



"Living With Us"... page 16



# MATAWA MESSENGER

The Power of Unity, The Dignity of Difference

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## Eabametoong First Nation, Northern Ontario School of Medicine & Matawa Partner To Establish a Remote First Nations Residency Program



Photo (L to R): David Paul Achneepineskum - Matawa CEO, Dr. Roger Strasser - NOSM Dean and, Elizabeth Atlookan, Chief of Eabametoong First Nation



On February 14, Eabametoong First Nation (EFN), Matawa and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) announced they are partnering in a unique tripartite process with regards to establishing a Remote First Nations Residency Program.

This program came from the desire of Eabametoong First Nation to do things differently in the area of physician services and from Chief Atlookan's initial discussion with Hon. Carolyn Bennet in April 2016 in Neskantaga First Nation. The partnership with NOSM took off shortly after this time and required a willingness for all parties to learn and be open about the complexities involved in establishing this first-of-its-kind program. Champions included EFN Chief & Council, EFN Health & Social Services and Dr. Cervin and Jennifer Fawcett of NOSM.

Some important milestones worked into this partnership have included having physician interviews in the community of Eabametoong (this has already taken place and the 1st physician has been jointly selected with NOSM), ensuring the protection and control of Indigenous knowledge and greater First Nation's role in curriculum development.

Matawa's role was in the areas of broader proposal/program development and protocols that had to be developed. Matawa CEO David Paul Achneepineskum said that the program aligned wonderfully with Matawa's overall plan to take over health services for member First Nations and other projects Matawa has been leading including establishing a Matawa Health Co-Operative and installing fibre-to-the-home broadband. It also aligns with the Dr. Eric Hoskins, Ontario's Health Minister's recent statements on aiming to 'hand-back' health-care decisions to First Nations within years.

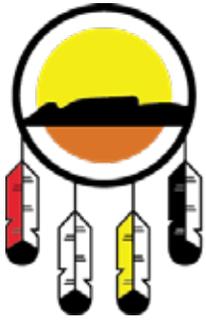
### IN THIS ISSUE:

Education Bursaries, MLC Activities

NIBI Services, Housing Conference, Economic Development, Regional Framework Updates

Welcome New Staff and more....





## Northwestern Ontario Aboriginal Youth Achievement and Recognition Awards

**DEADLINE DATE: March 23, 2018**

Recognize a person for their achievements to build self-esteem and to build role models so others can see that their goals are attainable.

### Eligibility for Nomination

#### Youth Achievement Nominees

- Be of Aboriginal ancestry of the Northwestern Ontario Region\*
- Must be of applicable age for each category as of March 28, 2018
- Consent to the nomination
- Submit nomination letter
- Submit relevant information such as copies of school transcripts, newspaper articles, photographs, or any other documentation
- Demonstrate commitment to a healthy and positive lifestyle

#### Aboriginal Ancestry

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people – Indians (Status and Non-Status), Métis people and Inuit.

#### Northwestern Ontario Region\*

Any Aboriginal person born within the Northwestern Ontario or currently resides in the region. Northwestern Ontario is the region within the Canadian province of Ontario which lies north and west of Lake Superior, and west of Hudson Bay and James Bay.

#### Youth Achievement Award Categories (visit website for more information)

Peer Mentorship  
Advocacy & Activism  
Academic  
Athletic  
Artistic  
Community Leadership & Volunteerism  
Employment in a Traditional Field  
Group Achievement  
Personal Achievement  
Sandra Kakeeway Cultural Award

#### Recognition Awards (visit website for more information)

Personal Achievement  
Employment in Chosen Career Path  
Excellence in Diversity  
Career Guidance  
Apprenticeship Award  
Community Involvement  
Aboriginal Youth Mentorship  
Entrepreneurship Award

Wed, May 2, 2018

### Achievement & Recognition Awards 2018

Save the Date! The 14th Annual Northwestern Ontario Aboriginal Youth Achievement & Recognition Awards will take place Wednesday May 2nd, 2018 at the Italian Cultural Centre in Thunder Bay.

[www.ayara.ca](http://www.ayara.ca)  
Phone: 807.474.2351

Follow them on Facebook at: NWO Aboriginal Youth Achievement & Recognition Awards

**Copy this url to get a nomination form: [https://ayara.ca/application/files/5615/1543/3363/AYARA\\_-\\_Nomination\\_Form.pdf](https://ayara.ca/application/files/5615/1543/3363/AYARA_-_Nomination_Form.pdf)**



## MATAWA EDUCATION AND ROTARY CLUB BURSARY

Application deadline : May 1, 2018 by 4:30 pm EST

### CRITERIA:

The Bursary Fund is for Matawa First Nations Community Members attending Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Training, Apprenticeship, Trades or Adult Education programs. Applicants are required to complete the bursary application form and attach required documentation

### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR AN APPLICATION, CONTACT:

Matawa First Nations - Education Department  
1.888.283.9747 | t. 807.768.3300 | f. 807.768.3301

## ELEMENTARY / SECONDARY AWARD CATEGORIES

These awards promote excellence in literacy through reading and writing through the publication of community stories and achievements.

- Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 class will create, write and illustrate a legend or narrative book.
- Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 class will create a legend or narrative collaboratively, in a multi-media format, demonstrating commitment to positive community values and activities (examples: song, movie, book, etc).

