MIIGWECH is in order to the following parties:
Student editors, artists, writers, photographers, and the entire Leech Lake Tribal College community who helped directly and indirectly to bring this project into fruition.
Sydney Beaulieau (student) for designing the logo for the publication.
Emily Nordstrom (Print Shop) for bringing this publication into the physical realm from the digital space it was in.

GINITAA-OZHIBII’IGEMIN

ABOUT
Ginitaa-ozhibii’igemin (We are good writers) highlights Leech Lake Tribal College students’ gifts and talents by creating a space to get their work seen by the public eye. Our ambition is to showcase the talents of LLTC students, gain experience in publishing, and manifest a creative environment on and off campus.

NOTE
This is the first volume of work compiled under the name Ginitaa-ozhibii’igemin during Fall 2020. In the midst of a hectic year of uncertainty and distance learning, students in ENG 299: Special Topics in Student Publications developed, designed, compiled, and completed these works from past and present LLTC students.

EDITORS

Justin Wilson
Proud Indigenous American pursuing an education in counseling providing a support system for today’s youth. Current editor for LLTC’s student publication.
Hello, my name is Justin Wilson; I am a proud enrollee of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and currently studying at Leech Lake Tribal College with a major in Indigenous Leadership. I plan on attending North Dakota State University after LLTC to come back home and work with our Indigenous youth.
My goal with our publication (Ginitaa-ozhibii’igemin) is to establish a creative community to express creative writing and different artwork types. We have the talent to accomplish astounding achievements, and this publication can help with that.

Mike Bunker
Boozhoo (Hello), My name is Michael Bunker I am a student at Leech Lake Tribal College (LLTC), pursuing my Associates degree in liberal arts.
I love doing landscape paintings and painting the Northern lights. I like working with acrylics and blending the paints. The northern lights are kind of tricky to paint. I painted this to help me with my prayers and remind me that I am but a tiny part of this vast universe.

Ann Cloud
My name is Ann Cloud, I am an enrolled member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe pursuing an AA in Liberal Education at the Leech Lake Tribal College and I will also be graduating this year.
I think this publication will bring awareness to the public and showcase our local artists from writing to beadwork to sculpture to photography and everything in between. We have a lot of talented people here, on and around the Leech Lake Reservation, that deserve to have their artwork be seen by the public.
I would hope that our publication helps our local artists see themselves as artists and not just seeing themselves as somebody who has a hobby.
Looking at Life Through the Third Eye
By David Villier

What is the third eye to begin with? It is everything that helps comprehend perception, deception, imagination, manipulation, manifestation, a higher consciousness of reality. It is all seeing, ever open. Spinning. Driving you. The triangles, squares, circles spinning inside each other, creating you, bursting with light and energy in the universe of our minds. It is there. And it all rests comfortably in between our ears… As we so carelessly neglect

Life has become many walls for me with no way over. Red brick grey mortar red brick grey mortar That all i can see for an eternity. Do you see it now? There are no doors. Only unless we make them. Think of this wall as a fear as it continues to consume you, growing, pushing you back even further and further. Feasting on you. It could be waking up and living life and the wall is surrounding you everyday. It’s time to start putting doors in these walls when we build them. The understanding of this wall can be torn down anytime. We know the weak spots. We built it. It is knowing we are more than one, we are all. The everlasting eternal. A snap of the finger. the wall is gone. You then take towards your destiny our destiny.

My mind is open. My third eye is piercing through the windows of reality. Like sunlight with force. shattering divided windows inside myself and you. Only to be reborn many times and I do not want to shut it off.

I no longer wish to cloud my mind with emotions, ego, Drowning it in addictions, but still I stray.

We are not perfect to the path of righteousness. We are kids at heart, often playing in our minds. Unintentionally grasping to emotions projecting them from past into the present as the slides of emotions and memories flow. While the audience feeds you.

These are my thoughts and feelings so I share my world with you. Running in your mind in a tall green grass field as the sun rests above us. Warming you as we both fill with excitement. Listening to the leaves clap with joy. Watching the grass sway as it dances to the tune of the wind. So we dance to the beat of the earth.

All this can change in an instant!

Fires, disruption, killing, evil stares, weak minded laughs of destruction!… Here we are..

As we forget the past and reinvent ourselves, we gaze up to the universe to connect the stars inside our head. Spinning. Driving us, Triangles, squares, circles spinning inside each other burst with light energy driving us to our eternal destiny.

It was a square shape with Triangles inside it, moving around inside itself in circular motion with a light energy coming out of it spinning in the universe of my head. Now yours.
He continues walking around the powwow ring looking for spring. He swears he heard this frybread sing once before. It reminded him of hearing the first robin at the beginning of the season. The sound of the drum and singing makes him want to dance. If only his old beadwork wasn’t two sizes too small.

