



BC FIRST NATIONS

JUSTICE FORUM



EVENT PROGRAM

APRIL 8TH - 10TH, 2024
THE WESTIN BAYSHORE
VANCOUVER, BC

The modern City of Vancouver was founded on the traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəy^əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.



Wi-Fi Login

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WELCOME

Dear Elders, Leadership, Delegates and Collaborators
of the 3rd Annual Justice Forum,

The BC First Nations Justice Council (BCFNJC) is honoured to welcome you to
the 3rd Annual BC First Nations Justice Forum.

Many things have changed since the last Justice Forum, including several
advancements in key priorities drawn from the Strategy. This week, we will share
the work that has been done on Strategy implementation to date and engage
in dialogue about what is next. We will discuss pressing issues, including how
community priorities in relation to justice have shifted since 2023.

The 3rd Annual Justice Forum will mark a renewed approach to collaboration,
especially between our Steering Committees and our Government partners. A
true collaborative partnership must include reciprocity. Our government partners
and collaborators must be fully committed to the Strategy's lines of action, which
are woven through and interconnected with most areas of government. The
challenges facing Indigenous people are multiple and connected and most levels
of government have a role to play in righting the wrongs of the past.

As we move into a new fiscal year and build off the tremendous momentum
we have gained in 2023, we encourage everyone to pause and breathe in the
successes, setbacks and the challenges. We encourage everyone to reflect on
what they have learned from the year, and to bring an even more united spirit
of resilience and harmony to the work we are doing to advance the Strategy and
uplift communities. Systemic change is hard work but together we are stronger
and together we can make difference.

BCFNJC is honored to center your voices, your stories, your insights, and your
experiences. As Indigenous leaders, Rights holders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers,
subject matter experts, justice partners, and community members, we know each
of you has an important role to play in implementing the BC First Nations Justice
Strategy.

Thank you for coming and sharing your wisdom and gifts with us!

Sincerely,

Kory Wilson (Puglid), Chair

Boyd Peters (Xoyet thet), Vice-Chair

Dr. Judith Sayers (Cloy-e-iis), Director

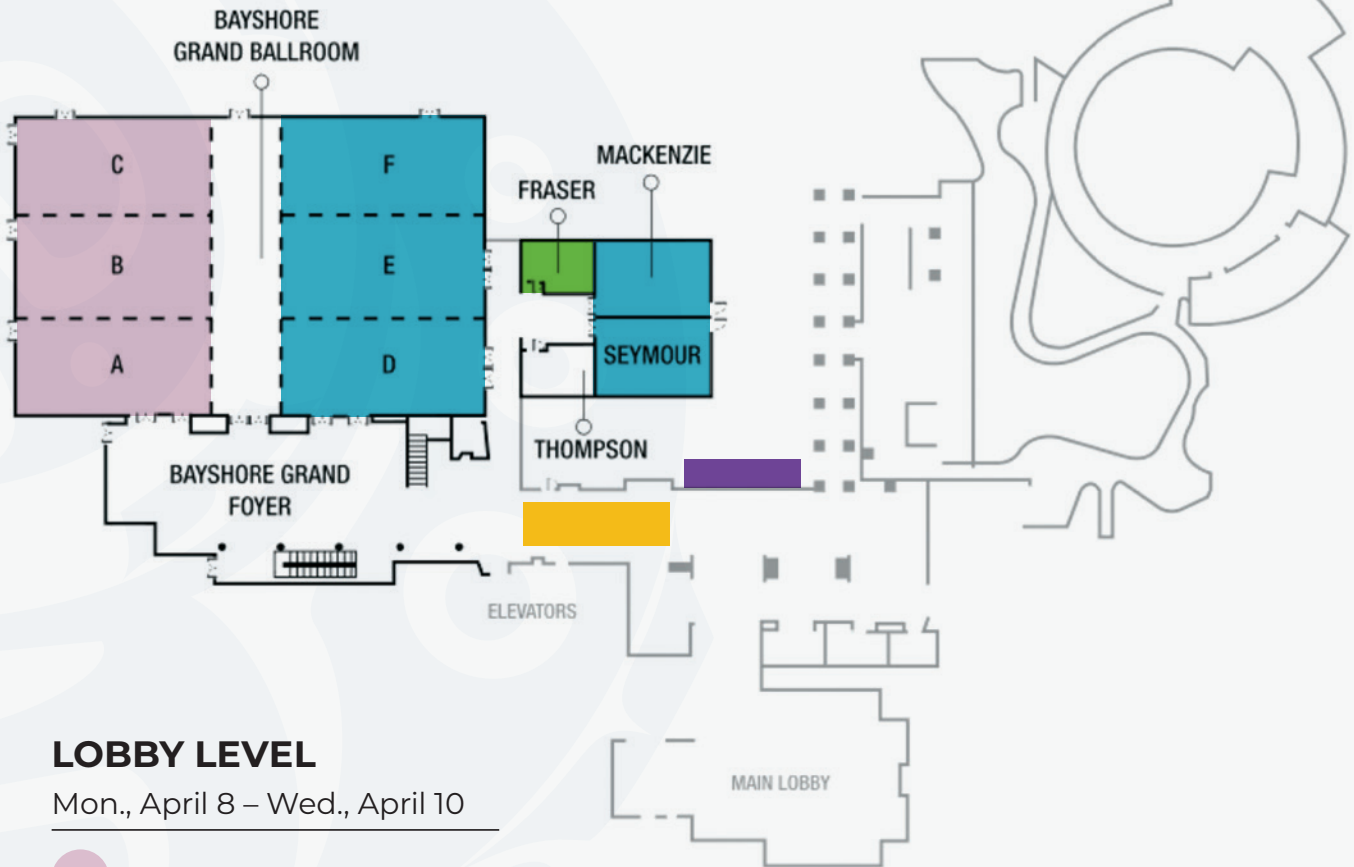
Lydia Hwitsum (Xtli'li'ye), Director and Secretary

