Building Relationships, Improving Outcomes: Urban Aboriginal Communities Collaborating for Change

March 22-23, 2016
Sheraton Centre • Toronto, Ontario
Greetings!

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2016 Urban Aboriginal Forum: Building Relationships and Improving Outcomes. The Métis Nation of Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, and the Ontario Native Women’s Association, with the support of the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, have worked collaboratively over the past few months to bring together community leaders and partner organizations to share wise community practices in relationship-building, networking, partnerships, and community development.

We hope you find these two days informative and helpful in your work as you build bridges across communities. It is our hope the Forum will contribute to improving the well-being of urban Indigenous communities and all communities across the province.

We thank you for joining us and look forward to connecting with you over the next two days and in the weeks and months after the Forum.

Miigwetch/Nya:weh/Marsi/Thank you

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### Conference Agenda

**DAY 1: MARCH 22, 2016**

**DOMINION BALLROOM**

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<td>8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Traditional Opening</td>
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<td>9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Comments</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Address</td>
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<td>10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Community Partnership Panels</td>
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**DOMINION BALLROOM**

**PANEL 1:**

Municipal Level Collaborations With Aboriginal Services Providers In Timmins And Ottawa

- Veronica Nicholson, Timmins Native Friendship Centre
- Dave Landers, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board
- Marc Marcile, Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition
- Clara Freire, City of Ottawa
- Moderator: Rebecca Carman

**DOMINION FOYER**

**PANEL 2:**

Addressing The Needs Of Children And Families

- Karen Baker-Anderson, Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre
- Tracy Engleking, Ottawa Children’s Aid Society
- Wanda Botford, Métis Nation of Ontario
- Moderator: Stan Williams

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**Indigenous Our Minds**

First Nation Youth Drum

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Acknowledgements
12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. Lunch Provided

1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Community Partnership Workshops

**WORKSHOP A**
Building Housing For Vulnerable Families
Sydney Blum, WoodGreen
Al Day, N’Amerind Friendship Centre
Moderator: Kimberleigh Kofoed

**WORKSHOP B**
Wise Practices In Health Partnerships
Alethia Kewayosh, Cancer Care Ontario
Charles Morris, Wequedong Lodge
Moderator: Angela Carman

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Break

2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Community Partnership Workshops & Panels

**WORKSHOP E**
Creating Opportunities For Youth
Karen Chowhan, United Native Friendship Centre
Glenda Henderson, Shooniyaa Wa-Bitong
Moderator: Rebecca Carman

**WORKSHOP PANEL 3**
Wise Practices In District School Board Relationships With Community
Crystal Kingston, Urban Aboriginal School
Roni Dal Ciri, Algoma District School Board
Anna Trudel, Métis Nation of Ontario
Joseph Maurice, Algoma School Board
Moderator: Stan Williams

4:00 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Day One Highlights
Wanda Brascoupe-Peters
Executive Director, Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal People in Canada

4:20 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Métis Fiddlers and Dancers from the Métis Nation of Ontario
Gerald Lavallee
Genevieve Routhier
Alicia Blore
Liam Blore

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**DAY 2: MARCH 23, 2016**

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Breakfast

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Opening Comments
Sylvia Maracle, Executive Director, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
Cora McGuire-Cyrette, Executive Director, Ontario Native Women’s Association
Doug Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, Métis Nation of Ontario

9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Reconciliation Panel
Making Reconciliation Happen In Mainstream Institutions
Laura Hall, Ontario Native Women’s Association
Brian Tucker, Métis Nation of Ontario
Ellen Blais, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network
Maya Chacaboy, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Aboriginal Cultural Competency

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Networking Break
11:00 a.m. – noon  Community Partnership Workshops

**WORKSHOP G**  HURON ROOM

Building Communities And Addressing Systemic Change Through Collaboration And Partnership
Crystal Basii, Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council
Israt Ahmed, Social Planning Toronto
Moderator: Rebecca Carmen

**WORKSHOP H**  CITY HALL

Private Sector Partnerships
Joanne Meyer, Métis Nation of Ontario
John Borvin, Union Gas
Rachel Pineault, Detour Gold
Moderator: Sabine Saroyan

**WORKSHOP I**  KENT ROOM

Addressing Sexual Health Needs In Thunder Bay
Collin Graham, Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy
Jolene Biving, Elevate NWI
Moderator: Angel Maracle

**WORKSHOP J**  KENORA ROOM

Community Engagement, Cultural Competency
Tanis Thompson, Ontario Native Women's Association
Nancy Hernandez-Basurto, Thunder Bay Suicide Task Force
Moderator: Melissa Deleary

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**PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Israt Ahmed**
Israt Ahmed works as Senior Community Planner at Social Planning Toronto coordinating civic engagement initiatives, and leading knowledge mobilization actions for improved public policy. She coordinates city-wide campaigns and local initiatives to make the city equitable, accessible and affordable for Torontonians. She is currently coordinating Commitment to Community (C2C)—a broad-based network that promotes equitable engagement around city of Toronto’s poverty reduction strategy. Israt is the current president and chair of the board at West Scarborough Community Legal Clinic and teaches at Ryerson, UTSC, and York University.