## GRADES 3-5

Students will write a narrative or recount that is based on community lore, legend, stories, accomplishments or activity that reflects positive community values, relationships and/or pride.

## GRADES 6-12

- *Creative Writing \$500* - Applicants will submit an original creative writing piece that has not in any part been copied.
- *Native Language \$500* - Entries must be fictional or stories from the community, and written in syllabics or roman orthography.
- *Multi-Media \$500* - Applicants are encouraged to answer the question, "What motivates you in high school?" and convey this through a medium of their choosing (examples: audio, visual, electronic). A written explanation must accompany the entry, as the judges will be evaluating the written explanation, 250 words.
- *Matawa Learning Centre \$500* - Students at the Matawa Learning Centre who demonstrate hard work and perseverance through leadership or achievement in academics, athletics, work, cultural activities, or lifestyle choices are eligible, 500-words.

## POST SECONDARY AWARD CATEGORIES

- *College Bursary \$1000* – University Bursary \$1000 - Applicants at the post-secondary level may apply for this bursary on a yearly basis. Students who demonstrate determination, commitment and achievement in their chosen career path are encouraged to apply.
- *Continuing Post-Secondary Education Bursary \$1000* - Applicants at the post-secondary level may apply for the continuing education bursary on a yearly basis. Students must have successfully completed their year of studies with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Proof of registration to a maximum of a 4-year program and an official transcript will be required.

## TRAINING, APPRENTICESHIP, TRADES AND ADULT EDUCATION CATEGORY

A \$1,000 Bursary will be awarded in this category for one student that is enrolled in a training, apprenticeship, trades or Adult Education program that is 6 weeks or more in duration.

DON'T MISS  
THE DEADLINE!

# Matawa Tourism Development Strategy Highlights

In January and February 2018, the Matawa Economic Development Committee made up of the 9 EDOs from each First Nation invited RT Associates, Robert Trudeau and Bill Davidson, for a discussion on the main elements of the Matawa Tourism Development Strategy. In doing so, they met a wide range of community members, answered questions, and obtained broad support for the Strategy. The Matawa First Nations Traditional Territory lies within the boreal forest of Northwestern Ontario. Because this boreal forest is defined by water as much as by forest, it is often referred to as the 'Blue Forest.' It is a region that would attract tourists.

How does tourism compare with mining and forestry in terms of economic impact? In the province of Ontario, tourism far outweighs both mining and forestry combined, in revenues and employment. Who are the tourists that would visit Matawa First Nations? Of twelve (12) market segments identified by the *Destination Ontario*, four (4) represent the target markets most likely to visit and attend an event, participate in an activity, and/or stay in accommodation offered by Matawa First Nations. They are described in the chart below:

The fundamental basis of the Matawa Tourism Development Strategy will be that it is 'market-driven' and not 'product driven'. A market-driven plan ensures development of a tourism industry focused on providing attractions, facilities and services that those in the four identified target markets want, and Matawa First Nations are willing to provide. Further, every Matawa community can make contributions to that 'experience of place' that tourists will never forget. Communities can do this by encouraging the development of authentic Indigenous tourism products that will engage and educate visitors, and provide them with a sense of involvement in an experience that is true to the past and present culture of the community.

The Vision for the Matawa Tourism Development Strategy is:

*A viable Matawa tourism industry that respects the culture of the Ojibwa, Cree and Oji-Cree, and provides visitors to Northwestern Ontario with transformative tourism experiences.*



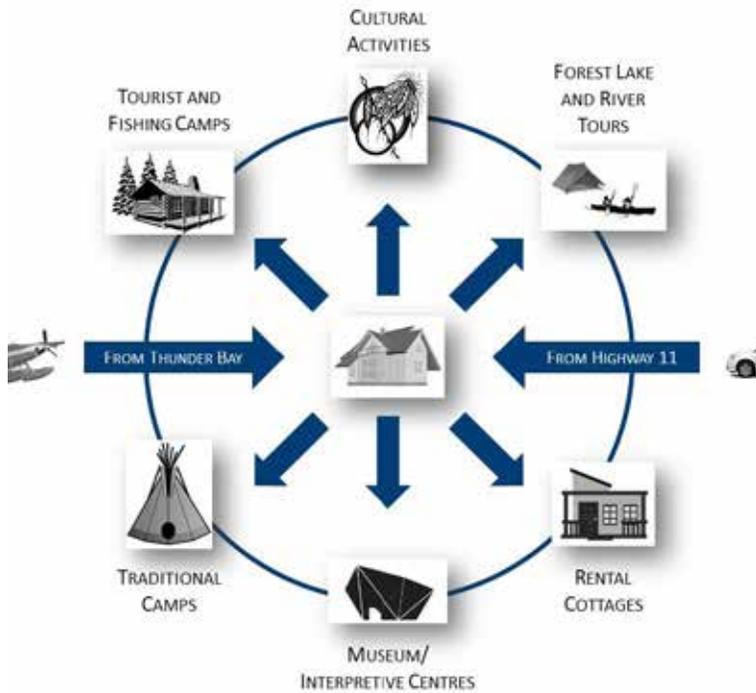
Key to achieving this vision over the long term will be an accessible lodge, hotel and/or gathering centre in or near every Matawa First Nations community, from which all cultural activities, tours, and visits to all other facilities radiate (see chart to the right).

