



Aaniin-Boozhoo-Hello:

Thirty years ago, a council of Elders recognized UCCM Anishnaabe Police as protectors of the Anishnaabe and the six First Nations of Mnidoo Mnising—Manitoulin Island. They entrusted us with instructions to protect and care for our communities in times of need and uncertainty. As protectors, we are called to be responsive and sensitive to the needs of the people we serve, while seeking guidance from the rich teachings within our history, traditions and culture.

This is our long-ago story, our creation story. At the heart is community and our commitment to honour the instructions of care we received. The Lighting the Fire Gatherings provide a space for UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service to share what we have learned as we continue moving towards excellence in trauma-informed and culturally aware policing. Our officers remain committed to growth through a deeper understanding of culture and historical trauma, recognizing that connection and vulnerability can transform the human response.

Daily, I am encouraged by our Service's continued curiosity and commitment to grow and understand how trauma affects others, which includes our recognition that policing must sometimes move beyond traditional approaches to meet people where they are.

True strength comes from empathy, compassion, acceptance, and connection – something we strive to practice daily while serving our six First Nation communities. This approach is known as lighting the fire within. At UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service, we recognize the importance of always lighting the fire within. We are each called to light the fire within ourselves, our families, our workplace, and our communities.

We hope that by participating in this Gathering, we will inspire each of you to understand how you can light the fire within.

Miigwech for making our Gathering a part of your journey.

In unity and friendship,

Teresa Nahwegahbow
Cultural Coordinator
UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service