He finds a good parking spot. Away from the dirty faced kids that has made the dust rise up as if it was the Daytona 500 and it was run on an old gravel road.

He gets out of his vehicle and the smell of campfire smoke and deep fried powwow food hits his nose harder than the kid at the Red Lake powwow playground did years ago. The parking lot is full.

By Anonymous

Recognition of Sanctuary
By Ricky Roy

There was a moment in my life when I felt like giving up on successfully passing a college semester. I wanted to quit because I didn’t understand what was being taught by my instructors. I have sacrificed friendships that posed a threat to my education. My life became lonely as I sat for endless hours studying in the library or in my room. My soul began to feel weak and exhausted. Until one night, on a camping trip, I found my sanctuary. Sanctuary offers serenity to crazy minds and can revitalize a fatigued soul. Nothing is greater than or equal to the day when you unexpectedly find your sanctuary. I remember the day I stumbled upon my recognition of sanctuary.

It was the summer of 2018 and I was in summer school. I was stressed out from the previous school semester in addition to the current semester that I was attending, and I was ready to give up. I needed to take a break from the endless hours of studying, so I asked my cousin when the next time he would be going camping would be. Coincidentally, he said he was going to go camping the following weekend. When that day arrived, we packed up his pontoon and sailed to the island.

My cousin Henry Grayhawk, his family, and I had decided to set up camp on the tree line of Star Island. Next to our camp was a sandy beach on Cass Lake. We remained awake late into the night sitting in chairs and silence until my cousin’s voice broke the quietness. He started singing a round dance that I recognized. My voice would back his lead and shortly his daughter’s young voice would follow. All three of our voices synced beautifully. Behind us, the trees swayed back and forth. It looked as if they were dancing to our voices. I could feel my mind easing into serenity. After everyone fell asleep, I walked towards the shores of the lake and little did I know, I was about to embark on a hallucinogenic like preternatural experience.

As I approached the beach, the night’s breeze whispered enchantments of peace into my ears. As my feet restfully absorbed the secrets of the sands, I closed my eyes and the emcee announces the host drum will sing a two-step, men’s choice, find your partners. He picks up his pace around the ring. His heart starts racing as frybread will look at him like it has the few times they’ve met. Then he sees her. She’s walking towards him. Her hair is braided. She looks like a dusty Leech Lake powwow angel. She imagines she smells the way powwow angels ought to smell. Like fried food in the fresh air and campfire, with a hint of sweetgrass.

Then it hits him like the ground did when he was pushed off the top of the playground at Big Grassy powwow when he was just a boy. Alone and trying to make new friends. She’s hand in hand with another man. His heart starts to slow.

He makes his way back to his old Ford and opens up the back. There lies his new outfit and beadwork.

To be continued...

By Ricky Roy

Recognition of Sanctuary

There was a moment in my life when I felt like giving up on successfully passing a college semester. I wanted to quit because I didn’t understand what was being taught by my instructors. I have sacrificed friendships that posed a threat to my education. My life became lonely as I sat for endless hours studying in my parent’s basement. My soul began to feel weak and exhausted. Until one night, on a camping trip, I found my sanctuary. Sanctuary offers serenity to crazy minds and can revitalize a fatigued soul. Nothing is greater than or equal to the day when you unexpectedly find your sanctuary. I remember the day I stumbled upon my recognition of sanctuary.

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Artwork

Red Dress Quilt
1st in a series of quilts designed and sewn to illustrate issues and views of the Anishinaabe. The dresses are done in various fabrics reminiscent of the styles our mothers and grandmothers wore. The Red dress is an awareness for our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Woman. Our local chapter of Missing Flowers is represented by the blue and red floral borders. The white arrows are symbolic of the fight and strength of our people to overcome and protect each other.

Deanna Croaker

Two Feathers Quilt
This is the 2nd in the series from #3, and represents the sacredness and strength of our Two-Spirited ones. Then braided ropes in the center are to show the strength we have as a people when we come together.

Deanna Croaker
Turtle Quilt
The 3rd in the series embodies the overall worldview and beliefs of the Anishinaabe. From Mikinaak holding then earth with the sun shining on her back as she rests on then water, to our 4 directions and colors. They swirl around her in the same way many life cycles are at different stages throughout our lives.

Deanna Croaker

Artwork by Savannah Pemberton
I have been creating beadwork since I was about 9 years old, I am now 31 years old. It's a challenge to do better each time I am creating. My passion is drawing up the design and making it into a reality.

