

ANNUAL REPORT of activities

2024-25



info@puamun.com



Table of *contents*

| | |
|--|------|
| <u>Message from the President and Founder</u> | p.2 |
| <u>Message from the Executive Director</u> | p.3 |
| <u>About the Organization</u> | p.4 |
| Our History | p.4 |
| Our Mission | p.5 |
| Our Vision | p.5 |
| Strategic Orientations | p.5 |
| Guiding Principles | p.5 |
| <u>Our Team</u> | p.6 |
| <u>Our Activities This Year</u> | p.8 |
| Mamu Nikantetau 2024 | p.9 |
| <i>KWE! À la rencontre des peuples autochtones</i> | p.12 |
| Uapikun Journey | p.13 |
| Dr. Vollant's Challenge | p.16 |
| President's Representations | p.17 |
| Executive Director's Representations | p.17 |
| <u>Acknowledgements</u> | p.18 |

Message from the President



It is with great pride that I present the 2024–2025 annual report of Puamun Meshkenu. Once again, this year, we have walked many paths, built strong connections, and planted seeds of hope for future generations. Our activities reaffirmed our commitment to reconciliation, education, and the well-being of First Peoples and society.

The Mamu Nikantetau Walk once more demonstrated the power of sharing and dialogue, allowing each person to open to others while walking together toward a more harmonious future. We also developed new inspiring projects, such as the Uapikun Pathway, which supports a new generation of Indigenous leaders in their personal and professional journeys.

I would like to warmly thank everyone who contributed to these initiatives: the members of the Board of Directors, our dedicated staff, our partners, and, of course, all participants who chose to walk alongside us. Together, we continue to bring our vision to life—a world where every dream can take flight.

Puamun Meshkenu means “the path of dreams,” and I am honoured to walk it with you.

Dr. Stanley Vollant
President and Founder of Puamun Meshkenu

Message from the Executive Director



Dear friends, partners, and allies,

The 2024–2025 year was marked by meaningful encounters, ambitious projects, and a collective energy that inspires us to pursue our mission with passion. Puamun Meshkenu continues to grow, evolve, and innovate to offer transformative experiences to youth, participants in our activities, and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Our initiatives—whether the Dr. Vollant Challenge, the KWE! festival, the Mamu Nikantetau Walk, or the brand-new Uapikun Journey—reflects a shared desire to move forward together, create spaces for dialogue, and foster resilience and authentic connections. The expansion of our team and the addition of new collaborators allow us to go even further in our commitment.

I would like to thank each one of you who contributes to this meaningful journey. Thank you to our board of directors for their vision, to our team for their dedication, and to our partners for their trust. Together, we are making Puamun Meshkenu a driver of positive change, where every step brings us closer to a more just and inclusive future.

Let us walk, listen, dream, and build together!

Jay Launière-Mathias

Jay Launière-Mathias
Executive Director of Puamun Meshkenu



History

For over 30 years, Dr. Vollant has been interested in issues related to the health of Indigenous peoples in Canada as well as their overall well-being.

In 2010, the Innu Meshkenu project was initiated, bringing together Indigenous communities across Quebec in a unified movement. Through this effort, Dr. Vollant travelled more than 6,000 km on foot, making a significant and lasting difference in the lives of many Indigenous youths.

Through these encounters, he gathered many dreams. To bring them forward, Dr. Vollant founded the non-profit organization Puamun Meshkenu in 2016. It is therefore the natural continuation of the Innu Meshkenu project.

Since its founding, the organization's mission has been to inspire and support First Nations and Inuit peoples in forging their own "path of a thousand dreams" through the development of their physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional potential.

Building on the legacy of Innu Meshkenu, Puamun Meshkenu seeks to help First Nations and Inuit peoples reach their full potential by contributing concretely to collective well-being.

Our organization

Puamun Meshkenu is a non-profit organization founded in 2016 by Dr. Stanley Vollant. Since its creation, the organization's mission has been to inspire and support Indigenous peoples in developing their full potential.

The organization implements projects aimed at making a lasting impact on the lives of many Indigenous youths and creating a structured movement across Indigenous communities in Quebec.

To achieve this, we focus on initiatives capable of generating meaningful positive impact. Puamun Meshkenu has established two main strategic orientations: fostering hope and promoting well-being through a holistic approach.



Mission

Our mission is to inspire and support Indigenous peoples in forging their own “path of a thousand dreams” (“puamun meshkenu” in Innu-aimun) by finding their place in society in a holistic way—mentally, spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

We support Indigenous peoples so that everyone can develop their full potential and contribute to collective well-being with the support of their community. Our actions aim to promote healthy lifestyles, encourage academic perseverance, and foster reconciliation.

Vision

We have a dream (“puamun” in Innu-aimun): that Indigenous peoples develop their full potential and contribute to collective well-being.

