

W8BANAKI PILASKW

WORD FROM THE CHIEF



Richard O'Bomsawin
Chief - Abenaki
of Odanak Council

Kwaï fellow band members,

I hope your holidays allowed for rest, time with loved ones, and the creation of great memories. I wish you all the very best in the new year. We look forward to a year in which hard work will begin to transform into promising outcomes.

The year 2025 saw many changes at both the federal and provincial levels of government, many of which directly impact our relationship with the state. At the same time, it provided us with resources to carry out important work for our nation's future. Developing a clear vision of what needs to be done to create a culturally thriving environment and to fuel our progress as a nation is certainly at the top of our priorities.

Bills that alter the demographics within our nations, along with Quebec leaders developing their own constitution that attempts to write First Nations out, do not paint a strong future for our people. Important agreements are being overlooked in Quebec's plans for its future. We must affirm our place as a people who share our homelands with the people of Quebec—not to assimilate, but rather to walk together with mutual respect in building a platform for change. One that respects the right to live and practice our own culture and values, thereby righting the wrongs of past government decisions.

We must continue to take up space and engage in the revitalization of ancestral fires to illuminate our path and safeguard our journey. Ignoring our existence as a distinct people with our own purpose in this world goes against agreements such as the Two Row Wampum—existential agreements meant to allow our people to thrive while remaining connected to what is at risk of being lost. Our language, dances, and ceremonies are at the root of our cultural revival; they allow us to exist with our colors intact. We cannot abandon the fight to restore a strong, developing nation.

As First Nations, we remain capable of governing and building a sustainable, culturally rich framework for future generations. Stripping us of this capacity has long been an underlying agenda of the Canadian government, dating back more than 50 years to the White Paper. This agenda continues to be reworked time and again, from different angles and at different levels of government, with the aim of abolishing Indigenous peoples. We have paid the price for our survival. There is no greater strength for righting wrongs than that of survivors.

As we prepare for another year that calls for collective effort and commitment, we feel ready for the undertaking—to pursue the revival of our ancestral values and ways. We continue to be empowered by the strength and tenacity of our ancestors as we carry on working for our nation.

Our community must work together to address the critical task of rebuilding a stronger, more unified nation. We need a community in which future generations can feel proud and free to raise their families in a culturally appropriate environment. We must continue to build a foundation with a fluid, collective cultural safety net—roots for our great-grandchildren.

Growing up in a world where we participate in song, dance, and ceremony, while shaping a world that is entirely our own, remains our best approach. As established through historic belts, we agree to walk beside our larger nation's brothers and sisters while preserving our freedom to live as a distinct people, sharing and safeguarding our respective ancestral teachings. Our singers and storytellers hold the keys to understanding our ancestral values and beliefs. Various challenges in recent years have threatened the integrity of our community's story. We have faced issues of appropriation and exploitation and have worked to reclaim what is rightfully ours. We continue to address these barriers to the integrity of historical teachings.

Fiduciary negotiations have also been at the forefront of Council's activities. Agreements are becoming increasingly restrictive due to federal budget cuts and the redistribution of resources. Destabilization caused by trade wars between countries creates changes at the grassroots level in programs and funding formulas that have been in place for many years. Cuts are evident in health care, education, and community development.

Our original treaties secured the resources necessary to identify and restore wellness. However, identifying distinct priorities and acting on them to improve our quality of life is increasingly threatened by dwindling resources and global turbulence. The ripple effects of this instability hinder our efforts to rebuild the nation our forefathers fought to protect.

Re-evaluating our vision is of utmost importance. What do we want our nation to be for the next generation?

Developing clear guidelines and providing our community with solid infrastructure and our own constitution will offer the protection necessary to build a strong foundation for the survival of our nation. This foundation will sustain a framework through which we can develop a resilient, collective, and historically rooted community that continues to uphold a strong Abenaki identity.

As First Nations, we remain capable of governing and building a viable, culturally relevant framework for present and future generations. The choices we make today will determine our future. Let us work together for the continuity of our Nation.

In peace and friendship,



WORD FROM COUNCILLORS



Alain O'Bomsawin
Councillor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï,

First of all, I want to wish you all a Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday season with your families and friends. What matters most is good health, and that is what I wish for everyone.

Next, I would like to thank the people who are helping us spread and restore the truth about the Abenaki people of Vermont and New Hampshire. This history (our history and identity) belongs to us and must not be forgotten or altered. We can draw attention to the remarkable achievements of dedicated individuals from diverse backgrounds, communities, and organizations.

In addition, congratulations to community members and partners for the fourth National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (Wasanw8gan). The event, which took place on September 27, 2025, in Nicolet, was truly impressive, featuring craftspeople, booths, performances, and a large turnout. I am happy and proud to be able to share these precious moments with the people of our nation.

On September 23, the great Mamu Nikantetau expedition set off! This community adventure is a wonderful opportunity to come together, walk together, and support the path to reconciliation. In fact, an initiative was launched by Puamun Meshkenu and led by Dr. Stanley Vollant. This inspiring action aims to motivate Indigenous youth to walk proudly and take steps to achieve their dreams.

With that said, keep up the good work! Summer is coming, and with it, new activities and events.

Wli Wni,



Florence Benedict
Councillor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï dear members of our Nation,

As we begin 2026, I would like to wish you all health, happiness, and prosperity. May this year be filled with peace and harmony.

2025 RETROSPECTIVE: SPECIFIC CLAIMS

The last six months have been quite eventful for the Council. The decision reached by the Council regarding specific land claims (a decision that took into account input from public meetings and from Normandin-Beaudry, the firm hired to provide us with a realistic picture of financial projections) is to allocate 40% of the funds, equivalent to approximately \$80 million, to be redistributed directly to members.

In the weeks leading up to the decision, some people criticized me for not being sufficiently "assertive" publicly as a councillor.

My response to them is this:

For the past 10 years that you have chosen me to represent you as a councillor (for which I am grateful for your trust), I have not changed the way I am or the way I make decisions (despite what some people may think).

I am a private person and am not one to speak for the sake of filling moments of silence in a meeting. If I have not spoken, it is because I did not possess all the information necessary to share with you. I respect you all too much to express myself recklessly.

My vision for my Nation and its future has always been one of self-determination. I never make decisions under pressure, especially not when it comes to money.

I formed my opinion after reading the reports presented by the firm hired to —and I stress— guide us in our choices, not decide for us.

After reading the results, 40% seemed to me like the best decision, a carefully considered decision, and I want to make it clear that this is my own opinion that I am sharing with you, not that of the Council.

The values that guide me remain the same: justice, equality, and fairness for all members.

Dear members, please know that you are my priority, even if some people think otherwise. I am always mindful of whom I represent, and I am very proud of it.

I care deeply about the fate of all members: women, men, seniors, children, and people of all genders, not just a few individuals or certain groups.

The work does not stop here; it continues, and I invite you to participate in future assemblies and get involved in the future direction of our beautiful Nation.

FALL 2025

Last fall, during the power outage that lasted almost three days, we witnessed the spirit of solidarity that sets us apart as a community. Various departments sprang into action to implement emergency measures and ensure that seniors had everything they needed and that residents had a place to warm up and share a good meal. Our neighbouring municipalities praised us as an example to follow.

Despite our differences and the chaotic period we went through, our values remain the same: mutual aid and solidarity.

The coming year looks promising with the construction of new housing, the opening of the women's shelter, the new daycare center, and more.

The year ahead will be filled with positivity and great achievements.

I wish you a wonderful winter and urge you to stay safe on the roads.

We'll talk again in the spring.

Wliwni,



Departure of the Great Mamu Nikantetau Expedition.



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation



WORD FROM COUNCILLORS



Jacques T. Watso
Councillor – Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï to you all, my friends,

Politics never sleeps. As we begin 2026, I would first like to wish you all a year filled with good health, strength, and hope.

This past year was one of great emotions for our entire community. Discussions surrounding specific claims allowed us to express ourselves and say what was on our minds. There was dissatisfaction, questioning, and sometimes disagreement, but these conversations were necessary. They led us, collectively, to a decision that I believe is wise: to distribute part of the funds to the community while investing the rest to generate independent income.

This vision is essential. If we want to one day free ourselves from the Indian Act and strengthen our right to self-determination, we must develop sustainable sources of income that will benefit the entire band, both today and for generations to come.

For 2026, one of my main priorities will be to create real living environments here in Odanak. Creating spaces where we can live well, gather together, raise our families, and pass on our values is, in my view, a must for the future of our nation.

I remain committed to working with you, listening and respecting you, to build a strong, self-reliant and proud community.

I wish you all the best in achieving your dreams and, above all, in finding happiness.

Wliwni,

ABENAKI POLICE FORCE

Mylène Trudeau

Assistant Director - Abenaki Police Force

Kwaï,

I would like to talk to you about something that affects both us and our teenagers: social media.

Social media is not problematic in and of itself; in most cases, it is a useful tool for staying informed, socializing, creating, etc.

The risks lie in the way it is used, the vulnerability of the people who use it, and their contact with ill-intentioned individuals.

It is therefore important to be aware of the risks associated with internet use and cybercrime, as well as to know the precautions you can take to protect yourself.

RISKS FOR ALL SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing Personal Information

What should you do to protect yourself? Limit the disclosure of your personal information as much as possible, exercise caution when posting and sharing images and videos, choose a strong password (and don't share it with anyone), and check your privacy settings on social media. If your personal information is accessible, you could become a target for scammers.

Exposure to Inappropriate Content

This content may include images or videos depicting violence, pornography, hate speech, misinformation, etc. Such content is inappropriate for young people and they may be exposed to it accidentally or intentionally.

If this happens, talk to your child about it without judging them. Content can be reported via the platforms. Parental controls can be useful, but in many cases, communication is still the best tool.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is becoming increasingly common, but what does it usually look like? And most importantly, what should I do if I'm a victim myself?

