



Brock University Graduate Students' Association Special Statement

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

September 30, 2021 - (St. Catharines, ON)

Today, September 30, marks the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – a federal holiday established to honour residential school survivors and recognize the Indigenous lives lost across Turtle Island (an Indigenous name used to reference America and/or Canada).

This day was formerly known as Orange Shirt Day, a day created by Phyllis Webstad of Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation. The [orange shirt is a reflection of Phyllis' own orange shirt](#) that was taken from her as a six-year-old when she attended a residential school; her orange shirt was taken, along with her culture. The orange shirt is meant to be worn to raise awareness about the negative consequences of the residential school systems felt by all Indigenous communities like Phyllis' and the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation.

As Indigenous communities across these lands continue to combat the ongoing legacies of colonization, the GSA believes that it is the responsibility of settlers to learn about the [history of residential schools](#), [the 60s scoop](#), [missing and murdered indigenous women and girls \(MMIWG\)](#), as well as ongoing land reclamation and sovereignty efforts.

We encourage you to take meaningful steps with us towards ending the legacies of colonization; to take actionable steps forward toward reconciliation. Here are some steps that we would encourage you to take with us:

- Take time to learn about the histories of Indigenous peoples in Canada and reflect on actions taken by Canada towards these communities.
- Create space for Indigenous people to speak, to share their perspectives and their voices.
- Find ways to spread awareness by sharing resources and educating your friends, families, and communities.
- Learn how to properly acknowledge the land that you reside on and engage with tools like [Native Land's Interactive Map](#) to learn about traditional territories around you.
- Read the 94 Call to Action in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Truth and Reconciliation Report](#) and identify what role you can play in the work left to be done.
- Support Indigenous-owned businesses, artists, experiences, and events.

Resources and Information:

[Brock Service] [Aboriginal Student Services](#)

[Brock Library Collection] [Reconciling the History of the Residential School System in Canada](#)

[Virtual Brock Workshop] [How to Two Row: Advice from an Indigenous Auntie](#) on October 5

[Virtual Brock Workshop] [GSV Support Certificate: Indigenous Perspectives](#) on October 20

[Website] [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)

[Interactive Map] [Native Land: Find out whose traditional territory you live on](#)

[Website] [ON Canada Project: Settlers Take Action](#)

[Course] Free 12-week [Indigenous Canada course from University of Alberta](#)

[Interactive Website] [CBC's Beyond 94: Truth and Reconciliation in Canada](#)

[Website] [35 Books to Read for National Indigenous History Month](#)