



"Awashishewiigihiwaywiin will support children and families to restore family connection and unity. We will empower our children, families, parents and communities by wrapping them in a blanket of love, care, trust and support. We acknowledge and understand our family systems. We are culturally-based and rooted in a historic understanding of Anishnawbe way of life."

Welcome New Staff and
more....



Reflections from the Mamow Winter Gathering



From Jan 14 - 16, 2020, over 50 community members met in Thunder Bay at the Nor'Wester Hotel to continue work toward a community-led regional decision-making framework. Through the helpful facilitation of the Watershed Partners team, Matawa members were able to focus on the biggest challenges of their specific communities, and then compile the biggest common concerns/challenges in the Matawa region. After 3 days of hard work, the group arrived at 6 priority topics they felt needed to be addressed:

1. Addictions
2. Cultural Practices
3. Family Unit Breakdown
4. Health & Housing
5. Skills & Education
6. Restrictions to Funding



At the end of the third day, the group had arrived at a possible model to illustrate the region's major challenges, along with a list of immediate solutions. Each member offered one way they can start to personally contribute to tackling the identified issues through the group's proposed solutions.

The group also worked on the components of what a regional community-led decision-making process might look like... which is intended to build self-sufficient and self-sustaining communities, create well-being and move toward economic prosperity for the future generations.



Matawa Chiefs Engage in Opportunities to Address Provincial Members of Parliament

Ontario 'Red Tape' Reduction Bill Standing Committee

Matawa Chiefs presented November 25, 2019 in Toronto to the Provincial Standing Committee – to oppose Bill 132 – known as the “Red Tape Reduction” bill. Despite the Bill eventually passing, the Chiefs are now officially recorded as having opposed it, which is important in building a legal foundation for the future. Chief Harvey Yesno of Eabametoong, Chief Celia Echum of Ginoogaming and former Chief Veronica Waboose of Long Lake #58 presented on behalf of the Matawa Chiefs Council providing the following positions:

- Matawa First Nations will lead and deliver the next economic boom of this province and that equitable partnerships will result in investment opportunities on a national and international scale
- Matawa is fully aware of the potential impacts to Inherent Aboriginal and Treaty Rights
- In today’s environment, it would be absurd and negligent for Matawa communities not to call on the Ontario government to develop a new Crown-Inherent Aboriginal Rights-Treaty approach to develop the North
- Matawa First Nations look forward to meeting the exciting challenge of development and the opportunities that are expected by our people and communities
- Matawa First Nations are the partners and investors of certainty required for economic and social prosperity



Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs (Ontario Pre-Budget Consultations)



Also, on January 21st 2020, Matawa Chief Cornelius Wabasse (Webequie) and Chief Harvey Yesno (Eabametoong) presented to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for the Pre-Budget Consultations regarding the Emerging Northern Economy.

Neskantaga Chief Chris Moonias also delivered a presentation to this committee to address the urgency of the suicide crisis.

Matawa First Nations Forge New Way Forward

On Monday March 2, 2020 the Chiefs of the Matawa First Nations were selected from Indigenous groups across Canada to present a formal panel presentation on the comprehensive approach to development of the Far North during the Prospectors and Developers Association (PDAC) conference in Toronto. The panel presentation was followed by an important media announcement that interested Matawa communities are creating a New Way Forward in developing community infrastructure in their traditional territory. Along with PCL Construction, Enterprise Canada, Ontario Power Generation and EPCOR Canada, interested Matawa First Nations will work to determine how to best meet the infrastructure needs in Matawa communities.

In the coming months, Matawa First Nations will play a lead role in developing Northern infrastructure plans and ensuring equitable First Nation participation in the Emerging Northern Economy. Through new relationships with these leading Canadian companies, an innovative approach to financing, building and managing the construction needs of these communities will be developed so that Matawa communities can own and operate their own community infrastructure. Matawa communities have long waited for crucial infrastructure that will bring their people the stability and hope that they deserve.

Key to the success of this project is that the communities themselves will move the process forward, with decision-making power on what is built, when and how. This unique approach can allow Matawa First Nations to control development of their community infrastructure, while protecting inherent aboriginal and treaty rights and their Homelands.

Through partnership with the federal government, Matawa First Nations have been able to move forward on this

ground-breaking new approach where Matawa communities control their future. The work now will include prioritizing individual community needs to create a 25-year plan to bring Matawa communities up to First Nation determined standards. The Mamow Community Coordinators (MCCs) who are employed in each Matawa community will be working to collect information on infrastructure priorities for their home communities.



