

IWWT FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

ANNUAL REPORT



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ISSUE NO. 01

This issue will include the medicine pouch workshop, climate change, events, upcoming opportunities

INTERESTED IN JOINING A WOMEN'S GROUP?

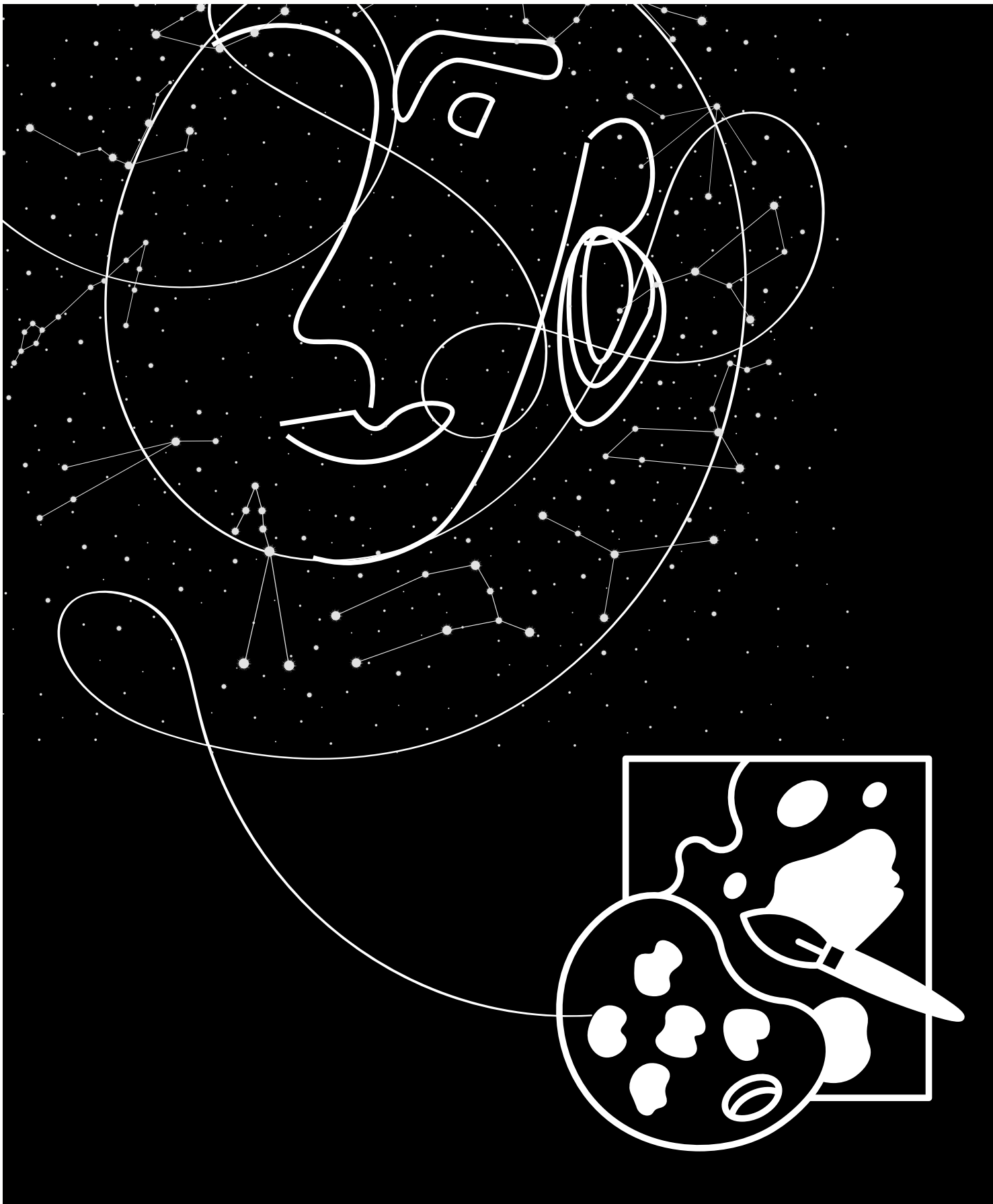
See our issue for more details!



