





# HEALTH TRANSFORMATION & NURSING TRANSFER

## What is Health Transformation About?

- It is about the Matawa communities determining how health services can best serve their community members on and off-reserve.
- It is about the Matawa communities taking on greater control of physician & nursing services, land-based healing programs, public health and more.
- It is about Matawa communities moving forward toward self-governance, control and ownership of health services by re-designing services to improve health and well-being.

## How will Matawa Health Cooperative carry out this work?

- Matawa Health Co-op (MHC) staff will travel into the Matawa communities during Fall/Winter 2022-2023 and consult leadership and community members on how they wish to see health services improved.
- MHC will develop a plan on how health services can best meet community needs based on feedback and direction gathered.
- Leadership, community members, elders, women, and youth will be consulted.

For further information, contact:

Jason Beardy, Director of Health Transformation at [jbeardy@matawa.on.ca](mailto:jbeardy@matawa.on.ca)

or

Carmen Blais, Nursing Transfer Initiative at [cblais@matawa.on.ca](mailto:cblais@matawa.on.ca)

## WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN YOUR COMMUNITY!



## MATAWA EDUCATION AND ROTARY CLUB BURSARY

Application deadline : May 1, 2023 by 4:30 pm EST

### CRITERIA:

- This Bursary Fund is for Matawa First Nations Community Members attending Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Training, Apprenticeship, or Trades programs
- Applicants are to complete the application form and attach required documentation
- The goal of these awards is to promote excellence in literacy, leadership, personal achievements and applicants who demonstrate determination, commitment with education and career goals

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

Matawa First Nations - Education Department  
200 Lillie Street North  
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 5Y2  
Tel: 807.768.3300 | Toll-Free: 1.888.283.9747



## Matawa Post-Secondary Program

### Deadline Dates for Applications



Matawa Post-Secondary Program (MPS) provides post-secondary assistance on behalf of the following First Nations: Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga, and Webequie. All potential students are required to submit an application with required documentation. For more information, please contact the Matawa Post-Secondary Program staff at: Tel: 807.768.3300 or Toll-Free: 1.888.283.9747

### DEADLINE DATES:

- |                |                       |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| • May 15th     | Fall Term             | September to December |
| • May 15th     | Fall-Winter Terms     | September to April    |
| • November 1st | Winter Term           | January to April      |
| • March 31st   | Spring & Summer Terms | May to August         |

# MATAWA WAKA TERE

© All Rights Reserved 2022

## Certificate III in Indigenous Pathways to Speaking the Language

The 32 Week Community language classes kicked off on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2022, and will run until July 2023. This is a free program made available to Matawa First Nation members, followed by associated community members. The class ratio of tutor/instructor to student is 1:20 and is for individuals 16 years of age and over. Classes are held twice a week, in the evening (or daytime) for 3-hours. Each class will celebrate with a launch cake.

The Language Project congratulate all National Indigenous Kikinoomagewin Anishinabemowin (NIKA) tutor/instructors and assistant instructors who completed the Matawa Waka Tere 2-Week full training in Thunder Bay during September and October. We also acknowledge all students who have enrolled in the program for 2022 – 2023 and wish you all a fun filled, successful journey. The new Matawa Education language staff are:

### Aroland FN Language Class – Ojibway

Joe Baxter  
Mary Meshake  
Cathy Theriault

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Aroland FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Aroland FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Aroland FN

[joebaxter@matawa.on.ca](mailto:joebaxter@matawa.on.ca)  
[mmeshake@matawa.on.ca](mailto:mmeshake@matawa.on.ca)  
[ctheriault@matawa.on.ca](mailto:ctheriault@matawa.on.ca)

### Webequie FN Language Class - Oji-Cree

Lillian Stoney  
Sandra Spence

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Webequie FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Webequie FN

[lstoney@matawa.on.ca](mailto:lstoney@matawa.on.ca)  
[sspence@matawa.on.ca](mailto:sspence@matawa.on.ca)

### Eabametoong FN Language Class - Ojibwa

Gordon Yellowhead  
Eileen Wabano

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Eabametoong FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Eabametoong FN

[gyellowhead@matawa.on.ca](mailto:gyellowhead@matawa.on.ca)  
[ewabano@matawa.on.ca](mailto:ewabano@matawa.on.ca)

### Ginoogaming FN Language Class - Ojibway

Sharon Mendowegan  
Bernadine Mendowegan

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Ginoogaming FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Ginoogaming FN

[smendowegan@matawa.on.ca](mailto:smendowegan@matawa.on.ca)  
[bmendowegan@matawa.on.ca](mailto:bmendowegan@matawa.on.ca)

### Nibinamik FN Language Class - Oji-Cree

Loretta Wabasse  
Matthew Sofea

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Nibinamik FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Nibinamik FN

[lwabasse@matawa.on.ca](mailto:lwabasse@matawa.on.ca)  
[msofea@matawa.on.ca](mailto:msofea@matawa.on.ca)

### Long Lake #58 FN Language Class - Ojibway

Andrea Onabigon  
Cheyenne Pafabon

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Long Lake #58 FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Long Lake #58 FN