**Anne-Marie Armstrong**
Anne-Marie Armstrong is a proud Métis woman, born and raised in the Rainy River District. She and her husband moved to Thunder Bay in 1972 where they raised their six children. During that time Anne-Marie was very involved in Girl Guides and Scouting and as a volunteer with her church and in the community. She worked with the Volunteer Bureau of Thunder Bay, financial institutions and in the service industry and a private child care provider. Anne-Marie and her husband moved back to the Fort Frances area twelve years ago where she embarked on her career with the Métis Nation of Ontario as The Métis Healthy Babies, Healthy Children co-ordinator. Family is very important and the move meant that they were closer to their parents and siblings and many nieces and nephews. Anne-Marie is also blessed with eight beautiful grandchildren.

Anne-Marie thrives on being outdoors and spends many hours harvesting wild berries, gardening, canoeing, and snowshoeing. She also enjoys music, jigging, reading and crafting and is learning more about the wild plants growing in her area. Anne-Marie also enjoys cooking home cooked meals and baking breads and desserts. Her bucket list is long and she hopes to travel and explore our country as time goes on.

**Roslynn Baird**
Roslynn Baird is the Executive Director of the Southern Ontario Aboriginal Diabetes Strategy (SOADIS) for the last 16 years. She is a mother of one and a proud woman of mixed heritage, Mohawk from Six Nations of the Grand River and English. She began working in Diabetes prevention in 1996 at the Niagara Regional Native Centre, facilitating a talking circle. In 1997 she began working for the SOADIS as a Regional Diabetes Worker before advancing into the Executive Director position. She continues to fight the epidemic in Aboriginal communities.

Roslynn has sat on national boards and forums for Diabetes prevention. She is currently the chair of the Indigenous Health Network in the HNHB LHIN region. She was awarded the partnership award on behalf of the organizations on our network as presented by De Dwa Da Dehs Nye>=>. She is honored to work alongside so many dedicated people.
Karen Baker-Anderson
Karen has been involved with the Ottawa Inuit community for twenty years. As the founder and Executive Director of the Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre (OICC) she oversees all programs and services. Karen is the recipient of the Children’s Aid Society of Ottawa’s Service Providers Award, the Community Builder Award and the Success by 6 Family Friendly Workplace Award. OICC supports Inuit children and youth in Ottawa, to become strong, healthy and proud community members with knowledge of their culture, connection to the local Inuit community, equitable access to services and supported by their families. She does this through culturally strength-based programs and individualized services for the children, youth and their families that improve their ability to live a good life.

This work is not done in isolation. Karen seeks out like-minded partners. For the past 10 years she has been on a journey with the Ottawa Children’s Aid Society. A journey that at times has been difficult but knows it is the right thing to do for aboriginal children and Aboriginal communities.

Jolene Banning
Jolene Banning is the IDU HCV Community Developer at Elevate NWO. Born and raised in Thunder Bay, Jolene earned a diploma with honours from Confederation College in the Native Child and Family Worker Program. Her experience in the field also includes working at a women’s shelter while serving on the board of another. More recently, Jolene spent over a decade working at CBC Radio in Thunder Bay, establishing a weekly entertainment column, which continues today. While working in media, she honed her voice and now uses it to advocate for people who have experienced social marginalization.

Elevate NWO is a not-for-profit, community-based organization providing services and opportunities for people affected by HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis C in Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario for over 30 years. The agency understands the importance of partnering with Indigenous communities in order to properly and effectively meet the needs of a vast region.

Crystal Basi
Crystal Basi is the Executive Director of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC), a non-profit that supports 10 member agencies through community research, policy, advocacy and engagement. Originally from Sudbury, Crystal has lived in Toronto for 15 years and has a rich experience within the charitable sector. Previous to her current position, Crystal was the Executive Director of the Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto. She holds a Masters degree in Community Development and Adult Education and wrote a thesis exploring research relationships between Indigenous communities and institutions using an Indigenous model. In 2012 Crystal was a Vital Peoples Award recipient from the Toronto Community Foundation. Crystal is of mixed Mohawk, French Canadian and Scandinavian heritage.

Gloria Bergner
Gloria Bergner is a very active senior and has been volunteering with the Healthy Living Food Box Program for many years. She is also dedicated many hours within the community of Fort Frances volunteering with the Legion Auxiliary Rainycrest Auxiliary, at Lowey’s Greenhouse & Market. Gloria also finds time to organize exercise classes which are open to anyone interested.

Gloria enjoys taking part in year round outdoor activities. She enjoys gardening, harvesting berries, baking and cooking.

Gloria is the mother of three children and proud grandmother ten times over.

Leah Bergstrom
Leah is a proud member of the Metis Nation, her roots being grounded in Mohawk and French ancestry.

Since November 2013 she has been employed as the Aboriginal Patient Navigator with the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre. Prior to this she was faculty with the School of Aboriginal Studies in the Aboriginal Community and Social Development program at Georgian College, Barrie ON. She holds a B.A. in psychology and Indigenous studies from Laurentian University, has a diploma in Developmental Services Work from Georgian College and post graduate studies in Behavioural Sciences with Algonquin College. She is currently working towards a Master’s Degree in Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency with the University of Toronto.

For over 25 years Leah has been involved in the Human Services Field and enjoyed a variety of experiences throughout her professional career. Leah regularly finds herself in positions that draw on her innate and natural ability to act as an intermediary and strong advocate for the people and process development she so enjoys supporting.

