



COMMUNAUTÉ DE  
PARTAGE DE SAVOIRS

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## A Word from Savage

tân'si friends,

As we head into 2025, there is so much to celebrate and share! Please take a moment to check out our newsletter and share it widely with your classes, potential W2B facilitators, and funders. Together, let's continue building bridges and creating opportunities for transformational learning and justice. First let's give a big congratulations to the Ontario Community Collective (OCC) for their incredible conference panel at the UNESCO Montreal International Conference on Education in Prison! Their workshop was packed with eager participants and was exceptionally well-received. What an amazing achievement!

Another huge congratulations to Dr. Rachel Fayter W2B alum, and OCC member, who successfully defended her PhD dissertation on December 10, 2025. Another special shout-out to W2B alum and OCC member Melissa Alexander on her outstanding award from WXN, which recognizes extraordinary women. Melissa, we've always known you were remarkable, and your CPKC Skilled Trades Award for excellence in skilled trades and community involvement is so well-deserved.

We'd also like to congratulate OCC collective member Dr. Rai Reece on her tenure promotion at Toronto Metropolitan University! This accomplishment comes on the heels of Dr. Reece's recent publication, *Unequal Relations: A Critical Introduction to Racism, Gender, Immigration, and Coloniality*, 9th edition. Congratulations Rai!!

Exciting news - W2B Vanier is launching soon! The MOU is finalized, and classes will be starting in Fall 2025. Stay tuned for more details as this exciting collaboration takes shape.

Meanwhile, OCC members Lorraine and Tiina facilitated some truly powerful Transformative Justice Facilitator Training workshops at GVI. These workshops have provided the GVI Collective and W2B leadership team with new inspiration and skills for shaping future goals. Amazing work, Lorraine and Tiina!

Facilitator and W2B Leadership team member Sara Howdle, PhD Candidate, has been hard at work hosting brand-new creative writing classes at the Wentworth Detention Centre in Hamilton, Ontario. While these centres cannot currently offer for-credit courses, the connections and learning opportunities being created in these challenging spaces are invaluable. The women loved the courses, and we are excited to offer more workshops in the new year.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to be organizing the 2025 facilitator training at GVI. The interest has been phenomenal, and we can't wait to welcome the successful candidates to GVI. Earlier this year, W2B Winnipeg hosted a transformative training session at Stony Mountain Institution. Supported by W2B National, the Inside Collective of 11 men from medium and minimum security worked with 13 new W2B instructors to create a truly unique training experience. Incorporating W2B exercises, course design, and community building, this training reflected the lived experiences and knowledge of the participants. Congratulations to the Winnipeg team on this incredible achievement!

Finally, we ended the year on a high note with a visit from Anishnaabe author and journalist Tanya Talaga at GVI on December 12. Tanya shared her journey to writing *The Knowing and Seven Fallen Feathers* with the book club and library community and W2B Collectives. It was an inspiring and enriching conversation that left a lasting impact.

Here's to another year of building bridges, celebrating successes, and creating change. Thank you all for your dedication and passion. Wishing you a wonderful start to 2025!

ekosi,  
Savage

We create educational opportunities in correctional settings where the experiences of teaching and (un)learning challenge assumptions, stigmatization and inequality.

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## W2B GVI Collective

### 2024 W2B Instructor Training



“ It is so clear to me now, after the training, that trust and relationality are the most important lessons I can impart upon my students. Trust and relationality are the skills I want to teach because they are essential for building sustainable, liveable futures for all.  
- W2B Trainee, 2024 ”



“ This experience has been transformative in relation to how I see myself as a person as an educator and how I plan to facilitate education in classrooms or elsewhere.  
- W2B Trainee, 2024 ”



“ This was one of the most intentional, impactful, and ongoing training I have ever experienced. The way that inside and outside collective members seamlessly weaved their knowledge, skills and beings into a cohesive whole made this space a fertile garden for learning.  
- W2B Trainee, 2024 ”

We are amazed and excited at the continued interest in the W2B training. It was heartening to see so many applications from professors across Canada. It gives us hope that the W2B pedagogy will reach more and more classrooms, in prisons and universities alike. In May 2024, another cohort of W2B Instructors completed a 5-day training including two professors from Newfoundland, adding another province keen to offer W2B courses. Like other cohorts, the 2024 trainees allowed their academic walls to crumble and showed vulnerability in their willingness to learn.