- **Hateful messages and comments:** emails, text messages, social media posts
- **Spreading intimate content:** sharing private photos or videos without consent
- **Flaming:** insults and provocation
- **Exclusion:** intentionally excluding someone from an online group
- **Impersonation:** pretending to be the victim to damage their reputation
- **Cyberstalking:** constant harassment and online tracking

Please note that if you are a victim of this type of online behavior, there are solutions: report the content to the platform administrators, save the evidence (screenshots), and talk to someone you trust, such as a parent, a youth center worker, or a teacher.

The behaviours mentioned above can lead to criminal charges, whether for harassment, threats, extortion, defamation, or non-consensual publication of intimate images. Just because someone is hiding behind a screen does not mean that the police cannot step in or that there will be no consequences.

Call your local police department and ask to speak to an officer. There are several solutions that can be implemented.

Here are some helpful resources:

- **Tel-jeunes:** by phone at 1-800-263-2266 and by text at 514-600-1002
- **Need Help Now:** provides help and support is you think intimate images of you are being shared
- **Cybertip.ca:** information on internet safety and information on how to report sexual abuse on the internet
- **Odanak Health Center:** 450-568-6766
- **N8wkika (Abenaki Social Services):** 819-294-1686 ext. 5316

Talk to your kids, friends, and family to see what they know about cyberbullying or even what they understand about the internet. With all the new tech out there, it's easy to get confused.

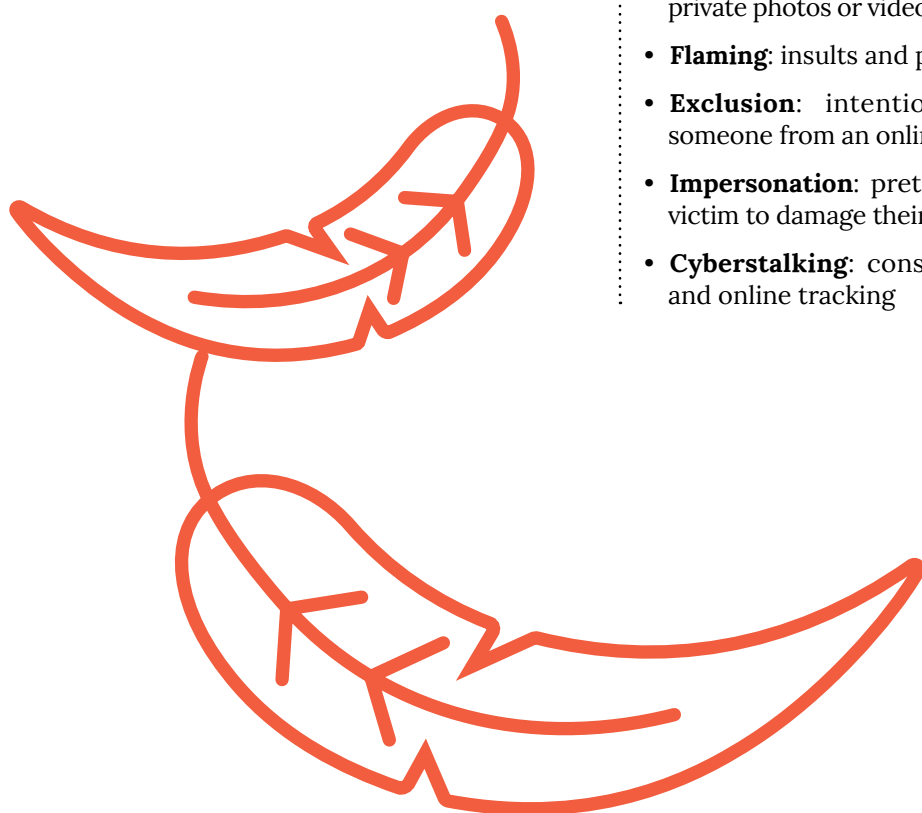
Worried? Your local police department can help.

Abenaki Police Force: 450-568-3733

To file a complaint: 911

Wliwni!

Be safe!



WORD FROM MANAGEMENT



Daniel G. Nolett
Executive Director -
Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwai mziwi!

Regarding the shelter for Indigenous women and children fleeing violence, we have finally hired a director for the shelter. Her name is Émilie Grandmont-Bérubé. She took up her position on January 14, although there is still much to be done before we can officially open the shelter. She must, among other things, hire social workers and other staff to support them in providing services to these women and their children. She will also have to develop policies and programs to be implemented. Finally, she will be responsible for purchasing all the furniture for the bedrooms, offices, and common areas.

The architects at AUpoint are still working hard on the final plans for the construction of the new 81-space daycare center and the new FNHS premises, which will be built in front of the Anglican cemetery on Tolba Street. Construction of these two new buildings is still scheduled for the summer of 2026. More to follow...

A call for tenders via the Quebec Electronic Tendering System (SEAO) is planned for this winter so that the repair work on Awassos Street can be carried out in the spring of 2026. A communication campaign is currently underway, and a meeting will be held with Awassos Street residents to inform them of the project schedule, potential inconveniences, and disruptions during the work period. The work will take place over a period of 14 weeks and is expected to be completed by the end of the summer. More to follow...

Construction of a new 4-unit (3 bedrooms) apartment building on Mgezo Street is still scheduled for spring 2026. The SEAO bidding process is expected to take place in the coming weeks. More to follow...

Construction of the new 11-17-year-olds' hall, located at 1100 Marie-Victorin Road, is underway. Work is progressing according to schedule and should be completed by the end of winter or early spring.

With regard to the specific claims settlement, based on input from members received during public meetings held on May 10 and June 25, 2025, as well as comments and suggestions received by email as of July 4, 2025, the Board has made a decision regarding the compensation received. This decision was shared with members at the November 29 public meeting. A distribution of 40% of the \$190 million in compensation (including principal and accumulated interest up to the time of payment) received from Ottawa will be made to each member of the band. The eligibility dates remain to be determined. The current plan is that all living members who were and will be registered on the band list between June 30, 2023, and the date of signing of the Distribution Trust deed will be eligible to receive the compensation amount. The law firm Dionne Schulze is currently drafting the trust deeds for the Distribution Trust and the Compensation Management Trust.

MNP is currently drafting the investment policy, which will serve as a guide for the trustees, who will eventually be appointed to sit on the Management Trust's board of directors and who will be responsible for investing the compensation funds in order to grow the capital. More to follow...

This year, we were once again fortunate enough to have a beautifully illuminated trail along part of the Tolba Trail, near the Museum, from December 19, 2025, to January 4, 2026. It was magical!

Over the past few months, several new staff members have joined our wonderful team. We are pleased to announce that: Josée O'Bomsawin is the new administrative assistant at the CAO reception desk, Mélanie Desmarais is the new cultural and events coordinator, Emmanuelle Durand is the new CAO administrative assistant, Connor Cubit is the new BETO project manager, Sarah Guilbault-Boudreau is the new CPDA outreach worker and, finally, Ozalée Constant-Nolett is the new CSO occupational therapist. A warm welcome to all these wonderful people.

Mziwik, n'sidaldam wli pbon! I wish you all a wonderful winter!

OVER \$39,500 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO OUR STUDENTS!

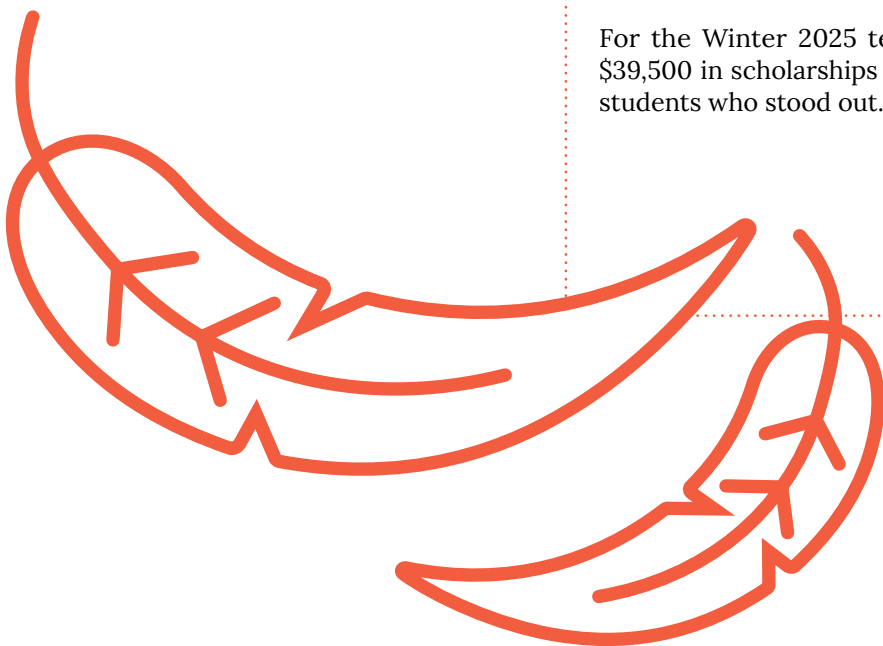
The Kiuna Kinosalwaw8gan Scholarships aim to encourage perseverance and academic success among our students.

Each year, over \$80,000 is awarded to support their journey and recognize their commitment.

For the Winter 2025 term, more than \$39,500 in scholarships were granted to students who stood out.

Join us in congratulating them!

- Pénélope Boivin
- Valérie Flamand
- Tyson Cananasso
- Alexandre Godbout
- Eva-Julie Chachai
- Francis Kurtness-Bossum
- Mikee Charlish-Germain
- Alanis Mollen
- Lisa-Lindsay Napess
- Julie Collard
- Eruoma Ottawa-Chilton
- Audrey-Ann Descheneaux
- Camille Siméon-Germain
- Abby Dubé-Moar
- Élizabeth Verreault
- Jordan Clary



ABENAKI LANGUAGE OFFICE

Kwaï,

The members of the Abenaki Language Office are pleased to share some good news with you.