The recognition of Puamun Meshkenu and its human and inclusive approach allows us to take concrete actions that promote Indigenous identity, holistic health, and academic perseverance.

The organization’s actions not only support community well-being but also contribute to the recognition of Indigenous peoples in society.

Strategic Orientations

Puamun Meshkenu has established two main strategic orientations: fostering hope and promoting well-being through a holistic approach. To pursue these orientations, the organization implemented several initiatives during 2024–2025.

These include a reconciliation walk held in June during the KWE! Meet with the Indigenous Peoples event, the Mamu Nikantetau Walk, the Dr. Vollant Challenge, the Uapikun Pathway, and conferences led by Dr. Vollant.

Guiding Principles

We consider and respect each person in their entirety in all of our actions and decision-making.

Our approach is holistic, human-centered, and inclusive.

We take climate-related issues into account as much as possible within our means when making choices and planning activities.

We aim to expand our programming at the national level.

Our Team

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors stands out for its commitment to representation, including diversity in gender, Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, and individuals from a wide range of Indigenous nations.

The Board also reserves seats for youth to ensure their voices are represented.

This year, we welcomed Marc-André Galbrand. Previously involved in the deployment of Dr. Vollant's walks during the Innu Meshkenu era, he played a key role as an advisor for the Mamu Nikantetau Walk in September 2024. His logistics expertise, outdoor intervention knowledge, and dedication were invaluable in supporting the team throughout the expedition. He joins the eight other board members and contributes to the complementarity of strengths within the team.



Dr Stanley Vollant
President and Founder



Éric Cardinal
Vice-President



Sabryna Godbout
Secretary



Adam Jourdain
Treasurer



Sarah Bourque
Board member



Suzy Basile
Board member



Denis Bouchard
Board member



Marie St-Gelais
Board member



Marc-André Galbrand
Board member

Staff

In addition to the new Board member, two new staff members joined the organization.

Uashtushkueu Gros-Louis worked as a seasonal project officer in summer 2024. Her mandate was to create content related to holistic health as part of the Dr. Vollant Challenge launched in fall 2024. We thank her for her contribution and wish her success in her studies and future projects.

In November 2024, Maud Pellerin joined the team as Project Manager. A trained psychoeducator, she contributed to the planning and implementation of the Uapikun Pathway.



Jay Launière-Mathias
Executive Director



Olivia Benjamin-Hervieux
Administrative Assistant



Jean-Benoît April
Communications
Manager



Maud Pellerin
Project Manager



**Uashtushkueu
Gros-Louis**
Project Officer

Our activities this year

2024-25



Mamu Nikantetau 2024

Inspired by the 6,000 kilometers walked by Dr. Stanley Vollant as part of the Innu Meshkenu project, the Mamu Nikantetau Walk embodies a concrete approach to reconciliation and connection between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Following a new route each year, the 2024 edition connected Kitcisakik to Pikogan via Lac Simon, Val-d'Or, and Amos. A core group of 20 walkers completed this 8-day journey, enriched by meaningful encounters and exchanges.

Dr. Vollant delivered three conferences and participated in a podcast organized by the secondary school in Lac Simon. Participants also attended the inauguration of UQAT's new space dedicated to learning, sharing, and reconciliation, and took part in a walk in Val-d'Or alongside the university community and local population.



Public walks were also organized in Lac Simon, Val-d'Or, Amos, and Pikogan, each gathering around one hundred participants. This event reflects a shared commitment to building a future rooted in respect and understanding.

We would like to thank Marc-André Galbrand and Diane Moreau from Contact Nature for their support in organizing the walk, Janie Helen for documenting the expedition through photography, and Maggie St-Pierre and Sebastien Methot for managing meals and daily logistics.



Walkers



Ariane
Québécoise



Ève
Anishinabe



Kimberly
Anicinape



Dr Stanley Vollant
Innu



Marie
Innu

Indigenous
16



Sarah Bourque
Québécoise



Anthonia
Innu



Veronik
Wendat



Marie-Claude
Wolastoqewi



Alexandre
Québécois

Non-Indigenous
4



Chantale
Québécoise



Mikue
Innu



Geneviève
Innu



Jon
Anicinape



Edouard
Anicinape

Nations represented
6



Nathalie
Anicinape



Wandat
Anishinabe et Eeyou



Marie-Christine
Québécoise



Véronique
Wendat



Claudia
Wendat

Shared mission
1

The support team



Jay Launière-Mathias

Chief Executive Officer



Jean-Benoît April

Communications Manager



Olivia Benjamin-Hervieux

Administrative Assistant



Maggie St-Pierre

Cook volunteer



Sébastien Methot

Volunteer



Diane Moreau

Member of the Contact Nature team



Marc-André Galbrand

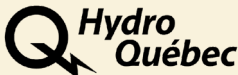
Member of the Contact Nature team



Janie Helen

Photographer

Thank you to our valued partners for the 2024 edition



KWE! À la rencontre des peuples autochtones

For the 2024 edition, KWE! once again partnered with Puamun Meshkenu to host the walk led by Dr. Stanley Vollant. As President and Founder of Puamun Meshkenu and Honorary President of the KWE! festival, Dr. Vollant launched the walk alongside individuals and families who came to meet him.

