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## “Together We Can Do So Much”

A Case Study in Building Respectful Relations  
in the Social Economy of Sioux Lookout

Sean Meades, Astrid Johnston, and Gayle Broad

**A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba,  
and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite**

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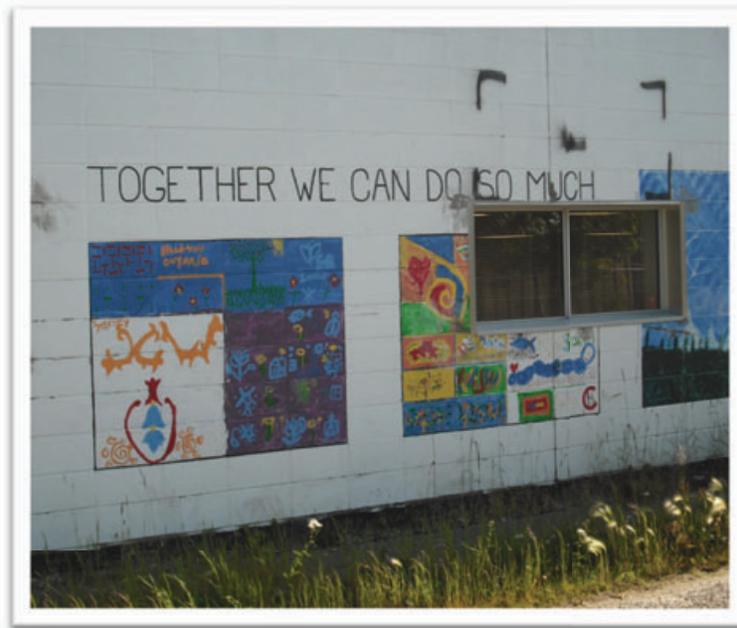
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## “TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH”

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## ABSTRACT

**T**HIS CASE STUDY examines the role of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee (SLARC) within the social economy of the northwestern Ontario town of Sioux Lookout. Examining SLARC's history through the context of anti-racist solidarity, in light of massive shifts in the North American socio-political landscape in the last thirty years, provides a more holistic picture of how the group has impacted the local social economy. Primarily, this study investigates how SLARC has bridged racial divisions within the community and created space for cross-cultural relationships and provides models for other communities to emulate. Policy-level challenges and barriers are also identified in the interest of shedding light on how to strengthen local social economies.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**T**HE SIOUX LOOKOUT ANTI-RACISM COMMITTEE (SLARC) is a non-profit community based organization in the northwestern Ontario town of Sioux Lookout. The committee was struck in 1988 after rising racial tensions between Anishinaabek and non-Native people and a deadly attack against an Anishinaabe Elder from Slate Falls First Nation provoked the municipal council and local citizens into action.

Throughout its more than twenty-year history, SLARC has developed a multi-pronged approach to tackling racism, including:

- creating space for cross-cultural dialogue
- preventing future generations from adopting racist attitudes through youth education and cross-cultural relationship building
- providing support to those who experience racism, whether it takes place in the present day or in the past
- creating opportunities for cross-cultural relationships to develop

The impact of SLARC in facilitating respectful relations in Sioux Lookout has been substantial, both in terms of fostering better relations between Anishinaabe and non-Native community members, as well as providing community-wide conflict resolution services and training. The success of SLARC also challenges some dominant ideas about the social economy, primarily on the appropriateness of the concept of social capital in contexts or racial or other power imbalances, and the importance of solidarity and advocacy in producing respectful relations.

SLARC and its volunteers have contributed substantially to healing racial tensions in the

community that have allowed for some recent landmark partnerships between various levels of Anishinaabe and non-Native governments.

It has also been influential in providing employment, skills development, attracting newcomers to the community, and contributing to the town's cultural life.

The committee's success, however, has been tempered by a lack of sustainable funding options. The case of SLARC demonstrates that the pervasiveness of racism across Ontario necessitates a willingness to address the problem and acknowledge that anti-racism work is a public good with positive social, economic, environmental and cultural spin-off effects. Consequentially, various levels of government should strategize on how to support the work of community-based anti-racist organizations, and invest into the work done by these organizations.

Overall, SLARC's example demonstrates the importance of strong personal commitments and personal connections for building respectful relations in situations where respect has been compromised.

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SEAN MEADES, ASTRID JOHNSTON, AND GAYLE BROAD



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## GLOSSARY

**Anishinaabe:** The indigenous word (in the Anishinaabemowin language) for First Nations formerly known to settlers as Ojibwe, Odawa, Algonquin, and Potawatomi, meaning “original people.” Anishinaabek is the plural form of Anishinaabe. Anishinaabe was chosen instead of more generic terms because Sioux Lookout is located in traditional Anishinaabe territory.

**Capital:** Human resources considered in terms of their contribution to an economy. The term is most often used in the context of material wealth, in which case capital refers to money, property, or other financial resources that can be used in the production of more wealth.

**Commodification:** The process by which something is turned into a good that can be bought, sold, or traded. This is usually critiqued for assigning value to goods or abstract notions that some people hold to be priceless.

**Civil Society:** Individuals and organizations that are separate from the government .

**Discourse:** The patterns and ideas motivating the patterns of how people talk about a certain topic.

**Holistic:** Emphasizing the importance of analyzing the whole or entirety of something, rather than separating it into parts.

**Identity Politics:** Political activity or movements based on or catering to the cultural, ethnic, gender, racial, religious, or social interests that characterize a group identity.

**Socialization:** A continuing process whereby an individual acquires a personal identity and learns the norms, values, behavior, and social skills appropriate to his or her social position.

**Social Capital:** The social networks between people, and the trust, reciprocity and positive assumptions that people have for one another.

**Social Economy:** The practices mobilized to satisfy social or human needs, usually through the work of organizations or people that are operating neither as representatives of the state nor as parties in a for-profit enterprise.

**Solidarity:** A state of two or more groups of people highly committed to a common cause.

**Value Congruence:** The process by which people with different values or ideas come to an agreement or common understanding.

**Voluntary Associations:** Groups that are primarily or largely driven by volunteers, including non-profits, ad-hoc committees, charities, and other groups that rely on volunteers.

## 1.0 Introduction

Describing relationships between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe people within the civil society of the small Northern Ontario town of Sioux Lookout, a long-time resident stated, “*It’s a question that doesn’t quite go far enough, that’s all that racism is really. [...] I mean, the most telling example is ‘how come the Indians are drunks?’ There’s not that much difference between that and my friend saying, ‘How come Native people don’t volunteer at the shelter?’*” Without extending the question to look at the underlying power relations that shape our reality and questioning the conditions that produced these situations, individuals accept a superficial view of that reality. This view is based in a type of ignorance where “*our current interests, beliefs, and theories obscure [certain topics]*”<sup>1</sup> making it difficult to identify knowledge gaps because existing interests or beliefs prevent our awareness of the matters of which we are ignorant.<sup>2</sup>

While racism takes on many shapes and can indeed be much more than “*a question that doesn’t quite go far enough,*” from systemic exclusion to acts of violence, this “*not even knowing that we do not know*” has played a major role in more passive forms of race-based prejudice.

This project explores the role of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee (SLARC)’s work on building inter-racial solidarity, and the impact that this has had on the social economy of Sioux Lookout and the surrounding area. The social economy refers to the practices mobilized to satisfy social or human needs, usually through the work of organizations or people that are operating neither as representatives of the state nor as parties in a for-profit enterprise. This sector can include community-based organizations, co-operatives, community economic development organizations, not-for-profits, and many voluntary-sector initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

This project is a case study to see how voluntary associations can benefit both the social economy and the fight for a just society. The project will identify lessons learned by SLARC that may be valuable for other communities in Northern Ontario and elsewhere.

The case study examines in detail the methods SLARC has used to foster respectful relations in Sioux Lookout. These methods are summed up as a multi-pronged approach to addressing racism, including (1) building a cross-cultural dialogue on racism; (2) supporting those who experience racism; (3) preventing the transmission of racist ideologies between generations through youth education and integration; and (4) creating space to foster the development of

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy Tuana, “The Speculum of Ignorance: The Women’s Health Movement and Epistemologies of Ignorance,” *Hypatia* 21, no. 3 (2006): 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Lou Hammond Ketilson, *Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies, and Sustainable Communities*. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

cross-cultural relationships. SLARC's reflective practice and the ongoing challenges faced by the organization will also be addressed.

Finally, policy options for supporting the work of SLARC and similar advocacy groups will also be discussed.

## 2.0 Background

Sioux Lookout is town in Northwestern Ontario with a population of 5,183, 28.18 percent of whom identify as Aboriginal according to the 2006 census.<sup>4</sup> Sioux Lookout is located within Treaty 3 territory, and the site of the town is known in Anishinaabemowin as *waaninaawagaang*. The nearest reserve is the Lac Seul First Nation, approximately 35 km. northwest of Sioux Lookout, with a population of 2,700 people, two-thirds of which reside off-reserve.<sup>5</sup>



Map courtesy of Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority [www.slnha.com](http://www.slnha.com)

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada, *2006 Census of Canada*. "Community Profiles — Census Subdivision: Sioux Lookout (town)." (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Lac Seul First Nation, 2008, "Lac Seul History," retrieved from <http://lacseul.firstnation.ca/?q=node/8>

The town of Sioux Lookout was incorporated in 1912 after the construction of National Transcontinental Railway turned the surrounding settlements into a transportation hub. Aviation soon came to play a major role in the community after the discovery of gold at the more isolated community of Red Lake in the 1920s. While air and rail transportation remain an integral part of the local economy, the significance of both have been gradually eroded over the years. The shift from steam engines to diesel decreased the need for refuelling and maintenance operations in Sioux Lookout, while the 1960s and '70s saw significant erosion of rail infrastructure and loss of jobs connected to the railway.<sup>6</sup> Sioux Lookout was also home to the Pinetree Radar Base, which was one of the town's main employers throughout the Cold War. The base was shut down in 1987 after restructuring of the North American air defence systems.<sup>7</sup> The overall economy, however, has remained stable and relatively strong, due mostly to the significance of the service sector in Sioux Lookout's economy, composing approximately 68 percent of local industries.<sup>8</sup>

Sioux Lookout plays a key role in the provision of services to 29 fly-in or otherwise isolated First Nations in the Northwest of Ontario. It is the centre for local media, telecommunications, health care, and education. Due to its location, many government services have located themselves in Sioux Lookout for ease of access to these other communities. The presence of well-paying secure jobs has led to Sioux Lookout having a low rate of government transfers as a per cent of total income, standing at 7 percent, in addition to comparatively very stable employment figures, with the unemployment rate standing at 4.2 percent at the time of the 2006 census.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, since the late 1980s, Sioux Lookout has been experiencing numerous socio-economic shifts, which have dramatically changed the make-up and nature of the community. Long time established as a military and railway community, the local economy was severely hit following lay-offs on the railway over the last 40 years. In 1987, the Pinetree Radar Base was closed, and in the 1990s and 2000s, the troubles facing the forestry sector across Northern Ontario hit the community with the eventual closure of the McKenzie Forest Products Mill in nearby Hudson.

While the military and resource-based industries slowly eroded, the growing strength and political organization of Northern First Nations facilitated more and more economic, political, and social development of which Sioux Lookout was the hub. As the primary service centre for First Nations in Northwestern Ontario, servicing a total population over 25,000, Sioux Lookout benefitted strongly from the development of tribal councils such as Shibogama Tribal Council,

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<sup>6</sup> Municipality of Sioux Lookout, 2007–2009, “The History of Sioux Lookout and Hudson,” retrieved from <http://www.siouxlookout.ca/communityhistory>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Sioux Lookout Chamber of Commerce, 2007, “Sioux Lookout Fast Facts,” retrieved from [http://www.siouxlookout.com/asl\\_slfacts.htm](http://www.siouxlookout.com/asl_slfacts.htm)

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. *2006 Census of Canada*.

the Independent First Nations Alliance, and Windigo Tribal Council, as well as the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. Other services and businesses whose primary client and customer base was First Nations, such as the NNEC, Wawatay News, KNet, Kwayaciiwin Education Resource Centre, and Tikinagan Child and Family Services all headquartered in the community.

The result has been a massive demographic shift. Most interviewees who had spent more than fifteen years in the community report that when they first moved to the community the Anishinaabe population definitely constituted a minority. Currently, however, estimates ranged from about 40 percent to “over half” of the town’s population being Anishinaabe. Describing the current status of the town, one participant stated:

*I think it’s in a transitional period because some of the “old guard” are getting old [laughter] and a lot of those folks are — maybe it’s the history they have — they just have an inability to see this town in a good light around the changes, the demographic changes. They probably would prefer it be the way it was.*

In August of 1988, the Sioux Lookout Race Relations Committee was established by an act of the municipal council adopting a motion by councillor Garnet Angeconeb. The move was in response to heavy racial tensions between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe residents following the brutal beating-death of an Anishinaabe elder, Levius Wesley, from Slate Falls First Nation. By 1989, the committee was formed with the participation of both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe residents. Over the last 20 years, the committee has taken a multi-pronged approach to confront racism. Educational projects and programs have been a primary part of the committee’s activities since its inception, while it has also pursued projects and events that bring both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe people together, including a variety of artistic and cultural projects.

In 1994 the committee began a 17-year tradition by hosting the first annual ***Race Relations Week*** coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, March 21st to 25th. The first year included community awareness activities and capacity building for board members, however the week has grown and evolved, sometimes involving theatre productions, film screenings, public displays, racism-awareness activities in schools, ribbon campaigns, guest speakers, dances, runs, Pow Wows, theatre workshops, prose and poetry competitions, and an elders’ tea. In 1996 the committee introduced what would become staples of ***Race-Relations Week***: the ***Multicultural Pot Luck Feast*** and the ***Mary Carpenter — “People Making Changes” Award***.

In 1992 the committee initiated what would become another yearly occurrence, the ***Bannock Bake-Off*** Competition during the town’s summer Blueberry Festival. The ***Bannock Bake-Off*** started as a challenge to councillors of both the Lac Seul First Nation and the Town of Sioux

Lookout to build links between the two communities. It has since become open to public teams for competition.

Following years of groundwork in developing youth initiatives in the town, SLARC opened the *Multicultural Youth Centre* in 1995. Since this time the *Multicultural Youth Centre* has offered a space for both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe youth, which has evolved with the generations it has served. The Centre’s activities are largely directed by what youth that attend would like to see. The centre has hosted drama and improv classes, coffee houses where young musicians can perform or where out-of-town bands can be hosted, as well as sports and other recreational programming. The *Multicultural Youth Centre* has provided numerous youth with mentorship, built on local capacity, while also addressing a void in activities for youth outside of formal organized sports.

In 1998, SLARC created the position of the School Programs Coordinator, which managed anti-racism programs being delivered within area schools. These programs included the *S.H.I.F.T. Initiative*, which was designed to break down barriers of understanding between children at the elementary school level, the *Sharing Our Heritage and Enriching the Future* that targeted high school students, and *Action — Youth Initiatives*, which eventually led to the organization of several youth conferences and cross-cultural exchanges.

SLARC established an *Advocacy Sub-Committee* in 1990 to tackle “*racial incidents brought to its attention and work toward systemic change to eliminate racial discrimination.*” The sub-committee took part in mediation training in 1993, and focussed on sharing this knowledge. By 1999, a lack of visibility prevented the sub-committee from taking a larger role in mediating racist incidents until in 2005 SLARC received funding to launch the *RESolve* project. *RESolve* provided formal training to a pool of volunteers to become certified Third-Party Neutral Mediators who would respond to reported incidents. *RESolve* focuses not only on racial conflict, but any situation where mediation may be necessary, from noise complaints to workplace relations.

The committee has hosted workshops on developing conflict resolution and mediating skills, has provided input into curriculum development, has liaised with police on how to improve service provision for First Nations, and has developed training resources for local businesses to provide better cross-cultural customer service. SLARC has also consistently organized events marking both the *National Day of Healing and Reconciliation* and *National Aboriginal Day*.

In 1991 and 1996, SLARC hosted a Northwestern Ontario regional race-relations conference that brought 80 and 121 delegates into the community respectively. The conferences brought together citizens, service providers, educators, lawmakers and students to establish an open dialogue about racism and provide networking opportunities for race-relations committees in Northwestern Ontario. The committee also hosted several youth-specific regional conferences,

including *5 days 4 the Future*, *4 Days 4 Change*, and *R We Tracking the Future*. These conferences focussed on social change more broadly, while providing youth with educational and skills development.

In 2001 SLARC took over management of the *Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival* from the Blueberry Festival, which had previously organized the two-day music celebration during the late summer months. The festival hosts local musicians as well as musicians from Northern remote communities and neighbouring larger centres such as Winnipeg and Thunder Bay. Since the festival has come under the SLARC umbrella, it has expanded to feature artist and artisan workshops and a now annual “*Taste of Sioux Lookout*” event featuring a multicultural variety of food including traditional Anishinaabe meals.

In 2009 SLARC embarked on another significant project, acting as the primary facilitator of the *Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation*. The coalition was organized in anticipation of the national Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigating the abuse and attempted cultural genocide that took place through the residential school process throughout Canada. Bringing together concerned members of the community, survivors, spiritual leaders, and SLARC members, the coalition believed it was important to begin the long process of healing through local dialogue and increasing understanding. Participants were invited to share information with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and planning is underway to complement the work of the Commission over the next five years. Beyond that point the *Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation* will continue its own work as it is determined by the coalition.

Over the last 20 years, SLARC has clearly been a major player in the civil society of Sioux Lookout, growing from a coalition of concerned citizens to a community fixture.

### **3.0 Methodology**

This study is based on a literature review and 22 semi-structured interviews on the impact of the work of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee within the civil society and social economy of Sioux Lookout. Interviews also focussed on perceptions of SLARC’s work and the experience of participants in being a part of the organization. Interview questions are attached in Appendix III.

Interviews were conducted by NORDIK over a 14-day period in Sioux Lookout in August of 2009. Interviews were audio recorded and notes were taken. Due to the often-transient nature of the community, many individuals who hold a great deal of institutional memory were not reached because they now live in other communities. As the interviews were conducted in August, several residents were also unavailable due to travelling and other engagements.