**2020****THE WORLD'S PREMIER
MINERAL EXPLORATION
& MINING CONVENTION**

March 1 - 4
Metro Toronto Convention Centre,
Toronto, Canada

Indigenous Program

**Forging a New Path Forward for the
Development of the Far North of Ontario**

DATE
Monday, March 2, 2020 at 3:30pm-4:30pm
LOCATION
Room 701

Federal Government Orders Regional Impact Assessment

Canada's Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change ordered a Regional Impact Assessment of the Ring of Fire area in the Matawa territory. The order was issued under Canada's new Impact Assessment Act (IAA) due to requests from three parties: Aroland First Nation, the Wildlife Conservation Society of Canada and the Osgoode Environmental Justice and Sustainability Clinic.

Part of the government's creation of the IAA included an overhaul of Canada's environmental assessment legislation - aimed at streamlining the approvals process for natural resource projects and improving consultation with Indigenous peoples. Developments in the Matawa region could cause adverse effects and have cumulative impacts on fish habitat, migratory bird populations, and the land and air, as well as impacting climate change. There are also potential impacts on treaty rights, traditional land and resources, socioeconomic conditions, health and community well-being.

A regional assessment could help inform future project-specific assessments that might be required in order to proceed with road construction, mining development and other activities in the region.



Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment: Adapt Project

In the face of unprecedented environmental changes and an unpredictably changing climate, our communities need an opportunity to understand better the risks and opportunities of climate change to plan and adapt for the future. During the next couple of years, Four Rivers will be working with all Matawa communities in a vulnerability assessment that will support the identification of risks presented by climate change. We will be focusing on health and infrastructure, with a community-based methodology that will help identify culturally appropriate adaptation options.

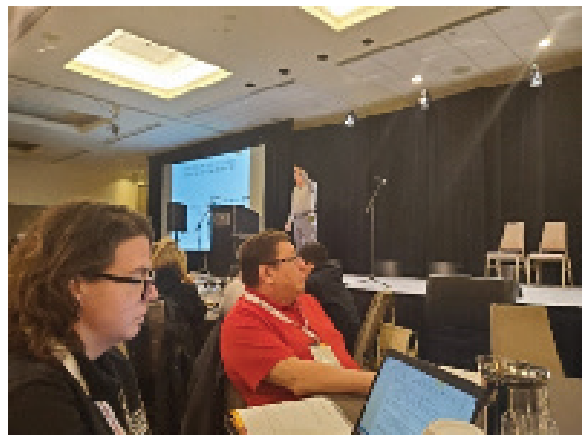
We visited Long Lake 58, Ginoogaming, and Constance Lake in early February to plan activities. We also visited Nibinamik and Webequie and interviewed community members, including leaders, elders, land users, youth, and key stakeholders. These interviews expand on the previous work done by the Laurentian University in several of our communities about perceived changes in different areas such as weather, lakes, rivers, animals, etc. In this phase, we are identifying how the previously reported changes are impacting communities. The next step is to build risk models based on the information given by the community and mapping technology, to define adaptation priorities. We can't stop climate change, but we can adapt to the future climate realities. If you would like more information on this and other Four Rivers initiatives, please visit our website at www.fourrivers.group



Indigenous Forum on Cumulative Effects

An inaugural Indigenous Forum on Cumulative Effects was held in Calgary on February 4-6, 2020. Representatives from Four Rivers, Eabametoong First Nation and Long Lake #58 First Nation attended. The forum brought together participants from across the country to share knowledge and experiences about the assessment and management of cumulative effects and to provide input for an independent Indigenous Forum on Cumulative Effects being funded by Indigenous Services Canada. From a western perspective, cumulative effects are changes in the environment caused by multiple interactions among human activities and natural processes that accumulate across space and time. From Indigenous perspectives, it is important to also consider the cultural, social and health impacts from activities on the lands and waters that affect community well-being in relation to food systems, cultural practices and economies.

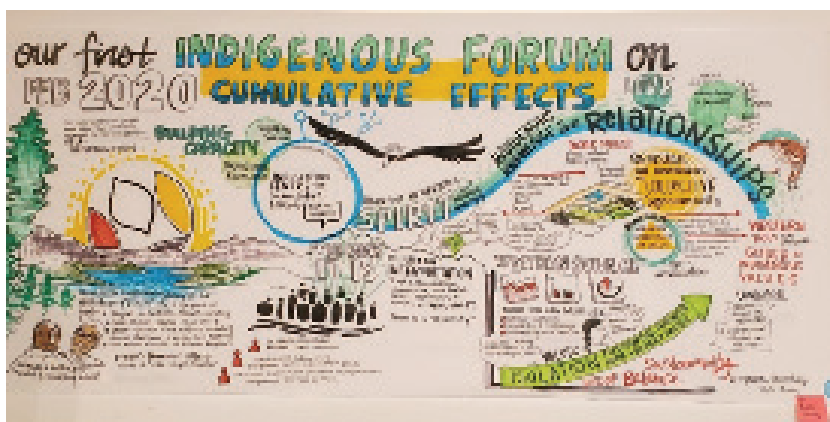
of cumulative effects from an Indigenous perspective.