Creating a viable tourism industry within the Matawa First Nations Traditional Territory will require millions of dollars invested over many years. It might be possible to renovate a few existing outpost camps, start a few new businesses, and undertake training programs with current provincial and federal government programs, and these programs will be accessed as required. But, to successfully establish and sustain a tourism industry, will require nothing less than substantial multi-year funding agreements with both levels of government.

With these kinds of investments, the benefits, like the following, are immense:

- New employment opportunities, and increased direct and indirect income;
- Development of the arts and crafts sector;
- More resources and more effort for the protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage resources of the Blue Forest, and;
- Building capacity in each community, leading to other economic development opportunities

Perhaps equally important, a tourism development plan that is properly implemented can be a positive force in cultural revitalization, and can contribute to addressing the complex social issues that plague many First Nations communities in North-western Ontario.



*An alliance of Matabwa First Nations camp operators and EDOs met in Thunder Bay on January 29 to discuss plans for the 2018 season with Matabwa Economic Development Advisor Jason Rasevych and Business Support staff Brent Edwards and Audrea Sturgeon. For over two decades, these entrepreneurs have offered tourism packages in remote camps to visitors from the U.S. and now are looking to expand to new markets overseas. This is part of the Matabwa Tourism Strategic planning process that is underway.*

On February 5, Matabwa published a media release acknowledging funding for the Matabwa Tourism Strategy from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, Rural Economic Development Program and to advise the public that a 20-year plan on tourism is being developed and is expected to be completed by March 31, 2018.

In terms of other tourism, Matabwa currently supports the Native Camp Operators Alliance comprised of a group of remote, fly in fishing and hunting outpost camps owned and operated by members of Matabwa communities promoted by Moccasin Trails Adventures. To learn more: [www.moccasintrailsadventures.com](http://www.moccasintrailsadventures.com) can be checked out online.

**For more info. on the strategy, contact a representative from the Matabwa Economic Development Committee:**

- \* Jason Rasevych - Matabwa
- \* Lewis Nate - Eabametoong
- \* Delia Okees - Marten Falls
- \* Glen Wabasse - Webequie

- \* Mark Bell - Aroland
- \* Peter Rasevych - Ginoogaming
- \* Edward Moonias - Neskantaga

- \* Lorraine Wesley - Constance Lake
- \* Darcy Waboos - Long Lake #58
- \* Byron Waboos - Nibinamik



The 2nd Annual *Matawa Power to the People Energy Conference* took place in Toronto from March 20 - 21, 2018 with a technical pre-conference workshop that took place on March 19. The theme of the conference was 'A New Approach to the Social Licence.' Including Matawa First Nations leadership and youth/Elder delegates from their communities, Economic Development Officers (EDOs), Matawa Energy Planning Committee representatives and Matawa Staff from the Regional Framework and Education Departments attended. Other participants included FedNor, the Ontario Ministry of Energy, Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), Hydro One, Hydro One Remotes, Ontario Power Generation, Ontario Waterpower Association, GridLink, Hugh Wood Canada Ltd., Marten Energy Group, HydroMega, Wave Energy, and Jazz Solar.

The March 19 technical pre-conference workshop focused on the areas of an Introduction to Renewables in Aboriginal Mining Regions, Renewables and Mining Models in Worldwide Indigenous Groups, Renewables and Worldwide Models for the Ring of Fire and Matawa First Nations and Long-Term Sustainable Development. It included special guest speaker Dr. Arnoldus Matero Van Den Hurk Mir, PH.d. from Spain who spoke about Mining Renewables. March 20 included panels and presentations from government agencies such as the Ministry of Energy and the IESO, and other energy agencies such as Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. Amongst the many areas of discussion were distribution, generation, education/capacity building, renewable energy readiness and long-term energy planning. March 21 included panels and presentations on financing and insurance, transmission, and women in energy. The conference concluded with a tour of the IESO Control Room and a dinner.

On December 18, 2017 Matawa announced that it was a recipient of federal funding through FedNor's *Northern Ontario Development Program* to undergo an Energy Readiness Assessment Project to assist Matawa First Nations in making informed decisions when it comes to prioritizing their energy generation and transmission needs. This assessment is currently underway and is expected to be completed this spring.

On February 16, 2018 the government of Canada announced a call for proposals for new funding envelope called the *Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program* which will provide \$220 million in funding for initiatives to reduce reliance on diesel fuel in rural and remote communities. As part of our work in energy, Matawa will be targetting this program in the months to come. Stay tuned for further information in the next Matawa Messenger due to come out this summer.

**TUNE IN EVERY 2ND TUESDAY  
FROM 4:00 - 4:30 EST  
(3:00 - 3:30 CST)**

[www.wawataynews.ca/radio](http://www.wawataynews.ca/radio)  
89.9 FM in Sioux Lookout  
106.7 FM in Timmins  
BellTV Channel 962

**UPCOMING SHOWS**

April 10 and 24  
May 8 and 22  
June 5 and 19  
July 3 and 17



# 16th Annual First Nations Northern Housing Conference



*Saverio Rizzo of Matawa and Zack Tait of Wasaya Airways (who sponsored the Awards) present the Community Recognition Award to Walter Oskineegish and Nora Wabasse of Nibinamik First Nation*

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The 16th Annual First Nations Northern Housing Conference (FNNHC) has completed another instalment in its ongoing effort to bring knowledge and networking opportunities to delegates involved in First Nations Housing.

