



OUR SHARED FUTURE: THE STORY OF KRISTIANNA MERCREDI

ORANO NORTHERN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT: 1994-1997

As a teenager attending Churchill Community School in La Ronge, Kristianna Mercredi never dreamed that she would now be its Vice-Principal.

"I always wanted to be a teacher since I was a little girl, but I didn't think I'd be the first graduate of Churchill – and the first First Nations person – to be Vice-Principal," says Mercredi.

Kristianna's path to become a top administrator at northern Saskatchewan's largest high school began at Uranium City where she was born.

The family moved to La Ronge in 1981 as the Beaverlodge uranium mine was winding down. Kristianna was one year old. Her mother served her community as a social worker in La Ronge and her father worked as a corrections officer at the Waden Bay and Besnard Lake facilities.

Kristianna—a member of the Chipewyan Prairie First Nation of northeastern Alberta—studied in La Ronge. She attended Pre-Cam Community School and later Churchill. After high school, she went straight into the Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), where she excelled. Orano Canada was proud to offer her a scholarship based on outstanding academic performance in her first year of studies.

After graduating from NORTEP in 2002, Kristianna immediately became a teacher, first at Valley View School in Beauval and then at Buffalo River School in Dillon. Orano's commitment allowed her to graduate from NORTEP debt-free, which helped her focus on teaching.

In 2006, she took a position at her old school, Churchill, where she taught Grades 8, 9, and 10 with a focus on math and social studies. Still at Churchill, Kristianna continued her education, pursuing and gaining a master's degree in education from the University of Regina. After eight and half years at Churchill she became Vice-Principal of the school, where she works to this day, impacting the lives of students.

"We have a great group of kids here. They are fabulous. The staff is open to new things. Every day is different. I get to deal with a lot of different people and that's great," says Mercredi.

Kristianna says she has seen a lot of progress in northern education during her time as a student, teacher, and administrator.

"La Ronge is my home and it feels really good to be able to give back to my community. We're seeing more and more of our people coming back to their home communities to practice their professions. Just in La Ronge there are three doctors who grew up in the north," she says.

Kristianna is not satisfied though. She sees an even brighter future, "I'd like to see more of our kids get educated and have an opportunity to work and live in their home communities."

Orano Canada is proud to have helped Kristianna pursue her dream to become an educator and serve her community. She is proof that if we support one another we can grow stronger together. Thank you Kristianna for all you have done for our community so far.

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