Andrea Hilland (Asits'amniyaak), K.C., Director

Clifford White (Nees Ma'Outa), Director and Treasurer








FLOORPLAN



LOBBY LEVEL

Mon., April 8 – Wed., April 10

-  Plenary
-  Breakouts & Workshops
-  Wellness Room
-  Coat Check/Registration/Help Desk /Travel Reimbursements
-  Washrooms



OBJECTIVES

- The first Justice Forum was held in 2019 to inform the creation of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy contains many distinct yet interdependent strategies that impact all areas of the justice system. With such a large scope of work, involving many justice partners, First Nations need to be kept informed of the Strategy's progress, including areas where work has stalled or progressed significantly.
- Strategy 16 of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy speaks to this need and requires a mechanism to track progress regarding the implementation of the Strategy (ensuring that it progresses and has an impact on both track 1 and track 2). Strategy 16; Line of Action A, specifically mandates Council to establish an annual Justice Summit that is dedicated to Indigenous justice issues, inclusive of a broad cross-section of First Nations leadership, and has a focus on evaluating and assessing progress on the Strategy.
- The Justice Forum is intended to update First Nations on implementation progress of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy while also providing space for Rights Holders and justice partners to caucus and provide guidance and direction to the BCFNJC on how best to advance and respond to the many timely initiatives BCFNJC is undertaking in accordance with our mandate. The Forum is a space to share knowledge, gather insights, and make connections that will support the continued implementation of the Strategy.

FORMAT

- The Forum will be a working session with a focus on providing delegates opportunities to provide input on a wide range of critical topics and themes.
- The Forum will include a mix of plenary sessions (including keynote addresses), workshops, and breakout sessions.
- One side room (Fraser Room) will be dedicated as a wellness space with Elders present to support any Forum Attendee that is in need.
- The facilitated break-out sessions will be dialogue based (not panel or other presentations), pose key questions for discussions, and if appropriate, use small-group formats.
- On the evening of Day Two (Tuesday, April 9th) BCFNJC will host a cultural honouring ceremony and feast in the main ballroom of the venue.



AGENDA

DAY 1 – APRIL 8, 2024

TRACK ONE – Reform of the current criminal justice system so that it is less harmful to our people

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|---|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| 8:00 – 9:00 am | Registration and Breakfast | | |
| 9:00 – 9:15 am | Territory Welcome and Opening Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amanda Carling, CEO, BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Carleen Thomas, Elder / Knowledge Keeper, Tsleil-Waututh Nation ■ Councillor Wilson Williams, Squamish Nation | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 9:15 – 9:30 am | Welcome and Forum Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amanda Carling ■ Introducing Michelle Buchholz, Visual Practitioner, Cassyex Consulting | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 9:30 – 10:30 am | Opening Remarks from the Justice Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kory Wilson (Puglid), Chair of the BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Boyd Peters (Xoyet thet), Vice-Chair of the BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Dr. Judith Sayers (Cloy-e-iis), Director of the BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Lydia Hwitsum (Xtli'li'ye), Director and Secretary of the BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Andrea Hilland (Asits'amniyaak), K.C., Director of the BC First Nations Justice Council ■ Clifford White (Nees Ma'Outa), Director and Treasurer of the BC First Nations Justice Council Opening Remarks from the First Nations Leadership Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hugh Braker, K.C., Political Executive, First Nations Summit ■ Chief Terry Teegee, Regional Chief, BC Assembly of First Nations ■ Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 10:30 – 10:45 am | Wellness Break | | |
| SESSION ONE: INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S JUSTICE PLAN | | | |
| 10:45 – 11:30 am | Celebrating the Indigenous Women's Justice Plan (IWJP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Darla Rasmussen, Justice Coordinator, Sts'ailes and BCFNJC Steering Committee Member ■ Kory Wilson ■ Lydia Hwitsum | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |



AGENDA

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|---|--|----------|--|
| 11:30 am – 12:30 pm | BREAKOUT | | |
| | Implementing the Indigenous Women's Justice Plan | Breakout | All Rooms |
| 12:30 – 1:30 pm | Lunch Break | | |
| SESSION TWO: POLICING, DIVERSION & LEGAL SERVICES DELIVERY | | | |
| 1:30 - 2:00 pm | Community Safety, Policing & Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Judith Sayers | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 2:00 – 2:30 pm | Presumption of Diversion - Community Justice Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boyd Peters Alisia Adams, Director, Policy & Justice Issues, BC Prosecution Service Joanne Jefferson, Justice Manager, Qwi:qwelstóm - Stó:lō Nation Justice Program Corporal Jaden Courtney, Acting NCO, Indigenous Policing Services Team - Upper Fraser Valley Regional Detachment, RCMP | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 2:30 – 3:00 pm | BCFNJC's Journey to Service Delivery (Legal Services / IJCs / Gladue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amanda Carling Cedar Dodd, Provincial Director of Indigenous Justice Centres, BCFNJC Courtney Daws, Provincial Director of Legal Aid Services, BCFNJC | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 3:00 – 3:15 pm | Wellness Break | | |
| 3:15 – 4:30 pm | BREAKOUTS (Choose One): | | |
| | Paddling Together – Feedback on Service Delivery | Breakout | Bayshore Grand Ballroom F and Mackenzie Room |
| | Towards Self-Determination Over Safety – Coordinating a Provincial Approach to First Nations Policing in BC | Breakout | Bayshore Grand Ballroom E and Seymour Room |
| | BCFNJC's Diversion Workplan | Breakout | Bayshore Grand Ballroom D |
| 4:30 – 5:00 pm | Summary of Day 1 Review of Agenda for Day 2 Giveaway! Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kory Wilson | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |



AGENDA

DAY 2 – APRIL 9, 2024

TRACK TWO: Supporting First Nations to restore and reawaken Indigenous legal orders, traditions, and structures