The conference was held February 6-8, 2018 in Thunder Bay at the Valhalla Inn. This year, the event was at its largest with over 350 people in attendance during the 3-day event. There was over 20 Matawa First Nations members in attendance. Formerly known as the Northern Housing Conference, this was the second year that delegates from across the nation were invited to share in this event. The Conference attracted First Nation housing professionals from British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, Nova Scotia and all over Ontario. This shift has allowed the Conference a national scope for the second time in its 16-year history.

The theme for the conference, which included a trade show and the 10th Annual Builders Challenge, was "Building On Our Traditions". This year, there were technical, administrative and planning workshops. Some of the workshops for this year's event included; Housing Portfolio Assessment, Construction Tendering, Review Processes and Code Updates, Housing Committees, Are you the Active or Passive Fire Safety Person, Housing Manager: How Can we best Collaborate, 2016 Capacity Development Projects and Infrastructure/Capital Planning just to name a few. Over 50 exhibitors also participated in a one day Tradeshow that featured consultants, housing suppliers and contractors from throughout Ontario and Manitoba.

During the tradeshow, the Builders Challenge took place. This year's Builders Challenge focused on Window Installation. It involved demonstrations by our special guest Jon Eakes followed by challenges where delegates competed against each other and were

judged on accuracy, speed, and quality. The challenges included; Rough Opening Structure, Waterproofing, Installing Window & Strapping, and Insulation, Sealing and Finish Window Interior.

This year, three communities were honoured for the Community Housing Recognition Awards at the banquet. Nibinamik First Nation for their development of a community based housing policy, Rainy River First Nation for the construction of their high efficiency duplexes, and Wunnimun Lake First Nation for their successful renovations and new construction projects.

This annual event was organized by representatives from 14 Tribal Council from Northern Ontario. The main focus of the conference is to address issues and challenges in First Nations Housing. At the same time it is important for delegates to network with others and bring useful information back home to share. This year's conference is deemed a success and we are already looking forward to the 2019 event!!!!

Further information is available online at the conference's website. [www.northernhousingconference.com](http://www.northernhousingconference.com) or contact:

Saverio Rizzo  
Housing Inspector / Coordinator  
Matawa First Nations Management  
\* FNNHC Working Group Member



*Councillor Grace Bottle and Alyssa Loon of Marten Falls take part in the Builders Challenge*



*Ron Missewace of Eabametoong FN and Bernard Gagnon of Aroland FN team up to take part in the Builders Challenge*

# "Reach Ahead" Transitions Course

The Matawa Education Department is excited to announce the roll out of a new "Reach Ahead" Transitions course that began early this February in the Matawa schools. The course is designed to assist students in Grades 7 and 8 in the potentially difficult transition between attending a community elementary school and moving to secondary education outside of their home community.

The "Reach Ahead" Transitions course is focused on learning strategies to help students become more independent during the transition from elementary to secondary school. This course will guide students and give them the skills needed to develop and apply literacy and numeracy skills, personal management skills, and interpersonal and teamwork skills to improve their learning and achievement in school, the workplace, and the community. This course will also help students build confidence and motivation to pursue opportunities for success in secondary school and beyond.

Upon completing the "Reach Ahead" Transitions course, students will earn a high school credit. As each community and school situation is unique, the course offers the flexibility to allow communities to adapt the course to meet the needs of their school and students. For more information, please contact the Matawa Education Department.



## MATAWA BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM

Greetings Beautiful Matawa Members,

What a way to begin 2018! The Business Support Team travelled into Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, and Long Lake #58. Our workshop focused on building a business plan. The turn out was great and we're hoping to see more people as we plan ahead for another visit soon.

The Business Support Team will be rolling out 3 new items under the program and we are very excited to share it with you.

First, we developed a Facebook page strictly for updating our new business entrepreneurs and others by keeping them updated for future events and chances to win some prizes. Search 'Matawa Business Support Program' to find us.

Secondly, when the snow starts to melt away, we'll begin planning for our very own Business Conference for off-reserve members of Matawa. So, for those of you living in Thunder Bay and the surrounding area, be sure to look for information.

Finally, we are proud to announce we will be registering through ProsperCanada to obtain a train the trainer course on Financial Literacy Certificate. Thus, empowering the business support team to offer financial literacy training to all Matawa members in the communities.

So, on behalf of myself Brent Edwards, BSO and Audrea Sturgeon, Business Support Assistant, get ready Matawa Members, we'll be seeing you very soon!



## Rapid Lynx Begins Design Phase of Broadband Project

In October 2017, Matawa received a major announcement that \$69 million was approved to bring advanced fibre optic telecommunications to the 5 remote First Nations of Eabametoong, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik and Webequie by a connection in Aroland and Wunnimen Lake. The funding came after years of project planning and advocacy from the Broadband Working Group with support provided by Matawa Economic Development, Four Rivers and Technical and Engineering Services.

In February 2018, the design team from Stantec travelled to the First Nations to meet community members, answer questions about the project and learn about the community level infrastructure like the placement of hydro poles and current facilities that store the internet equipment. One area that is unique about the Rapid Lynx project is it will be fibre-to-the-home, meaning each and every household will have the fibre connection which will provide faster speed internet and reliable telephone services that will rival municipalities in Canada. The participating First Nations will be one of the few in Canada to have fibre to the home, this could not of been achieved without the Matawa Chiefs directive to establish a company called Rapid Lynx Telecommunications to design, build, own and maintain this 880 kilometer fibre optic network.