[aonabigon@matawa.on.ca](mailto:aonabigon@matawa.on.ca)  
[cpafabon@matawa.on.ca](mailto:cpafabon@matawa.on.ca)

### Thunder Bay – MECC Language Class #1 - Ojibwa

Wanda Baxter  
Cathy McGuire

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Thunder Bay  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Thunder Bay

[wbaxter@matawa.on.ca](mailto:wbaxter@matawa.on.ca)  
[cmcguire@matawa.on.ca](mailto:cmcguire@matawa.on.ca)

### Thunder Bay – MECC Language Class #2 - Oji-Cree

Sarlane Fiddler  
Bentley Cheechoo

NIKA Tutor/instructor – Thunder Bay  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Thunder Bay

[sfiddler@matawa.on.ca](mailto:sfiddler@matawa.on.ca)  
[bentley.cheechoo@matawa.on.ca](mailto:bentley.cheechoo@matawa.on.ca)

### Neskantaga FN Language Class – Oji-Cree

Elizabeth Sugarhead  
Coleen Moonias

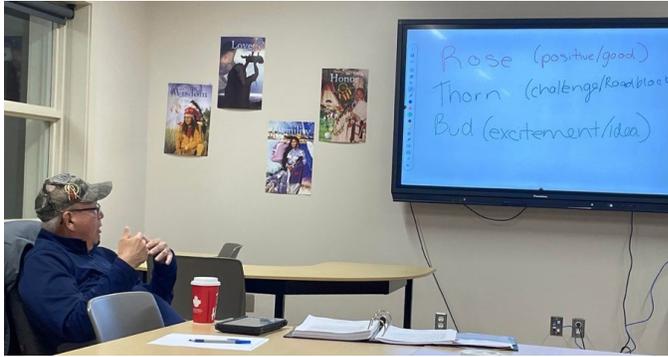
NIKA Tutor/instructor – Neskantaga FN  
NIKA Assistant Instructor – Neskantaga FN

[esugarhead@matawa.on.ca](mailto:esugarhead@matawa.on.ca)  
[cmoonias@matawa.on.ca](mailto:cmoonias@matawa.on.ca)

## YEAR ONE LAUNCH 2022



**Pics of Students and Staff during the MATAWA  
WAKA TERE Certificate Year One Program,  
November 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022.**



**MECC Class #2 – Oji-Cee**



**Long Lake First Nation #58**



**Eabametoong First Nation**



**Aroland First Nation**



**MECC Class #1 - Ojibwe**



**Neakantaga First Nation**

# Diabetes

November was Diabetes Awareness Month with November 14th being World Diabetes Day. The significance of this is to bring awareness to diabetes and the need to act and implement changes to improve health outcomes for those who live with diabetes.

The challenges of diabetes are huge and managing this disease can be time consuming. Unfortunately, if blood sugars are not managed, the devastating damages that can occur from diabetes will happen over time. Diabetic retinopathy (eye damage, including blindness), nephropathy (kidney damage which can lead to need for dialysis), nerve damage and amputations, heart disease and strokes, and mental health issues can occur when one's sugars are consistently elevated above targets. Unlike having a heart attack or stroke where the symptoms are very evident and you seek treatment, diabetes can be silent, and you can continue to function with high blood sugars. Quite often diabetics do not seek treatment until diabetic complications begin to happen.

One of the keys to managing blood sugar and your overall health is to focus on minor changes, one at a time. Slow and steady changes can bring huge health benefits. Regardless of whether you are doing well with your diabetes management or are struggling to get sugars under control, your diabetes educators can be a great support. Diabetes educators will collaborate with you to understand your health goals and provide support and education so you can achieve better health outcomes.

Call Matawa Health Co-operative @ 346-2370 to book with diabetes educators Nick, Cheryl or Dayna.



We are moving!

Construction is near completion on our new office/warehouse space. We are currently getting situated and can't wait to have visitors in the very near future!





## Environmental Monitoring on the Upper Albany River

In August, Erin and Graeme from Four Rivers had the great pleasure of spending 10 days paddling from Miminiska Lake to Eabamet Lake. Along the way they completed a variety of baseline data collection surveys for birds, bats, bees, water quality and fish health. Data collected will be added to Four Rivers' baseline data inventory for safe storage and future use. To get there they boarded a turbo Beaver float plane and got dropped off at Miminiska Lake Lodge. Most nights, they cooked dinner over a fire, including fresh walleye and bannock dogs.



Erin collecting weight, length, age, sex and tissue samples on a Walleye caught in Petawanga Lake.



Erin and Graeme taking a much-needed break before running Split Rapids. All their camping, field work and personal gear had to fit in the 16 ft canoe they used for the 10-day



The Four Rivers drone was incredibly useful for scouting out rapids and possible hazards that the crew may encounter on the river! The crew were also able to get some beautiful photos and videos of the remote landscape along the way.



Graeme working to identify a flowering plant while completing one of many detailed vegetation inventories (DVI) of the trip. Plant observations like these will go into the Four Rivers' catalog of baseline data collected for the Matawa communities to inform monitoring and management decisions.



