighted the sacredness of all relations and the importance of walking together in good ways as one circle.

It was a peaceful and moving day, filled with gratitude and unity. The AFCC extends sincere thanks to Mayor Gondek for her unwavering support of community, her commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, and her strong allyship for 2Spirit and Indigiqueer rights and freedoms in Treaty 7 Territory.

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Her leadership serves as a reminder that reconciliation must go beyond truth. It must also mean Reconciliation, taking meaningful steps toward justice, healing, and inclusion.



The AFCC is grateful to all who attended and helped make this day so special. Together, we continue to build a future grounded in community, respect, and shared responsibility.



# CELEBRATING THE DAY OF FRIENDSHIP AT AFCC



On the first Friday in June, communities across the country observe the Day of Friendship, a celebration of the powerful bonds that unite us through friendship, respect, and community.

The Day of Friendship honours the spirit of connection at the heart of the Friendship Centre Movement. It is a chance to recognize the culturally rich programs and services that support urban Indigenous peoples and to reflect on the importance of relationships in building strong, inclusive communities.

At the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC), the occasion was marked by gathering with community members and staff to share hot dogs, cake, and laughter. While every day at the AFCC is dedicated to building friendship and connection, this annual celebration provided a special opportunity to highlight just how meaningful those bonds truly are.



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# HOW THE RECOVERY CAFÉ MODEL COULD TRANSFORM COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN CALGARY

Exploring how the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary is working to adapt a proven recovery model, rooted in Indigenous traditions, to serve our community.



*“The opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection.”*

That powerful message guided a recent visit by leaders from the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) to the Recovery Café Clark County in Vancouver, Washington. The experience left a lasting impression and sparked a vision for what could one day be possible in Calgary.

## A Model Rooted in Belonging

The Recovery Café is more than a program, it is a community. Since opening its doors more than seven years ago, the Clark County café has supported over 300 active members. Its success is built on a simple idea: recovery happens best when people are surrounded by care, accountability, and genuine human connection.



Membership comes with commitments. Individuals pledge 24 hours of sobriety, attend a weekly Circle of Support meeting, and give back through service. These requirements ensure that the café is not just a place to receive help but a place where every member contributes to the whole. The result is a true community of belonging, where members support one another while working toward their own recovery goals.

The model is practical yet deeply human. Members share meals and coffee, gather in circles to talk through challenges, and build bonds that help sustain them through difficult times. By design, it is not clinical or transactional. It feels like family.



### Stories of Transformation

During the Calgary delegation's visit, the impact of the café was made real through the stories of its members. One volunteer, Mitch, has been part of the café for 15 months. He calls it his "happy place," a term that captures what the Recovery Café strives to be, a safe space where people can rebuild their lives in the company of others who understand.

For Mitch and many others, the café is not just about staying sober. It is about connection, purpose, and finding joy in community. That sense of belonging is often the difference between isolation and recovery.



### Vision for Calgary

The AFCC sees immense potential in bringing this model to Calgary. The organization has long focused on fostering well-being, cultural connection, and inclusion for Indigenous peoples in the city. The Recovery Café model aligns naturally with that mission.

What makes this vision especially meaningful is the opportunity to root it in Indigenous cultural traditions. For generations, Indigenous communities have emphasized the importance of kinship, shared responsibility, and collective healing. Adapting the Recovery Café model to reflect these values could create a uniquely powerful resource for Calgary's urban Indigenous population, and for the city as a whole.

### Why Connection Matters

Addiction often thrives in isolation. By contrast, the Recovery Café demonstrates that healing grows where people are seen, valued, and supported. Calgary, like many cities, faces ongoing challenges related to addiction, homelessness, and community disconnection. A model that brings people together in a safe, structured, and culturally meaningful way offers a new path forward.



The potential benefits extend beyond those directly in recovery. A Calgary-based Recovery Café could also strengthen intergenerational ties, provide opportunities for Elders to share knowledge, and foster community resilience. In this way, the café would not only help individuals but also contribute to the broader fabric of the city.

### Looking Ahead

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary is now actively exploring what it would take to establish a Recovery Café locally. Discussions are focused on how to bring the model to life "in a good way," ensuring that it reflects Indigenous traditions, honours community input, and provides a welcoming environment for all.

