



## **Media Release**

*Media Relations (807) 343-8177*

# **Lakehead University Athletics and Wasaya Airways recommit to *Reach Up!***

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Lakehead University Athletics is renewing its partnership with Wasaya Airways to continue the *Reach Up!* program with First Nation communities in the North.

*Reach Up!* brings coaches and athletes from Lakehead's hockey, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, Nordic skiing, track and field, and cross country ski teams to Northern communities to hold sports clinics and provide mentorship to the local coaches and youth.

"A special thank you must go to Wasaya Airways for flying our athletes to First Nation communities," said Tom Warden, Director of Athletics at Lakehead University.

"Our athletes are very good mentors. They help demonstrate what is possible through hard work and dedication, plus they introduce young people to Lakehead," Warden said.

"We are delighted to partner with Lakehead University for the *Reach Up!* Program once again," said Michael Rodyniuk, President and CEO of Wasaya. "This program brings great value and inspiration to our First Nation youth in the North. We welcome Lakehead's athletes aboard Wasaya and appreciate them taking time to encourage and educate the youth about the importance of staying active and healthy."

Lakehead University is committed to fostering leadership and development with Aboriginal students, and advancing the understanding of Aboriginal cultures, heritage and languages within the University and broader communities.

*Reach Up!* is an exceptional opportunity for our athletes to learn more about First Nations people and to help young people learn about Lakehead and about the benefits of sports. Each time we visit and engage with a community, we bring back as much new

knowledge and growth from the experience as we have shared,” said Lakehead President and Vice-Chancellor Dr. Brian Stevenson.

Three to four *Reach Up!* visits take place annually.

The *Reach Up!* program helps encourage Aboriginal youth to be active and to consider postsecondary education to benefit themselves and their community.

Lakehead’s coaches and athletes grow as leaders and trainers by sharing their expertise and personal experiences on sport and life skills.

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**Media:** For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact Kelly Arnold, Media Relations, at (807) 343-8177, or [mediarelations@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:mediarelations@lakeheadu.ca).

**Lakehead University** has about 9,700 full-time equivalent students and 2,000 faculty and staff in 10 faculties at two campuses in Orillia and Thunder Bay, Ontario. Lakehead is a fully comprehensive university: home to Ontario’s newest Faculty of Law in 44 years, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, and faculties of Engineering, Business Administration, Health & Behavioural Sciences, Social Sciences & Humanities, Science & Environmental Studies, Natural Resources Management, Education, and Graduate Studies.

*Maclean’s 2016 University Rankings* place Lakehead University second in Ontario and among Canada’s Top 10 undergraduate universities, and first among Ontario’s undergraduate universities for Total Research Dollars, Social Sciences & Humanities Grants, and Library Expenses. In 2015, *Re\$earch Infosource* ranked Lakehead first among Canada’s undergraduate universities.

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