(see more of this story on page 6)

Keynote presentations conveyed how we must return to the traditional relational way of thinking based on natural law; how we can create alternative "conservation economies" as are emerging in conjunction with Indigenous Protected and Conservation Areas; and, an understanding

Breakout sessions showcased a variety of processes, structures and tools being used for cumulative effects assessment and management, including the integration of Traditional Knowledge. Also highlighted was how cumulative effects are being considered in environmental assessments and there were many discussions on the impacts of climate change. The forum concluded with a panel on Elders teachings related to observed changes on their lands and waters. In the coming year, Four Rivers will be reaching out to a number of the groups who gathered at this event to facilitate future information sharing opportunities for Matawa member First Nations



18th Annual First Nations Housing Conference (FNHC)

The 18th Annual First Nations Housing Conference (FNHC) 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 11-13, 2020 in Thunder Bay at the Valhalla Inn. This year, the event was at its largest with over 380 people in attendance during the 3-day event. There were over 20 Matawa First Nation members in attendance. Formerly known as the Northern Housing Conference, this was the fourth year that delegates from across the nation were invited to share in this event. The Conference attracted First Nation housing professionals from Nunavut, The Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, Nova Scotia and all over Ontario.

The theme for the conference, which included a trade show and the 12th Annual Builders Challenge, was "Building Our Vision". This year, there were three streams for workshops; technical, administrative and leadership. Some of the workshops for this year's event included;

National Building Code update, Wood Stove and Home Fire Safety, Housing Assessments, Understanding Your Housing Program, Federal Government Housing Updates, Indoor Air Quality and Respiratory Health, Project Management, and Environmental Public Health Services-Bed Bugs to Radon, 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 Permanent Wood Founda-

tions. 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; Setting Foundation Wall, Insulating Foundation Wall, Lateral Support Insulation / Moisture control and Exterior Details.

This year, three communities were honoured for the Community Housing Recognition Awards at the banquet. They were: Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek, Fort Severn First Nation and Onigaming First Nation.



(see more of this story on page 7)



*George Mequanawap - Eabametoong
Terrence Keeskitay - Eabametoong*



*Bernard Gagnon - Aroland
Irvin Taylor – Constance Lake*



*Sandy Shewaybick - Webequie
Louie Wabasse - Webequie*



*Bernard Gagnon - Aroland
Roberta Wesley – Constance Lake*

This annual event was organized by representatives from 11 Tribal Council from 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 2021 event!!!!

Further information is available online at the conference's website. www.firstnationshousingconference.com - for further information contact:

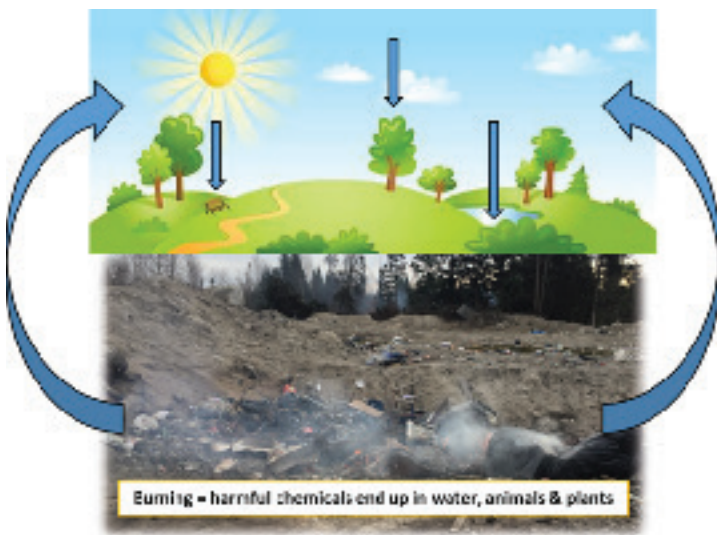
Saverio Rizzo
Housing Inspector / Coordinator
Matawa First Nations Management
* FNHC Working Group Member

Trash Talk

Each member First Nation is working on ways to improve waste management activities. Some are working to upgrade dumps or build new landfill sites that will include areas for recycling. Others are starting new roadside collection programs, entering into agreements with neighbouring Municipalities to take their garbage and recycling, and designing new transfer depots for construction. No matter where you live, here are some things to think about:

1. **Burning garbage** releases harmful chemicals into the air we breathe. The little tiny ash pieces, called particles, are carried by wind and drop to the ground. Eventually these chemicals end up in the water, plants, and animals.
2. Things like paints, oils, antifreeze, batteries, fuel, electronics, and other chemicals are called **hazardous wastes** and should not end up in the dump/landfill. The hope is for every community to have a safe place to store these wastes until pick up and disposal can be arranged through a licensed company.
3. **The 7 Rs of Sustainability are the future.** Recycling is not an environmental solution nor is it a money maker. The economic market for household plastic, metal, and paper is struggling because there is too much product and not enough ways to reuse the materials – particularly plastics. Changing the way we buy and what we buy will make a big difference in how we manage our garbage. For example: refuse to buy plastic packaged items and choose to have reusable grocery bags.
4. **Litter** is a huge problem no matter where you live. Many things have a long life, especially plastics which are causing a lot of health problems for wildlife around the world.

If you have questions or concerns about waste management in your community, please contact Lindsey Jupp, Environmental Technologist at ljupp@matawa.on.ca or (807) 630-3948 (text/call).



THE WAY YOU BUY TAX-EXEMPT GAS IS CHANGING

STARTING JANUARY 1, 2020

The Ontario Gas Card will be discontinued.
Instead, show your Indian Status card to buy
tax-exempt gas on reserve.

Message from Matawa Membership Program: Now that this new system is in place, please check with your local gas provider to see what they require. How it's rolled out varies within Matawa. Some retailers require a Secure Indian Status Card while others are accepting the laminate Certificate of Indian Status Card.

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

www.wawataynews.ca/radio
89.9 FM in Sioux Lookout
106.7 FM in Timmins
BellTV Channel 962

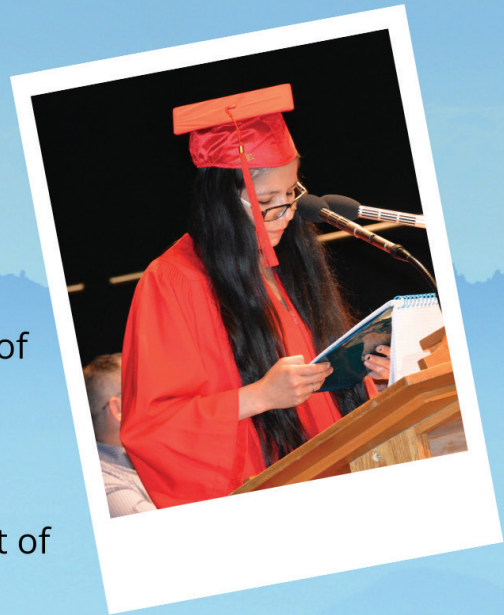




MATAWA POST-SECONDARY PROGRAM

STUDENT APPLICATION PACKAGE

Matawa Post-Secondary Program (MPSP) provides Post-Secondary assistance on behalf of the following First Nations: Aroland, Ginoogaming, Longlake #58, Neskantaga, and Webequie. The MPSP provides financial assistance to eligible students towards the cost of Post-Secondary Education.



ALL STUDENTS,

continuing and new, are required to submit a new application for each term according to the following deadline dates:

DEADLINE DATES FOR APPLICATIONS

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

Matawa Education Host 13th Annual Conference

Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM), in partnership with Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ), hosted the 13th Annual Matawa Education Conference from March 10 – 11, 2020 at the Valhalla Inn on the traditional territory of Fort William First Nation. This year's theme was: Achieving the Dream: Inspiring Future Generations – Debinan Gibawamowin Kotagiyag Chigichiinendamowach.

Teachers from Matawa and KOBE schools engaged in a variety of workshops together while making meaningful connections, sharing their successes and celebrating their learning experiences. The conference focused on building positive relationships with students in order to support their learning.

Professional learning opportunities for school staff were provided through 30+ workshops in the areas of: cultural curriculum, assessment and evaluation, cultural programing, land based learning, technology, teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy, STEM, mental health, and language revitalization, amongst others.

Each year the Matawa Education Conference gives participants the connections, tools, learning opportunities, and strategies they need to understand and implement effective professional learning in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

This year, the conference program was pleased to announce keynote speaker Dr. Pam Palmater is a Mi'kmaw lawyer, professor, author, and social justice activist from Eel River Bar First Nation in New Brunswick. Pam is a well-known public speaker and media commentator and is considered one of Canada's Top 25 Influential Movers and Shakers. She spoke about her social justice advocacy on behalf of First Nations, Indigenous women and children. Pam's current research focuses on police racism, abuse and sexualized violence against Indigenous women and girls and its contribution to the crisis of murdered, missing, traded, and exploited Indigenous women and girls.