Ellen Blais
Ellen Kanika Tsi Tsa Blais is from the Oneida Nation of the Thames and is an Aboriginal midwife. She is the mother of three children, Derek, Genevieve and Sarah. She works as the Aboriginal Health Consultant Lead for the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network and works part time as a Policy Analyst for Aboriginal midwifery at the Association of Ontario Midwives. She currently holds the position of National Co-Chair for the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives. Ellen is a co-founder of Seventh Generation Midwives of Toronto which is now housed above the Toronto Birth Centre. As an Indigenous adoptee, Ellen believes in the reclamation of Indigenous birth practices and ceremony as integral to the identity and health of Indigenous peoples.

Sydney Blum
As WoodGreen’s Director of Community Impact and Strategic Relations, Sydney Blum is responsible for establishing new local initiatives as well as facilitating inter-sectoral relationships and program development opportunities with partner communities outside of Toronto. Sydney’s portfolio includes the replication of WoodGreen’s award-winning Homeward Bound program, the Urban Aboriginal Homeward Bound Project in partnership with OFICF and 5 Friendship Centres, creation of a new program for youth aging out of care in Toronto, exploring social finance opportunities, WoodGreen’s SROI practice, and other strategic initiatives. Sydney led the development of a partnership with the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake ke which resulted in a 2-day Wisdom Exchange. Over the past 2 years Sydney has helped raise more than $1.5 million for WoodGreen and its collaborative partners. Sydney has a BA in Sociology from the University of Chicago and her MSc in Ecological Economics from University of Edinburgh. She has also completed the first phase of her Social Return on Investment (SROI) Practitioner Accreditation.

Spending time with her family and friends is very important and she can be counted on when needed. Gloria fills the room with sunshine with her beautiful smile and bubbling laugh. She makes everyone around her feel at ease.

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John Bonin
John Bonin is the Manager, Economic Development First Nations and Métis Affairs for Union Gas. In this role, John is responsible for policy development, support and liaison with Ontario's First Nations and Métis peoples, with a strong focus on initiating and creating economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses. He also provides policies and support for provincial ministry relations. John has worked for Union Gas for 37 years in various management positions including Government/Municipal relations, operations, construction, maintenance, sales and service across the Ontario operations. John also assisted in the start-up of energy companies: Union Energy in Ontario and Maritime NRGE in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. John received an Ontario College Diploma in Business Management Studies, a Strategic Planning Certificate from Queens University and has been very active in leadership roles with various Chambers of Commerce, Rotary and Lions Clubs across Ontario.

Wanda Botsford
Wanda Botsford is an Education Officer with the Métis Nation of Ontario where she focuses on Early Learning to Grade 12 education. Prior to her position with the MNO, Wanda was a consultant, specializing in marketing and public education for municipal and provincial governments, private industry, political and marketing groups. She was strongly affected by historical stories of oppression of First Nation, Métis and Inuit people, and is a strong advocate for harmony and reconciliation. Wanda is a Métis Nation of Ontario representative on a variety of provincial and local committees, advisory groups, and task forces. She has a passion for telling stories about Métis ancestors; navigating Métis inclusion in the school curriculum and school board activities; reinvigorating Métis culture; supporting students and educators; creating positive school environments for all children; and building strong partnerships.

Wanda Brascoupe Peters
Wanda is Bear Clan, a Haudenosaunee/Algonquin and member of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabek. Philanthropy is a common bond Indigenous and the non-Indigenous societies share. It is here Wanda’s flourishes in creating spaces for mutual partnerships with reciprocal learnings and a longer term goal of reconciliation in Canada. Her charitable activities began as a teaching in reciprocity, a fundamental component of global Indigenous cultures. With fifteen years of experience at a local, regional and national level her skills include fundraising, advocacy and creating learning opportunities to understand philanthropy and Indigenous realities in Canada.

Known to many as a natural communicator and innate bridge builder, Wanda brings her view that reciprocity and reconciliation are action-oriented words when we allow them to be. It is these skills she enthusiastically brings to her position as the Executive Director of The Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada and as your Master of Ceremonies. She and her husband live in unceded Algonquin territory, also known as Ottawa, with their 3 daughters.

Maya Chacaby
Maya Chacaby (Ja-kaw-bay) is Anishinaabe, Beaver clan from Kaministiquia. She is the Senior Researcher at the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. Maya has been leading Cultural Competency Training sessions across the province for the last three years. She has trained over 3000 participants from District School Boards, Health Service Providers, Hospitals, Law Enforcement, Children’s Aid, Municipal leadership, Provincial Ministries and Tribal Councils. Maya holds an M.A. in Adult Education and Community Development from the University of Toronto. Her research and publications include Aboriginal worldviews and pedagogues, Aboriginal research methodologies, Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe Language) revitalization and policy work in ending violence against Aboriginal women. In addition to designing and delivering Aboriginal cultural competency training sessions across the province, Maya teaches linguistics and sociology at York University and has designed several Aboriginal youth-based leadership and education initiatives provincially. Maya is committed to fulfilling the vision put forward by the Elders to remember where we come from and to use our teachings and worldview to improve our quality of life for generations to come.

Karen Chowhan
For 8 years, Karen Chowhan has worked at the Friendship Centre in the Employment Program and as the Apatisiwin Employment Counsellor for about 5 years. She is married 30 years to her husband and have 2 wonderful daughters as well as a granddaughter and a grandson. She comes from a family of 10 children and has lived in Fort Frances all her life.