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|--|--|----------|-------------------------------|
| 8:00 – 9:00 am | Breakfast | | |
| 9:00 – 9:15 am | Opening and Overview of Day 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amanda Carling ■ Lydia Hwitsum | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| SESSION THREE: FIRST NATIONS LAW IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY | | | |
| 9:15 – 10:30 am | Revitalizing Indigenous Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Andrea Hilland, K.C., Assistant Professor, Peter A. Allard School of Law ■ Johnny Mack, Assistant Professor, Peter A. Allard School of Law ■ Sarah Morales, Associate Professor, University of Victoria Faculty of Law ■ Michelle Joy Carmichael, RELAW Coordinator, West Coast Environmental Law ■ Navjot Jassar, Lawyer, West Coast Environmental Law | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 10:30 – 10:45 am | Wellness Break | | |
| 10:45 am – 12:00 pm | BREAKOUTS | | |
| | Strategy 2 Guidebook | Breakout | All Rooms |
| 12:00 – 1:00 pm | Lunch Break | | |
| SESSION FOUR: FIRST NATIONS LAWS IN CHILD PROTECTION | | | |
| 1:00 – 2:30 pm | First Nations Law: Child Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lydia Hwitsum ■ Boyd Peters ■ Robert Morales, Chief Negotiator, Cowichan Tribes Child Welfare ■ Grand Chief Willie Charlie, Sts'ailes ■ Kirsten Barnes, Policy Lawyer, BCFNJC | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 2:30 – 2:45 pm | Wellness Break | | |
| 2:45 – 3:30 pm | BREAKOUTS | | |
| | Child Protection | Breakout | All Rooms |



AGENDA

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|--|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| 3:30 – 4:00 pm | Summary of Day 2 Review of Agenda for Day 3 Giveaway! Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Clifford White■ Dr. Judith Sayers | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 4:00 – 5:30 pm | Free Time | | |
| Honouring Our Accomplices: Ceremony & Feast | | | |
| 5:30 pm | Arrival and Seating <i>(Please arrive no later than 5:45pm as the ceremony will begin promptly at 6pm)</i> | Dinner | |
| 6:00 pm | Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Speaker: Elder Ray Harris■ Floor Manager: Kalila George-Wilson | Dinner | |



AGENDA

DAY 3 – APRIL 10, 2024

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|---|--|----------|-------------------------------|
| 8:00 – 8:30 am | Breakfast | | |
| 8:30 – 9:00 am | Strategy 16B: Tracking Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amanda Carling ■ Natalie Martin, Director of Communications, BCFNJC | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| SESSION FIVE: TRIPARTITE COLLABORATION | | | |
| 9:00 – 9:45 am | Ministers Panel – BCFNJC’s Tripartite Relationship and Commitment to Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hon. Niki Sharma, K.C., Attorney General ■ Hon. Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada (by video) ■ Hon. Dominique Leblanc, Minister of Public Safety Canada (by video) ■ Curtis Bedwell, Director of Policy, BCFNJC ■ Colleen Spier, K.C., Assistant Deputy Minister – Indigenous Justice Secretariat, Attorney General | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 9:45 – 10:00 am | Overview of the workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Amanda Carling | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 10:00 – 11:30 am | Workshops | | |
| | Corrections: Moving forward on Strategies 13 & 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Jennifer Metcalfe, Executive Director, Prisoners Legal Services ■ Boyd Peters ■ Marty Maltby, Director General of the Indigenous Initiatives Sector, Correctional Service Canada ■ Lori Pruce, Director of Indigenous Programs and Relationships, BC Corrections <p>Join us for a two-part panel on how to advance Strategies 13 and 14 of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy within Provincial and Federal Corrections.</p> <p>For the first panel, Boyd Peters (BCFNJC Council Member and long-time leader involved in Correctional Services Canada (CSC)’s Kwikw̱welhp Healing Village) and Lori Pruce (BC Corrections, Director of Indigenous Programs and Relationships) will discuss the current status and challenges of implementing Strategy 13, which calls for a standard and accessible process for First Nations to know where their members are being held in the corrections system, so that they can support and contact them.</p> <p>For the second panel, Boyd Peters, Jennifer Metcalfe (Prisoners Legal Services, Executive Director), and Marty Maltby (CSC, Director General of the Indigenous Initiatives Sector) will encourage us to think outside the box of prison to fully realize Strategy 14, which calls on the Federal and Provincial Governments to expand culturally based programs throughout Corrections and supports for use of alternatives within First Nations. Panelists will discuss alternatives to prison, along with a thorough discussion on Section 81 and the necessary steps to bring Section 81 to reality.</p> <p>We invite you to participate in this dynamic, interactive session with these esteemed experts on creating alternatives to prison that are Nation-led and governed.</p> | Workshop | Bayshore Grand Ballroom D |



AGENDA

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|------|---|----------|---------------------------|
| | <p>First Nations Courts: Moving forward on Strategy 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clifford White ■ Chief Judge Melissa Gillespie, Provincial Court of British Columbia ■ Judge Tina Dion, Provincial Court of British Columbia ■ Judge Linda Thomas, Provincial Court of British Columbia <p>Join us for a presentation on First Nations Courts in British Columbia. In this session you will hear from three Provincial Court Judges, a First Nations Court Elder and a First Nations Court Graduate. You will hear about the current state of First Nations Courts in British Columbia and where these presenters would like to see First Nations Courts go in the future.</p> <p>After this panel presentation all attendees will participate in a discussion of BC First Nations Justice Council's Strategy 12. Strategy 12 includes the following:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Strategy 12: BCFNJC and BC will establish a joint policy on expansion of First Nations Provincial Courts; this policy will consider ways in which First Nations Courts may support and form a bridge towards roles and responsibilities for Indigenous courts, as well as the role and function of Indigenous Justice Centres. The policy will include a plan for how and when First Nations Courts may expand. The policy will consider where First Nations legal order courts are emerging and how to support the development of these decision-making and dispute resolution practices and entities based on self-determination and the priorities of First Nations.</p> <p>In this interactive discuss we are asking our community members for feedback and direction on how you want to see BCFNJC prioritize and implement Strategy 12. We hope you will join us for this informative and interactive workshop.</p> | Workshop | Bayshore Grand Ballroom E |
| | <p>Public Legal Education: Exploring First Nations Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kory Wilson ■ Rachel Barsky, Policy Lawyer, BCFNJC ■ Miranda Seymour, Policy Analyst, BCFNJC ■ Catherine Dauvergne, K.C., Professor, Peter A. Allard School of Law <p>The workshop will present information and support discussion on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What do we mean by Public Legal Education (PLE)? ■ What are some PLE initiatives that have already been created for First Nations people in BC? ■ What have we heard from First Nations recently about PLE initiatives through our fall 2023 engagement sessions? ■ What would you like the BCFNJC to focus on in developing future PLE initiatives? Tell us about the subjects you would like to learn about and what medium you would like PLE delivered in. <p>We hope you will join this session and be prepared to share your perspectives on Public Legal Education for First Nations in BC. Your participation is integral to ensure that the BCFNJC develops PLE projects which prioritize First Nations' needs.</p> | Workshop | Seymour Room |



