



JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER

A Message from the Executive Director: Community Visits, Reflections, and Upcoming Initiatives at OFNEDA

Wachay OFNEDA Community,

I would like to wish everyone a meaningful **National Indigenous History Month**. I encourage you to take time to learn, reflect, and attend events happening in your communities and nearby areas. This is an important opportunity to recognize and celebrate the cultures, histories, and contributions of First Nations and Inuit peoples.

I would also like to congratulate all parents and families whose children are graduating this year, whether from kindergarten, high school, college, or university. This is an exciting time and a reminder of how important education is in creating a strong path forward for future generations.

This month, we completed our Technical Aboriginal Economic Development (TAED) course in Halton. As part of the program, students visited the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to learn about their economic development work and major projects. It was a valuable experience that helped bring learning to life.

We also supported our entrepreneurs by delivering two marketing training sessions. This included a virtual session on crisis communications for our members, along with

connections within our network.

OFNEDA was proud to participate as a Gold Sponsor at the Made in Canada Expo at the International Centre in Mississauga. It was a great opportunity to highlight Indigenous businesses and innovation.

We also hosted our first Regional Engagement Forum of this fiscal year at Casino Rama in Rama, Ontario, marking the second round of our regional sessions. Many First Nations Economic Development Officers and entrepreneurs attended this full-day session. These gatherings allow us to listen to community priorities, identify gaps, and strengthen how we support economic development, businesses, and services. They also help us share our programs and resources directly with communities.

Planning for the **First Nations Advancement Conference is in full swing. This year is especially meaningful as we celebrate our 15th Crystal Anniversary. This marks 15 years of OFNEDA supporting and shaping First Nations communities.** I would like to thank the Conference Planning Committee for their time, effort, and dedication in preparing this event.

Please take advantage of the early bird registration for a chance to win an iPad. Also remember to book your hotel early, as space is limited.

OFNEDA will continue working alongside our First Nations communities to build capacity, support economic development, and create opportunities. Through mentoring, training, and education, we remain committed to helping our communities move forward.

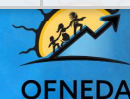
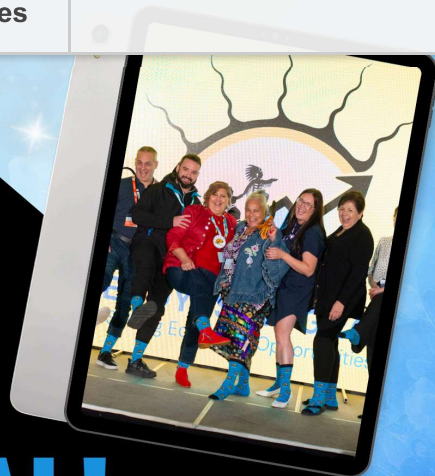
Meegwetch,



Peggy Domingue

Executive Director, OFNEDA

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL!



First Nations Economic Advancement Conference

Register by
June 30, 2026
for a chance to

WIN an iPad

September 14–17, 2026

Pearson Convention Centre
Brampton, Ontario

OFNEDA'S Journey and the Significance of Celebrating 15 Years

For 15 years, the Ontario First Nations Economic Developers Association (OFNEDA) has advanced First Nations economic growth through advocacy, education, networking, and capacity building for communities and businesses across Ontario. The 15th anniversary of the First Nations Economic Advancement Conference (FNEAC) marks a milestone in collaboration, resilience, and economic leadership, while setting the stage for the next generation of First Nations prosperity and opportunity.

Questions about the hotels or the discount code

If you have any questions regarding the hotel options or how to use the discount code, our team is happy to help. Once you complete your conference registration, you will automatically receive the booking link as part of your ticket confirmation.

Please reach out to

Tessa Lavoie,

Event Coordinator — events@ofneda.ca or Call or Text 204.797.2932

REGISTER NOW



Calling all Indigenous artisans in Ontario.

OFNEDA invites applications for participation in the
First Nations Economic Advancement Conference.

To apply, contact Tessa Lavoie, Event Coordinator at events@ofneda.ca

APPLY NOW

Plan ahead and secure your stay for the First Nations Economic Advancement Conference.

Have questions about hotel options or the discount code? We are happy to help. Your booking link will be included in your registration confirmation.

For assistance, contact
Tessa Lavoie, Event Coordinator
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First Nations Community Highlights



Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek Advances Sustainable Energy Through Biomass Innovation



Bingwewenishinaabek (BNA), located along the southeast shores of Lake

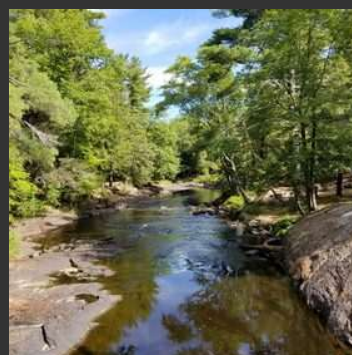
Nipigon, continues to demonstrate leadership in sustainable economic development.

