

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

# Politics

# NAN hosts community engagement session on Indigenous Led CARE

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

Nishnawbe Aski Nation held a Community Engagement on an Indigenous Led CARE (Children at Risk of Exploitation) Unit on April 17 at the Superior Inn in Thunder Bay.

“What we’re trying to do here is get direct feedback from community members — in today’s case we’re engaging with off-reserve NAN community members who reside in Thunder Bay to see what their thoughts are on the need for establishing a CARE Unit, which is a Children at Risk of Exploitation Unit, in the province,” says Loretta Sheshequin, director of women’s initiatives at NAN. “This one would be specifically Indigenous-led and possibly NAN specific. There are three existing CARE Units in the province, and we’re just ... investigating to see if the need is there specific to our NAN (citizens) and communities.”

Sheshequin says another reason for the community engage-

ment sessions is to gather data on human trafficking.

“We keep hearing human trafficking is an issue, it is happening, but we don’t have the hard data to support that,” Sheshequin says. “I know in my own work that I’ve been doing through NAN, we’ve been hearing more of those stories where people are having to go and search for their children by themselves. One of the important reasons for doing this series of engagements that we intend to do is to gather those statistics and those stories so that we can say, yes, this is important and there needs to be more resources, whether it’s human or programming, available to families who are struggling to get their loved ones out of the hands of human traffickers.”

Sheshequin says they had community engagement sessions scheduled for early May in Timmins and Matagami First Nation, and they will also be doing more sessions up until the end of September but still have to finalize and select the

communities and dates.

“Beyond that we are targeting some of our remote communities, probably in the end four to six of our remote communities,” Sheshequin says. “We’re going to try and do as much as we can, a broad cross section, road access, west, east, central parts of NAN as well as bringing together some of our service agencies like NAPS (Nishnawbe Aski Police Service) and the city police, Tikinagan (Child and Family Services), even Dilico (Anishinabek Family Care), just depending on where we’re looking at.”

Former grand chief Harvey Yesno, who participated in the community engagement session on April 17, says the communities need to get involved with the human trafficking issue.

"The communities need to get involved in that because their people are getting into that situation both in the community and more so in the urban centres," Yesno says. "I think this is a good thing to bring it up and start dealing

with it. Just like anything else, we need to become more aware of the issue because we're not absent from those things that happen in urban centres. So it's good that we're talking about it."

Linda Sakchekapo, a North Caribou Lake citizen who participated in the community engagement session on April 17, says it is important to establish awareness of the human trafficking issue at the First Nation level.

“There’s a lot of traffic that happens between the First Nation and urban centres and sometimes inadvertently youth go missing, and we also have a very high population from North Caribou Lake in Thunder Bay,” Sakchekapo says. “I’m here to learn because I’m working for my First Nation in their law development — we work for our community as they’re developing their child and family law.”

Harriet Visitor, a Sachigo citizen who participated in the community engagement session



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of Nishnawbe Aski Nation citizens participated in NAN's Community Engagement on an Indigenous Led CARE (Children at Risk of Exploitation) Unit, held April 17 at the Superior Inn in Thunder Bay.

on April 17, says she attended as the parent of a daughter who is in Grade 10.

“I wanted to be informed as to what’s happening in the city,” Visitor says. “What I heard is it’s going to take a community, it’s going to take people that

work and advocate for our people, but also it's going to take everyday people, community members, parents to be very informed as well and be part of what's happening within our communities, whether it's community or urban."

[illegible] $\cong \Delta', b \cong \Delta'$ [illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

“∇·Π   Γ<sub>Q</sub>Δ·   ∩<sub>Q</sub>ΛΓ”  
 ρΛLbΓ\   b<sub>z</sub>ρ   C<sub>Q</sub>ΛΔ·Q”

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

"ᐱᑭᕈᕋ ᐱᓂᑦ, ካሶ  
ኣልደብ ድረ ባለ-ፆ  
የምረባ ሊቀ-ጳውስት ጉቡ-  
መለሾ 17, ሲነ መሠረ  
ርርዮን የምረባቴው 10  
በአሁኔው-

[illegible]

# Thank You, Airlines!

Your fast, courteous delivery of Wawatay News to our northern communities is appreciated.



# Politics

## Sol Mamakwa stresses rights of Indigenous Peoples's at NOMA conference

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa stressed that the country's economic situation cannot be used to trample on the rights of people in the north during the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association's (NOMA) Conference and AGM. Held April 23-25 at the Superior Inn in Thunder Bay, the gathering also featured speeches by Ontario NDP leader Marit Stiles, Ontario Liberal Party leader Bonnie Crombie and Green Party of Ontario leader Mike Schreiner on April 23.

"It's just a reminder, and I reminded them as well that we can work together," Mamakwa says during his speech on April 24. "I reminded them as well (about) some of the things that First Nations continue to live with, you know when we talk about youth suicide and the drug issue, the drugs that are coming into the communities and also the addictions. It's very clear that we need to come together in the north to address these issues."

Mamakwa says he also acknowledged that many First Nations in northern Ontario still do not have high schools and many are on boil water advisories.

"We still see things happening and I think jobs are a given when we talk about development, but how do we continue to work together," Mamakwa says. "My message was basically



that we need to work together as northerners because no matter if it's housing, no matter if it's infrastructure, health care, these are the issues that we see together."

Mamakwa says he also spoke about how First Nations in the north depend on the land.

"Land is where we get the language, land is where we get our ways of life, it's the identity," Mamakwa says. "And I think erosion of these lands will have an impact on who we are as a people. We've been caretakers of these lands since time immemorial and we continue to live that way."

Mamakwa says the free prior

informed consent principle, which is found throughout the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, needs to be followed.

"Free means First Nations shouldn't have to pay anything when there's engagement happening; prior, before any drill goes into the ground we have to be able to understand that; informed is when we say they have to understand it in their language in layman's terms, make sure that people understand; and consent, First Nations rights holders have the right to say yes or no to development — that's what free prior informed consent is," Mamakwa

says.

Mamakwa says he thanks Shuniah Mayor Wendy Landry, a Red Rock Indian Band citizen who stepped down as NOMA's president on April 23 after serving for eight years, for the work she has done as NOMA's president.

