

## **Olympes De La Parole 2017-2018: The First North American Edition**

Theme: The emergence of communication technologies has transformed lifestyles, work organization, learning methods and skills needed to acquire and apply knowledge

The access to new technologies could contribute to the empowerment of indigenous girls and women in a particular region of Canada

### **Project: Université du Nord**

Our Team: Lily Magny, Eloise Valasek, Lola Gomez-Ribeiro, Morgan Geyer, Cayla Cohen, Mia Strack

### **The Study School**

Lead Instructor: Mme Marie-France Senécal

UWCM Mentor: Dr. Yvonne Saleh

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction	p. 3
History	p. 4
The Importance of University Education	p. 5
The Current Situation in Nunavut	p. 6
Iqaluit	p. 7
The Nicaragua Partnership	p. 8
The RACHEL	p. 9
Context	p. 10
Our Final Proposition	p. 10
Works Cited	p. 11
Acknowledgments	p. 13

## **(I) Introduction**

The undeniable reality is that we live in a technological time, and it's only the beginning. The future is exciting. We can expect self-driving cars, pocket supercomputers and printable food. The world is evolving at a fast pace, however in order to ensure sustainable global development, everyone needs to be moving at an equal pace. A second undeniable reality is that this is not the case. In Canada, the Indigenous population, specifically women, are being left behind in an aspect of life as crucial as education. It is embarrassing to say that Canada does not have a University for its northern citizens. All Canadians are deserving of advanced education. **We intend on granting northern Canada the human right of advanced education (proposed solution should be at the end?).** We had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Madeleine Redfern, Mayor of Iqaluit, capital of Nunavut. She ignited an awareness in us by informing our class that a reason for female high school student dropouts is a lack of motivation, as they have nowhere to go beyond high school. They figure that they have no further purpose, but they do. **We have the power to make them realize it and we plan on doing so by making University education accessible, free and easy to use (proposed solution, should be placed at the end. In addition, The power should be put in their Indigenous hands to decide, Not in your hand to decide for them).** Canada is considered as a first world country. However, women and girls in Iqaluit do not have the privilege of having advanced technology and fast speed internet. Nunavut is one of the few places that runs off Satellite Internet. Other places in the world that have terrible internet quality as well if not worst are countries such as Libya, Nepal and Nigeria. However, those are 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries, therefore it is incredibly shocking and sad that Canada, a first world country admired by the world, is home to one of the least developed technological areas on the planet. All

Canadian girls and women deserve high level quality education. Hopefully, University level education made easily accessible to all Canadians will bridge the wide gap between southern and northern Canada. (proposed solution and anticipated outcome should be at the end)

## **(II) History**

In 1876, the year of the foundation of Canada as we know it, Canada was only made up of four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Within 123 years, Northern Canada was formed with its constituents of Yukon (joined the Confederation in 1898), Northwest Territories (joined the Confederation in 1870) and Nunavut (joined the Confederation in 1999). The three major indigenous groups in Canada are the First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Over the years, laws such as the Indian Act, the Residential School System, the Constitution Act of 1982 and the Royal Commission have been put in place by the federal government targeting these people. Firstly, the Indian Act is a legislation that dates back to 1876, the founding year of our country. Although there have been around 20 major changes made to the Indian Act since its founding year, its basic concepts have not changed. The Indian Act presents who can be recognized as indigenous and how Bands and Reserves can function. Its original forms are often seen as discriminatory but thankfully, in 1985, the Canadian Parliament passed Bill C-13 which is “An Act to Amend the Indian Act”. Bill C-13 was made effective on April 17th, 1985. It allowed Bands to establish their own membership terms, for the reinstatement of the “Indian” status for those that were denied or lost it as well as eliminated the discriminatory articles against women. Secondly, the Residential School System was one where indigenous children were taken from their families and enrolled in non-aboriginal schools in order to assimilate them into a Euro-Canadian lifestyle. Even though the last residential school closed in 1996 (which is very

recent historically), this system and period of time greatly damaged the relationship between Canadian indigenous and the federal government, creating major tension that is still in the process of being mended today. Thirdly, the Constitution Act of 1982, is a defining document in Canada's history. In its second part, the Constitution Act of 1982 states that Canada's indigenous peoples are guaranteed all existing human rights, as stated in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Lastly, the Royal Commission (1991) was introduced by the federal government to review issues concerning the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. The final document was approved in November 1996 and stated 440 recommendations in total that all share the same goal: changing the atmosphere of interactions between Indigenous, non-Indigenous and the Canadian government. Some of the 440 recommendations were the following:

- Creation of Aboriginal Parliament
- Expansion of the Aboriginal Land and resource base
- Recognition of Métis self-government, provision of a land base, and recognition of Métis rights to hunt and fish on Crown land.

