



Grand Council Treaty #3

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Kenora Justice Centre Receives Ontario Bar Association President's Award

Kenora, ON – The Kenora Justice Centre (Ga naa na ga da waa ba dang) has been honoured with the Ontario Bar Association President's Award in recognition of its innovative, community-driven approach to justice.

The award was presented on April 28 by Ontario Bar Association President Katy Commisso to Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh on behalf of Grand Council Treaty #3, alongside Dayna Arron, Executive Director of Justice Centres, Office of the Assistant Deputy General, Criminal Law Division, and His Worship David Gibson, Regional Senior Justice with the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The presentation took place during the Ontario Bar Association's visit to the Kenora Justice Centre, where leadership, Elders, justice officials, and community partners gathered to recognize the Centre's collaborative model and its impact within the justice system.

The Kenora Justice Centre has evolved into a model that integrates Indigenous-led, community-based supports within the justice system. Through its Circle of Care approach, the Centre provides culturally grounded programs and services for youth, victims, and families involved in the criminal justice system.

Together, partners have established a continuum of Indigenous restorative justice processes focused on healing and the restoration of relationships for youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 24.

The day began with traditional opening protocols led by Elder Don Kelly, Mabel Mandamin, and Billy Boucher, grounding the gathering in Anishinaabe teachings and ceremony.

Also in attendance were Gaakinawataagizod Cheyenne Vandermeer of Grand Council Treaty #3 and Darrell Mandamin, Cultural Liaison with the Ministry of the Attorney General, along with Court Elders and community stakeholders who witnessed the recognition and shared in the ongoing work of the Centre.

This recognition highlights the importance of Indigenous leadership and strong partnerships in advancing justice approaches that are rooted in community, healing, and accountability.

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