

EDUCATION...A PATH TO TOMORROW



**GRAND RIVER  
POST  
SECONDARY  
BOARD  
NEWSLETTER**

Summer 2011  
Issue 45

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**Onkwehon:we  
with Grand River Territory  
lineage are empowered  
through higher education  
within available resources.**

located at 2160 Fourth Line

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Website: [www.grpseo.org](http://www.grpseo.org)

**Grand River Post Secondary  
Board Members**

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MOTIVATE ♦ INSPIRE ♦ EDUCATE ♦ CHALLENGE



Heather Watts is of the Mohawk Nation, Bear Clan.

Heather is in her third year at Syracuse University(SU) taking an Inclusive Elementary and Special Education major. This program surrounds the idea of universal design- having curriculum and schooling environments that foster a meaningful education for ALL students regardless of any differences they may have (ability, gender, race, culture, socio economic status, etc). This program has inspired her to be a part of an educational reform for First Nations communities. She believes curriculum needs to be relevant to our culture, while possessing standards that allow First Nations students to be successful in career fields both on and off reserve. She would like to teach in a First Nation community and eventually work for either a state/provincial government in their Department of Education.

One major accomplishment for Heather is being a Haudenosaunee Scholar, which means she attends the SU on a full scholarship known as the Haudenosaunee Promise.

Also, in her freshman year, at SU she was initiated into Pi Beta Phi Fraternity for Women, served as the President for her Chapter in 2010 and has recently been elected as Vice President of Philanthropy.

In this freshman year, Heather also traveled with a delegation from the Assembly of First Nations to Rome, Italy regarding the Indian Residential School era. She served as a First Nations youth representative and had the opportunity to learn from many elders who experienced the Residential School system. She was present when the current Pope addressed the audience.

Heather participated in the Indigenous Youth Gathering at the 2010 Winter Olympics held in Vancouver, BC. In addition to the amazing experience of meeting and learning from other Indigenous youth, she performed in the Opening Ceremonies representing the Iroquois people.

One major challenge that Heather had to deal with throughout her post secondary education was her first experience with **culture shock**. There

were so many new people in a new environment where she was expected to be very independent living hours from her home, family and friends. She **struggled** very much with **adjusting** to 'being on her own' and found herself returning home quite often. She missed her family terribly and believes this was a moment she noticed the differences in values from those not of our culture.

Heather has always been somewhat disheartened when she hears another student or even worse, a Professor use the term 'Indian' for Native people in their classroom. Hearing politically incorrect terms such as this makes her aware that the **stereotypical mentality** still exists today. She finds it especially disheartening since the SU is located in Haudenosaunee territory, which most of the student population is unaware of.

The values or principles that guided Heather throughout her education is the emphasis she places on the **importance of family and surrounding herself with good people**. Family achievements **inspired** her passion for education. Her parents have been with her every step of the way and she cannot express how much she **appreciates** their love, assistance and care that she is shown her in all that she does. She strives to embody many of the characteristics she sees in her

parents as they are role models for her and her path.

One key challenge that Heather feels needs to be addressed by Six Nations in the next generation is the need for **educational reform**, which she is aware is already in process. She also feels we need to value the presence of our youth more. "We must **celebrate** the successes of ALL youth because their knowledge **contributes** to the **collective identity** of our community."

As young people make decisions for their futures, Heather tells them to "**always want the best for you**. You **deserve** the best things in life and should **never stop pursuing** your dreams until you have attained them. Make great friends who will **help you reach** your goals."

Heather encourages the community to **support our students!** "Support is needed at all levels whether it be kindergarten, tenth grade or while in pursuit of a doctorate degree. Your support means more than you know and your students will be more **motivated to succeed** knowing that they have people standing behind them."

# Application Calendar 2011

- May 17** Application Deadline for Fall or Fall/Winter semester(s) **Apply on-line!**  
Winter Marks/Progress Reports due for all continuing students.  
Levels 3 & 4 provide Letter of Good Academic Standing.  
Summer course registration/timetable and detailed tuition fees due.
- July 1** Official Transcripts due from students with any assistance following the previous July. For fall applicants, funds will be decommitted if the transcript is not received.
- Sept 17** Application deadline for Winter semester – **Apply on-line!**  
Summer Marks/Progress Reports due for all continuing students.  
Levels 3 & 4 provide Letter of Good Academic Standing.  
Fall course registration/timetable and detailed tuition fees due.
- Jan 17** Application deadline for Summer semester **Apply on-line!**  
Fall Marks/Progress Reports due for all continuing students.  
Levels 3 & 4 provide Letter of Good Academic Standing.  
Winter course registration/timetable and detailed tuition fees due.

**\*Late applications will not be processed. Please apply before the deadline.**

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## Other Post Secondary Dates and Events

- June 1** Summer Office Hours: Open from 8 am to 4 pm
- June 21** Office Closed: Participation in Solidarity Day
- July 15** **Norm's Golf for Grads, Sundrim Golf Course**
- Sept 1** Back to Regular Office Hours: Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- Oct 31** Graduate Photos due for publication
- Nov 22/23** Post Secondary Information Week
- Nov 18** Semester contact required from all students – check with your Counsellor
- Dec** Recognition of Graduates and Award Recipients For 2011
- Dec** Office Closed **December 22** and Reopens **January 3, 2012**
- Feb 1** GRPSEO Funding Information Night 2012
- Feb 21** Office Closed: Participation in Family Day
- Mar 16** Semester contact required from all students – check with your Counsellor
- May 21** Participation in Bread and Cheese Parade

Check the local newspapers and our website at [www.grpseo.org](http://www.grpseo.org)  
or give us a call at (519) 445-2219 for more information.

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### **NORM'S GOLF FOR GRADS**

(GRPSEO Annual Scholarship Fundraiser)

**FRIDAY JULY 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011, SUNDRIM GOLF COURSE**

**9:30 Shotgun Start, Contests, Dinner & Prizes**

**Registration Deadline: July 8<sup>th</sup> @ 3pm Cost: \$130/Person**

**Contact: Virginia or Brenda at (519) 445-2219 or**

**Fax (519) 445 4296 E-mail: [info@grpseo.org](mailto:info@grpseo.org)**