AGENDA

DAY 3 – APRIL 10, 2024 (continued)

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|------|---|----------|---------------------------|
| | <p>Data for Sustainability: Moving forward on Strategy 16B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmony Johnson, Principal, Harmony Johnson Consulting Hannes Edinger, Founder & Managing Director, Big River Analytics Amanda Carling <p>BC, Canada and BCFNJC are collaborating in the implementation of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy. This includes the following:</p> <p>Strategy 16: A. Establish formal mechanisms to track progress on the Strategy, and ensure that it is progressing and having an impact on both track 1 and track 2. B. Establish a joint process and standards for data collection and reporting on measurable outcomes, including the evaluation of the effectiveness of this Strategy.</p> <p>As part of Strategy 16, we are seeking to undertake a research project to identify measures of fiscal responsibility and financial efficiency and effectiveness, and more broadly to comprehensively understand the fiscal implications and benefits of implementation of the BC First Nations Justice Strategy.</p> <p>This workshop will be held on April 10, 2024, 10:00am-11:30am as part of the annual BC First Nations Justice Council Forum. The workshop will present information and support discussion on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Why”: Mandate and origins of this project and the project’s purpose. The “What”: The proposed approach to the project (method and supportive evidence for that method). The “How”: Aspects of the project workplan (timelines, risks and constraints, engagement requirements, data requirements). <p>We hope you will join this session and be prepared to share input about the project method, opportunities to align this work with other similar projects, any risks which should be considered, and advice on accessing data and engaging with key informants. Your participation is vital to help shape the research plan for this important project.</p> | Workshop | Mackenzie Room |
| | <p>Indigenous Law Revitalization: Keeping Women, Girls & 2S+ Safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lydia Hwitsum Norma-Jean Stump, MMIWG Interior Coordinator, Indian Residential School Survivors Society Tristen Wybou, Two-Spirit advocate Janine Benedet, K.C., Professor, Peter A. Allard School of Law Lorelei Williams, Founder, Butterflies in Spirit, Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre Society Kirsten Barnes Cassandra Gouschuk, Provincial Manager, Women & Child Protection, BCFNJC <p>The purpose of this workshop is to bring together Indigenous women, girls, 2S+ and their allies, to discuss how the BCFNJC can support communities to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2S+. The objectives of this session are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Gain insights from grassroots and frontline workers, as well as allies, who are actively engaged in combating violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2S+ individuals. Gather participant feedback regarding ways the BCFNJC through Track 2 work can support the restoration and implementation of First Nations justice systems and structures to combat violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2S+. | Workshop | Bayshore Grand Ballroom F |



AGENDA

| TIME | AGENDA ITEM | FORMAT | LOCATION |
|---------------------|--|---------|-------------------------------|
| 11:30 am – 12:00 pm | Closing Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ First Nations Leadership Council■ BC First Nations Justice Council Giveaway! | Plenary | Bayshore Grand Ballroom A/B/C |
| 12:00 pm | Adjournment | | |



CEO



Amanda Carling, CEO BC First Nations Justice Council

Amanda Carling (she/her) is Métis from Red River, Treaty One. She is a grateful guest on the unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan peoples with her partner Jesse, son Sam (5) and daughter Joy (2).

Amanda's undergraduate studies were in criminology at the University of Manitoba (BA, 2007). Thereafter she joined the JET Programme and spent two years teaching high school English in Tosu, Japan. Amanda attended law school at the University of Toronto (JD, 2012) and articulated with Innocence Canada. She was called to the Ontario Bar in 2013. Amanda served as president of the board for Aboriginal Legal Services in Toronto from 2014 until 2020. In 2014, Amanda launched Innocence Canada's National Legal Education Program to forward the organization's mandate to prevent wrongful convictions. The same year Amanda was appointed by the Attorney General for Ontario to the Debwewin Jury Implementation Committee. In 2016 she returned to the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law as Manager of the Indigenous Initiatives Office, and Adjunct Faculty, where she oversaw the institution's efforts related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action and taught a course on wrongful convictions. Amanda's work in legal education was recognized by Precedent Magazine in 2020. Amanda has served on the Canada Committee of Human Rights Watch since 2016.

Amanda was called to the Bar of British Columbia in May 2022. She first joined the BC First Nations Justice Council in 2022 as a Senior Policy Lawyer. Within a few months, as the capacity of the organization grew, Amanda accepted the role of Chief Executive Officer. She has since led the organization in a restructure, creating a 7-Bundle system to best tackle the 25 Strategies and 43 lines of action that the organization is responsible for.



Carleen Thomas, Elder/Knowledge Keeper

Carleen Thomas is the Special Projects Manager for the Treaty Lands & Resources Department, of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Ms. Thomas works on building relationships with communities, and various government entities encompassed within the homelands & waters of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation (TWN). In the recent past, she worked on the Sacred Trust Initiative for TWN's opposition to the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion project.

In 2003, Ms. Thomas obtained her Bachelor of Education from the University of British Columbia, through the Native Indian Teacher Education Program. She went on to become a District Aboriginal Education Resource teacher for Burnaby School District, and then later, an Aboriginal Literacy/Numeracy Resource teacher for North Vancouver District #44.