Finally, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in 2007.

According to the UN, this statement “emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to live in dignity, to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue their self-determined development, in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.”

### **(III) The Importance of a University Education**

University provides higher education. Higher education is the product of colleges, universities and institutions that award academic degrees. Higher education encompasses undergraduate level as well as postgraduate level courses. Tertiary (college/undergrad) and quaternary(graduate)

education make up the University system. A University degree is an extremely valuable asset in one's life. It allows the obtention of steady jobs with rewarding salaries, leading to a sustainable lifestyle. A college or postgraduate education gives back by providing one with the tools and skills necessary to challenge yourself and others (This assumption has not always been verified Educated Indigenous women and girls can face empowerment barriers despite education, just as is the case for immigrants living in Canada) barriers. University harnesses the beauty of the human brain, challenges it and allows it to reach its full potential. Every mind is brilliant and should have the opportunity to be challenged and flourish (not a fact, but platitudes). University education does exactly that. The northern Canadian population is thousands of intelligent minds ignored. With University education made accessible, Canada, and the world will be enriched. According to stats.gov.nu.ca (what year?) the unemployment rate in Nunavut is 12.1% just second after Newfoundland and Labrador in all of Canada. This means that out of 35,944 people, 4,349 people are unemployed and the number continues to expand and increase every year. (Did you check if these unemployment rates have a correlation with lack of university education? Are the job skills available require university education?) Every person exposed to University level education contributes to the global intellectual society. University will help prepare you become a productive member of society. University teaches you cooperation, networking, how to develop ideas and communicate your voice (You can learn this at any academic level no?). A lifelong benefit to University is that it provides one with confidence in our opinion. A big benefit to a degree is it expands employment opportunities as well as often allows the attainment of financial goals. The human race functions based on a labor system, and in today's economy it is important to be employed. (This section has lots of platitude and provides no foundations to anticipated arguments. It would have been wise to elaborate why there is

university education gaps, explain learning processes and pedagogical method that is prevalent in Nunavut populations. How do Inuit students learn? What is the weight of their culture and learning methods in class pedagogy? How RACHEL would be adapted to help fill the gap in these domains.)

#### **(IV) The Current Situation in Nunavut**

There are no universities physically based in the territories (it would be interesting for sake of argument to explain why there is no university in the Territories....). All three territorial colleges offer university degrees in partnership with southern universities and professional organizations such as the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO) and the Registered Nurses Association of Northwest Territories and Nunavut. However, while distance-based and online university degree options may be available to territorial residents, they depend on supporting infrastructure, such as Internet connectivity, which is not adequate, particularly in small remote communities outside the territorial capitals. (Good)!

#### **(V) Iqaluit**

Iqaluit is Nunavut's capital city (superfluous as stated in primary evaluation). It has a population of approximately 7400 people, 61% are Inuit but the city is home to people from all across Canada. To put its location into perspective, Iqaluit is 2090 km north of Ottawa, making it closer to the north pole than to Canada's capital city. The average temperature in late June is 6 degrees Celsius, making it an arctic city. During the summer months, days in Iqaluit can have up to 22 hours of sunlight. An interesting fact about Iqaluit is that there is no liquor store, however there are licensed restaurants and bars. The legal drinking and purchasing age is 19. Iqaluit has the

highest population of Inuit of all the Canadian cities. For centuries, Inuit people have been established in Iqaluit's region. They live mainly around Frobisher Bay where they practice traditional activities such as fishing and hunting. Iqaluit culture is influenced by its diverse population, its three official languages are English, French and Inuktitut. There is a real cross of cultures. Based on research (Which one?), when in Iqaluit, you can see men hunting while jet planes fly in overhead, seal skins being cared for in homes that might have a single TV or computer. Inuit culture dominates the art scene. *(It would have been interesting to explore how this culture impact learning style and method to give more arguments to your proposed solution)* Inuit dances, drama, music, song and fashion can be seen throughout the city in addition to more southern lifestyle aspects such as sports games and festivals. Iqaluit captures modern and traditional aspects of Canadian Arctic. Pastimes such as boating, hiking and camping are very popular in the capital city. Iqaluit blends traditional Inuit traditions and culture with more modern facilities. *(In this section, It would have been critical thinking to reflect or report on Iqalawuit educational strategic plan and show that Rachel will fit in this plan)*