The conference featured additional, distinguished speakers during opening and closing remarks including: Sharon Nate, Matawa Education Department Manager; Jonathan Kakegamic, on behalf of Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education; Tony Sakanee, Education Director in Neskantaga First Nation; NAN Deputy Grand Chief Derek Fox; and MFNM CEO David Paul Achneepineskum.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Classroom Sponsors

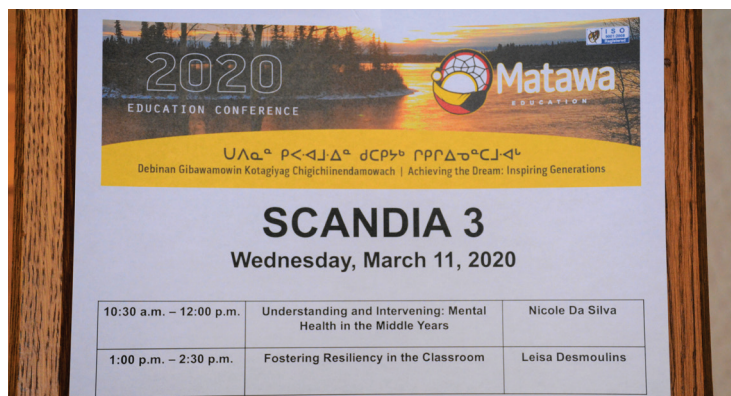


OSHKI-WENJACK

OSHKI-PIMACHE-O-WIN
THE WENJACK EDUCATION INSTITUTE



Learning Sponsors



MECC Students Visit Aroland

Towards the end of January M.E.C.C students teamed up with the grade seven and eight students from Johnny Therriault School in Aroland First Nation. The objective of the trip was to set up a camera study, with the hopes of capturing a photo of the elusive wolverine. While out at the incredible cabins built by the Aroland Choose Life Program on Esnagami Lake, we learned about trapping, and wolverines from local Knowledge Keepers, and a wildlife biologist from the Wildlife Conservation Society. We spent the rest of our stay at the cabins cross country skiing, and ice fishing on Esnagami Lake. We had an amazing trip and are so grateful to connect with a community school and to have the chance to learn from the amazing instructors from Johnny Therriault School. Students from both schools are looking forward to seeing the pictures from the camera traps, and completing a report on the wildlife we photographed.



Translated Books Made Available

For the past year, members of the Matawa Education PASS Team have been working on the Matawa Book Translation and Creation Project with funding support from the Ontario Arts Council and the Government of Ontario. The project consists of taking ready-made books from partner publishers and engaging community members to translate the text into Anishinabemowin so that it is applicable for each Matawa community dialect. PASS Staff also worked with communities to create books that featured events, and people from within Matawa. Danielle Gibson and Katie Hughdie are pleased to announce that after a year, the Book Translation project has almost reached its completion, with Book Launch parties to share the new books being the conclusion of the project. Thank you to all the Matawa community members who supported this work.



Matawa Students Break the Ice

During the last week of November M.E.C.C students in the Outdoor Education program developed both their first-aid and rescue skills. The class spent a week out at the Sleeping Giant Provincial Park getting certified in both Wilderness First Aid and Ice Safety and Rescue. During the Wilderness First Aid course we learned how to provide life-saving treatments to the body's three critical systems, clean wounds, and several other useful first-aid treatment skills. A major highlight of the course was cleaning wounds using chicken thighs to simulate a real wound. The Ice Rescue course combined rope skills, rescue skills, and ice extraction skills; including a full day of ice immersion. Combining these two certification courses provided opportunities to use real treatment within a practical context, for example building hypothermia wraps after extracting a patient from the ice. On the last day of the course students participated in an elaborate simulation, rescuing their teachers and instructors from a simulated skidoo accident. Students combined the skills they had been practicing throughout the week and smoothly dealt with the emergency simulation.



Dogsledding Along the Trapline

M.E.C.C students embraced the challenge of dogsledding and outdoor living while spending four days out on the trail near Vermillion Bay. We travelled as a group across big lakes, over portages, and winded along through creeks, swamps, and marshes. Our group got along great, and really connected with the amazing dogs that worked hard to take us to our destination. We snowshoed through several trails and marshy areas to explore, and check the traps. While out on the trail we learned about trapping and were lucky enough to harvest 3 beavers, a mink, a marten, and an otter. It was an incredible learning opportunity as we had the chance to travel using dog teams and learn a bunch of different skills like skinning animals, wood cutting, etc. During the March Break from March 16 - 20, 2020, we went on another dogsledding expedition travelling between Neskantaga and Webequie.