Since receiving reserve lands in 2010, BNA has built a strong foundation through Papasay, its 100% community-owned Economic Development Corporation, which operates an on-reserve sawmill grounded in the principle of using every part of the tree.

This commitment has led to the development of a Biomass District Heating Facility, currently under construction. Using approximately 900 cubic metres of sawmill residue each month, the system will convert wood waste into energy to heat the community. The 4,560-square-foot facility will house two 500-kilowatt boilers that will distribute heat to all homes. At the same time, BNA is retrofitting homes to replace electric baseboard heating, with several upgrades already completed.

This initiative highlights BNA's focus on maximizing local resources, reducing energy reliance, and supporting environmental sustainability, while setting an example for other First Nations communities.

LEARN MORE ABOUT REGIONAL BIOMASS PROJECT



Rama Office Interiors and Black River Wilderness Park Drive Community Growth

Rama First Nation continues to advance community growth through key initiatives in business and tourism. Rama Office Interiors (ROI) is strengthening its role as a trusted Indigenous partner across Ontario, delivering high-quality workplace solutions while supporting economic benefits for the Chippewas of Rama First Nation. Its work, including projects with Ontario Power Generation, highlights innovation, job creation, and long-term capacity building. Learn more at www.ramaofficeinteriors.com.

growth supports sustainable, land-based tourism and local economic development.
Plan your visit at www.blackriverwildernesspark.ca.

Together, these efforts reflect Rama First Nation’s commitment to innovation, sustainability, and economic prosperity.

VISIT BLACK RIVER WILDERNESS PARK

WHAT’S COMING UP

EDO and Entrepreneurs Community Connections

July 18, 2026 | 2–3 PM ET

OFNEDA is inviting Economic Development Officers and First Nations Entrepreneurs to connect in a casual, welcoming setting, whether over a coffee, tea, or whatever you enjoy at your desk. This monthly space offers EDOs the chance to have informal conversations with one another, share ideas, discuss challenges and wins, and highlight what is happening in their communities. It is an opportunity to build relationships, exchange practical insights, and strengthen the network that supports economic development across First Nations in Ontario.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT

UPCOMING REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT FORUMS

REMINDER

Regional meetings are intended for First Nations Economic Development Officers, but they are also open to

designated representative from the First Nation.

Our Regional Meetings are small gatherings where we meet with First Nations in the hosting area to hear community priorities, challenges, and opportunities. These sessions help us share OFNEDA programs and resources while ensuring each community feels informed and supported. You will have the chance to connect with Ryan Moore, Reema Chopra, and other team members, and your input will help guide the development of upcoming toolkits. ***Breakfast, snacks and lunch is included.***

Regional Engagement Forum – Thunder Bay

Tuesday, July 7 | 8 AM – 4:30 PM

Best Western Plus NorWester Hotel & Conference Centre

2080 Highway #61, Thunder Bay, ON, P7J 1B8, Canada

(807) 473-9123

RESERVE YOUR SPOT FOR THUNDER BAY

IMPORTANT

Please carefully select the Regional Engagement Forum location closest to your First Nation, as travel costs will only be covered for attendance at the nearest location.

Did you miss our Community Capacity Funding LIVE webinar?

No problem. **You can log in to your OFNEDA membership dashboard** to watch the recording at any time. If you haven't applied yet, please make sure to submit your application as soon as possible. If you have any questions or need support, please contact Membership Support at membersupport@ofneda.ca.

**Community Capacity Funding
Agreements Funding Amount: \$15,000.**

support your community initiatives.

[WATCH THE RECORDING NOW](#)

NEW 10-PART SERIES FOR EC TRAINING

We are excited to launch a new 10 part learning series for entrepreneurs, led by Sarah Hopkins, Matriarch and Founder of Three Sisters Consulting. Each session offers practical training to support our community in starting, building, or growing a business.



Mon Sept 21

12:30 PM – 4:30 PM ET

Managing Growth: Scaling
Your Business Sustainably

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Growth is exciting but it can also break a business if you're not ready for it. This session is for entrepreneurs whose business is picking up and who want to grow with intention. We'll talk about what scaling really looks like for small First Nations businesses, when to hire, when to move to a physical location, and how to manage the financial side of growth without losing control. We'll also explore what it means to grow in a way that stays true to your values.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify 2–3 areas of your business that are ready to grow
- Create a simple hiring checklist or staffing plan
- Map out the financial steps needed to support your next growth stage
- Name at least one boundary or value you want to protect as you grow

Mon Oct 19

12:30 PM – 4:30 PM ET

[REGISTER NOW](#)