"You don't see a lot of First Nations people in these places so I thank her for her work and bringing some of the First Nation issues ... to the forefront, but also how we can become better in working with First Nations as municipalities, especially in the north," Mamakwa says. "There's so much more work to be done,



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

Kiiwetinoong MPP Sol Mamakwa speaks during the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association's Conference and AGM, held April 23-25 at the Superior Inn in Thunder Bay.

but I thank her very much again for doing the work she did, and I'm sure she will be continuing to be involved in the municipalities that are in the north."

Mamakwa says it is time for First Nations people to be more involved in municipal governments, whether it is as a councillor or a mayor. Moose Cree's Lawrence Martin previously

served as the mayor of Sioux Lookout and Cochrane.

"It's important that as First Nations we begin to be involved in these processes, just to have a voice because we matter too," Mamakwa says. "A lot of our people are living in these municipalities and it's just an opportunity to be able to be a part of it."



### Building & Empowering First Nations Futures

To learn more contact our Recruitment Office  
Toll Free: 1-868-636-7454 | 1-807-626-1880 | [recruitment@oshki.ca](mailto:recruitment@oshki.ca)  
106 Centennial Square, Thunder Bay

### Fall 2025

- Business (General)
- Early Childhood Education
- Mental Health and Addiction Worker
- Personal Support Worker (funded)
- Pre-Health Science (funded)
- Social Service Worker



OSHKI WENJACK  
OSHKI-WENJACK EDUCATION INSTITUTE

[oshki-wenjack.ca](http://oshki-wenjack.ca)



## \$500

SAVE on select 2025 Can-Am Outlander models

## \$2,000

in Cash Rebates  
Up to on Can-Am Side by Sides

2025 OUTLANDER 700 MAX DPS H3792

- 2 up seat
- Visco-Lokt QE auto-locking front differential
- Dynamic Power Steering
- Full skid plate

Trail + work

MSRP

## \$12,749

OR

## \$102

bi-weekly 84 mos. 6.49%



### Half-Way Motors

## POWER SPORTS

1230 Carrick Street, Thunder Bay • 807-622-2626  
[www.halfwaymotorspowersports.com](http://www.halfwaymotorspowersports.com)

©2025 Bombardier Recreational Products Inc. (BRP). All rights reserved. ®, ™ and the BRP logo are trademarks of BRP or its affiliates. Offers valid from May 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025. All adult model ATV are meant to be used by drivers of age 16 and older. Carefully read the vehicle's operator's guide. Always ride responsibly and safely.



165th Avenue North P.O. Box 1180  
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B7

Serving the First Nations in Northern Ontario since 1974.  
Wawatay News is a politically independent monthly newspaper  
published by Wawatay Communications Society.

ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ 1974 ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ  
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ. ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ  
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱ  
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ.

# Commentary

## Mother Earth On Our Side



**Xavier  
Kataquapit**  
  
UNDER THE  
NORTHERN SKY

In a world that is so upside down these days we really need to count on our leadership and Elders to stand up for us, for mother earth and to make sure that there is a world in place for future generations. When I first started out writing and faced with interviewing government representatives like Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament, local, regional, provincial and national Chiefs, council members, Mayors, bureaucrats and business corporate executives I was intimidated. I recall my partner and mentor Mike an experienced journalist enlightening me that all these people were just ordinary folk like everyone else. As he commented “they all go to the toilet just like every human being”. I thought this was so funny but also it really did remind me that I had no reason to feel intimidated by anyone just because they held a position in government or had some form of power. That little trick gave me confidence.

Over the past three decades I have interviewed and become acquainted with many people in leadership. We tend to forget that all these people deal with the same challenges we all have to meet. Some endured difficult experiences growing up, some have had relationship problems, some have struggled with addictions and some have had to deal with illness. For the most part, my interactions with all of these leaders and professionals has been beneficial and enjoyable and I have learned much from their feedback and stories.

These days we see some very disturbing trends all over the world, in the United States and right here in Canada with far right movements winning power or threatening to take power. Some of the leaders involved resemble the fascists of the period during the Second World War. More than ever we have to make sure we are electing and putting in power leaders at every level that believe in democracy and a just and fair form of government. It is up to us to support our leaders to make sure that good decisions are made in pushing back on war, doing what we need to do to fight climate change, provide health care and social service care for people and in particular our Elders and children.

Make no mistake about it our leaders are constantly under fire through lobbying from wealthy corporate interests and

those who are more interested in making money rather than protecting Mother Earth and the people and creatures who live on our planet. We all need to make money, we deserve the right to make a good living to care for ourselves and families but we have to balance that with making sure that at the end of the day we will have a future with fresh air, clean water to drink, enough good food to eat and a planet that is peaceful and enriching.

Too often we are ready to criticize our First Nation Chiefs and leadership when we should be supporting them and reminding them what we need to make the world a better place. I grew up in a time when resource developers were more concerned in colonizing us and terrorizing our people through residential schools and all kinds of limitations. Our lives as nomadic hunters and gatherers changed abruptly when we were forced to live in restrictive reserve locations and made to feel less than human as compared to our colonizers. Today there have been many changes and by law resource developers and governments have to deal with First Nations in consultation and making agreements that provide benefits to Indigenous people with all kinds of development. These are better times and many of my people have enjoyed training and employment opportunities that have improved our lives. However at the same time we see powerful interests moving ahead with policies of divide and conquer with First Nations to reap the benefits of developments geared to making a lot of money but with little concern for Mother Earth, First Nation lands and our traditions and culture. It is up to our First Nation leaders to stand strong and stay together to make sure we have the strength and integrity to make sure good decisions are made.

Too often these days we see First Nations being influenced by government and resource developers with all types of pressure. In some cases they infiltrate tribal councils, organizations and First Nation leadership to get their way. In times of immense lobbying we need to make sure our First Nations Chiefs and leadership are not intimidated or pressured into making decisions that are not in our best interest. We are an enormous force to be reckoned with and that is proven simply by the fact that we have survived all of the most terrible forces of colonization. No need to feel intimidated. Money can't buy us. We have Mother Earth on our side.

[www.underthenorthernsky.com](http://www.underthenorthernsky.com)

### Fort William FN’s Sixth Annual Hide Tanning Camp



Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug’s Charlotte Marten led a bingo session in Anishinabemowin at the 6th Annual FWFN Hide Tanning Camp, held May 7-11 on the shores of Lake Superior at Thunder Bay’s Chippewa Park.

Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

# Evacuations For Flood And Wildfire



**Graham  
Saunders**  
  
WEATHER

Northern Ontario was generally cooler than normal in April. Precipitation totals, however, varied significantly across the region. The Northwest and the Far North were drier than normal, and in contrast the Northeast and north of Superior were much wetter than average. An area from Geraldton to Chapeau and Hearst received about double the average normal April total. This distribution of precipitation in April had follow up consequences in May.

Kashechewan First Nation and neighbouring Fort Albany First Nation, located at the mouth of the Albany river on James Bay both communities had to be evacuated early in May because of extreme flooding. However, the evacuation was complicated in Kashechewan because the road to the airport was under water. Helicopters and small boats were used to move residents, especially families with children to the airport in Fort Albany.

Most people in Kashechewan and Fort Albany were able to return to their homes in the

middle of May.

The month of May often brings a variety of weather to the region. A heat wave in mid-May brought some record temperatures to northwestern Ontario.

May 11 temperatures rose to 34.1°C in Fort Frances and 31.9°C in Atikokan. The seasonally warm temperatures were accompanied with very low relative humidity and with moderate winds in many locations in the Northwest. For people who monitor and manage wildfires, there is a “rule”, the 30-30-30 Crossover Rule which describes weather conditions that have the potential to result in extreme fire behaviour. If the temperature is 30°C or above, the relative humidity is 30% or less and the wind speed is 30km/h the “crossover” has been reached and there is a possibility of extreme fire behaviour which could also be difficult to control.

Wildfires forced more than 800 residents to evacuate from Wabaseemoong First Nation (100 kilometres northwest of Kenora near the Manitoba border). Rain and cooler temperatures have limited growth of several fires at near the community, but Kenora 20, which is 27,647 hectares in size, still pose a major threat. Sprinklers are set up for most of the buildings in his community.

### Weather “Luck”

Weather forecasters usually consider numerous factors when predicting rain, the likelihood of sunshine, thunderstorms and other elements of weather. Successful predictions require science but still depends on chance. For many years I was on call during the wildfire season to predict fire behavior at large “project fires”. Typically, these were large fires that had the potential to destroy property and other values. Often, this entailed forecasting wind strength and direction which would result in fire spread and the intensity of smoke down wind.

Occasionally, I would be asked to assess the feasibility of doing a prescribed burn, to remove a green forested area, from the path of the large forest fire approaching a community.

Such attempts to “fight fire with fire” are risky can go badly wrong, say if the wind direction changes in the during process. I felt lucky after the fact, one does not want to be responsible for “losing a fire”.

The evacuations mentioned above had all sorts of risk associated with them. Floodwaters over an airport runway, mix take-off and landing of aircraft impractical. Wildfire smoke can reduce visibility.

A few communities in northern Ontario, Examples include Red Lake, Sioux Lookout and Armstrong, depend on a

single highway if an emergency requires the evacuation of the towns. One of the most frightening emergencies in recent times was Fort McMurray in 2016. More than 80,000 people Drove on one highway out of the city has a forest fire engulfed the community.

I think we’ve been very lucky so far in these situations in northern Ontario and Canada.

### Global Temperatures

April 2025 was the second warmest April ever recorded, just behind April 2024, according to data from both the European Union Copernicus Climate Change Service and the US-based Berkeley Earth climate agency.

Copernicus reported an average global temperature of 1.51C above pre-industrial levels, marking the 21st month out of 22 to exceed the 1.5°C threshold. The 1.5-degree Celsius threshold is critical for avoiding the worst impacts of climate change. This record heat for almost two years means it “means more frequent “hot, wet and dry extremes of weather”.

Global temperatures in May 2024 are almost identical to last year. May is likely to be another month at least 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures.

## CONTACT US

**Sioux Lookout**  
Office Hours: 8:30:50 CST

Phone: ..... (807) 7372951  
Toll Free: .....18002439059  
Fax: .....(807) 7373224  
.....(807) 7372263

**Timmins**  
Office Hours: 8:30:30 EST

Phone: .....(705) 3604556  
Toll Free: .....18779292829  
Fax: .....(705)3601601

**ACTING CEO/PUBLISHER**  
Mark Kakekagumick  
markk@wawatay.on.ca

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Chris Kornacki  
chrisk@wawatay.on.ca

**NORTHERN LIGHTS BANNER**  
Dan Russell  
http://NorthernLightsNow.com

**SALES REPRESENTATIVE**  
Tom Scura  
Phone: 807 6226000  
Fax: 807 6226010  
toms@wawatay.on.ca

**CIRCULATION/PRINTING**  
Safeguard Business Systems  
Thunder Bay, ON

**TRANSLATION**  
Vicky Angees  
vickya@wawatay.on.ca

**DESIGN AND LAYOUT**  
Through the Sky Studio

**CONTRIBUTORS**  
Lindsay Cote  
Rick Garrick  
Xavier Kataquapit  
Graham Saunders

Guest editorials, columnists and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of Wawatay News.

**Disclaimers:** All submissions to the Managing Editor must be in a Microsoft Word document, double spaced, and must adhere to Canadian Press style. Wawatay reserves the right to refuse to publish any unsolicited submissions.

Wawatay Communications Society and all its affiliate media outlets are intended to provide general information and news to the public. The material expressed within is given for general information only and does not constitute professional, legal or medical advice. Where appropriate, users should seek their own professional advice. Wawatay accepts no responsibility for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of material published or broadcast. Wawatay accepts no liability in respect of material contained on other sites which may be linked to from time to time.

# News

## Neskantaga evacuates nursing station

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

Neskantaga has boarded up the community's nursing station after fuel was discovered in the ground in the area of the building. Neskantaga had called for an immediate emergency response on April 20 after the nursing station was closed down due to severe flooding and toxic fuel fumes.

"Fuel was found, a very large number," says Neskantaga Chief Gary Quisess on May 17, noting that the fuel was found about eight to nine feet below the surface. "The final report will be next week. Yesterday I arrived in the community — our nursing station, we closed it, we boarded it up. We're going by the ISC (Indigenous Service Canada) report, they're saying the temporary clinic is operational."

Quisess says they boarded up the nursing station for safety reasons.

