

Science North and TD unveil renewed *TD abinoojihns mitigo gamik Toddler Treehouse*, part of the Indigenous Ways of Knowing project

(Sudbury, ON) - Science North's TD Toddler Treehouse reopened with an exciting renewal today, with support from TD Bank Group (TD). Teams from both Science North and TD unveiled the new space, along with young visitors. The TD Toddler Treehouse is one of the first engaging experiences that visitors encounter as they make their way into the science centre. This special learning space is dedicated to young visitors, five and under, and their caregivers as they learn to discover science, technology, engineering and mathematics in their everyday lives.

The iconic new experience in the TD abinoojihns mitigo gamik Toddler Treehouse features a beaver-*amik*- lodge and cattail- *apakweshkway*- forest! Audiences can enter the habitat and play like one of Science North's most popular Northern Ontario animal ambassadors, Kash, the beaver. In this renewed space, visitors can see and hear the common names of the animals represented in the mural in three languages – anishinaabemowin, French and English. Visitors, especially young learners, will discover new toys, books and tools that encourage both sensory and active play and learning tied to the theme of Northern Ontario outdoor habitats such as water ecosystems and their biodiversity. They'll see, learn, and hear about the sounds of animals and plants who call these vibrant wetlands their home. Beautiful woodland-style art was created by talented muralist and children's book illustrator Mangeshig, a member of Wasauksing First Nation.

This project allows Science North to continue dedicated efforts to advance Truth and Reconciliation by highlighting the innovations of Indigenous Peoples, representing perspectives from Indigenous Peoples, sharing teachings and knowledge, and using anishinaabemowin language. This furthers the organization's mission by creating a space where visitors, school groups and program participants from Indigenous communities feel represented and connected, ensuring that visitors who identify as Indigenous feel a sense of belonging when visiting Science North.

The *Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project* builds capacity within Science North that matches the organization's commitment and intentions.

About the Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project

The Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project will deepen engagement, relationships, and partnerships to:

- Advance Truth and Reconciliation and the implementation of the Calls to Action;

- Ensure culturally appropriate research, language inclusion and teachings to inform program, exhibit and initiative development;
- Honour and reflect Indigenous ways of knowing;
- Increase economic and employment opportunities;
- Include culturally and regionally appropriate ceremonies and promote adherence to protocols for events, openings, installations and initiatives;
- Create mentorship opportunities for staff, partners and volunteers who identify as Indigenous as well as those who do not;
- Inspire Indigenous Peoples of all ages to be engaged with science in the world around them;
- Support workforce learning and development

Quotes

“This initiative is an important means of bringing the voice of Wahnapiatae First Nation and indeed all Indigenous peoples to Science North, and to the diverse audiences it serves. It’s crucial to see our culture incorporated into this progressive learning environment, and specifically with an eye to science and education: it creates more space for all of us to share our perspectives and our teachings while growing that foundational relationship with an open heart. In that spirit of greater understanding, we celebrate this project -- much as we celebrate our work in continuing to grow lifelong partnerships that truly drive towards truth and reconciliation.”- Craig Tyson, Chair of Science North’s Northeast Ontario Indigenous Advisory Committee

“We are extremely proud to be a long-time supporter of Science North programming through the TD Ready Commitment, the Bank's corporate citizenship platform," says Sean Kinkley, Branch Manager, TD. By supporting initiatives like the TD abinoojiihns mitigo gamik Toddler Treehouse, as part of the Indigenous Ways of Knowing Project, we hope to help preserve and celebrate arts and cultures from Indigenous Peoples. We recognize the importance of the work to be done toward our collective journey towards Truth and Reconciliation and hope our support contributes to accelerating this journey toward an inclusive and sustainable tomorrow."

"This mural is a whimsical depiction of the Northern Ontario landscape, designed to captivate the imaginations of our youngest visitors. The vibrant colors and friendly characters are depicted in a playful Anishinaabe woodland style, inviting toddlers to explore this fascinating environment through play and joy. In this way the mural becomes a tool, teaching our children we share this land in all its beauty, this land ties us together, this land teaches us." – Mangeshig, anishinaabe artist

“We’re so excited to welcome visitors to our renewed TD abinoojiihns mitigo gamik Toddler Treehouse and are grateful for support from the TD Ready Commitment. It’s been a rewarding experience to work with the team at TD as we both advance our work and knowledge in Truth

and Reconciliation. The renewed Toddler Treehouse is a beautiful space that is the perfect place for our youngest visitors to first experience STEM discoveries, and Indigenous knowledge. I'd like to especially recognize and highlight the meaningful and impactful work of Mangeshig in creating beautiful artwork that brings this project to life." - Ashley Larose MSc, Science North CEO

About Science North

Science North is Northern Ontario's most popular tourist attraction and an educational resource for children and adults across the province. Science North maintains the second – and eighth- largest science centres in Canada. Science North's attractions include a science centre, IMAX® theatre, digital Planetarium, butterfly gallery, special exhibits hall, and Dynamic Earth: Home of the Big Nickel. Science North, in partnership with Laurentian University, offers North America's first and only comprehensive Science Communication program, a joint Master's and Graduate Diploma program. As part of its mandate, Science North provides science experiences throughout Northern Ontario including outreach to schools and festivals, summer science camps and more, and has a permanent base in Thunder Bay providing outreach to the Northwest. Science North is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For information, visit sciencenorth.ca.

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