



ANIIN (hello ... I see your light)

Manidoo Giizisoons (Little Spirit Moon) December 2024

Aaniin, Niijiiwag (Hello, Friends),

Aaniin! Hello! I'm Sarah "Miskwaaens Migiziwigwan" Kalmanson, and I'm thrilled to share that I have stepped into the role of Executive Director. It's been a privilege to serve as Interim Executive Director since February 2024, and I'm deeply grateful for this opportunity. Before this, I enjoyed working as the Marketing Director and Creative Co-Curator when we began to build the museum to open the doors. It has been an incredible journey, and I eagerly anticipate collaborating with all of you as we strive to support and uplift our wonderful, beautiful community together in impactful, meaningful ways!



Sarah 'Miskwaaens Migiziwigwan' Kalmanson
Executive Director

As we conclude our inaugural year, we are filled with immense gratitude for the remarkable journey of "sharing history while we make it." Dedicated to honoring the rich tapestry of the Anishinaabe people's enduring history and cultural heritage, the **Giiwediniing Treaty Rights and Culture Museum** has evolved into a vibrant gathering place. This space serves as a testament to our stories, where every exhibit resonates with the whispers of our ancestors and the rhythms of our traditions.

We want to express our gratitude to the devoted community members whose unwavering commitment and hard work have turned our dream into reality. Your support has been integral to our success, and we sincerely appreciate it.

We are also deeply thankful to our generous funders: the Minnesota Humanities Commission, Blandin Foundation for Rural Placemaking, Mellon Foundation, Knight Foundation,



Mary Crystal Gogleye, and Winona LaDuke

Minneapolis Foundation, and numerous individual donors whose belief in our vision has fueled our mission.

Our dedicated team brings a wealth of experience and passion to our museum, including Co-Curator *Winona LaDuke*, who is renowned for her advocacy; Youth Programs Coordinator *Mary Crystal Gogleye*, committed to engaging our youth; Events Coordinator *Waseyabin Kapashesit*, who enhances our community events; and our enthusiastic young volunteer, *Kiley Knowles*, who assists in the Gift Shop. We are also grateful for our outstanding maintenance volunteer, *Ross Karvonen*, who devoted countless hours to renovating our building with care and dedication.

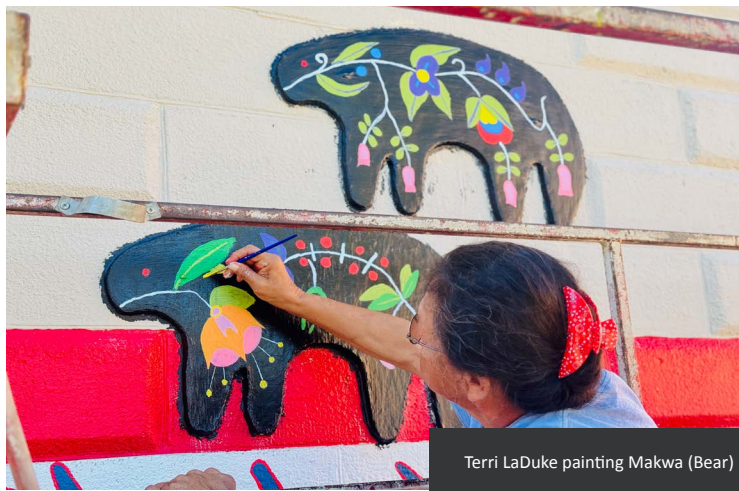
Our board is a diverse group of passionate individuals, including Board Chair Don Wedll, a seasoned historian; Secretary/Treasurer Danette Larson, a dedicated educator; Travis Zimmerman, our knowledgeable Museum Director; and Gina Peltier, an Anishinaabe water protector, all unified in their commitment to our mission.

At the heart of our mission is the desire to *empower and inspire the Anishinaabe and Dakota peoples through immersive exhibitions, dynamic public programs, and transformative education experiences. We aim to ignite awareness, foster respect, and drive meaningful change in our community and beyond.*

Giiwediniing is deeply rooted in *Mino Bimaadiziwin* (the good life) for all Indigenous peoples. We recognize it as a gift from the Creator, nurtured by past generations, and intended for future generations to cherish.