Karen’s very first summer job was with the United Native Friendship Centre as a student when she was 15 years old, little did she know that this would become a full-circle, as she plans for the Friendship Centre to be my last place of employment. This Partnership began in April of 2013 when Karen heard about the MNRF’s Stewardship Youth Ranger Program through the online SYR Poster Advertisement. By chance, She had looked at the MNRF website in passing and saw the word “partnerships”. She knew the importance of this and our interventions but also recognized the opportunity for our aboriginal youth. Steve Latimer who is the Career Developer made a few phone calls to find some details and then Karen started attending meetings with MNRF & Shooniyaa We-Bitong to find out more. From there, together they developed an awesome working group to collaborate with the management team. They have an MOU in place and annual M&E of the program and partnership to keep them on task. Each year they have made improvements for the youth to make this program better and more successful than the last.

Al Day
Executive Director, N’Amerind Friendship Centre
Bio and Picture not available at time of print.

Tracy Engelking
Tracy Engelking graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School and was called to the Bar in 1992, at which time she entered into private practice in Family Law, and predominately represented parents in Child and Family Services Act matters for a period of six years. In 1998, she joined the Children’s Aid Society of Ottawa as in-house counsel, and in October of 2000 became its’ Senior Legal Counsel. In addition to being active on several local committees, including the Family Law Bench and Bar Committee, the CFSA Subcommittee of the Bench and Bar and the Community Resource and Liaison Committee, she sits on the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies’ Aboriginal Services Advisory Committee, and is a member of the provincial Senior Counsel Networking Group. Tracy also is the current Co-Chair of the CAS of Ottawa, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Liaison Committee.
Roni Dal Cin

Roni Dal Cin has been in education since 1987 after receiving his Bachelor of Musical Arts Degree and Bachelor of Education Degree from the University of Western Ontario. He began his career as a music teacher at St. Peters High School in Peterborough before moving back home to his hometown of Sault Ste. Marie. From there he continued teaching music before becoming a Vice Principal for the Algoma District School Board in 2006. He is currently the Vice Principal of the Algoma Education Connection program which is comprised of several alternative learning programs including the Urban Aboriginal School.

Debbie Ferris-Giammattoella

Debbie spent a summer working on the Geriatric Unit at what was then known as the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre. She had never worked with seniors before nor encountered anyone with severe mental health issues. She soon found herself helping them with the most intimate acts of everyday life. It shaped her life.

After 10 years as a Domestic Goddess (or, Stay-at-Home-Mom) and Yoga Instructor, she entered the working world as a Physiotherapy Assistant in Nursing Homes. It was her job to look for a resident’s physical strengths and help them to maximize their abilities in an environment where it is important to define limitations. She found that true wellness is not just a physical practice, but a holistic journey.

Debbie came to work at the Métis Nation of Ontario as the Community Support Services Coordinator because of the more traditional belief to wellness. She now goes into senior’s homes and helps them identify and then remove any barriers they feel they have in achieving a good quality of life through programs or through referrals. Debbie is finishing her degree in Gerontology through distance education classes, while supplementing this knowledge with courses on Alternative Medicine.

Clara Freire

Clara Freire is currently employed as Manager, Strategic Community Initiatives, in the Community and Social Services Dept. at the City of Ottawa. In this capacity she manages various community engagement and strategic initiatives. She currently oversees the Older Adult Plan, the Aboriginal Working Committee, Municipal Immigration Strategy, the City’s role in the Community Development Framework and other initiatives such as the Equity and Inclusion Lens implementation and social policy work. Clara has worked for the City for 15 years and prior to her current position, worked in the area of housing and homelessness both with the City and in the community. She has a Masters Degree in Social Work.

Rae-Anna Gardner

Rae-Anna began her career with the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in 2012 as Project Developer for the Navigating Employment Pathways Project and within a few months, began to oversee the program as the Project Coordinator. In partnership with Ontario Tourism and Education Corporation, the endeavor provided training and workplace experience to aboriginal people in the Hospitality Tourism sector. Following the end of the project, Rae-Anna was promoted to the position of Supervisor of Labour Market Projects for the Education and Training Branch of the MNO. As part of her role, she continues to oversee a variety of developments including the Navigating Employment Pathways Youth Program. Rae-Anna earned a Bachelor of Arts (History) and Bachelor of Education from Nipissing University and prior to coming to the Métis Nation of Ontario, had over 5 years’ experience in managing an Adult Education Centre as well as teaching abroad.

Collin Graham

Collin was born and raised in Thunder Bay, Ontario. His home community is Ojibigwe’s Babig’ning First Nation which is just outside of Kenora in Northwestern Ontario. He is fun, entertaining and passionate and he carries this spirit into his work. Collin began his life’s work at the Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy in 2006. This man loves an audience! While providing current, relevant teachings and education about HIV and AIDS he has become known for creatively and entertainingly tailoring his presentation to suit the audience.

He is extremely passionate about working with and educating Youth and strongly believes that this is the future; it is here where the social and health sciences need to focus their attention. Empowering youth through education and choice about harm reduction needs to become commonplace in order to continue to move forward.

Laura Hall

Laura Hall is the current Research and Policy Director for the Ontario Native Women’s Association. As a University educator, she has taught and completed research initiatives across a range of Indigenous health, social services, governance and economic concerns. Her family background includes Haudenosaunee and British-Canadian roots. Laura’s specializations include decolonizing research methodologies, culturally based knowledge engagement, and experiential education—in the gardens, in the bush, or around a circle—for Indigenous youth and women.