Savannah Pemberton
Poems

Taz Junior
By Andrew “Tre” Bloom

I Rock Numbers On My Back & So Do You..
Should I Be Proud? To Be A Replica Of You..
Everything About Me Is Like You, I Don’t Know Where To Begin..
Those Foot Steps You Left, That’s The Only Place I Really Fit In..
It Hurts Emotionally That We Are Locked Up Miles Apart..
You Not Being In My Life, Tore A Hole In My Already Shattered Heart..
I Became Very Unsure Of Myself, Not Having A Father To Go To & Ask For Help..
Becoming A Dad & Not Being Responsible For My Child, Are My Deepest Fears..
You Not Being There, Only Made Me Stronger But I’m Still Steady Sheddin’ Many Tears..
And As I Reminisce, I Remember It Was Over You I Cried, It Tore Me Up Inside..
Cuz Even Though Our Relationship Was Never Really Born, Somehow It Still Died..
Now As I Wake Up In A Cell This Morning & Look At This Scratched Stainless Steel Mirror..
I See You… Thru Me.

sunset night sky

I love doing landscape paintings and painting the Northern lights. I like working with acrylics and blending the paints. The northern lights are kind of tricky to paint. I painted this to help me with my prayers and remind me that I am but a tiny part of this vast universe.

Mike Bunker
Thoughts from Cell one-eleven (111)
By Anonymous

I go by the name of Devin,
And these are my thoughts from cell one-eleven
My life hasn’t been easy, but it hasn’t been too hard
I’ve lived through a lot of physical and emotional scars
As a kid I’ve always dreamed and aimed for the stars
But day in day out all I see is brick walls and bars
It aint all bad, so I keep my nose to the sky
They can’t hold me forever, still it hurts to hear my family cry
Sometimes I feel down on my luck, and I ask “why do I try?”
Then I hear my brothers Jordy’s voice “Find the beauty out of life”
Because someone, somewhere will always have it worse than you.

Winter Weather Blues
By Anonymous

Ground with iridescent hues.
Each flake adding to the weight of a blanket, that’s made entirely of sheer blues.
Matching my mood with the color
Why does everything feel so blue?
Freezing cold and lonely with only a pillow to hold, thinking to myself that these are definite cues.
How did I find myself here? When did I get so old? Molding to the shape of my bed, I hadn’t a clue.
Matching my mood with the color
Why does everything feel so blue?
However, I am fortunate to feel anything at all including breathing in this winter air.
It’s just that I’m all out of positive cares, due to my mind being held hostage by dreary weather scares.
Matching my mood with the color
Why does everything feel so blue?
Until this season subsides, here in my bed is where I’ll stay, searching for a place in time that doesn’t feel so cruel
Until my winter weather dues go far away, In this mindset I’m doomed to suffer another blue winter day.
Where Did You Go?
By Anonymous
You disappeared from your sights
But, you’re still here within our lives.
I think of you almost daily.
Although, I did not know you all too well.
I remember your gentle face
That smile, your laugh.
Hide and seek was once a game we often played.
Now we find ourselves playing it once again.
The game back then was fun and filled with stifled giggling.
But now it’s cheerless and filled with stifled crying.
We have lost you from our sights
But, you’re still here within our minds.

A Poem
By Anonymous
Only the driven through the camera’s eye adrift and alone in the darkness of space.
This is a challenge we can meet a new breed of inspiration
During the dark days to bear witness an irregular heartbeat in all kinds of ways.
Unlike any other gentle and courageous in, which I discover.
Was once buried for a taste of shock enduring the impact of an era full of risk.
As your life changes figure out what to do.
Where the rules of war do not apply emerges an ever shifting war zone.
It’s all about to change on way or another.
How can you meet your challenge?
Relax and think in peace of our origins and evolution.
A fresh voice drives you to care for its fragile rebel warrior facing a savage massacre has
Forged a fragile peace for the new generation gap reborn.
In a trusted voice while we were doing it.
We knew it was wrong, but evidence shows as your life changes, so does your rising stars.
**Untitled**  
*By Anonymous*

Have you ever heard the sunshine chime, twinkling on rivers, water shine
Running brilliant purples and blues, crazy shades of red, sunrise hues
Have you ever seen a mountain dyed hot pink?
Dancing colours on a mountain peak.
Have you ever touched a tangerine sky?
Seeing for miles, across the red deserts heat, oh my
Have you ever tasted the the pacific spray?
Splattered with the suns high noon rays
Have you ever felt some typa way, watching the beginning, or end of day?
If your still enough you can hear the wind say.
"No matter if you look east or west, it's where you are the sun looks best”
- Emsige

**I'm Still Here.**  
*By Anonymous*

You wanted me dead, but I'm still here.
You wanted me forgotten, but I'm still here
You took me from my mom, cut my hair.
You took me from my culture, fed me jesus.
I'm still here, a reminder of your atrocities.
I'm still here, a reminder of your failures.

My mind is growing, I'm learning to love a mother you took away from me...
I'm STILL HERE!
Photography

Photo by Deanna Croaker

Photo by Justin Wilson