The historic Carnegie Library, now known as Giiwediniing, proudly houses our vibrant museum, symbolizing our commitment to sharing our cultural knowledge and historic resources in the northern region. "*Giiwediniing*" means "*in the north*." Following the library's transition, the building served as headquarters for Enbridge, a multinational company that faced challenges from our community. In a joyful return to our origins, we opened our doors on October 12, 2023, eager to connect with and empower our communities.

In 2025, we are excited to embark on a project to enhance accessibility at our museum. We will construct a thoughtfully designed ramp and vestibule to welcome all visitors, ensuring everyone in the community can enjoy our gallery.



Terri LaDuke painting Makwa (Bear)

With the generous support of the Blandin Foundation, the museum has undergone a significant transformation. It now features vibrant art murals and inviting outdoor seating areas for guests. Each mural tells a unique story, adding to the cultural richness of our space and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

In 2025, we plan to embark on three new art mural projects beautifying our community and engaging local artists and residents. Each project will focus on a unique theme that reflects our area's cultural heritage and artistic spirit. We aim to select diverse locations that are easily accessible and visible to the public, ensuring that these murals inspire and connect with a broad audience. These initiatives will involve collaboration with local native artists and community members, empowering a sense of ownership and pride in the finished artworks.



Charles Rencountre's "Not Afraid to Look"

Community Relationships

As the little museum that could, we embarked on an inspiring journey this year; driven by our unwavering dedication and hard work, our team came together to create an inviting and enriching space for everyone in the community. We were proud to receive several distinguished awards for our efforts and impact throughout the year, a testament to our shared achievements and the community's support.

On July 11th, the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented the Giiwedining Museum with the *Historic Preservation Recognition Award*. Winona LaDuke also received the Society's *Women of History Award*.

Charles Rencountre's "Not Afraid to Look" sculpture received the *People's Choice Award* on October 12th, demonstrating the community's appreciation.

Community Events

With the support of the Blandin Foundation, we successfully organized various vibrant community events. These included the First Annual National Day of Racial Healing and a Water Protector Reception in collaboration with the Shell River Alliance. These events brought people together in celebration and connection.

On September 15th, we partnered with 'OWAMNI,' a renowned indigenous-owned restaurant by the Sioux Chef, to host a unique culinary event at the Amory in Park Rapids. Ethan Denny-Broker, OWAMNI's Chef de Cuisine, led the evening. He skillfully prepared and presented an array of traditional locally harvested foods that highlight the rich cultural heritage of the Anishinaabeg people. Simultaneously,



Mesina, Mary Crystal, Waasamoan and Ethan Denny-Broker serving Miijinimaaganag (Three Sisters) soup

the guests were served by the local native youth and team. This event marked our first annual *Dagwaagin* (Fall) Feast dinner, a celebration of the *manoomin* (wild rice) harvest season and the local ingredients that accompany it. Given the unique menu and the occasion's significance, tickets sold out quickly, reflecting the community's excitement and interest in experiencing this cultural feast. We look forward to September 2025 to host our *2nd Annual Dagwaagin (Fall) Feast* with Chef Ethan Denny-Broker.

On November 1st, Giiwedining hosted the Park Rapids community's highly anticipated *3rd Annual Días de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Block Party*.

This fantastic family event featured pony rides and various activities inside the Armory. Artists Guillermo Valadez and Amy Knowles provided Mexican skull face painting, while Ana Cornejo created a traditional Ofrenda.

Community members placed photographs of their loved ones on the Ofrenda to honor their memory and engaged in storytelling. Additionally, we celebrated local Mexican cuisine with Vallarta's Mexican Grill, which offered a delicious taco bar and beverages for everyone. DJ Ernest Oppgaard Peltier ensured a lively atmosphere, providing music for dancing and a fun experience for all guests.



Guillermo Valadez

Every event was a vibrant testament to our community's rich cultural fabric, fostering active participation and engagement from all attendees. We eagerly anticipate hosting more engaging events in 2025.

Artist Program

Our art murals highlighted the incredible talent of local Anishinaabe artists. They featured stunning painted murals, captivating sculptures, and immersive installations that captivated attendees during the ArtLeap weekend event, which extended into the Pine Point village.