Ms. Thomas then spent a number of years in TWN Education Department, as coordinator, teacher, and eventually, as the Manager of Education. This department includes education from pre-school to Post Secondary and employment training, the administration and planning for these areas, before secondment to work with the Sacred Trust Initiative. She also spent one & half years on the Capilano Senate as an Indigenous representative.

Carleen Thomas achieved 16 years as an elected Council member for the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, in which she held the portfolio of Community Development. She continues to support her community as a member of its Lands Advisory Committee and the Climate Change Advisory Committee.

Ms. Thomas currently sits on the Wild Bird Trust of BC Board of Directors, Burnaby School District's Aboriginal Education Advisory, Carnegie Centre Indigenous Advisory Committee, appointed Chancellor at the Emily Carr University of Art & Design in 2021. Carleen is most proud of being married to Dave Thomas Sr. for 36 years, until his untimely, but peaceful passing September 2019. She is also a proud mother of three, and grandmother of four granddaughters and one grandson.



Sxwíxwtn, Wilson Williams

Spokesperson & General Councillor, Squamish Nation
(S_kw_xwú7mesh Úxwumixw)

Sxwíxwtn Wilson Williams has dedicated his life to furthering the cultural, economic, and geographical interests of the Squamish Nation. A proud Nation Member who was born and raised on the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw homelands, Sxwíxwtn is passionate about giving back to his community. Currently serving his third term on Squamish Nation Council, Sxwíxwtn also acts as one of two appointed Spokespersons for the Squamish Nation.

An elected official with a background in communications, Sxwíxwtn carries a full portfolio. He is committed to protecting Squamish lands and waters through the assertion of historical rights & titles, while ensuring a bright and sustainable economic future for all Members. A passionate ambassador and knowledge keeper of the Nation's rich history, culture, and language, Sxwíxwtn believes deeply that respecting and understanding the Nation's past is an essential component in informing decisions that will carry the Nation forward.

Committed to furthering "True Reconciliation", Sxwíxwtn believes walking with the Squamish People on all decisions is integral as he continues to build meaningful external relationships, both close to home and around the world.

A true believer in the power of sport as a catalyst for growth, Sxwíxwtn is a devoted volunteer with the Community's sports development programs. He also believes in the medicine of music and creativity and loves to play rhythm guitar. A loving husband and father to three young girls, Sxwíxwtn is now passing down the sacred teachings he holds to ensure a bright and positive future for the next generation, and for generations to come.



COUNCIL



Puglid, Kory Wilson

Kwakwaka'wakw

Kory Wilson (Puglid) is the Chair of the BC First Nations Justice Council and the BCFNJC Lead on Indigenous Women's Justice Plan, Youth & Education (Bundle D). She was jointly appointed by the First Nations Leadership Council.

Kory has over 20 years of experience in post-secondary education, community development, and the legal profession. She is a member of the BC Law Society and has practiced family and criminal law. She is also the Executive Director of Indigenous Initiatives and Partnerships for British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) and serves on several boards - from Pearson College, BC Women's Foundation, Future Skills Canada, to the Genome BC. A sought-after strategist, speaker, and leader, Kory continues to be instrumental in advancing an Indigenous vision of truth-telling, justice, and reconciliation.



Xoyet thet, Boyd Peters

Sts'ailes Nation

Boyd ("Xoyet thet") Peters is a Director for BCFNJC and the BCFNJC Lead on Indigenous Justice Centres & Knowledge Keepers Council (Bundle B) and Diversion, Corrections, Community-Based Justice Programming (Bundle G). He was appointed by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

Boyd was born and raised in Sts'ailes and has been elected to Council for more than 20 years. Boyd is responsible for looking after Sts'ailes' Xa'xa Temexw—an expression that conveys the spiritual, physical, and cultural connections that the Sts'ailes people have with the land, water, and resources in their territory. Boyd became executive assistant to the Chief in 2002 and is now the Aboriginal Rights & Title director. A champion of justice and self-determination for the Sts'ailes people and First Nations across BC, Boyd brings a strong understanding of the need to bring cultural and traditional forms of healing to the justice system.



COUNCIL



Cloy-e-iis, Dr. Judith Sayers

Hupacasath Nation

Cloy-e-iis, Dr. Judith Sayers, OC is a Director for BCFNJC and the BCFNJC Lead on Policing, Oversight and Accountability (Bundle F). She was jointly appointed by the First Nations Leadership Council.

Dr. Judith Sayers is President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and Chancellor of Vancouver Island University. She is also an adjunct professor with the Gustavson School of Business and the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. Judith has also practiced law for 18 years in both BC and Alberta and served fourteen years as Chief of the Hupacasath First Nation, located in Port Alberni, BC. A member of the Order of Canada, Judith has received the Silver Award from the Canadian Environmental Association for Climate Change, the Bora Laskin Fellowship on Human Rights, and been twice awarded the Woman of Distinction from the Alberni Chamber of Commerce.



Xtli'li'ya, Lydia Hwitsum

Cowichan Tribes

Lydia Hwitsum is a BCFNJC Director and Alternate Chair for Indigenous Women's Justice Plan, Youth & Education (Bundle D) and Diversion, Corrections, Community-Based Justice Programming (Bundle G). She was appointed by the First Nations Summit.

Ms. Hwitsum has over 20 years of experience in leadership positions in Indigenous governance in BC and Canada, and recently served a term as Chief of the Cowichan Tribes. She previously served four two-year terms as the elected Chief, and in 2019 was elected to a second term on the First Nations Summit Political Executive. Ms. Hwitsum has been a staunch advocate for Indigenous and human rights, presenting at local, national, and international stages, including at the UN Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. She brings to BCFNJC vast experience and a strong commitment to advancing Indigenous rights and justice.



COUNCIL



Asits'amniyaak, Andrea Hilland, K.C.

Nuxalk Nation

Andrea Hilland, KC is a Director for BCFNJC and the BCFNJC Lead on Gladue Services (Bundle C). She was jointly appointed by the FNLC.