Glenda Henderson

Glenda Henderson is a member of Mitanjigamig First Nation located one hour northwest of Fort Frances, ON, Muskrat Clan, mother of one daughter and a jingle dancer. Education: General Arts Science Diploma; Confederation College & Bachelor of Arts – Lakehead University expected graduation date: June 2016. Major: Indigenous Learning. Past Work Experience: Finance Administrator, Executive Assistant, Council Member for my community Community: Board Member involvement with several local boards in Tribal Area in various capacities; Chair, Vice-Chair of social, education, mental health organizations. I have retained employment as the Eastern Area Program Officer for Shooniyaa Wa-Bitung Training and Employment for the Treaty No 3 Area in July 2013. Duties include: Provide support to the Eastern Area First Nations with regards to employment and training initiatives; workforce development, strategic planning, including training needs identification, proposal development, project implementation, and evaluation; Develop partnerships with local partners and industry. Provide individuals employment counselling Treaty #3 members; Manage all program activity within the budget & Monitor all Eastern Area contract projects, including special projects. This special project includes the Stewardship Youth Program which is a Partnership with Ministry of Natural Resources & United Native Friendship Centre and began in August 2013. The Stewardship Program is currently in the discussion phase of expansion to Kenora District which we are proud to share.

Nancy Hernandez- Basurto

Nancy is a public health nurse for the Injury Prevention and Substance Use team at the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Her portfolio consists of substance use education and mental health promotion. She is the chair of the drug awareness committee which is a coalition associated with the broader Thunder Bay Drug Strategy that is dedicated to raising awareness, providing education and taking part in prevention initiatives as they relate to substance use. As part of her mental health promotion portfolio Nancy is an executive member of the youth suicide prevention task force taking lead roles in strategic planning and youth engagement initiatives. When she’s not in the office
you can find her in the gym, coaching a bootcamp or crossfit class, enjoying the great company of her friends, partner and awesome dog Jasper or exploring the breath taking outdoor sights of Northern Ontario via snowboard, x-country ski or hiking trails.

**Alethea Kewayosh**  

Alethea Kewayosh is the Director Aboriginal Cancer Control for Cancer Care Ontario (CCO). This position is responsible for Aboriginal cancer control planning and coordination at CCO, and serves as the secretariat to the Joint Ontario Aboriginal Cancer Care Committee, a committee with representation from the four First Nations Provincial Territorial Organizations, the Independent First Nations, Metis Nation of Ontario, Inuit, Ontario Native Women’s Association, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres.

Alethea has long been an advocate for the improved health and well-being of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario, she believes the best approach to working with Aboriginal peoples is to be respectful of the diversity of the First Nation, Inuit and Metis peoples and their communities, knowledgeable of their governance and political protocols and considerate of the need to develop regular engagement and dialogue with each of the groups that lead to relationships based on trust and mutual respect. Alethea launched the Aboriginal Cancer Strategies II (2012 to 2015) and III (2015 to 2019) which epitomizes her approach to working with First Nations, Inuit and Metis people through direct engagement with each nation, now being formally established through the development of Relationship Protocols.

Alethea is Odawa and also has close family ties to the Pottawatomi and Chippewa Nations, she maintains a close affiliation with her home community of Walpole Island First Nation to visit family, relatives and to participate in community events.

**Debra Kincaid**  

City Clerk/Community Transportation Project Manager, City of Dryden

Debra is the City Clerk for the City of Dryden, and has over 32 years of diverse, progressive public sector experience in the municipal, economic development and social service sectors as a front line worker, advocate, leader and senior manager.

Debra Kincaid was born in Kenora and raised in communities throughout Northwestern Ontario living in the City of Dryden since 1994. The City of Dryden like many northern municipalities recognizes a demographic and cultural shift in their community. Mayor and Council acknowledge this change and offer strong support for the City’s engagement and leadership in local initiatives like the Dryden Urban Aboriginal Action Plan. They are committed to working with all local stakeholders and community leaders to improve programs and services delivery systems for Aboriginal people in our urban communities.

The City of Dryden delivers accessible transportation for residents requiring specialized lift services and for seniors. Debra has been actively involved in local transportation initiatives over the past 2 years collaboratively working with local stakeholders including the Dryden Native Friendship Centre to identify gaps/solutions in public transportation services and is leading the Ministry of Transportation funded Community Transportation Pilot Project.

**Crystal Kingston**  

Crystal Kingston has been working in the social services field since graduating from Lake Superior State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in human services and two associate degrees in child development and addictions. She began working for the Indian Friendship Centre as the literacy coordinator before adding the urban aboriginal adult alternative high school program to her responsibilities. Crystal belongs to the bear clan and is a Lac Seul First Nation Band member.

**Dave Landers**  

Chief Administrative Officer, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board

As the Chief Administrative Officer of the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB), Dave is responsible for overseeing the provision and delivery of Ontario Works, Social Housing, Children’s Services, Emergency Medical Services, Homelessness Prevention Programs and Community Resource Centres throughout the District of Cochrane. He began his career in municipal social services as a case worker with the City of Timmins Department of Social & Family Services before Local Services Realignment led to the creation of DSSABs in Northern Ontario in 1999. Dave was named as the Chief Administrative Officer in 2004.

