

*Corrina Gavan*



## INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATIVE ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL

As the Indigenous Representative on the Ontario Regional Council (ORC) and the Chair of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Committee, I have continued to dedicate my work to advancing Indigenous rights, supporting reconciliation, and advocating for the voices of Indigenous members within our union and across our communities.

Over the past year, I attended and participated in numerous cultural, community, and union events to foster connection, solidarity, and education.

- Participation in ceremonies and events to honor Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S+), continuing to advocate for justice and healing.
- Active involvement in community cultural gatherings alongside FNMI committee members, including ceremonies, drum group participation, and events with First Nations partners to strengthen relationships and solidarity.
- Attendance and representation at the Eastern District Conference and the Southwest Conference, ensuring Indigenous voices were present and engaged in regional discussions.

“The strength of our people is not in what we keep for ourselves, but in what we share with others.” – Cree Proverb



As FNMI Committee Chair, I played a key role in organizing training opportunities to promote reconciliation and Indigenous cultural awareness. Our committee coordinated the Truth and Reconciliation training event in Sault Ste. Marie (September 28 – October 1, 2024), which included teachings from Indigenous knowledge keepers and a visit to the Former Shingwauk Residential School to deepen participants' understanding of Canada's history. This event was deeply impactful and provided members with the tools to carry reconciliation into their workplaces and communities.

In addition to this event, I also facilitated cultural workshops for members, guiding participants in the making of medicine bags, copper cup necklaces and dreamcatchers. These workshops were not only hands-on learning opportunities but also a chance to share teachings and foster cultural connection among members.



Planning is also underway for future FNMI-led training and events, including an upcoming Truth and Reconciliation-focused session in Brantford (September 2025), which will once again center lived experience, cultural teachings, and traditional ceremony.

In my role on the Structure and By-laws ORC sub-committees, I have been actively involved in reviewing and updating our regulations and by-laws. I co-created the Ontario Regional Council Manual which is a new “green” resource with clickable links and tools designed to support ORC Representatives. This project was completed in collaboration with the former ESDC Representative, and will serve as an accessible, living document to guide ORC members in their roles.



I am also pleased to welcome Adam Murphy, who will be stepping in to act in my role during my leave. Adam brings dedication, insight, and a strong commitment to supporting Indigenous members, and I have full confidence in his ability to carry this important work forward. His involvement will ensure continuity of leadership, advocacy, and representation for Indigenous members within the ORC. I am grateful for his willingness to step into this role and to continue building on the initiatives and relationships we have worked so hard to strengthen over the past year.

Looking back on this past year, I am proud of the progress our committee and council have made in advancing Indigenous rights, building awareness, and creating safe spaces for Indigenous and non-Indigenous members to learn, connect, and grow together. From campaigns on clean water and MMIWG2S+, to training events and governance, each initiative has been a step toward reconciliation and justice.

I remain committed to this important work, to being a strong voice for Indigenous members, and to ensuring that the path of truth and reconciliation is reflected in our union’s actions, priorities, and advocacy.