First, we would like to welcome Mélanie Desmarais, the new cultural coordinator for the Abenaki Council of Odanak. She will be providing support for the Office's projects. K'wlipai8 Mélanie.

Representatives from the Office participated in the Global Indigenous Languages Summit held August 11-14, organized by the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages. In addition, last September we attended a meeting and working session of the Regional Committee on First Nations Languages in Mashteuiatsh. Our efforts to revitalize the Abenaki language have been recognized to such an extent that we have since secured funding until March 2028 to continue developing our initiatives. It is gratifying to see that our various actions are bearing fruit.

Did you know that in September 2025 we offered four online community courses for learning aln8ba8dwaw8gan? There are now three different levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The approach to learning the language is flexible and uses a variety of methods, including deduction. This approach to language learning allows us to make connections with our history, culture, and place names. Don't miss this unique opportunity!

For those who are not already in a group, there is still time to register for online language courses by contacting the reception desk of the Odanak Abenaki Council for winter 2026 courses. We also plan to offer a beginner's course reserved for our English-speaking members in January 2026.

Did you know that the Abenaki language is also taught at the University of Sherbrooke, the University of Montreal, Bishop's University, Champlain College in Lennoxville, and the Kiuna Institution? Spread the word to our members who are studying at these institutions and to our allies. It is also possible to register as an independent student.

In short, every week, over 200 learners from all walks of life have the opportunity to learn about and participate in the study of aln8ba8dwaw8gan. That's no small feat! We all have a lot to be proud of.

If you want to practice or test your knowledge of aln8ba8dwaw8gan, new modules are available on the Abenaki.app, including a Bingo game (Pingo).

Finally, in the spring of 2026, we plan to hold in-person activities for our learners.

What great news for the culture of our beautiful language!

Wli nanawalmezikw.



Photo taken by Marc Simard of Asban during the May 2025 language camp.

SHORT COLUMN ON THE ABENAKI LANGUAGE

ORDINAL NUMERALS¹

Indicating the order and sequence of both animate and inanimate nouns.

	TYPE	
	ANIMATE	INANIMATE
First	Nitamabid	Nitamatak
Second	Nis akw8babid	Nis akw8batak
Third	Nas akw8babid	Nas akw8batak
Fourth	Iaw akw8babid	Iaw akw8batak
Fifth	N8lan akw8babid	N8lan akw8batak
Sixth	Ngwed8s akw8babid	Ngwed8s akw8batak
Seventh	T8baw8s akw8babid	T8baw8s akw8batak
and so on

Indicating the order, sequence, or numbering of written items (laws, chapters, sections, paragraphs, etc.).

	WRITTEN THINGS
Firstly / First / Number one	Nitamagimgwak (ou) Pazokw alagimgwak
Secondly / Second / Number two	Nis alagimgwak
Thirdly / Third / Number three	Nas alagimgwak
Fourthly / Fourth / Number four	Iaw alagimgwak
Fifthly / Fifth / Number five	N8lan alagimgwak
Sixthly / Sixth / Number six	Ngwed8s alagimgwak
Seventhly / Seventh / Number seven	T8baw8s alagimgwak
and so on	...

¹ Taken from INITIATION À LA GRAMMAIRE ABÉNAKISE, Monique Nolett-Ille, Odanak 2006.



TOURISM ODANAK: FLOURISHING SUMMER, PROMISING FUTURE

Stéphanie-Nika Trottier

Tourism Development Advisor -
Abenaki of Odanak Council

Although the article could not be published in the latest edition, the summer of 2025 deserves to be highlighted, as it was so significant for the Odanak community. The season was rich in visitors, initiatives, and collaborations, solidifying Odanak's position as a must-see Indigenous tourist destination in Quebec.

Since the official launch of Tourism Odanak, several actions have been implemented to promote Abenaki culture, territory, and knowledge. This momentum has attracted the interest of many partners, public markets, and regional organizations eager to collaborate in promoting local artisans and businesses at the regional and national levels.

This enthusiasm has also been recognized at the provincial level, with Tourism Odanak nominated as a finalist in the categories of "Innovation and Development of Services - Operating Budget Under \$999,999" at the Gala des Prix Excellence Tourisme de l'Alliance de l'industrie Touristique du Québec, highlighting the quality, creativity, and relevance of the initiatives implemented within the community.

LAND-BASED STRUCTURAL PROJECTS

Current major projects include an initiative to promote tourism along the Saint-François River, carried out in partnership with the Drummond, Nicolet-Yamaska, and Val-Saint-François RCMs. This initiative aims to showcase the history and Indigenous presence along this river, the cultural and historical backbone of the Abenaki Nation.

In terms of new developments, Excursion Pl8sis was launched this year, providing fishing charters and guided tours on the Saint-François River. These activities allow visitors to enjoy an immersive experience in the heart of the territory.

Camping Abénaki Aventure also had an exceptional season, welcoming nearly 10,000 visitors and hosting several major events. This traffic benefited all local businesses, including the Abenaki Museum, Café Masko, Dépan-O-Gaz Nimôwôn, Boutique Miguan, and storytelling and legends activities, which are very popular with families.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

Even though the 2025 season has just ended, Tourism Odanak is already looking toward the future. Several projects are currently under development:

- The completion of the Tourism Odanak website, as well as the production of brochures and promotional material;
- A study on the revitalization of the church square, a central and symbolic location in the community. A public consultation is planned for this fall to gather ideas and aspirations from community members;
- The creation of a Heritage Space and a Culinary Space, with the goal of establishing community spaces dedicated to Odanak artisans, providing them with an environment conducive to working, developing their art, and sharing their expertise with visitors;
- The development of a self-guided tour of the community, offering visitors the opportunity to discover Odanak's landmarks, stories, and voices at their own pace.

These projects are designed to enhance the tourism offering while promoting cultural pride and intergenerational transmission.

RECOGNITION OF REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Over the past few months, Tourism Odanak has also played an active part in the region by participating in several key initiatives and events, including:

- The launch of the Centre-du-Québec tourist season;
- The Grand Rendez-vous du tourisme gourmand (gourmet tourism event);
- The study on the culinary identity of Centre-du-Québec and the regional strategy for gourmet tourism;
- A study on tourism reception facilities strategy;
- An advisory committee on Indigenous tourism in Centre-du-Québec;
- The structuring of bike tourism in the region.

This sustained presence helps reinforce Odanak's reputation as a key player in sustainable tourism and cultural development.

PROMOTING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES IN TOURISM

This acknowledgement has even spread to the provincial level. Tourism Odanak was invited to speak at the 5th Symposium Tourisme durable Québec (Quebec Sustainable Tourism Symposium) as part of the panel discussion entitled *Apprendre à parler de deux voix, d'un même souffle : la perspective autochtone dans la promotion touristique* (Speaking with Two Voices, in Unison: An Indigenous Perspective on Promoting Tourism).

During this discussion, Stéphanie Nika Trottier (Tourism Odanak), alongside Isabelle Milord (Tourisme Baie-James), Pierre Kanapé (Tourisme Autochtone Québec), and Virginie Zingraff (Tourisme Mauricie), emphasized the importance of fair and accurate communication rooted in active listening, engagement, and direct collaboration with communities. The panel highlighted issues related to representation, content validation, and the fight against cultural appropriation.

Along the same lines, on December 3, Tourism Odanak participated in the "Indigenous Tourism: Encounters, Learning, and Opportunities in the Eastern Townships" event organized by Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est, thereby strengthening interregional ties and opportunities for collaboration.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS

With the 2025 tourist season having just ended, now is the perfect time to start preparing for 2026. Community members who wish to develop a tourism or cultural project, whether in crafts, gastronomy, or immersive experiences, can benefit from personalized support.

Tourism Odanak continues to build a tourism industry that reflects the image of the community: authentic, respectful, and forward-looking.

To discuss this or learn more, contact Stéphanie Nika Trottier at sntrrottier@caodanak.com



CRANBERRY BOG EXPANSION ON THE NDAKINA: THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE COEXISTENCE

Cathy Duguay

Project Manager - Odanak Environment and Land Office

For the past four years, the Ndakina Office has seen an increase in requests for cranberry bog projects, particularly in the Centre-du-Québec region. Although the Nation does not oppose this practice per se, the current development model raises serious concerns about the protection of wetlands and black ash trees (Maalhakws).

VULNERABLE TREE-LINED SWAMPS

These projects mostly target wooded wetlands. For developers, these habitats offer a technical advantage, as the soil type is already suited to cranberry cultivation, making development easier than on conventional farmland. This focus on wooded wetlands is explained by two major regulatory exemptions that contradict the basic environmental principle of “avoid, minimize, compensate”:

- No financial compensation: Unlike other industries, cranberry farm developers are exempt from having to pay financial compensation for the destruction of these tree-covered wetlands (RLRQ, c. Q-2, r. 9.1).
- An exclusive right to expand: Where other types of agriculture are prohibited from converting new natural areas, cranberry bogs benefit from an exemption allowing them to expand explicitly into these environments (RLRQ, c. Q-2, r. 26).



Inventories of black ash stands conducted in 2022.

For the Nation, these areas are crucial environments that perform essential ecological functions, such as water filtration and purification, flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, and preservation of rich and specialized biodiversity, such as the black ash tree. This tree, now threatened by the emerald ash borer, is much more than a resource: it is the cornerstone of basketry and cultural identity. Allowing these forests to disappear is a direct attack on the history and traditional practices of the W8banakiak people.

A FARMING MODEL IN NEED OF CHANGE

It is worth noting that our position does not target producers directly, but rather the development model that relies on the destruction of natural environments. This situation is all the more concerning given that conventional agriculture already has a significant impact on the Ndakina.

