

NORTHERN LAKES COLLEGE

Northern Lakes College Valedictorian Learns it's Never too Late to Follow Dreams

Selected as the valedictorian of the class of 2021 at Northern Lakes College, University Studies graduate, Jeri Asels-Beaulieu, modelled grit, determination, and resiliency in her studies as she navigated family health scares during her studies.

“When my husband was admitted to the hospital, I was worried that maybe I wouldn’t be able to complete the essays that were due, but they were really understanding. I appreciated how NLC values family,” explains Jeri.

Immediately thriving in her University Studies program, Jeri started working at an elementary school where she met a veteran school teacher, who soon became her mentor. Jeri noted that the warm, welcoming, and wise woman was the only Indigenous teacher in the school, and that the young students looked up to her. Jeri herself valued seeing an Indigenous woman in a position of leadership and influence.

“It was eye-opening to see that there were so many Indigenous children in the school, and yet there was only one teacher there who shared their culture. I learned that she was well into her years when she decided to become a teacher. That was my story, too. My mentor is the one who showed me that it’s never too late to follow your dreams,” Jeri explains.

When considering her future, Jeri’s focus is on Indigenous youth. “Kids are growing up unaware of the histories of Canada’s First Peoples, and there is loss of language and culture. That inspired me to be not only a teacher and a leader, but an inspiration to children. I hope to be a good role model,” she explains.

Through a partnership with Northern Lakes College, Jeri has been accepted into the University of Calgary’s Community-Based Bachelor of Education program, where she will pursue a specialization in Social Studies.

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