"We don't know what kind of fuel or how much fuel is under that building or underground," Quisess says.

"Last week they did soil testing on the area to try to find out where the fuel came from, and the ground testers gave us a report that they found some fuel underground, contaminants. This is very puzzling for the engineers, where did the fuel come from, so they are going to do more testing, they're going to do more work on the nursing station."

Quisess says it was a very

emotional situation for the community when they boarded up the nursing station.

"Our people were seeing their clinic being boarded up with a lot of memories," Quisess says. "I had to explain why we're closing it yesterday and people understand now why we're doing this."

Quisess says they have set up a temporary clinic in a duplex building, noting that it is smaller in size than the nursing station.

"That's where the nurses are going to be working," Quisess says. "It's smaller — we'll find out when the people come back if they are going to get comfortable with it."

Quisess says the duplex building was just finished this year, and was originally intended to house two families.

"The way it looks now, it looks like they're running two temporary clinics," Quisess says. "They have to go from A to B to get supplies, that's how it's set up."

Quisess says the first load of evacuated community members was scheduled to return home on May 18 — about 181 people were evacuated to Thunder Bay due to the closed nursing station.

"(We evacuated) the most vulnerable that need care, the Elders, the infants and the children," Quisess says.

Quisess says the evacuated community members were frustrated about being away from their community, during a May 14 interview.



Neskantaga Chief Gary Quisess and Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler check out Neskantaga's temporary clinic after the nursing station was closed due to severe flooding and toxic fuel fumes.

photo from Nishnawbe Aski Nation's Facebook page

"The people in Thunder Bay want to go home," Quisess says on May 14. "It's very hard for big families to stay in a crowded room. The kids and their parents don't have that privacy, it's really impacting our lives."

Quisess says the children who were evacuated feel displaced as

well regarding their education.

"It doesn't feel (like) school to them when they have a classroom in the hotel," Quisess says.

Quisess says they also missed the spring hunting season.

"We go hunting all the time, or harvesting, and that didn't happen this spring," Quisess

says.

Neskantaga has been under a boil water advisory for more than 11,000 days, the longest in Canadian history, and the community has faced multiple evacuations.

"Reconciliation is not just a word," Quisess says in an April

20 press release. "It's a commitment. And that commitment must come with action. If this crisis were happening in any other community, the response would have been immediate. Our people deserve the same urgency and the same dignity."

## Summer Specials Here Now!



## Slushy and Soft Serve Ice Cream Machines

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR COMPLETE LINE OF PRODUCTS!



Toll Free  
**1-800-465-3930**  
**Bazaar & Novelty**  
**612 Squier St**  
**Thunder Bay, On**



Dan Peever

**www.bazaarandnovelty.ca**

ADVOCACY · INCLUSION · OPPORTUNITY · GROWTH



**Anishnawbe Business** PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION



Jason Rasevych  
PRESIDENT  
Ginoogaming First Nation



Ron Marano  
VICE PRESIDENT  
North Caribou Lake First Nation



Jason Thompson  
SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Red Rock Indian Band



Rachael Paquette  
DIRECTOR  
Mishkeegogamang First Nation



Tony Marinaro  
DIRECTOR  
Naicatchewen First Nation



Brian Davey  
DIRECTOR  
Moose Cree First Nation



Steven McCoy  
DIRECTOR  
Garden River First Nation

## WHY JOIN US?

Indigenous Business is an economic force that is growing, and we're growing together.

### Information

We offer information session and networking events relevant to projects and business expansion here in the North.

### Guidance

We develop best practices for First Nations Development projects and non-First Nations businesses regarding inclusive Procurement and Human Resources Policies.

### Communications

Our Members have access to economic buyers and key decision makers in Northern Ontario through our growing network, events, and conferences.

### VIP Privileges

Our Members are the first to know about discounts on events, access to new or upcoming programs, or opportunities for growth in our region.



Learn more at [www.anishnawbebusiness.com](http://www.anishnawbebusiness.com), or connect with us at [info@anishnawbebusiness.com](mailto:info@anishnawbebusiness.com), or call 807-357-5320. We serve Treaties 3, 5, 9, Robinson Superior and Robinson Huron areas.

The strength of the wolf is the pack.

# Indigenous Arts Festival

## Na-Me-Res Pow Wow

Fort York • June 20 & 21

**FEATURING:** SNOTTY NOSE REZ KIDS,  
SHUB & AMANDA RHEAUME

Learn more: [\*\*toronto.ca/IAF\*\*](http://toronto.ca/IAF)



# THM

Pictured: Kehew & Kirby Buffalo | Photo by: Roberto Caruso, 2024

Produced by



Funded by



# Sports



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The Constance Lake Hawks won the junior division at the 2nd Annual Matawa Education and Care Centre Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament.



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

The Notorious D.I.G. won the senior division at the 2nd Annual Matawa Education and Care Centre Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament

## New teams, players had fun at Matawa's co-ed volleyball tournament

**Rick Garrick**  
Wawatay News

The Notorious D.I.G. won the senior division and the Constance Lake Hawks won the junior division at the 2nd Annual Matawa Education and Care Centre Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament, held April 18-20 in Thunder Bay. The Muskrat Dam team finished second in the senior division and the Sandy Lake Wolverines finished second in the junior division.

"It was pretty fun getting to meet all these new players and teams and being able to play with my friends as well and watching the junior players play as well," says Jayda Jeremiah, a member of the

Notorious D.I.G. "I started playing (volleyball) when I was in middle school and I started playing in high school when I came to DFC (Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School). What keeps me going is playing with my friends and laughing with them on the team, even if I win or lose I'm still having fun playing volleyball."

Kylan Whitehead, a member of the Notorious D.I.G., says it was a very good experience to participate in the tournament.

"We're a very good team and I expected them to play at their best and they did," Whitehead says. "I can't wait for next year's tournament because they keep improving every year, every year it gets better and better and more challenge. I was in Grade

8 when I started playing (volleyball) — it's eight years already."

Whitehead says he and one of his teammates played for Team Ontario two years ago at the North American Indigenous Games in Halifax.

"And we've been playing since," Whitehead says. "Last summer we went to an All Nations (Volleyball Showcase) tournament."

Tinah Bluff-Wabano, a member of the Constance Lake Hawks, says it felt amazing to win the junior division.