PHOTO CREDIT

Rebecca Ireland's
medicine pouch

INDIGENOUS WOMEN OF THE WABANAKI TERRITORIES
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INDIGENOUS WOMEN OF WABANAKI TERRITORIES



Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories

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Presidents Report

“ WE ARE AN ARMY OF LOVE AND LIGHT AND WE WILL FIGHT FOR WHAT’ S RIGHT. ”

IWWT’s goal is to support, inform, and empower our membership to assert their inherent and unique Indigenous rights through capacity building, knowledge mobilization, healing and wellness, and strategic advocacy toward reclaiming traditional, Indigenous matriarchal leadership and strengthening individual and collective linguistic and cultural identities.

We achieve this through the provision of programs and services in the following areas:
Training and employment skills development; Wabanaki language revitalization; MMIWG2S+ awareness; Climate change and health vulnerability research; Matriarchal and Two-Spirit leadership and training; Youth empowerment; food security and traditional medicines; Wabanaki justice; and intergovernmental relations.

Brandy Stanovich pictured at the Wabanaki Resiliency Lodge



TREASURER'S UPDATE FOR 2021- 22 FISCAL YEAR



2021-22 was a busy year for IWWT financially speaking. Vice-President Amy Sock took over as Treasurer after Joanne Bartibogue's resignation from the Board in summer, 2021. Previous to that, in March IWWT created the position of Strategic Funding Coordinator to address our need for a proposal writer and someone to coordinate our funding in relation to the strategic goals of the organization. The position works closely with the Treasurer and Board to ensure that our reporting obligations are met, our human resource decisions advance our proposed outcomes, and our project staff are on track to meet their deliverables.

Throughout the year, our finance and administration team tightened up our financial practices in accordance with our organizational policies and in preparation for a Review and Engagement by an Auditor.

However, after contracting the accounting firm Daye Kelly & Associates and discussing our options with the membership at the June 11-12, 2022, meeting of members, IWWT opted to conduct a full audit. We completed that process in October of 2022 and the findings were very favourable. The Auditors were complimentary of how well organized they found our finances to be, especially when compared to other non-profit organizations.

As you will see throughout this Annual Report, we have also been quite busy securing project-based funding from a variety of federal funding agencies. New in 2021-22 is the \$499,990 over 3 years we were awarded for Feminist Recovery to Covid-19 from Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), under which we are advancing outcomes related to empowering matriarchal leadership in the province.



TREASURERS'S UPDATE FOR 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR

We also secured \$25,000 for climate change engagement in partnership with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) and \$239,000 from Heritage Canada to develop Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq language resources during the 2021-22 fiscal. Both of those projects have been carried over to the 2022-23 fiscal year towards completion. Additionally, we met the final deliverables and reporting requirements for our Commemoration project, which had been carried forward from 2019-20, and we received a steady flow of donations from the general public via our website. Lastly but not least, we negotiated a \$50,000 adjustment to our Core funding agreement with NWAC to cover a missed payment from them in a prior year, bringing our Core budget to balance.

Going forward into 2022-23, we signed a new, 3-year Core funding agreement with NWAC in which we will receive at least \$110,000 per year. We have also been funded \$100,000 from Health Canada for research on Wabanaki women's and 2S+ experiences of health vulnerability due to climate change.

Amy and Grace at the 2021 Chantel Moore Commemoration Event



We successfully applied for \$250,000 over 2 years from Crown-Indigenous Relations to build the capacity of our organization to participate in public policy creation by conducting membership engagement and Indigenous, gender-based policy analysis in areas of top concern, such as Indigenous justice, MMIWG2S+, Indigenous governance, and more. Additionally, we have received confirmation of another \$499,500 over 4 years from Women and Gender Equality Canada for further organizational capacity building in finance, human resources, communications, and administration. We have also transitioned to a new bookkeeper and moved to a new office located in Sitansisk (St. Mary's First Nation). Together, these positive changes have enabled us to hire more staff and secure our organization's future to 2027. We are very much looking forward to continued financial health and expansion of our organization in 2022-23 and beyond.