Matawa Education & Rotary Club Bursary

DEADLINE DATE FOR ALL APPLICANTS: May 1 – 4:30 p.m.

- This Bursary fund is for Matawa First Nations Community Members attending Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Adult Education, Training, Apprenticeship, or Trades Programs
- Applicants are to complete the application form and attached 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 to obtain an application package, please contact:

Matawa Education Department

Tel: 807.768.3300 Toll-Free: 1.888.283.9747



 **FEDERAL
INDIAN DAY
SCHOOL
CLASS ACTION**

There is a nation-wide settlement to compensate
Survivors of **Federal Indian Day Schools**
and **Federal Day Schools**

If you attended one of these schools, you've
waited a long time for this moment.

This may be an important step in your healing journey.

Find out if you are eligible for compensation and how you can make a claim.
Go to **IndianDaySchools.com** or call us at **1.888.221.2898**

Need to Talk? Contact the Hope for Wellness Hotline: 1.855.242.3310

Former Federal Indian Day School and Federal Day School students (“Survivor Class Members”) and their family members (“Family Class Members”) are included in this settlement. To be eligible for compensation as a Survivor Class Member, the Claimant must have attended at least one of the identified Day Schools during the time that it was operated and/or controlled by Canada and must have suffered a recognized harm as a result of that school attendance. Each eligible Survivor Class Member will be required to provide supporting material for his or her claim. Survivor Class Members who passed away on or after July 31, 2007 may also be eligible to receive compensation. All payments will be made to the Estate Executor. Family Class Members will receive no direct compensation under the Settlement. Instead, a \$200,000,000 (CDN) Legacy Fund is being established to support projects for commemoration, wellness/healing, and the restoration and preservation of Indigenous languages and culture.

Matawa members can contact Matawa Education (Skylene Metatawabin) at 1-807-768-3300 (or toll free 1-888-283-9747) or Matawa Health & Social Meno Biimadeswin (Francine Pellerin) at 1-807-344-4575 (or toll free 1-800-463-2249) for assistance in completing the forms. Paper copies of the Claim Form, can also be requested by calling (toll free): 1-888-221-2898 or, by email at: indiandayschools@deloitte.ca or, by mail to: PO Box 1775, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5C 0A2. **Deadline to submit a claim is: July 13, 2022.**

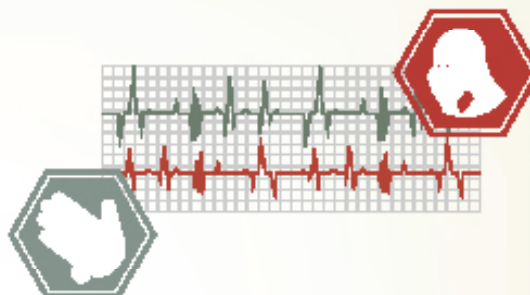


CORONAVIRUS FACT SHEET

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is providing this overview of the coronavirus, and information on resources in your region. As the situation is evolving rapidly, please visit the Public Health Agency of Canada and Indigenous Services Canada for the most updated information.

Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr Theresa Tam, has assessed the **public health risk of COVID-19 within Canada to be low.**

- Coronaviruses in general are part of a large family of **viruses** which may cause illness in people and in animals. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, like the common cold.
- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a new disease that has not been previously identified in humans.
- Those who are infected with COVID-19 may have little to no **symptoms**. You may not know you have symptoms of COVID-19 because they are similar to a cold or flu.
 - Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known infectious period for this disease.
 - Symptoms have included fever, cough, difficulty breathing, pneumonia in both lungs.
- Coronavirus infections are **diagnosed** by a health care provider based on symptoms and confirmed through laboratory tests.
- Currently there is **NO vaccine** to protect against 2019 novel coronavirus infection.
- The flu vaccine does **not** protect against coronaviruses.
- For now, there is no **specific treatment**. Most people with the common coronavirus illness will recover on their own and your health care provider may recommend steps you can take to relieve symptoms.
- Common **prevention measures** for viruses, such as the COVID-19 and influenza, include:
 - Regular hand washing with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand cleanser.
 - Covering your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
 - Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of a respiratory illness, such as coughing or sneezing.



For updated national information on COVID-19:

PHAC: www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html

ISC: www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581964230816/1581964277298

NOTE: This Fact Sheet was released by the Assembly of First Nations on March 9, 2020.

Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

Economic Development

Rapid Lynx Communications Officer, Audrea Sturgeon

Booshoo my name is Audrea Sturgeon and I am a member of Nibinamik First Nation. I have recently transitioned from my previous role as a Business Support Officer to the new Communications Officer for the Rapid Lynx Team. I am still under the Economic Development Department for Matawa First Nations Management. With my experience and background in Business Marketing, I am very grateful that I have been given this opportunity to create and provide informational materials for the Matawa community members. I am also looking forward to working with the communities and the working group that are part of the Broadband Project.