"I was just shocked, I didn't know how to react when we won," Bluff-Wabano says, noting that she got involved with volleyball when their coach-manager started up the team. "We started asking people who

wanted to join so we could have something different in the rez going on."

Akira Wesley, a member of the Constance Lake Hawks, also enjoyed winning the junior division.

"This was our first time winning, even a rally," Wesley says, noting that her friends told her about playing with the volleyball team. "(There's) lots of socializing, I like it but it's kind of scary at the same time."

Liam Nakogee, coach of the Constance Lake Hawks, says he started coaching the team this past October.

"They definitely improved a lot over the past couple of months I've been coaching them, and I think what really helped us a lot was our serves,"

Nakogee says. "They limited their service errors and getting the ball over is really important."

Nakogee says he started playing volleyball in Grade 11.

"I kind of picked it up from there and stayed consistent with the sport," Nakogee says. "I'm from Constance Lake, there's no volleyball clubs around so it was really hard to pick up the sport but I approached some other guys and we just picked it up just like that, we just kept playing and practicing and being consistent, participating in the volleyball tournaments and I guess that's where we picked our skill up from."

Constance Lake Councillor Ricky Sutherland says he was proud of the Constance

Lake Hawks as they came from behind to win the junior division.

"It was a nice tournament this weekend," Sutherland says. "Volleyball just came back about a year ago — we've got the volleyball going and we've got the new arena going up there for hockey, so I think it's going to be good for the kids. I'm just happy I came out to support the tournament."

Kylie Baxter, part of the organizing committee for the tournament, says the tournament was competitive and fun.

"Everyone was really welcoming, I saw a lot of friendships being made and respect was a big one," Baxter says. "Everyone had a good time."

# ABA Dental Clinic

## THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

*Serving Indigenous communities for over 21 years.*

Insurance & Status Cards Accepted



- \* Hygiene Cleanings
- \* Teeth Extractions with i.v. moderate sedation
- \* Periodontal Care

- \* Root Canals
- \* Orthodontics
- \* and more



*Patients from First Nations communities typically receive all their dental work at our clinic during a two to three day trip to Thunder Bay.*

**Request an appointment today!**

(807) 626-8001 | [info@abadental.ca](mailto:info@abadental.ca)

| [abadental.ca](http://abadental.ca)

**Did you know? NAPS officers are among the highest paid in Ontario, enjoy unparalleled work-life balance with two-week-on two-week-off rotations, and receive unrivaled promotional opportunities.**

**YOU can be a police officer in YOUR community, or travel to one of our 34 communities across Northern Ontario.**



## Start your journey today and

**Apply NOW at  
joinnaps.ca**







# Community

## KKETS announces \$392,000 in new funding

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS) announced the launch of its Mino-Ayaawin Maamawi (Leading in Health and Wellness Together) project on May 14 in Thunder Bay. The two-year initiative, which is being supported by the TD Ready Commitment through \$392,800 in funding, aims to develop and implement a culturally grounded, community-led wellness model that addresses urgent mental health, trauma and addiction-related needs in the nine Matawa communities.

"When we talk about creating a healthy workforce, what we're trying to deal with are very complex traumas and a range of health issues that plague Indigenous people, and we know they stem from settler colonization, settler colonialism and in particular intergenerational historical traumas that

hinder and manifest in different ways such as disease," says Anita Vaillancourt, an assistant professor at Lakehead University who is leading research on the program along with Lana Ray, an associate professor at Athabasca University. "So we see a disproportionately higher risk of developing health issues among Indigenous populations and persistently poor outcomes in terms of academic completion, obtaining employment, and this is also due to racism in the job market but also health of the workforce."

Vaillancourt says their focus is on recognizing the detrimental effects of stress and trauma and how those manifest and impact people's ability to function in a variety of different settings.

"We understand that there is a direct link between the trauma that Indigenous people experience historically through colonization and on an ongoing basis because of the persistent racism that Indigenous people experience in Western society

and how this negatively impacts health," Vaillancourt says. "You can see there that there is quite a bit of research that supports these findings, this is not new knowledge to us, so our work around this mindfulness project is very much evidence based."

Vaillancourt says their data on participant observed changes due to mindfulness engaged practices around employment shows that 72 per cent said the mindfulness training increased their motivation to apply for jobs.

"So we're getting people motivated to take action to make change in their personal lives — this is so powerful," Vaillancourt says. "The next category here is the confidence to actually apply for jobs, 70 per cent; confidence that you will succeed, 65 per cent. When we look at barriers to why people aren't engaging in proactive behaviours, (it) is a lack of confidence, feeling that one won't succeed, so we can see here that these markers have increased as

a result of mindfulness."

The TD Ready Commitment funding will support the delivery of workshops, one-on-one support services, community-based research and culturally appropriate healing activities that respond to the unique needs of Indigenous individuals living in northwestern Ontario.

"On behalf of TD, I just want to say that we recognize as an organization that there is more work to be done on our community initiatives, specifically towards truth and reconciliation," says Allison Nunes, a district vice-president at TD. "So that's why we're supporting community initiatives that promote a connection to the land, enhance financial literacy and foster a sense of belonging. We are super thrilled to present a cheque today for \$392,800 to KKETS. Through the TD Ready Commitment corporate sponsorships, TD supports initiatives across Canada that are led by and for Indigenous communities. Through the TD



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of TD and Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS) staff participated in the announcement of \$392,800 in TD Ready Commitment funding.

Ready Commitment, we support programs that promote financial education, increased opportunities for youth, steward the environment and help to preserve and celebrate Indigenous peoples, arts and culture."

The Mino-Ayaawin Maamawi project seeks to strengthen the emotional, mental and spiritual well-being of individuals while also enhancing their capacity to succeed in education, employment and community life by creating a holistic system of care

that embraces both traditional and contemporary approaches.

"This funding from TD is more than just financial support — it is a partnership in our vision to build strong, healthy and resilient Indigenous communities," says David Neegan, executive director at KKETS. "Through this project, we will empower our members to reconnect with culture, rebuild from trauma and move forward with strength and dignity."

## Confederation hosts APIWIN drum social



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News

A group of drummers recently participated in Confederation College's APIWIN Drum Social.

Rick Garrick  
Wawatay News

Confederation College held an APIWIN Drum Social featuring instructor Emery Wesley, from the Walking Bear drum group, on May 12 at the APIWIN Room on the Thunder Bay campus.