A member of the Nuxalk Nation and an Assistant Professor at the Peter A. Allard School of Law, Andrea has been an empowering advocate within the Indigenous justice landscape. Professor Hilland has extensive expertise in legal practice and prior to her academic career advocated on behalf of First Nations to assert their rights with respect to environmental issues. She has also advised organizations such as the BC Human Rights Tribunal, the Canadian Bar Association of BC, and the Law Society of BC on Indigenous issues in the context of legal regulation. A former BCFNJC Policy Lawyer, Andrea holds a deep understanding of the work we are advancing around the resurgence and power of Indigenous laws.



Nees Ma'Outa, Clifford White

Gitxaala Nation

Clifford White (Nees Ma'Outa) is a Director for BCFNJC and the BCFNJC Lead on First Nations Courts and DRIPA Compliance (Bundle G). He was appointed by the BC Assembly of First Nations.

A hereditary leader and a former Chief Councillor of Gitxaala Nation, Clifford has dedicated his life to serving Indigenous people. As an Elder he has played an important role in BC's First Nations/Indigenous Courts supporting holistic, traditional ways to restore balance and healing. In addition to his involvement as an Elder in the New Westminster First Nations Courts, Clifford is a BC Treaty Commissioner, elected by the First Nations Summit. He is also a Commissioner with BC Housing and a Commissioner with BC Infrastructure Benefits. Clifford brings a wealth of expertise and wisdom with him that will help guide BCFNJC's implementation of the Justice Strategy.



FNLC



Hugh Braker, K.C.

Hugh Braker is a citizen of the Tseshaht First Nation, which is located in Port Alberni on the west coast of Vancouver Island and is one of fourteen tribes of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Nation.

After graduating from UBC Law School in 1983, Hugh practiced law in BC for more than 25 years, specializing in Indigenous rights litigation. He has appeared in all levels of court in BC and many times in the Supreme Court of Canada. He was counsel on some of the most important Indigenous rights cases in BC, including *Haida v. Canada*, *R. v. NTC Smokehouse*, *R. v. Dick*, *R. v. Douglas*, *Taku v. BC*, *Campbell v. Nisga'a Nation*, among others.

He has written and delivered 75-100 papers in his career (many published), was appointed Queen's Counsel (Q.C.) in 2000 (revised to K.C. in 2022), and received the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in Law and Politics in 2007. He has delivered papers in Brisbane, Australia; Tasmania, Australia; Seattle, WA; Auckland, New Zealand; throughout Canada, among others. He has served on numerous Indigenous boards of Directors, including more than 25 years as president of the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC.

In June 2022, Hugh was elected to serve a three-year term (2022-2025) as a member of the Political Executive of the First Nations Summit, which is mandated to carry out specific tasks related to Aboriginal Title and Rights negotiations with British Columbia and Canada and other issues of common concern to First Nations in British Columbia. He concurrently serves on the BC First Nations Leadership Council, a political leadership collective which consists of the BCAFN Regional Chief, the executive members of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the Political Executive of the First Nations Summit.



FNL



Regional Chief Terry Teegee

Terry Teegee, is the elected Regional Chief of the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations and proudly serving his third term in this position. Terry's ancestry is Dakelh, Gitksan and Sekani descent and is a member of Takla Nation. As a former Registered Professional Forester, Terry was responsible for looking after the forests, forest lands and forest resources. Terry is deeply involved in natural resources development and the pertaining policies. As Regional Chief, he was an instrumental voice in the development and historic passing of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). Terry's strong leadership, both provincially and nationally, was vital on the following portfolios and issues: AFN Chair on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Committee AFN Chair of the Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED) Co-Chair of the AFN National Fisheries Committee Co-Lead on the AFN Justice and Policing Portfolio Co-Chair for the Champions Table with BC Business Council Tripartite Working Group (TWG) member to implement Bill C-92, Indigenous Child Welfare Jurisdiction Bill to implement the Commitment Document Provincially AFN Representative on the UN Convention of Biodiversity Member of the BC First Nation Gaming Commission Terry is known for his caring and collaborative leadership. He worked to unify and support people working together towards the recognition of our inherent rights and Title, Treaty Rights and Human Rights as Indigenous Peoples. Previous to become the Regional Chief, Terry was the elected Tribal Chief of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) from 2012-2017 and CSTC Vice Tribal Chief from 2009-2012. Previous to his political aspirations, Terry held forestry and natural resources roles with the CSTC and Takla Nation. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Natural Resources Management (Forestry) and also a Natural Resources Technology Diploma. Terry and his wife Rena Zatorski have been married for 20 years and have two children, Rylie and Rowan. They reside on Lheidli T'enneh Shelley Reserve, 22 kms up the Fraser River from Prince George.



FNLC



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs

In October 2008, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip concluded his fourth consecutive four-year term as Chief of the Penticton Indian Band (PIB), and served the Band as Chief for a total of 14 years. In addition, he served as an elected Band Councilor for a 10-year period. Aside from serving as a member of the PIB Council for a total of 24 years, Grand Chief Phillip served as the Chair of the Okanagan Nation Alliance from 2004-2020.

In October 2006, the Okanagan Nation, led by the Elders of the Penticton Indian Band, acknowledged his lifetime commitment to the defense of Indigenous Peoples' Title and Rights by bestowing on him and his family the rare honour of the title of Grand Chief.

Aside from serving as a member of the PIB council for a total of 24 years, he is proud to be in his ninth three-year term as the President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

He has taken an active role in the defense of Aboriginal Title and Rights by readily offering support to Native communities in need. He has taken a personal approach seeing first-hand the impact of fish farms in the Broughton Archipelago, lobbying on Parliament Hill to defeat the First Nations Governance Act, standing with Elders of Treaty 8 against oil and gas development in the Peace River, burning referendum ballots with fellow chiefs in protest and has stood on the steps of the Legislature with 3000 other people united under the Title and Rights Alliance banner. In November 2018, Grand Chief Phillip was awarded a Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, from the University of British Columbia for his life-long advocacy and work. In 2021, he was awarded with the inaugural British Columbia Reconciliation Award.

