

# DIBIKI GIIZIS DIBAAJIMOWINAN (MOON TELLING STORIES)



## ***AAN-JI-JI-GEWIN - BUILDING FOR CHANGE***

One of our greatest achievements in 2023 was hosting our first gathering, **Aan-ji-ji-gewin - Building for Change**.

The gathering was for and about Manitoba Indigenous women, 2Spirit and gender diverse individuals leading into the 21st Century. It was also about capacity building and connecting with the community that we serve.

**Aan-ji-ji-gewin** took place over two days at the end of March. Local personality Sheila North emceed the event. We were proud to have a number of amazing vendors at the event, selling their beading, jewelry, clothing ware, etc.

## **\* ANIIN \* BOOZHOO \* GREETINGS \***

Welcome relatives to Manitoba Moon Voices, Inc.'s second newsletter, **Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan** (Moon Telling Stories). Rather than a quarterly newsletter, as originally planned, it was decided that **Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan** will be published bi-annually, sharing stories and events about MMVI. In the following issue, we are pleased to share some special stories and events that took place in 2023.



Honoured guests included Chief Angela Levasseur from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. Relatives from across Manitoba (like, Opaskwayak Cree Nation and St. Theresa Point First Nation) were invited and attended **Aan-ji-ji-gewin**.



**Aan-ji-ji-gewin** opened with a Water Ceremony and with keynote speaker Cindy Woodhouse, Regional Chief for Manitoba, Assembly of First Nations. We were proud to honour and gift Woodhouse with a star blanket. Each table had materials for guests to make Faceless Dolls. Materials included a felt doll, fabric, glue, ribbon, scissors, beads, etc. We were really impressed with the creativity of the relatives.



Day one consisted of speakers and raffles. A Hoop Dancer and Hand Drummer entertained guests at lunch. The day ended with a Fire Side Chat by the Winnipeg Executive Indigenous Circle. Day two started off with a breakfast, followed by various speakers, that spoke on topics like HIV/STBBI Testing, Housing and MMIWG2S+. Guests were entertained by local talent Kristen McKay. Gifts were raffled off through-out the day. **Aan-ji-ji-gewin** concluded with an Engagement Session with the relatives that allowed the community to share their thoughts on community capacity building.

**PRIDE 2023**

MMVI was honoured to have a table at the 2023 Pride Festival.





The project was called *The Annual Healing Journey Video Project*. This was our second time doing the project. The event took place at the *Manitoba Indigenous Cultural Education Centre*.



**SUMMER PROJECTS**

MMVI organized a number of projects through-out the year. Two major projects that we did in 2023 honours (1) *The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation* (Sept 30th) and (2) *The National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2S+* (Oct 4th).

To honour *The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation*, in August we brought together elder/survivors of the residential school system together with Indigenous youth for two days of story sharing which we called Story Circles.

For everyone involved in the project, the location was a form of “medicine.” Each day ended with a Feast.

Video vignettes of the event were posted on our social media sites (Facebook and Instagram) to honour *The National Day of Truth and Reconciliation* (Sept 30th).

We look forward to doing the project again in 2024.



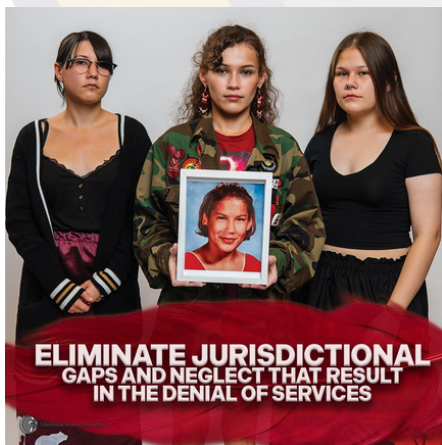
MMVI has been *Honouring the Families of the MMIWG2S+* since 2020. The project involves bringing MMIWG2S+ families together to take a photo with an image of their loved one.



From the *Final Report of the National Inquiry into MMIWG2S+*, each family chose a Call for Justice appropriate to them and to their loved one. The text from the Call for Justice is summarized in each image. For the first time this year (2023) we were able to honour the participating families with a Pipe Ceremony and Feast. The images were posted on our social media sites (Facebook and Instagram), starting on Oct 30th, to recognize *The National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2S+*.

In 2023 we recognized and honoured the following families:

- Mackaylah Gerard-Roussin family
- Mercedes Myran family
- Morgan Harris family
- Divas Boulanger family



**PROGRAMS:**

**(1) TAKING THE NEXT STEPS IN OUR JOURNEY**

**(2) RECLAIMING OUR POWER AND PLACE**



*Reclaiming our Power and Place* is a long standing MMVI program. It is a 12-week program that connects Indigenous women, girls, 2Spirit and gender diverse individuals, who have experienced gender based violence, with their culture. This is done through various activities, like drum making, workshops and ceremonies that connects the relatives to their customs and traditions.



In 2023, MMVI developed a new youth program called *Taking the Next Steps in our Journey*. *Taking the Next Steps* helps build and strengthen youth’s bundle. The program is designed for Indigenous women, girls, 2Spirit and gender diverse individuals who are seeking the life skills to move on from EIA and gain meaningful independence through education and/or employment.

“We saw the opportunity and thought the program would benefit MMVI members and the community. In developing *Taking the Next Steps in our Journey*, we also thought it would be a good match to the *Reclaiming our Power and Place* program,” said Shannon Hoskie, MMVI Executive Director.



## PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF TRANSGENDER AND GENDER DIVERSE GROUP



MMVI started a monthly group, in 2023, for parents and caregivers of transgender and gender diverse youth. The group meets the first Wednesday of the month. The group was created by MMVI to support parents and caregivers who are raising transgender and gender diverse kiddos. It was felt that there needed to be a place for parents and caregivers to share stories and ask questions about their kiddos in a safe and secure space. The group is led by a passionate knowledge-keeper who specializes in the field of “parents, family and transgender individuals.”

## COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARD



MMVI was the recipient of the **Community Builder Award**. The annual award is presented, by *SEED Winnipeg, Inc.*, to community organizations for outstanding community development.

### Dibiki Giizis Dibaajimowinan

(Moon Telling Stories) was put together by Darrell “Gav” Chippeway and the MMVI team.

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