Participants were identified and interviews were arranged by a community-based researcher from Sioux Lookout with extensive familiarity with SLARC. The community-based researcher also compiled background information and historical records of the association, including past media coverage, annual reports, and special project reports.

Interviewees were a mix of Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe community members, all with varying experience with SLARC. Some have been involved since the organization’s beginning, while others are new to the organization. Some have sat on the board; some have been or were at the time staff of SLARC, while still some others have only volunteered for programs offered by the committee. Interviewees varied in age from early-20s to mid-80s.

### 3.1 Literature Review

A literature review was conducted examining themes related to:

- the role of voluntary associations in the social economy
- the impact of the rise of advocacy politics on the social economy
- Anishinaabe perspectives on decolonization
- theories of anti-oppression and anti-racism

The literature review highlighted areas where traditional ways of organizing in civil society have had difficulty in effectively addressing the needs of diverse populations.

The rise of “identity and advocacy politics,” or organizing based primarily around an identity category (for example race, ethnicity, ability status, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), which grew in popularity during and after the Civil Rights Movement and the Second Wave of Feminism in the 1950s and ’60s, has created new ways of participating in civil society that are often overlooked.<sup>10</sup> Yet while the Civil Rights Movement, American Indian Movement and other movements that have tried to tackle racism have created a general awareness of the political exclusion of non-white races, many people and traditional voluntary organizations continue to behave and organize in ways that unintentionally reinforced social structures of discrimination and exclusion.<sup>11</sup>

The Anishinaabe Seven Fires prophecy talks about the oppression and discrimination that Anishinaabek faced after European colonists and their descendants spread across North America.<sup>12</sup> It also foresaw a choice that Anishinaabek and settlers would face generations later; the choice between an approach to life that emphasized domination and hierarchy, which would lead to destruction, and an approach that emphasized traditional Anishinaabe values “*of peace*

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<sup>10</sup> Barbara Arneil, *Diverse Communities: The Problem with Social Capital* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 88 and 60.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61; and bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 28.

<sup>12</sup> Leeanne Simpson, “Oshkimaadiziig, the New People” in *Lighting the Eighth Fire: The Liberation, Resurgence, and Protection of Indigenous Nations*, ed. Leeanne Simpson (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2008), p. 14.

*and justice.*"<sup>13</sup> To follow the latter path, Anishinaabe scholar and activist Leeanne Simpson states "*settler society must also choose to change their ways, to decolonize their relationships with the land and Indigenous Nations, and to join with us in building a sustainable future based upon mutual recognition, justice, and respect.*"<sup>14</sup> Currently, much of civil society is still struggling to achieve this partnership. Achieving such a partnership is no simple task, but it is a crucial task in building stronger more inclusive communities.<sup>15</sup> It is also essential in resisting a world-view that emphasizes domination, as the Seven Fires Prophecy warns.

Emphasizing the role of Anishinaabek in the decolonization process, Simpson states "*if we are to take seriously our current responsibilities, our generation has a profound ability to contribute to the recovery and rebirth of Indigenous Nations, and to peaceful and just relations with our neighbouring nation states.*"<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the willingness of people in positions of power to learn from those that are marginalized is seen as an important part of challenging racism and other forms of discrimination that hurt our communities. Anti-racist feminist writer, bell hooks highlights the connection between learning and risk:

*Working with white students on unlearning racism, one of the principles we strive to embody is the value of risk, honoring the fact that we may learn and grow in circumstances where we do not feel safe, that the presence of conflict is not necessarily negative but rather its meaning is determined by how we cope with that conflict. Trusting our ability to cope in situations where racialized conflict arises is far more fruitful than insisting on safety as always the best or only basis for bonding.*<sup>17</sup>

Hooks emphasizes the importance of challenging one another and working through misunderstandings for the sake of creating an inclusive, affirming community.<sup>18</sup> This learning process is seen as a crucial component of creating inter-racial solidarity that is necessary for overcoming discrimination and inequality.<sup>19</sup> Paulo Freire writes that solidarity must mean more than just "sympathy," he states, "*true solidarity with the oppressed means [people in positions of privilege] fighting at their side to transform the objective reality*" that has made them oppressed or marginalized.<sup>20</sup> Solidarity, he argues, is built on real relationships and the caring that develops between people in a position of privilege and people who are oppressed.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> hooks, p. 36.

<sup>16</sup> Simpson, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> hooks, p. 64.

<sup>18</sup> bell hooks, *Killing Rage: Ending Racism* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1995), p. 272.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1970, reprint 2007), p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

This report looks at how one group has fostered solidarity between the descendants of settlers and Anishinaabek, and the contributions that shared struggle have brought to a small northern community.

#### **4.0 Respectful Relations, Solidarity, and the Social Economy**

SLARC’s original terms of reference emphasized the need to promote cross-cultural awareness, increase local dialogue on issues of racism, to advocate for policy changes that would curtail or diminish racial tensions, and to advocate for increased Anishinaabe representation in the community’s social and political structures. The committee sought to provide opportunities for inter-racial dialogue through cultural and educational events, as well as pursuing a wide range of initiatives aiming to foster better race-relations within the community. One of the committee’s inaugural co-chairs commented, *“We started off quite gently I think. By just encouraging people to talk.”*

One of the first activities undertaken by the committee was a survey on residents’ experiences of racism. The survey enabled the committee to identify the prevalence of racism within the community, allowing anti-racist activists to counter ongoing denial about the severity of the problem. According to the survey, *“over 90 percent of all questionnaire respondents indicated that there are problems between Natives and non-Natives in Sioux Lookout.”*<sup>22</sup>

Anti-racist organizations need to have an analysis of the racial divisions within their communities to properly tailor their activities to address the nature and shape of racism in a relevant way. One SLARC supporter commented:

*In the North there’s so much more connection to Native people, so that makes it more in-your-face. As it would be in your face if you lived in a suburb of Toronto where there would be a lot of Ethiopian people. Wherever it seems to be in your face, the racism seems to take on a new visceral quality...*

At the general meeting of 1992 the committee changed its name to the present Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee. Over the last 20 years of the organization’s existence, SLARC has earned a positive reputation through its consistency, resourcefulness, and tenacity in the face of unstable funding opportunities.

#### **4.1 Building a Cross-Cultural Dialogue on Racism**

##### *4.1.1 First Steps in Creating a Dialogue*

The founding members of the organization, both Anishinaabe and Non-Anishinaabe, understood the relationships of privilege and oppression at play in the community, but were also aware of

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<sup>22</sup> Carol Terry and Tom Terry, “Together We’re Better: A Report on Race Relations in Sioux Lookout, Ontario” (Sioux Lookout, ON: Sioux Lookout Race Relations Committee, July 1990).

the larger invisibility of this privilege to the Non-Anishinaabe population and the limitation on dialogue that stemmed from these relationships of distrust. One long-time activist stated, “*it started off with workshops [...] Not pressuring anybody to go but making people free to attend [...] we didn’t want to scare too many people away, after all we’re trying to build trust.*”

Addressing the Anishinaabe, Non-Anishinaabe divide within Sioux Lookout required a difficult balancing act to develop a productive dialogue between the Anishinaabe portion of the population that experiences race-based oppression, and portions of the Non-Anishinaabe population that are sympathetic to anti-racism but may not fully understand themselves to be in positions of racial privilege. Both portions of the larger population may assume the other comes to the table with an agenda and that they do not understand the other’s experience. Consequentially building trust is essential to break down walls between these two groups.

The organization’s founding members included many well-connected people within the community, both Anishinaabe and Non-Anishinaabe. With its roots in a motion of the Sioux Lookout Town Council, the organization has had an important relationship with the Municipality. These connections to the Municipality as well as the networks of early members facilitated the development of a public dialogue on racism. While the town bureaucracy itself is either reluctant or unable to take on much of the work conducted by SLARC, there is an acknowledgement that the work currently done by the organization has an important and necessary role in the community:

*Now I think SLARC was in, right from the beginning, when the first signs of real trouble, with the violent death of Mr. Wesley, and Garnet [Angeconeb] (then a town councillor and later inaugural co-chair for SLARC) being a real advocate for good relations [...] Kai [Koivukoski] was one of them, Garnet, Terry Lynne [Jewell] (inaugural co-chair for SLARC), and they just took the bull by the horns and went to council [...] and said “Look town, if we’re going to deal with this we’re going to deal with it properly, and let’s recognize it.” It’s been a struggle to have that recognition, even though we are a creature of council, but initially there was support from the town [...]we’ve got good support now, from the community, from individuals, from the town mechanisms, certainly from the council that’s in place now.*

#### 4.1.2 Fostering Dialogue

To address this deficit of trust, SLARC spent a great deal of time and effort organizing opportunities for community-based education through events such as ***Race Relations Week***.

SLARC took advantage of opportunities, such as those presented through officially recognized days like the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, National Aboriginal Day, and the National Day for Healing and Reconciliation, to conduct educational workshops,

displays, and themed events to address the multiple facets of the motivations, manifestations, and experiences of racism. **Race Relations Week**, which became an annual event since 1994, was initially organized around the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and has been the most consistent locus for this kind of community-based education. One interviewee described the week:

*We take a whole week to organize different events. And it's all about promoting relations, promoting understanding and awareness, and so on. But we do it through different means, like workshops, by displays by using the arts to tell our story. There's also a community feast, the multicultural feast we have every year, so people look forward to that.*

While the feast is by far the most popular event of the week and arguably the event that least explicitly addresses the issue of racism, the awareness that the feast and other activities are a part of **Race Relations Week** has allowed the committee to maintain awareness that racism remains a problem within the community. One interviewee commented:

*I just saw all kinds of people going to events, and knowing that they were going to events that were part of **Race-Relations Week**. And that's about as good as you can get when you get to the overall public, of people who weren't kind of the overall converted.*

SLARC also mobilizes to bring in as diverse a population as possible to the dialogues that the committee was able to foster around these types of events. The committee reaches out to greater participation by finding diverse means to attract new community members and include a wider cross-section of the community. Describing the process of preparing for **Race Relations Week**, one participant stated:

*... we try to get a community meeting going [...] so we invite folks from a cross-section of the community to come to the planning and we act as a catalyst to try to get different organizations to do different things during **Race Relations Week**. [...] One year we got funding and we brought in a singer-songwriter and he did song writing workshops with the kids. We do those kinds of things, but if there's no funding [...] we still carry it on and we do things, like a lot of the organizations have open houses so people can come in and see what their work is, a lot of the Native organizations open their doors and serve coffee.*

Inviting as wide a cross-section as possible to participate within the organizing stages of a project, particularly **Race-Relations Week**, forces many community members to engage with the idea of anti-racism and provides a door to new participants within the anti-racism committee itself. The open-houses also offer an opportunity for some residents who may be unfamiliar with the work of many Anishinaabe organizations in the community to familiarize themselves with

these organizations on which the town is now in many ways economically dependent. The process plays a crucial role in bringing the larger community into a dialogue about race-relations and provides shared ownership and responsibility of the event.

The committee also uses various other means for engaging the larger community in an inclusive way, including membership drives, community meetings and being aware of the importance of safe space. One participant describes how the committee often alternates between venues to maximize its exposure across the community:

*A lot of the activities happen at the friendship centre. A lot of community activities happen at the legion, you know? Two different places. The legion there's the big SLARC awards are given out, they have a community feast every year and it's at the legion and a lot of people come. There were 300 people there or 400 almost there last year. I mean that's 10 percent of the community, that's massive.*

Another participant expanded on the relationships with the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre: *"The Friendship Centre has been a major partner for many years. We host a lot of events there. Someone from the Friendship Centre sits on our board and sits on the **Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation**, and he really does a lot for the organization."*

#### 4.1.3 Presenting Alternatives

One community member compared the work of SLARC to work being done within the local High School, explaining the significance of their shared approach:

*[It's] the same thing with racist stuff at the school. [...] Racist behaviour is not acceptable. But to get to that [point] you also have to offer the alternative "here are things to do together." It's not enough to say to somebody "change your behaviour." You gotta show them, right? Cause if they can't envision a world where colour doesn't matter, where cultures and religious differences don't matter, if they can't envision that they'll never be able to make it a reality.*

Part of presenting these alternative ways of relating to one another is reforming existing institutions so that they are more representative of the whole community's population. SLARC's mandate to increase participation of First Nations within the decision making mechanisms of Sioux Lookout has been a guiding concern of the organization since its inception. It's first terms of reference published in 1990 state, among other missions, that the committee aims *"to encourage appropriate representation of the Native population of the community in all town organizations, boards and committees."* Interviewees frequently maintained the committee's commitment to this objective as being one of its most significant contributions to the community. One person commented that SLARC *"is often the voice that says, when there's a planning meeting, "do we have representation from the First Nations community?" It's just important*

*having people there that ask that question.”* The committee also takes this question seriously, as it constantly endeavours to have an equitable representation in its own board structure.

Reflecting on the success of the organization, one supporter said:

*[one of the main strengths] is having a board that is representative of First Nations as well as non-First Nation [...] I think that has to remain intact. Because there's nothing like wanting to be saved by somebody, you know? [laughter] We've heard that so much all the time, you know? If our own people can be part of that and promote it, I think it's a good thing.*

The organization works hard to ensure that its own board reflect the changes that its supporters wish to see in the broader community. By doing so, the board itself becomes an example of an anti-racist alternative to segregation and the systemic exclusion of Anishinaabek within much of the community's civil society.

The ***Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation*** (CCHR) has been one of the strongest examples in SLARC's history of a cross-cultural partnership. While many SLARC activists have over the years been eager to foster relationships between Sioux Lookout and Lac Seul First Nation, frequently this desire has to be overlooked due to funding priorities and limited organizational capacity. Through the ***CCHR***, however, SLARC has been able to build bridges between the two communities by addressing an issue pressing to Anishinaabe communities, yet that affects many non-Anishinaabe people without their awareness. Describing the purpose of the ***CCHR***, one active member for SLARC explained that it was for the purpose of:

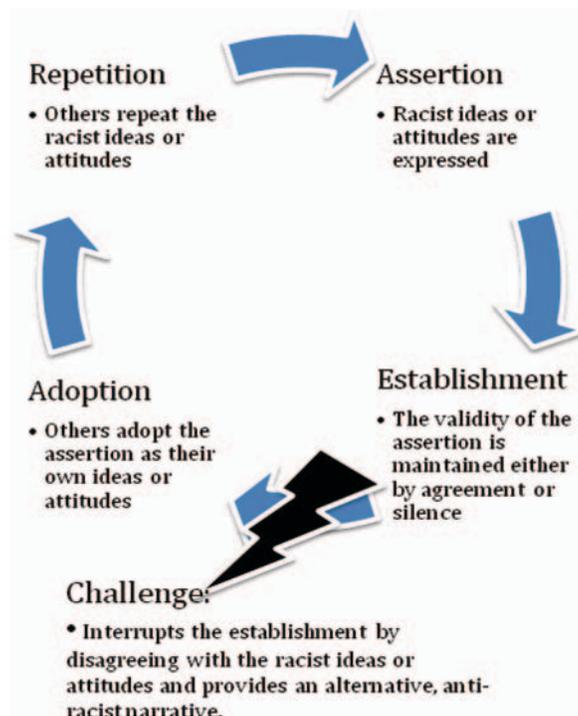
*Getting people together to talk about the residential school issues, and to see what can be done to make sure the history of the residential schools is being shared, particularly with non-Aboriginal people — there's still quite a lot of people that really don't know what happened — and to do some things that may help towards some healing for individuals who have experienced the residential school setting. But also kind of healing and reconciliation for everyone because that whole episode of Canadian history really impacted everybody even if we're not aware of it.*

While the ***CCHR***'s mandate is significantly more long-term than most of SLARC's advocacy projects, the work undertaken through the coalition lays the foundation for the alternatives SLARC wishes to see in the future.

#### *4.1.4 Interrupting the Normalization of Racism*

The committee's vocal opposition to racism also has the affect of interrupting the normalization of racist values, particularly given the committee's significant visibility within the community. When asked about the difference in prevalence of racist comments from the 1970s to the present,

one participant stated: “*I don’t know that you’d get those any more. I think that you wouldn’t get them because people are silenced.*” The same participant went on to credit agencies, including teachers and police officers, for the training they have undertaken to increase inter-racial understanding among service providers.



While silencing is typically considered to be negative, in the case of racism what silencing has done is limit the spread of racist ideas and comments from previously open public displays, to private, in-group communication. The result is anti-racist individuals are freer to share their beliefs unchallenged, while the public exposure of racist ideas has been limited, curtailing the opportunities for such ideas to be taken-up by people who would be previously uninvested. The same participant later commented:

*I would say that it’s very difficult to pinpoint exactly what SLARC has done, except to at least keep the idea alive, so in other words, that’s why again, people have to know what SLARC is, they have to be able to say it, they have to be able to associate something with it, cause that’s about all you can do [...] so I would say if SLARC has anything to take credit for, it’s just keeping the idea of working together or understanding each other alive.*



Facilitating dialogue has been a major key to the success of SLARC’s efforts to mobilize cross-cultural attempts to tackle racism. This dialogue has a long-term impact by solidifying the bonds of solidarity that make SLARC’s anti-racist projects possible. When asked about the committee’s strengths, one respondent stated *“the people. Incredibly strong, committed people. And no one individual but just the way people are interconnected has kept it going [...] for the most part it’s been the way people are connected.”* The

networks of loyalty and commitment established through countless means in the community, but contributed to by SLARC, have been the organization’s primary strength in the face of continual difficulty in securing funding and the threats of complacency and fear that fuel racism.

