

## **Annual General Meeting – True North Society**

**June 24, 2026**

### **Message from the Executive Director**

Good evening, everyone,

My name is Courtney Helfrich, and I am the Executive Director of True North Society. Thank you all for joining us at our Annual General Meeting. It is a pleasure to welcome our members, board, staff, volunteers, partners, funders, and supporters.

As Executive Director, I am proud to reflect on the past year and the progress we have made together. This year brought both opportunities and challenges, but through the dedication of our team and the ongoing support of our stakeholders, we continued to advance our mission and serve our community.

Over the past year, we have achieved significant milestones. We expanded our programs and services, strengthened our partnerships, and worked diligently to meet the evolving needs of those we serve. These accomplishments are a direct result of the commitment, expertise, and passion of our staff, volunteers, and board members.

At the same time, we faced challenges that required flexibility, resilience, and innovation. Whether adapting to changing circumstances, managing limited resources, or responding to emerging community needs, our organization remained focused on delivering meaningful impact. I am proud of how our team rose to these challenges and continued to move forward with purpose.

People:

- We finished bargaining for our first collective agreement and ratification occurred in December of 2025. It has been a smooth transition and implementation of the collective agreement alongside CUPE.
- Our Board successfully participated in governance training this year, and we held our annual retreat in January. We are looking forward to working on a updated strategic plan this year to being for 2027.
- Our committees are populated and we continue to meet monthly to achieve our strategic goals and support in guiding the organization and the board.
- Lots of work went into updating our governance policies and procedures this year, which supports capacity building for the organization.
- We continue to work hard to create a unified workforce and maintain a positive workplace culture. We recently launched our second employee engagement survey of a 3-part series, to ensure staff are highly engaged, valued and their feedback is implemented appropriately.

Working with other organizations and ensuring integration is a key to success both on a macro and micro level. We will always be mindful of the many diverse cultures we service and will seek to always provide inclusive programming.

#### Services:

- We continue to work alongside our partners with Siksika, offering Indigenous programming, and culturally sensitive support. We know that healing occurs because of the reconnection to community and traditional practices.
- We continue to build relationships with various post-secondary institutions to support the growth and learning of the next up and coming professionals. We supported many students complete a full practicum successfully this year.
- We finalized our Social Needs assessment this year, and this continues to inform our programs and services as we expand and strengthen services.
- The GoA released it's 10 year strategy to end GBV, and True North continues to seek partnership with the GoA in collaboration with offering services in alignment with this strategy.
- A big milestone for True North was becoming Pet friendly this year, which has been incredible for our clients and meeting their needs.
- Formal MOU'S with Kickstand were completed this year, and we participated in many programs offered as partners.

#### Infrastructure:

- Optimized the use of available space to better meet the needs of clients and staff, with a focus on maximizing storage, increasing accessibility, and ensuring a comfortable, home-like setting.
- Ensure the building is fully accessible to all clients, including those with mobility challenges, by implementing modifications such as ramps, wider doorways, and accessible bathrooms.

#### Re-brand:

- Communications plan was developed including rebranding strategy, logo, media launch, social media strategy.
- Build and Secure a Donor portfolio and update and review annually to ensure positive community collaboration and relationships.

#### Fund Development:

- We were successful in many grants this year to support with operations and programming, and administrative tasks.
- Fundraising and fund development is crucial to the sustainability of True North and we continue to engage with different stakeholders.
- We launched our rural strong campaign last fall and this was a huge success in a get to know your neighbour kind of way. It really showed the impact that small rural communities can have in supporting one another.
- We also launched our Holiday season campaign, with the generous support of a local community member as a matching donor. We are so grateful to all our supporters.

Growth:

- We continue to work hard towards achieving our goal of building an affordable housing/second stage building to support our families with onsite, wrap around, continuum of care supports.
- Much of the year was spent working towards achieving funding, and I am happy to report that we are so so close to our end goal. Further announcements will be coming soon, and we can't wait to share what we have been working on, and bring this goal to life!

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors for their leadership, guidance, and governance throughout the year. Your commitment to the organization's success is invaluable.

I also want to recognize our staff and volunteers. Your hard work, professionalism, and dedication make our mission possible every day. Thank you for the energy and care you bring to your roles.

To our funders, partners, donors, and community supporters, thank you for your trust and investment in our work. Your support enables us to create positive outcomes and strengthen the communities we serve.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on building on our successes while continuing to address emerging opportunities and challenges. We are committed to strengthening our programs, expanding our impact, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our organization.

The year ahead will bring new possibilities, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference. Our success is built on collaboration, shared purpose, and a commitment to our mission.

Thank you for your continued support, your belief in our work, and your partnership. I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the coming year.

Thank you.

