

MEDIA RELEASE



**FIRST NATIONS
UNIVERSITY
OF CANADA**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FNUniv and Regina Campus Student's Association Host the Late Tony Cote Welcome Back Traditional Powwow

Regina, SK – The First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv), in partnership with the Regina Campus Student's Association, proudly hosted the Late Tony Cote Welcome Back Traditional Powwow on Wednesday, September 18, 2024. This cultural gathering on the sacred grounds of the FNUniv Regina Campus brought together dancers, drummers, Elders, and community members to celebrate our traditions, languages, and spirits, providing a warm welcome to the new academic year.

The event began with registration for dance and drum participants at 10:00 AM, followed by the Grand Entry at 12:00 PM. Despite the day starting off with rain, the weather cleared up just in time for the Grand Entry, with the sun coming out to greet everyone. The powwow featured over 100 dancers and more than 8 drum groups, showcasing the rich traditions and vibrant heritage of our Indigenous communities. Attendees enjoyed a day filled with performances, fellowship, and a celebration of Indigenous culture, marking a powerful start to the academic year.

Adding to the festivities, the powwow featured a couple of unique specials. The "Streetwear Special" allowed participants to dance without the traditional powwow regalia, giving them a chance to "dance their style" in their own way. Additionally, the "Dinosaur Special" brought smiles and laughter as four participants donned inflatable dinosaur costumes to compete, adding a fun and lighthearted twist to the day's events.

A special thank you goes out to our arena director Rod Belanger, emcee Jeff Cappel, and Oskapewis Roland Kaye as well as Elder Dennis Omeasoo for their dedication and contributions, which helped make this event a success.

"The Late Tony Cote Welcome Back Traditional Powwow signifies the beginning of the fall semester at the First Nations University of Canada and the start of the academic year 2024-2025," said Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, President of FNUniv. "It welcomes new students and embraces current students through a traditional intertribal celebration. This is also an

opportunity for the community to come together. I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable time as they start and renew relationships."

"Our family is deeply honored that FNUUniv continues our father's legacy through this powwow," shared Faye Cote, daughter of the late Tony Cote. "He was a visionary who understood the strength of our communities and the importance of our traditions. This powwow is a living tribute to his spirit, a place where we gather, dance, and remember who we are. We hope this celebration inspires many to embrace and honor the beauty of Indigenous culture, just as he did."

"On behalf of the First Nations University of Canada Regina Campus Student's Association, we are honored to continue this cherished tradition in memory of the late Tony Cote, a leader who embodied resilience and cultural pride," said Fearence Francis, President of the Regina Campus Student's Association. "The Welcome Back Powwow is more than just a celebration—it is an opportunity to come together, embrace our traditions, and welcome new students into a space that nurtures learning and community. We invite all students, families, and community members to join us in celebrating our heritage and starting this academic year with strength and unity."

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About First Nations University of Canada

Established in 1976, the First Nations University of Canada is Canada's only national First Nations-owned post-secondary institution. FNUUniv is a unique place of higher learning that specializes in Indigenous Education for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of all cultural backgrounds. Our vision is to have a transformative impact by bridging our ceremonies, knowledge keepers, languages, and traditions with the delivery of high-quality post-secondary education. For more information, please visit www.fnuniv.ca.