KKETS

ASAP Data Entry Clerk, Lucy Bois



Booshoo my name is Lucy Bois, I am a member of Eabametoong First Nation. I joined the KKETS –ASAP Team in September 2019 as the ASAP Data Entry Clerk.

KKETS

Intake & Referral Officer, Theresa Morrisseau

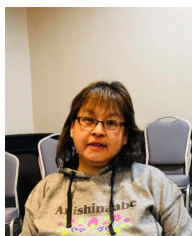


Boozhoo, my name is Theresa Morrisseau, I am from Eabametoong First Nation. I was recently hired as the Intake & Referral Officer at Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment & Training Services. I've lived in Thunder Bay most of my life. I graduated from a three-year Business Management

Program (Aboriginal Organizations), Human Resources (Post Diploma) Certificate. And, I have a background in ISO 9001:2008, and worked with Matawa in the past as the Quality Assurance/Financial Advisory Administrative Assistant. Also, I had the pleasure of working with Eabametoong Chief and Council. I am excited to a part of the KKETS team, and I look forward new challenges! Meegwetch!

Matawa Education

Indigenous Language Specialist, Lois Whitehead



Hello, my name is Lois Whitehead. I'am from Webequie First Nation and I speak fluently in Oji-Cree. I have been hired as an Indigenous Language Specialist at Matawa Education. I have been an educator for number of years at my home community of Webequie. I'am proud to be here and thankful for the opportunity to work with everyone. miigwech!

Awashishewiigihiwaywiin

Family Support Worker, Brittnei Westphal



Hello, my name is Brittnei Westphal, I am very excited to be joining Awashishewiigihiwaywiin program as a Family Support Worker. I grew up in the small town of Red Rock located on Northshore of Lake Superior, for the past eight years

I've been living in Thunder Bay. In June, I will be graduating from Native Child and Family Services and Aboriginal Canadian Relations programs at Negahneewin College in Thunder Bay. I look forward to serving and providing assistance to families from the Matawa First Nations.

Economic Development

Rapid Lynx General Manager In-Training, Wayne Slipperjack



Hi everyone, I have been hired to be the General Manager in Training for the Rapid Lynx Broadband Project. I come from Eabametoong First Nation where I was employed with Eabametoong Communications Inc. as Manager/Technician/Finance. Prior to coming to Rapid Lynx,

I worked with the Education Department as IT Technician. I look forward to bringing Broadband internet to our communities which is badly needed as most of you know who travel to the remote communities, Internet is very slow. With that, I hope to keep our communities updated as much as possible so that our members are informed on the progress of this project. With that meegwetch and see you when I come to your community.

KKETS

Social Development Officer, Sabrina MacLaurin



My name is Sabrina MacLaurin, I am a member of Constance Lake First Nation. I am the Social Development officer for the ASAP program, I had started in September of 2019. I am excited to be part of the Matawa team and look forward to working with my fellow Matawa members.

KKETS

Social Development Officer, Caitlin Fletcher



Hello everyone! My name is Caitlin Fletcher. I was born and raised in Fort Frances, ON. I came to Thunder Bay to attend post-secondary school in 2013 and I decided to stay after I was finished my schooling. I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Gerontology from Lakehead University as well as a diploma in Social Service Work from Confederation College. I am a Social Development Officer in the Aboriginal Skills Advancement Program at KKETS. I became a part of the team in January 2020 and I really enjoy my role here within the organization. I look forward to meeting fellow members of the team.

Matawa Education and Care Centre

Education Coordinator, Stephanie Gerrie



Hello, my name is Stephanie Gerrie and I began here at Matawa Education in January 2020. As Education Coordinator I have had the privilege of meeting so many of the amazing employees over here at our Lillie St. Office and MECC. The work that is happening in the Matawa Education

and Care Centre, PASS and Post-Secondary Programs is inspiring. I am born and raised in Thunder Bay and enjoy spending time outdoors, skiing, hiking and camping with my family. I have always had a passion for education and began my career in the field of Early Childhood Education, later branching out to Resource Teaching and Special Needs planning. I am so excited to continue learning all that Matawa has to offer, and am proud to be part of such an amazing team.