INDIGENOUS SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT TRAINING (ISET)



Indigenous Skill and Employment Program, provides employment and training support services to Indigenous Women through the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISETP). The Program is delivered throughout Canada in partnership with the Provincial Territorial Membership Associations (PTMAs), who provide the program at the regional levels.



Megan Birch is Wolastoqiyik woman from Sitànsisk. Megan is the Indigenous Skill and Employment Coordinator with IWWT. The ISET Program provides employment and training support services to women and 2S+. The ISET Program is delivered throughout Canada, and Megan is the coordinator for the province of New Brunswick.

Megan joined our team in March of 2021. When Megan came on as Coordinator, she started with 2 active clients, and finished the fiscal year with 11 active clients. Megan's success in the program resulted in her becoming the lead coordinator across Canada. Since then, she has secured more clients as we all as a partnership with Hayes Farm for the Regenerative Farming Internship Program.

Project Title: Indigenous Women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People Speak Out: Perspectives on Climate Change in the Wabanaki Territories Across New Brunswick

Title of Fund: Indigenous Women's Voices on Climate Change, Conservation, and Biodiversity

Funder: Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)

Funding in 2021-22: \$13,000; Funding in 2022-23: \$12,000; \$25,000 total.

Summary: In the fall of 2021, IWWT responded to a call for proposals from NWAC for research and membership engagement on climate change. IWWT responded with a proposal to conduct 3 online engagement sessions asking members how climate change is affecting their lives and the lives of their families living in Wabanaki territories across New Brunswick. The proposal included publishing a Report on Engagement, writing a research paper on a core theme of engagement findings, and recommending IWWT members for inclusion in a future NWAC newsletter.



For more information contact: Katalin Koller, Funding Coordinator,
at katalin@iwwt.ca



How is climate change affecting you?

#WabanakiWomenTalkClimate

Status Update: IWWT hosted 4 virtual engagement sessions with 36 people in the fall and winter of 2021-22, resulting in over 9 hours of recorded discussion. IWWT has compiled the responses to 11 discussion questions and completed a draft 76-page engagement report (over 16,000 words!). Discussion questions asked participants how climate change is affecting them and their communities and what knowledge and solutions they see as contributing to solutions. The draft report will be shared with the members that participated to ensure their opinions were accurately captured, before integrating their feedback and releasing the final publication. IWWT staff are currently interviewing Board members using the same discussion questions. Responses will then be analyzed and core themes identified for use in drafting a research paper. When NWAC is ready, IWWT will reach out to 2 members that participated in the engagement process to invite them to contribute to a forthcoming NWAC newsletter on climate change.

MEDICINE POUCH WORKSHOP

WE MATTER

Medicine Pouch Wellness Workshop for Youth brought to you by the Indigenous Women of the Wananaki Territories and We Matter Campaign. IWWT staff and volunteers created and posted advertisements to promote the project and recruit participants.

Participants were allotted time to register to receive their kits and zoom invitation for the workshop. Kits provided the leather pattern (precut and punched), lacing, the four sacred medicines and instructions. (video of pouch assembly was posted to IWWT website and Facebook page).

The zoom workshop started off with an opening prayer and traditional medicine teachings from Elder Alma Brooks. While a demonstration of assembly of pouch took place, participants were encouraged to chat, ask questions and connect while pouches were completed. Participants were asked to send picture to be entered for a wellness gift. The workshop ended with a sharing circle. All participants were pleased.



MAGGIE PAUL

Dedicating her life to bringing
it back.

DR MAGGIE PAUL

Dedicated to unearthing and reviving the culture.

INDIGENOUS WOMEN OF WABANAKI TERRITORIES

“WHEN YOU BRING THE SONGS BACK, YOU’RE GOING TO BRING THE DANCES BACK. YOU’RE GOING TO BRING THE PEOPLE BACK. YOU’RE GOING TO BRING EVERYTHING BACK.”

