

MIZIWEGIN

Aabita-Niibino-Giizis 2026



welcome to our

CCS NEWSLETTER

MIZIWEGIN SPOTLIGHT

MARLA MESARINA



26-27 FEMALE CO-UNITY PRESIDENT

A little about myself: I am going into my junior year at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, pursuing a double major in Science of Nutrition (To become a registered dietitian) and Ojibwemowin. I have been on my language journey where I am actively learning my language. I am a part of an Ojibwe apprenticeship with “Nisookamig” where I am taking Ojibwe classes. I have recently started a new hobby of playing Lacrosse!

My experience with Leech Lake Education: I have been an intern for Maajiigin for two summers, and I have been currently working at the new School Age Care Center (Miikogin) this summer! I love this summer job as I get to connect with Native youth and share what I know about our language and culture. From this experience so far, I have learned how important it is to look at our cultural ways when we come across stressful situations during child care. It is important to incorporate our language and culture into their everyday lives as these will become tools for when they continue on within their stages of life.

I attended the 2026 United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) Organization National conference in Oklahoma City and was elected to serve as the 2026-2027 UNITY Female Co-President. My position entails serving Native youth across Indian Country, which pertains assisting Native youth councils/individuals with finding funding resources, establishing youth councils, and building connections with other networks.

With this platform of UNITY Female Co-President, I want to ensure all youth voices are heard from all regions. I want to help with establishing youth councils within my region but also within the regions that are underrepresented. I also want to focus on language revitalization and connect the UNITY network with the National Native American Language Resource Centers organization to help with Native youth learning about their language rights. I have a lot of ideas and a lot of motivation to use this platform to better support Native youth across the nation.



IN THIS NEWSLETTER YOU WILL FIND:

Program services, Trainings, Helpful tips, staff directory, and Job opportunities

MIZIWEGIN SPOTLIGHT CONTINUED

HALEIGH ROY



26-27 MISS CASS LAKE

My name is Haleigh Roy. My parents are Cora and Marcus Roy, I have 5 siblings. I enjoy beading and playing volleyball. I currently work at maajiigin as a youth intern. I have been enjoying it and the people I work with are very welcoming.

As Miss Cass Lake my job is to represent our community and be a good role model by showing up to events around the area. I hope to push the future Miss Cass Lake's to be more involved with the events in our community by being involved more myself and setting a standard of what this position should look like. I plan on doing more booth at different events, participate in parades in near by towns and also do activities with kids in the Cass Lake area schools.

CONGRATULATIONS

develop

DEVELOP TRAININGS

Health and Safety II- FCC
(inservice)

8/25/26 Bemidji 2Hrs Free

Native American Parenting
Program-Traditional Parenting

9/22/26 Bemidji 2hrs \$10

HS & CCS host quaterly trainings for their Teachers, Staff, and Providers.



Ready to become licensed or would like more information? Contact us today!

Rebecca "Becca" Tibbetts
Licensing, Compliance, & Grant
Coordinator
218.335.8338 /
Rebecca.tibbetts@llojibwe.net
www.lloboearlychildhood.com

LICENSING, COMPLIANCE, & GRANTS COORDINATOR

Tribal Child Care Licensing

All across Minnesota, there is a need for quality child care. Families need childcare in order to work or go to school. Children need a safe and healthy environment where they can play and learn while they're away from home.

If you have a passion for helping children and families, you may be thinking about opening your own child care business.

Is A Child Care Business Right for You?

If you're thinking about owning and operating a Family Child Care and that it might be a good fit for you, make sure to consider your own abilities and needs.

- Do you have the skills and temperament to care for children long-term?
- Do all members of your household support your decision?
- Think about the needs of your community.
- Does your community need another family child care home or center?
- Is your location convenient for the families in your area?
- Are you able to provide child care during the hours that families need it?

Licensing Eligibility:

- Be 18 Or Older
- Enrolled in A Federally Recognized Tribe
- Live on the Leech Lake Reservation
- Pass Background Check
- Complete Health & Safety Trainings within 90 days of licensure
- You DO NOT have to own your home! You can be a renter and have permission/approval from your landlord!

**Watch the Miziwegin
FB page for outreach
events to learn more
about becoming a
child care provider**

Benefits to being Licensed:

- WORK FROM HOME – NO DAILY COMMUTE TO THE OFFICE
- STAY HOME WITH YOUR OWN CHILDREN
- CREATE YOUR OWN SCHEDULE AND HOURS OF OPERATION
- Eligible for Grant Funding to purchase supplies & equipment
- Eligible for payments from Child Care Assistance Programs
- Eligible for Food/M meal Reimbursement

\$2000.00 START UP GRANT AVAILABLE!!!!

