



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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Kahnawà:ke Oral History Project

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 22, Ohiarikhó:wa/July 2021) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) wishes to inform the community that it will collaborate with the professional historical research firm Know History Inc. (KHI) to gather, record, and share life stories and oral histories of Kahnawà:ke elders. This company has worked alongside Indigenous nations from across the country and has to date completed many projects in collaboration with Indigenous communities that include more than 250 traditional knowledge and oral history interviews. The Project Manager is Gerald Taiaiake Alfred.

This Project is designed to preserve and present an essential part of the cultural heritage of Kahnawà:ke to community youth who are in danger of losing the knowledge, wisdom, and sources of identity that are contained in the life stories and our elders' remembrances of families, the land and of community life.

"It is crucially important that the roots of our Kahnawà:ke heritage and identity are passed down multi-generationally so that the younger generation has the tools they need to maintain the cultural and political strength of our people," said Gerald Taiaiake Alfred. "They will gain the psychological resilience needed to create positive futures for the generations to come."

The first phase of the Project will run through February 2022 and aim to record approximately forty interviews with elders. These interviews will be used to develop a short film and an accompanying interpretive, interactive educational toolkit that can be accessed and used by community youth in English and, with the cooperation of the KOR, in Kanien'kéha.

The MCK and the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíohkwa Language and Cultural Center (KOR) are partnering in this Project with Know History Inc., which specializes in researching, documenting, and presenting history in Canada. KHI will be providing its services free of charge as part of its own set of commitments to work with Indigenous communities.

KOR is currently running a number of programs and projects within the community in the area of oral history and elder interviews in Kanien'kéha. These related interviews focus on language issues in support of the development of curricula for language retention and revitalization efforts in the community.

A list of interviewees is being developed, and the Project is taking names of elders or families who wish to participate. Names of potential interviewees can be submitted to Gerald.Alfred@mck.ca or TrinaC.Diabo@mck.ca.

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