There is still much work to be done, the design is expected to be completed by the end of summer, while construction could begin near the end of 2018. This would provide the opportunity for the first communities to be connected by spring of 2019. If you have any questions please contact Jason Rasevych ([jrasevych@matawa.on.ca](mailto:jrasevych@matawa.on.ca)) Economic Development Manager, Matawa First Nations Management.



## Aroland, Eabametoong and Marten Falls Prepping to Take Over the Ogoki Forest

The three First Nations of Aroland, Eabametoong and Marten Falls have been in forest tenure discussions with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry for over 4 years. With the establishment of the Agoke Development Corporation (ADC) there is a plan to take over the management of the Ogoki Forest starting April 1, 2018.

With the closure of the Nakina sawmill in 2009 there hasn't been much done in the forest in almost 10 years. With the potential re-start of the Nakina facility there is an opportunity now that the 3 First Nations are looking to take advantage of and secure a meaningful role and have a say on what happens in the forest.

Over the past 2 years the Agoke Board of Directors (Aroland – Mark Bell, Eabametoong – Bill Spade, Marten Falls – Delia Okees) have built capacity by securing a forest resource licence and managing the provincial roads funding. This has positioned ADC to prepare the next 10-year forest management plan working with the Agoke Working Group to get input from the communities on areas of concern like sensitive areas to mitigate conflict in the woodlands operations.

The Agoke Working Group and Board has been working with Matawa Economic Development on this initiative. ADC is currently in the process of exploring business opportunities associated with the Nakina sawmill and related woodlands operations including trucking, road construction and maintenance and bio-energy. If you have any questions please contact Jason Rasevych ([jrasevych@matawa.on.ca](mailto:jrasevych@matawa.on.ca)) Economic Development Manager, Matawa First Nations Management.

## Student Activities at the Matawa Learning Centre (MLC)

These last few months have been great for Student Activities at the Matawa Learning Centre! As well as going bowling and to the movies each week, this past month students had opportunities to play sports, go tobogganing, and try indoor rock climbing. We also took some students to see the Lakehead University Thunderwolves men's hockey team in action! We are looking forward to late winter/early spring and going ice fishing, snowshoeing, tubing, and enjoying the (some-what) warmer weather! We also participated in a 4 on 4 Ball Hockey tournament February 24!



## MLC Student Exhibits Photography in Thunder Bay Art Gallery



MLC student, Andy Beaver had been given the opportunity to have his artwork shown at the 29th Annual Juried Exhibition hosted by Definitely Superior Art Gallery in Thunder Bay Ontario. Andy's work was shown alongside widely known Canadian artists throughout the months of November to January 2018. Along with his framed photograph that displays his home community of Nibinamik First Nation, Andy wrote a brief explanation that gave the viewer more information outlining what inspires his artwork.

MLC students took a field trip to Definitely Superior Art Gallery during their Visual Arts class to view the exhibition and support Andy in his career as an artist.

*"Born and raised in Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver First Nation), Andy Beaver is a self-taught photographer and artist who produces images of the landscape and people from around his community and traditional territory. The goal of Andy's photographs is to display the beauty and elegance of his northern home.*

*'Mystical Night' (below) was captured during the transitional stages of the seasons in Nibinamik First Nation. This photo represents the manifestation of the changing season of Winter into Spring and the beauty of the land year-round. The photo also depicts the transition between evening and night and the changing attractions of the land."*



Andy Beaver, *Mystical Night*, 2016

## Regional Framework Working Group Visit Neskantaga First Nation

On February 22, 2018, members of the Regional Framework Working Group (RFGW) went to Neskantaga for a community visit and open house. Upon arrival to Neskantaga, the RFGW were greeted and welcomed to the community. The day's agenda consisted of a RFGW Meeting and an open house/information session on the Regional Framework Agreement with the community members. The community participation was great; approximately 40-50 people attended the session throughout the day. A lot of good discussions took place and many questions were asked. Overall, the visit was a success. Kitchi meegwetch Neskantaga for your hospitality!



## Apprenticeship at KKETS



*Native Residential Construction Worker Apprentices,  
Neskantaga First Nation - December 2017*

Through the Employment Integration Services program (EIS), sponsorship of apprentices in all trades are available to Matawa members with the Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Development (MAESD).

We are able to register, monitor and assist apprentices in an Ontario Apprenticeship whether it be through one of our programs or an individual apprenticeship.

Success has been had through several areas within the KKETS organization. The community of Eabametoong has completed Level One General Carpentry, the community of Neskantaga is just finishing up the year one pilot project with the Native Residential Construction Worker apprenticeship and the community of Constance Lake is just starting Level Two General Carpentry.

Through the EIS and Apprenticeship Program 75 apprentices are recognized by MASED and KKETS has been invited to present at the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum in Montreal this June!



This past fall, the Matawa First Nations Management Technical Services Department was able to establish a Water and Wastewater Support Services HUB Pilot Project called 'NIBI Services' supported through Indigenous Services Canada. It will run until March 31, 2019. The goal of the pilot project is to provide ongoing water and wastewater support for all 9 Matawa First Nations communities and their Water and Wastewater Operators (WWOs). Ongoing support includes 24/7 emergency services.