My honour as part of Minister Hajdu's Indigenous delegation to Aotearoa-New Zealand  
**BY MATAWA EDUCATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHARON NATE**



As an Anishinaabe ikwe from Eabametoong First Nation, I have devoted my path to Indigenous advocacy and language revitalization. So, receiving a request from Minister Hajdu's office to accompany Minister Hajdu to New Zealand was surprising, to say the least. I have been taught that the Indigenous language is the key to fostering a positive cultural identity that ensures the diffusion of beliefs and values, including connections to land and spirituality.

The invitation came during the Annual General Meeting in Webequie First Nation. At the same time, I was surrounded by like-minded, hardworking individuals who devoted their best efforts to better the lives of our Peoples and First Nations. I was grateful and humbled that I was considered to accompany such a respected Canadian delegation while representing Matawa First Nations during a historical event.



The purpose of the visit was regarding the Canadian and New Zealand governments and the move forward in working together to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples in both countries. The Indigenous Collaboration Agreement signed at Parliament in New Zealand on August 24, 2022, moves to promote social, economic, cultural, and environmental advances by developing relationships between the indigenous groups in both countries and sharing our knowledge. The expertise and experiences both indigenous groups have gained throughout our similar histories are instrumental in our path toward reconciliation, revitalization, rediscovery, and development.



The Canadian delegation consisted of the following:

- Minister Patty Hajdu, Indigenous Services Canada
- Gina Wilson, Deputy Minister, Indigenous Services Canada
- Dawn Madahbee Leach, Chair of the National Indigenous Economic Development Board and General Manager of the Waubetek Business Development Corporation
- Dr. Brenda Gunn, Academic and Research Director, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and a law professor at the University of Manitoba
- Gerri Sharpe, President of the Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
- And myself, Sharon Nate, Executive Director of Education, Matawa First Nations Tribal Council

The purpose of the visit was regarding the Canadian and New Zealand governments and the move forward in working together to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples in both countries. The expertise and experiences both indigenous groups have gained throughout our similar histories are instrumental in our path toward reconciliation, revitalization, rediscovery, and development.



I found myself in the company of strong influential women from across Canada doing profound and impactful work in their expertise. Travelling with fellow women in senior leadership positions created a lasting bond for which I am forever grateful. As well, seeing meaningful progress in the number of women in governance has had lasting impacts on my current practice.

The first engagement was signing the agreement at Parliament, a historic moment for New Zealand and Canada. Our team was welcomed at the Grand Hall, filled with New Zealand Ministers, MPs, and civil servants who embraced us in song. Emotionally and spiritually, the experience left an everlasting imprint in my memory. During this experience, tears welled in my eyes as I reflected on the current affairs of Canada, its Indigenous peoples and the continuous unjust we endure far too often. I recall thinking, "if only our Canada governments back home would do this for us and honour us so."



Each day was a new experience, with a different location, breathtaking scenery, and welcoming and warm people. Following signing the agreement, we travelled by bus to a Marae, a unique and sacred place that the Māori People used for worship and ceremonies. At the Marae, the team was traditionally welcomed onto the lands by the Māori People. Like the welcome at Parliament, I was greeted with intense gratitude for those around me while being reminded of those in Canada who remain committed to the continued prosperity of our First Peoples.

As the days went by, I reflected on my time in New Zealand, which probed my inquiry to Minister Hajdu as to what compelled her to think of Matawa Tribal Council to be a part of this experience. Minister Hajdu responded by expressing her insightful views on the work being conducted by the Matawa Waka Tere Language Revitalization program. She furthered her statement by uttering that the program is revolutionary, and that Matawa Tribal Council is leading the way in language recovery. As we met new people in New Zealand, it was well-received to know of the continued kinship between the Māori People and Matawa that was formed years prior.

During a moment of solitude, I found myself on Waitangi Beach, where the Māori People signed their historic treaties with Colonizers 100s of years ago. There, I unfolded a container of sand I brought from my Ojibwe traditional homelands on the Albany River and Makokibatan Lake shores and mixed the sand into Waitangi Beach. I then scooped up sand from Waitangi Beach to travel back to our lands to be mixed. This would forever signify our undivided partnership and friendships with our Māori whānau (family) on the other side of the world.

Indigenous language is the key to nurturing cultural identity, which circulates beliefs and values, including links to land and spirituality. Without the continued support and vision of Matawa First Nations and your commitment to language and culture, this partnership would not exist. I am honoured to have been given this opportunity to represent our People during such a colossal signing.

## Four Rivers and National Tree Seed Centre Indigenous Seed Collection Program



Four Rivers was visited by the National Tree Seed Centre's Director, Donnie McPhee, in early September to discuss their Indigenous Seed Collection Program to support future community seed collection projects to better preserve and protect species of interest to our communities. The goal is to build capacity in seed collection, processing of seeds, as well as long-term seed storage for plant species that are of cultural, medicinal, spiritual, and economic importance to each community. Four Rivers looks forward to expanding these conversations as part of emerging community Guardians programs, as community's build capacity to monitor the lands and waters of their homelands.





