



# *A Love Letter to Indigenous Learners*

***To Indigenous residents and learners of the Faculty of  
Medicine at the University of British Columbia,***


We hope you spend Monday to connect with your community, and if you would like additional support, resources will be listed on the following page. All the emotions that are coming up today are valid - please take care of yourself today and we hope through these words, you feel the love and support they had throughout this interview for you.

For the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation 2023, the Postgraduate Medical Education office has asked our three Elders, Dr. Elder Roberta Price, Elder Jean Wasegijig, and Elder Yvonne Rigsby-Jones about what they would like to say to you.

The following are their musings:








“What I want to say to all of our beautiful Indigenous grandchildren who are in the [medical education] system is to **become the best doctors that you can.**

Whether it's in the urban areas, whether you go back to their communities to give service to all of your relatives.

What **I encourage you is to reach out, reach out to the Elders that are available.** Within your reach, whether you go back to your home communities, **stay connected to your Elders, your Aunties, the Matriarchs, or whether there are Elders in the program or in the communities where you are learning.** Like, the Indigenous clinics, often we'll bring in the Elders. So, **stay connected to the Elders, stay connected to the culture -- we're there, we're there to support you. Each one of you.”**

*--Dr. Elder Roberta Price*



“My wish is that it continues so that we are getting **more Indigenous people to do our work, not just a few.** I see a lot of our Indigenous people wanting to share their knowledge and to help our people in a really good way.”

*--Elder Jean Wasegijig*

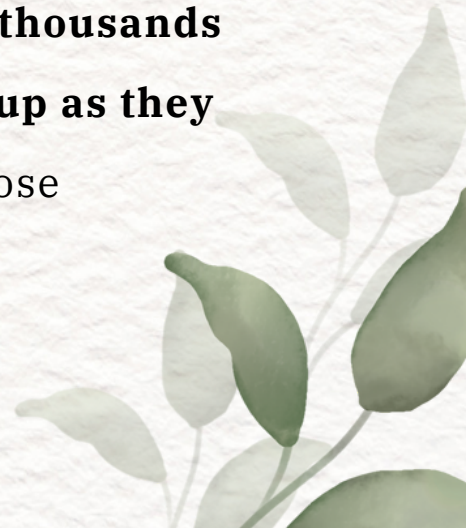




“I'm inspired by how many of our young people we have now that have university degrees, that are working in our communities, that are making a difference. To our Indigenous learners, **I'm really excited for you. I really acknowledge the strength in the courage that it took you to enter this field. That I wish you the very, very best ever.** Especially since you have the willingness to step into this work. **I also wish for you to let your gifts shine, that you remember how precious you are.** My Auntie Ellen used to say to us all the time ‘**you're precious -- there's no one else like you in this world, you're just an absolutely precious person.**’ And I want you to remember that as you move forward in your work. ”

*--Elder Yvonne Rigsby-Jones*

“What I share with many, many of my relatives and all the works that I do is that we are here today. **We are strong today because of the thousands and thousands of years of prayers that our ancestors sent up as they knew what was coming** and they sent out those





prayers, they share the ceremonies and **that's the strength of all our people today**. No matter what walk of life you're in, whether you're going to be a doctor, a nurse, a teacher. All of that, **you are strong today, all of our grandchildren, because of those thousands of years of ceremony and prayers that went up.**"

*--Dr. Elder Roberta Price*

“All my relations”

“O Siem Ah Siem”

Elder Jean Wasegijig

Elder Yvonne Rigsby-Jones

Dr. Elder Roberta Price



# Support Resources

## Specific people to contact:

Meghan Macgillivray, Indigenous Student Initiatives manager.

[meghan.macgillivray@ubc.ca](mailto:meghan.macgillivray@ubc.ca)

Elder Jean Wasegijig in the Resident Wellness Office

To book a session with Elder Jean in August onward please complete the [Elder Support Request Form](#) or to inquire further please email [resident.wellness@ubc.ca](mailto:resident.wellness@ubc.ca) and make the subject line “Elder Support”.

## Organizational resources:

First Nations House of Learning’s Longhouse – for Vancouver Campus students

Website: <https://indigenous.ubc.ca/longhouse/>

Contact: FNHL Reception

Email: [fnhl.reception@ubc.ca](mailto:fnhl.reception@ubc.ca)

Tel: 604-822-8940

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

First Peoples House at UVIC – for Victoria students

Website: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/house/index.php>

Contact: Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement

Email: [iacereceptionist@uvic.ca](mailto:iacereceptionist@uvic.ca)

Tel: 250-853-3730

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The First Nations Centre at UNBC, Indigenous Centre at UBCO – for UBC Okanagan Campus students

Website: <https://www2.unbc.ca/indigenous-resource-dati/first-nations-centre>

Tel: 250-960-5555

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Indigenous Physicians of Canada – for all students

Website: <https://ipacamic.ca/mentorship-circle/>

Email: [info@ipacamic.ca](mailto:info@ipacamic.ca)

Tel: 604-719-7981

## Counselling Specific Resources

Today may bring up strong and heavy emotions. If you’d like specific counselling resources, we suggest visiting this page for crisis lines and support groups: <https://www.med.ubc.ca/healing-and-wellness-resources/>

As you may already know, RBC’s PGME Resident Wellness Office is available for appointments:

<https://postgrad.med.ubc.ca/resident-wellness/>