Grand Chief Phillip has been married for 36 years to his wife Joan. They have three grown sons, two daughters, six granddaughters and nine grandsons. He is currently enjoying his 33rd year of sobriety. In this regard, he is a firm believer in leading by example.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Indigenous Women's Justice Plan



Darla Rasmussen

My given name at birth is Darla Rasmussen (Blackkettle). I am Blackfoot, Cree, and Métis from Siksika Nation, on my paternal side, Ronald Blackkettle, now resting in peace. Norwegian, Danish, Austrian and English on my maternal side, Dawn Rasmussen.

My traditional names are Qelqáz (Wild Rose) gifted to me from Elder Sara Sam from lower Stl'atl'imx and Red Elk Singing Woman, gifted to me in sacred pipe ceremony from Elder David Bain.

I am a mother, community volunteer, and entrepreneur of Sacred Spaces, Pipe Carrier for the people, Drum Keeper of Gathered Voices, and knowledge sharer.

It is a blessing to have been selected to uphold the Justice Coordinator position for the XWILEXMET Department for Sts'ailes Nation for the last 2.5 years.

I come to this position with several years experience supporting Indigenous communities in different capacities. 6 years with Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of BC, 4 years experience in the Child and Family Services sector with Xyolhemeylh and 5 years experience serving Indigenous community members at the Mission Friendship Centre.

It is an honour to be a Steering Committee Member of the Bundle D (Women, Youth and Education) for the BC First Nation Justice Council and contribute to the work being done for the justice strategy for our Indigenous peoples. I am also an Advisory Committee member for Connective BC and a Board Member for Prisoners Legal Services.

I am a survivor and a thriver! I use my lived experiences to power my passion to create change in systems that do not set our Indigenous peoples up for success or provide a quality of care that Indigenous peoples are entitled to receiving. It is my goal to inform as many people as possible of the challenges suffered, and to inspire curiosity, break down walls we hold between ourselves and encourage new ways of thinking and being.



SPEAKERS

Alisia Adams

Alisia Adams is the Director of Policy and Justice Issues for the BC Prosecution Service. After completing her Bachelor of Laws degree at the University of Victoria and clerking at the BC Supreme Court, she joined the BCPS in 2002. As a prosecutor in the Vancouver Region and later with Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions, she has appeared in all levels of court in BC. Alisia has worked at BCPS Headquarters since 2017 and assumed her current role in April 2021. Her responsibilities include the development and strategic direction of BCPS policies, the BCPS Indigenous Justice Framework, and the BCPS's response to emergent justice issues.



Joanne Jefferson

Joanne Jefferson is Sto:lo member and has lived most of her life on the Skowkale reserve. She carries the traditional Halq'eméylem name Síqwamiya. Joanne received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of the Fraser Valley and has worked with the Stó:lō Nation for 20 years. She is currently the Qwi:qwelstóm Wellness Manager.



Corporal Jaden Courtney

Jaden is a member of the Tla'amin Nation and a member of the RCMP. He is currently the supervisor for both the Urban Indigenous Liaison Team and the Indigenous Policing Services Team of the Upper Fraser Valley Regional Detachment based in Chilliwack, BC.



SPEAKERS



Johnny Mack

Professor Johnny Mack is from the Toquaht Nation (Nuu-chah-nulth) and is Assistant Professor at UBC Allard School of Law. From 2014-2018 he was jointly appointed across First Nations and Indigenous Studies and Allard Law at UBC. His research investigates the legal relationship between Indigenous and settler peoples in contemporary settler states, particularly Canada, as well as Indigenous constitutionalism, subjectivity, critical theory, and legal pluralism.

Professor Mack's graduate research earned a CGS scholarship from Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and he is an alumnus of the Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation, where he was a 2011 Trudeau Scholar. He has been co-investigator on numerous SSHRC grants, including two Partnership Development Grants and one Partnership Grant supporting collaborative anti-colonial research. He has served on the Dean's Advisory Committee on Truth and Reconciliation. Professor Mack sits on the editorial board of Indigenous Peoples and the Law book series for Routledge Press, led by Claire Charters, Glen Coulthard, Denise Ferreira da Silva, and Mark Harris.

An impassioned advocate for Indigenous peoples on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, Professor Mack's involvement has been both formal, as a policy analyst for Aboriginal organizations, and informal, as a community activist working to create constructive critical dialogue on the subject of contemporary Treaty negotiations. He is the recipient of the Courage in Law Award from the Indigenous Law Students' Association. In 2022, he received the George Curtis Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence and the UBC Killam Teaching Prize.

Professor Mack is grateful for the opportunity to reside and work on the ancestral, traditional and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) people.



SPEAKERS



Su-taxwiye, Sarah Morales, JD, LLM, PhD, PostDoc

Sarah Morales (Su-taxwiye) is Coast Salish and a member of Cowichan Tribes. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Victoria, Faculty of Law, where she teaches torts, transsystemic torts, Coast Salish law and languages, legal research and writing and field schools.

Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Victoria, she taught at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law where she taught Aboriginal law, Indigenous legal traditions and international human rights with a focus on Indigenous peoples.

Sarah's research centres on Indigenous legal traditions, specifically the traditions of the Coast Salish people, Aboriginal law and human rights. She has been active with Indigenous nations and NGOs across Canada in nation building, inherent rights recognition and international human rights law.



Michelle Joy Carmichael

Michelle Joy Carmichael (she/her/hers) is a dedicated advocate for equality, diversity, and inclusion, with a rooted commitment to building vibrant communities. A Gwich'in and Inuvialuit woman from the Northwest Territories, she grew up hunting, fishing, and harvesting in her family's remote camps. With her experience in the community, Michelle is known for her passion for diversity and growth. Her expertise includes economic development, community engagement, education, training, and resource consultation. Michelle is a skilled communicator, consultant, and mentor, recognized for her advocacy within Indigenous communities and public service. Her approach is rooted in understanding and connecting with people's unique stories.