# Matawa

EDUCATION & CARE CENTRE

## Boozhoo, Wacheya, Greetings from Matawa Education's PASS Team

Matawa Education PASS department provides support services and resources for our affiliated Matawa First Nations schools and Education Authorities.

- Johnny Therriault Memorial School
- John C. Yesno Education Centre
- Neskantaga Education Centre
- Nibinamik Education Centre
- Henry Coaster Memorial School
- Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre

### PASS Team:

Skylene Metatawabin, PASS Program Administrator  
Doug Gagnon, Cultural Education Coordinator  
Katie Hughdie, School Success Lead  
Mary Ann Nawagesic, Mental Health Lead  
Olivia Merko, Student Nutrition Worker  
Shelby Ch'ng, Education Partnership Program Liaison  
Susan Zgolak, Student Success Lead

smetawabin@matawa.on.ca  
dgagnon@matawa.on.ca  
khughdie@matawa.on.ca  
mnawagesic@matawa.on.ca  
omerko@matawa.on.ca  
schng@matawa.on.ca  
szgolak@matawa.on.ca

### Information Technology Team

Rafal Zgolak - System Administrator  
Nathaniel Salgueiro - Database Helpdesk  
Aaron Gray - IT Technician

rzgolak@matawa.on.ca  
nsalgueiro@matawa.on.ca  
agray@matawa.on.ca

### What We Offer?

- Supports with annual School Success Plans, numeracy and literacy, and other educational initiatives that

support student success.

- Supports with Information Technology which helps schools with technology implementation and troubleshooting
- Host Matawa Education Conference annually in March, which includes a wide range of professional development topics that address current needs for Matawa teachers, principals, education leadership, administrators, nutrition program staff, parents, and community members.

### PASS Team Highlights:

- The IT Team made the trip up to Nibinamik with the purpose to build a brand-new computer lab for the school. 20 all-in-one curved-screen desktop computers, desks and chairs were built and set up. The teachers and students will now be able to use high-end computers and high-speed internet in their daily learning. We're excited knowing that the students now have additional tools to be more connected to communities and the world around them.

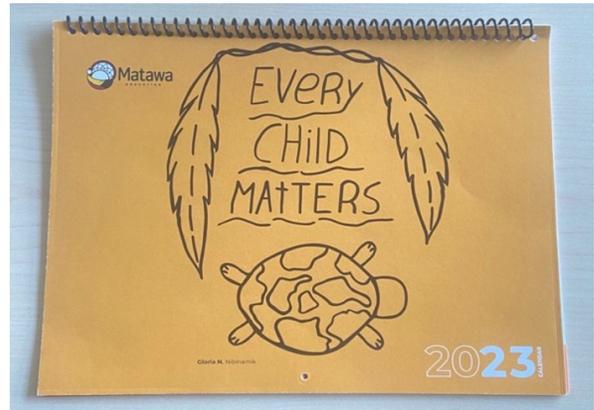


- The PASS Team is excited to share a newly developed program called the Moccasin Curriculum, which is available for Grade 7 and 8 students. Schools have all received their Moccasin Curriculum boxes that contain everything they need to make Ojibwe Split Toe Moccasins. These are an older traditional type of moccasins worn by the Ojibwe people a long time ago and we are very excited to teach students how to make them. The boxes contain a curriculum binder that has all the instructions (both print and video) for how to make this style of moccasin, as well as all materials (fabric, canvas, threads, leather, needles, sinew, bias tape, and scissors). Each student in Grade's 7 and 8 will make their own pair of moccasins.



PASS Team also held an Orange Shirt Day Design contest that closed on May 31, 2022. The winning t-shirt design was from Nibinamik Education Centre. Thank you to all Matawa schools who entered and participated in the contest. All designs are featured in a 2023 calendar!

**Calendar and T-Shirt Contests!**



PASS Team member Susan Zgolak traveled to Webequie visiting Simon Jacob Memorial Education Centre. She held Evaluate Your Life Day sessions with the grades 5 and 7 classes. They discussed the meaning of the day, to reflect on our lives with the aim of becoming better versions of ourselves. The students concluded with creating vision boards.



PASS Team members Doug Gagnon and Olivia Merko traveled to Eabametoong visiting John C Yesno Education Center to host cooking workshops for grades 4-8. Students learned about the importance and benefits of incorporating traditional foods into our lives and diets and gained hands-on cooking experience making delicious Mooz burgers. Miigwetch to the students and staff of John C Yesno Education Center for welcoming us into your classrooms and making some awesome burgers for everyone to enjoy.



We look forward to continuing to support our Matawa schools and communities, please feel free to reach out to PASS if there are any specific programming, supports and resources needed. Contact us at toll free 1-888-283-9747, local 807-768-3300.

Wishing you all a wonderful December, and a safe Merry Christmas and happy holidays. Miigwetch-Wacheya.



## Four Rivers Attends AFN Climate Gathering

Amanda Misnakoshkang and Lynn Palmer, Four Rivers, attended the AFN Climate Gathering in Fredericton, New Brunswick. The theme of the gathering that took place this September, was Preserving our Earth, Land and Water for Future Generations. The Climate Gathering brought together First Nations experts, leadership, youth, women, Knowledge Keepers and other professionals from across Turtle Island to work on the most urgent crisis of our time – climate change. It offered an opportunity to explore solutions that First Nations are advancing in the face of rapid change at the local, regional, national and international levels.