**Procurement: How to
Sell to Government &
Corporate Clients**

Session Overview

Growth is exciting but it can also break a business if you're not ready for it. This session is for entrepreneurs whose business is picking up and who want to grow with intention. We'll talk about what scaling really looks like for small First Nations businesses, when to hire, when to move to a physical location, and how to manage the financial side of growth without losing control. We'll also explore what it means to grow in a way that stays true to your values.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least 2 procurement programs or opportunities relevant to your business
- Read a sample RFP and identify the key evaluation criteria
- Start or update your capabilities statement
- Register with at least one vendor database or certification program

Budgeting and Financial Management

Jul 13, 2026 01:00 – 4:00 PM ET



Presented by:

Justin Jimmy

CPA, CAFM, ICD.D



REGISTER NOW

In this short workshop, participants will gain an understanding of what a budget is, the important aspects of a budget, preliminary program budgets, program workpans and appropriations and the budget cycle. Participants will also gain an understanding of financial statements including reporting frameworks, the balance sheet, income statement, debt, cash flows, and various schedules. At the end of the workshop, participant will have gained an understanding of budgeting and financial statements.

Justin Jimmy, CPA and ICD.D certified corporate director, brings more than a decade of experience in financial management, governance, and capacity building. As CEO of Urban Cree Consulting, he supports Indigenous governments, organizations, and businesses with tailored financial and governance solutions.

His background includes leadership roles across First Nations, the corporate and for-profit sector, Indigenous not-for-profit organizations, and advisory boards. His expertise in financial reporting, governance, and community-focused initiatives positions him as a trusted leader in advancing strong, culturally grounded financial practices. Justin is Cree from Onion Lake First Nation.

UPCOMING COFFEE MEET-UPS



Firefly Solar: Powering Sustainable Community Energy

Jul 7, 2026 10:00 AM ET

Exploring clean energy solutions and community-focused solar opportunities with Firefly Solar

Presented by:

Serena Pawluk

Indigenous Business Development

Liaison

Firefly Solar

REGISTER NOW



Opportunities for Cross Border Indigenous Trade

Jul 16, 2026 10:00 AM ET

Join us to learn about foreign trade zones, customs brokering, and how sovereignty can support economic growth and global opportunities.

Presented by:

Jennifer Saeck

Of Counsel

Mshkawzi Law, LLP.

REGISTER NOW

Economic Development Opportunities Through Digital Transformation

Jul 21, 2026 10:00 AM ET

Digital sovereignty is economic sovereignty. Join Tansi (Indigenous-owned and built) to discover how the unified Tansi™ platform turns daily community operations into sustainable, recurring wealth.

This highly practical presentation introduces 11 actionable revenue streams—including automated job boards, contractor compliance fees, and digitized permit licensing. See how consolidating 7+ legacy software systems slashes community overhead while creating long-

corporate equity partnership model.

If you are ready to stop leaving money on the table and start funding your community's future on your own terms, this is the one session you cannot afford to miss. Secure your spot today and take full control of your Nation's economic destiny!

REGISTER NOW

Questions or Tech Issues? Reach Out Anytime

If you have any trouble logging in, please reach out to our Training Coordinator, **Debbie Donovan**, at trainingcoordinator@ofneda.ca or call **519.200.1033** for assistance. We look forward to insightful conversations and building lasting connections!

IPED Corner by Ryan Moore

Procurement Canada adds AI ChatBot "Procura"

The government has added a new '**beta**' **tool** to help with your navigation on the CanadaBuys site, an AI chatbot named "**Procura**" that you can ask questions and should be able to help you along your process

LEARN MORE

Apollo Microgrid: Powering Communities with Clean Energy

The ONE Apollo Microgrid is an innovative solar and battery-powered energy solution designed to deliver reliable, scalable power for communities, businesses, and remote locations. Integrating solar generation with advanced battery storage, each unit provides

for community infrastructure, EV charging, and emergency or remote applications.

Learn how the Apollo Microgrid can support your community's energy future—visit [one.ai](#) to explore opportunities.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL BROCHURE](#)

Modernizing Transit in Sudbury with On-Demand Innovation

Greater Sudbury is exploring a new approach to public transit through a proposed on-demand mobility system designed to improve access, affordability, and service across its large and diverse geography.

A Smarter Access Layer

The proposal introduces an app-based, on-demand shuttle service to replace the current taxi-based GOVA Zone system. Riders would benefit from real-time booking, accessible vehicles, and improved connections to existing GOVA transit routes.

Phase 1: Immediate Impact

The first phase focuses on replacing the current system at the natural contract renewal point, maintaining service across multiple communities while removing long wait times and booking barriers. This upgraded service is designed to better connect residents to work, school, healthcare, and daily needs.

Built for Communities

The model supports seniors, students, and workers by improving first- and last-mile connections, while also generating valuable data to guide future transit planning and investment.

Discover how innovative, on-demand transit can transform mobility for northern and rural communities by improving access, efficiency, and sustainability.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL BROCHURE](#)

[View email in browser](#)



OFNEDA

ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC
DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

QUESTIONS ABOUT MEMBERSHIP?

For OFNEDA membership support please contact membersupport@ofneda.ca

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