

New podcast aims to bring diverse 'Ancestral Voices' to the table



A new podcast aims to bring 'Ancestral Voices' from diverse backgrounds to the table.

Ancestral Voices: We Belong, a new monthly podcast, is led by Traditional Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley and Jamaican Canadian Storyteller and Lawyer Maxine Gordon Palomino.

The aim of the podcast, which is facilitated by Neighbour Media, is to 'celebrate the rich narratives of Indigenous, Caribbean and Black communities.'

The program was launched on February 25 at Aurora Town Square with Gordon Palomino saying their collective aim of the podcast is 'getting to know ourselves, getting to know others' and share perspectives 'even those that don't align 'eye to eye' all the time.

'Our journey started in 2020,' said Wheatley. 'A mutual friend said, 'I think the two of you would sync together really well.' At the time, Maxine had a vision and she was working on a partnership with libraries to try and bring this vision forward, and I thought that was a great idea. She really led that part of the project for us and we had a remarkable time with that.

'We're at 2025 [and] five years in we're still getting to know each other.'

Wheatley says she is of Potawatomie, Ojibwe and Caribbean ancestry and, therefore, lives at 'that intersectionality of people of colour' and she wants to 'honour all I am and all that travels through me.'

'This has allowed me to really connect with my co-lead Maxine so powerfully and intimately,' she said. 'We feel and we act like sisters. All the things that come with sisterhood we have gone through and we continue to go through, and we have a great respect for each other.'

Those sisterly bonds were underscored by Gordon Palomino.

'This is what Ancestral Voices is about: getting to know ourselves, getting to know others ' some don't necessarily see eye to eye all the time, but you can see things from different perspectives,' she said. 'We tend to have two different approaches to most things and this is where the sisterhood thing comes in. Each of us, with our creativity and our differences, we're able to make this project a home; we can listen to the podcast, you will hear the different tones and approaches' and I think that is what will make it interesting.'

As the monthly podcast develops, Wheatley and Maxine Gordon are fielding any and all guest suggestions, stating they "don't want to be limited" in who sits opposite them at the microphone.

"We just want to highlight Indigenous, Black, African and Caribbean voices in a platform that is safe and welcoming," says Wheatley, adding this includes cultural expressions of the past, present and future. "I hope the guests that we have on the podcast capture your interest and that you're able to like, share, and encourage other people to follow us.

"One of our superhero powers is freewill use it wisely. Just make very good choices for the greater good, from your heart first. The podcast is very much our heart-speak. We're not trying to bother or criticize anybody but we're trying to embrace a sense of unity."

By Brock Weir