



*“I hope to develop a greater sense of self and stronger relationships with community members. Furthermore, I hope to gain confidence in my ability to engage mindfully within a community to connect existing assets.”*

# Nicole Townsend

*Queen's University*

*Muskrat Dam First Nation, Ontario*

The goal of my initiative is to support the development of a Youth Leadership and After-school Program at Samson Beardy Memorial so youth mentors can have space to develop leadership skills, self-efficacy, and opportunities for community engagement. I hope to design a program with cultural continuity that builds upon what students are learning in the classroom and creates a space for other areas of skill development through active community involvement. The initiative will help youth feel more connected to their advancement in school and in their own abilities, while making space for community members to be actively engaged and more aware of the school's programs.

My connection to the community started through my work with Frontier College where I met community leader Stan Beardy. Stan and others inspired me to participate in the initiatives of The Samson Beardy Memorial School, and adopt their commitment to the improvement of student learning, performance and self-efficacy. I have previously spent time running a literacy camp in Muskrat Dam. Through this experience, I discovered how programs increased in impact through community involvement.

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