As well as being the current President of the Cochrane District Social Planning Council and the Secretary-Treasurer of the NCSDA, David has participated on many municipal and provincial committees on social services and government. He is a Past-President of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) and has participated in numerous government task force and working groups on behalf of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

**Sally Ledger**  

Sally Ledger is a grassroots Woodlands Metis, who originates from the small hamlet of Jellicoe, in Northwestern Ontario. Ms. Ledger has a diverse skills set & over 25 years’ experience working with & advocating for Urban Aboriginal people in Ontario, at various levels.

Sally is currently the Executive Director of the Dryden Native Friendship Centre (DNFC). With her leadership and determination, the DNFC has grown from a Centre in Difficulty with a significant deficit in 2009, to an active Urban Aboriginal Hub Agency, which administers over $1M in various government program funds. DNFC has a community membership of over 200 and is actively engaged with numerous community partners to improve access to services for Dryden’s Urban Aboriginal people.

**Joe Maurice**  

Joe Maurice is a Superintendent of Education with the Algoma District School Board. In his 8 years within this role, Joe has held a diverse number of portfolios including secondary education programming, secondary staffing, student success, adult and continuing education, and more recently First Nation, Metis and Inuit programming. Within all of these portfolios Joe has worked closely with First Nation, Metis and Inuit partners in Sault Ste. Marie and across the Algoma District School Board to support student achievement, engagement and well-being. Prior to becoming Superintendent, Joe worked as a secondary Principal, Vice Principal and teacher with the Algoma District School Board, and taught grades 8 to 12 for four years at Eenchokay Birchstick School in Pikangikum First Nation.

**Marc Maracle**  

Marc is a Mohawk from the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. Marc has been involved with First Nations and Aboriginal issues over the course of his 20 year professional career. His initial background was in architectural design and the preparation of construction documents as well as in capital project management. Marc’s background also includes community development; economic development; program/project design, coordination and management; program/project evaluation; negotiations for federal transfers of program management; communications; facilitation; conflict resolution; and, strategic planning.
Marc has worked as a Consultant, as a Senior Policy Advisor with the National Aboriginal Management Board at Human Resources Development Canada and as the Executive Director of the National Association of Friendship Centres. Marc joined Gignoul Housing as the Executive Director in the spring of 2004.

**Sylvia Maracle**

Sylvia Maracle (SKONAGANLEH:RA) is a Mohawk from the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. She is a member of the Wolf Clan. A passionate advocate for urban Indigenous people and women’s issues, Sylvia Maracle is at the forefront of change.

Sylvia has been involved in the Indigenous Friendship Centre Movement for over 30 years, and has served as the Executive Director of the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) for much of that time. She has also served as the President of the Native Women’s Resource Centre (NWRC), President of Native Child & Family Services of Toronto (NCFPS), and Co-Chair of the City of Toronto Taskforce on Access and Equity.

She has fundamentally altered the landscape for urban Indigenous programs and policies through her tireless work ethic, her ability to foresee emerging issues and her inability to accept no for an answer. Her achievements and work with the National Association of Friendship Centres, the Native Women’s Association of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, National Aboriginal Head Start and a long list of regional and local organizations are internationally renowned.

Sylvia Maracle was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and holds an Honorary Doctorate of Laws in Management and Economics from the University of Guelph, and has been awarded a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in Public Service.

Ms. Maracle is a lecturer on urban development, women’s issues, most notably on ending violence against Indigenous women and girls, and the cultural revitalization of her people. She has published various articles on these topics and has been recognized as a primary shaper of culture-based management principles.

**Cora McGuire-Cyrette**

Executive Director, Ontario Native Women’s Association

Originally from Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek, located in Robinson Superior Treaty Area, Cora-Lee McGuire-Cyrette has completed an undergraduate degree in Bachelor of the Arts, with a double major concentration in Indigenous Learning and Sociology from Lakehead University. Her experience with the Ontario Native Women’s Association includes numerous managerial positions including Interim Executive Director for ONWA in 2008-09. She has developed and implemented culturally safe violence prevention and intervention programs. She has trained and mentored many volunteers and staff within the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy programs.

**Constance McKnight**

Constance McKnight, a Métis woman of Moose-Cree heritage, is the Executive Director of the De dwa da dehs nye> Aboriginal Health Centre in Hamilton, Brantford and Niagara.

She is a wife, mother and auntie.

Currently, she is also serves as Aboriginal Constituency Member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Ontario Health Centres, and as a Public Member of the Consent and Capacity Board of Ontario.

She is a founding member and past Chair of the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health, is the former Executive Director of the National Network for Mental Health, and has a substantial history working within the mental health and cross-disability sector nationally.

As a mental health leader, Constance worked hard to support the move of mental health to the front of the Federal Agenda. For her leadership nationally, she was awarded with The Council of Canadians with Disabilities National Award in 2005.

Constance’s passion is to help build stronger communities, and resources, through partnership and collaboration.

**Joanne Meyer**

Joanne Meyer is the Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the Métis Nation of Ontario. Prior to joining the Métis Nation of Ontario, Ms. Meyer held positions with the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Secretariat and both the federal and Ontario governments.