**(VI) The Nicaragua Partnership** *(It was recommended that this section be removed because Nicaragua is socially, culturally and geographically much different than Iqalawit; albeit you could have report the outcome of the Rachel in diverse rural environments)*

The Study has a sister school in Diria, Nicaragua. The Diria Institute is a High school in the town of Diria. Every two years, selected grade ten and eleven girls embark on a life-changing ten day community service trip. The girls go down south carrying shoes, portable computers, books, school materials and supplies as every trip focuses on a school improvement. In previous years, The Study has built a science lab and a water tower in order for the students and staff to get access to running water and filled the empty library with books. In addition to physical school



improvements, a big part of the sisterhood between The Study and The Diria Institute is the scholarship offered to one girl of the graduation class. Every year, The Study puts together a Scholarship Committee whose task is to choose a scholarship receiver from a variety of very qualified candidates, all students from the graduating class of our sister school. The Scholarship Committee is comprised of ten Study students and a few staff members. After four sessions of reviewing profiles and discussing, all ten girls and the founder staff member vote for who they think is most deserving of the scholarship. The scholarship is 5000 USD and pays for everything the receiver would need, including transport, books, lunches and tuition. The 5000 USD is raised by all Study Students. We have an “Open Your Heart Day” dedicated to the funding of school improvements. When we see a problem, we fight for a solution. This scholarship has changed numerous lives. Brilliant girls in Nicaragua have been granted the opportunity to help others, be challenged and in all cases, be the first in their family to have a University Degree. There was a problem in Diria. Now, we see a problem very similar, not in the opposite hemisphere, but in our own country. I believe that our team has the capability to change the women’s and girls’ lives in our Nunavut communities, we did in Nicaragua. The Study girls have changed lives before, and are prepared to do so again.

## **(VII) The RACHEL**

Our idea of bringing RACHEL Offline Technology to girls in Nunavut would allow them to have access to the big world of higher university-level education. They are currently isolated and very far back in terms of internet and technology evolution (**You would have demonstrated critical thinking by reflecting on why they are deprived of access to technology in this 21<sup>st</sup> century**)

Internet packages are ridiculously expensive. According to Meshnet.ca, a network provider for the Northern Regions, to possess the best internet package it would cost 160\$ compared to 69.95\$ from Bell in Montreal. This package would include unlimited internet, unlimited storage and 2 mbps speeds. To give you an idea of how fast 2 mbps is just know that to watch and download anything on Netflix in high definition you need minimum 5 mbps. Your speed can also be affected by the amount of downloading you do. The more you download, the slower your connection. Their quality as well as speed are of very low caliber in comparison to most of the world. Our project consists of downloading university-level content such as lectures on a variety of different program areas and sending these little compact universities to Nunavut. Just because there is a low graduation rate (~30% - 35%) in Nunavut ([data source?](#)) does not mean that the students do not have the potential to be motivated. They are simply in a situation where there is not much around them to encourage motivation. This RACHEL Offline Portable University would allow students to access post-secondary education content and we believe that this tool will motivate the students since they will know that there is somewhere to go. They need a tool to spark their inner drive for success and we strongly believe that bringing RACHEL Offline to the students of Nunavut will do that. ([But did you check with Nunavut that this is what they need as suggested in preliminary evaluation? If yes, you should have made a strong argument about such needs](#))

**(VIII) Context** *This section should have been place at the beginning as suggest in preliminary evaluation*

In our modern day, technology plays a vital role in our daily lives. As we continue to move forward at an alarming pace, we cannot allow ourselves to forget about those who are less fortunate. Our world continues to increase in population and competition for simple jobs

becomes harder every day. Almost any job you want today requires you to have basic technological skills. There are so many people who want the same job and without a university diploma, a student's chances of getting the job becomes significantly decreases. Northern Canadian girls and women should not be neglected because they do not have access to what the modern world does. Without the diploma granted by higher-education, they are deprived of their chances. Now, the culture in which these northern Canadian girls live in is very different from our own. *(You would have demonstrated critical thinking by describing these differences and confirm that indeed, you understand objectively the issues facing by Indigenous women and girls).* Knowing this, we would be prepared to adapt the education so that it respects their culture and language. We have considered possible adaptations to local context and needs, and cultural methods of teaching and learning.