Coordinating the HUB pilot (NIBI Services) is Aaron Wesley, Matawa Operations & Maintenance Technician who will be overseeing the project and assisting with logistical services (Utilities Coordination) for water and wastewater repairs. He also coordinates training for all for all Matawa WWOs ensuring that they received required education, training and certification.

On November 6, 2017, Matawa hired Class 4 Water Plant Operator and Class 1 Wastewater Operator Mike Bazdarick. Mike has over 30 years of water and wastewater experience as a former Manager and Overall Responsible Operator for the City of Thunder Bay. On November 14, 2017, Matawa hired Water Treatment Service Technician Jeff Mitchell. Jeff has 31 years of experience in the water treatment industry as a Service Technician (introductory messages for both Mike and Jeff can be found on the 'Matawa Welcomes New Staff' section).

Since hired, Mike Bazdarick has been working closely with the operators to oversee Water and Wastewater Plant Operations, Certification, and to ensure First Nations are meeting Ontario Drinking Water Regulations and Federal Guidelines for operations. Jeff is a hands on specialist who is overseeing the calibration of water treatment equipment. Additionally, he is an expert in, and has been involved in filter media replacement, reverse osmosis repairs, chlorination systems, etc.

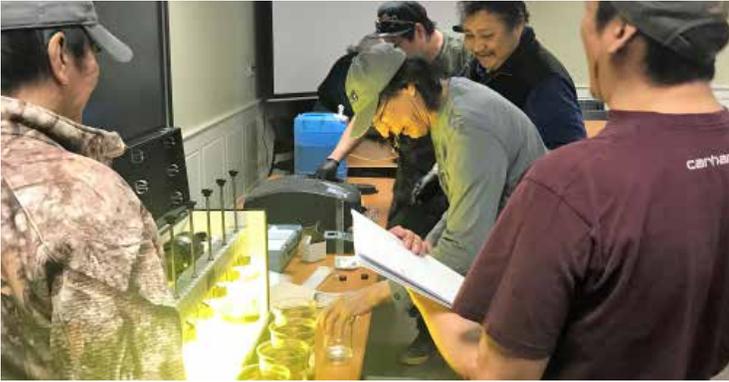
Besides overarching services in the areas of 24/7 monitoring and oversight, maintaining and collecting water quality data, and coordinating/delivering training to maintain federal and provincial water quality standards---NIBI Services will be assisting First Nations with developing Preventative Maintenance and Emergency Response Plans.

Matawa hopes that these services to our members will improve capacity and assist in achieving a more efficient public works sector. If you see Mike or Jeff in your community to collect water samples at the water treatment plant, or working with your WWO or Chief and Council, give them a warm welcome!

For more information on NIBI Services, contact Aaron Wesley at (807) 344-4575 or at: [awesley@matawa.on.ca](mailto:awesley@matawa.on.ca)

## Community Water Plant Operators Receive Training

On Feb 20-23, Matawa hosted a training for Water Plant Operators provided by the Walkerton Clean Water Training Centre in Thunder Bay. Operators were trained on a number of things like flocculation, coagulation, and disinfection as part as their on-going training and certification. This training is particularly important because Operators are preparing for upgrades to water treatment facilities that will have new technology and treatment processes that are coming. Attendees were: Frank Shewaybick, Wesley Wabasse, and Lenny Spence of Webequie First Nation; Simon Moonias of Eabametoong First Nation; and, Wilfred Sakanee and Marcus Moonias of Neskantaga First Nation.



## 1st Annual Matawa Learning Centre 4-on-4 Ball Hockey Tournament

On February 24, the Matawa Learning Centre hosted the first annual Matawa 4 on 4 Ball Hockey Tournament! We had 5 teams come out to the tournament, which was held at Sir Winston Churchill CVI. Two teams were made up of students from the MLC, 1 was made up of Matawa Staff, and we had 2 teams from the community at large. We were able to utilize hockey equipment from the Matawa Education Recreation Equipment Library to outfit the players. The competition was fierce, and there were many great games played!

The champions for this year were the “JHL All-Stars”, a group of youth from Superior CVI. Congrats JHL All Stars! The 1st place, 2nd place and 3rd place teams all received medals, and the champions’ name will be put on a trophy that will be displayed at the MLC.

A big thank you to Matawa Education for providing door prizes, as well as to Roy Begall for making our trophy and medals. The MLC would like to say a special thank you to Officer Gary Cambly, an officer with the Aboriginal Liaison Unit with the Thunder Bay Police. Officer Cambly volunteered to help set up the tournament and was one of our esteemed referees.

Other honourable mentions include MLC staff, Matt Mills, Student Activities Coordinator, for organizing the event; Jackie Corbett, Senior Vice Principal, for being the fiercest sports paparazzi (photographer) and; to Carly Ducharme, Student Support Worker, who was responsible for ordering the trophy and medals! An MLC team effort! Well done!