## 4.2 Supporting Those Who Experience Racism

### 4.2.1 Confronting Racism

From the very beginning of SLARC, the question of how to directly challenge racism in its day-to-day forms has been a primary concern for many of the committee’s activists. One interviewee discussed the role of volunteers in the committee’s conflict resolution programs:

*... one of the areas that SLARC has worked on, and it’s a very difficult area, is to actually tackle issues of racism. To do conflict resolution, even though there is a program, it’s still using a lot of volunteers and really good people; you know, what do you think they volunteer for? It’s conflict! Most people would want to run away from conflict [laughter] But I’ll tell you this, there’s some courageous people that have been willing to take on issues of actual cases of discrimination, acts of racism, and so on and try and resolve those issues. Some people think we haven’t done enough, other people think that we’re doing great, but all I want to say is that I think it takes some extraordinary people to tackle all those difficult issues, but it’s happening.*

The *Advocacy Group* was one of the first sub-committees of SLARC, formed in 1990, and was tasked with receiving complaints of racism and discrimination and responding to these reports

when deemed necessary in a just and fair manner. One long-standing volunteer explained the process employed by the group:

*... there was a couple of us who would list our phone numbers. We had notices in the newspapers. So we would get calls [...] and often, just the conversation that I would have with people would be adequate, they would feel they'd been heard and they didn't really want it to go forward. And occasionally there was an opportunity for the two people to meet. It was always brought to a meeting of our sub-committee [...] we'd discuss it, and someone would approach both parties. I think almost always there was contact with the person who's been complained about. Sometimes there might have been an apology. In some cases, they didn't even acknowledge that there was really a problem. But there were one or two times when we actually got the two parties in a room and had a discussion, and it turned out really well.*

The group was consistent for a period of approximately 5 to 8 years, and regularly reported statistics on incidents that came to the attention of the committee. By the mid-2000s, the committee's exclusively volunteer organization became unsustainable due to volunteer burnout, a lack of staffing, and limited access to proper training. "In the meantime," one internal report stated, "complaints have continued to be received on a regular basis and have been dealt with in an unstructured, and often less than adequate, way by SLARC staff and board members, who lack the time and training to deal with them effectively."

The spirit of the committee was taken up again in 2005 by the **REsolve** program, which provided confidential community mediation for anyone in conflict. One participant commented, "we recognized the fact that we needed to be getting the word out and get training, and we wanted to kind of renew the mediation process in the town, because over the years that's always come up. The things that we have been doing have been good, but there's still incidents and things that have come up." The program provided training for community members through the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution, which certified approximately two dozen volunteers as Third-Party Neutral mediators. These mediators assisted plaintiffs in achieving successful resolution to their concerns with significant positive results. The project's initial funding also provided the funds to purchase a cell phone to receive the calls, which was used as an exclusive line for the program and carried by the program co-ordinators. After receiving a call, the co-ordinator would find an appropriate mediator from the group that had received training and assign them to the case. The renewal of SLARC's advocacy work reinvigorated interest in the organization locally, as well as providing project funding for a short period of time. One interviewee commented: "What **REsolve** did was bring a tonne of people from the community into SLARC and I think people that probably never would have come to SLARC got involved in that sense."

The **REsolve** program has also been crucial for sustaining positive relationships within the community. Its roots as a means for addressing race-based conflict provided additional visibility

to SLARC’s anti-racism project, which in its own right challenged people to be vigilant about the presence of racism within the community. The program also facilitated the development of mediation skills for dozens of local volunteers, which one participant in particular believed had a positive spin-off before the volunteers were ever called to provide mediation:

*It’s offered an opportunity to build a set of skills for a set of people who know how to solve problems [...] once you teach people how to do the formal thing, the conflict doesn’t happen that often, because it doesn’t need to. Because a problem’s happening, and there’s somebody that’s near it that has the skills to resolve it. So the conflicts just don’t arise.*

Another community member working for a First Nations service organization noted:

*I know a lot of positive feedback came from that conflict resolution work that they did, that was really something that I know a lot of people liked and the various people I know [...] I think they were really happy to have that kind of programming.*

Both programs were rooted in the concept of mediation, which brings people in conflict (particularly over issues of racism and discrimination, but not exclusively) together in dialogue to resolve their conflicts in ways that maintained and repaired relationships. Despite the positive results stemming from the mediation processes, the project itself was not always embraced by the wider community. One participant described the work associated with the **REsolve** project as being “a hard sell.”

Nonetheless, the **REsolve** project is also significant as it not only gives a voice to those who are marginalized by discrimination, but provides a means of redress for those that experience discrimination. The challenges that have faced SLARC in sustaining such a significant project have been substantial, and unfortunately have at times placed limitations on the visibility and accessibility of the program. Nonetheless, even critics of the program lauded it for its intent and potential:

*... our people, First Nation people, they’re very passive and sometimes when something happens to them, they just kind of shake it off and say “Oh well” you know? Or they won’t do anything about it, they’ll tell someone but there’s not a willingness to act on it, but if we start to, you know those of us that can do that, that are not scared to say something and advocate and provide that support they require, I think they would be willing to talk about it in a forum where they feel safe to do that. But I think more and more people are comfortable to bring these issues up [...] but if people feel they’re not being listened to, then they’ll never go back. But if you try to build a forum where they know that something is going to happen, or follow up is going to take place, or respect is*

*there, I think that's the kind of forum that should be developed, [is] in the process of being developed, I'd say.*

In early 2010, however, the committee obtained funding to hire a program co-ordinator for a two year term, which will hopefully allow the program to establish a more firm footing and increase the role **REsolve** plays in providing a voice to those that have experienced racism locally.

#### 4.2.2 Tackling Systemic Racism

While the **REsolve** program provided a means to confront discrimination as incidents came to light, supporters and volunteers with SLARC were also concerned with tackling systemic forms of racism that pre-dated the committee and did not necessarily involve individuals that could be confronted.

At its initiation in 1990, the **Advocacy Group** aimed to tackle systemic forms of racism in addition to its individual-based advocacy, with one of its functions outlined as *“in all actions, focus on contributing to long term, systemic change.”* However the same challenges of volunteer burnout and a lack of sustainable structure that eventually led to the group's dissolution also prevented the group from identifying means for tackling systemic forms of racism and focussed its attention on responding to reports of racial discrimination.

SLARC has also taken on measures to tackle perceptions of systemic racism within certain sectors of the community. One resident commented, *“there is occasionally some systemic stuff with the OPP, and it's kind of the mentality of being ‘a cop’ kind of.”* Another said, *“there's been some incidents where, it's just the way the business people approach First Nation people. It's almost like your colour of money is a different colour from the rest. And it shouldn't be like that!”* Both the police as well as the business sector have been identified as needing some special attention by the committee.

In November of 1993, representatives of SLARC met with members of the Sioux Lookout Chamber of Commerce and began to develop what became known as the **Cross Cultural Project**. Through the project, the committee developed an anti-racism policy in consultation with local businesses and services that could be adapted by local businesses, recruitment strategies for local businesses to hire more Anishinaabe employees, and the development of a cross-cultural training video, titled *“Addressing the Needs of First nations Clients”* that was launched in 1999.

SLARC has been active in including the business sector in its efforts to tackle racism through its corporate membership. The committee's corporate members and sponsors range from branches of national companies such as the CIBC and the Bank of Montreal, to service providers such as Shibogama First Nations Council and the Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre, to local businesses large

and small, such as Bearskin Airlines, Wasaya Airways, Musselwhite Mine, Johnny’s Fresh Market, and Wawatay Native Communication Society, to name just a few.

Other agencies, such as the OPP, that have wished to improve their relationships with First Nations have done so in part by becoming actively involved with SLARC, not only in partnership, but by some individuals demonstrating a prolonged, years-long commitment through the committee’s board of directors. One long-time volunteer described this officer’s involvement:

*[he] was involved in the **REsolve** project and he’s started sitting on the board for SLARC and the youth centre, he wanted to be involved with the youth centre, and he wanted to involve the police with the youth at the youth centre. And what they started doing was having sports nights, we tried having them as a presence that would show up every now and then, like just to say hi, but that didn’t go over so well [laughter] [...] So they come out of uniform and interact in the gym [...] But that’s basically the relationship now. The police and the youth centre working together now.*

SLARC was also able to mobilize on an incredibly significant example of systemic discrimination in the form of *the **Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation***. Born in part out of a challenge to begin a dialogue of healing with regard to the impact of the residential school system by one of SLARC’s founders at a dinner commemorating the National Day for Healing and Reconciliation, the ***CCHR*** brought SLARC in partnership with survivors of residential school and representatives from local churches to begin a dialogue of healing.

While the ***CCHR*** was inspired by the anticipated work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, there was an awareness of the Commission’s shortcomings and the need for ongoing dialogue. One participant stated “*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is only going to be around for five years. It’s what happens beyond that that’s important, that’s where the really important work begins.*” Commenting on the increased engagement created through the ***CCHR***, another participant stated “*there’s several members from that community involved in that committee [...] We just recently started this year, and it’s working.*” Part of the strength of the ***CCHR*** lies with SLARC having seized an opportunity offered by developments at the national level. Another participant commented:

*... one of the ideas behind the coalition is that we don’t have to wait for the TRC to get going or even come to the community, we can get things started here at a local level. Also, create a really good foundation and context for when the TRC does come [...] but I think another aspect is that people are finally ready to talk about the residential school legacy, so it’s just been about creating events where people can do that and where survivors can speak if they want to speak publicly and that’s really been valuable for me as a learning experience...*

On May 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada visited Sioux Lookout on the invitation of Garnet Angeconebe from the **CCHR** to speak to residential school survivors as well as students and community members. In his address to a community forum hosted by the **CCHR**, Sinclair highlighted how the residential schools perpetuated systemic racism long after their closure. Sinclair stated:

*While the children were the ones placed in the schools, what they were told was their culture, their community, their people were literally invalid. They had nothing to be proud of. They were inferior. They were almost evil and it was something they should be ashamed of and that sense of shame was not only ingrained in the Aboriginal child, but the fact that Aboriginal children should be ashamed of being Aboriginal was also ingrained in the white children who went to the white public schools because almost indirectly, they were taught the same thing. [...] non-Aboriginal Canada needs to know that the way they educated their children has also contributed to this legacy and, in fact, is a result of this legacy too...<sup>23</sup>*

Sinclair estimated that by the end of his visit two dozen survivors stories had been recorded, which will be included in a compilation of stories being used by the TRC for its report on the history and impact of residential schools in Canada. Sinclair went on to say “*It gives the survivor an opportunity to put the experience of residential school within the overall context of their lives. It’s part of the individual’s process of reconciliation for themselves and what it is they’ve gone through.*”<sup>24</sup>

Commenting on the **CCHR**, one long-time SLARC member stated:

*I really think the work needs to continue of rebuilding where we’ve gone wrong. And to learn from that so we don’t repeat the same mistakes again. And there are signs of change, so it’s all about facilitating social change. That’s what we’re about.*

These examples demonstrate how SLARC has utilized partnerships to address issues of systemic racism; however these relationships have been in development and have been in flux for 20 years. The significant time commitment required to establish this level of trust goes beyond simple networking, and demonstrates the importance of commitment and perseverance.

#### 4.2.3 Responding to Crises

Delivering anti-racist advocacy has required considerable flexibility on the part of SLARC volunteers and activists. As one participant stated:

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<sup>23</sup> Tim Brody, “Two powerful days of truth and reconciliation,” *The Sioux Bulletin*, 19, no. 29 (19 May 2010): 10–11.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

*... my sense is that a topic like racism changes with time. And so people need to be sensitive to the different kind of waves that the topic is emerging.[...] historically as things happen, the conversations around racism change, and so I think the openness and flexibility of the folks that are involved is really important.*

One such change within Sioux Lookout has been discussions around the possibility of creating an urban reserve within the town . The same participant stated:

*... recently there's been some discussion about whether there might be an urban reserve [...] hearing sort of the discussions around the side... that raised the bar a bit on people's understanding.*

Another participant, discussing the impact of the dispute between the Northern First Nation of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug and the Ontario Government from 2006 to 2009, described the relevance of the events to Sioux Lookout:

*... you have those kinds of fallouts, you hear about them in the barroom, you hear about them in the streets [...] You talk about sovereignty, it means different things to different people. [...] And so that kind of discussion needs to take place at the community level. [...] I think it's incumbent upon SLARC and organizations like SLARC to help foster that discussion in some ways at the community level. We've got a lot of educating to do.*

Over 20 years, SLARC has witnessed numerous events and public discussions that have either fanned flames of racism or changed the existing dialogue on racism. Much of the response to these changes has been informal, given SLARC's structure is primarily based around program delivery of varying sorts. However the committee has organized around events such as the **National Day of Action** called by the Assembly of First Nations to raise awareness and contribute to discussions on anti-racism. Because of the impact that news events have on local feelings about racism some supporters and volunteers of SLARC wished to see a larger role for the committee in responding to events as they arise. One person commented: *“I think the town should be able to call on SLARC at the drop of a hat and SLARC should be strong enough to be able to respond at the drop of a hat to hot-button issues.”*

### **4.3 Prevention and Youth Education**

#### **4.3.1 Preventing Segregation**

The **Multicultural Youth Centre**, founded in 1995, has been successful in creating a multiracial space for youth to gather. The organization has occasionally been able to obtain funding for a youth centre co-ordinator, though typically it has relied on obtaining project grants to hire staff that can oversee the youth centre in addition to their other responsibilities. When funding for co-

ordinators was unavailable, the job of keeping the Youth Centre open fell on youth volunteers that created schedules and shifts for volunteers to open and monitor the space. Co-ordinators had the freedom to develop and deliver programs for the Youth using the space, including an open mic “coffee house,” theatre projects, and other recreational activities. By creating a sustained place for youth to go that offered varied potential for activities, youth had a constant location available to them with programming that was flexible enough to meet the needs of its clientele that was necessarily in a constant state of change and evolution. One long-time SLARC activist commenting on the cross-cultural aspect of the Youth Centre, stated:

*It's taken a long time but it really is, it is now a cross-cultural place, which is what we wanted to foster but it took forever, and we've gone both ways! We've had non-Aboriginal kids that were really cool doing a lot of social justice stuff, then we had a lot of Aboriginal kids, so now we do have a bit of a mix and it's coming along nicely. The youth centre's been very productive.*

Two participants who first became involved in SLARC through the Youth Centre commented on how the Youth Centre has also bridged faith divides within the community:

*1. It wasn't like how it is now, where there's this overlap where kids from here go over there and the church kids go to the youth centre regularly [...]*

*2. I think music has had a lot to do with it, that's just what I've seen [...]*

*1. Yeah, yeah. That's true actually. Like having the coffee houses and stuff, having concerts at the youth centre...*

One participant went on to comment explicitly on how the youth centre has fostered inter-racial co-operation:

*I think having the youth especially be in charge of those kinds of things, I think [...] [it] is forcing them to interact with kids that they would never interact with, ever, in their life, outside of school [...] I think at the youth centre other kids would want to get involved too, and you can't turn them away either.*

The youth centre provided opportunities to bridge social divisions that were prevalent within the high school, and were often racialized.

One recent activity of the **Multicultural Youth Centre** that drew wide praise across the community was the development of a play by local youth that tackled real-life situations of racism and homophobia, titled *Bounce*. The program included an education component where youth were educated about hate crimes as well as healing with a model based on the Seven

Grandfather Teachings. The group that took part was a mix of both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe youth who wrote and performed the play. One community member commented on the play’s significance, stating:

*I don’t know if anyone understood [how important that was], like to me, it was HUGE. It was the biggest thing that I saw that worked to address [racial divides among high-school aged youth]. It was the biggest thing that happened since I moved to this community [20 years ago]. It was massive [...] So I think they understood from my perspective, and I really think that that play needs to be done all over Northwestern Ontario.*

#### 4.3.2 Anti-Racist Education

In addition to the **Multicultural Youth Centre** much of SLARC’s programming was targeted to youth in schools and was carried out by the **education sub-committee** or the School Programs Coordinator.

The **education sub-committee**’s early activities included developing anti-racism policies within schools, and later on, the adoption of an anti-racism policy by the school board itself. One of SLARC’s first co-chair’s commented:

*I think the Anti-Racism Committee has had influence in that they helped develop a policy on anti-racism for the Dryden Board at that time. So whatever the policy was that was approved by the education board, is implemented here so I think that has had some influence on relations. My son graduated in 1998 here, and the other day we went to my nephew’s graduation [...] the seven teachings [of the Anishinaabe culture] were marked on the wall of the foyer in the high school, and [my son] said “we never had that when I was here [...] and then for him to say that I thought, Wow, well we certainly didn’t have it.” And what I was noticing is a process of gradual change for the better.*

The same person added reflections on the significance of creating policy change: “*Now that there’s policy, how do you make that change? Well there’s a policy that allows you to do that! Creating change also means setting policy.*”

By 1994 SLARC had created solicited youth participation on its management committee and struck a youth advisory committee by the end of the same year. From 1998-2005 SLARC also developed programming to deliver within local schools, which came under the management of the newly created School Programs Coordinator. Some of these program included the **S.H.I.F.T. Initiative** that promoted means of overcoming barriers to cooperation among children and youth, and the **Sharing our Heritage and Enriching the Future** program that was designed to break down barriers of understanding between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe students at the high school level, and also provided orientation and support for students coming to Sioux Lookout

from communities in the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. While the programs themselves were sometimes short-lived, the principles behind them were carried on in different forms. This process of reincarnation was necessary due to the availability of funding, with some programs ending before new funders were found, and then being taken up again later through different granting programs. The *Sharing our Heritage and Enriching the Future* for instance, lasted only a year, however in 2001 SLARC's School Program Coordinator launched a new program, *Niinawint Anishinawbek*, which was designed to give students the opportunity to learn about Anishinaabe history, culture and accomplishments through educational workshops in classrooms. The program persisted another year and was eventually succeeded by the *Piskapiiwin* project that ran from 2003 to 2008. This project was an outdoor education program led by an elder designed to expose a racially mixed group of youth to aspects of Anishinaabe culture through camping and canoe expeditions that at times connected the communities of Sioux Lookout and Lac Seul First Nation. At the program's height, SLARC was able to offer a camp for each winter, spring, summer, and fall season. One participant commented: "... *when you look at some of the things that are happening in the school systems [...], the winds of change are blowing, and in a good way when you see those results.*"

#### 4.3.3 Building Confidence and Training Anti-Racist Activists

The committee's youth work has also focussed significant attention on building self-esteem and young people's capacity for advocacy. Through the *Multicultural Youth Centre* and the school and youth programs SLARC developed the *Sioux Lookout Youth Council (SLYC)* that organized events for youth, as well as three local youth conferences, *4 Days 4 Change* held in 2002, and *R We Tracking Tomorrow* held in 2003 and again in 2005. Both conferences focussed on youth engagement in social justice work, some attracting youth from as far away as Atikokan and Thunder Bay. One mother described the experience of both of her daughters that attended the conference: "... *my own daughters anyway, they were really fascinated by that because it gave them kind of an outlet to voice their own concerns because they have their own concerns as youth in terms of what they face out there.*" The conferences also acted as catalysts for several other youth to become future volunteers or staff with SLARC. When asked how they became involved, one participant stated:

*The first time I was involved with SLARC was through a youth committee called the Sioux Lookout Youth Council, and we met on a weekly basis, sort of just showed up and planned activities for the youth centre for ourselves and for other kids, and on top of that the person that was running the place at the time was pretty socially active [...] So she was really into showing us stuff that we weren't really used to seeing in Sioux Lookout at the time in terms of [...] just making us more aware of our surroundings and politically aware and stuff like that.*

#### 4.3.4 Future Developments

The **Multicultural Youth Centre** has been one of the most successful and long-standing of SLARC’s youth programs and has benefitted from some support from the Municipality. This support has usually been in the form of covering the rental costs for the facility and in 2009 the Municipality paid the salary of the Youth Centre Co-ordinator. One participant commented: *“[The municipality] provide the office space, basically at no cost, and they’ve been a major supporter. I think without their support they wouldn’t continue to exist.”* Currently the municipality has partnered with SLARC in the rehabilitation of an old hotel in the town’s downtown, which will house both a new Youth Centre, SLARC offices, and a social enterprise. The municipality has also played an active role in many of the Youth Centre’s projects, including attempts to construct a skate park for town youth.

