

Delorme seeks bridge between world views

BY WALID CHAHAL

DIVERSITY Thunder Bay is delighted to present Cadmus Delorme as our keynote speaker for our 18th annual event for the elimination of racial discrimination. The event will take place both in person at the Courthouse Hotel and virtually via Zoom.

Cadmus Delorme was chief of the Cowessess First Nation from 2016 to 2023. In 2012, he was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his student leadership during King Charles III (then prince) and Queen Consulate Camilla's visit to First Nations University. In 2015, Cadmus was named one of CBC Saskatchewan's Future 40, which celebrates the province's new generation of leaders, builders, and change-makers under the age of 40.

During Cadmus's time as chief, he focused on political sovereignty, economic self-sustainability and cultural rejuvenation. In 2022, Cadmus was awarded the Queen Elizabeth Platinum Jubilee. In 2023, Cadmus received an honorary degree from the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Institution. Currently, he is the chair of the Residential Schools Document Advisory Committee and the University of Regina board of directors.

Diversity Thunder Bay is a community-based organization whose mission is to work towards an inclusive, equitable community free of racism and discrimination of any kind. Every year on March 21, Diversity Thunder Bay honours United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. We invite prominent speakers to join the ongoing community dialogue on racial (in)justice, thereby advancing the work and struggle of Diversity Thunder Bay.

We mark March 21 to remember the 1960 Sharpeville massacre when 69 unarmed and peaceful demonstrators were killed by South African police as they protested the state's unjust and discriminatory apartheid laws. Since proclaiming the day in 1966, the United Nations General Assembly has called on the international community to re-double its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. Although race-based laws and practices have been eradicated



ONE CITY,
MANY VOICES

The Thunder Bay Anti-Racism and Equity Advisory Committee and Diversity Thunder Bay produce this monthly column to promote greater understanding of race relations in Northwestern Ontario

in many countries, racism continues to exist and has adverse effects on individuals, and ethno-cultural, racial and religious groups, across the globe.

For example, we are all currently witnessing anti-Palestinian racism in real time through the horrific assault on Gaza, whereby Israel has been repeatedly bombing and killing Palestinian civilians and destroying their homes and infrastructure (including hospitals, schools, universities and places of worship). Close to 30,000 Palestinians have been killed with two-thirds of them being women and children. A deplorable 70,000 have been injured, and more than one million people have been displaced from their homes. In addition, Israel has been prohibiting food, medical aid and fuel from entering Gaza. On Jan. 26, the International Court of Justice in its ruling and provisional measures stated that some of Israel's actions in the Gaza strip plausibly fall within the provisions of the Genocide Convention.

The war on Gaza has also led to an increase in racism here at home, including in Thunder Bay. Hence, it is of tremendous importance for us in Canada and Thunder Bay to double our efforts — individually and collectively — to identify and continue to combat racism and all forms of discrimination. Cadmus, with his diverse narrative skills and his experience as a former chief of the Cowessess First Nation, will provide us with new insights that can help us in our work to keep moving in the right direction of ending racism in our community.

In this exclusive talk (titled: What We All Inherited, And What Steps And Actions We All



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Cadmus Delorme, former chief of the Cowessess First Nation, will speak on March 21 at Diversity Thunder Bay's 18th annual event for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Must Take To Ensure We Get It Right This Time), Cadmus will bring stories, humour and truth by differentiating between two world views we experience in Canada — one being an Indigenous world view and the other a Canadian/Western world view. Through his message, we will learn that we inherited a history together and Cadmus will offer models to show that both world views can co-exist.

Two of our Diversity Thunder Bay members — Lee-Ann Chevette (who is also the community safety and well-being specialist with the City of Thunder Bay) and Ellen Chambers Picard (Diversity Thunder Bay co-chair) — have had the pleasure to hear Cadmus speak, were very inspired, and felt invigorated and motivated by his presentation.

After attending a keynote address by former chief Delorme at a national conference in Regina in 2023, Lee-Ann had this to say: "He wove storytelling and traditional teachings throughout his presentation, and encouraged deep reflection, relationship building, compassion and action towards reconciliation."

She adds that her "thoughts

and feelings about his talk were confirmed in many discussions with colleagues, following his keynote address."

Please join us in person at the Courthouse Hotel or virtually via Zoom on Thursday, March 21, from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. for Delorme's presentation. 'What We All Inherited, And What Steps And Actions We All Must Take To Ensure We Get It Right This Time' will help us better understand the root causes of our problems, and decide which approaches and strategies to adopt — individually and collectively — in order to overcome individual and systemic racial barriers and biases.

Tickets are available for reservation on Eventbrite ([eventbrite.ca](https://www.eventbrite.ca)); set location to Thunder Bay and search for 'Cadmus Delorme' or 'Diversity Thunder Bay' to find the event.

Walid Chahal is the co-chair and a founder of Diversity Thunder Bay, and a continuing education lecturer in sociology at Lakehead University. The views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author.