**Charles Morris**

Charles Morris is from the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inniniwig First Nation (formerly known as Big Trout Lake), which is geographically located in the northern half of Northwestern Ontario. Ki is an isolated and/or remote, fly-in community located 275 air miles north of Sioux Lookout. He was born in Ki, where he resided for the first fourteen years of his life prior to attending residential school at Sault Ste. Marie for one year. Morris subsequently attended high school at Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay.

Culturally, Morris is of northern Ojibwe descent (now better known as Oji-Cree). He is married to Marion (nee Sainnawap) now for over forty years, and they have three surviving children and nine grandchildren. In his varied career he has worked as a labourer, as an Agency Assistant with INAC, as a research worker with NAN and with Ki as well as being a Band Councillor with Ki for five years. Morris has been the Executive Director of Wequedong Lodge for the past sixteen years. He has attained a three year social arts university degree.

**Veronica Nicholson**

Veronica Nicholson is Anishnawbe from the Michipicoten First Nation on the north eastern shores of Lake Superior. She has considerable experience working with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations in administrative and business management, leadership development, community economic development, strategic planning, capital project management and health service planning.

She has been involved with the Friendship Centre Movement for many years, and is currently the Executive Director of the #1 ranked friendship centre in Canada the Timmins Native Friendship Centre. She has deep roots where she lives and continues to be actively involved with community development and social change that address the needs of urban Aboriginal people. Her community involvement is highly regarded through her ongoing leadership and participation on local boards and advisory committees. Veronica sees endless merit in bringing people from diverse cultures, ages, and backgrounds together to engage in practical dialogue and community driven research.
Rachel Pineault
Rachel Pineault, Vice President, Human Resources and Aboriginal Affairs at Detour Gold, is a results-focused Human Resources Leader with extensive senior management experience and proven success developing and implementing strategic HR initiatives and Aboriginal engagement to drive organizational effectiveness, on both corporate and operational levels.
Over the course of her career, Ms. Pineault has held prime responsibility for Aboriginal engagement strategy. A recognized industry expert in this arena, she has successfully co-negotiated and implemented Impact Benefits Agreements with multiple First Nations groups as well as the first mining agreement with the Métis Nation of Ontario. Each Agreement reached has been fundamental to establishing and validating the respective operation’s social license to operate. Once in place, Ms. Pineault effectively managed each relationship to ensure that both party’s interests were respected, and that the benefits committed to communities were realized and maximized.

Ms. Pineault currently sits as a Board Member of the International Mining Advisory Board – Goodman School of Mining, a member of the CHRO Advisory Council of the Human Resources Professional Association of Ontario and a past Governor on the Board of Northern College and a member of the Executive Committee as well. Ms. Pineault has recently received her Executive professional designation through the HRPA of Ontario.

Deborah Richardson
Deborah obtained her undergraduate degree in Sociology and Law from Carleton University and completed her Bachelor of Laws at the University of Ottawa and was called to the Bar in 1996.
Deborah began her career in the finance industry where she worked in business banking before becoming the Manager of Diversity for the Royal Bank of Canada. In 1999, she was appointed Executive Director of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, and then served as Director of Operations and Business Development for the OI Group of Companies.
In 2004, Deborah was recruited into the federal public service as Associate Regional Director General for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Affairs Canada. In 2007, she was appointed Regional Director General responsible for the federal department’s largest regional organization.
In 2008, Deborah was recognized as a Top Leader under 40 and selected for the Governor General’s Leadership Program. In that same year, she was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister for the Aboriginal Relationships and Ministerial Partnerships division of the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.
In 2012, Deborah served as Assistant Deputy Minister for the Ring of Fire Secretariat at the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.
In 2013, Deborah took a leave of absence from the Ontario Public Service to work on an assignment with Ishkonigan Inc. as a member of the Executive team. Together, Deborah and her husband Bob have five children: Jasmine, Fiona, Katherine Faith, Griffin and Migwans.

Tanis Thompson
Tanis Thompson currently works with the Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA). Tanis brings with her a background in psychology, social work, training in trauma and suicide prevention, and over ten (10) years of experience servicing Indigenous populations within various communities across the province. Tanis is passionate about health and wellness, reducing social/personal stigma and improving mental health. Her current focus at ONWA is the Mental Health Coordinator is geared towards building capacity and creating awareness regarding mental health and addictions. This is accomplished by providing knowledge to communities to build further understanding of the impacts of colonization amongst Indigenous peoples, due to various historical traumatic events, and how these events have a noticeable effect on the health and mental wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. Her personality, positive attitude and passion for this issue is evident in her work, as she strives to remove prejudices’, racism, and reduce the stigma of mental health by addressing mental health issues, addictions, family violence and suicides within communities across the province with a high need for expansion in services.

Dr. Elaine Todres
Dr. Elaine Todres has had a distinguished career in government, the not for profit sector and the volunteer world. After having completed a doctorate in Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh, she joined the civil service of Ontario where she quickly rose in rank from her early beginnings in the tax department. She became the Assistant Deputy Minister of Women’s Issues in 1985 where she bore the responsibility for the development and enactment of the ground-breaking pay equity legislation. That portfolio sharpened what would become her lifelong interest in women’s issues in general and women’s health in particular. Elaine was appointed Deputy Minister of Human Resources in 1987 under the Liberal Administration. That posting was followed by her appointment as Deputy Minister of Culture and Communications, later Culture, Tourism and Recreation under the NDP regime. Her final job in the Ontario Government was Deputy Solicitor General and Deputy Minister of Corrections serving under the Conservative Government.
She is the Chief Executive Officer of Todres Leadership Counsel, a boutique consultancy practice specializing in corporate governance, regulatory governance, human resources, strategy and strategic facilitation.