- W2B GVI Collective

## GVI Collective Events

### Transformative Justice (TJ)/Conflict Resolution (CR) Facilitator Certification Training

- Organized as the W2B GVI Collective professional development and team building experience this fall, the TJ/CR Facilitator Certification was administrated through Rittenhouse and facilitated by OCC members Tiina Eldridge (ED) and Lorraine Pinnock

### An Evening with Anishnaabe author and journalist Tanya Talaga

- Recommended reading: *The Knowing*
- Recommended viewing: [The Knowing - CBC Gem](#)

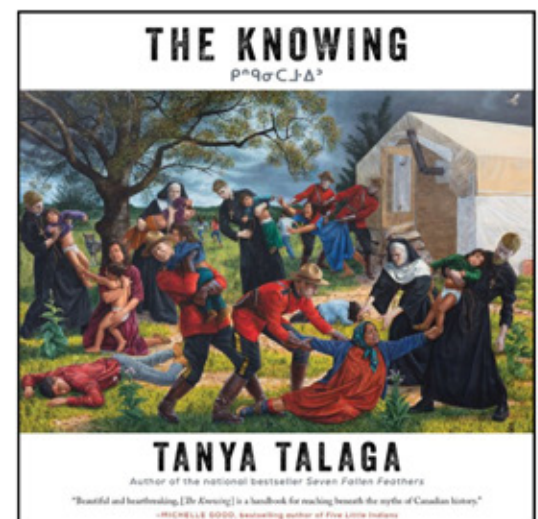


Photo retrieved from  
<https://www.harpercollins.ca/9781443467537/the-knowing/>



## W2B Ontario Community Collective (W2BCCO)

### OCC Member Rachel Fayter, PhD Thesis Defence - Dec 10, 2024

**Unbroken: Stories of Strength, Solidarity, and Resistance from Canadian Prisons Designated for Women**

During the annual Walls to Bridges 5-day instructor training at GVI in 2015, I met a criminology professor (Dr. Jennifer Kilty) from the University of Ottawa who encouraged me to apply to their PhD program upon my release from prison, and she offered to supervise my work. I began keeping a journal of my experiences inside and reading criminological literature. I noticed that this literature, much like pop culture, media, and "correctional" discourse, tends to use a deficit-based perspective focusing on the risks, needs, and vulnerabilities of criminalized women and gender-diverse people while neglecting their strengths, skills, solidarity, and resilience. My research provides a more wholistic understanding of incarcerated people's identities by challenging the prevalence of deficit-focused narratives and demonstrating the characteristics of resilient prisoners. I created a strength-based framework of prisoner resilience, based on healing and transformative justice, to guide data interpretation. Interviews were conducted with 13 key informants and 20 people who were incarcerated in federal prisons designated for women. My findings reveal that promoting criminalized people's strengths and fostering prisoner resilience can buffer the harmful impacts of imprisonment, support community re-entry, and contribute to transformative social change. Rather than interventions targeting the perceived deficits of criminalized people, a strengths-based approach, such as the W2B model, that promotes healing, resilience, and relational connections is needed to build safe, inclusive, caring communities.

- Rachel Fayter, W2B Ontario Community Collective Member



Jennifer Kilty (left) & Rachel Fayter (right)

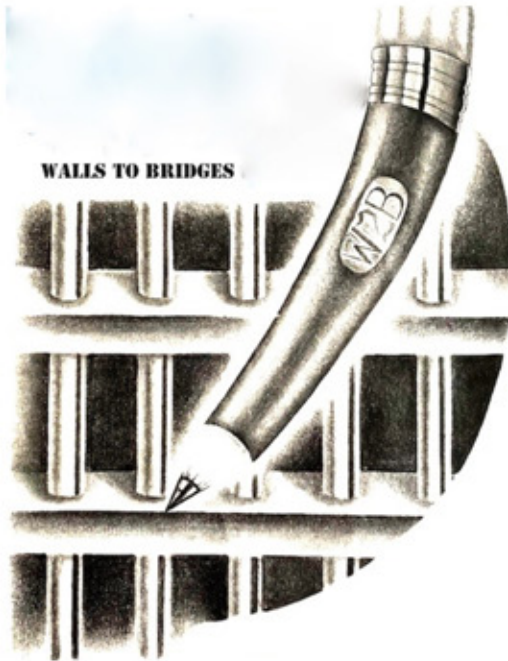
## UNESCO Montreal International Conference on Education in Prison

Weeks of planning and preparing for our presentation at the UNESCO Montreal International Conference on Education in Prison (Oct 16-18, 2024), were not in vain - and we couldn't be more thrilled! Collectively, we agreed on the following:

- It was really exciting to witness the collaboration of W2B folks connecting with Inside-Out members from the United States, with people from each group participating in one another's workshops. Networking and meeting people from all over the world who care about post-secondary education in prison was inspirational and hopeful!
- Our W2B program was well received and allowed us the opportunity to showcase a plethora of advantages in using our pedagogy to all stakeholders involved including incarcerated people, students, educational institutions, prison staff, etc.
- Bringing together educators from across the world allowed for a sharing of resources and potential advocacy. Even within Canada and programs like W2B, we are rarely able to share strategies. Learning from colleagues was a gift. There is great strength in knowing how many passionate advocates are working to provide valuable education and a different vision for the future.
- We all have a role to play in making sure everyone has the opportunity to improve. By learning from the best practices of different countries, we can ensure that no one is left behind; fostering an environment of care, support, and empowerment.
- The experience was deeply rewarding, as it allowed us to stand in solidarity with like-minded individuals who share a commitment to advancing social justice and creating positive, lasting change. The conference was an inspiring reminder of the collective power of education to break down barriers and build bridges toward equity and hope.