Matawa Education and Care Centre

Mental Wellness Worker, Katy McGuigan

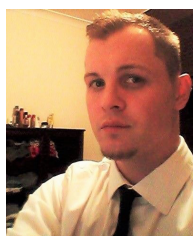


Hello, my name is Katy McGuigan. Originally from Nova Scotia, I am relatively new to the city of Thunder Bay, though I am quickly coming to love its good people and natural beauty. After having completed a degree in psychology, I recently completed my degree in social work, during which

time I had several placement opportunities which involved supporting various populations, including vulnerable women and youth. Since moving to Thunder Bay, I have been lucky to find many opportunities to continue supporting folks throughout the city, but I have always known that my true passion involved supporting youth and children. With this new opportunity through the Matawa Education and Care Centre, I am looking forward to getting to know the students, and having the opportunity to support them as they work to achieve their educational and wellness goals.

Matawa Education and Care Centre

Cooperative Education Instructor, Tanner Little



Hello, my name is Tanner Little and I am happy to be joining the Matawa Education team as the cooperative education instructor. My journey as an educator has provided me with different opportunities to teach as well as led me to explore various parts of the world such as beautiful British Columbia and London, England.

With that said, I have also spent two years educating young students on a reserve west of Thunder Bay and have taught just about every subject including English, Culinary Arts, and Phys-Ed. However, as a Masters graduate of Lakehead University, and having grown up in Thunder Bay, I am happy to be returning home and to be starting work for a terrific organization like Matawa Education and Care Centre.

Matawa Education and Care Centre

Database Helpdesk, Derek Zoccole



Boozhoo, hello. My name is Derek Zoccole. My real name is Wawatay Gaana Giizhig, which means Lots of (or all of) Northern Lights in the day (I think?). I am a nishnawbe from Eagle Lake First Nation but have been born and raised in Thunder Bay. Before working for Matawa,

I worked for OZHI which did housing inspection for First Nation houses to make sure they are properly built. I was the IT person for that organization. I am now working for Matawa as the new Database Helpdesk person. My duties include but not limited too helping teachers and staff with the Education database for things like attendance and students marks. Pretty much, I help with all things computers. Need help with a computer problem and are in the MECC then I can help.

I am what you call the A-typical nerd. I like things like Dungeons and Dragons, video games, board games, math, school, and other things most people don't like. In my spare time, I like to program and am currently working on Automatic Speech Emotion Recognition program that will tell if you are sad and give you an appropriate response. I look forward to working with everyone here at Matawa and am hoping my expertise will help this organization flourish and prosper.

Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff (Cont'd)

Matawa Education and Care Centre

Teacher Coach, Brittany Precosky



Hello! My name is Brittany Precosky and I am the new Teacher Coach at Matawa Education and Care Centre. I am born and raised in Thunder Bay, and have recently spent the last 7 years of my teaching career in Winnipeg, Manitoba. While out of province, I had the opportunity to teach across grades K-12 as well as gain experience in administration, academic support and counselling. I have also spent my summers working as a teacher coach for a sustainable education program in East Africa. Outside of work, I love adventuring the outdoors while accompanied by good friends, a camera and of course, my dog. I feel so excited to be back in Ontario, and even more thrilled to be part of the Matawa team. I am eager to lead and support our incredible teachers, in order to provide our students with a positive, inclusive and diverse educational experience - one that always strives for their personal success and well-being.

Living with Us... CHIIWEH (Dragon Fly)



Photo Credit (both pictures): Xavier Sagutch, Eabametoong First Nation



There are many different dragonfly species throughout northern Ontario, including the Rusty Snaketail, Delicate Emerald and Beaverpond Baskettail! While they have different (and interesting) names, all have long thin bodies, large eyes, six legs and four wings. All dragonflies begin their lives in the water, in their larval form called a nymph (which can last for several years), where they are excellent hunters eating other insect larvae (including mosquitoes), tadpoles, and even minnows. When it is time to mate, the dragonflies emerge from their larval form, shedding their exoskeleton (like a shell) and emerging into the air. They become ferocious flying hunters, with amazing eyesight and the ability to maneuver at high speeds, eating moths, grasshoppers, mosquitoes and other flying insects. Adult dragonflies live, on average, for just five weeks, ultimately laying their eggs in the water or on wet moss for the next generation of nymphs to emerge.

Did You Know... Dragonfly larvae are a vital part of the community of water bugs found in at the bottom of streams, lakes and rivers. This water bug community is referred to as the 'benthic' community, and their health can be an indicator of the health of the entire water body. Four Rivers is exploring a new partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Canada and Living Lakes Canada to support the Matawa member First Nations in monitoring the health of the benthic populations in their waters. Though access to new DNA analysis technology, our community Environmental Monitors can start collecting this valuable baseline information on important waterways to check for future change from development and our changing climate. **If you would like more information on this and other Four Rivers initiatives, please contact info@fourrivers.group**



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