On May 17th, the Giiwedining Museum welcomed "Not Afraid to Look," a world-famous symbol of the Water Protector movement that celebrates the resilience and courage of Native people. Artists Charles Rencountre and his wife Alicia Da Silva transported the four-foot-high statue from their studio in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Giiwedining, the City of Park Rapids, and the Park Rapids Arts and Culture Commission sponsored the installation as part of the city's sculpture trail program. Unique donors, including Betty LaDuke and others, contributed to this project.

On September 28th, Terri LaDuke finished her mural called "Sweet Corn," an art mural, on our building. This mural showcases the artistic and cultural heritage of the Dakota and Ojibwe peoples. The spiritual significance of the animals depicted in the artwork is evident throughout the piece. Many visitors were excited to observe the live painting as it unfolded. The Heartland Arts event, Art Leap, unveiled the mural that weekend.



"Sweet Corn"

Giiwedining to the Community

We proudly introduced Giiwedining to the vibrant village of Pine Point, showcasing a beautifully painted mural of a medicine

Mikinaak (turtle). The talented Wesley May crafted this stunning artwork, incorporating the creative contributions of local youth, highlighting their voices and perspectives in the mural's design.

We also have been engaging historical docent program in Pine Point that highlights the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the village's tribal community. This program will involve training knowledgeable guides to share the storytelling of our history and culture of heritage, allowing visitors and locals alike to appreciate and learn about the community's legacy.



Youth of Pine Point

Ribbon Skirt Warriors

The Giiwedining Museum is proud to act as a fiscal sponsor for the Ribbon Skirt Warriors film project. This collaboration not only contributes to the film's production but also highlights the museum's dedication to honoring the historical water protector movements at Standing Rock, Line 3, and Line 5. Additionally, it promotes Indigenous narratives through art and cinema. The water protector movement is forever.

"From the icy grip of Minnesota winters to the scorching heat of a record-breaking drought, witness the unwavering dedication of Native women and their allies as they take a stand against the construction of the Canadian Line 3 tar sands pipeline." www.giiwedining.org/ribbon-skirt-warriors

This year has been an incredible journey, showcasing the resilience of "the little museum that could." We hosted interactive guided tours designed to unleash creativity, offering hands-on experiences that inspired visitors of all ages. Incredibly, we welcomed nearly 2,000 guests through our doors, a testament to our growing presence and the interest in our offer. Among these visitors, we had the pleasure of hosting around 300 eager regional school students who participated in guided tours designed to ignite their curiosity and appreciation for art and history. This year focused on building relationships and inspiring a love for learning within our community. We spent every moment in the museum in a memorable and impactful way.

Yet, as we celebrate our culture and community, we encourage everyone to hold on to hope. Like our sacred manoomin (wild rice), our traditions and stories endure, ready to flourish once more when nurtured by respect and care. We are grateful for your ongoing support as we continue to share and celebrate the richness of our culture.

We look forward to new adventures and sharing many stories in the upcoming year.

Miigwech,

Sarah Kilmartin

Sarah 'Miskwaens Migiziwigwan' Kalmanson
Executive Director AND, Giiwedining Treaty Rights and Culture Museum Board and our Team.



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Please consider joining us if you have not become a Founding Member today.

We started our journey with *250 passionate Founding Members*, and we warmly invite you to join us in this inspiring initiative! As a founding member, you are crucial in shaping our community, mission, and projects.

Every contribution counts—whether through educational programs, cultural events, storytelling, or preserving our rich history. Each effort not only honors our heritage but also fortifies our community. Together, we can create a meaningful impact and celebrate our vibrant culture!

As a Founding Member, you'll help breathe life into this museum. You'll also receive invitations to exclusive public and virtual events throughout the year and special perks. Join us in making a difference!

We have the option for a monthly or annual membership. Members who donate \$250 or more will receive a 501(c)(3) Miigwech letter along with a special gift of a 1/2 lb. of traditional Anishinaabe hand-harvested and wood-parched manoomin (wild rice).

Go to www.giiwedining.org/donate to join us as a Founding Member.

