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## **Morris (Onagottay) Blanchard selected as one of two winners of the Psychology Indigenous Art Project**

By Queen's Psychology  
Tuesday, February 25, 2020

The Department of Psychology excited to announce that **Morris (Onagottay) Blanchard** has been selected as one of two winners of the Psychology Indigenous Art Project. Onagottay will prepare a piece that will be installed in the formal conference space of the Humphrey/Craigne buildings in late 2020. Onagottay is from Lake of the Woods, Ontario and grew up learning the language and culture of his people. He has Ojibway and Blackfoot ancestry and is a member of the Eagle Clan. Onagottay is also a Medicine Man and Knowledge Keeper and carries many teachings and ceremonies. Onagottay is also a Member of the Midewiwin Lodge where he is taught from the Elders the sacred healing methods, including traditional medicines and their uses.

Onagottay is a self-taught artist who spent his early career painting and sketching with renowned Indigenous artist Norval Morisseau. Onagottay has been featured widely in the Kingston area, including paintings for the Alma Mater Society at Queen's University and Kingston General Hospital, a series of paintings for the City of Kingston's waterfront project, and a mural with students from Napanee District Secondary School. His art has also been featured in the 'Colouring it Forward' book series. He was awarded the Kingston Mayor's Art Award in 2018.

The Psychology Indigenous Art Project is part of the Department of Psychology's response to further the objectives of the Calls to Action outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission of Canada, as well as being a part of a greater initiative to increase the visibility of Indigenous art and culture and the recognition of Indigenous territory in spaces across the Queen's University campus. The aim of this project is to create a welcoming space for Indigenous peoples in the Department of Psychology, and to help promote awareness around historical and contemporary issues relevant to Indigenous peoples and psychology.

Onagottay has felt the impacts of both the Residential School System and the Sixties Scoop and as a result, has struggled with addiction and mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder. Onagottay is on a healing journey and is working to end the cycle of intergenerational trauma. Onagottay sees this public art project as an important way to increase visibility of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous ways of knowing.

In accepting this award, Onagottay would like to acknowledge the friendship and support of Bridget Glassco at Rise Helps and the Keys Job Centre in Kingston. Rise is the only national charity dedicated to helping people with mental health conditions or addiction achieve financial independence through self-employment or small business ownership. Rise provides resources, mentorship and micro-financing to eliminate barriers, improve life outcomes and strengthen communities. KEYS Job Centre partners with Rise locally to offer the program in the Kingston area.

*Pictured above are (left-right): Eric Brousseau, Lola Cuddy, Kate Harkness, Onagottay Blanchard, Bridget Glassco, Daniel Tassone. Absent adjudication committee members include Janice Hill, Wendy Phillips, and Al Doxtator. Photo by Janessa Shorrock*