This is an ambitious vision, but the experience in Clark County shows that it is possible. With the right partnerships and support, Calgary could one day have its own Recovery Café, a place where meals, circles, and conversations lay the foundation for healing.



As the AFCC moves forward, one truth remains clear: the opposite of addiction is not simply sobriety. It is connection. By creating spaces where connection flourishes, communities can transform lives.



# A CALL TO SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF FRIENDSHIP CENTRES

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary calls on partners, funders, and community members to raise their voices, ensuring stable funding and a secure future for urban Indigenous services.



The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) is part of a national network of more than 100 Friendship Centres that collectively make up the Friendship Centre Movement. Together, this network supports over one million Indigenous people each year, offering culturally grounded programs and services that span every stage of life, from infancy to Elder years.

Today, this vital work stands at a crossroads. On March 31, 2025, the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) saw its core federal funding come to an end, with no certainty of renewal. This decision puts thousands of Indigenous jobs and essential services at risk across the country.

## Why Funding and Advocacy Cannot Be Separated

Funding and advocacy are not separate issues. Funding is what sustains services, but advocacy is the only way to ensure that funding continues. Without advocacy, governments and funders may not feel the urgency to act, and without funding, advocacy cannot translate into real programs that impact lives.

Every dollar of core funding provides stability, and every advocacy effort helps secure those dollars. The two are inseparable, and both are required to keep Friendship Centres strong.

## The Reach of the Friendship Centre Movement

Friendship Centres are not only service providers, they are active contributors to reconciliation and justice. The Friendship Centre Movement supports:

- 47 of the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action
- 76 of the 231 MMIWG2S+ Calls for Justice
- 21 of the 46 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Articles

This reach highlights the national importance of stable investment in the work being done. For every one dollar of core funding, Friendship Centres leverage an average of nine more, turning modest investment into significant community impact.



## What Is at Stake in Calgary

In Calgary, the AFCC depends on core funding to maintain programs that connect Indigenous people with housing initiatives, cultural supports, Elder guidance, and community services. The loss of stable investment risks unravelling years of progress and weakening the Centre's ability to respond to growing community needs.

This is not just about keeping doors open. It is about ensuring continuity for services that directly affect health, safety, and belonging for Indigenous families, youth, and Elders.

## How You Can Act

The AFCC and NAFC are calling on partners, funders, and community members to take action now. Advocacy is the key to restoring and protecting stable funding, and every voice matters. You can help by:

- **Connecting with Your MP:** Share your story about how AFCC has made an impact in your life or community. Personal experiences are the most powerful way to show why funding matters.
- **Sharing the Message:** Amplify the AFCC's advocacy work by posting on social media and encouraging others to join in.
- **Speaking Publicly:** Contact local newspapers, radio, or TV outlets to talk about why the AFCC matters and why long-term investment must continue.

## Looking Forward

The Friendship Centre Movement has been a cornerstone of urban Indigenous life for decades. With stable funding secured through collective advocacy, it will continue to be a lifeline for generations to come.

Funding sustains the work, advocacy secures the funding, and together they ensure that Friendship Centres like the AFCC can continue to serve as places of belonging, healing, and opportunity for Indigenous people in every city across Canada.



## DONATE NOW!

To make a donation, please scan the QR code for more details or email us at [info@afccalgary.org](mailto:info@afccalgary.org).

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# CELEBRATING TWO YEARS OF OMAHKKITAPIOYIS ELDERS LODGE APARTMENTS

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary reflects on the success of Omahkkitapioyis Elders Lodge apartments, celebrating its second anniversary as a home of culture, respect, & connection for Indigenous Elders.







This month marks a meaningful milestone for the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) and the community it serves: the two-year anniversary of Omahkkitapioyis Elders Lodge apartments, an award-winning apartment complex dedicated to Indigenous Elders.

The Blackfoot word Omahkkitapioyis means “a lodge where people dwell.” The name reflects the heart of the project, which was never simply about bricks and mortar. It was about creating a home rooted in respect, culture, and community, a place where Elders could live in safety, dignity, and connection.

### A Vision Realized

From its earliest planning stages, the Elders Lodge was guided by the wisdom of Elders and Knowledge Keepers. Their voices shaped every aspect of the vision, from the design of the building to the cultural programming that makes it unique. As a result, Omahkkitapioyis is far more than housing. It is a living testament to the teachings, traditions, and spirit of Indigenous community life. The AFCC envisioned the lodge as a space where Elders could thrive, not just reside. Over the past two years, it has become exactly that: a welcoming home, a hub of cultural connection, and a place where healing and belonging are woven into everyday life.