### 4.4 Creating Opportunities for Cross-Cultural Relationships

#### 4.4.1 Bringing People Together

Many of the organization’s projects have been examples of attempts at creating safe spaces where Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe residents can meet, socialize, and form friendships across the racial divide in Northwestern Ontario.

Part of the strength of SLARC lies in its facilitation of bonding experiences, both for committee activists as well as cross-culturally throughout the community. While committee activists shared their experiences either on the board or as volunteers and employees, much of SLARC’s energy and focus has been targeted to creating opportunities across the broader community to come together. Much of this work has been challenging, balancing the committee’s goal of increasing anti-racist awareness, while attempting to put on events that were attractive to a wide range of residents and visitors. As a result, many of the events regularly organized by SLARC do not at first sight appear to be inherently anti-racist at their core, however, the bonds that are created within the community through these events go a long way in increasing cross-cultural exposure and providing people with shared experiences on which to build personal relationships.

The organization’s primary goal throughout this time has remained to bring people together. As one participant noted:

*I think the role of SLARC is just to bring people together across these boundaries and across these divisive lines, and as long as you can manage that in a respectful, inclusive way where you create this comfortable space for people to be in together, it doesn’t really matter what kind of language you use surrounding that. Because I think you’ve achieved your goal of creating new relationships in the community. Hopefully across, well not just cultural boundaries but all kinds of boundaries.*

The committee's youth programs outlined earlier contribute to cross-cultural bonding, particularly the *Multicultural Youth Centre*. SLARC also paid plentiful attention to creating spaces for adults to integrate across racial lines. Commenting on the erosion of racial segregation in Sioux Lookout, one interviewee commented:

*I think there was a few things that happened over the years: There's been more community events that are interactive between the diverse groups of the community. There's been some activities where you're beginning to see more integration of First Nation involvement, such as the Blueberry Festival, the Multicultural [feast]. We now have some First Nation members on town council.*

Some of SLARC's other projects have also inadvertently created similar spaces as a by-product of other ends. For instance, one relatively recent newcomer to the community described their experience of taking part in the training sessions for the *REsolve* program:

*I took a couple of the training session and really found that very beneficial and very interesting. Not only personally, but as a way to connect with other people and get to know other people in the town in an interesting kind of way, because when you do those kinds of training workshops you get to know people and see their strengths and interests in a different way than if you had just casually met them over coffee or at some other event.*

Through many of these endeavours, SLARC not only created space for Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe people to build relationships and community, but also fostered discussion on racism that made the anti-racist quality of their work and activities clear. Through these projects, SLARC helped citizens draw the connections between the divisions within the community, racism, and the capacity to build a sense of community across racial lines.

#### *4.4.2 Meeting People Where They're At*

SLARC has been enormously successful in using public events to create bonding within the community across racial barriers. Much of this success stems from adapting activities that are appealing to the general public regardless of any theme the activity might take:

*... any of the successful initiatives of SLARC have been things that people want to do, and you can make the issues more palatable, because they want to show up for a pot luck or they want to show up for a film, or it's free, or it's you know really accessible, visible part of town and there's just people walking through.*

Among the most popular events that SLARC organizes each year include the annual *Bannock Bake-Off*, coinciding with the summertime Blueberry Festival, *the Multicultural Pot-Luck Feast*, *the Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival*, the *Taste of Sioux Lookout*, and

numerous community events that are planned in conjunction with *Race Relations Week*. Several participants offered praise for these sorts of events:

*... an event for example, like the multicultural potluck feast, I think this year it might have been the biggest ever, and there must have been 3-400 people from like a huge range of sectors of the community and even from Lac Seul, just all of them sitting together in the same room, I think it affects the way people see the community and see each other. And there's a lot of events like that, that the organization does, it does in fact bring a lot of people together that wouldn't necessarily come together.*

*... the [...] bannock bake off has always been one great example of something where there's an Aboriginal intent or content that everybody can do, it's simple easy fun, it's a riot.*

As one supporter commented, *“I think SLARC is sort of a better than the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee, SLARC is now “okay, SLARC, my kid went to this event and that was good.” So I think it has got a pretty good reputation.”* This comment suggests that many people are opening themselves and their children up to experiences of inter-racial bonding without necessarily being aware that such bonding is among the intended goals of the events or activities taking place. This allows the committee to reach into sectors of the community that would otherwise be turned off by the overtly political project of building inter-racial solidarity. Speaking of *Race Relations Week*, the same supporter later commented, *“But I just saw all kinds of people going to events, and knowing that they were going to events that were part of race-relations week. And that's about as good as you can get when you get to the overall public, of people who weren't kind of the overall converted.”*

SLARC has also had to actively seek out participation from Anishinaabe communities. The committee has sometimes struggled to maintain a balance between Anishinaabe and Non-Anishinaabe participants in both the board and in SLARC's programs. In attempting to address at-times limited First Nation involvement, the committee has had to actively recruit volunteers and board members and address issues of accessibility that present barriers to the Anishinaabe population. One participant commented *“some of the stuff has been translated in syllabics and more fluent speakers are involved in the anti-racist committee, [now] there's more people that are coming forward and want to get involved.”*

These actions demonstrate the importance of three crucial considerations for organizations promoting inclusion:

- (1) the activities of the group have to be of interest to their intended audience
- (2) barriers to communication and participation should be accommodated, such as language barriers or those experienced by people with a disability

(3) individuals need to be invited to participate



#### 4.4.3 Partnerships and Bridging the Cultural Divide

Relationships with local First Nations leadership have also been crucial. While the municipal council is a multi-racial body, Anishinaabek have typically been underrepresented on the council. The nearest reserve is Lac Seul First Nation, 35 KMs west of the Town of Sioux Lookout, and while distance and lack of local connections have historically hampered efforts to build solid longstanding relationships between the First Nation and SLARC, ***The Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation*** has played a large role in solidifying a relationship.

*We have pretty good support from the Chief, Chief Clifford Bull, he attends a lot of events. He's especially interested in Truth and Reconciliation residential school legacy dialogue, so again, the coalition [for Healing and Reconciliation], I think that's been the first thing in a while that's hit on that is actually relevant to Lac Seul. So there's some potential there to expand on our partnerships.*

Relationships with locally headquartered tribal councils, First Nations service providers, and the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre have also been essential, as the Anishinaabe population of Sioux Lookout comes from across Northwestern Ontario as well as locally. While forging these bonds has at times been difficult, particularly for tribal councils (Shibogama, Windigo, and the Independent First Nations Alliance), whose communities are hundreds of kilometres away, the relationship development has created bridges between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe groups within Sioux Lookout, as well as creating links between the Town of Sioux Lookout and the remote communities it services.

The immense breadth of relationships that SLARC has developed since its inception, from the school board, to small businesses, to social services, municipal government to Tribal and band administrations, have contributed to the organization's success. By identifying stakeholders in

both Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe communities in Sioux Lookout, SLARC was able to target its outreach and partnership development in a way that brings the community together. In addition, SLARC targeted much of its education work to institutions that impacted both communities or that were identified as cross-roads between these two communities where interracial conflict or tension had been identified. While this bridge building serves a larger goal of community-wide anti-racist solidarity, the forging of these new relationships between otherwise disconnected individuals and groups are themselves examples of new relationships of solidarity that are forming throughout the community.

These discussions eventually became complimented by bonding activities such as those seen throughout *Race Relations Week*, the *Sioux Mountain Festival*, the *Bannock Bake-Off* and other events where the focus took on a more social character. One remarkably successful effort to bring people together was *The Thread Project*. The project invited community members to bring fibres they felt carried personal meaning to weave into a “world tapestry,” containing material that had been collected from all over the world. Participants then had the opportunity to share stories about why they chose the particular piece they did. One participant stated:

*[The Thread Project] involved such a broad based part of the community. And what I liked so much about it was that you'd be sitting there, [...] there'd be people who you'd have your attitude about, you'd say "Oh, that person is-" whatever, not necessarily in your top 10 list of people [you like], and then you'd read something that they'd written as to what their thread was about, why they were contributing it... I had tears in my eyes so many times over these people who I didn't necessarily put in my top 10, and it just helped really to open my mind [...] the fact that they cared enough to contribute threads to this and believed in it, it was just such an awesome project.*

One interviewee described the impact that many of these events have had on the community, as well as the significance of personal bonds in widening SLARC's audience:

*[SLARC has an impact by] getting people together and building relationships. I mean it happens gradually. I know there's a feeling that when you have an event, it's always the same people that come, and that you're always preaching to the converted. But those people all need to have that backup so they can be out in the community and interact with people and it just spreads gradually. And there's always some new people, because someone's made a personal connection, and it's hard to get people to come if there isn't some little pull, some little personal connection.*

#### **4.5 Reflection**

The interviewees emphasized that the racial balance on the committee was part of what gave the organization the moral authority to do the work that it does, as well as providing the necessary

insights and social networks to effectively carry out that work. To ensure the committee is satisfactorily carrying out its mandate, the committee also regularly conducts consultations with the broader community. Typically these consultations are done in 5-10 year intervals, beginning with *Together We're Better*, a 1990 investigation into race relations in Sioux Lookout that established some of the education gaps and points of conflict that needed to be addressed by anti-racism work, followed by *Bridges of Understanding* conducted in 2000, and a community consultation in 2003 that preceded the redevelopment of the *REsolve* program, titled *Visions for the Future*. Through these consultations and other measures, the committee has actively sought out and listened to voices that may otherwise be silenced, or might not have the opportunity to be heard.

## 4.6 Challenges

### 4.6.1 Racism and the Denial of Racism

While most agree that racial tensions in Sioux Lookout have improved over the years, racism remains a part of life in the community like countless others. One Anishinaabe respondent stated “*There’s been several instances most recently that have caused me to believe that it’s still very evident here in town.*” Most respondents to SLARC’s surveys have also heavily indicated that while relations are improving, there is still much work to be done. One non-Anishinaabe SLARC volunteer stated:

*I feel like it’s not a very polarized community, but then someone who experiences racism on a much more consistent basis will challenge that belief that I have and get me out of my comfort zone where I’m thinking “Oh yeah, it’s a pretty good community, there’s good people here, there’s good stuff happening” and I need those constant reminders that it’s not, we can’t rest too much on our laurels, there’s still work that needs to be done.*

Even within the surveys distributed by SLARC to gauge racism, some respondents answered questions with racist statements such as “*some people don’t like how Indians react or the way they’re always drunk or pregnant,*”<sup>25</sup> “[*These problems are caused by*] *drunk Indians who think they own the town*”<sup>26</sup> and “*SLARC has failed to educate the bums of Front Street on what’s been happening over 10 years.*”<sup>27</sup>

The denial of racism within the community was one of the most commonly identified ongoing challenges for the organization. One participant, discussing the committee’s use of the term “anti-racism” commented “*it’s important to be using these words too, otherwise people might just not even acknowledge. Like if you stop talking about the problem some people will assume*

<sup>25</sup> Terry and Terry, p. 11,

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> Deb Sider, “Bridges of Understanding 2000: A Report on Race Relations in Sioux Lookout, Ontario” (Sioux Lookout, ON: Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee, 2001), p. 9.

*that the problem’s gone away.”* The debate over the committee’s name has been ongoing since the committee changed its name from “Race Relations Committee” to “Anti-Racism Committee” in 1992. While the debate over the name has been at times heated and passionate, the debate generated by the name has provided a consistent ongoing dialogue about anti-racism:

*Well just by being there and surviving, it has allowed the acknowledgement of racism to remain somewhat near the surface. Just the fact that it’s been here for 20 odd years the name, although sometimes people say “ooh, well we don’t like the name because we don’t like the word ‘anti-racism’” but the name gets people reminded that it is an anti-racism organization, that there is racism and that we’re trying to do something about that. [...] the arguments about the name, the dissenting voices saying “We don’t like that it makes us look bad.” That’s all been part of a dialogue that’s hopefully moved Sioux Lookout away from racism and towards... whatever the opposite of racism is [laughter] Harmony, I guess.*

While SLARC’s bonding activities, such as the **Multicultural Pot Luck Feast**, the **Bannock Bake-Off**, and **Sioux Mountain Festival** have been successful, inclusive endeavours, the reception of SLARC’s other work has been mixed at times. One respondent commented, *“I think everybody likes the fun stuff, it’s just that the tough stuff [like **REsolve**] can be a hard pill to swallow.”* Those projects that do or have tackled racism head-on and tried to provide a means to correct incidents of racism are likely to be more intimidating to an audience that does not experience racism on a regular basis. Another interviewee commented *“something like **REsolve**, which is looking at the issues a lot more head-on has been a harder sell.”* At the same time, several interviewees commented that they felt awareness and accessibility of these programs was limited within the Anishinaabe community. One person stated *“in the Anishinaabe community [the perception is that] the tough stuff isn’t happening, which we should be doing.”* With language barriers, geographic distance from local First Nations and significant distance and travel costs from fly-in First Nations, much of the work SLARC would like to do to reach out to First Nation communities is exceptionally expensive and beyond the means of the organization’s current capacity.

#### *4.6.2 Financial Support and Public Funding*

Most of the barriers to the success of programs have been tied to SLARC’s unstable sources of funding. While the committee has diversified its income through the sale of memberships, sponsorships, and corporate memberships, the bulk of program funding continues to come from government granting programs. None of these sources of funding, however, are necessarily consistent. While most private donors have been consistent, many of them have not been able to donate a consistent amount or donate each year. Similarly membership sales vary year to year and are dependent on the availability of someone to solicit them. Government granting programs, meanwhile, frequently change their funding criteria. This instability is widely recognized in the

community as a barrier to the organization. One resident commented *“the programming is almost inconsistent because of the lack of dollars, because they really have to go out and seek funding all the time. And a lot of it is volunteer.”* The readiness of Sioux Lookout residents to volunteer and be involved with the organization has been a significant strength and has been one of the driving forces that has kept the organization afloat and active over 20 years of financial uncertainty. Another interviewee that had been active in writing grant applications for SLARC stated *“Any amount that SLARC didn’t have to spend 90 percent of its time raising and then 10 percent of its time using could be used so much more efficiently.”* One of the principal casualties of the strain on financial resources has been the promotion of SLARC’s programs and projects. One participant stated: *“part of that has to do with promotion and [...] it’s linked to our funding and our ability to maintain staff who can work on getting our name out there in the community, showing people what we do, the programs that we do in the schools.”* Later they went on to state: *“We’re a small organization [...] I think we’ve always been, especially the first 10-15 years, just working hard to get funding every year. We’ve had lots of different programs, so PR or trying to promote what’s available [is very difficult].”*

*The Multicultural Youth Centre*, as one of the committee’s longest standing and most expensive projects, has often faced the consequences of financial shortfalls. One interviewee stated: *“I think it’s a bit more sustainable right now than it has been, but the funding has been so sporadic for the youth centre that it has had to close at certain times and great things that have started have had to stop.”* SLARC volunteers and community members have also expressed similar concerns for the **REsolve** program:

*So basically we have this group of trained people wanting to be volunteer mediators — which is not an easy thing to do — in situations of cross cultural conflict — which is not a happy place to be — and no way to sort of co-ordinate because you really can’t run that by the seat of your pants, you need to have a certain measure of financial stability to be able to have the confidentiality protocols and the consistency and somebody answering the phone and not blabbing the whole story, especially in a small community.*

*We know what needs to be done in this town as far as education around race relations and the **REsolve** was a great project and now we’re racking our brains trying to find money to keep it going where it doesn’t take an awful lot — you know, enough for a phone and somebody to co-ordinate this group of volunteers. Get them together to do a refresher every once in a while, it’s not a huge amount but the pay back’s huge. But we’re always searching. Always searching. Same with youth money.*

Even in situations where funders are impressed with the work being done by the committee, the heavily politicized nature of certain government departments has had a detrimental impact on SLARC’s ability to secure funding. One participant shared the story of the committee’s frustration over a more recent application:

*... the Department of Canadian Heritage was so impressed with our work that they solicited a follow-up proposal to take **REsolve** to the next level where it needed to go further, for the next three years. They solicited the proposal, I spent six weeks working my butt off to make these proposals happen and TEN months went by and they turned it down after having solicited it in the first place.*

In addition to the unreliability of government funding, the reporting requirements for many grants have been significantly onerous for a committee such as SLARC, relying primarily on volunteers and frequently only having the capacity to hire short-term staff to work on specific projects. One participant shared:

*... a couple of years ago, we had a \$16,000 deficit because the federal government on that **REsolve** project. When we got the funding, it was actually over almost a three year period, and then they told us we had to do an audit for that three year period, and we didn't have any money to do an audit. And we had to audit and it cost us over \$12,000.*

Eventually the committee was able to fundraise to eliminate the deficit; however the costs of conducting the audit, as with nearly all granting programs, were not covered by the grant amount.