Dr Maggie Paul is an elder, knowledge keeper, teacher and song carrier who has traveled around the world to share Wolastoqey and Passamaquoddy culture. Known for her voice, Dr Maggie has recorded two famous albums – capturing the traditional songs of the people.

Dr Maggie has raised six children and lived most of her adult life in the Wolastoqey community of Sitansk (St. Mary’s First Nation) in Fredericton. Her contribution and dedication to song has inspired countless singers to maintain their culture.

A leader in the community, Dr Maggie has mentored Polaris Prize winner Jeremy Dutcher, who’s work on the multi-award-winning album began when Maggie suggested he listen to century-old wax cylinders of Wolastoq songs, housed in the archives of the Canadian Museum of History. In 2018, when Dutcher accepted the Polaris Prize for his album *Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa*, he thanked Dr Maggie for encouraging him to study the songs of his community.

As Dr Maggie once said, “When you bring the songs back, you’re going to bring the dances back. You’re going to bring the people back. You’re going to bring everything back.” She has dedicated her life to unearthing and reviving the culture..





Matriarchal Governance Project

Coordinator

My name is Tatyannah Cote, Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories' (IWWT) Matriarchal Governance Project Coordinator. Since beginning my work at IWWT a few short months ago, I have networked with multiple community members across the province of New Brunswick. I have travelled to many Wabanaki First Nation communities in attempt to establish Women's Groups in all 20 communities. Women's Groups are in the beginning stages of development or are already meeting within the communities. Each community's group has a specific focus for their group and their groups have been tailored to fit their current assessed needs and goals as expressed by members within each community.

Depending on each community, the groups look vastly different with the same end goal, women / gender-diverse and 2SLGBTQIA+ empowerment and amplification of Indigenous voices and community strengthening.

These Women's Groups are a proud extension of Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories as part of our Matriarchal Governance project.

I am in the pre-establishment period of the commencement of applications for a Matriarch and Youth Council. Moving forward, applications will be available for those with a passion for matriarchal governance and advocacy for Indigenous voices along with an interest in teaching others about matriarchal governance. This allows for generational knowledge transfer and a tone of change.

I am pleased to be apart of this project and organization. I am excited to share more updates over my work opportunity with IWWT!

“Women belong in all places where decisions are being made.
It shouldn't be that women are the exception.”
— Ruth Bader Ginsburg



MATRIARCHAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Program Title: Wabanaki Women's Traditional Leadership: Disrupting Systemic Racism in New Brunswick

Title of Fund: Women's Program: Feminist Response and Recovery to Covid-19

Funder: Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE)

Funding in 2021-22: \$99,998; Funding in 2022-23: \$249,995; **Funding in 2023-24:** \$149,997; \$499,990 Total.

Summary: This program was funded with the goal of addressing exclusionary practices at the provincial level that have worsened since the pandemic began. empowering Wabanaki women's traditional leadership to impact provincial consultations and policy development that affects Wabanaki inherent rights. Proposed activities include: hiring a Project Coordinator, Strategic Liaison, and Training Coordinator; engaging and supporting 20 Wabanaki Women's Groups in on and off-reserve communities; establishing an intergenerational Matriarch Council and mentorship opportunities; and, developing culturally-informed training and informational materials targeted to Wabanaki women and girls, men and boys, and the general public and partners. Through these actions, IWWT will disrupt the status quo exclusion of Indigenous women's voices from the New Brunswick political realm and transform awareness, attitudes, and recognition of Wabanaki women's leadership in the public and political spheres.