## University of Winnipeg & Stony Mountain Institution

The Walls to Bridges (W2B) group at University of Winnipeg has been around for a dozen years. W2B instructors in Manitoba have now facilitated over 50 courses at Stony Mountain Institution and at Women's Correctional Centre. W2B at University of Winnipeg is now offering courses in minimum, medium, and maximum security at Stony Mountain. There are many men at Stony Mountain who want more access to post-secondary education. For this reason, in the spring of 2024, W2B at University of Winnipeg hosted a training at Stony Mountain Institution. With support from Walls to Bridges Canada, the inside collective of 11 men from medium and minimum did an amazing job of working through the training for 13 new W2B instructors. In addition to covering W2B exercises and debriefing, course design, and community building, the inside collective wanted the training to reflect their unique experiences and knowledges. It was a great success.

- Kevin Walby

Art by Jack Nolin (left)

## Queen's University & Collins Bay

In the Spring of 2024, Walls to Bridges Ontario Community Collective (W2BOCC) and alumni from W2B classes at Collins Bay, facilitated a workshop at Queen's University, at the behest of Lisa Guenter and Dolleen Manning. This provided us an opportunity to connect, mentor and plant some seeds about a possible collective at Collins Bay. Looking forward to this becoming a reality!

Lisa Guenther facilitated another Walls to Bridges course this fall at Collins Bay Minimum. Professors at Queen's University continue to offer W2B courses both at the Minimum and Medium prisons in Kingston, ON.



## Wilfrid Laurier University & Grand Valley Institution For Women

I had the privilege of facilitating a third-year Law & Society course at Grand Valley Institution for Women (GVI) in Kitchener in the winter of 2024. It was the first time that a W2B course was offered in the minimum-security unit at GVI. With the phenomenal support of Nichelle, an inside Teaching Assistant, the course brought together 8 inside students and 10 outside students. The course was offered by the Faculty of Liberal Arts at Wilfrid Laurier University, and involved examining the intersections of globalization, law and injustice through a number of themes, such as climate crises, global poverty, and gendered and sexual violence. We began the course with the Kairos Blanket Exercise, which set the groundwork for our class and helped us better understand Indigenous histories, life experiences, and historical and current practices of colonialism on Turtle Island. We revisited and built on these teachings throughout the course as we explored colonialism more globally and its role in perpetuating many global injustices both historically and today. We are grateful for Elder Jackie and Teresa and Sarah (from Santele's Healing Circles) for joining our learning community and leading us through this exercise. The students decided to bring our class to a close by creating collective poems and individual art projects based on dominant themes of the course, which were showcased at the final ceremony. The creative projects included canvas art, beaded lanyards, embroidery, crocheted alter cloths, and a handmade dress and blazer sewn from scrap fabrics. The students wanted the ceremony to be engaging for the audience, so guests were invited to walk around and have conversations with the students about their creative projects. The success of our class and final ceremony would not have been possible without the support of the education department at GVI and the MSU management and staff. I also want to thank the Dean's Office in the Faculty of Liberal Arts at Wilfrid Laurier University (Brantford campus) for supporting this program and the W2B GVI Collective, with special thanks to Nichelle for all her help and support in making this class so meaningful and transformative for us all.

- Marcia Oliver, Department of Indigenous Studies, Law, and Social Justice, Law & Society Program





## Artists' Corner

Queen's University / Collins Bay Minimum -  
Kingston, Ontario

Images from W2B Course Final Project "Names Over Numbers"  
for PHIL 407: Power and Knowledge - facilitated by Professor Lisa  
Guenther, Philosophy Department, Queen's University



Art by entire class - each student contributed an image

WE ARE ONE  
NOT THE OTHER

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[info@wallstobridges.ca](mailto:info@wallstobridges.ca)  
 McMaster University - Walls to Bridges,  
 1280 Main Street W.  
 274 AN Bourns  
 Hamilton, ON  
 L8S 4L8



Real Life Out the Window by Carlos, Joey, and Morgan



## Panoptic by Jonathan