The precarious condition of the yellow perch (M8lamagws) and northern pike (Kwenoza) in Lake Saint-Pierre (Nebesek) is proof of this: erosion, failure to respect riparian strips, and excessive nutrient input from annual crops have degraded their essential habitats. The entire agricultural model must evolve to better preserve wildlife and aquatic environments. For this reason, the Nation believes that the development of cranberry bogs must be better regulated so as to not further weaken an environment that is already under significant stress.

THE NATION TAKES A STRONG STANCE

Given the scale of the anticipated impacts, which would affect over 805 hectares of wetlands, the W8banaki Nation has officially taken a stand. On October 9, the Ndakina Office and the Odanak and Wôlinak Councils sent a position letter to the Québec government.

This document condemns the shortcomings of the current legislative and regulatory framework, which gives preferential treatment to the cranberry industry, encouraging the conversion of still-intact natural environments. These cumulative losses directly threaten the exercise of ancestral rights, either through the destruction of the potential or confirmed habitat of several valued species, such as moose and small game.

The demands submitted to the government include:

- Revision of the legislative and regulatory framework governing the development of cranberry bogs.
- Ending exemptions which promote the conversion of wooded wetlands.
- Imposing a moratorium on new permits until the regulations have been amended.

LOCAL EXPERTISE: SCIENTIFIC MONITORING CONDUCTED BY OUR ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICES

The Odanak and Wôlinak environmental offices are currently working on a joint water quality analysis project. This will allow for the implementation of independent, scientific, and rigorous monitoring directly in the cranberry bogs. Our teams will measure contaminants to understand the entire sequence of potential water movements: from crop spraying and runoff to water recapture and discharge into rivers such as the Bécancour (W8linaktegw). This four-year project is part of our Abenaki program N’skaw8damobna mziaow8gan (We monitor the environment).



Cranberry bog visit in October 2024.

AN OPEN DIALOGUE

On November 13, a meeting with the Association des producteurs de canneberges du Québec (APCQ) provided an opportunity to discuss issues and explore avenues for collaboration.

Meanwhile, we also attended a presentation on a water management pilot project for the Bécancour and Nicolet rivers. This project aims to adjust extraction permits based on actual water availability in rivers, with stricter management levels during critical periods. This is a voluntary and promising initiative, keeping in mind that even the best management will never replace the functions of a destroyed wetland.

TAKING CARE OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Ndakina office and environmental offices will continue to urge provincial departments to prioritize the protection of Ndakina in their decision-making. Black ash trees, wetlands, and waterways remain our top priorities in ensuring the health of Ndakina for generations to come.



ABENAKI HUNTING AND FISHING COMMITTEE: A PIVOTAL YEAR

Edgar Blanchet

Research Coordinator - Ndakina Office

The year 2025 was a historic one for the Committee, as the Nation terminated its hunting and fishing agreement with the Quebec government. We now issue our own permits and adopt our own codes of practice, which are in effect throughout our ancestral territory (see map).

In doing so, we have reaffirmed several of our ancestral and treaty rights, such as the right to invite other Nations to the Ndakina, to fish for striped bass, to hunt waterfowl at baited sites, and to fish with live bait (caught in the tributaries of the watercourse being fished).

These practices are traditional, ethical, and always carried out in accordance with our codes of practice. The principles of the “One Dish, One Spoon” wampum belt inform the Committee’s decisions.

The first year of implementation was a success, with no incidents involving wildlife officers or poaching charges reported, and more than 50 deer registered via the platform.

TWO NEW PLATFORMS TO RECORD YOUR CATCHES

From now on, your big game harvests (white-tailed deer, moose, bear, turkey) must also be registered directly with the Tribal Council or the Council on this platform: www.reservationndakina.com

We also invite you to download *Carnet de pêche Abénakis*, the fishing log app, from the App Stores (app only available in French).

This data is essential: every harvest report and every activity recorded help us protect your rights, sustain our access, and fulfill our stewardship responsibility.

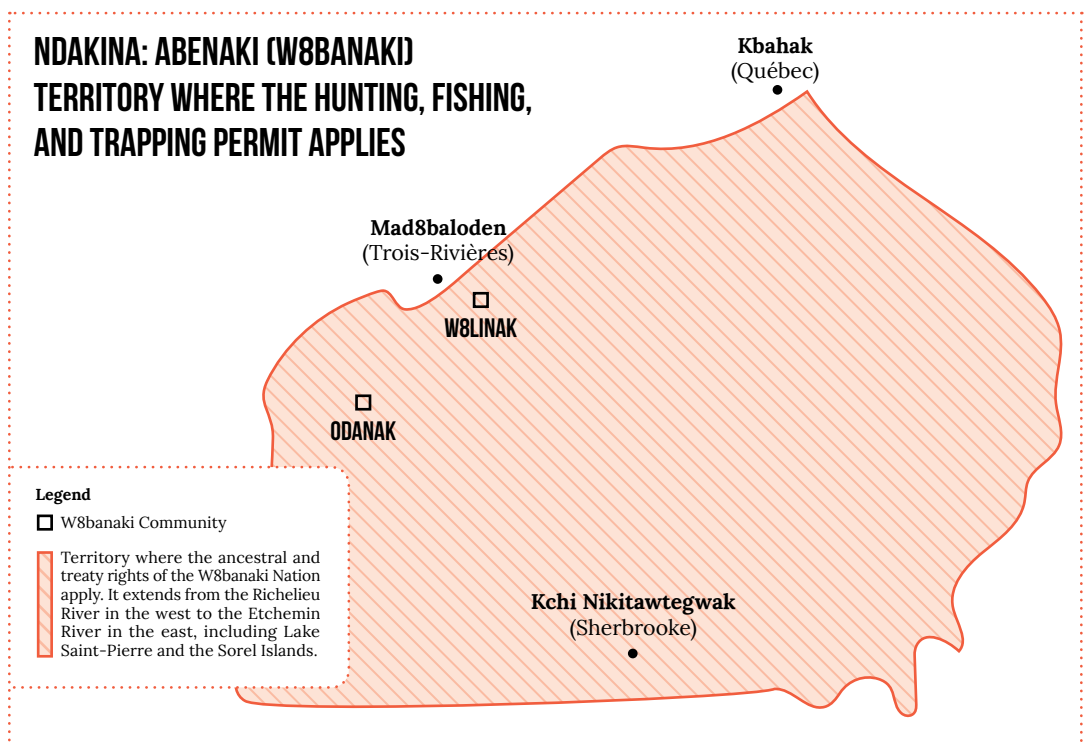
REMINDER

You can fish, hunt, trap, and gather within the Ndakina according to the code of practice. Outside the Ndakina, you must request an invitation from the host nation that welcomes you. No provincial license is required; you must simply comply with the host nation’s regulations.

Thank you all for your commitment and respect for our land. The year 2026 is shaping up to be even more promising for the resurgence of our ancestral rights.

Kchi wliwni!

NDAKINA: ABENAKI (W8BANAKI) TERRITORY WHERE THE HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING PERMIT APPLIES



SUMMARY OF THE W8BANAKI NATION ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE STEWARDSHIP PROTOCOL

Archaeology plays an essential role in protecting and handing down the heritage of the W8banaki Nation. It allows us to document the occupation of the territory, preserve the traces of our ancestors, and pass on this knowledge to future generations. Archaeological heritage includes archaeological sites and the artifacts they contain, as well as the knowledge and interpretations gained from studying them. It also includes intangible elements, such as cultural sites and orally transmitted knowledge.

The W8banaki Nation’s Archaeological Heritage Stewardship Protocol is a document that affirms the W8banaki Nation’s right to protect, manage, and transmit its own archaeological heritage, according to its values and knowledge. It is the starting point for collaboration between the Nation and archaeology stakeholders on the Ndakina.

In short, this protocol was designed to ensure that the management of this heritage is done by, for, and on behalf of the W8banaki Nation.

WHY A STEWARDSHIP PROTOCOL?

For a long time, archaeology was carried out without the participation of First Nations, leading to the loss or misinterpretation of our heritage and history. This protocol aims to correct this situation by giving the W8banaki Nation back the power to govern all matters relating to its archaeological heritage.

WHAT THE PROTOCOL ENTAILS

The protocol applies to many different situations:

- Infrastructure development projects (roads, industries, etc.)
- Archaeological research projects
- Chance discoveries of graves or artifacts on the Ndakina
- Repatriation of cultural or funerary objects related to the Nation

RECOGNITION OF THE NATION AS RIGHTFUL STEWARD

The protocol reiterates that the W8banaki Nation is the rightful steward of its archaeological heritage. This means that:

- No research may be conducted without its approval;
- The Nation must have access to all archives and data pertaining to its heritage;
- It may reject a project or demand modifications if its values are not respected;
- It is best positioned to tell its own story and interpret its cultural heritage.

MAIN ELEMENTS

Stewardship is the responsibility to protect, preserve, and pass on archaeological heritage. For the W8banaki Nation, this means:

- Actively participating in all stages of archaeological projects on the Ndakina;
- Being consulted before, during, and after archaeological interventions;
- Having the right to make decisions about the treatment, conservation, and repatriation of objects and human remains related to our Nation;
- Collaborating on a Nation-to-Nation basis with government and academic institutions on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

If you have comments or questions, please email us at archeologie@gcnwa.com



NDAKINA, OUR LAND

Edgar Blanchet

Research Coordinator - Ndakina Office

FOR THE FUTURE OF BLACK ASH AND W8BANAKI BASKETRY

On October 21, 22, and 23, the Ndakina Office convened several nations (W8banaki, Mi'kmaq, Kanien'kehà:ka, Penobscot, Wolastoqey, Passamaquoddy, etc.) in Odanak, along with partners from academia and science (UQO, RNCAN, Forest Gene Conservation Association, UMaine, ULaval, etc.) to reflect on the future of Maalhakws (black ash) and basketry. For three days, we united our voices and knowledge and wove together stories, ancestral practices, and scientific data.