The role of all levels of government in funding the projects championed by SLARC was a significant point of frustration both within the organization and in the wider community. There was a strong sense that there was little understanding among various levels of government of the impact of the work done by SLARC and the importance of addressing racism in an organized fashion. One participant commented: *“I think funding agencies have to start recognizing this is part of where we live, and there is racism and there is discrimination, and if there's a program that's working, you should keep funding it, consistently, because it's for the betterment of everybody.”* While most of the frustration was directed at higher levels of government, some participants expressed that they felt the municipality took the committee and its work for granted. While there was acknowledgement that the current council has been among the most supportive of the organization's history, frustrations remained about the financial burden remaining on SLARC due to projects such as the Youth Centre, which many felt should be the responsibility of the Municipality. Drawing parallels with the experience of a local privately owned art gallery, one interviewee commented:

*Wow, SLARC has made Sioux Lookout look so good and we've got nothing from the town, and they keep expecting us... and the A-Frame Gallery has the same experience, not with the town specifically, but just, you know, we're giving so much to the town and the town is saying “Aren't we great, we've got an art gallery!” But they're not actually putting any money where their mouth is...*

Overall much of the frustration with various levels of the government lied with the belief among many residents that anti-racism work was a public good and should be provided by the government and not reliant on cross-sector partnerships that force parties to water down their missions for the sake of making a partnership fit:

*If the private sector wants to throw in some money that's fine, but a civil society that we supposedly live in, where we as members of the society create and support the government that governs us and elect that government and pay taxes to that government, that's where the things that make our society a better place should be supported from. So health care and education should be supported by the government, so should anti-racism work.*

#### 4.6.3 Scope of the Organization

The idea of expanding SLARC's scope more formally has been advanced on numerous subsequent occasions, yet the feedback received by committee members continues to reaffirm the significance of racial cleavages between Anishinaabek and the non-Anishinaabe population.

Where consensus within the organization can be questioned is the analysis of racism shared among volunteers and supporters. Most within the group hold a view rooted in an analysis of power structures that is critical of colonialism and emphasizes the prevalence of a Eurocentric bias and that there is a power imbalance between racial groups. One participant commented:

*... Maybe that's the nature of people, that you sort of... are more comfortable with people that are more like you or have similar background, so that's not completely strange, it's when in that mix, when you've got that separation, like what's not healthy in our society is the power imbalance. And that's the systemic kind of racism that has developed that is part of everything. We're still a very Eurocentric society.*

Some, however, held an analysis that was based in more liberal concepts of multiculturalism, fixed ethnic categories, and a belief that people from all groups should be treated equally. One participant commented:

*[SLARC]'s involved with harmonious race-relations, and its impetus has to do with Aboriginal people primarily, primarily in Aboriginal relationships with the European culture here in Sioux Lookout. It's touted as more inclusive, but I don't often see a great deal of evidence of that, I don't see a reaching out to the Italian community or the Ukrainian community or the Finnish community, so my perception is it's not as broad in its practice as it is in its theory.*

These differences have been played out in scenarios such as the long-standing debate over the name of the organization.

### 5.0 The Changing Face of Sioux Lookout

The visibility of the committee’s work within the community, particularly its consistent presence over the past twenty years, has asserted the need to renew the relationship between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe residents. One recent SLARC employee stated: “[it’s] the kind of work that you’re not going to see results and you’re not necessarily going to see any changes, but I think gradually over long periods of time, just having this organization and continuing to do the work that it does can gradually seep into people’s psyche.” The feelings were echoed in a 2000 study of racism in Sioux Lookout and review of SLARC’s effectiveness. 40 percent of respondents felt that SLARC had improved race relations, as compared to 20 percent of youth and 23 percent of adults that felt it had not.<sup>28</sup> Among the 5 percent of youth and 19 percent of adults that indicated SLARC had “somewhat” improved race-relations within the community, comments included:

*To some extent, but the way things stand there will always be racism.*

*Somewhat. Making people aware there is a problem.*

*Probably has helped bring recognition to the problem and slowed down the expected increase in racism that usually accompanies the change in population base we’ve experienced in the last ten years.<sup>29</sup>*

Nonetheless, in SLARC’s first 10 years of operation a clear plurality of survey respondents identified progress in race-relations. Through the committee’s anti-racist advocacy work, SLARC has been able to challenge both the denial of racism and misconceptions about the nature of the relationship between Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe populations within Sioux Lookout. The committee has also offered an alternative vision that asserts that better relations are possible.

One participant later commented on progress made within the community’s business sector:

*I think the business community has been more open to native businesses coming into Sioux Lookout. Although at one time that was a threat. There was a notion of “Well these native businesses have started off by using our taxpayers money, so why should I compete against my own tax dollars?”[...] So there’s those kinds of relations that need to be improved [...] I think there’s been some influence made in that area, but there’s more to come.*

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<sup>28</sup> Sider, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

These observations demonstrate the impact that the committee has in addressing the impact of racism on community relations. Due to the dialogue created and sustained by SLARC and its participants, many residents have observed a smoother than expected transition for the community as it has and continues to undergo massive demographic and economic shifts.

While racial tensions in the community have varied, the work done by SLARC helped significantly to facilitate greater acceptance of the changes happening to Sioux Lookout's economic and social fabric. By promoting interaction and cooperation, while interrogating the negative assumptions and ignorance that perpetuated fear and segregation, the committee attacked the foundation of the resistance to these changes. The changes seen in the education sector are particularly notable, with institutional attempts to increase familiarity with indigenous languages, culture and knowledge greeting significant praise from those involved in SLARC.

Currently the community is benefitting from a number of projects that exemplify a new period of cross-cultural cooperation, most notably the construction of the new Meno-Ya-Win hospital that was the result of a four-party agreement between the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, the provincial and federal governments, and the Municipality of Sioux Lookout. The hospital will replace the Sioux Lookout General Hospital, which serviced the Town of Sioux Lookout and the Sioux Lookout Zone Hospital, which serviced remote fly-in communities.

Similar changes have been noted within the region's business sector, where SLARC has also played an active role in providing training resources, mediation services, and has maintained a high visibility thanks to its corporate memberships and sponsorships for its programs. One participant stated, "*The business community is supporting the work that we do.*" This support has been over a period of significant local change: "*Yeah there's some changes. You see bilingual signs. Syllabic signs and stuff like that. Although one business man said "that's a good tourist attraction!" [laughter] What works for him works for us, too! [laughter]*"



SLARC continues to combat the prevalent denial of racism. This denial can be just as damaging as racism itself, in that it refuses to acknowledge the experiences of marginalized members of the

community that continually report extensive experiences with racism. Without this acknowledgement, relations continue to be strained due to a lack of trust and a belief that outsiders will “never understand.” The resulting tensions permeate both the social and economic sphere, hindering local progress.

Overall, however, the committee has found many ways to motivate its supporters and partners to contribute to the projects of bridging the racial divide in Sioux Lookout and advocate for the inclusion of First Nations both within the organization as well as within the power structures of the community. Nonetheless, the problem of scarce resources and a lack of stable reliable funding has prevented many of these initiatives from taking off, and limited the effectiveness of even its most successful projects.

## **6.0 Policy Options**

Based on interviews conducted with 22 community members, volunteers, and long-term organizers of SLARC in Sioux Lookout, a number of policy-level decisions could support the essential work being done in this Northwestern Ontario community in its efforts to bridge an incredibly detrimental racial divide.

To support the work and sustainability of similar organizations and provide them with resources and financial support to leverage for additional funding, the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage should:

- Provide core-administrative funding for community-based organizations that advocate for anti-racism and other goals of inclusivity.

Furthermore, given the tremendous lack of awareness surrounding the treaty-relationships that exist in most parts of the country, the Ministry of Indian Affairs and Northern Development should:

- Initiate programs that support community-based education and teacher-training on treaties and the current nature of the treaty-relationship between Anishinaabek and non-Anishinaabek.

To increase the pool of funding available to community groups, institutions, and agencies combating racism, the Government of Ontario should:

- Re-establish the Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat to provide program funding for anti-racism projects.
- Offer granting programs through the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs that encourage non-governmental bodies to undertake projects designed to heal racial tensions and the historic damages of colonialism.

In addition, stemming from the work done by SLARC to increase the visibility of Anishinaabe cultures within the public discourse and within the education system, the Ontario Ministry of Education should:

- Conduct a review of the education curriculum to include extensive regional-specific and culturally appropriate content about First Nations within Ontario, to increase awareness of First Nations contributions, culture, languages, practices, and history in Ontario.

In recognition of the invaluable service provided by the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism to the Town of Sioux Lookout, and to support the committee's continued sustainability, the Municipality of Sioux Lookout should:

- Take over the stewardship and financial responsibility for the *Multicultural Youth Centre*, ensuring that anti-racism remains a core guiding principal of the facility and its programming.
- Allow SLARC to leverage this support to acquire youth-specific program funding that creates cross-cultural bonding and educational opportunities for youth.
- Use SLARC as a resource to address issues pertaining to race-relations as they develop, and include the committee early on in discussions to facilitate a productive dialogue that avoids adding further strain to race-relations.

## 7.0 Conclusion

Since 1990, the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee has taken a multi-pronged approach to confront racism within the Northwestern Ontario community of Sioux Lookout. This approach could be a model to communities facing similar challenges, and includes:

- Building a cross-cultural dialogue on racism, including presenting alternatives to a racist society;
- Supporting those who experience racism, whether it be direct or systemic, and responding to community crises as they arise;
- Preventing the continuation of racial segregation in younger generations through anti-racist education, through providing opportunities for youth to bond across cultural barriers, and by helping to build confidence for future generations of anti-racist activists; and
- Bringing people together to foster cross-cultural relationships.

Nearly all of SLARC's volunteers and supporters interviewed recognized the importance of all of the approaches and had a very difficult time identifying where cuts could be made if they were necessary. One slight exception was the *Multicultural Youth Centre*, which some participants felt should be the responsibility of the Municipality. However even in this scenario participants

were unwilling to see the youth centre come out of the SLARC umbrella if it were not going to be appropriately supported by the Municipality. One SLARC supporter commented, *“I would make the Youth Centre the responsibility of the town [...] [but] I wouldn’t get rid of the Youth Centre unless I was sure it was completely safe in the hands of another organization, like the town.”*



While each participant in the organization may have preferred projects, there appears to be a shared understanding that the diversity of projects undertaken by SLARC are a reflection of a multi-pronged approach to combating racism. Without all of the pieces in place within this system, the whole system becomes compromised.

Summing up SLARC’s activities, one participant stated:

*[SLARC] provides opportunities for [...] the two dominant cultures to get together and know more about each other. [...] And a lot of the ultimate work that’s done, it’s all in layers. It is the outcome of some of these events, but it’s all relationship building. So [...] you’re making bridges between people all the time. You can kind of compare it to weaving, you get people to weave into places they haven’t been before. I think that’s all it can do. It can say “Racism is bad, don’t do this” but it doesn’t really have any effect. The awareness is important. There need to be opportunities to learn [...] about what racism*

*is and little bit about different people, people with different beliefs, attitudes, whatever, [so that we] can get along and make a community.*

By the nature and high calibre of its work, SLARC has provided significant contributions to the social economy of Sioux Lookout by bridging a painful and deep divide within the community that threatens not only the quality of life for all citizens, but the community's long-term economic viability.

SLARC has been an instrumental force in developing and sustaining a local anti-racist discourse that encourages cooperation and the redress of damages committed through colonialism. In addition, this discourse has challenged and interrupted the normalization of racism that has divided the community.

The committee's model also subverts the division between bridging and bonding social capital in bridging the racial divide in Sioux Lookout by creating spaces for interracial bonding to occur. This model also reveals methods to consciously mitigate the allegedly marginalizing affect of "strong" personal relationships as opposed to "weak" personal relationships.

The experiences within SLARC through years of relationship building also demonstrate the importance of commitment and earned trust that form the basis of a relationship of solidarity that is more lasting and transformative than commodifiable measures of social capital. Describing the strengths of the organization, one supporter commented: *"I think that the sense of commitment, there's people who've been there from the beginning and are still involved, and I tip my hat to them because it's jolly hard work, exhausting work at times, and yet they're not willing to give up."*

These principles are reflected in the vision of community members to continue to build on anti-racist initiatives and eliminate the marginalization of Anishinaabek within the community, in spite of its immense challenges:

*I'd like to see more First Nations people feeling that they want to be part of this community, and I'd like to see more understanding and healing, like I think the Healing and Reconciliation Commission is vital to this area, but that's long term, so the willingness for non-Aboriginal people to hear the stories and to understand the extent of the damage that's been done to a whole society of people.*

The 22-year history of SLARC, though not without challenges and setbacks, has created a model for building local solidarity and fostering community across racialized divisions. Their experience demonstrates profound opportunity for other communities to continue or begin repairing the divisions that plague Canadian communities, particularly Northern and remote settlements, in the wake of the devastating impacts of colonialism.

## **Appendix I: Corporate Members of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee**

### **Corporate Members**

Bank of Montreal  
Beamish Mackinnon  
Belinda’s Hair Studio  
Berkshire Securities  
Confederation College  
Dr. Arvid Hakala  
Dr. Lesley Myers  
Fireweed Honey  
Forest Inn and Conference Centre  
Fred & Dee’s Corner  
Gillons’ Insurance Brokers Ltd.  
H&M Cars  
Hugh Allen Clinic Family Health Group  
Johnny’s Fresh Market  
Keewatin-Aski Ltd.  
La Pita Fresh Restaurant  
Lamplighter Motel  
Madsen Motors Ltd.  
Mascotto’s Marine Ltd.  
Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre  
Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre Foundation  
Monique Hansen (RMT)  
Nitawin Community  
Development Corporation  
North Web Online  
Ojibway Golf and Curling Club  
PM Computers  
Queen Elizabeth District High School  
Rona  
Sioux Lookout Bulletin  
Sioux Lookout Chamber of Commerce

Sioux Lookout Public Library  
Sioux Lookout First Nations  
Health Authority  
Sioux Lookout Remedy’s RX  
Sioux Lottery  
Sioux-Per Auto Parts  
Sioux Travel Carlson Wagonlit  
The Standard Insurance Brokers  
The Team — IBO  
Tikinagan Child and Family Services  
Wasaya Airways LP  
Wawatay Native Communications Society  
Wilson's Business Solutions

### **Past Corporate Members**

A&K Home Centre  
Ah-Shaw-Bin Sioux Lookout-Lac Seul  
Victim Support Services  
Abram Lake Electric  
Amik-o-Ninch Enterprises  
Angelo’s Pizza  
Aurora Consulting Services  
Aztak Auto  
BDO Dunwoody  
Bearskin Lake Air Service Ltd.  
Beaver Lumber  
Best Western Sioux Lookout Inn  
Buchanan Forest Products Ltd.  
Canada Brokerlink  
Catherine Beamish/Andreas Asmus  
Central Public School  
CIBC

Cheers!

Community Counselling and Addictions Services

Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout

DE Hoey Contracting Ltd.

Dingwall Ford Sales Ltd.

DJ's Gas Bar Ltd.

Drayton Cash and Carry

Dryden Board of Education

Duncan Computer Solutions

Edwin Switzer Memorial Branch #78

Royal Canadian Legion

Ernst & Young

Equay-wuk (women's group)

Favot Motors Ltd.

Fifth Avenue Bar & Grill

First Step Women's Shelter

Hudson Public School

Independent First Nations Alliance

Ireland's Jewellery

Dr. James Mao Dental Office

K.K. Morgan

Keewatin Aski Ltd.

Keewating-Patricia District School Board

Kewawun Community Development Corp.

Kimberl K. Morgan/Certified Financial Planner

Knobby's Sportsman Restaurant

Knowles McGill & Associates

Law Office of Kevin W. Romyn

Manulife Securities Inc.

Mayfair Theatre Ltd.

McAuley & Partners

McKenzie Forest Products Ltd.

Morgan Esso

New 2 You

New Kowloon Restaurant

Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service

Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre

Nodin Counselling Services

Norah Love Children's Centre

Northern Lights Credit Union

Northern Nishnawbe Education Council

Northern Store

(Kenora) Patricia Child & Family Services

Patricia Area Community Endeavours

Pelican Falls First Nations High School

Perron Contracting

Pickerel Arm Camps

PM Computer Service

Pharmasave #491

Roy Lane

Royal Canadian Legion Branch #78

Ladies Auxiliary

Sacred Heart School

Sanders True Value/Hardware

Sew What?

Shibogama First Nations Council

Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board (SLAAMB)

Sioux Creations

Sioux Hotel

Sioux/Hudson Literacy Council & Frontier Bookshop

Sioux-Hudson Employment Services

Sioux Mountain Realty Inc.

Sioux Lookout Diabetes Program	Sunset Inn & Suites
Sioux Lookout District Health Centre	T Nebbs Building Materials Ltd.
Sioux Lookout-Hudson Association for Community Living Residential Services	The Sutcliffe Group
Sioux Lookout Hydro	Town & Country Cleaners
Sioux Lookout Lions Club	Town of Sioux Lookout Department of Development Services
Sioux Lookout Zone Hospital	Tumble Inn Bed & Breakfast
Sioux-Tek Solutions	University of Toronto — Sioux Lookout Program
Slate Falls Airways	The Wellington Limited Partnership
Standard Insurance Brokers Ltd.	Wellington Public School
Stewart’s Woodworking	Wilson’s Stationary & Office Equipment
St. Andrew United Church	Windigo First Nations Council
St. Mary’s Anglican Church	

## Appendix II: Programs of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee<sup>30</sup>

### *Advocacy Group*

**Duration:** 1990-2000

**Description:** SLARC sub-committee tasked with receiving complaints regarding incidents believed to be racist or discriminatory in nature and responding to these reports when deemed necessary in a just and fair manner. It also endeavored to focus on contributing to long term systemic change.

**Partners:** Project-to-project basis: Windigo First Nations

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** The 2005 Project Proposal for the REsolve program states: “SLARC established an Advocacy Group in 1990 with a mandate to provide assistance for community complainants in need of help with disputes resolution. Over the years, however, this voluntary sub-committee ceased to exist, due to a lack of on-going resources, in particular staffing, adequate training, and volunteer burnout. In the meantime, complaints have continued to be received on a regular basis and have been dealt with in an unstructured, and often less than adequate way by SLARC staff and board members, who lack the time and training to deal with them effectively.” The committee participated in Mediation training in February of 1993 and partnered with Windigo First Nations to coordinate a Mediation and Conflict Resolution Workshop in November and December of 1993, and again in November and December of 1994. The group maintained yearly statistics on reports of discrimination and racism. By 1999 the group became inactive, however statistics continued to be kept by the SLARC staff in consultation with members of the management committee. The number of reports from 1992-2000 by year are: 1992, 18; 1994, 11; 1995, 5; 1996, 6; 1997, 2; 1998, 1; 1999, 10; 2000, 10.