For more information contact: Tatyannah Cote, Project Coordinator, at
Tatyannah@iwwt.ca

WOMEN'S GROUP MEETINGS



Red Bank Women's Group

MATRIARCHAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Summary:

This program was funded with the goal of addressing exclusionary practices at the provincial level that have worsened since the pandemic began. empowering Wabanaki women's traditional leadership to impact provincial consultations and policy development that affects Wabanaki inherent rights. Proposed activities include: hiring a Project Coordinator, Strategic Liaison, and Training Coordinator; engaging and supporting 20 Wabanaki Women's Groups in on and off-reserve communities; establishing an intergenerational Matriarch Council and mentorship opportunities; and, developing culturally-informed training and informational materials targeted to Wabanaki women and girls, men and boys, and the general public and partners. Through these actions, IWWT will disrupt the status quo exclusion of Indigenous women's voices from the New Brunswick political realm and transform awareness, attitudes, and recognition of Wabanaki women's leadership in the public and political spheres.



MMIWG2S+ Events

May 5th is MMIWG2S+ day, and Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories in collaboration with St. Mary's First Nation held an event to honor the victims, as well as their friends and family. Lisa Perley-Dutcher of IWWT was in charge of the event and coordinated with the community to hold a public ceremony and private reception for the families invited. We asked participants to wear red in recognition of its importance to this day and we were not disappointed with the variety of MMIWG2S+ clothing. From ribbon skirts to hair bands to the classic red shirt.

Grand Chief Ron Tremblay, in support of the REDress campaign, organized a march from Officer's Square to 150 Cliffe street to participate in a ceremony in front of a mural created by Morgan Henderson (sister of Erin Brooks). After opening remarks from Sakom Allan (Chicky) Polchies Jr., Ron Tremblay did the opening prayer before the guest speakers.



PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT
LISA PERLEY-DUTCHER, BRANDY STANOVICH, MARTHA MARTIN



MURAL PAINTED BY MORGAN HENDERSON AT 150 CLIFFE STREET. POSTCARDS ARE AVAILABLE AT SACRED ARTS WHERE A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE HEALING HOUSE.

A ceremony was held after the march to shed light on the importance of the day, with Lisa Dutcher as the head speaker who reminded the audience of the Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report released by the Native Women's Association of Canada. (English version / French version) *Page 48 is the New Brunswick PTMA report. Maggie Paul closed the ceremony on a high note with a spirited hand drumming group, as well as inviting the audience to sing along to 'Strong Woman'.

Special thanks to Arlene Brooks, Martha Martin, Chris Fowler, and Justin Henderson for sharing the memories of your loved ones, Rowena Sharpe, Chantel Moore, and Erin Brooks.

For August 6th, the Warriors MC Turtle Island invited IWWT to attend a Bike Blessing event in the community in honor of his sister-in-law Erin Brooks and all MMIWG2S+ at 150 Cliffe Street.

It was \$20 a bike, \$130 per couple with proceeds going to the Gignoo Transition House and the Healing House.

Dr. Maggie Paul held a smudge bowl at the entrance of the parking area as the bikers drove by.

Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2S+ Event Agenda

When: Thursday, May 5th, 2022
Where: MMWG Mural behind St. Mary's Smoke Shop (150 Cliffe Street)



Speakers
 Welcoming: Chief Allan Polchies
 Opening Prayer: Grand Chief Ron Tremblay
 Guest Speaker: Alma Brooks- Elder of IWWT Board
 Families and Friends of MMIWG
 Poem from Roseanne Clarke
 Closing Prayer: Elder Maggie Paul

Join Grand Chief Ron Tremblay at 9 am in a march starting at 9:30 am from Officer's Square to 150 Cliffe Street to promote awareness of Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

Location (ceremony): In honor of MMIWG2S+ there will be a ceremony starting at 10:30 am. All are welcome to attend, and there will be mental health professionals on site.

We ask that you please wear red.
****Parking only at the old cultural centre located on Dedham Street**
 Head to www.iwwt.ca for event details.







The Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories office had relocated to Sitsansk (St. Mary's) during the spring and had become closer to the community in both space and partnership. We would like to thank Sitsansk, and especially Tammy Nash for allowing us to host this year's annual general assembly at the Maqiyahimok Centre.