### Honouring Elders and Knowledge Keepers

At the heart of Omahkkitapioyis are the Elders themselves. Their guidance has not only shaped the lodge but continues to nurture the community within it. Their presence affirms the importance of intergenerational wisdom, reminding us all that the future is strongest when it is grounded in the teachings of those who came before.



The AFCC extends deep gratitude to the Elders and Knowledge Keepers who ensured that Omahkkitapioyis would be more than a housing project. Their vision turned an idea into a reality that reflects Indigenous values of kinship, respect, and shared responsibility.

### Collaboration and Support

The success of Omahkkitapioyis has also been made possible through the dedication of partners who shared the AFCC’s commitment to creating lasting change for Indigenous seniors. Key supporters include the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta with special recognition to Minister Jason Nixon and the Ministry of Seniors, Community and Social Services, the City of Calgary, the Calgary Homeless Foundation, and the Calgary Foundation.



Together, these partners helped ensure that Omahkkitapioyis would not only be built, but sustained as a home that meets the unique needs of Indigenous Elders. Their collaboration demonstrates what can be achieved when governments, organizations, and communities work side by side.

# COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR AFCC'S ANNUAL STAMPEDE BBQ

Honouring tradition and strengthening relationships, the Annual Stampede BBQ showed the power of gathering as one community.



This year's Annual Stampede BBQ at the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) brought together hundreds of community members, leaders, and partners for a day of food, music, and kinship. The gathering was about more than sharing a meal. It was about strengthening the bonds that connect us, building bridges between cultures, and living reconciliation through shared experience.

Before the event even began, the line of guests waiting to be served stretched around the building, a clear sign of the day's excitement and energy. The atmosphere was filled with laughter, music, and a strong sense of belonging.

## **Grounded in Tradition**

The day opened with a prayer from Elders, whose guidance set a spirit of respect and intention for the celebration. Their presence reminded everyone of the importance of grounding community events in tradition and cultural teachings.



Blackfoot drummers followed, sharing the heartbeat of the land and connecting all who gathered through rhythm and song. Their performance underscored the cultural richness at the centre of the event.

## **Music, Leadership, and Support**

Guests were treated to live music from country artist Brad Saunders, who kept spirits high throughout the afternoon. The event also welcomed Mayor Jyoti Gondek and Alberta NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi, both of whom spent time listening, engaging, and celebrating alongside community members.

Special thanks go to event sponsor Joy Bowen-Eyre and The Alex for their generous support, which helped make the day possible.



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The AFCC also acknowledged Joanne Saunders and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which continues to provide free books to children from birth to age five. Over the years, this partnership has ensured that countless children in Calgary receive the gift of reading each month, contributing to literacy and learning in the community.



### A Collective Effort

The success of the Stampede BBQ would not have been possible without the AFCC board, staff, and volunteers, who set up, served food, and cleaned up long after the event ended. Their dedication ensured that everyone felt welcomed and cared for.



It was also inspiring to see so many community partners present, including the Calgary Homeless Foundation, United Way of Calgary and Area, Distress Centre Calgary, Discovery House, and CUPS Calgary, among many others. Their presence highlighted the spirit of collaboration and the shared commitment to building a stronger, healthier city.



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### A Day of Belonging

At its heart, the Stampede BBQ was about connection. It was a chance to share stories, catch up with old friends, and make new ones. It was a reminder that reconciliation is not only a concept, but something that takes shape when people come together with open hearts and respect.



The AFCC extends gratitude to everyone who attended and contributed. Together, we created a moment of belonging and unity, and together we will continue to walk this path forward.





# A SACRED NAMING CEREMONY FOR HER HONOUR SALMA LAKHANI

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary, alongside Elders and community partners, hosted a Blackfoot Naming Ceremony for Her Honour Salma Lakhani, recognizing her as Iss'stoo'tsimaakii, Eagle Plume Woman.



The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC), in partnership with the First Nations Health Consortium (FNHC) and OKAKI, recently hosted a historic and deeply meaningful ceremony: the traditional Blackfoot Naming Ceremony for Her Honour, Salma Lakhani, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta.