Here is a simple yet fun idea to do as a family.

Backyard Nature Hunt

Take a short walk outside with your child and look for simple things in nature! See if you can find:

- Flower
- Bird or bird nest
- Something green
- Bug or worm
- Rock
- Squirrel
- Pinecone
- Butterfly



Talk about what you see, hear, and feel along the way. This is a fun and easy way to build language, observation, and learning skills while spending time together outdoors!



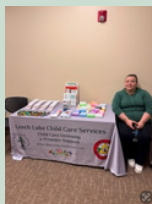
LEECH LAKE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Does your family need assistance helping pay for childcare? Our Leech Lake Subsidy Program is taking applications for families with children who meet our eligibility requirements. Our eligibility requirements are:

- Your family must live on the Leech Lake Reservation or within 10 miles of the boundaries
- Have a child age 0-12 years old
- Be employed or attending job training
- Meet income eligibility based on your household size
- Yourself or child must be enrolled in a federally recognized tribe

If you have any questions or are interested in an application please reach out to.

Rosella Headbird
(218)335-4431 or
Rosella.Headbird@llojibwe.net



EARLY LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP

Leech Lake can serve Leech Lake affiliated children throughout the entire state of Minnesota and can serve all children within our service area.

- Your child must be between the ages of 0-5 and not kindergarten eligible.
- Eligibility is based on income, or if you are receiving any public assistance like Snap, Headstart, MFIP, CCAP, ETC
- Online applications are available at: Earlylearningscholarshipshub.mn.gov

For more information contact:

Destiny Jourdain
Destiny.Jourdain@llojibwe.net
218-335-4430



SUMMER EVENTS:

Child Care Services attends many community events throughout the year, here are some of the summer events we will be attending,.

Quarterly 7/10/26
Cass Lake Parade 7/11/26
Ball Club Parade 7/19/26
Pediatric Fair 7/30/26
Back to school event 8/28/26



Previous Events



CLBHS Career Fair
Laptop winner

Tonya's Tips

Update for Maajiigin and SACC

Aaniin! Both of our Maajiigin and SACC centers have waitlists for child care but you are still encouraged to apply!

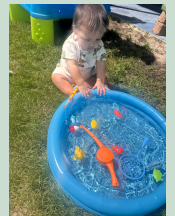
Applications for Fall 2026 have been reviewed and letters have been sent out to families. Maajiigin center (0-3 years) is an ongoing program so apply today to get on our waitlist.

Please reach out if you are looking to get on our waitlist for child care in Cass Lake.

Tonya Morris, Family Engagement & Enrollment Coordinator
Tonya.Morris@llojibwe.net
218-335-8249



**Openings will be posted
on the Mizwegin
facebook page and Leech
Lake Early Childhood
website.**



CHEF'S CORNER: LEAD COOK NAYKOTA JACKSON

A few changes happening during the summer months. Kota will be moving to the school age building but will be providing meals for both centers.



WAYIIBANAGIDAA WIISINIMIN? - SHOULD WE EAT SOON?
GIDAA GOJIPIDAANI'IW - YOU SHOULD TASTE THAT?

Elmo's Strawberry Pops

Ingredients

- 1 pound frozen strawberries, thawed
- 1 cup Greek yogurt*
- ¾ teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon vanilla



Directions

1. Puree strawberries and lemon juice in blender.
2. Mix yogurt and vanilla together.
3. Evenly layer the strawberry puree and the yogurt into four popsicle molds or ice cube trays.
4. Freeze until slightly set and then add the stick into mold or ice tray. Continue freezing until completely frozen.

One pop provides ½ cup fruits and ½ oz eq. meats/meat alternates

A Summer of Discovery at the Miikogin Center

The Miikogin Center (School Age Care Center) celebrated an exciting milestone this summer as it welcomed 45 children and 11 dedicated staff members for its inaugural summer program. Transitioning to full-day operations from 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., the center provided a safe, engaging, and enriching environment where children explored science, culture, creativity, and outdoor adventures.

Celebrating Culture and Community

Throughout the summer, children deepened their understanding of Indigenous culture and heritage by learning about Minnesota's Tribal Nations, the communities of the Leech Lake Reservation, and participating in virtual field trips to Indigenous museums. Hands-on cultural activities included creating dreamcatchers, weaving birch bark baskets, planting seeds, and learning the significance of the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

One of the summer's highlights was a memorable visit to the Red Lake Buffalo Ranch, where children were warmly welcomed with a meal before enjoying a guided trail ride through the buffalo pasture. Seeing a thriving herd—including 16 calves—gave children a firsthand appreciation for buffalo restoration and their cultural importance to Indigenous communities.