### *Education Sub-Committee*

**Duration:** 1990-1994

**Description:**

**Partners:** Project-to-project basis: St. Andrew’s United Church

**Funders:** Federation of Women Teachers Association of Ontario (Development of Teacher Training Package)

**Outcome:** The sub-committee worked with Central Elementary School to develop an Anti-racism policy, which was emulated by other schools in Sioux Lookout and Hudson. From June 2-5, 1992 the committee co-hosted with the local United Church the Very Reverent Dr. Sang Chul Lee, former Moderator of the United Church of Canada. The committee was the primary organizer of promotional and educational material in recognition of the

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<sup>30</sup> Organized by year, beginning with the earliest programs to the most recent.

International day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 1992 and 1993, which would eventually become *Race Relations Week*. In March and September 1993 the sub-committee hosted Ontario Award for Excellence in Race Relations recipient Teresa Gonzales, who shared best-practices with SLARC’s management committee, facilitated workshops, and visited Wahsa Distance Education, Pelican First Nations High School, and the community of Frenchman’s Head at Lac Seul First Nation. By 1996 the sub-committee no longer existed formally; however its goals were carried on by ad-hoc sub-committees as required, such as was needed to develop a Teacher Training Package focusing on how to integrate Anti-Racism education into the common curriculum.

### ***Bannock Bake-Off***

**Duration:** 1991-present

**Description:** Teams from Sioux Lookout and Lac Seul compete to make the best Bannock, incorporating whacky costumes, antics and fun.

**Partners and Past Participants:** Blueberry Festival, Lac Seul First Nation, Town of Sioux Lookout, Windigo First Nations, Shibogama First Nations Council, the Independent First Nations Alliance, Northern Chiefs, Ministry of Citizenship Native Community Branch, Community Counseling and Addictions Services, Equay-Wuk, Wahsa, Sunset Women’s Aboriginal Circle, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, Nishnawbe-Aski Police Services, St. Mary’s Church

**Funders:** N/A

**Outcome:** The Bannock Bake-Off has been part of SLARC’s contribution to the Blueberry Festival in addition to taking over the coordination of the Sioux Mountain Music Festival (Now Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival).

### ***Race Relations Week***

**Duration:** 1992 (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)-1994(Race Relations Week)-present

**Description:** Week of social, educational, and cultural events organized around the March 21<sup>st</sup> International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

**Partners, Funders, and Outcome:** See Appendix IV for detailed history of Race Relations Week

### ***Multicultural Youth Centre***

**Duration:** 1995-present

**Description:** The Youth Centre works with successive generations of Nishnawbe and non-Nishnawbe youth and seen them grow and flourish in an environment that encourages them to be young and creative, and to plan and execute their ideas with skilled adult guidance.

**Partners:** Regional Multicultural Youth Council (RMYC); Northern Nishnawbe Education Council; Town of Sioux Lookout; Sioux Lookout Community Police Committee; New Vision Unlimited; A-Frame Gallery

**Funders:** The Community Policing Committee (1995); Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation (1996 summer student); The Loyal Order of Moose (1996); Human Resources Development Canada (1997 Youth Service Canada Program); McKenzie Recreation Association (1997 donation); Northern Stores (1997 donation); Royal Canadian Legion (1997 donation); Town of Sioux Lookout (financial support 1996-1997, 2009); the Moose Lodge (1997 donation); Angela James (1998 donation); Métis Nation of Ontario Summer Career Placement Program (1998 summer student); Northern Ontario Heritage Fund (2003); Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General, Hate Crimes Response (2008); The Salvation Army Community Support Group (2008-2010);

**Outcome:** Throughout the early 90s, particularly 1994, the RMYC, based in Thunder Bay, assisted SLARC in youth outreach and support in developing plans for a youth centre. The Sioux Lookout Community Police Committee agreed to hold the monies raised for the youth centre until January 1995.

A coordinator was hired in 1994. 1994 was also the first meeting of the Youth Advisory Committee, which would meet regularly and advise SLARC on matters pertaining to youth. The Centre was officially opened on February 25, 1995. The Youth Centre's goals and objectives were also modeled after those of the RMYC.

A community open house was held in June, 1996 to promote the centre, while the following month the Youth Centre was awarded its first summer student.

The centre was assisted in 1997 by the Youth Service Canada Program that led to renovation of the Youth Centre facilities and the expansion of resources available at the centre, including internet access, a youth resource centre with information on youth-related issues, and an information catalogue of other youth services and where they can be accessed.

In 1998 the Youth Centre employed another summer student that developed and delivered programs including face painting on Canada Day, a week-long multicultural day camp, Girlz Nite Out, and arts and crafts during the 1998 Blueberry Festival. In partnership with the Heart Health Committee, the Youth Centre also sponsored a family skating party at the arena in December. While the centre was unstaffed, youth volunteers took on the responsibility of opening the Centre on weekends for programming.

In 1999 the Youth Centre employed another summer student that delivered programs including pool and foosball tournaments, movie nights, and arts and crafts nights, in addition to assisting with other SLARC activities. The Youth Centre also hosted a Halloween Dance and constructed a float for the Christmas parade.

In 2000 the centre hired a part-time councillor and the Youth Centre was operated on weekends by young volunteers. The Youth Centre hosted a MuchMusic Video Dance during the Blueberry Festival with an attendance between 200 and 300. The survey

distributed by the *Voices for the Future* group found an appetite to gear the centre to a slightly older demographic of high school aged youth who felt they had few options for space within the community.

In 2001 youth renovated the Youth Centre to create the coffee house atmosphere the high school students sought. Tech students from Queen Elizabeth District High School built a stage for music performances. The centre also became the meeting space for *SLYC* and the *United Grrrl Front*.

In 2003 the Centre received an NOHFC grant for the purchase of a sound system and video equipment.

In early 2004 lack of funding meant the Centre was only open with the support of volunteers, however by the summer funding was available for a coordinator and a summer student, which led to a dramatic increase in usage during the summer, with the Centre being open 6 nights a week. The Youth Centre then became actively involved in efforts to develop a skatepark, including coordinating fundraisers for the facility.

In 2006 the Youth Centre reached new records for attendance despite having nearly no funding. The Centre began hosting *Stand-Up Mondays* that were an open mic invitation to discuss serious questions, and Tuesdays became *Art Night*. *The Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival* also became an event that was nearly entirely run by youth or employees from the Youth Centre. The centre also hosted 36 touring bands during the summer.

In 2007, volunteers developed *Sioux Lookout Youth Music (SLYM) Productions* that put on several shows drawing crowds of 40 on average. Sports Night became a regular feature, which drew between 30 and 40 youth per week. The Town of Sioux Lookout is partnering with SLARC to redevelop the former Sioux Hotel to house a new wheel-chair accessible Youth Centre, provide office space for community groups and youth-focused organizations. The town has been successful in acquiring funding and the new Youth centre will open in 2011.

In 2008 the Centre hosted a Youth Against Hate Crimes Project that taught youth about hate crimes and healing based on the seven grandfather teachings. The youth created an art exhibit titled *Beneath the Surface* that was displayed at the A-Frame Gallery, as well as writing, producing and performing a play about racism and homophobia titled *Bounce*. The play was performed three times. Theme nights expanded to include *Improv Night*, and *Movie & Games Night*. The Economic Development Department of the Municipality also struck a sub-committee to work on the redevelopment of the Sioux Hotel into the *Cultural Centre for Youth and the Arts*.

## ***Sign Project***

**Duration:** 1994

**Description:** The Sign Project was organized around erecting bilingual (English and Oji-Cree) signs at the North and South entries to the community, highlighting the committee’s

objectives of bringing people together and encouraging residents and visitors to be vigilant against racism.

**Partners:** N/A

**Funders:** Heritage Canada

**Outcome:** In August Abe Kakepetum began work on a logo design for the signs, titled *Together*. This logo would eventually become the logo for the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee. The signs were erected in November with an unveiling in December. Replicas of the signs were presented to area schools. Signs stand to this day.

### ***Cross-Cultural Business Video Project/ “Addressing the Needs of First Nations Clients”***

**Duration:** 1994-2000

**Description:** The project’s objectives included Developing a generic Race Relations Policy that could be adapted by local businesses and services, developing a training package with cross-cultural component, and developing recruitment strategies to increase the number of Native employees in stores and other services.

**Partners:** See appendix VI for a list of film credits.

**Funders:** Heritage Canada; Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation; Trillium Foundation; Bank of Montreal as well as in-kind contributions and a fee-for-service arrangement established.

**Outcome:** In 1994 the project’s organizers undertook efforts to develop a training video with the support of youth from the high schools’ drama classes. The group consulted with a group of approximately 40 businesses and services that supported the program and did a test screening of a video provided by the Ontario Hospital Association titled *The Multicultural Customer*. This video, however, was specific to multicultural contexts and not as relevant to the cross-cultural dynamics of Sioux Lookout. In response to needs of local businesses, the committee developed a workshop package titled “Addressing the Needs of First Nation Clients.” The project included a video of the same name, and the package was completed by 2000. The packages were purchased by Tikinagan Child and Family Services, Sioux Travel, Sioux-Per Auto Parts, Queen Elizabeth District High School, Kenora-Patricia Child and Family Services, Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, Johnny’s Food Market, Madsen Motors, Buchanan Forest Products Ltd., and the Township of Pickle Lake. In 2002 a fee-for-service plan was developed so that the project could be self-sustaining.

### ***Affordable Housing Project***

**Duration:** 1995-1997

**Description:** Undertaken in response to an awareness of tensions in the affordable housing units in Sioux Lookout due, in part to cultural differences amongst the tenants. The objectives were to obtain greater insights into the problem, provide new tenants with more information

about Sioux Lookout, develop programs with tenants that may lessen tensions and encourage tolerance, and share the information with service agencies.

**Partners:** the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority; the Town of Sioux Lookout; Wawatay News

**Funders:** The Ministry of Citizenship, Anti-Racism Secretariat; Nitawin Community Development Corporation; the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre; the Sioux Lookout Non-Profit Housing Corporation

**Outcome:** Conducted a tenant survey, gathered data for a community information booklet that was published, the “Newcomers Community Information Booklet,” which was translated.

### ***OAC Theatre Project***

**Duration:** 1997

**Description:** Two First Nations theatre artists, Alanis Odjig and Bruce Sinclair, came to Sioux Lookout to conduct two week-long theatre workshops during the 1997 Blueberry Festival. During the workshop, participants were given the opportunity to learn new skills in various aspects of co-operative artistic experiences.

**Partners:** Equay-wuk, Sunset Inn, St. Andrew’s United Church

**Funders:** Ontario Arts Council First Nations Organizations Projects Grants Program, Sioux Lookout Lions Club, the Bank of Montreal, the CIBC, Sioux Grocery, Sioux Travel.

**Outcome:** The two weeks culminated in a community presentation at St. Andrew’s United Church with an audience of over 150 people. The performance was based on an interpretation of the participants’ understandings of their community. Approximately 10 adults, 10 young adults, and 10 children participated in the project and were part of the community performance.

### ***Youth Service Canada Project***

**Duration:** February to August 1997

**Description:** SLARC worked with partners to develop the personal and professional potential of young adults through the development of work opportunities through service.

**Partners:** FAS/FAE Prevention and support services; the Sioux Lookout Diabetes Program

**Funders:** Human Resources Development Canada

**Outcome:** The project included renovations to the *Multicultural Youth Centre*, the expansion of hours, programs, and activities at the *Multicultural Youth Centre*, the creation of the Youth Resource Centre including electronic resources at the *Multicultural Youth Centre*, and the performance of “The Blurry Life”, a play that deals with the effects of substance abuse before, during and after pregnancy.

### ***S.H.I.F.T. Initiative***

**Duration:** 1998-2000

**Description:** The project was designed to break down barriers of understanding between children and youth and encourage them in specific ways to move beyond tolerance to acceptance and appreciation of each other and their differences.

**Partners:** Central/Wellington Public School, Hudson School, Sacred Heart School, RMYC

**Funders:** Ontario Trillium Foundation

**Outcome:** The program provided classroom instruction on conflict resolution and anti-racism, the production of several plays including plays in French and Oji-Cree, youth counseling to partnering schools, student-led ***Grade 9 Orientations*** for new students and Queen Elizabeth High School, and the development of a new program, the ***Peacemakers*** student mediation program that involved students from Central and Hudson Schools trained in conflict mediation. The program also offered support to students and teachers where students were in conflict. Trillium recommitted itself to funding the School Programs Coordinator, and many of the projects continued on for several years (see below).

### ***Sharing Our Heritage and Enriching the Future***

**Duration:** 1998-1999

**Description:** The project was developed to break down barriers and increase understanding between Nishnawbe and non-Nishnawbe students at the high school level.

**Partners:** Nishnawbe Northern Education Council

**Funders:** Heritage Canada

**Outcome:** The program resulted in a student-produced video titled “Welcome to Sioux Lookout” that introduced new students from remote communities to the school and facilities around town. A copy was sent to every community that was planning to send new students for the 98/99 school year. An information package about the school and the town was sent to every new NNEC student. A day-long student orientation workshop was held for all new grade 9 and 10 students, which were followed by additional orientation workshops throughout the fall led by senior students for all new students. A joint theatre project was held with Pelican Falls First Nations High School and Queen Elizabeth District High School, however this portion of the project was not completed due to stumbling blocks encountered in the development of the project and conflicting school schedules.

### ***Action — Youth Initiatives 2000***

**Duration:** 1999

**Description:** As part of SLARC’s celebration of the new millennium, the Action Youth Initiatives included two other programs: ***Global Connections*** and the ***Five Days for the Future Youth Conference***.

**Partners:**

**Funders:** Canadian Millennium Partnership Program

**Outcome:** In 2001, 11 members from the group attended the National Conference on Peacemaking and conflict Resolution in Fairfax Virginia. They conducted a workshop on the plight of war-affected children, including a presentation of the original play on the subject, *The Silent Voice*.

### ***Five Days for the Future: Youth Conference***

**Duration:** November 10-14, 2000

**Description:** 5-day regional youth conference to encourage youth to find the role that they might play in creating opportunities for positive social change in their communities, their country and their world.

**Partners:** Sunset Inn & Suites

**Funders:** Canadian Millennium Partnership Program

**Outcome:** The conference was divided into four themes: The power of politics; Community Development; The Arts as a Tool for Social Change; and the Global Village. A total of 64 high school students attended the conference.

### ***Global Connections***

**Duration:** 2000-2001

**Description:** The program is for youth in grades 4 to 8, connecting them to other classes across the world through the internet and sharing letters, photos, artwork, and tapes.

**Partners:** Central School, Wellington School, Sacred Heart School

**Funders:** Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation funded SLARC's School Program Coordinator who was the lead organizer of this project.

**Outcome:** Partnerships were established with schools in Canada, the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, England, France, Martinique, South Africa, Ethiopia, Sweden, Italy, Israel and Switzerland. Significant difficulty was experienced in establishing and maintaining contact with some of the classes, but many positive connections were established. Several students stated they would continue to correspond with the children that they met through the program. The final phase of the project included a teachers training manual that was designed to assist teachers who would like to initiate a similar project on their own. The manual was distributed to all teachers who took part in the program, both locally and internationally, as well as school librarians.

### ***Peacemakers***

**Duration:** 2000-

**Description:** Student mediation program where students are taught to mediate disputes at recess time.

**Partners:** Central Public School, Hudson Public School, Sioux Mountain Public School

**Funders:** Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation funded SLARC's School Program Coordinator who was the lead organizer of this project.

**Outcome:** Students were trained in mediation in both 2000 and 2001. The School Program Coordinator developed puppet shows and skits to teach young students skills to deal with bullying. Central School students signed "peace pledges" which were displayed in the classrooms. In 2002, the new Sioux Mountain Public School took part in the program.

### *Voices for the Future*

**Duration:** 2000-2002

**Description:** Stemming from the *5 Days for the Future* conference, students from Queen Elizabeth District High School formed a group to promote youth community engagement.

**Partners:** SLARC

**Funders:** Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation funded SLARC's School Program Coordinator who assisted the youth leading the project.

**Outcome:** In 2000, the group conducted a sweatshop awareness raising and letter writing campaign in schools, organized workshops for *Race Relations Week*, coordinated a benefit concert for Warchild Canada, and attendance at other conferences, rallies, and marches. In 2001, 11 members from the group attended the National Conference on Peacemaking and conflict Resolution in Fairfax Virginia. They conducted a workshop on the plight of war-affected children, including a presentation of the original play on the subject, *The Silent Voice*. Two participants also took part in the United Nations Student Conference in New York City, and two others took part in the Summit of the Americas Youth Conference in Québec City. Other activities included attendance at national, regional, and local conferences, fundraising for UNICEF, and the distribution of a survey to local youth to get student input on ideas for revamping the *Multicultural Youth Centre* that eventually led to the creation of a "coffee house" for high school students.

### *The Music Project*

**Duration:** 2000

**Description:** The purpose of the project was to promote harmony and cross cultural understanding through sharing songs from various cultural heritages represented in Sioux Lookout

**Partners:** Artists from Thunder Bay

**Funders:** Ontario Arts Council, Artists in the Community Program

**Outcome:** Six local workshops took place, each including training for local volunteer facilitators in order to inspire the community process between workshops. Flowing from the workshops a "vibrant community of drummers, singers and dancers" grew out of the project.

### ***Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival***

**Duration:** 2001-present

**Description:** Originally organized by the Blueberry Festival committee, SLARC took over stewardship of the Sioux Mountain Festival in 2001. The festival highlights local and regional music performers, and also features an annual celebration of local cuisine titled *Taste of Sioux Lookout*. The festival also provides local artists and artisans the opportunity to display and sell their work.

**Partners:** Sioux Lookout Youth Council; Municipality of Sioux Lookout Recreation Department

**Funders:** Ontario Arts Council (2001, 2002, 2003) Café Collective

**Outcome:** SLARC has been able to take advantage of student employment programs to provide coordinators for the festival, and it has generally grown over the last five years. Its line-up of performers, however, is dependent on the availability of funding. When SLARC first took over the festival in 2001, the event was modified from the Sioux Mountain Music Festival to the Sioux Mountain Music and Cultural Festival. In addition, SLARC added a youth component, which had previously never existed.