Anne Trudel
Anne Trudel Reg. N, Hons. BScN. OHN. MScN

Anne is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario and an active member in her Métis community. She has been employed with the Métis Nation of Ontario for 5 years and most recently as an Education Officer. She recognizes the importance of all Canadians learning about Métis people, their history and culture. As a leader in the Historic Sault Ste. Marie Métis Dance Club, she encourages people to share their Métis knowledge and re-enacts at local, regional and international locations. Anne first became interested in history when she worked as a student for Parks Canada’s Fort St. Joseph while in high school. After completing her Nursing degree, Anne worked in public health where she assisted individuals, families, students, groups and communities through community development strategies that incorporated the need for a holistic approach in helping people to reach their optimum potential. Working in public health gave Anne the opportunity to work with people in their homes, classroom and workplace settings, at a local and provincial level. She now uses this experience to support her Métis community and enjoys working in a Métis cultural climate where she can share and further develop her skills and experience in education, collaboration and partnerships that are paramount to the well-being of her fellow Métis.
Dr. Brian Tucker
Dr. Brian Tucker is an ecologist specializing in terrestrial ecology and spatial statistics, with additional background in ecological restoration. He was born and grew up in Northwestern Ontario (Fort Frances), where his traditional lifestyle fostered and maintained a close connection to the lands and waters of the area. He grew up hunting, fishing, trapping and harvesting plants as part of his Métis way of life. Before moving away to attend post-secondary education, he worked at the family commercial fishing, trapping, and logging operations.

Brian has studied at the University of Alberta in Edmonton (Ph.D. in Ecology), Laurentian University in Sudbury (M.Sc. in Biology & B.Sc. in Environmental Earth Science), and Confederation College in Thunder Bay (3-yr Environmental Engineering Technology). Brian taught for 3 years at Confederation College before joining the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) as the Manager of Lands, Resources and Consultation in 2009. He has since held the position of Manager of Métis Traditional Knowledge and Land Use, and he is currently the Associate Director of Education and Way of Life.

Whenever possible, Brian enjoys spending time with his family. He also enjoys canoeing, hunting, fishing, trapping, creative writing and literature.

Sheila Watt-Cloutier
Nobel Peace Prize nominee Sheila Watt-Cloutier is in the business of transforming public opinion into public policy. Experienced in working with global decision makers for over a decade, Watt-Cloutier offers a new model for 21st century leadership. She speaks with passion and urgency on the issues of today—the environment, the economy, foreign policy, global health, and sustainability—not as separate concerns, but as a deeply interconnected whole. At a time when people are seeking solutions, direction, and a sense of hope, this global leader provides a big picture of where we are and where we’re headed.

In 2007, Watt-Cloutier was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy work in showing the impact of global climate change on human rights—especially in the Arctic, where it is felt more immediately, and more dramatically, than anywhere else in the world. Watt-Cloutier is also an Officer of the Order of Canada. She is also the recipient of the Aboriginal Achievement Award, the UN Champion of the Earth Award, and the Norwegian Sophie Prize.

From 1995-2002, she was elected the Canadian President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). She was later elected in 2002 to become the International Chair of the ICC, representing the 155,000 Inuit from Canada, Greenland, Alaska and Russia; she held this post until 2006. Watt-Cloutier is the author of the memoir, The Right to Be Cold: One Woman’s Story of Protecting Her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet, published in 2015.

Doug Wilson
Chief Operating Officer, Métis Nation of Ontario
Doug Wilson has served for more than a decade in senior leadership within the MNO public service. Wilson joined the MNO in 2005 as the Director of Healing & Wellness, and in 2008 assumed the role of Chief Operating Officer. "COO Wilson has a lifetime of experience as a high-ranking officer and pilot within the Canadian Armed Forces to his work at the MNO, including having led search and rescue teams and served as Base Commander for CFB Trenton – a major air force base in Ontario with thousands of employees and multiple levels of government to manage."

Linda Wright
Linda has been with the Sioux-Hudson Literacy Council for the past 10 years where she started out as a volunteer in their Sioux Lookout Learning Centre and then began instructing and developing online courses. Currently, she is the Director of Distance Projects. Linda enjoys travelling to and working with organizations and communities to identify challenges they face, and molding the Aboriginal Stream eChannel program, Good Learning Anywhere, to meet these needs. Through her travels and experience, Linda understands the many barriers to learning faced by our rural and remote First Nations communities and that one of those solutions is introducing online learning that is delivered in a warm, positive and non threatening way. Linda’s favourite place is in the online classroom working with new learners as they begin to grasp the possibilities and barriers are broken down with online learning opportunities. Good Learning Anywhere is funded by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. They provide online learning in Literacy and Essential Skills to Adults across Ontario, at no charge, with a focus on meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Métis organizations, communities and individuals.
Laura Hall  
Director of Research and Policy, Ontario Native Women's Association

Juliette Nicolet  
Policy Director, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres

Jennifer St. Germain  
Director of Education and Training, Métis Nation of Ontario

Kimberly Nesbeth  
Policy Analyst, Urban Aboriginal Issues, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres

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