Black ash, which is endangered by the emerald ash borer and the destruction of wetlands, still is a major concern for the Ndakina Office. We're working on an action plan to restore the species in the area and to preserve the cultural ties that bind us to it.

NDAKINA GUARDIANS – 2025 REVIEW AND PROGRESS

The year 2025 saw a surge of activity in the Ndakina and significant progress in terms of our ancestral rights. The guardians would first like to thank all members who participated in their activities and who remain active on the land. You are all invaluable, and your presence brings the Ndakina to life!

1. New Land Access

Thanks to agreements with various organizations, we have gained new access to the land, including areas with excellent potential for our cultural activities. With support from ASBAN, we have developed a user-friendly interface for booking these areas (whether for hunting, trapping, gathering, or backcountry camping).

These new access points will be updated on the website www.reservationndakina.com.

2. Guardians' Community Hunt

The 2025 community hunt was a success. As of December 10, five deer had been harvested, and the guardians dressed them themselves. We can't wait to let you taste this delicious game during our activities in 2026!

3. Sharing and Transferring of Knowledge

This year, the guardians offered several cultural transmission activities (rabaska, fishing, war-club making, Wigodi, Île Ronde, food smoking, introduction to hunting, etc.). These instances of mutual exchange enhance our intergenerational ties and underscore the significance of our traditional knowledge.

Contact the Ndakina guardians to find out more about the activities planned for 2026.



Source: Theresa Watso



UPDATE FROM N8WKIKA SOCIAL SERVICES!

Mathieu O'Bomsawin

Cultural Engagement Officer -
Ndakina Office

NEW SERVICE! POST-MAJORITY SUPPORT

Post-majority support services include a set of personalized support measures for young First Nations adults aged 16 to 25 who have been or are currently in the care of youth protection services. These services aim to support a safe, gradual, and respectful transition to adulthood and independence.

Rooted in a culturally safe approach, the services take into account the identity, values, and realities specific to Abenaki communities, while recognizing the unique challenges faced by youth leaving the youth protection system.

Post-majority support services specifically aim to prevent situations of vulnerability, such as social isolation, housing instability, financial insecurity, or integration difficulties. They provide an essential safety net after the age of majority, allowing each young person to build their future on a solid foundation, at their own pace and according to their aspirations.

What are Post-Majority Support Services?

The service is an individualized support program offered to young adults aged 16 to 25 who have been placed in care by youth protection services. The support provided aims to promote the development of independence, provide access to appropriate resources, and maintain a relationship of trust throughout the transition to adulthood.

Eligibility

To be eligible for post-majority support services, an individual must:

- Be a member of the Odanak or W8linak community;
- Be between the ages of 16 and 25;
- Have been placed in care by youth protection services up to the age of majority or currently be in care.

For more information about this new support service, please contact Chloé Daneau, Post-Majority Support Service Manager, by email at cdaneau@gcnwa.com or by phone at 819-294-1686.

YOUTH SPACE: A NEW FACILITY TO BETTER ACCOMMODATE OUR TEENS

Since last fall, a new building has been under construction where the former 11-17 Youth Space used to be. Unfortunately, due to significant water damage during the pandemic, the old building was no longer safe for our young people.

After several years of planning, research, and fundraising, the project is finally becoming a reality! Young people will soon be able to enjoy a space dedicated entirely to them, which is scheduled to open next spring or summer.

The new premises have been designed specifically to meet the needs of teenagers, offering them a modern, healthy, and safe environment conducive to interaction, activities, and personal development.

We look forward to welcoming your teens soon! In the meantime, Teen Nights will continue at the Kizos hall every Friday from 6 to 9 p.m.

THE DADS' GROUP IS UP AND RUNNING!

A new group of fathers has recently been formed within the community. This project aims to create a secure and inclusive environment where fathers can connect, discuss their experiences, share their stories, and provide mutual support as they navigate their role as parents.

The fathers' group offers various opportunities to participate in prevention workshops, as well as fun, educational, historical, and cultural activities, and special father-child moments, promoting stronger family ties and a sense of belonging to the community.

A first group dinner, held last fall, identified the needs and interests of fathers in the community. Many expressed a desire to spend more meaningful time with their children and to take part in outings on the land, which are conducive to the transmission of knowledge, values, and culture.

Many activities are planned for the coming year. Stay tuned for news from the dads' group: great opportunities for gathering and sharing will be coming soon!

If you have any questions or would like more information about the dads' group, please contact:

Marc-Olivier O'Bomsawin at moobomsawin@gcnwa.com

Philippe Bouvette at pbouvette@gcnwa.com

By phone at 819-294-1686

TKIN8GAN: AN INVALUABLE SERVICE FOR YOUNG FAMILIES!

Tkin8gan offers a respite service specifically designed to support new families with children under 6 months of age, with weekly home visits. The main goal of this service is to help families during the postnatal period by offering personalized, local support. When you apply, you will be assigned a caregiver who will pay you regular visits over a period of several weeks or months, depending on your needs.

Please contact Caroline M'Sadoques by email at cbmsadoques@gcnwa.com or by phone at 819-294-1686 if you think these services could benefit you or if you would like more information.

Every family deserves support from the very beginning!

COFFEE CHATS

Twice a month on Tuesdays, intergenerational coffee chats provide a welcoming space that encourages friendly conversations, dialogue, and sharing of experiences among participating families. These gatherings are designed to be meaningful opportunities to discuss, learn, and build relationships in a respectful and caring atmosphere.

At each coffee chat, facilitators suggest different general topics such as nutrition, parenting skills, or prevention workshops, while leaving plenty of room for spontaneous exchanges and open discussions to strengthen bonds between participants.

Coffee chats are held every other Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Kizos hall.

CULTURAL COFFEES: DYNAMIC SPACES FOR LEARNING AND SHARING

In collaboration with the Odanak Health Center, cultural coffees are usually held every other Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in the Kizos hall. These events provide community members with a safe and inclusive environment, allowing them to reconnect with their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and collective identity.

Participants can craft whatever they choose, in a spirit of handing down, sharing, and promoting cultural practices. These precious moments help strengthen intergenerational ties, encourage discussion about traditions, and nurture a sense of belonging to the community.

Two knowledge keepers are there to guide participants in their creations, while promoting the transmission of knowledge, techniques, and cultural teachings specific to the Nation, in a way that respects each person's pace and experience.

The entire N8wkika Social Services team wishes you all a wonderful early spring and looks forward to seeing you at our upcoming activities!



WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ODANAK HEALTH CENTER



Julie Durand
Director - Odanak Health Center



Kwai mziwi!

First, allow me to introduce myself: I am Julie Durand, newly appointed director of the Odanak Health Center. I was the CSO's assistant director from March 2024 to September 2025. Prior to that, I was a school principal at the Centre de services scolaires Sorel-Tracy for nearly 12 years. I initially studied special education and worked as a remedial teacher for over 10 years. As an Abenaki from Odanak, I am happy to be able to contribute to the well-being of our community and reinforce my sense of belonging here.

As we enter 2026, I am pleased to offer you, on behalf of myself and all CSO employees, our best wishes for the new year! May it bring happiness and good health to you and your loved ones!

NEW MEMBERS, NEW POSITIONS

There have been several recent changes within our team, and I thought it was important to inform you. Here are the new members of our organization, as well as experienced colleagues with new official roles:

- Ms. Joanie Boisclair, Meals on Wheels Driver
- Ms. Janice Cardin, Administrative Agent and Receptionist
- Ms. Sandrine Cardin, MT Manager
- Ms. Ozalée Constant-Nolett, Occupational Therapist
- Ms. Caroll-Ann Courchesne, Human Relations Agent in the Psychosocial Sector
- Ms. Virginie Descôteaux, Recreation Technician
- Ms. Claudia Fortin, volunteer and Meals on Wheels Driver
- Ms. Andréanne Gouin, Medical Archivist and Accreditation Canada Liaison Officer
- Ms. Genève Grimard, Jordan's Principle Coordinator
- Ms. Angélie Lafontaine, Recreation Coordinator (recreation, swimming pool, day camp)
- Ms. Annie Lapierre, Hygiene and Sanitation Manager, Kchaiaik Support and Medical Archives Support
- Ms. Lyne Mailhot, NIHB Manager
- Ms. Justine M'Sadoques-Plourde, CSO Assistant Director
- Ms. Sandra Pearson, Social Worker
- Ms. Stéphanie Plante, Kinesiologist
- Ms. Élise Provencher, Nutritionist
- Mr. Guy Trudeau, Meals on Wheels Delivery Driver

OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Following the revision of the Community Health and Wellness Plan, the CSO team reiterated its commitment to the CAO values: Happiness, Respect, Integrity, and Commitment. In addition, the Center's staff wanted to establish guiding principles to inform our professional practices. Following surveys, we identified three that we felt were most important: teamwork, collective well-being, and quality of service. Every day, staff are committed to working together, collaborating and coordinating services to provide quality care to the population in order to maintain a physically, mentally, and spiritually healthy population.

RECENT ACTIONS

During the 2026 Maanem Mijow8ganal food drive, the CSO gave Metro coupons to over 90 Odanak residents to help make the holiday season a little easier. We hope we were able to help ease the financial burden of grocery shopping. We would also like to remind you that the CAB food bank in Pierreville is back and open to the people of Odanak. It is also possible to obtain an emergency basket during exceptional circumstances. Please do not hesitate to contact this organization if you have food needs; the volunteers are there to assist you! You can also use the yellow bin located at 58 Waban-Aki to drop off non-perishable food items, which are then distributed to the community.