# Environmental Monitoring – Constance Lake First Nation Caribou

Four Rivers has been assisting the Lands and Resources department in Constance Lake First Nation a project studying Caribou. Using trail cameras, research is being undertaken on the range of Woodland Caribou in the Pagwachuan Caribou range. It has long been thought that Caribou no longer exist south of Highway 11 due to pressures from industrial practices like forestry and mining. Constance Lake and Four Rivers hope to confirm the presence of Caribou south of the highway after hearing about observations of Caribou tracks made by community members that hunt and trap in the area. Although most camera data is yet to be analyzed, a number of species have been identified in the images already including Black Bear, Eastern Gray Wolf, Ermine, Gray Fox, Lynx, Moose, Otter, Pine Marten, Rabbit, Red Fox, Sandhill Crane and Spruce Grouse.

Pictured below is: Constance Lake councilor Wayne Neegan who was excited to get out into the field to play in the snow!



## World Diabetes Day 2022

By Gloria Henrick-Laliberte, Health Promotion Education Planner

Matawa Health Cooperative hosted the first World Diabetes Day Awareness Walk on November 14, 2022 at the Intercity Mall in Thunder Bay. The walk opened with a welcome from Crystal Bell, followed by opening prayer from Elder Sam Achneepineskum, welcoming remarks by Executive Director Frances Wesley, the diabetes team of Cheryl Schultz, Nick Kwiatkowski, Dayna Lalonde and Janet Twomey introduced themselves and stated land acknowledgement. Elder Dave Wesley provided a talk about his experience with Diabetes and Shaelynn Willanen from the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre started the walk with a warm up. Community partners Anishnawbe Mushkiki, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, Semple Enterprises, Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority and Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre set up tables with health information and chance to win attendance prizes. The walk was very successful with over 100 participants, gathering and sharing their experience living with diabetes. This will become an annual event, please join us next year as we bring awareness of diabetes to our Matawa members!



# Matawa Radio

*Engaging First Nations over the airwaves*

**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**

January 3, 17 and 31  
February 14 and 28  
March 14 and 28

# Have Ideas on What a MECC Indigenous Culture Credit Should Involve?

Attention all Matawa community members! The Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC) is seeking your input in the development of learning resources for the youth at our school. The course we are in the process of designing is an Indigenous cultural course that focusses on traditional ways of knowing and practice. Our goal in the development of this course, is to create a series of lessons and meaningful learning activities that celebrates Indigenous culture. This new course will focus on important themes such as awareness, celebration, validation, connection, reclaiming stories and oral traditions, and students learning to understand more about themselves, their communities, the land, and its connection to the world we live in. We want to provide even more opportunities for students to receive course credits and achieve their high school diploma.

The development of this course is in collaboration with the MECC’s long-standing partner the Critical Thinking Consortium. The main purpose of our partnership is to work together to co-create and encourage discussion, prompt generative thinking, and support decision making within the MECC on ideas around education. Together, we are working to support the Calls to Action from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to ensure the improvements in education are accompanied and preceded by successful efforts to support the well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learners.

If you are interested in providing your input to help us identify teachings, topics, traditions or share any knowledge you consider is important for the creation of this course, we ask you complete the survey below to provide your input. We look forward to reading and listening to your ideas so we can create resources for this course that are meaningful and impactful. You can also reach out to our Curriculum Development Officer, Joe Willis if you have any questions or ideas, [jwillis@matawa.on.ca](mailto:jwillis@matawa.on.ca).

You can also scan this QR code with your phone’s camera to access the survey!



## Matawa Development Corporation

In March 2020, the Matawa First Nations Chiefs Council (MFNCC) entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with four initial corporate partners (Enterprise Capital Inc., Ontario Power Generation, PCL Constructors Ltd., and EPCOR Commercial Services Inc.), to partner with Matawa First Nations (MFN) to create a significant private sector presence for Matawa owned businesses.

In line with that vision, in March 2021, the Matawa First Nations Chiefs' Council (MFNCC) created a new corporation – the Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) - with provisions for participation of all the Matawa First Nations.

MDC's is to work with the private sector and MFNCC and the Matawa communities to work toward solving the infrastructure crisis in our communities. MDC will do this by working with large private sector companies to take advantage of regional opportunities in the Matawa traditional territory and elsewhere, and will provide benefits for reinvestment in community infrastructure, and will assist in the development of our workforce and our member and community owned businesses.

These include, clean energy, better housing, safe drinking water & wastewater management – with adequate provisions for firefighting services, efficient transportation (roads, railways, air-transport) and greater access to other socio- economic development needs such as schools, health-centers, playgrounds, child and seniors care, food security, community-centers to maintain multi-generational cultural relations, and economical retail food and petroleum services.

Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM), under the direction of MFNCC, has been providing assistance in operationalizing the MDC, and we anticipate other funding to complete the start-up phase of the MDC, and we expect MDC to be self-sustaining and a profitable business enterprise.

