

## Gratitude

*by Amanda O'Regan-Marchand, Executive Staff Officer,  
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As we celebrate Thanksgiving in our own ways this month, we make time to practice gratitude. Gratitude can be a very effective way to take pause and refocus when life gets overwhelming, as it often does. It's important to make time to bring these thoughts and feelings to the surface at all times in our lives.

As you read this, I invite you to take that moment to pause. Bring to mind a moment, a person, a special token; something that has made you smile and feel thankful. Sit with that feeling and count to 10, 20 or even 30. Have you been able to reset, and refocus? Consider sharing your gratitude with someone close to you.

Gratitude can also be inspired by special people in our lives who have shared their experience, their learning and knowing. This year's visual for Mi'kmaq History Month focuses on the art of Mi'kmaq beading and shares the story of this important tradition. *"Beading represents life and creativity. Generations of hands, eyes, backs and fingers have worked for balance in intricate designs and colour palettes....*

*beauty emerges from skill and love... Ceremonies have a special place to focus to carry the intentions of artists' hearts and minds and to carry these teachings in our hearts as we celebrate the art of beading."*

We can also be grateful for a skill and passion for art. Whether it is beading, sewing, painting or drawing; turning your hand towards a visual representation from your mind's eye can also fill us in challenging times. We can also express appreciation for the efforts of others' talents and time in creating works that fill our living spaces with beauty that allows us to call all of this to mind.

As you move through this month, try to practice gratitude as often as you can; make time to notice the world around you that passes in a blur far too often. Know that you have also been a source of gratitude and appreciation for your students, their families, colleagues and your own friends and family, by just being you.

Take care of yourselves and one another.



*NSTU executive staff officer Amanda O'Regan-Marchand (first row, second from left) is shown with April Prosper, First Nations Support Worker at East Antigonish Education Centre and member of the Paqtneke community (seated), and teachers from around the Atlantic Provinces. Prosper held a workshop on Ochre Painting and History during the CONTACT 2022 in Antigonish in August.*