### **(IX) Our Proposition**

Our goal is to further educate the Northern Canadian population by providing them with University level courses. The beauty of today's technology is that we can make this goal possible for them with the help of a RACHEL. The RACHEL is a Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning. It is an offline server run on a raspberry pi that does not require wifi or internet for downloading information. Its main goal is to provide digital content to those who need it. We hope to provide basic university level courses as well as basic English courses to those who feel that they deserve and need a university diploma. We hope to bring this information to the First Nations people with many RACHELS. It uses a combination of encyclopedia information, medical resources, video lectures, coding games, educational games and much more from many reliable sources such as Wikipedia, Khan Academy and CK-12. **(Do**

they have content in mother's tongue?) The RACHEL is an offline server run on a raspberry pi. With its USB stick, the software on the RACHEL can be installed on numerous computers and when paired with a router, creates a community hotspot where anyone with a hardware device can access its centrally stored content. The RACHEL is a technology tool that has recently paired up with World Possible, an organization whose goal is to connect offline learners to the world's knowledge. With the help of World Possible, the RACHEL has already been developed and put to use in over 25 countries around the world such as Guatemala, Israel and Honduras. The World Possible team is currently in Guatemala being led by Israel Quic, a native Mayan. He was attracted to the RACHEL as a tool to help preserve and teach his Mayan heritage to local communities. Another student in Guatemala was able to build a drip irrigation system out of plastic bottles after discovering the information on a teacher's smartphone while researching Guatemalan content that was found on the RACHEL. The promise for education with the RACHEL is unlimited. University courses on the RACHEL will change the lives of our Northern neighbors. The girls with dreams will become women with visions.

### **(X) Works Cited**

C. (2018). *Education and Skills in the Territories*. Retrieved from <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/provincial/education/education-territories.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

Canada, B. (n.d.). *Fibe Internet plans, Mobile Internet access* /Retrieved January 07, 2018, from [https://www.bell.ca/Bell\\_Internet/Internet\\_access](https://www.bell.ca/Bell_Internet/Internet_access)

Canada, G. O. (2017, November 16). *Census Profile, 2016 Census*. Retrieved from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0306&Geo2=PR&Code2=47&Data=Count&SearchText=Iqaluit&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All>

- Certificate of Proficiency in Written English – Workplace Communication* (Online). (2018, January 24). Retrieved from <https://www.mcgill.ca/continuingstudies/programs-and-courses/languages/online/written-english-workplace-communication>
- Dixon, C. (2016, August 18). *11 reasons to be excited about the future of technology*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/11-reasons-to-be-excited-about-the-future-of-technology-2016-8>
- Education*. (2018, January 01). Retrieved January 18, 2018, from <https://www.gov.nu.ca/education>
- Facts about Aboriginal funding in Canada: op-ed*. (2017, March 02). Retrieved January 14, 2018, from <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/article/facts-about-aboriginal-funding-canada>
- G. (2010). *Nunavut Quick Facts*. Retrieved January 21, 2018, from <http://stats.gov.nu.ca/en/home.aspx>
- Government of Nunavut |. (2018, January 01). Retrieved January 25, 2018, from <https://www.gov.nu.ca/>
- Heritage, C. (2017, August 15). *Nunavut's territorial symbols*. Retrieved January 09, 2018, from <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/provincial-territorial-symbols-canada/nunavut.html>
- Herold, B. (2017, September 21). *Technology in Education: An Overview*. Retrieved January 02, 2018, from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/technology-in-education/index.html>
- Kirkup, K. (2016, March 22). *First Nations education, water infrastructure to get \$4.6B from 2016 budget*. Retrieved January 3, 2018, from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/liberal-budget-billions-new-spending-aboriginal-peoples-1.3502942>
- Meshnet. (n.d.). Retrieved January 27, 2018, from <http://www.meshnet.ca/index.html#/>
- Possible, W. (n.d.). *World Possible*. Retrieved January 18, 2018, from <https://worldpossible.org/>
- RACHEL-Pi - *delivering education worldwide*. (2014, October 17). Retrieved January 12, 2018, from <https://www.raspberrypi.org/blog/rachel-pi-delivering-education-worldwide/>
- Schwartz, J. (2013, November 20). *RACHEL - Remote Area Community Hotspot for Education and Learning*. Retrieved January 01, 2018, from <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/rachel-remote-area-community-hotspot-for-education-and-learning#/>

## **(XI) Acknowledgments**

This project would not have come to life if it was not for our two mentors, Mme Marie France Senecal and Mme Beatrice Bousser, who both contributed so much to this project by guiding us every step of the way, so thank you.

And finally, we would like to thank our team, for being perseverant and supporting each other.

Without all of us in it together, our final product would not have turned out the way it did.