During the gathering, Her Honour was given the name Iss'stoo'tsimaakii, which translates to Eagle Plume Woman. The ceremony recognized her enduring commitment to inclusion, reconciliation, and the well-being of all Albertans. More than a formal event, it was a sacred act of kinship that affirmed a lifelong relationship between Her Honour and the Indigenous community.

## **A Gathering of Tradition and Community**

The ceremony was guided by respected Elders and Knowledge Keepers, including Drs. Reg and Rose Crowshoe, Miiiksika'am Clarence Wolfleg, Elder Jackie Bromley, Grandfather Clement Leather, and Grandmother Leanne Sleigh.

Their wisdom and presence ensured that the ceremony was carried out in a way that honoured tradition, respect, and cultural continuity.



*The Elders emphasized that receiving a traditional name is among the highest honours in Indigenous culture, symbolizing trust, respect, and mutual responsibility between the individual and the community. For those in attendance, the moment was both sacred and celebratory.*

*Community leaders and allies also joined in the ceremony, including representatives from the United Way of Calgary, Calgary Homeless Foundation, The Alex, and many other local organizations. Their presence reflected the collective spirit of support and recognition that the day embodied.*

### **Cultural Expressions and Artistry**

*The afternoon was filled with cultural performances that carried both energy and reverence. Blackfoot drummers shared the heartbeat of the land, while musicians Gina Onespot and Kyle Snow contributed powerful performances.*



*A highlight of the day was the unveiling of a commissioned artwork titled *The Blessing*, created by Blackfoot artist Kalum Teke Dan. The piece was presented as a tribute to Her Honour, marking the significance of the occasion through visual storytelling rooted in culture and tradition.*



### **Honouring Leadership and Reconciliation**

*Throughout her tenure, Lieutenant Governor Salma Lakhani has been a visible and steadfast advocate for reconciliation and inclusion. The Naming Ceremony was an opportunity for the community to honour her in return, recognizing her not only as a dignitary but as kin.*

*The event served as a reminder that reconciliation is often expressed most meaningfully through shared traditions, the embracing of new relationships, and the honouring of commitments that bind people together.*



### **A Path Forward**

*The AFCC extends its gratitude to the Elders, performers, community partners, and volunteers who made the day possible. Their contributions ensured that the ceremony was both respectful of tradition and inclusive of the wider community.*



*The Naming Ceremony for Iss'stoo'tsimaakii, Eagle Plume Woman, stands as a powerful testament to what reconciliation can look like when rooted in cultural practice, respect, and shared vision. It was a day that will be remembered not only for its sacredness but also for the spirit of unity it inspired.*

# AFCC HOSTS BOOK LAUNCH FOR AWARD-WINNING ARTIST SUSAN AGLUKARK

The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary welcomes Susan Aglukark for the launch of her memoir of healing, *Kihiani*, with an afternoon of conversation, music, and community.



The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary (AFCC) is honoured to host celebrated Inuk singer-songwriter and author Susan Aglukark for the Calgary launch of her new memoir, *Kihiani: A Memoir of Healing*.

The event will take place on **Monday, September 22, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Mountain** Chief Room at the Westin Calgary Airport. Guests will have the opportunity to hear directly from Aglukark, participate in a Q&A session, and receive a personally signed copy of her new book. Light refreshments will be provided.

## About the Book

*Kihiani* is a deeply personal memoir in which Aglukark reflects on her journey of healing, resilience, and cultural identity. Through her writing, she shares stories of family, tradition, and the path toward reclaiming strength and well-being. The book expands on the themes that have long been present in her music, weaving together Inuit storytelling with contemporary experiences.



## A Celebrated Artist and Advocate

Susan Aglukark is widely recognized as one of Canada's most beloved artists. Known for her powerful songs that blend Inuit folk traditions with contemporary music, she has touched audiences across the country and around the world. Her many achievements include:

- Officer of the Order of Canada
- Governor General's Performing Arts Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement
- Multiple Juno Awards



Beyond her artistry, Aglukark is an advocate for Indigenous communities, using her platform to raise awareness and foster healing through both music and storytelling.