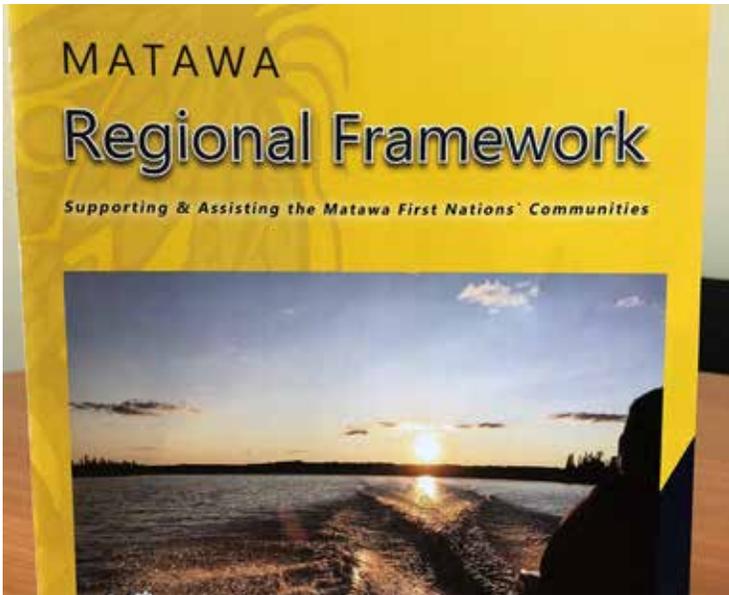


*Champions: JHL All Stars*



*Handing out awards*

# NEW Regional Framework Brochures!!



The Regional Framework Department is excited to announce they have a new brochure! Thanks to Laura Prior at Four Rivers for her assistance with the design. Copies are available - get yours today!



## Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

### Matawa Education

#### MLC Education Systems Navigator, Nicole Beardy-Meekis



Boozhoo, my name is Nicole. I am originally from Sandy Lake First Nation. I have lived in Thunder Bay most of my life and now I am raising 3 beautiful daughters here in the city. I have an Early Childhood Education diploma from Confederation College and a Bachelor of Education specialization in Aboriginal Education from Lakehead University. Many of

my past work experiences involve educating and working with child, youth and adults; I was an educator in daycares, planned a conference for youth, and taught adults at Oshki-Pimache-O-Win. I have a strong passion for Aboriginal Education and I look forward to working with everyone here at the Matawa Learning Centre.

### Matawa Economic Development

#### Business Support Officer Assistant, Audrea Sturgeon



Booshoo, my name is Audrea Sturgeon and I am a member of Nibinamik First Nation. I recently joined the Business Support Team as the Business Support Assistant through the Economic Development Department at Matawa. I have a background in Business Marketing and Office Administration, therefore my new role as the Business Support Assistant is an excellent opportunity for me to expand my knowledge in business development especially within our communities. I look forward to help create opportunities for our community entrepreneurs in establishing economic growth and business development within their communities. Your ideas = Your Success. Meegwetch.

### Matawa Education

#### MLC Guidance Counsellor, Allyson Gilmour



Hello! I was born and raised in Thunder Bay and graduated from Lakehead University in 2012 with my Honours Bachelor of Education. I have continued my education over the years and have achieved certification in Guidance and Career Counselling; as well, I have recently completed my specialist in Special Education. For the 4 1/2 years I have been living

and working in the Sioux Lookout area as a Kindergarten and Special Education Resource Teacher with Lac Seul First Nation. My experience has taught me the importance of having a strong support system to challenge and motivate, not only the students but, each other. It is my hope that this school year will be full of successful experiences for all students and Matawa staff. This is an exciting opportunity for me as I able to return home and continue to share my love, and passion of learning with others. I am honoured to be part of the Matawa team and I look forward to meeting and working with everyone this year.

### Matawa, NIBI Services

#### Jeff Mitchell, Water Treatment Service Technician



I have worked for many years installing and repairing equipment for all of the Matawa communities, and was very happy to be offered a full time position at Matawa doing what I enjoy. My education includes an Environmental Biology Technologist diploma and a Bachelor of Bible degree. My wife and I have been married for twenty four years and we have ten children to keep us busy. I would like to thank you all for the great work environment here at Matawa.

## **KKETS**

### **Apprenticeship Officer, Courtney Ward**



Born and raised by elders in beautiful Thunder Bay, Courtney recently completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in gerontology and is most proud of her published contribution to an assessment tool in elder abuse, which exemplifies her dedication to her community and her passion for learning. Working with Matawa First Nations Management, Kiikenomaga

Kiikenomaga Employment & Training Services (KKETS), as an Apprenticeship Officer, since October, 2017, Courtney is working to help grow the training program well beyond its current reach and foster an ongoing rapport with current participants in the Ontario region.

## **Matawa Education**

### **MLC Vice Principal, Trevor Workman**



Hello, my name is Trevor Workman and I was recently appointed Vice Principal of the Matawa Learning Centre. Prior to this role I was a classroom teacher for ten years, four of which were at the MLC. I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity and I look forward to working with the MLC students to ensure their reach their full potential. I graduated from Lakehead University with a Bachelor of Science and a

Bachelor of Education, and have since completed a number of additional qualifications through Lakehead and Queen's University. I am a husband and proud father of two energetic boys, ages 2 and 5. In my spare time, I enjoy an array of outdoor activities like skiing, cycling, and hiking.