"It's important to pass on the culture — that's what I keep in mind every day when I sing," says Wesley, a Ginoogaming citizen. "It's because I want to pass it on to younger ones, it's super important. The more I've gotten into culture, the more I've realized that it's beautiful."

Wesley says there were a lot of young people around the drum, including some who were born into the drumming lifestyle.

"They're going to be amazing teachers, amazing singers," Wesley says. "I've been singing for a few years now and it's changed my life for the better. It's left an impact in my community, it's left an impact in other schools that I've visited and it's a huge part of my life."

Wesley says he started singing with the Walking Bear drum group about four years ago.

"In 2021 we started taking it more serious and we fell right in love with it, we'd sing every single day for about two months straight," Wesley says. "Slowly through time we got recognition from other communities and the City of Thunder Bay. A lot of organizations here like Nishnawbe Aski Nation helped give us a lot of recognition, they invited us to conferences."

Jeff Neekan, a Mishkeegogamang citizen, says his three-year-old son grew up around the drum.

"Ever since he's been in his

mom's womb, I've been singing to him, drumming with him, talking the language with him," Neekan says. "Ever since he's been able to walk, he's been around the drum, singing and dancing. Now that he's three, that's why he's so comfortable in the circle. That's what he wants to do, and I support that because I've been singing since 1993."

Justin O'Keese, an Eabametoong citizen and a member of the Young Thunder drum group, says they started up the drum group last year.

"But we've all been singing together since we were in Grade 6, and now we're all in Grade 9 now," O'Keese says, noting that he started drumming when one of his friends asked him to drum with him at their school, Algonquin Avenue Public School in Thunder Bay. "I never used to drum before until that day, and then after that day I was just hooked to it."

O'Keese says he enjoys participating in drum socials.

"It's a good learning experience, you meet new people, you learn along the way, you hear new teachings too," O'Keese says. "We went to a few powwows since our group started, but before our group also we've been to powwows with the drum at Algonquin. We're hosting three more powwows this month, Hammarskjöld powwow, Superior powwow and Westgate powwow, those are all at the end of the month, and we also got invited to be a co-host in Vancouver, Squamish (Nation), B.C."

Hunter Derosier-Krieger, an Eagle Lake citizen and a member of the Young Thunder drum group, says he got involved with drumming when

he was about seven-years-old.

"My step mom took me to a drum social just like this at a school, and that was it," Derosier-Krieger says. "It's pretty fun, we go to lots of different places, we'll probably be travelling a lot this summer."

Derosier-Krieger says the

drum socials are a good time with good people.

"It's some good practice too for all the powwows we'll be going to," Derosier-Krieger says. "We've learned lots of new songs the past couple of months."

James Henderson, Indig-

enous student advisor at Confederation College, says they usually have one or two drum socials per month but haven't had one for a while.

"It's just important to teach people more about their culture and to have pride in who we are," Henderson says. "So

having the drum teachings is always really good for our young people, and that's who we have mostly. We have a lot of first-time drummers coming here so it's perfect, and I always encourage people if they haven't drummed to come and sit down at the drum."

# The Coach is coming!



Book your breast, cervical, and colon cancer screening appointment today.

**Call (807) 684-7777**

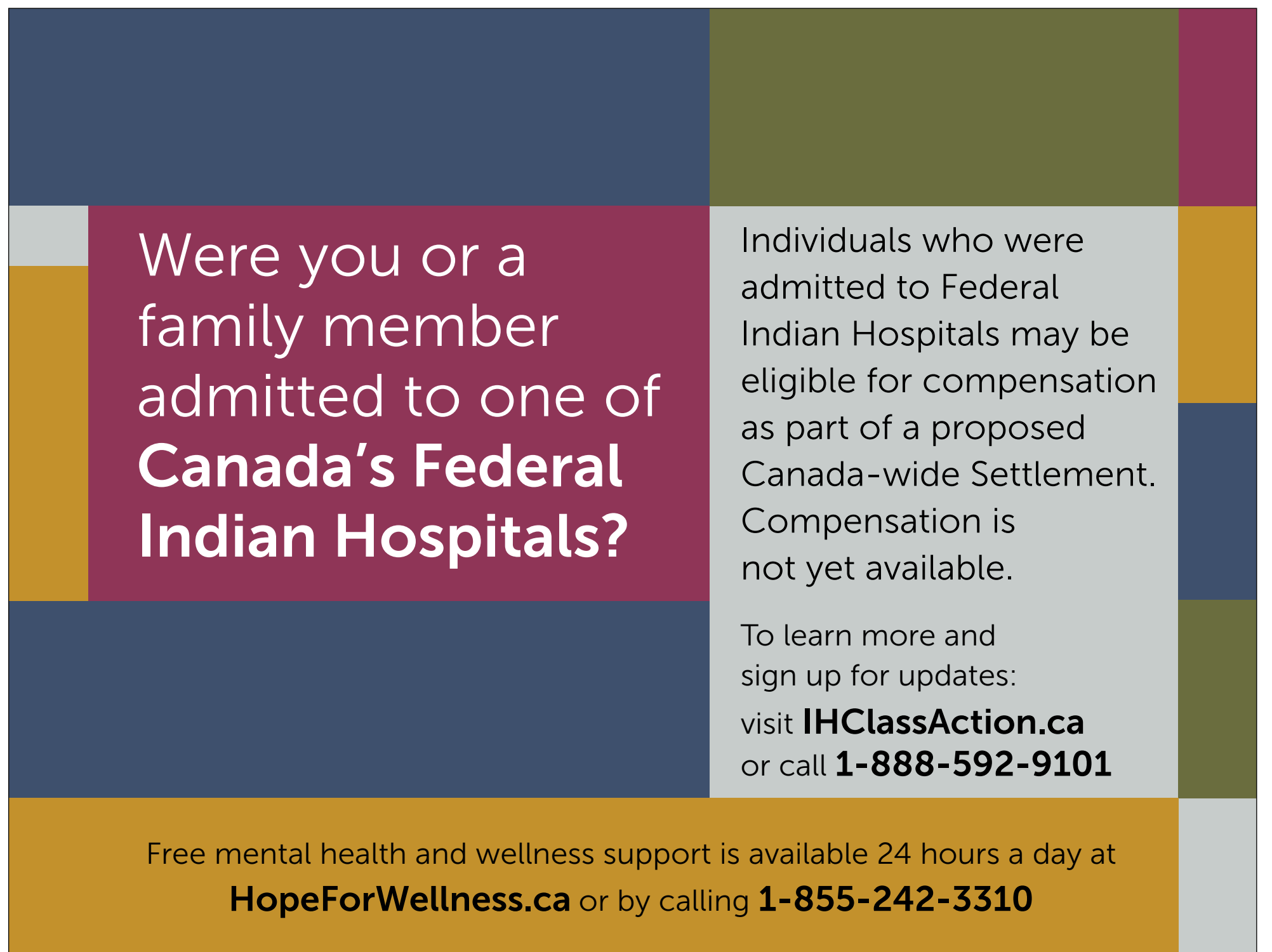
For more information, visit:  
[www.tbrhsc.net/screenforlife](http://www.tbrhsc.net/screenforlife)