Annual General Assembly

Lisa Perley-Dutcher, our Language Coordinator, was the facilitator and Dr. Maggie Paul opened the event with ceremonial prayer and drumming. As the day continued, the current Board of Directors presented their reports on the last few years ranging from different partnerships gained over the years, issues the company supported, workshops provided, and much more. Lynne Groulx, the CEO of the Native Women's Association of Canada, was the guest speaker. She spoke about NWAC, her time since being with the company as well as inviting guests to the Ottawa, Ontario Resiliency Lodge opening on June 21st, and NWAC Annual General Meeting on July 16th in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The firekeepers arrived early alongside staff to set up for the day. Staff and attendees would make offerings throughout the two days. On Sunday everyone decided to sit outside around the sacred fire to discuss the women's group when it became apparent quorum could not be done.

Quorum

For IWWT to have a quorum at least 25 voting delegates needed to be in attendance. Due to last-minute cancellations and no-shows, we were not able to move forward with voting on the Constitution as well as nominations. Another AGA will take place in autumn 2022 and the membership will be informed via e-mail, social media as well as a website update when details have been solidified.

JUNE 2022 AGA

Our feature:

Melissa Dedam

Background

Melissa Marie Googooo-Dedham is a Mi'kmaq Indigenous woman from Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick. Her mother was a 60 Scoops survivor who was taken to the United States at a young age and forced to grow up, losing family connections, culture, and language. It was there she met Melissa's father, an unnamed white man she would be raised by her single mother. Between the ages of 2 - 12, Melissa, her siblings, and her mother would travel back and forth between the US and Elsipogotg before choosing to officially move back. This was a difficult time as her mother battled her demons, Melissa took on the caretaker role to her younger siblings until she was kicked out of the house at 14 an addition to the childhood trauma and abuse she endured up until the that time.

This left Melissa to being homeless, struggling during school, and resulting in becoming a young mother to her first child at 17 years old. Despite this, she still graduated from High School in 2001. In a state of survival, she stayed with this man, as he provided a roof over her head and access to essentials.



During their 20 years together, she became a stepmother to his children from a previous relationship and they had five more children together. As she became aware of how unhealthy the relationship as well as the fact that she did not want her children to view this as normal, she made several attempts to leave. After 2016 despite her accomplishments in school and work, Melissa had hit a low point in her life where she was evaluating if she still wanted to be with this man or create a new path with herself and her children. A good friend supported Melissa to get out of the situation by offering her a place to stay on Indian Island. Even though it was a difficult start she knew it would be worth it.

Post-Secondary

In 2002, Melissa's first attempt at post-secondary only lasted about two months before the man of her children threatened to have their children taken away by social services if she did not quit and return to Elsipogtog immediately. Distraught, she did as he said to ensure her children stayed with her. In 2006, while working at an Early Childhood Education facility, Melissa noticed an ad for a First Nations Teachers Education Program (FNTEP) that was being offered to community members. Therefore applied and was accepted.

She took part-time classes in the evening and completed her Bachelor of Education (BED) five years later. During her last year of University, she and her mother moved to Fredericton, NB, to finish her Education Degree. This was a healing experience as they were able to repair their relationship before she passed in January 2011. Melissa would graduate that year in May when she walked the graduation platform 8 months pregnant with her fifth and last child. Despite all the obstacles, in 2016, she graduated from Crandell University with her master's in Administration and leadership education, and from UPEI with a Master's of Education in 21st Century Teaching and Learning. She accomplished all of this education while raising 5 children of her own, being a step mom and working.

Workplace Experience

In March 2012, she got her first contract through the province to work in schools. Her contracts were grades 2, 3, and 4 varied from Literacy Lead and Resource. She also participated in many training and new initiatives at the District and Department of Education. She explains this was also a survival tactic since she was still living with the father of her children during that period and wanted to work as much as possible so she would not be home

After leaving him in 2016 and working more in the schools she met Dan and Kevin Scully. Both Dan and Kevin would provide continued guidance and positive experience in both her professional and personal life to this day. Kevin would support Melissa in becoming the leader and confident teacher that she is. He offered her to act as principal in his 8-week absence.