This walk provided an opportunity for people to connect, learn about one another, share, and listen in the spirit of living together more harmoniously. It reflects solidarity with First Nations and a desire to build a country where all children—regardless of their background—can develop their potential and achieve their dreams.

New this year, we organized a youth activity in the festival shaputuan where participants created their own “dream sticks,” inspired by Dr. Vollant’s. Nearly one hundred youths took part with enthusiasm. Due to its success, this activity will return in 2025 over the full three days of the festival.



Uapikun Journey: Cultivating the Full Potential of Indigenous Youth

The Uapikun Journey (“flower” in Innu-aimun) is an innovative program designed to support Indigenous youth aged 18 to 35 in developing their full potential. Through specialized training and personalized psychosocial support, the program aims to strengthen self-esteem, enhance capacities, and equip participants to become engaged leaders within their communities.



By focusing on personal development, cultural reconnection, and critical thinking, the program seeks to create a lasting impact. Like a flower, it unfolds in three phases: rooting, growing, and blooming.



Mathilda
Innu of Uashat mak
Mani-Utenam



Solène
Wendat of
Wendake



Jasmine
Innu of
Mashteuiatsh



Sophie
Innu of Pessamit



William
Innu of Pessamit



Ève-Marie
Innu of Uashat mak
Mani-Utenam



Fanny-Alisson
Innu of Unamen Shipu



Rosalie
Innu of Essipt



Sarah
Innu of Essipt



Émilie
Innu of Pessamit



Alyss
Innu of Pessamit

1. Taking Root: An Inspiring Journey Begins

The program began in January 2025 with an initial retreat at Manoir du Lac Delage focused on reconnection and sharing. Participants explored their dreams and identity through workshops led by Audrey-Lise Rock-Hervieux, Stéphane Mapachee, and Maud Pellerin.



2. Growing: An Educational and Identity

This phase included weekly online sessions covering:

- History and impacts of the Indian Act
- Identity and Indigenous pride
- Relationship to the land and ancestral knowledge
- Self-determination and entrepreneurship
- Mental health, healing, and resilience

Through interactive activities, participants are encouraged to question themselves, sharpen their critical thinking, and take a stand on key issues.

Thanks to the experts who generously shared their knowledge:

- **Sipi Flamand** (Atikamekw Nehirowisiw, Manawan) : political and cultural figure, filmmaker, and pow-wow dancer, he led a workshop on civic participation and political engagement.
- **Alexandra Picard-Sioui** (Wendat, Wendake) : Founder of Yawinonh, she led a workshop on the role of women in communities and the sacred feminine.
- **Adam Jourdain** (Innu, Uashat mak Mani-Utenam) : An expert in economic development, he presented a workshop on the importance of the economy within Indigenous communities.
- **Jean-Simon Gagné-Nepton** (Innu, Mash-teuiatsh) : A political advisor and former journalist, he led a workshop on territorial development.

3. Blooming: A Cultural Immersion in the Territory

The final phase of the program, titled “Blooming” took place in March at the traditional Innu Kanapeut site on the Côte-Nord. This immersive experience allowed participants to acquire new knowledge and skills while reconnecting with the land and Indigenous traditions.

Exploring the Territory

A snowshoe outing with Éric Kanapé highlighted the impacts of the forestry industry and climate change on the territory.



Traditional Knowledge

Alongside his brother Michel Kanapé, Éric also taught the art of setting snares for hares and skinning a beaver, as well as introducing traditional medicinal herbs such as larch.



Introspection and Healing

Catherine Bacon shared her life journey and experience with intergenerational transmission, followed by a sweat lodge ceremony (“meteshan” in Innu-aimun) to encourage reflection and purification.

The program concluded with a review of the entire journey and the presentation of completion certificates, marking a key milestone in each participant’s personal development.



The stay fostered a reconnection with the land and oneself in a safe and respectful environment. It also allowed the program to conclude on a note of celebration and appreciation.

The Uapikun program has proven to be fertile ground for nurturing the potential of First Peoples youth. By blending tradition and modernity, self-knowledge and collective understanding, this program has sown seeds of transformation that will continue to grow long beyond the experiences shared. It honors the resilience, beauty, and strength of young First Peoples while providing them with the momentum needed to forge their own path, rooted in their culture and oriented toward the future. Thank you to M361 for supporting this initiative.