## **Matawa Education**

### **Student Achievement Officer, Yvonne DeBruyne**



Hello, Boozhoo. My name is Yvonne DeBruyne, and I have recently entered on a new journey in my career as Student Achievement Officer for the Matawa Learning Centre. I have been involved in the education system for over 20 years, first as an Educational Assistant in Terrace Bay and Schrieber, but being a lifelong learner and knowing I wanted more, I chal-

lenged myself to earning my Bachelor of Arts while being a full time mother to 3 children and working full time. My journey brought myself and my children back to Thunder Bay where I was raised and here I entered Lakehead University and obtained my Bachelor of Education. I have taught with both of the Lakehead School board and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. During that time I have taught grades K-10, I have obtained a Masters degree in Education and added two more children to my family. My partner and I live with 4 of my 5 children, a menagerie of pets and are always busy with the children and our families. I have been drawn to indigenous learning as a result of learning of my Metis heritage and my grandmothers attendance in residential school. I am excited about being a member of the Matawa Learning Centre education staff and am looking forward to the future the lies ahead.

## **Matawa**

### **Receptionist, Mary Meshake**



Hello, my name is Mary Meshake and I am from the community of Aroland First Nation. I am the Main Receptionist for Matawa First Nation which means I am the first contact you make when you call us or visit us here at our office on 233 S Court St Thunder Bay. I am also fluent in the Ojibway Language which allows me to speak with Elders in our surrounding area. It's wonderful

to be back working for Matawa because it's like a being a part of a huge connected family. It's full of warmth and smiles from our other Staff Members. My history with Matawa begins in 2009 working in the Education Department; I then worked as Casual Receptionist (Court Street location in 2010). Between 2011 and 2014 I was a Career Development Officer for the Ring Of Fire Training Alliance now known as the NEAT Program. In this role I provided different training opportunities for our members in all 9 communities. Now I am back at main reception and looking forward to talking and meeting you all, please feel free to call or visit me and I will help direct your call to the appropriate department.

## **Matawa Education**

### **MLC Student Activities Coordinator, Matt Mills**

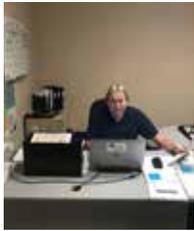


My name is Matt Mills and I am so excited to be part of the work at the Matawa Learning Centre as a Student Activities Coordinator. I have a degree in Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism from Lakehead University. I bring with me extensive program development and implementation experience from summer camps and outdoor education centres across

Ontario. Most recently I was the Coordinator for the Managed Alcohol Program at Shelter House. In my role as Student Activities Coordinator I am excited working with students to design a wide variety of quality recreation opportunities where they can develop skills, maximize community resources, and have agency in the development of programs. I am especially passionate about getting youth outside into nature. I feel honoured to be a part of the Matawa Learning Centre and am excited to learn and grow alongside Matawa students.

## Matawa, NIBI Services

### Mike Bazdarick, Class 4 Overall Responsible Operator



Hello. My name is Mike Bazdarick and I am pleased to be recently hired by Matawa First Nations Management as the Overall Water/Wastewater Operator, overseeing the operational needs and requirements of the Water Treatment and Wastewater Systems. My career has spanned more than 35 years in the Municipal Water and Wastewater sectors with additional time spent working at remote sites and numerous communities in Northern Ontario. I was born and raised in Thunder Bay and have been married to my wife Janet for 37 years. We have three grown children, Leanne, Danny and Katie. In my spare time I am a volunteer "Spotter" with the Northwestern Ontario Air Search & Rescue Association (NOASARA), and my hobbies include astronomy, stamp collecting and playing the banjo. I enjoy my field of work, passionate about what I do and I'm always keen to learning new things. If you'd like to know more about what I do or about any of my interests, please call (631-2498) or drop by my office any time for a visit. See you soon.

## Matawa, NIBI Services

### Ian Medwick, MLC Trades Development Officer



Hello, my name is Ian Medwick, and I am very excited to be a part of the Matawa Learning Centre. I was born and raised in Thunder Bay and have been working in the construction industry for the past 20 years. I am a Certified Carpenter and for the past year I have been training and teaching the Native Residential Carpentry Apprenticeship program for KKETS in Neskantaga First Nation. My education and employment in the trades until now has been extremely enjoyable and rewarding. I want to help the next generation of trades people have access to all the necessary "tools" they need to be successful. I look forward on helping to make a positive difference with everyone involved.

## Living with Us... MIGISI



Migisi (Bald Eagle) is Canada's largest bird of prey. It is often found near water and feeds mainly on fish and carrion (dead animals). Bald Eagles do not get their characteristic white head and tail feathers until they are at least four years old. Pairs of Bald Eagles mate for life, raising 1 to 3 young in a large stick nest high-up in the trees. Bald Eagles are considered a "species of special concern" in Ontario, meaning they are sensitive to human activities.

Historically, these eagles were relatively common in southern Ontario, but about 50 years ago the species was no longer nesting in the area. After an intensive re-introduction program and environmental clean-up efforts, the species has returned, and these eagles can be seen flying the skies of southern Ontario once again. This is a true success story recognizing all those who support species at risk protection efforts!

**Did you know** the government has a process for looking at the impacts of large new developments on the land, water and animals, such as the Bald Eagle, before the project can start? This process is called an Environmental Assessment (EA). If the EA finds that the project could cause negative environmental effects, the government makes the company adjust their project to reduce or eliminate those impacts.

For more information check out: [www.fourriversmatawa.ca](http://www.fourriversmatawa.ca)

Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/bald-eagle>



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