### ***Niinawint Anishinawbek***

**Duration:** 2001-2002

**Description:** Translated to English as “We are the People” the project was designed to give students the opportunity to learn about local First Nations history, culture and accomplishments through classroom visits

**Partners:** Central Public School, Sacred Heart School, Hudson School, Queen Elizabeth District High School and Pelican Falls First Nations High School.

**Funders:** Heritage Canada and the Ontario Trillium Foundation funded SLARC’s School Program Coordinator who was the lead organizer of this project.

**Outcome:** Classroom workshops included visits by Marcel and Liza Angecone, Ralph Johnston, prolific Anishinaabe writer Basil Johnston and local adventurer Jesse Terry. Students looked at artifacts, took part in a sweatlodge, dancing, and drumming activities.

### ***Homelessness Initiative***

**Duration:** 2001-2004

**Description:** SLARC collaborated with other local residents regarding issues affecting the homeless population of Sioux Lookout.

**Partners:** Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre; Sioux Lookout Homelessness Committee

**Funders:** Canadian Race Relations Foundation

**Outcome:** A sociological research study was conducted including interviews with local Elders and local homeless people, historical research and an analysis of models utilized in other communities to address homelessness. The study was completed in 2003 and assisted the Sioux Lookout Homelessness Committee in developing a framework and policies to open a

transition program that eventually led to the opening of the *Out of the Cold Shelter* on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003. The final report was submitted to the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in 2004.

### ***Grade 9 Orientation***

**Duration:** 2001-2003

**Description:** Stemming from the S.H.I.F.T. Initiative, with the support of SLARC's School Programs Coordinator, senior students organize an orientation including fun activities for grade 9 students designed to break down some of the barriers between long-time resident youth and students from isolated Northern First Nation communities.

**Partners:** Queen Elizabeth District High School

**Funders:** The Ontario Trillium Foundation funded SLARC's School Program Coordinator who was the lead organizer of this project.

**Outcome:**

### ***The Blanket Train***

**Duration:** June 2001

**Description:** The Blanket Train was a national initiative organized by the Aboriginal Rights Coalition and the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative that crossed the country by train raising awareness about Aboriginal land rights.

**Partners:** Northern Nishnawbe Education Council

**Funders:** Aboriginal Rights Coalition and the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative

**Outcome:** Thousands of blankets and petition signatures from across Canada were brought to the Supreme Court of Canada.

### ***National Aboriginal Day***

**Duration:** 2001-present

**Description:** Celebration of June 21<sup>st</sup>, National Aboriginal Day

**Partners:** Pelican Falls First Nations High School; Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre; Kwayaciiwin Education Resource Centre

**Funders:** N/A

**Outcome:** N/A

### ***United Grrrl Front***

**Duration:** 2001

**Description:** A support group for girls addressing issues of body image, self-esteem, and healthy sexuality.

**Partners:** Regional Multicultural Youth Council

**Funders:** Regional Multicultural Youth Council (through the Status of Women Secretariat)

**Outcome:** A week of workshops were held in July 2001, which were followed by weekly meetings for discussion and organizing events focused on young women.

### ***4 Days 4 Change Youth Conference***

**Duration:** February 2002

**Description:** The 4 Days 4 Change Youth Conference was for the purpose of offering youth the opportunity to explore various ways to become involved in positive social change.

**Partners:**

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** (2005) Over 70 youth attended from local high schools, and students were present from Thunder Bay, Dryden, Winnipeg and Atikokan. Guest speaker was Arun Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. The Danny Grossman Dance Company also made a presentation in addition to toehr workshops on Native land rights, international development, and youth empowerment.

### ***Sioux Lookout Youth Council (SLYC)***

**Duration:** 2002-2005

**Description:** Stemming from the *4 Days 4 Change* conference, SLYC sought to encourage local youth community engagement

**Partners:** N/A

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** SLYC produced a zine written and designed by local youth, and lobbied town council to preserve a playground that was scheduled for demolition, resulting in the development of new outdoor recreation facilities for youth. The group struggled to remain organized during a period without a paid coordinator for the *Youth Centre*, however once a coordinator was secured in May of 2004 *SLYC* was active in regenerating usage of the *Youth Centre* and also became active in organizing efforts to develop a skatepark locally. Throughout the next year, *SLYC* developed a training and orientation for new *Youth Centre* volunteers. The committee dissolved in late 2005.

### ***Piskapiiwin Cultural Outdoor Education Program***

**Duration:** 2003-2007

**Description:** land-based program that blends wilderness experiences with local native culture to develop and strengthen participants' feelings of self confidence and self-worth

**Partners:** Elders Roy Skunk ; Sacred Heart Catholic School, Hudson Public School, Sioux Mountain Public School, Pelican Falls First Nation High School, Queen Elizabeth High School, Ontario Provincial Police, Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, Ministry of Health Promotion, Municipal Parks and Recreation, Cedar Bay Outdoor Centre, Lac Seul First Nation

**Funders:** Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation; The Aboriginal Healing Foundation; the United Church of Canada; in-kind contributions from local organizations; Town of Sioux Lookout; Community Mobilization Program, Department of Justice; National Crime Prevention Centre; Communities in Action Fund.

**Outcome:** The program encouraged a mix of Anishinaabe and non-Anishinaabe, male and female participants, and addressed calls from Anishinaabe youth to acquire traditional teachings and build closer relationships with Elders. Students in grades 1 to 6 were reached through a series of weekly visits that used puppets, books, videos and games to instill messages about the beauty of diversity and encouraged students to explore and share their cultural heritage. The program ended in 2007 due to lack of funding, however local schools have since integrated much of the materials into its outdoor education and other classes.

### ***Urban Connections Program***

**Duration:** 2003

**Description:** Developed to provide valuable urban life skills and leadership training to students from remote Northern Communities at Pelican Falls First Nations High School

**Partners:** Pelican Falls First Nation High School, Pelican Falls Centre, the Den Youth Centre

**Funders:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation; the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation; and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

**Outcome:** Self-esteem workshops with Turtle Concepts, coffee houses and an increased involvement in the regional youth conference. The project provided important opportunities for youth to develop skills and helped to remove barriers between local students and students from the North.

### ***4 Days 4 Action Youth Conference***

**Duration:** April 2003

**Description:** The three day conference was designed to facilitate youth engagement in social justice causes and find ways to take action on these issues.

**Partners:**

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** Over 100 students from across the region participated in interactive workshops that included exploring visual art, hip-hop, drama, and photography as media for engaging in social justice activism.

### ***Strings Across the Sky***

**Duration:** 2003-2004

**Description:** Provided violin instruction in two intensive workshops. Videoconferences were also held linking students to the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto.

**Partners:** Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra; Royal Conservatory of Music

**Funders:** Ontario Arts Council, Voyageur

**Outcome:** As a finale, a community performance was held with approximately 100 people in attendance as a fundraiser to send 15 participants to Thunder Bay for a performance with the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra. The program offered students the opportunity in 2004 to perform in the Festival of Sound held annually in Parry Sound, ON.

### ***R We Tracking Tomorrow Conference***

**Duration:** 2005

**Description:** R We Tracking Tomorrow aimed to empower youth to be involved in the community and see that justice is served and injustice is corrected.

**Partners:**

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** Over 70 youth attended from local high schools, and students were present from Thunder Bay, Dryden, Winnipeg and Atikokan.

### ***REsolve***

**Duration:** 2005-present

**Description:** provide confidential (often free and other times sliding fee scale) community mediation for people in conflict. Mediation provides a non-judgmental, safe and respectful alternative for dealing with conflict. The program provides trained community mediators to assist you achieve peaceful and co-operative resolution to your concerns or issues.

**Partners:** Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution

**Funders:** Ontario Trillium Foundation

**Outcome:** Resolve has faced the brunt of the committee's difficulties with financial sustainability. At times the program has gone on without funding or a central coordinator, leaving it to be organized by volunteers. In early 2010, SLARC was awarded a Trillium Foundation grant to hire a coordinator to run the program and organize refresher courses for volunteers.

### ***The Thread Project***

**Duration:** 2005

**Description:** Community members were invited to bring a thread to weave into a “world tapestry,” that contained threads and fabric that had been collected from all over the world, and share stories about why they chose the particular piece they did.

**Partners:** A-Frame Gallery

**Funders:** Volunteer

**Outcome:** During the 2008 *Race Relations Week*, over 60 people took part in the opening of *Weaving Reconciliation* at the A-Frame Gallery, which included a film about the creation of the Thread Project that included five dramatized Sioux Lookout stories.

### ***Youth Empowerment***

**Duration:** 2005-2007

**Description:** Designed to assist young people develop skills that empower them to become more active participants in their community and providing a gateway to participation in community building initiatives.

**Partners:** Sioux Lookout Fire Department, Ah-Shaw-Bin, Sioux Lookout Policing Committee, the Recreation Department of Sioux Lookout, Lac Seul First Nation, the Salvation army, and the Power Workers Union of Ontario (assistance with skatepark fundraising)

**Funders:** Department of Justice Community Mobilization Project

**Outcome:** The program assisted youth in bringing attention to the campaign to build a skatepark as well as fundraise for the effort.

### ***National Day of Healing and Reconciliation***

**Duration:** 2007-present

**Description:** Recognition of the May 26th National Day of Healing and Reconciliation.

Activities have included feasts, ceremonies, and theatrical presentations (such as the presentation of *Triple Truth* and *Savage* by the Native Earth Performing Arts troupe).

**Partners:** Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (2007); the Native Earth Performing Arts (2008); Pelican Falls High School (2009); Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre (2009)

**Funders:** N/A

**Outcome:** The first recognition of the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation featured a speech by Garnet Angecone in which he called for “a process of reconciliation to help with healing from the residential school legacy,” which eventually led to the formation of the Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation. In 2009 Sioux Lookout was named the National Host for the Day of Healing and Reconciliation.

### ***Community Coalition for Healing and Reconciliation***

**Duration:** 2007-present

**Description:** The purpose of the coalition is to provide opportunities in Sioux Lookout, Lac Seul, and surrounding communities to complement and further the work of the *Truth and Reconciliation* Commission at a local and regional level to strengthen good cross-cultural relationships among First Nations and non-First Nations people

**Partners:** The Coalition is made up of concerned members of the community, including survivors of residential school, representatives from local churches, and members of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee.

**Funders:** N/A

**Outcome:** In 2009 a representative from the commission was invited to share information on the Truth and Reconciliation Process and hear concerns from local community members. The

Coalition will offer support to programs for the healing of survivors and endeavors to complement the work of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Sioux Lookout was chosen as the National Host for the Day of Healing and Reconciliation because of the work of the Coalition. In 2010 Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* visited Sioux Lookout to collect stories from survivors and spoke to students at local schools and at a community forum.

### ***National Day of Action***

**Duration:** 2008

**Description:** Recognition of the May 29<sup>th</sup> National Day of Action to draw attention to issues facing First Nations in Canada.

**Partners:** Called by the Assembly of First Nations

**Funders:** N/A

**Outcome:** March of solidarity was held throughout the town of Sioux Lookout, and the audience heard speeches and prayers.

### **Appendix III: Sample Interview Questions**

#### **Personal Information**

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself — i.e., how long have you lived in Sioux Lookout, what your occupation is, etc.

How did you first become involved with SLARC?

Has your position with SLARC changed any since your first involvement?

What benefits have you as an individual experienced from your involvement with SLARC?

#### **SLARC and the Community**

How would you define SLARC and the role they play in the community?

Of the activities that SLARC has undertaken, which stand out the most in your mind?

What would you say are the most significant of these?

How has the community benefitted from SLARC's activities?

What is your perception of racism in Sioux Lookout/Northwestern Ontario? How has this changed over time?

Has SLARC had an impact on the prevalence of racism in Sioux Lookout/Northwestern Ontario? If so, in what ways?

How do people talk about racism differently now compared to 20 years ago prior to SLARC?

How would you say the work of SLARC is perceived throughout different sectors of your community? (Sioux Lookout or Lac Seul depending on interviewee)

#### **About SLARC**

What prompted the creation of SLARC?

How has it evolved from its beginnings?

What are some of the challenges you have faced within the community working for/with SLARC? Have the challenges the organization faced at the beginning been different from those you face today?

How were/are these challenges overcome?

What have been the major strengths of the organization? How have they been utilized and built upon?

What have been some of the organization's defining moments?

What is your vision for the future/ongoing role of SLARC?

### **About Racism/Dialogue**

How has people’s willingness to confront racism changed since the development of SLARC?

Has the work of SLARC helped cast more attention on other forms of discrimination (based on gender, class, etc.) as well?

How did SLARC create space in the community for respectful dialogue?

What relationships were particularly significant in SLARC’s processes?

How have these relationships been maintained? Deepened?

Have some relationships failed to grow? If so, why?

What are some of the ongoing challenges with addressing racism in this community/region?

### **Wrap Up**

Do you have any other comments?

## **Appendix IV: Historical Record of Race Relations Week and Recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**

### **1992 — March 21**

Promotional and education material were organized for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination by SLARC's Education Sub-Committee.

### **1993 — March 21**

A visit to Sioux Lookout took place by Teresa Gonzales, recipient of Ontario Award for Excellence in Race Relations. A community luncheon was held for Teresa, who also met with the management committee of SLARC, providing SLARC with the opportunity to share their work and discuss some strategies to work toward Employment Equity and other Anti-Racism issues.

### **1994 — March 21-25**

The first Race-Relations Week was held March 21<sup>st</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup>.

On March 21st there was recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, while from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, a film festival was presented in partnership with the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, Cable Channel 9 and the Sioux Lookout Public Library.

A ribbon campaign at the schools, "The Multicultural Bow" was developed to symbolize commitment to the elimination of racial discrimination. The red, yellow, black and white ribbons represent the colours of the human race. They also signify the beauty and harmony created when the diverse people of the world unite together.

### **1995 — March 18-24**

Special guest, author Ruby Slipperjack visited all of the area schools and also presented an evening with Ruby at the High School.

During the week's events, area schools were presented with a replica of the "Let's Work Together" sign that was erected at both North and South entrances to the community. Also during the week, youth held a film festival at Queen Elizabeth District High School.

The week also included a membership drive and SLARC’s annual meeting with special guests, John Osborne and Rebecca Belmore.

**1996 — March 18-24**

**Theme: “Living Together, Learning Together”**

Special displays were done by the Bank of Montreal, CIBC, The Frontier Book Store and the library . There was a special art contest at all the schools in Sioux Lookout. Separate awards were given for art and literature, and many local businesses donated prizes for the winning entries. The grade 11 class at Queen Elizabeth District High School did a collage celebrating this year’s theme of “Living Together, Learning Together.” The week also featured an Elder’s Tea and mini Pow Wow, a Race Relations Fun Run/Walk, and a youth dance. A *Multicultural Potluck Feast* was held on March 17<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the presentation of the *People Making Changes Award*, which went to Ennis Fiddler, both of which would become annual events.

**1997 — March 16-22**

**Theme: “Building Bridges to Understanding”**

The week began with a Unity Pow Wow at the Recreation Centre organized by the Lac Seul Cultural Committee. Pelican Falls First Nations High School also shared their guest speaker, Ferguson Plain, with all the schools and the community. Plain also conducted a Cross-cultural workshop at the library . The schools also hosted a Poetry & Prose Contest.

Other events included an Elders’ Tea was held at St. Andrew’s Church, a Friday Night Square Dance, the Race Relations Fun Run/Walk, and a Theatre Workshop offered by Monica Marx with students from all the schools in Sioux Lookout and Hudson.

At St. Andrew’s Church, the *Multicultural Potluck Feast* was again held in conjunction with the presentation of the *People Making Changes Award*, which went to Monika Orzechowska.

**1998 — March 21-28**

**Theme: “Living in the Circle”**

In February 1998, a survey was faxed to several community agencies and individuals soliciting input into the development of Race Relations Week. Questions were asked regarding topics or events that they would like to see included, special guests who could be invited, contests and themes. This was followed by a community meeting for further development and planning of the weeks activities.

The 1998 Race Relations Week included the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Race Relations Walk/Run, a traditional talking circle at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre titled “Racism: Let’s Talk About it,” and a screening of the anti-slavery film *Amistad*.

The week also featured “An Evening of Comedy and Insight” with popular African-Canadian Kenny Robinson, a songwriting workshop with Métis singer-songwriter Don Freed, and an anti-racism concert hosted by student performers.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *Multicultural Pot Luck Feast* was attended by over 200 people, including team members from the Northern Bands Hockey Tournament, which coincided with the event. A moving address was delivered by guest First Nations elder Fred Plain.

A community concert was also held where the winners of the Race Relations Week Poetry/Prose/Art Challenge and the *People Making Changes Award* were announced. Awards for the Poetry/Prose/Art Challenge were donated by local businesses. Winning entries in the essay contest were printed in Wawatay newspaper. The *People Making Changes Award* was awarded to HIV/AIDS activists Rene Boucher and Jean Korobanik.

In recognition of the tenth anniversary of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee, archival displays detailing SLARC’s history were placed in the public library and the lobby of the Sioux Lookout District Health Centre.

It was estimated that approximately 1500 people participated directly in Race Relations Week 1998, and many more were reached through coverage of events in the press and posters hung up throughout the community.

### **1999 — March 21-27**

#### **Theme: “Many Faces — One Community”**

Race Relations Week in 1999 included a Sharing Circle held at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre facilitated by Lorraine Kenny. The Circle was attended by 13 people who discussed feelings about racism.

A Community Forum was also held, featuring panelists Julie Blackhawk (Native court worker with the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre), Terry Jewell Sr. (Former Sioux Lookout Mayor), and Henry Ogemah (Elder and former student at Pelican Falls Residential School). The forum was attended by 36 people and focused on social issues facing Sioux Lookout. Youth organized an Anti-Racism youth Concert that was attended by over 200 people.

The *Multicultural Putluck Feast* was attended by over 100 people and the *People Making Changes Award* was awarded to Janina Legros, Matthew Laverty, Aleisha DeRose, Carla Vinczeffy, and Lisa Hindy due to their community service and volunteer efforts with the *Multicultural Youth Centre*.

