



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

The Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union (SUSK) recognizes that we are located and operating on original lands of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. Wherever we are located across the country, we are on traditional Indigenous territory. As we honour our ancestors with bound wheat Didukhs — representing the spirits of our predecessors, who have and continue to call the land of Canada home — we honour the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who made and continue to call the territories of North America home, long before our Ukrainian ancestors arrived. This land has been and continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to our society. As a settler people, we acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices Indigenous people in Canada endure. We recognize that the road towards justice, freedom, and sovereignty continues and commit to being a part of the struggle.

On this National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union (SUSK) honours the First Nation, Inuit, and Métis children and survivors of residential schools. We also recognize the ever-present legacy of residential schools, specifically on the welfare and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. We encourage everyone to explore the voices, stories, and diverse culture of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. To redress these consequences, we first call on the Canadian Government to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. Secondly, as a Ukrainian-Canadian community, we recognize our role as Canadian settlers as uninvited guests on this land, and we strive to continuously educate ourselves on Indigenous history in Canada.

SUSK dedicates itself to a living history in Canada, to honouring residential school survivors and their families on September 30th and on every day of the year. We will share educational resources to others in our community to learn about our past, a past that was complicit in Canadian colonialism. We will also share ways that members can actively contribute to reconciliation, from donations to attending social mobilizations. Lastly, we will collaborate with the Indigenous community directly to understand what further actions Ukrainian Canadian students can take towards a path of truth and reconciliation.

Today, we encourage everyone to wear orange. The meaning behind the orange shirt began in 2013 when Phyllis Webstad told her story about her new orange shirt, purchased for her by her grandmother, being stripped off during her first day at a St. Joseph Mission Residential School. The SUSK Board of Directors wears an orange shirt today in solidarity with the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. SUSK encourages everyone to learn more about [Residential Schools](#) and [The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#).

Danya Pankiw,
President

Dasha Akhova,
Media Director