**MONDAY**  
**September 22, 2025**



**START AT**  
**11:00am - 2:00pm**



**Mountain Chief Room**  
**The Westin Calgary Airport**  
**671 Aero Dr NE, Calgary**

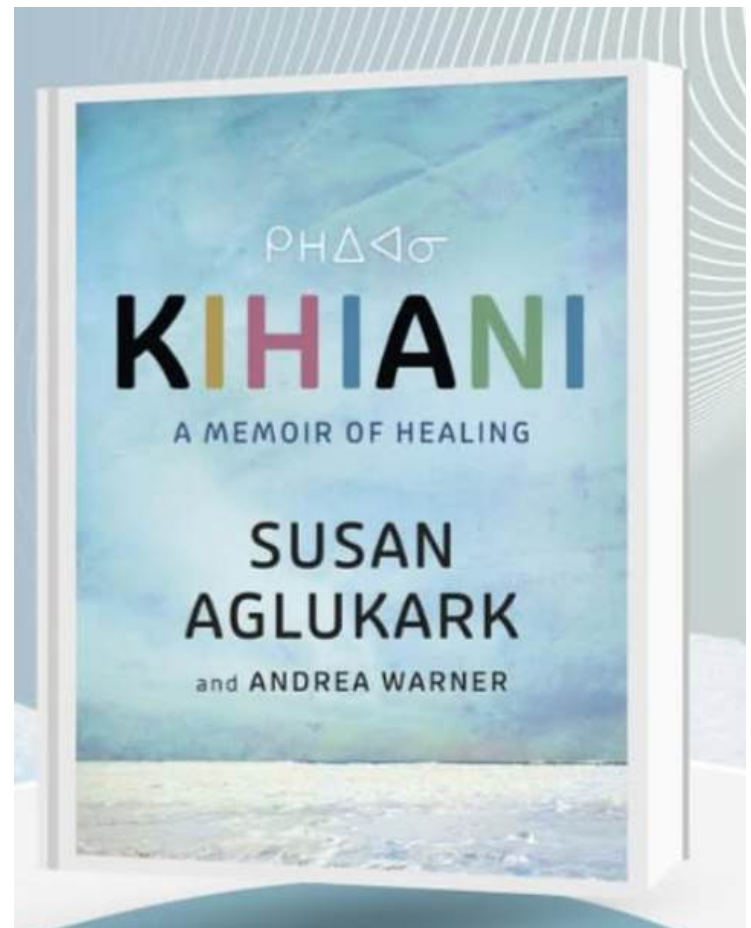
## Event Details

The afternoon will be hosted by **Lowa Beebe, MBA**, with a Q&A session moderated by **Krista White Pup**. This gathering offers a rare opportunity to connect with an artist whose career and personal journey embody resilience, creativity, and cultural pride.

### Event Information:

- **Date:** Monday, September 22, 2025
- **Time:** 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- **Location:** Mountain Chief Room, The Westin Calgary Airport, 671 Aero Drive NE, Calgary

Guests are kindly asked to RSVP by contacting [info@afccalgary.org](mailto:info@afccalgary.org).



## Looking Ahead

Hosting Susan Aglukark is a meaningful moment for the AFCC. Her story and her music resonate with the Centre's mission to strengthen culture, connection, and community for Indigenous peoples in Calgary. This book launch is not only a celebration of a remarkable artist but also an invitation to gather in the spirit of healing and shared learning.

# WALK FOR RECONCILIATION 2025: HONOURING TRUTH, SURVIVORS, & COMMUNITY

The Walk for Reconciliation calls on Canadians to honour survivors of the residential school system, remember the children who never returned, and celebrate the strength of Indigenous communities today.



16th Annual

## Walk For Reconciliation

Saturday, June 21, 2025



The Walk for Reconciliation is a time to reflect on one of the darkest chapters in Canadian history and to honour both the survivors of the residential school system and the children who never returned home.

Between 1883 and 1996, more than 150,000 Indigenous children from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities were forced into the federal residential school system. Taken from their families and communities, they were subjected to cultural erasure, physical and emotional abuse, and lasting trauma. For many, the impact continues across generations.

In October 2022, the House of Commons formally recognized the residential school system as a deliberate attempt at genocide against Indigenous Peoples, aimed at seizing control of land and resources. This acknowledgement followed earlier moments of truth-telling, including the 2008 national apology delivered by former Prime Minister Stephen Harper on behalf of Canadians.

The Walk for Reconciliation stands as a living reminder that reconciliation requires more than words.

