

*Man:* We knew that the number of existing elders who spoke Ojibwe fluently, who were raised with Ojibwe as a first language, were vastly diminishing. So we knew we had to do something quick. That's why we started "Waadookodaading."

*Woman:* Waadookodaading, it's a place where our language lives, where the Ojibwe language lives.

*Man:* Language — I think with any cultural practice, it has a specific vocabulary and teachings that are associated with each activity in that practice. So for instance, all the words about boiling sap, the way that it boils, have specific terms that describe it very, very accurately and allow you to develop a deep comprehension of the activity and why you do it and how you do it. I always say it's an educational experience for students, but it's a community movement. We're facing some really unique challenges right now.

*Woman:* We have a lot of statistics that are against us. We have a lot of issues with abuse and suicide, that show us as not being the most healthy of communities. And I always think of it, not just in terms of our culture surviving, but really, our people surviving.

*Man:* I didn't learn to speak Ojibwe as a child, but when I started studying it as an adult in college, I quickly realized how much knowledge and capacity there is in a language to know who you are, where you come from, how to see the world in that unique way. It's certainly academically rigorous. It's not just a culture program. It's not just a language program. Ultimately, it's prepping them and building an intellectual framework that they'll be able to apply to and adapt to, no matter where they are in the world, that will help them. And I think they're prepared with knowledge and ability that they feel proud of, that they feel connected to their ancestry in a deeper way. They have a much broader and deeper understanding of Ojibwe perspective in relation to the local community, the local environment, and the world.