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## Indigenous knowledge holder and comedian comes to town



DANIEL J. ROWE THE EASTERN DOOR

Ryan McMahon is featured as McGill's 2018 Indigenous knowledge holder and was at KSS Wednesday.

**JESSICA DEER**  
THE EASTERN DOOR

Students and staff from Kahnawake Survival School got a touch of wisdom from McGill University's 2018 Indigenous Knowledge Holder this week.

On Wednesday, the school got a visit from Ryan McMahon, an Anishinaabe comedian, writer, and media maker based out of Winnipeg. He was invited to spend a week in Montreal to share his knowledge with students as a part of McGill's Indigenous Knowledge Holder Series.

"Anytime I go anywhere, I always make the offer to try to stay busy and be in the community as much as possible," McMahon told *The Eastern Door*.

"The chance to come and

share a little bit about what I'm doing at McGill and try to put it in the context that young people can understand, it's been really cool."

The series seeks to act as a bridge between that knowledge and the institution while placing an emphasis on Indigenous community collaborations and partnerships through academic events, workshops, and community presentations.

Tonight, he'll be performing a few sets of comedy at Thomson House, while tomorrow will be a part of Indigenous Arts Night at West Lounge.

"It's been really awesome to be at the school. This is a very unique school within Canada. It's been very beautiful to see classrooms that are set up for Indigenous kids, and I think the

kids have enjoyed connecting with Ryan," said Patricia Johnson-Castle, student and administrative coordinator for McGill's Indigenous Studies Program.

McMahon recently finished the cross-country tour of his comedy show *Wreck-On Silly Nation*, and is the chief creative producer of the Makoons Media Group, a digital media company that focuses on telling Indigenous stories to worldwide audiences.

When *The Eastern Door* stopped by KSS, McMahon was speaking to grade eight students. It was his third presentation of the morning. He was talking about his career as a comedian and storyteller.

"Laughter is medicine. You've heard that saying before, laughter is medicine. When we

laugh, we feel good. When we laugh, it makes everyone feel good. It lifts up the spirits of the people and makes the people feel strong," said McMahon.

"Where do we get laughter from? We get laughter from stories, and inside the stories there are teachings. Inside the teachings, they tell us all kinds of things about ourselves.

"Here, in your community, in your territory, there are many stories and many teachings about your people, where you come from and what that means and that's a beautiful thing."

He shared an Anishnaabe story about the blueberry bush and its significance to his people, and his personal life.

"Our teaching and our understanding is this really intricate

root system. So when our elders are trying to teach you something, they're trying to teach you something for a reason.

"For me, what this blueberry bush has shown me is just how important that connection is. All these things in our lives become connected. Our stories, our medicines, our place names and our language are all connected back to the place we are from," he told students.

"This my story. Each one of you has your own story entirely and that's amazing. You're going to grow up as a young person and you're going to start building this story for yourself, and it's already started."

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## MEMORIAL



In loving memory  
of a dear mother  
and father

**JoJo &  
Harriett  
White**

March 19, 1993  
& March 26, 1983

25 years & 35 years

*Although many years have passed, their memory  
is as dear today as in the hour they passed away.  
Always remembered, very sadly missed  
and forever in our hearts.*

Daughter Catherine, daughter-in-law Debbie and grandsons;  
Francis, Jeffrey, Jonathan and Bradley  
Love ya forever



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