It calls us to walk together, to honour survivors, and to carry the memory of those who never came home. It is also an act of resilience, coinciding with National Indigenous Peoples Day to celebrate the cultures, languages, and communities that continue to thrive despite generations of attempted erasure.

For those who take part, the walk is both solemn and hopeful. It recognizes the pain of the past while affirming the commitment to build a future grounded in truth, respect, and healing.



# Key AFCC Programs & Services

Housing & Support Services:  
This is a cornerstone of AFCC's work.

## **Elders' Lodge Apartments:**

- Emphasize its role in providing safe, affordable, and culturally rich housing for Indigenous seniors, fostering a community environment with access to cultural activities and support.

## **The Bromley Place:**

- Highlight these initiatives that offer supportive housing solutions for Indigenous individuals and families who are transitioning from homelessness or seeking stable, culturally appropriate living situations.

## **Indigenous Warming Centre:**

- A critical seasonal service providing shelter, warmth, and connection during colder months.

## **Navigation and Support Centre:**

- This centre is crucial for connecting vulnerable and unhoused individuals to a wide range of services including shelter access, employment and financial aid, Alberta Health card and ID services, Indigenous cultural supports, and mental health and addictions support.

## **The Encampment Support & Transition Program:**

- A mobile outreach team that meets Indigenous individuals in Calgary's encampments with food, supplies, and culturally safe support. By building trust and reconnecting people to housing, services, and ceremony, the program helps create pathways from the street to stability.

## **Aboriginal Housing Initiative (AHI):**

- Aboriginal Housing Initiative- longest community serving program at AFCC to help house Calgary's most vulnerable

# CULTURAL CONNECTION & COMMUNITY BUILDING

These programs are central to AFCC's mission and resonate widely.

## Indigenous Hub ("iitaohkanitsini'kotsiiyo'p")

- As the main office, it's a central point for numerous services.
  - **Cultural Programs:** Workshops, traditional arts and crafts, language revitalization efforts (like Blackfoot, Cree, Michif camps), ceremonies, drumming, and singing circles.
  - **Status Card Clinic:** A vital service helping community members obtain or renew their Secure Certificate of Indian Status.
  - **Smudge Vow Program:** Focuses on cultural and spiritual practices to support Indigenous individuals transitioning from the justice system.

## Elders' Programs & Drop-in Centre ("Kanakaa'tsinom")

- Beyond the Lodge, this dedicated drop-in space ("All Friends Place") offers programming, meals, traditional ceremonies, language revitalization, and social support for Elders.

## Healing/Sharing Circles (at the Elders Lodge and potentially other locations)

- As you know, these are ongoing and crucial for education, awareness (especially for youth), and healing from intergenerational trauma, often guided by Elders like Jackie Bromley. Emphasize that reconciliation is a journey.

## Community Events

- Highlight significant events like the annual Red Dress Powwow (honouring MMIWG2S+), Traditional Round Dances, community feasts, and other cultural celebrations that bring people together.

## FAMILY & YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

### Honouring the Bonds

- A widely recognized parenting program that beautifully integrates traditional Indigenous teachings with contemporary early childhood development practices.

### Youth Engagement Strategy & Programs

- Initiatives aimed at empowering Indigenous youth through leadership development, cultural connection programs, drumming groups, and land-based learning.

## OUTREACH & CLIENT SERVICES

### Outreach Program & Cultural Reconnection

- These programs focus on connecting with the broader community, offering cultural teachings, and providing support. This can include activities like traditional harvesting.

### Client Services

- General support and referrals for housing, food, clothing, education, health, and skills development.



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# AFCC LOCATIONS

**The Indigenous Hub**  
"IITAOHKANITSINI'KOTSIIYIO'P"  
316 - 7 Ave SE

**Elder's Drop-in Center -**  
"Kanakaa'tsinom"  
4630 - 16 Ave NW

**The Navigation and  
Support Centre**  
420 - 9 Ave SE

**The Elders' Lodge Apartments**  
OMAHKKITAPIOYIS  
352 - 34 Ave NE

**The Bromley Place**  
120 - 29 Ave NW

**The Confluence - Memorandum  
of Understanding (MOU)**  
750 - 9 Ave

**The Indigenous Warming  
Centre (Seasonal)**  
4628 - 16 Ave NW



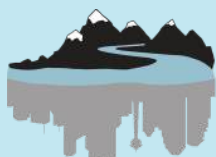
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