Exploring the Wonders of Science

Science and discovery were at the heart of many summer activities. Children explored the solar system, the moon, weather, and the natural world through engaging, hands-on experiments. They built string telephones to learn about sound, investigated the importance of clean water by creating water filtration systems, experimented with chemical reactions, explored motion and energy, and launched their own rockets.

Their curiosity continued during a visit to the Headwaters Science Center, where interactive demonstrations introduced concepts such as combustion, air pressure, and energy through exciting live experiments.

Creating Through Art

Creativity flourished as children developed fine motor skills and artistic confidence through a variety of hands-on projects. Throughout the summer, they made bath bombs, sidewalk chalk, flower bouquets, candles, tie-dye bags, shadow boxes, trinkets, beaded creations, and other keepsakes. The week concluded with a fun-filled trip to the movie theater, rewarding everyone for their hard work and creativity.

Adventure, Sports, and Teamwork

Children enjoyed an active summer filled with scavenger hunts, Olympic-style field games, dance parties, water activities, archaeological digs, decorating reusable water bottles, creating time capsules, and crafting traditional medicine bags. They also had the opportunity to learn the history and cultural significance of lacrosse from Dr. Dan Ninham, who shared the origins of the game and its enduring importance within Indigenous communities.

Community Partnerships in Action

The Miikogin Center extends its sincere appreciation to the Leech Lake Emergency Medical Services for providing children with an unforgettable experience during a helicopter training exercise. Students had the unique opportunity to tour the helicopter, meet pilots and emergency medical personnel, and learn about the important work of first responders in serving the community.

Looking Ahead

The Miikogin Center's first summer was a tremendous success, filled with opportunities for learning, cultural connection, scientific exploration, artistic expression, and lasting friendships. As the program continues to grow, staff remain committed to providing meaningful experiences that inspire curiosity, celebrate culture, and support every child's development.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our families, community partners, and dedicated staff for helping make our inaugural summer one to remember. We look forward to many more adventures together!



Contact Us

School-Age Care Center

201 4th St. NW, Cass Lake, MN 56633

Phone: 218-335-8380 | Email: amarin.chanthorn@css.edu

Website: www.llboearlychildhood.com/sacc

Hours: [e.g., Monday-Friday, 9 AM – 5:30 PM]



MAAJIIGIN NEW STAFF:

MAAJIIGIN CENTER MANAGER: EMMA GILLMAN

My name is Emma Gillman, and I am excited to step into the role as the Maajiigin Center Manager. I have a passion for supporting children, families, and staff; I am committed to creating a positive, welcoming, and high-quality learning environment for everyone in our program.

I have experience in early childhood education and administration, I worked with Leech Lake Early Head Start and Head Start for ten plus years. I enjoy building strong relationships with families and team members. I believe that open communication, teamwork, and a child-centered approach are key to helping children thrive.

I look forward to getting to know each of you and working together to provide the best possible experience for the children and families we serve.

GEKINWAA'AMAAGED-MEADELYNN AMMERMAN



"Hi I'm Madelynn Ammerman
I'm 20 years old. I've been
working at Miziwegin Leech
Lake Child Care Services for
three months as a teacher in
minogin classroom"



GEKINWAA'AMAAGED-ADRIENA GIFFEN

Adriena is a teacher in the Zaagakii room, working with the babies 1 years and younger.

GEKINWAA'AMAAGED-OLIVEA RUSCHMEIER

Olivea is a teacher in the nitaawigin room working with toddlers between the ages of 1 years old and 2 years old.

MAAJIIGIN INTERNS:

ALEXIS ROBINSON-NITAAWIGIN
HALEIGH ROY- ZAAGAKII
CIANA GOGGLEYE-ZAGIBAGAA

MIIKOGIN INTERNS:

BRANDON
CHERISH

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Miikogin youth assistant 26-0185
- Gekinwa'aamaged (teacher) 26-0181



We are looking for individuals that are dedicated to speaking and learning Ojibwe and providing opportunities for our children to learn in their natural environment.

For information visit the LLBO employment page or call the front desk 218-335-8369

STAFF DIRECTORY

Cora Roy

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(218)335-8257

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Rosella Headbird

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Tonya Morris

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Emma Gillman

Maajiigin Center manager
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Sherri Seelye

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Destiny Jourdain

Early Learning Scholarship
Administrator
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Naykota Jackson

Lead Cook
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