Although nervous she realized she wanted to continue being a principal, so she made it a goal to complete and obtain the District Leadership Modules and receive a NB Principal Certificate in 2019. To date, Melissa Dedam has the maximum certificate for teaching in the province of New Brunswick.



Currently

Today Melissa has a great personal and professional life. She met her wife Vanessa through some friends at a hockey tournament in March of 2019. They fell in love immediately and would marry that November. She found a partner who inspires her to drive further in all areas of life and encourages her to go back to obtain a Ph.D. Together in a new home, they had purchased, Melissa explains that Vanessa is her soulmate and could never imagine her life without her.

As of June 2021, she is the current Principal of Elsipogtog First Nation with about 380 students in attendance. She understands the intergenerational trauma as well as the culture shock once students transfer from on-reserve to provincial schools. Her passion is the children and her connections to the provincial schooling system she hopes to continue to create a system that prepares students for an easier transition into the public schooling system.

Her goal is to empower her staff, and build their own leadership skills, and to become the best versions of themselves. Melissa states that each and every person in the school, students and staff are unique and special and hopes that under her leadership, that fact will always be highlighted.

In January 2022 she accepted a part-time position through UNB Fredericton in the Wabanaki Bed program formally known as the FNTEP, she states that she teaches her courses with both an educator and principal's perspective, hoping to contribute in a positive way to the future of Indigenous educators. As one of the original students in this program, Melissa has now come full circle.



LANGUAGE



Program Title: Language is Life

Title of Fund: Indigenous Languages Component

Funder: Canadian Heritage

Funding in 2021-22: \$239,000; Funding in 2022-23: \$238,850

Summary: Approval for this project was received in late March 2022.

Therefore, IWWT signed a reinvestment plan to carry forward the funding and extend the timeline of deliverables to the end of the 2022-23 fiscal year. Proposed activities include: Hiring a Language Coordinator; establishing Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq Language Committees; and, developing resources for learning the languages, including: 12 lesson plans; 12 short language videos; and 2 longer language documentaries. Speakers from Wabanaki communities will be identified and invited to share their language teachings as committee members and contributors to the language videos and documentaries. All completed resources will be available on the IWWT website.

Status Update: A Language Coordinator was hired in April 2022 and a Language Committee established in Wolastoqey and in Mi'kmaq. Their work continues in 2022-23. Stay tuned for more!

For more information contact: Charolette Martin-Ward, Communications and Events Coordinator, at communications@iwwt.ca



Resiliency Lodge

The Indigenous Women of the Wabanaki Territories very own Wolastoq Elder Alma Brooks is partnered with NWAC (Native Women's Association of Canada) in creating the Wabanaki Resiliency Lodge.

She has shared the progress of the house and land that is located in Gagetown, New Brunswick and with the goal to have the space ready for the general public in 2023.

For now major renovations are still taking place and the land is being worked on.

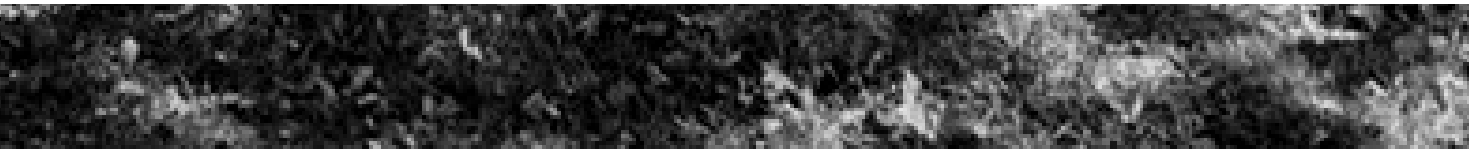


“

- This place is peaceful, so beautiful, relaxing and so healing.
- Re-furbishment of the house should begin within the next couple of weeks.
- Two living units ; each housing 4 people will be the second phase and then the 134 ft. gathering space the third phase.

-Alma Brooks

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INDIGENOUS WOMEN OF WABANAKI TERRITORIES