**2000 — March 19-26**

**Theme: “Goodwill and Understanding — Our Millennium Goal”**

Race Relations Week in 2000 also began with community outreach, including surveys both for the general population as well as one youth-specific survey. Significant energy was also put into promotion, including displays at the library in advance of the week’s events, and early publication of the week’s events calendar.

The week opened with a March Against Racism that led 200 people from the OPP Station to the Multicultural Youth Centre. Many of the participants were from Central, Wellington, Hudson, and some from Queen Elizabeth District High School.

The *Multicultural Youth Centre* hosted a teen drop-in night, with nine teens participating in the event.

On Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> a workshop titled “Building Bridges to Understanding & Communication” was held at the Forest Inn & Conference Centre. The morning activity included a “Learning Circle” facilitated by Mary Alice Smith, which garnered 9 participants. The activity presented participants with a presentation on how to communicate with each other, respect, learn about oneself, to learn about one another, and a historical background on Australian Learning Circles and Canadian Aboriginal relations with the government. The afternoon session was titled “Treaty, Partnerships and Agreements” and featured a panel including Frank Beardy (Executive Director of Northern Nishnawbe Education Council), Laura Calmwind (Executive Director of Windigo First Nations Council), Phil Lancaster (Lawyer and Conflict Resolution Specialist), and Grand Chief Charles Fox of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation.

On Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24 people participated in a workshop on the impacts of the Residential School System. The workshop was organized by Marcel Angecone from Lac Seul First Nation and Susan Barclay from St. Mary’s Anglican Church. Participants started the day with a sunrise ceremony and pancake breakfast. Speakers included Bishop Gordon Beardy, Marcel Angecone, Tom Chisel, Lorraine Kenny, and Juliette Blackhawk.

The week also featured a joint Open House/Scavenger Hunt encompassing six locations, including the OPP, Northwestern Healthy Unit, Sioux Lookout Diabetes Program, Ministry of

Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, Zone Dental Department, Aboriginal Family Support Program, and Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre. 16 people participated.

Other events that took place throughout the week included servings of bannock and tea at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, a youth Disco Dance that drew 65 participants, an Arts and Crafts night that drew 7 participants, and a Pool Tournament that drew 12 youth participants.

The week closed with the annual *Multicultural Potluck Feast* on Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 200 people participated in the event. Festivities were MC'ed by Garnet Angecone and Mayor John McDonald presented the *People Making Changes Award* to Ralph Johnson.

## **2001**

In 2001 the *People Making Changes Award* was awarded to Garnet Angecone, Lorraine Kenny, Eno Anderson, and the *Voices of the Future* Youth Group.

## **2002**

### **Theme: "Exploring Diversity"**

Race Relations Week in 2002 included a workshop entitled *Race Relations in a New Country*, which addressed treaty rights and was presented by Jerry Sawanas of Winnipeg's Culture Bridge.

Many participants took part in the *Fun With Languages Night*, where people were invited to explore some of the many languages spoken in the community as volunteers shared phrases, songs and poems in an interactive atmosphere. Later in the week, Ralph Johnson shared his knowledge of First Nations culture with a presentation of traditional games for students at Sacred Heart School.

Other events included a March for Harmony through the downtown, a Tea and Bannock Day at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, and *Rock Against Racism*, an open mic coffee-house at the *Multicultural Youth Centre*.

The *Multicultural Potluck Feast* included entertainment by the Lac Seul Dream Stars, and the *People Making Changes Award* was awarded to Lorraine Kenny.

## 2003

The 2003 Race Relations Week was wickered off with the annual *March for Harmony* and also featured a Coffee House in collaboration with the *Café Collective* featuring local musicians. A partnership with the Aboriginal Healthy Babies Program brought a special presentation by Turtle Concepts to students at Queen Elizabeth and Pelican Falls High Schools. Students at Hudson Public School and Sacred Heart School created colourful posters about Race Relations Week for the walls and windows of local businesses and facilities.

The Multicultural Potluck Feast had an attendance of over 200 people. The *People Making Changes Award* was not awarded this year.

## 2004 — March 19 – March 27

The week opened with Coffee House held on March 19<sup>th</sup> at the *Multicultural Youth Centre*.

March 21<sup>st</sup> was marked by the *Multicultural Potluck Feast* with over 200 people in attendance. Garnet Angeconebe was the recipient of the *People Making Changes Award*.

The Youth Centre hosted an after school program with 25 youth participants. The program included crafts, mural painting, and games from the Rediscovery Program.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, square dancing was hosted at the Nishnawbe Gamik Friendship Centre, lead by Nora Angeconebe and Merv Ningewance.

Five youth from Sacred Heart School shared some of their family’s culture on CBLs community radio. They presented information from workbooks that they had prepared as part of the *Piskapiiwin* program. The booklet entitled “Celebrating My Culture” explored traditional foods, music, clothing, and holidays enjoyed by their families or ancestors.

Sioux Mountain School grades 3-8 received presentations from the Youth Centre coordinator, Beth Dasno. Students were taught the importance of cultural diversity and racial harmony through a combination of songs, games, videos and discussions.

Later in the week, Lac Seul Chief and Council invited Sioux Lookout Town Council to meet with them for sharing and consultation on areas of mutual concern.

Other events included a Bannock making lesson at the Recreation Centre kitchen, customer appreciation days at local businesses, and display boards at the public library, including displays of literature relating to the international day for the elimination of racial discrimination.

**2005**

**Theme: “Weaving Threads of Healing”**

*The Thread Project* invited members of the community to bring a thread to weave into a “world tapestry,” that contained threads and fabric that had been collected from all over the world, and share stories about why they chose the particular piece they did.

The *People Making Changes Award* was awarded to Marcel Angecone.

**2006 — March 19 – March 25**

**Theme: “Community, Unity, and Opportunity”**

During the 2006 Race Relations Week, free gym time was sponsored by Tikinagan Child and Family Services and the Chamber of Commerce, Sioux Mountain Public School hosted a Talent Show, a day of Floor Hockey was sponsored by *Fun with Cops*, the Multicultural Youth Centre hosted a “Girls Night Out,” and the Recreation Centre sponsored a free public skate. Theme bracelets were provided care of Wasaya Airways and Musselwhite Mine, and volunteers staffed a SLARC information booth at Johnny’s Fresh Market

The annual *Multicultural Potluck Feast* was held at the Knights of Columbus hall, and the *People Making Changes Award* went to Garnet Angecone and Laurel Wood for their work on the Thread Project.

**2007 — March 16 – March 25**

**Theme: “Our Community, Our Family, Our Future”**

*Everyday Light: Family Photographs Selected by Contemporary First Nations Artists* brought over 400 visitors. The display was lent by the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. Later during the week, a community art display including 28 pieces was installed at the United Church for the week and drew over 70 people.

The *Multicultural Potluck Feast* attracted over 220 attendees and Dick MacKenzie acted as MC. He and Bertha Jacques presented the *Mary Carpenter — People Making Changes Award* to Neil Michelin.

The film “*Johnny Tootall*” was shown March 18<sup>th</sup> and “*Bearwalker*” on March 19<sup>th</sup> at the Mayfair Theatre, both by Shirley Cheechoo. Local filmmaker Nadia McLaren also shared her feature length documentary film about the legacy of the residential school system, “*Muffins for Granny.*”

Kwayaciiwin hosted a square dance in the Recreation Centre gym during the Northern First Nations Hockey Tournament.

A workshop entitled *Dreaming Our Cultural Spaces* was facilitated by Community Arts Ontario, providing a unique opportunity for a diverse group of artists and community activists to share their experiences, ideas, and issues.

The Nishnawbe Gamik Friendship Centre opened its doors for an evening of drumming on Wednesday, while CIBC created a display for Race Relations Week and offered coffee and bannock for their customers during an open house. The Out of the Cold Shelter held a fishing derby that drew a large and diverse group of people out onto Bigwood Lake. The week also coincided with the Cedar Bay March Break Festival for kids.

### **2008 — March 21 – March 30**

#### **Theme: “Let’s CHAT: Create Harmony Around Town”**

A local march was held titled *Let’s Walk Together : Gamamawibimosemin* that drew over 80 walkers escorted by the Nishnawbe Gamik Friendship Centre traditional drum and two hand drums. Stops included a traditional water ceremony at the spring, readings at Centennial Park and readings and prayers at churches that were involved in running residential schools.

The work of Roy Morris and Klaus Rossler were shown together at the *A-Frame Gallery*, while 60 people took part in the opening of *Weaving Reconciliation* at the A-Frame Gallery, which included a film about the creation of the Thread Project that included five dramatized Sioux Lookout stories. Nadia McLaren also presented her film, “*Muffins For Granny*,” and Ruby Morris led *The Sacred Teachings* Workshop at the A-Frame Gallery.

Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre provided an exhibition titled “Residential Schools: The Red Lake Story” including photos, a timeline, and some archival material, shedding light on the impact of the residential school experience on local individuals and families.

The Cedar Bay Family Fun Day drew a crowd of up to 500 people for sleigh rides, games and food, and a Coffee House was held at the *Multicultural Youth Centre*.

The week also included the launch of “*From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*,” a book that included a story by residential school survivor, Garnet Angeconeb. The book was published by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the gathering attracted 50 people.

The 2008 *Mary Carpenter — People Making Changes Award* was awarded to Peggy Sanders.

**2009 — March 21 – March 29**  
**Theme: “Celebrating Diversity”**

The 2009 Race Relations Week kicked off with a Sunrise Ceremony in Centennial Park and a breakfast at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre. The event was followed by another march through the community *Let’s Walk Together : Gamamawibimosemin* . The evening of March 21<sup>st</sup> was also the opening of an exhibit at the A-Frame Gallery that would stay up throughout the week, titled *I am... Indigenous*. The exhibit featured portraits that celebrate the people of Treaties 3 and 9 by Adrienne Fox-Keesic and Brent Wesley.

On Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> a concert was held by Shy-Anne Hovorka and Angus Jourdain at Queen Elizabeth District High School.

On Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, **REsolve** held a workshop entitled “The Intriguing World of Conflict” followed by an open house for the Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board (SLAAMB) and the **Multicultural Youth Centre**.

Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> featured the launch of the new SLARC website at the municipal library as well as a children’s “Storytime” at the library .

Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> was “Culture Night” at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre that featured drumming, singing, and more.

Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> was the open house for the Kwaiyaciwin Education Resource Centre. A film titled *Politics of the Heart* was screened in the evening at the A-Frame Gallery.

Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup> featured an Elders social gathering at the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre and the annual Multicultural Potluck Feast at the Legion Hall, as well as the presentation of the **Mary Carpenter — People Making Changes Award** to Florence Woolner.

On Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> there was a square dance at the Legion Hall hosted by the Asham Stompers Square Dancers.

The week closed off on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> with the Cedar Bay Spring Festival and a concert by House of Doc at the Queen Elizabeth District High School.

**2010 — March 21 – March 28**  
**Theme: “Everyone Has a Story”**

All throughout the week Christian Chapman had an art exhibit at the A-Frame Gallery, while CBLS community radio featured local storytellers and multicultural music.

Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup> kicked off Race Relations Week with a Sunrise Ceremony outside of the Rec Centre. The rest of the day featured the Northern First Nations Hockey Tournament, a “Community Walk for Solidarity,” a “Family Fun Day” at Cedar Bay, and the Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre’s sobriety Pow Wow.

On Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> the Multicultural Youth Centre held its open house.

Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> featured a screening of the film *Reel Injun* at the Mayfair Theatre and closed with the women’s hand drumming group at the Sunset Women’s Aboriginal Circle.

Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> included a luncheon at St. Andrew’s Church. The Sunset Women’s Aboriginal Circle hosted the *Remember Me Project* that was designed to be a healing art workshops in remembrance of missing Aboriginal women. The Youth Centre hosted a youth-targeted edition of the workshop later in the evening. The Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre hosted a cultural night with drumming, singing, and teachings and the evening closed with Ahmoo Angecone presenting the “Story of the Great Flood” at St. Andrew’s Church Hall.

Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> started with Anishinaabemowin Bingo at the Sunset Women’s Aboriginal Circle. A website honouring the work of the late Lorraine Kenny-Beaton, “Raising the Children” was also launched at the Best Western, and Jerry Sawanas hosted a program on Wawatay Radio in the evening titled *Your Spirit is Your Voice*.

Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup> included a coffee house with local musicians at the ***Multicultural Youth Centre***.

Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> featured a traditional African Dance Workshop and the Gumboots Dancing Workshop at Sioux Mountain Public School. The Legion hosted a community social titled “Every One Has a Story”.

The week closed on Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup> with the Multicultural Potluck Feast at the Legion Hall, and the presentation of the Mary Carpenter — People Making Changes Award to Sioux Lookout OPP Constable Mark Gaudet and Queen Elizabeth District High School Teacher Jacky Craig.

## **Appendix V: Employees of the Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee**

### **1990**

Coordinators: Tom Terry and Carol Terry

### **1991**

Coordinators: Laurel Wood and Christine Chisel

### **1992**

Coordinators: Christine Chisel, Laurel Wood and Terry Lynne Jewell

### **1994**

Youth Coordinator: Laurie Sapay (August to October) Jim Brown

### **1995**

Youth Coordinator: Jim Brown (to February)

Summer Student: Derek Kenny

### **1996**

Affordable Housing Project Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

### **1997**

Youth Service Canada Project Coordinator/Community Program Coordinator: Wendy McIsaac

Affordable Housing Project Coordinator/Theatre Project Coordinator/School Program

Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

Student Intern: Kanina Terry

### **1998**

Community Program Coordinator: Wendy McIsaac

School Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

### **1999**

Community Program Coordinator: Wendy McIsaac (to February) Rachel Garrick (from February)

School Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

### **2000**

Community Program Coordinator: Rachel Garrick (to February) Deb Sider (from February)

School Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

**2001**

Community Program Coordinator: Rachel Garrick  
School Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

**2002**

Community Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart  
School Program Coordinator: Gillian Roy

**2003**

Community Program Coordinator: Stephan Kudaka  
School Program Coordinator: Ellen Stewart

**2004**

Youth Worker: Janina Legros  
Summer students: Mary Stewart, Oliver Soulsen, Lenore Kudaka  
Piskapiiwin Coordinators: Beth Dasno  
Piskapiiwin Coordinators: Ralph Johnson

**2005**

Business Manager: Heather Mesich  
Piskapiiwin Coordinator: Charles Williams  
Youth Empowerment Coordinator: Nick Sherman  
REsolve Coordinator: Wava Fox  
REsolve Manager: Don DeGenova

**2006**

Business Manager: Heather Mesich (to September)/Jennifer Morrow (from October)  
REsolve Manager: Don DeGenova  
Associate REsolve Project Manager: Pierre Parsons  
REsolve Project Coordinator: Wava Fox  
Piskapiiwin Coordinator: Charles Williams  
Youth Empowerment Coordinator: Dan Fraser  
2006 Festival Coordinator: Nick Sherman  
2006 Festival Assistant Coordinator: Ian Alcock and Alexa Maxwell  
Web Designer: Elizabeth Miller

**2007**

Business Manager: Jennifer Morrow  
Youth Centre Coordinator: Daniel Fraser (to September) / Nick Sherman (from September)  
SLARC in the Summer Coordinator: Iris Stunzi

Summer Staff: Amy McDonald, Alexa Maxwell, Jamie Trout

## **2008**

Business Manager: Jennifer Morrow (to June)

Youth Centre Coordinator: Daniel Fraser (to September) / Daniel Sakchekapo (from September)

Event, Fundraising and Communications Coordinator: Michael Lavery

Projects and Partnerships Coordinator: Katy Quinn

SLARC in the Summer Coordinator: Iris Stunzi

Summer Staff: Mike King, Nicole Maxwell, Jamie Trout

REsolve Coordinators: Monika Orzechowsk and Erin Horvath

## **2009**

SLARC in the Summer Coordinator: Alexa Maxwell

Projects and Partnerships Coordinator: Katy Quinn

Summer Staff: Nicole Maxwell, Astrid Johnston

Youth Centre Coordinator: Daniel Fraser

Youth Centre Intern: Mark Hoggarth

REsolve Coordinators: Monika Orzechowskand Erin Horvath

## **2010**

SLARC in the Summer Coordinator: Michael Lavery

Project Youth Citizenship Coordinator: Dan Fraser

REsolve Program Coordinator: TBA

Summer Staff: Nicole Maxwell and Dennis Dumphy

## **Appendix VI: Video Credits for Addressing the Needs of First Nations Clients**

### **Actors**

Garnet Angeconeb  
Lucy Blanchard  
Rachel Garrick  
George Hoggarth  
Sheila Janvier  
Karen Kartinen  
Jonathan Kejick  
Norma Kejick  
Matthew Kejick  
Derek Kenny  
Rose Kokorudz  
Rhonda Konrad  
Lorene Lyon  
Miriam MacDonald  
Debbie Mchaud  
Allan Morrison  
Keith Roseborough  
Florence Sanderson  
Melissa Wilson

### **Narrators**

John Cooke  
Lisa Sagutch

### **Businesses and Organizations**

Bearskin Airlines  
DJ's Gas Bar Ltd.  
Sanders True Value  
Sioux Hotel  
Sioux Lookout Airport  
Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee  
Sioux Lookout Chamber of Commerce  
Stucliffe Group Sioux Lookout Ltd.  
Wilson's Business Solutions

### **Script Writers**

Lorene Lyon (situation one)

Lorene Lyon (situation two)  
Ursala Martin (situation three)

### **Narration**

Written by Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism  
Cross Cultural Business Video Project Sub-  
Committee

### **Script Adaptations**

Nadine Arpin  
Lorene Lyon  
Ursala Martin  
Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Cross Cultural  
Business Video Project Sub-Committee  
Melissa Wilson

### **Video Production and Post-Production**

Nadine Arpin  
Melissa Wilson

### **Post-Production Facility**

Full Circle Recordings

### **Music**

Light Wave  
Composed by Josh Heineman  
Published by Omni Music  
Distributed by The Music People Ltd.

### **Heritage Canada Consultant**

Rocky Serkowney

### **Project Funding**

Bank of Montreal  
Heritage Canada  
Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and  
Recreation  
The Ontario Trillium Foundation

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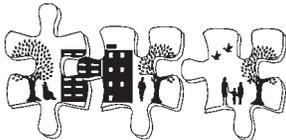


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