Last November, the CSO, CAB, and Lien de la famille de Pierreville joined forces to offer free winter clothing to children in Bas-Saint-François. Fifty-two children picked up winter gear during the open house days. Given the volume of donations we received, we were also able to help vulnerable adults stay warm this winter. This initiative will be repeated next year, as there is a real need for it. The CAB accepts clothing donations year-round, which can be dropped off in the blue container located at 34 Trahan Street in Pierreville. The clothing is then sorted and washed before being resold at a low cost. If you have sheets and blankets in good condition, you can also drop them off, as they will be donated to Point de rue to support people experiencing homelessness.

You may have noticed the educational speed camera on Marie-Victorin Road, across from the Sonic gas station in Pierreville. This is a collaboration with TIR-SHV, which donated the equipment to Odanak free of charge. In consultation with the CAO, we decided it would be a good idea to install it at this location to ensure the safety of children attending Maurault School. We contacted the municipality of Pierreville, who confirmed their interest. The speed camera will be installed facing west during the winter and facing east during milder weather.



PRESENTATIONS BY THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Justine and I sit on various advisory boards to represent Odanak. We are members of the management and steering committee of NoYau in Nicolet, which gathers key local stakeholders to collaborate on finding solutions for our communities. We also sit on the monitoring committee and the large regional intersectoral committee on healthy lifestyles (TIR-SHV) to share ideas with regional stakeholders on healthy eating, physically active lifestyles, active transportation, and other areas of focus. We are part of the Bas-Saint-François consultation group, which aims to identify challenges facing our region and find practical solutions for all our citizens. Since the fall of 2024, I have been a member of the board of directors of the Volunteer Action Center, and since last fall, I have been its president. The management team's goal is to promote Odanak by participating in meetings focused on opportunities and social development.

2026 FUTURE PROJECTS

2026 will see a few new additions to the CSO. First, we have commissioned Caroll-Ann to make courtesy calls or visits to our isolated or vulnerable residents. This is a voluntary service for users, which will be gradually implemented throughout the year.

We are currently working on renovating and developing sports facilities behind the new 11-17 building (former skating rink). Christina conducted a survey to identify the needs of the community. We are now drawing up plans for these new facilities.

The day camp will be back for a third year in the summer of 2026. We will be improving the program to ease the burden on parents for meals... Surprise! Angélie has also taken over the management of the Tolba trails (Winter Solstice), the Carnival, and ped days. If you have any ideas, please feel free to share them with her.

The Manazaozi program builds on the foundations of the successful Kirano program. Several community members participated in Kirano, and we wanted to repeat the experience. Registration is already open, and many people have expressed interest in participating. The meetings will promote healthy lifestyle habits through physical activity and healthy eating. A psychosocial component has also been included to support change.

The psychosocial sector and the CPDA are working together to offer a fraud workshop. We must stay alert to this scourge and want to provide the public with tools to help them stay vigilant. Let's not forget that fraudsters exploit people's trust or emotions and create a false sense of urgency. If you are a senior and believe you are experiencing abuse, you can contact the CSO, ask for help from the CPDA, or take the first steps by calling 1-888-489-2287, the elder abuse hotline.

We are working on developing an information workshop on important legal documents such as wills, powers of attorney, and incapacity mandates. We are taking steps to address this issue and hope to be able to offer you this information in 2026.

CONCLUSION

I am so grateful to be part of the Health Center team! We offer high-quality services; excellent, in fact, according to Accreditation Canada. We are involved in social and community life and have developed various projects to meet the needs of our users. All I can do is thank the teams, whether they work on the front lines or behind the scenes, for their commitment to promoting our organization. All of us can be very proud!

Kchi wlini!



DENTAL HYGIENE SERVICES



Élisabeth Morel
Dental Hygienist -
Odanak Health Center

SERVICES:

- Oral screening
- Dentist referrals as needed
- Topical fluoride application
- Application of a cavity-stopping agent (silver diamine fluoride (SDF))
- Brushing/flossing instruction
- Motivational tools
- Dietary priorities
- Information on preventive treatments
- Discussion on the services provided by the program

ODANAK HEALTH CENTRE ATTENDANCE SCHEDULE

MARCH							APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30		

MAY							JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
31													

Legend
● : Dental Hygienist Available at the Odanak Health Center

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

Call the reception desk at the Odanak Health Center at 450-568-6766, ext. 0, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon, or send an email to emorel@csodanak.com





TOGETHER, LET'S TALK ABOUT LIFE: SUICIDE PREVENTION IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Catherine Carignan

SW, Community Organizer -
Centre intégré universitaire de santé
et de services sociaux de la Mauricie-
et-du-Centre-du-Québec

Every year in February, Suicide Prevention Week reminds us of a fundamental truth: talking saves lives. Behind every smile, every neighbor, and every colleague, there may be invisible challenges. And sometimes, simply listening or offering a kind word can make all the difference.

Suicide is not an option. There are solutions, resources, and above all, people ready to help, willing to give those who are suffering the space they need to see that these solutions truly exist.

What if we made a collective commitment?

Let's pay attention, let's be there for each other. If you think someone might be struggling, don't be afraid to talk to them. And if you're going through a difficult time yourself, don't be afraid to talk to someone you trust. Asking for help is an act of courage and strength.

Need Help, or Want to Talk?

Call 1-866-277-3553 or visit suicide.ca. These services are free, confidential, and available 24/7 for individuals at risk of suicide, their loved ones, and those who are grieving.

Together, let's build a community where life is always the priority.

Here are some practical ways to make a difference.

Promote Resources

Display helpline numbers in public places, on social media, and in local newsletters. For example:

- 1-866-277-3553
- 53 53 53 (text message)
- suicide.ca
- 811 Info social, option 2

Create Safe Spaces

Promote community activities, places where people can meet and talk. Loneliness can get tough sometimes, and being together can do you good!

Training Community Sentinels

The Nicolet-Yamaska suicide prevention center offers training on recognizing warning signs and providing effective support. It's like CPR, but for mental health!

To take the training or get more information, contact Marianne Plante at 819-840-0549, ext. 13, or mplante@preventiondusuicide.com.

For more information, visit www.ciusssmq.ca/english/care-and-services/emergency-and-critical-situations/suicide/

The Odanak Health Centre is here for you. You can reach us at: 450-568-6766.

Thank you for being there... for life!

MEASLES IN ADULTS: ARE YOU PROTECTED?

Gabrielle Dolan

Clinical Nurse - Odanak Health Center

Measles is a serious disease that is highly contagious. It can cause serious complications in unprotected adults. This infection is caused by an airborne virus that spreads when an infected person breathes, coughs, sneezes, or talks. Measles was once widespread in North America, but fortunately, effective vaccination campaigns have made it much rarer. Nevertheless, Quebec still experiences occasional outbreaks. There is no specific treatment for measles. Vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself against this disease.

Here is a summary of the current criteria for determining whether an adult is considered protected against measles.

You are protected if (at least one criteria):

- You were born before 1970.
- You have a blood test showing antibodies to measles.
- You have medical proof that you have already had measles.
- You have received adequate vaccination.

How many doses of the measles vaccine are needed?

- 2 doses if you were:
 - Born in 1980 or after
 - Born between 1970 and 1979 and are either a healthcare worker or trainee, a traveller, or a military recruit
- 1 dose if you were born between 1970 and 1979 and are not a healthcare worker or trainee, a traveller, or a military recruit
- 0 if you were born before 1970

If you have any questions about your vaccination, please don't hesitate to contact me. A simple safety measure can help protect your health and that of the community.



CHRONIC DISEASE PROGRAM

Marie-Noël Mayrand
Chronic Care Nurse –
Odanak Health Centre

2024-2025: AN INSPIRING YEAR FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN ODANAK

This year, the Diabetes and Chronic Diseases Program at the Odanak Health Center was once again buzzing with ideas, projects, and collaborations. Together, we acted, learned, tasted, celebrated... and above all, we joined forces toward a common goal: taking care of our health and that of our community.

SHORT VIDEOS TO GET YOU MOVING, BREATHING AND THRIVING

In collaboration with the Center's kinesiologists, several short videos on health, wellness, and physical activity were created and shared.

They generated a lot of enthusiasm in the community: prizes totalling \$150 were awarded to those who took the time to participate and answer questions.

A great way to learn... while having fun!

THREE SISTER CHALLENGE: FROM AGES 1 TO 99, EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

On September 11, the hiking trails around the Abénaki Aventure campground came alive for the Three Sisters Challenge, an intergenerational walk/run where everyone proceeded at their own pace, for the simple pleasure of exercising together.

The result: 54 participants, aged 1 to 99, were brought together with a desire to get some fresh air and celebrate being active.

At the finish line: delicious Three Sisters soup, snacks, smiles, medals, and photos taken by an on-site photographer.

A huge thank you to the Abénaki Aventure campground, the kinesiologists, and all our volunteers. We couldn't have done it without you!



Three Sister Challenge, September 11 2025.

HALLOWEEN AT AW8SSISAK DAYCARE: TURNING HEALTHY EATING INTO A GAME

On October 31, 52 children from the daycare center celebrated Halloween by enjoying a healthy snack that was both fun and delicious. Served during a costume party, the purpose of the activity was to show that eating well can be simple, colorful, and really fun!

Many thanks to our dietitian for this tasty collaboration.



A healthy, fun, and delicious snack.

WORLD DIABETES DAY: ODANAK LIGHTS UP

On November 14, the Health Center turned into a giant blue lantern to commemorate World Diabetes Day.

This light symbolized this year's theme, "Diabetes and Well-Being at Work," reminding us of the importance of supporting people living with diabetes in all areas of their lives.

WHAT ABOUT 2026? EVEN MORE PROJECTS TO SHARE

The coming year will be shaped by new partnerships, including with the N'MANAZAOZI program. We will continue our ongoing efforts to achieve our goal: promoting a healthy community and preventing disease, one step at a time.