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre



# Lakehead Laskin graduate delivers first valedictorian speech in Anishinabemowin



Were you or a family member admitted to one of **Canada's Federal Indian Hospitals?**

Individuals who were admitted to Federal Indian Hospitals may be eligible for compensation as part of a proposed Canada-wide Settlement. Compensation is not yet available.

To learn more and sign up for updates:  
visit **IHClassAction.ca**  
or call **1-888-592-9101**

Free mental health and wellness support is available 24 hours a day at **HopeForWellness.ca** or by calling **1-855-242-3310**

# Community

## Oshki honours missing persons with Red Dress walk



Rick Garrick/Wawatay News  
TOP: Oshki-Pimache-O-Win The Wenjack Education Institute co-op student Trisha Meekis holds up her No More Stolen Sisters sign.  
ABOVE: A group of participants walked past the Thunder Bay Courthouse



Eagle Eye NDT is a provider of non-destructive testing services (NDT) in Ontario and across Canada. We work in the power generation sector, nuclear and non-nuclear as well as Mining, Oil and Gas, Pulp and Paper and others. It is our goal to grow our business while growing the representation of indigenous employees within our organization and to collaborate with indigenous communities in a positive way within the territories that we work.

### Positions Available:

NDT Trainee

NDT Technicians with a CGSB or CWB certification

### Position Description: NDT Trainee

Are you looking for a career opportunity in the trades? Consider applying for a trainee position with Eagle Eye NDT in the field of Non-destructive Testing (NDT). If you have an interest in technology and a thirst for learning, a career in NDT may be for you.

### Qualifications:

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Proficiency in Microsoft word, and basic computer literacy
- Strong communication skills in English, both written and verbal
- Ability to work safely, follow instructions and maintain focus
- Must be willing to travel
- A valid driver's license and a 3 years drivers abstract
- Must be able to obtain security clearance

### Training Provided:

- WHMIS
- Working at heights
- Confined Space training
- Step 4

A career in NDT offers competitive wages and benefits, union membership with the Quality Control Council of Canada (QCCC) and the opportunity to work a growing technical trade that is relevant in almost every business sector in Canada and beyond.

To apply and to learn more about Eagle Eye NDT and NDT please visit our website at:

[www.eagleeyndt.com](http://www.eagleeyndt.com)

Or send your resume to:

Christine Seeley

Manager Human Resources

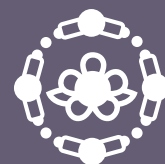
[cseeley@eagleeyndt.com](mailto:cseeley@eagleeyndt.com)

A PROUD MEMBER OF



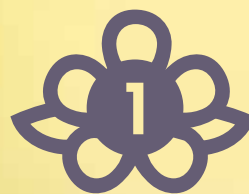
Eagle Eye NDT provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any kind without regard for race color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

[www.wawataynews.ca](http://www.wawataynews.ca)



## First Nations Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle Settlement

# The Claims Period is now open.



Removed  
Child Class



Removed Child  
Family Class



Learn more at  
[FNChildClaims.ca](http://FNChildClaims.ca)



# Job Posting



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

Wawatay Communications Society is currently looking for a dynamic and results-driven Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who brings management expertise and embodies the mandate and mission in service of Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities.

Wawatay Communications Society serves the communication needs of First Nations people and the communities of Nishnawbe Aski Nation. It does this through the distribution of a monthly newspaper, daily radio programming, other communication services and a multimedia website that seeks to preserve and enhance indigenous languages and cultures of Indigenous people in northern Ontario.

**Mandate**

“Wawatay Communications Society is a self-governing, independent community-driven entrepreneurial Indigenous organization dedicated to using appropriate technologies to meet the communication needs of people of Indigenous ancestry in Northern Ontario, wherever they live. In doing so, its founders intended that Wawatay would serve their communities by preserving, maintaining and enhancing Indigenous languages and culture.”

**Mission**

“To provide media capabilities and content that address the unique needs of the Nishnawbe people.”

The membership of the Society – 49 First Nation communities within the territory of Nishnawbe Aski Nation– formally adopted the above mandate and mission statement at an Annual General Membership Meeting on May 5-6, 2004.

**Location:** Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Timmins

**Position Summary:**

The CEO serves as the chief executive of Wawatay Communications Society and in partnership with the Board, is responsible for the success of the Wawatay Communications Society. Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for creating and implementing a clear sense of direction for the Wawatay Communications Society and its related businesses by defining, communicating, and overseeing the Corporation’s mission, goals, operating principles, and strategic actions.

This position is the senior management position in Wawatay Communications Society, with responsibility for:

- The overall management of the business including its overall strategic direction, preparation of agendas and background information for Board meeting and Executive Committee meetings.
- Keeps the Board fully informed of the conditions of Wawatay Communications Society and on all important factors influencing it.
- The development of annual works plans and related capital and operating budgets.
- Development of operational policies and procedures.
- The day-to-day operations management, human resources recruitment and management and budget and financial oversight and monitoring.
- Overall planning, design and implementation of projects and programs within the mandate; and
- Communications and marketing for the purpose of business development

**Governance, Strategy Development, Planning and Reporting**

- Formulates and updates annual business plan and strategies, policies and procedures for Wawatay Communications Society and brings these to the Board for input, and decision as to ratification.
- Ensures strong strategic and annual planning processes and procedures are undertaken and effective budget and plans are prepared for Board approval.
- Seeks out and develops business opportunities and presents such opportunities to the Board for consideration and decision.
- Oversees fiscal activities, ensuring that all financial and non-financial reporting requirements are met on a timely and accurate basis, and
- Ensures that reports to the Board are always transparent and timely basis.