Matawa First Nation (MFN) Members have been nominating their respective Directors on the MDC Board on an ongoing basis.

To-date, there have been regular Board Meetings, and an interim CEO has been contracted along with an Advisor. In addition, MDC has executed Letters of Intent (LOI) and Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) agreements with the founding partners.

Despite the global pandemic which presented travel challenges, along with our partners we have continued desk-top research and data collection, for developing plans to address community infrastructure in the short and long term.

The next task will be site evaluations, verification of the current infrastructure and related life spans, and projecting long term regional needs and plans. Full cooperation will be required from the MFN Members and Matawa Technical Services (MTS), the technical arm of MFNM to complete this base line in an expeditious manner.

Finally, and perhaps the most important work with the founding partners is to develop and implement a “robust Human Resources Development (HRD) strategy to identify management and other skill sets required for the immediate future, as well as for the longer term which will enable MDC and its partners employ and contract Matawa people and Matawa companies.

This HRD Strategy will run in parallel with existing strategies with our sister partners Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewin Employment & Training Services (KKETS) and Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC), and MFNs, post-secondary institutions, training centers and other service organizations and alliance partners, as necessary.

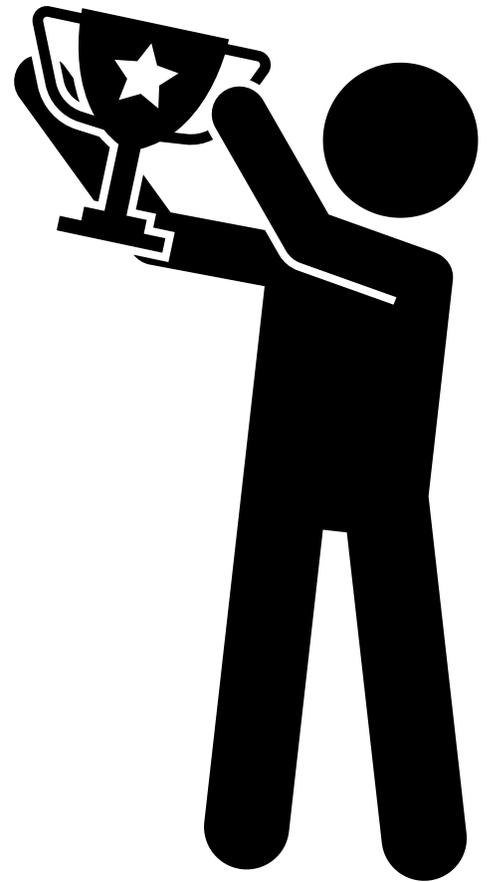
MDC calls it “robust” because we need an all-inclusive strategy to inspire our children to strive for and complete their higher education. This will also help youth and current employees to seek new skills that will match the job and skills requirements of the future in our territory and communities.

Hopefully, all this work will create an enabling environment for a better Quality of Life in our communities – with a place where MFN Members will want to live and raise their families - knowing that there is a hope and a future for our people.

**MATAWA 5TH ANNUAL BOCCE  
BALL TOURNAMENT**

**THANK YOU**  
*sponsors*

**AWASHISHEWIIHIIWAYWIIN | BAIN SMITH CONSULTING  
BRYCE HORNE - DOMINION MOTORS | CAMBRIAN VACUUM  
CLOW DARLING | COLLIERS | CORBEK SERVICES  
FOUR RIVERS INC | I4 ARCHITECTURE | IN MANAGEMENT  
KEATING INSULATION INC | KINNA-AWEYA | LOWERY'S  
MAGELLAN ADVISORS | MATAWA HEALTH COOPERATIVE  
MECC | MNP | NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION | NOMAD  
NORTH STAR AIR | NORTH WEST ELECTRIC  
OPEN MIND INTERIORS | OPG | RAINBOW PRINTERS  
SHOPPPERS (JOHN AND MEMORIAL) | SMITH RV CENTRE  
TELECO | TOM JONES CORPORATION  
TOUCH UNWIRED | TOY SENSE | TWIN CITY REFRESHMENTS  
VICTORIA INN | WEQUEDONG LODGE**



After two years of not being able to because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Gathering of Rivers for Community Care held its 5th annual bocce ball tournament in Thunder Bay on October 28. Thirty-two (32) teams registered and prizes were awarded for Best Team Costume and Best Individual Costume. The event included games of chance and activities such as a 50/50 draw, Find the Joker, Penny Auction and Grand prizes. This year's bocce champions were CEO David Paul Achneepineskum's team which included: Vivian Ann Ledger, Executive Assistant; Angelle Rebelo, Human Resources Coordinator and Rob Wesley, IT Manager.

The Gathering of Rivers for Community Care fundraised for the Family Transition Units that will be opened up by Awashishewiigiihiwaywiin (Social Services Framework) at the Matawa Training and Wellness Centre at 523 Algoma Street North in Thunder Bay this coming spring of 2023.

In total, \$23,000 was raised. Matawa First Nation Management would like to acknowledge the efforts of staff members Robin Haliuk, Michelle Levesque, Alexandra Horne and Tina Gordon who made the event a tremendous success!

# Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

## KKETS

### KAEP Cultural Activities Coordinator, John Slipperjack



My name is John Slipperjack, I am from Eabametoong First Nation. I am currently residing in Thunder Bay, but over the years I have been traveling all over Ontario to the Communities up North and down South. I have always enjoyed visiting other communities and interacting with their community members and learning their traditions as a whole, as well as

participating in their events. I graduated from the KKETS program back in 2014-15, I started working Home Maintenance and Renovations after I moved on from working as an Operator in a Lumber Mill. I have since found more time to honor invitations made by Powwow Committees and Communities, and was able to take a part time in a Cultural Based After School Program for Indigenous Youth. Now I am the KAEP Cultural Activities Coordinator and would like to say thanks for all the warm welcomes I have received since I began, I am looking forward to working with everyone and I hope to meet and work with some great people during my time here. Chi-Miigwetch.

## Matawa Chiefs Council

### Advisory Councils Coordinator, Kristin Fisher

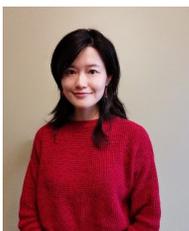


Boozhoo Kristin Fisher nindizhinkaaz, Ginoogaming First Nation nindoonjii. I am a 2006 graduate of the Native Child and Family Service Worker program at Confederation College. Over the years I tried on various employment hats ultimately looking for a career that would elevate my passion for helping people. I accepted my position as the new Advisory Council Coordinator

with an overwhelming amount of respect for Matawa and all the amazing work they do in Thunder Bay and region. Being apart of this team, my goal is to continue to shape my indigenized outlook for creating those safe spaces for our community members to express their feelings in a healthy way and share ideas on how to fully support growth. Providing that platform to empower our Youth, Women and Elders to use their voice is priority. I look forward to working with and learning from all of you. Miigwetch .

## Matawa Health Co-operative

### Policy Analyst, Yiran Wang



Hello! My name is Yiran Wang, I am the new Policy Analyst with Matawa Health Co-Operative. I graduated from the Master of Public Health at University of Toronto and Master of Applied Human Nutrition at University of Guelph. I have been working as a Registered Dietitian since graduation. I moved to Thunder Bay in 2020 and enjoy the life here. In my spare time I enjoy

cooking, rockhounding, hiking and foraging. I am very excited to be a part of the Matawa Health Co-operative team and look forward to utilizing my skills to serve Matawa members.

## Matawa Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin

### Administrative Assistant, Miranda Waboose



Hello! My name is Miranda Waboose and I am the new administrative assistant in the Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin department here at Matawa. I am a member of Eabametoong First Nation. I enjoy watching movies, going for walks and late-night drives, and learning to cook new things. I attended Confederation College from 2016 to 2019 and graduated from

the Office Administration program and the Aboriginal Community Advocacy program. I am excited to be a part of Matawa First Nations Management and have enjoyed being here so much already!

## Matawa Health Cooperative

### Nurse Practitioner, Hazem Sabeh



Hi, my name is Hazem Sabeh and I'm the new Nurse Practitioner! I am honored and can't wait to be part of the Matawa Health Co-op. I took an unconventional path to become a Nurse Practitioner. I undertook an undergraduate degree in Biology and Religious studies from University of Toronto. I then obtained a Masters in Business Administration before

receiving my nursing degree both from Lakehead University. I subsequently pursued a Masters in Nursing and Nurse Practitioner degree from Queens University. A little about myself, I was born in Cairo, Egypt and have lived across many different countries across 4 continents, but I am happy to call Thunder Bay my home. I am very excited to be serving the nine Matawa communities. As a fun fact, I am a first degree black belt in Taekwondo and I've lived & worked in Sandy Lake and King Fisher Lake First Nation teaching literacy to youth.

## Matawa Finance & Administration

### Casual Receptionist, Arianna Atlookan



Hi my name is Arianna Atlookan, I am from Eabametoong First Nation. I am currently working as a casual receptionist for finance and administration. I graduated from Hammarskjold high school in 2019. I have worked at Matawa as a summer student back in 2018 and I enjoyed it very much so I am happy to be back.

I am hoping to gain a lot more experience and attain full time employment. I have a 3 year old son and a soon to be 2 year old daughter. I enjoy taking them for walks, going to parks and doing new fun activities with them. I am grateful for this opportunity working for Matawa First Nations Management and I look forward to where it will take me.

## Matawa Development Corporation

### Interim CEO, Harvey Yesno



Ahniin, my name is Aberdeen Yesno aka # 12, born and raised in Eabametoong near Kenozhe Jeetin on Albany River my trapline. My early education started with my family on the shores of Eabamet Lake, helping with daily chores with wood, water, checking rabbit snares, fish nets etc. We had candle light, then onto coal oil lamps and eventually gas lamps before electricity in early 1970s. I was the running water but those days were the happiest days of my life.

And later with the day school, two residential schools, high school and college which changed my life completely both for the good and bad. I volunteered a lot of my time on community events to stay busy and as our First Nation was just developing at the time. Upon my graduation from college, I went back to my community for the last time because I was destined for an avionics maintenance technician position with then Pacific Western Airlines in Edmonton, my career choice.