Tel.: 450-568-6766 ext. 4010

GOOD DAILY HYGIENE HABITS

Marcelle Hannis
Chronic Care Nurse –
Odanak Health Centre

Preventing infections is not limited to hospitals: it starts at home, every day. Simple hygiene measures can protect our health and that of those around us.

Washing your hands remains the most effective measure. Using soap and water for 20 seconds, or an alcohol-based sanitizer if water is not available, will eliminate most germs.

Coughing and sneezing into your elbow, throwing away tissues immediately, and washing your hands afterwards are essential habits to avoid infecting others.

At home, it is recommended to regularly clean frequently touched surfaces (door handles, light switches, phones), ventilate rooms, and wash bedding and towels frequently.

Within the community, everyone has a role to play: staying home when sick, getting vaccinated against the flu, and teaching children the importance of these habits from an early age.

These simple actions may seem insignificant, but together they create a powerful barrier against the spread of infection. By adopting good habits, we all contribute to a stronger and healthier community.

Take care of yourself,

COMING TOGETHER FOR A YEAR OF HEALTH AND SOLIDARITY

Daphnée Couture
Clinical Nurse - Odanak Health Centre

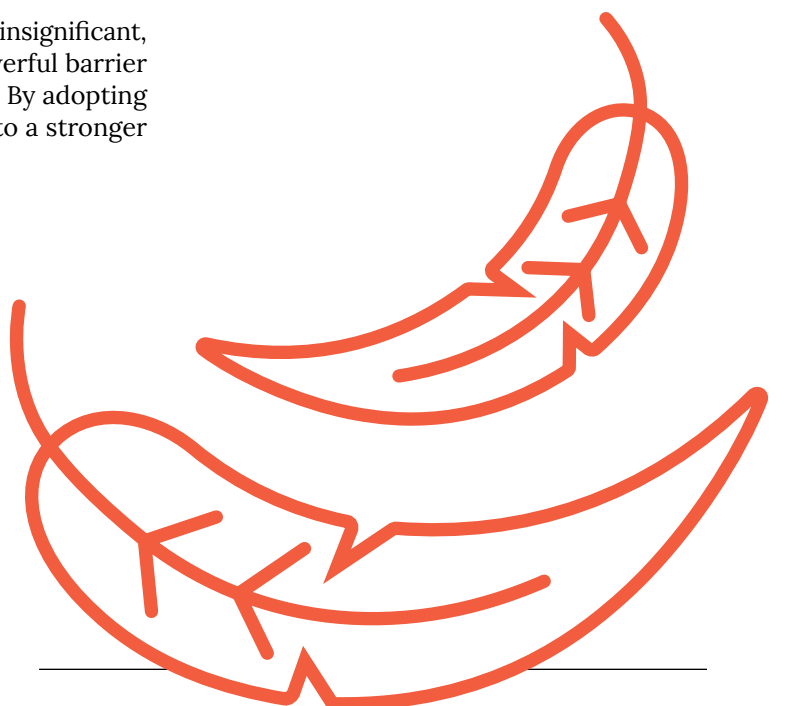
With 2026 now upon us, the nursing team would like to extend our warmest wishes to you. I hope that this new year brings you good health, well-being, and solidarity with your community.

Every day, we have the privilege of caring for you with attentiveness, respect, and kindness. Our commitment has remained unchanged over the years: we want to provide safe and humane care, prevent risks, and encourage habits that promote your well-being.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your health journey!

May 2026 be a bright year, filled with smiles, vigour and hope. Let's take care of each other, because that's the only way to move forward together toward a healthy future.

Happy New Year to you all!



COMPASSIONATE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AT THE ODANAK HEALTH CENTER

Isabelle Dupuis

Clinical Nurse - Odanak Health Centre

Pregnancy and childbirth are highly emotional stages of life, filled with changes and questions. To support families every step of the way, the Odanak Health Center offers comprehensive maternal and child health services that focus on listening, providing information, and offering compassionate care.

PERSONALIZED PRENATAL CARE

Individual prenatal care is offered to pregnant women, with up to six personalized appointments during pregnancy. These appointments allow us to meet the needs of each expectant mother and address essential topics such as fetal development, physical and emotional changes, parent-child attachment, prevention of shaken baby syndrome, nutrition, breastfeeding and commercial preparation, labor and delivery, baby care, sleep, safety, and the postpartum period.

POSTNATAL SUPPORT

After the birth, postnatal care is provided to support parents when they return home. A home visit within five days of delivery allows us to assess the health of the newborn, offer support with breastfeeding and nutrition, and help the mother adjust both physically and emotionally.

PEDIATRIC CARE FOR 0 TO 5 YEARS OLD

The CSO also offers pediatric care for children aged 0 to 5, including vaccinations in accordance with the recommended schedule and monitoring of child development. Families can also benefit from the support of a nutritionist and midwife, as part of a comprehensive and collaborative approach.

OLO PROGRAM

The OLO (Œufs, Lait et Oranges, or Egg, Milk and Oranges) program is offered to families in need, from the beginning of pregnancy up to one year after childbirth, to support the nutritional health of mothers and children.

These services aim to support families throughout pregnancy and the early years of a child's life by offering support tailored to their needs.

For more information, contact Isabelle Dupuis, clinical nurse and head of Maternal and Child Health at the CSO.

AVOIDING FALLS THIS WINTER: AN IMPORTANT HEALTH ISSUE FOR EVERYONE

Stéphanie Plante

FKQ Accredited Kinesiologist - Odanak Health Centre

Every year, many people—especially seniors—suffer some degree of injury after slipping on ice. These accidents can result in broken bones, sprains, loss of mobility, and, in some cases, reduced independence that can permanently affect one's lifestyle. Falls are not only painful, they can also cause a loss of confidence, discourage people from going outside, and lead to involuntary isolation.

WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO PREVENT FALLS IN WINTER?

Practice Safe Behaviour

- Take your time and avoid sudden movements.
- Use solid supports, such as railings, grab bars, etc.
- Walk like a penguin, taking small steps with your knees slightly bent and your feet turned slightly outward to lower your center of gravity and stabilize yourself. Keep your hands out of your pockets and walk slowly.

Choose the Right Gear

- Wear boots with non-slip, grippy soles.
- Attach removable crampons on particularly icy days.
- Use a cane or walking sticks with non-slip tips for added stability.

Take care of the exterior maintenance of your house

- Regularly de-ice and sand driveways, balconies, and stairs.
- Use salt or an abrasive depending on the temperature.

Maintain strength and balance: Muscle strengthening, proprioception, and mobility exercises are recommended. They improve stability and the ability to recover from imbalance. Refer to the attached image for full details on the fall prevention program for seniors, an essential resource for getting through the winter season safely.

FALL PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Fall Prevention Program for seniors is primarily aimed at reducing the risk of falls and promoting the independence of community members. Through tailored exercises and practical advice, the program seeks to:

- Improve strength, balance, and coordination to better prevent loss of balance.
- Boost seniors' confidence and safety in their daily activities.

By participating in this program, seniors actively contribute to their health and quality of life while minimizing the physical consequences that a fall could cause.

Services Offered

- Consultation and fall risk assessment
- Exercise program
- Weekly follow-up at home

Reserve your spot now!

Tel.: 450-568-6766 ext. 4207



GET A KICKSTART ON ADOPTING HEALTHY EATING HABITS FOR 2026!

Marie-Pier Desnoyers

Nutrition Technician -
Odanak Health Centre

For quite some time now, and much to the joy of nutrition specialists, eating well no longer means adhering to strict rules or striving for perfection. Nutrition knowledge continues to evolve and confirms one essential thing: the best eating habits are sustainable and support physical health, mental well-being, and the pleasure of eating, while taking into account our daily realities.

Here are a few principles to incorporate into your eating habits, one step at a time.

FOCUS ON BALANCE RATHER THAN RESTRICTION

It is no longer a question of eliminating food groups, but rather of varying your food choices, listening to your body, and including all foods without guilt.

EATING WELL MEANS TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF!

Élise Provencher

Nutritionist - Odanak Health Centre

Hello everyone, my name is Élise Provencher and I have been a nutritionist for 23 years. As of last September, I have had the pleasure of being the Health Centre's nutritionist.

I had the opportunity to work here several years ago as a temporary replacement, and I loved the experience. That's why I jumped at the chance to once again join this wonderful team!

My professional background has allowed me to work in several fields with a wide range of clients (children, pregnant women, adults, seniors), gaining a very diverse array of experience. I truly believe that this will help me better meet your needs.

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BODY'S SIGNALS OF APPETITE AND FULLNESS

Intuitive eating is becoming increasingly important. Learning to recognize true hunger (rumbling stomach, headaches, low energy), satiety (feeling "full"), and the pleasure associated with meals helps regulate portion sizes and maintain a healthier relationship with food, both in children and adults.

PRIORITIZE MINIMALLY PROCESSED FOODS

- Fruits and vegetables;
- Whole grains;
- Legumes;
- Dairy products or alternatives;
- Various sources of protein (fish, eggs, tofu, meat, nuts).

This does not mean banning processed foods, but rather limiting their consumption to occasional treats.

EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGGIES

While you don't have to go full-on vegetarian, eating more plant-based foods is good for:

- your cardiovascular health;
- your digestion (soluble and insoluble fiber);
- the environment.

Adding more vegetables, fruits, legumes, and nuts to your diet is one of the simplest and most effective steps you can take in 2026.

WHAT DOES A NUTRITIONIST DO?

Nutritionists help you improve or maintain your health through a diet tailored to your needs.

My approach is comprehensive, respectful, and personalized, focusing on intuitive eating and well-being. Whether you want to prevent disease, improve your lifestyle, get back into shape, or support recovery, nutrition plays an essential role at every stage of life.

