

Voices OF HOPE

Quebec

Jessica Lazare is focused on digging into her Mohawk culture and language and being part of her community's future in Kahnawake, Québec. But it was a long journey to get to that place. After high school, she didn't know what she wanted to do. "I was in limbo with my identity, wondering what it was and what it meant to be a Mohawk person. I wanted to learn more about the language and the culture."

After a few years, she enrolled in the two-year Adult Immersion Program at Kanien'kehaka Onkwawén:na Raotitiohkwa Language and Cultural Centre (KORLCC), supported by PWRDF. It was a turning point for Lazare. "The language itself is like a living entity. It changes the way you see yourself and it changes the way you see the world," she said.

With the Immersion course under her belt, she entered a double major program at Concordia University in First Peoples Studies and Canadian and Québec policy studies. She wants to understand the Indian Act and policies that affect Indigenous people in Canada and Québec. She then intends to relay this information to her community.

Dozens of people have graduated from KORLCC's program since it started in 2002 and are now educators or have launched other language initiatives in the community.




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