However, as life circumstances changed, the current Chief offered me my first job as an EDO which I enjoyed very much; then as Band Manager before I became Chief. As Chief I had many roles with the NDCC/ORLC (INAC), GCT9/NAN, COO, NIB/AFN, WCIP; Capital Projects Manager; Councillor; President and CEO of NADF; director on numerous volunteer boards including OFNLP; Government panels/task forces, Director - Ring of Fire Secretariat; owned and operated several businesses. Recognized with numerous awards and citations including Queen II's Diamond Jubilee Medal 2012.

The greatest achievement to date has been my family, my wife Helen of 41 years, 4 children and 12 grandchildren, and my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who has and continues to sustain me and be my rearguard at all times. So, I am excited to join Matawa Development Corporation (MDC) as the interim CEO, and apply my skill, knowledge and experience to further the goals of Matawa First Nations and continue to serve the people. I wish everyone a safe and a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

## Matawa Health Co-operative

### Mental Health Intake Worker, Kelsey McBain



Hello, my name is Kelsey McBain. I have recently joined the Matawa Health Co-operative team as the Mental Health Intake Worker. I am a graduate of the Recreational Therapy program at Confederation College. Prior to joining Matawa, I was a Family Wellness Worker at Dilico Anishinabek Family Care. When not at work, I enjoy time at camp with family, hiking

with my dogs Cali and Mabel and travelling. Looking forward to working with everyone!

## Matawa Waka Tere

### Student Support Officer, Syndyn Baxter



Boozhoo Syndyn Baxter Nidizhinikaaz. Eabametoong N'doonji; Thunder Bay Nidizhita Nichiikendam noogom. Hello my name is Syndyn Baxter. I am from Eabametoong; I live in Thunder Bay. Today, I am excited.

I am excited every day when I come to work and to be a part of the Matawa Family again; formerly I was working in the KKETS department as the NEAT Administrative Assistant, which was a great employment opportunity. While I was employed with KKETS, I had the opportunity to be a pilot student with the Matawa Waka Tere Pilot program that I completed in 2019/2020. I have always yearned to know my language and to be a student during the pilot year was a dream come true. I loved the program, I learned a lot and most importantly I have retained a lot; I have understanding and knowledge in my language and enjoy speaking when I have an opportunity to speak my language first then the English translation. Dreams do get bigger because I am now employed with Matawa Education and Care Centre in the PASS and Matawa Waka Tere Team as the Matawa Waka Tere Student Support Officer. I am working diligently to input enrolment data into the Student Registry Database and it truly makes my heart smile with every enrolment form that comes to my office to be processed.

I genuinely feel so excited to be one of the many team members who are in this journey of revitalizing our Ojibwe/Oji-Cree/Cree language and bringing the language program to our Matawa community and members.

I am looking forward to the day where our languages are reclaimed by our loved ones and also for the non-indigenous people surrounding our communities and Canada-wide; that is the ultimate dream and I firmly believe in my heart that I will see that day in my lifetime.

## Matawa Health Co-operative

### Community Health Nurse, Chantal Adams



Hello! I'm Chantal Adams! I recently joined the Matawa Health Co-operative as a community health nurse. I am a graduate of the Registered Practical Nurse program at Confederation College and previously worked at St. Joseph's Hospital for 7 years! I am so looking forward to a change in my work environment! If I'm not working, I am usually taking my dog for a walk or out at camp with friends and family! I can't wait to meet and work with all of you!

## Living with Us... Wolverine – Gwiingwa'aage (Gulo gulo)



Photo Credit: Jacob Seguin\_CC BY\_NC License



fourrivers.group

The Wolverine is the largest member of the weasel family, about the size of a medium-sized dog. Wolverine have long, glossy coarse brown-black fur, often with a pale face mask and stripes from its shoulders to tail. They have a strong sense of smell and will roam long distances in search of food. Wolverines are carnivores (meat-eaters) that are primarily scavengers, feeding on most animals they can find. They also actively hunt small mammals such as mice and rabbits. Females den under snow-covered rocks, logs or within snow tunnels, and have 1-3 kits in late winter.

**Did You Know...** that Wolverine are listed as a 'species at risk', meaning they are likely to become endangered if recovery efforts are not made? There are numerous threats faced by Wolverine, including climate change (Wolverines need dense snowpacks for denning into the early spring), habitat loss, and the decline in caribou as a source of scavenged meat. Canada is currently working on a Management Plan to help protect Wolverine from further decline. There is a significant gap in the documented knowledge on Wolverine distribution and habits in the Matawa homelands; local knowledge is needed from our members so that informed management conversations can be held. If you would like to discuss your experience with Wolverine in the homelands, please contact Four Rivers at: [info@fourrivers.group](mailto:info@fourrivers.group)



Photo Credit: Matt Scrafford\_CC BY License



Matawa First Nations | 233 S. Court Street | Thunder Bay, ON P7B 2X9 | Tel: 807.344.4575 | Fax: 807.344.2977 | Toll Free: 1.800.463.2249