I work with clients aged 0 to 100, and here are a few examples of situations where I can help you:

- Eating disorders
- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes
- Digestive and gastrointestinal disorders (celiac disease, intolerance, etc.)
- Food allergies
- Oncology
- Kidney disease
- Osteoporosis
- Healthy weight management
- Dysphagia (difficulty swallowing)
- Loss of independence or physical deconditioning (malnutrition)

REVALUING THE PLEASURE OF EATING AND COOKING

Enjoyment is recognized as a key element of healthy eating. Taking the time to eat mindfully, sharing meals, developing cooking skills, and involving children in the kitchen promote greater satisfaction and a positive relationship with food for young and old alike.

ADOPT A CARING APPROACH TOWARD YOUR BODY

Messages focused solely on weight are increasingly being replaced by an approach centered on overall health. Body positivity and respect for body diversity are now an essential part of developing healthy eating habits.

IN CONCLUSION

Healthy eating is all about simplicity, listening to your body, and enjoying yourself. It's not about eating "perfectly," but rather making choices that support your health and well-being, one day at a time.

Eat well, enjoy your food, and share meals with your loved ones!



- Wounds
- Sports performance and prevention
- Growth retardation
- Pregnancy
- Sports nutrition
- And much, much more!

I can even make house calls for people who have lost their independence in order to provide them with tailored care.

I am also fortunate enough to work with all the other CSO professionals and to collaborate with Marie-Pier Desnoyers, a dietetic technician, on various projects.

Although I have several duties, my main role is to offer individual consultations to clients who wish to benefit from my services.

For any questions or to make an appointment:
450-568-6766 ext. 4082

I look forward to helping you achieve optimal health!



PRIVACY WEEK: ODANAK RAISES AWARENESS AMONG EMPLOYEES AND USERS ABOUT DATA PROTECTION

BETTER UNDERSTOOD, BETTER PROTECTED

As part of Privacy Week, the Odanak Health Center stepped up its efforts to raise community awareness about the protection of personal and medical information.

From November 24 to 28, 2025, Andréanne Gouin, medical archivist and Accreditation Canada coordinator, Paule Leiby, medical archivist, and intern Mylène Petiquay prepared quizzes for the entire community and employees in various departments. These quizzes, available in the form of video clips and Google forms, were designed to assess everyone's knowledge of various aspects of confidentiality, such as security settings on social media and the risks associated with sharing sensitive information.

The initiative was well received by both staff and community members, who appreciated this opportunity to learn more about their rights and responsibilities regarding data protection.

The goal of this initiative was to gauge knowledge and information management practices, which are key issues in an environment where data security is vital. The surveys covered topics such as understanding privacy policies, handling files safely, and being aware of the risks of privacy breaches.

According to the organizers, this initiative is part of an ongoing effort to strengthen privacy in Odanak and ensure a safe and respectful environment for all.

Privacy Week is coming to an end, but vigilance remains essential. Protecting your personal information is no longer merely a matter of caution: it is a habit to adopt on a daily basis.

In Quebec, access to medical records is protected by law: the ARHSS, the AHRSSI, and the Access to Information Act. Section 19 of the ARHSS states that a user's file is entirely confidential and that only the person involved or their legal representative may access it, request a copy, or authorize its consultation.

Sections 38 and 39 of the AHRSSI explain who can consult a file and for what reasons. Health professionals may only access it when necessary to provide care. Certain non-professional employees may also consult part of the file, but only to perform essential administrative or technical duties.

Section 40 of the AHRSSI gives every user the right to have their file corrected if it contains errors, omissions, or ambiguous information. Individuals may also add a comment if they disagree with information recorded about them.

The Access to Information Act provides additional protections. It establishes the following:

- The rules allowing users to access documents and information held about them by public bodies
- The duties of institutions regarding the protection, storage and confidentiality of personal information
- The mechanisms for correcting or removing inaccurate information
- The responsibilities of institutions in the event of a data breach

This law applies to all public bodies, including healthcare institutions, and ensures that personal, medical, or administrative information is handled with rigor, transparency, and respect for personal rights.

Together, these laws guarantee privacy protection, freedom of access, and accuracy of the information contained in medical records.

A DEDICATED COMMUNITY

We would also like to congratulate the quiz winners:

- The video quiz winner is: Kim Paradis
- The employee quiz winners are: Jean Vollant and Isabelle Dupuis

Thanks again to everyone who participated!

MEDICAL ARCHIVES

Andréanne Gouin

Medical Archivist and Accreditation Canada Representative - Odanak Health Centre

For the past fourteen years, I have had the privilege of working as a medical archivist at the Odanak Health Center (CSO). Over the years, I have worked closely with all of the CSO teams, which has allowed me to develop a deep understanding of the different aspects of our services: physical health, mental health, administrative activities, among others. This daily collaboration has enriched my overall vision of our organization and strengthened my commitment to the quality of care provided to our community.

The role of medical archivists is an essential part of the organization. Rigorous management of user records, protection of confidentiality, enforcement of laws and standards relating to clinical documentation, and streamlining of practices directly support the quality and safety of care. By ensuring the reliability, accessibility, and traceability of information, medical archivists help to ensure optimal continuity of services and support all teams in their daily work.

A few months ago, a new responsibility was added to my duties: that of Accreditation Canada representative. This role naturally ties in with my job as an archivist, as it aims to ensure that our health center meets the highest standards of quality and safety in care and services. This means collaborating with our teams, monitoring changes in national standards, supporting the implementation of best practices, and promoting continuous improvement in all areas of the organization.

I am proud to contribute to this transformative initiative, which reflects the CSO's commitment to its community and its desire to provide safe, compassionate, and high-quality services.



NEWS FROM YOUR MUSEUM



Vicky Desfossés-Bégin
Executive Director – Musée des Abénakis

With the start of the new year, I wish you all happiness, good health, and success in your endeavors in 2026. Let us continue to promote W8banaki culture together.

Where to start, after such an exciting end to the year at the Abenaki Museum? The last few months have been marked by wonderful events, meaningful gatherings, and memorable moments that testify to the vitality of our Nation and the importance of our culture. It is with great pleasure that I share with you a glimpse of what has been happening at our Museum this fall, as well as what awaits us in 2026.

WAROWIK E OTCITEIAN – BACK FROM AFAR: A HEART-WARMING EXHIBITION

From October until the end of March, the Museum is hosting the exhibition Warowik E Otciteian – Back From Afar, by artist Sonia Basile-Martel. Through works that are both powerful and delicate, Sonia shares a personal and universal journey of healing, marked by vulnerability, pain, hope, and resilience.

Since the opening on October 24, visitors have been deeply moved by the honesty and power of the artist’s creations. Many take the time to share their impressions, emotions, or personal stories with us, creating a rich space for dialogue. This exhibition perfectly illustrates the role our museum strives to play: a place where art allows us to recognize ourselves, tell our stories, and sometimes even heal.



Launch of the Back From Afar exhibition.



Artist Sonia Basile-Martel.

A WARM AND WELCOMING CHRISTMAS MARKET

On December 6 and 7, the Museum’s annual Christmas Market once again managed to bring the community together. In a warm atmosphere filled with holiday spirit, nearly 750 people, including visitors and artisans, shared moments of joy, discovery, and creativity.

Indigenous artists and craftspeople showcased their work, ranging from jewelry and gourmet products to visual art and traditional crafts. For many, this Market is the perfect opportunity to share their talent while connecting directly with the public. Visitors, whether members of the Nation or just passing through, appreciated the diversity and quality of the creations on offer.



8th instalment of the Christmas Market.

GALART AWARD 2025: A GREAT SOURCE OF COLLECTIVE PRIDE

The year 2025 ended on a high note with GalArt, the award ceremony hosted by Culture Centre-du-Québec, during which the Musée des Abénakis won the Heritage and Museology Award for W8banakiak, our permanent exhibition.

This award carries special meaning: it is the third honor received in one year for this exhibition, which highlights the history and voices of the Nation. Following the Prix Innovation de Tourisme Centre-du-Québec and the Prix Entreprise des Premières Nations de la Chambre de commerce et d’industrie du Cœur-du-Québec, this new recognition confirms the cultural and identity importance of W8banakiak, as well as its resonance with the public.

We owe this success to a dedicated team, to the generous contribution of the Nation, and to the pride we all feel for the W8banaki culture. This award belongs to us collectively, so let us be proud of it!

2025-2028 STRATEGIC PLANNING: SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Last November, the Museum team and the Board of Directors of the Odanak Historical Society held a two-day retreat to establish the Museum’s strategic direction for the next three years.

These sessions were focused on collaboration, listening, and a shared commitment to grounding our practices in our W8banakiak values. These discussions allowed us to refine our vision and define objectives aligned with our core values: transmitting culture, acting with authenticity, and striving for excellence.

This strategic planning will guide our future actions and allow the museum to continue to evolve with respect for the community, our visitors, and our artisans.

WHAT’S COMING IN 2026: SIGWAN AND NEW EXHIBITIONS

One of the first major events of the year will be the 11th edition of our Sigwan fundraising event, which will take place on March 19, 2026. For several years now, this festive gathering has supported the Museum’s educational and cultural missions. We invite you to save the date now: a wonderful moment of sharing and celebration awaits us!

Meanwhile, 2026 will also see the arrival of new temporary exhibitions, which will be announced throughout the year. These exhibitions will showcase the talent of W8banakiak artists and continue to offer the community rich, contemporary, and inspiring cultural experiences. Stay tuned to our platforms to learn more about these projects.

WLIWNI TO THE COMMUNITY

Behind every exhibition, every activity, and every success lies a passionate team... but also a supportive and committed community. Your visits, your words of encouragement, and your dedication to the Museum fuel our efforts every day.

A great way to continue supporting the Museum and its cultural and educational missions is to become a member of the Odanak Historical Society. All the information is available on our website at museeabenakis.ca or by phone at 450-568-2600.

Wliwni to each and every one of you. Thank you for helping the W8banaki culture live on and shine.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Abenaki Museum in 2026!

