

Community Classroom launches Gimaa's Allyship Poetry Contest for students

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oakville, Ont., March 2, 2022 - The Oakville Community Foundation's Community Classroom program has launched Gimaa's Allyship Poetry Contest for students.

Gimaa (Chief) R. Stacey Laforme of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) has [shared a poem](#), titled "***Nii jii***" which means "friend" in Anishinaabemowin, and invites students to share their own poetry on what allyship or friendship looks like or means to them.

Students in Halton public schools and MCFN students from kindergarten through Grade 12 are invited to share and submit a poem, spoken word, rap or song through written or oral expression, with multiple winners to be chosen.

Students will be eligible to win*:

- the opportunity to perform their poem alongside Gimaa during an event on May 24th,
- their poem printed in the event program and
- have a recording of their poem shared as part of the Oakville Community Foundation's Community Classroom Online program

(*subject to parental consent)

To participate in the contest, teachers must register through the [Community Classroom page](#) with student participation left to the discretion of the teacher. Submissions are due in written or audio form on Thursday, April 24, 2022 through the online submission form.

"We are excited to facilitate this contest for students to share their experiences and feelings on allyship and friendship," said Frances Pace, Director of Fundholder and Community Engagement at the Oakville Community Foundation. "We look forward to seeing the creativity and expression shared through this initiative."

Community Classroom is a free, currently online program that offers all publicly funded Oakville schools and MCFN students the opportunity to participate in an arts, culture, heritage or environmental experience. Currently, these experiences include interactive videos and special live-streamed events.

Gimaa Laforme is the elected chief of MCFN, where he was born and raised, and has served his community for over 20 years, being first elected to council in 1999. He is very active throughout MCFN's treaty lands, which encompasses 3.9 million acres of land across southern Ontario, including Oakville which lies on Treaties 14 and 22.

Coinciding with the launch of the **Debwewin (Oakville): The Oakville Truth Project** website, the poetry contest and its focus on allyship and friendship can be a way of healing relationships, starting conversations and listening to the knowledge that is being shared. To begin the community learning journey, go to www.debwewinoakville.com.



Oakville Community Foundation

The Oakville Community Foundation is a local charitable solutions provider, delivering the tools to realize your charitable passions. The Foundation acts as a philanthropic medium, providing donors with local research, knowledge and solutions to make an impact in the local community, both today and in the future. The Foundation has more than 25 years of leading expertise on the Oakville community, having granted more than \$53 million to support charities locally and beyond.

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