

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Woodland Cultural Centre Announces Grand Reopening
of the Mohawk Institute Residential School on September 30, 2025**

Brantford, ON, July 29, 2025 – The Woodland Cultural Centre (WCC) is honoured to announce the official reopening of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School as an Interpretive Historic Site and Educational Resource. The opening will take place on September 30, 2025, Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, marking a significant step toward truth-telling, education, remembrance, and reconciliation.

The former Mohawk Institute, also known as "The Mush Hole," was the oldest and longest-running residential school in Canada. From 1828 to 1970, it operated as a key part of a system that profoundly impacted Indigenous communities, separating children from their families and cultures. The WCC is committed to ensuring the stories and experiences of Survivors are shared and understood, contributing to a more just and equitable future.

On September 30, 2025, the Mohawk Institute will reopen as an Interpretive Historic Site and Educational Resource dedicated to:

- **Truth-Telling:** Sharing the authentic history of the residential school system in Canada and the experiences of Survivors.
- **Remembrance:** Honouring the lives and legacies of all those affected by the Mohawk Institute and other residential schools.
- **Education:** Providing opportunities for visitors to learn about Indigenous history, culture, and perspectives.
- **Reconciliation:** Fostering dialogue, understanding, and action toward a more just and equitable relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Heather George, Executive Director of the Woodland Cultural Centre, states, "We are grateful to the Survivors, donors, former Woodland staff, contractors, and partners at all levels of government for supporting us in completing this major undertaking and preserving the evidence of the history of the longest-running residential school in Canadian history. It is made all the more meaningful by the fact that we are re-opening the building to the public as we reach the 10th anniversary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Of the 97 Calls to Action that accompanied the report, a number address Education and Heritage, and we are honoured to work to uphold these Calls and be part of the truth-sharing process necessary for true reconciliation to occur."

About the Mohawk Institute Restoration:

Following the 2013 community support to transform the former Mohawk Institute, The WCC began

restoration in 2016 after structural assessments estimated renovation costs at over \$23 million. The work included multiple phases of restoration, addressing the roof, masonry, windows, and accessibility.

To date, the "Save the Evidence" campaign has raised over \$26 million and benefited from federal, provincial, and municipal government funding, private donations, and community-led initiatives. In March 2022, WCC was thrilled to announce they had successfully raised the funds needed to restore the former Mohawk Institute building.

How to Participate:

- **Attend the Opening:** Join the Woodland Cultural Centre on September 30, 2025, for the grand reopening of the Mohawk Institute Residential School from 10:00am – 6:00pm.
- **Support the WCC:** Donations to WCC will help sustain programming and educational initiatives. Visit <https://woodlandculturalcentre.ca/support/donate/> to contribute.
- **Share:** Follow the campaign on social media using #SharetheEvidence, and share your commitment to truth and reconciliation.
- **Visit and Learn:** Plan your trip to the Mohawk Institute anytime after our grand opening on September 30th and explore this important historic site.

About the Woodland Cultural Centre:

The Woodland Cultural Centre is a First Nations educational and cultural centre that serves to preserve and promote Indigenous languages, cultures, art, and history. Located on the site of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School, the WCC strives to be a leading destination for cultural learning and understanding.

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