**Community and Relationship Management**

- Initiates, develops, and maintains effective strategic relationships and networks with key stakeholders including the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, government agencies, business owners, contractors, customers, potential customers, partners, suppliers, residents, and the business community in relation to their interests in the Corporation.
- Examines and recommends partnerships with private and public entities in support of projects that will assist the Corporation in fulfilling its mission and objectives; and
- Promotes and advocates the profile of the Wawatay Communications Society.

**Operational Management**

- Schedules Board meetings, prepares agendas, information and reports for consideration and decision by the Board, and ensures the completion of minutes of all Board meetings.

- Ensures the operation of Wawatay Communications Society follows all appropriate legal, regulatory and internal policies as approved by the Board, and are not contrary to policies, bylaws, and relevant government legislation and regulation.
- Prepares an annual performance management plan for approval by the Board.
- Analyzes, prepares reports, presents information and recommendations, and ensures timely completion of all activities.
- Implements the decisions of the Board in an efficient and effective manner,
- Ensures the day-to-day operations of Wawatay Communications Society are effectively and efficiently coordinated, implemented, and conducted within the policy and procedure framework approved by the Board.
- Implements stringent project management processes to ensure the timely, cost effective and profitable development and completion of projects.
- Determines limitations of authority for employees of Wawatay Communications Society covering expenditures, contracts personnel actions, etc.; and
- Establishes policies and procedures for Board approval in relation to consultants and contractors being retained by Wawatay Communications Society and exercises appropriate controls to ensure their use is managed cost effectively.

**Staff and Contractor Management and Leadership**

- Builds and maintains a high-performance culture through effective performance management, communication and coaching of staff,
- Recruits appropriately skilled staff to all positions and establish appropriate remuneration levels and performance-based conditions for each employee.
- Establishes performance management plans with employee and undertakes performance reviews, recommends salary and benefit changes, promotions and dismissals as appropriate within the authority of the position; and
- Recruits and appoints with the approval of the Board, where necessary.

**Financial Management**

- Prepares and presents an annual budget to the Board for approval complete with all supporting background information and documentation; and

- Establishes financial controls in relation to undertaking and monitoring the activities of Wawatay Communications Society against the approved budget and provides monthly (or more frequently, as necessary) reports to the Board on the performance of Wawatay Communications Society against the approved budget.

**Job Knowledge:**

- The work requires the following knowledge, skill and/or abilities:
- Significant and proven leadership skills developed through at least five (5) years in a senior management role and experience related to media, communications and business.
  - Substantial knowledge of business operations, asset management, marketing, finance, and business processes related to economic and business development activities.
  - Proven ability to build effective relationships with external stakeholders and collaboration, inspire and motivate high performance and effectively resolve conflict.
  - Knowledge and experience with the First Nations of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory.
  - Ability to speak and understand one of the languages of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation communities;
  - Excellent communication and presentation skills.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Post Secondary MBA in Business Management, Commerce or Finance.
- 5 – 10 years of experience in Business Development and Senior Management.
- The ability to communicate in English and Ojibway, Cree or Oji-Cree is an asset.
- Ability to work with both Macintosh and Windows computer platforms.
- A valid Ontario driver’s license and cell phone.
- A combination of education and/or experience will be considered.

**The Position will be Posted until Filled Start Date: ASAP**

Applicants can send their resume, cover letter and contact information for references (in confidence) to:

Board Chair Nick Day [nickday@sandylakefn.com](mailto:nickday@sandylakefn.com)

Board Vice Chair Vivian Waswa [vivianw@wunnumin.ca](mailto:vivianw@wunnumin.ca)

*Note: Only applicants considered for an Interview will be contacted.*

- Indigenous owned/operated
- All inclusive health and wellness practice
- No waitlist
- Experienced clinicians
- Community based services
- Face-to-Face or virtual
- NIHB, OAP & Jordan’s Principle providers

**OUR SERVICES:**

- Social Work/Mental Health/Psychotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Rehab & Behavioural Supports
- Speech-language pathology
- Augmentative & Alternative Communication

(807) 630-6884 [redarrowwellness@gmail.com](mailto:redarrowwellness@gmail.com)  
[WWW.REDARROWWELLNESS.COM](http://WWW.REDARROWWELLNESS.COM)  
RED ARROW WELLNESS IS A MEMBER OF THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR ABORIGINAL BUSINESS

Professional  
Computer Refurbishing, ITAD, & IT Solutions  
for the community!

Learn how we help organizations like yours at:  
(705) 749-5815 | [rebootcanada.ca/resource](http://rebootcanada.ca/resource)

REGISTERED CHARITY #89111 4043 RR0001

Book your ad for the next Wawatay News edition today!

To book your ad contact our Sales Representative:

Tom Scura, Phone: 807 6226000 Fax: 807 6226010

[toms@wawatay.on.ca](mailto:toms@wawatay.on.ca)



**Sullivan**  
**+ Associates**  
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY



## WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM COUNSELLING?

Counselling provides an opportunity to tell your story. We feel there are many important aspects to a helpful counselling session. It is important that our counsellors:

- Help clients to feel comfortable
- Be non-judgemental
- Be culturally sensitive
- Allow the client to decide what issues to talk about
- Teach coping skills for mental health
- Be a good clinical match for our clients

At Sullivan + Associates Clinical Psychology, we have 40 Master's and Doctoral-level Counsellors who provide service for children, adolescents, adults, couples and families.

We provide counselling services in-person, online and by telephone for all mental health issues with the most common issues being:

- Trauma
- Grief and Loss
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger
- Addictions

For counselling services, we are happy to help clients access funding through Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (*FNIHB*) and Indian Residential School (*IRS*) programs.



**Sullivan**  
+ Associates  
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY



**WWW.DRSULLIVAN.CA**

Email: [admin@drsullivan.ca](mailto:admin@drsullivan.ca)

**Toll-Free: (888) 269-0237**

**Fax: (807) 683-7167**