Dr. Vollant Challenge: Promoting Community Health

A 21-day daily walking challenge accompanied by the release of video content focused on holistic health. These videos were shared on Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, generating over 80,000 cross-platform impressions.

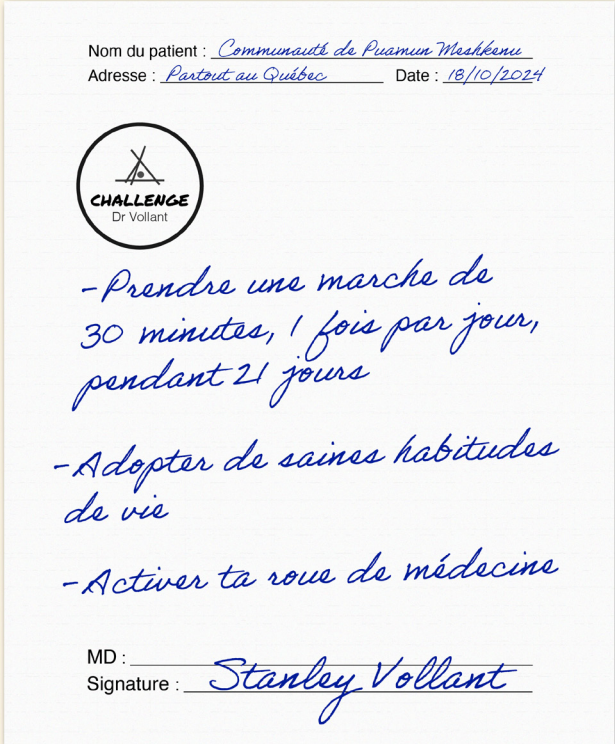
The challenge began with a fictional prescription from Dr. Vollant, encouraging our community to take a 30-minute walk once a day for 21 days, adopt healthy lifestyle habits, and activate their medicine wheel. This was followed by 17 motivational videos highlighting examples of healthy habits that are easy to integrate into daily routines. During these three weeks, three contests were held with the support of numerous partners, including Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations, Onquata, Onhwa' Lumina, Yawinonh, Sagamité Watso, Endi', and the Hanne-norak bookstore.

We extend our thanks to each of these valuable partners, who helped us offer participation prizes to nine individuals. Thanks also to Uashtushkueu Gros-Louis, seasonal project officer, who spent several months with the team in the summer of 2024 creating video content for this challenge and coordinating partnerships.



Coverage and Engagement with the Challenge Content

| | Facebook | Instagram | Tiktok | Total |
|--------------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Couverture | 43 800 | 1 400 | 38 000 | 83 200 |
| Interactions | 1 300 | 509 | 1 400 | 3 209 |



President's Representations

Telus Conference

A talk given to Telus employees about his life story and the realities faced by First Nations people.

Agnico Eagle Conference

A talk given to Agnico Eagle employees about his life story and the realities faced by First Nations people.

Presentation at Kitcisakik Elementary School

A memorable meeting with the students to share a message of hope, perseverance, and pride in their identity.

Lecture at Lac Simon High School

A moving talk to the community's young people about the importance of dreams and resilience.

Recording a podcast with Lac Simon High School

Participation in an interview conducted by students, fostering an intergenerational discussion about life journeys and Indigenous values.

Lecture at UQAT—Indigenous Luncheon Lectures

A presentation given as part of an academic initiative aimed at bridging the gap between the academic community and Indigenous realities, in which he discussed his involvement on the board of directors of Santé Québec.

Attendance at the Uashteshiu Evening

Puamun Meshkenu performed at this festive event, which brought together 200 members of the Innu Nation to celebrate Indigenous entrepreneurship.

Kwaweyih walk in Wendake

Participation in this walk, organized as part of Addiction Prevention Week in collaboration with several community partners.

Conference—North Shore Virtual Education Symposium

Presentation at a regional event for education professionals, highlighting the importance of identity, culture, and territory for Indigenous peoples.

Director's Representations

RBA Foundation Annual Golf Tournament

Participation in this philanthropic networking event aimed at supporting Indigenous community projects across Quebec.

Cercle Waska

Active participation in the June, November, and February meetings of this consultative group, which brings together Indigenous youth organizations, in collaboration with the Quebec Youth Secretariat.

Board of Directors of La Boîte Rouge Vif

Representation of Puamun Meshkenu as a director on the board of directors of this cultural organization, which is committed to supporting Indigenous communities and organizations.

First Nations Leadership Academy

Strategic contribution as a member of the advisory committee for the Next Generation Program, which supports the development of Indigenous leadership.



Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of Puamun Meshkenu throughout the 2024–2025 year. Your support, commitment, and dedication were essential to achieving our mission.