Navjot Jassar

Navjot Jassar (she/her) is a lawyer at West Coast Environmental Law and works in the Revitalizing Indigenous Law for Land, Air and Water (RELAW) Program. In her work, she supports First Nations partners in uplifting their own laws and governance, primarily in the context of declaring, implementing and enforcing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). She had the privilege to receive her legal education in the JD/JID joint degree program in common law and Indigenous Legal Orders at the University of Victoria. Before entering the legal profession, Navjot worked in advocacy and wrap-around services for families navigating the family policing system. Navjot is a member of the Punjabi Sikh diaspora.



SPEAKERS



TI'ul'thut, Robert Morales

Robert Morales TI'ul'thut is Coast Salish and a member of Cowichan Tribes. In 1986 he received his Juris Doctor Degree from the University of Victoria and in 1993 completed the Program of Instruction for Lawyers in negotiations under Roger Fisher at Harvard University Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Robert had a sole practitioner law practice from 1987 to 2000 specializing in the areas of litigation of First Nations' rights, criminal law, family law, and child protection. He has appeared in the Trial level, Court of Appeal, Federal Court and Supreme Court of Canada. He is also the lead person for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group petition before the Inter American Commission on Human Rights. He acted as legal counsel on for the intervenor HTG in the Roger Williams case before the Supreme Court of Canada.

He has extensive negotiation experience with many First Nations in their dealings with both the Federal and Provincial governments. He joined the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group as Chief Negotiator in November of 2000.

He is a lead for Cowichan Tribes Child and Family Wellness Legislation project. Cowichan Tribes is currently participating in a co-ordination table with Canada and BC regarding Cowichan jurisdiction and service delivery under the Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth and Families.

Robert has been and is also now currently the Chair for the First Nations Summit Chief Negotiators Forum which is composed of about 47 negotiating tables. He has been a lead participant in the establishment and served as a spokesperson of the Common Table for the BC Treaty Negotiation Process.



SPEAKERS



Chasta | Chaquawet, Grand Chief William Charlie

William Charlie carries two traditional names of “Chaquawet” and “Chasta”. He is from the semi-isolated community of Sts’ailes (Chehalis), located about 100km east of Vancouver on the banks of the Harrison River. William was born and raised in Sts’ailes. Sts’ailes has a population of 1,149 people, half of which live on-reserve.

Growing up in the close-knit village of “Sts’ailes”, William was able to grasp on to the cultural teachings of his people and utilize these teachings. “Chasta’s” gift and job for the Sts’ailes is a voice for our people. He is called upon from many communities and organizations throughout the Fraser Valley to be a voice for special ceremonies, gatherings or meetings.

“Chasta” is the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Negotiator for the Sts’ailes; Sts’ailes is a progressive Sovereign, Independent government that is not in the treaty process and is striving for self sufficiency and relying on the strength of not only our human resources, but also the rich and vast resources in our traditional territory.

Mr. Charlie has been a band staff member for over 25 years, an elected member of Sts’ailes Council for 12 years, and Chief for 6 years. His past experience includes Aboriginal Advisory Committee for the RCMP, Cultural Committee with University of the Fraser Valley, BC Hydro Integrated Resource Planning, Vice President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, First Nations Leadership Council, First Nations Wellness Council, and Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Service Society Board Member. Currently he sits on First Nations Health Council (15 years), Aboriginal Health Steering Committee (4 years), First Nations Health Steering Committee Co-Chair (4 Years), Fraser Health Authority Board Member, and National Indigenous Advisory Committee (5 Years). On May 29, 2023 Sts’ailes Chief and Council, through the highest traditional ceremony, bestowed the title of Grand Chief. Throughout his time working for Sts’ailes he was instrumental in the re-structuring of the band organization to a management team structure. Sts’ailes has experienced tremendous growth and presently employs over 350 employees on-reserve. In his role as Chief Negotiator he works tirelessly on Reconciliation Agreements with both British Columbia and Canada, as well as Sts’ailes Coordination Agreement for Children and Families.

Above all else William is a dedicated family man. He is married to Anna Charlie (nee Leon), and they have 3 boys and three grandsons. Any spare time is usually filled with his family, including his parents, aunts and uncles, or the Sasquatch Dance Group, which is grandsons, many nieces and nephews participate in. He also tries to stay active in participating in Traditional War Canoe Racing with many youth, and adults from the community. He is a true believer in protecting what we have for our most precious resource “Our Children” and those to come after.



SPEAKERS



Hon. Niki Sharma, KC

Hon. Niki Sharma, KC, is the Attorney General of British Columbia, appointed to the role by Premier Eby in November 2022. She was elected Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Vancouver–Hastings in 2020.

Niki is a lawyer whose practice focused on representing Indigenous people, including residential school survivors. Niki has worked throughout B.C. as an advocate on climate policy and reconciliation. She has also been recognized for her work on combatting racism.

Niki was elected to the Board of Vancity Credit Union, where she served as Vice-Chair and chaired the Climate Justice Working Group. She also served as Chair of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. In these roles, she worked to improve her community and make life better for people and our planet.

In 2017, Niki worked as a Senior Ministerial Assistant helping to deliver more childcare spaces for B.C. families.

Niki was raised in Sparwood B.C. A mother of two, she has lived in East Vancouver for over 15 years and has deep connections in the community.



SPEAKERS



Hon. Arif Virani

The Honourable Arif Virani was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Parkdale—High Park in 2015. He has previously served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to the Minister of Democratic Institutions, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), and as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

Minister Virani is an Ismaili Muslim who came to Canada in 1972 as a Ugandan Asian refugee. Before entering politics, he practised law for 15 years, starting his career as a civil litigator at Fasken Martineau and subsequently working as a constitutional litigator at the Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario, advocating for human rights and access to justice.

Minister Virani previously worked as an analyst with the Canadian Human Rights Commission in Ottawa, an investigator at the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse in Montréal, and an Assistant Trial Attorney prosecuting genocide at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. He was a consultant on police reform with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative in India, and was also one of the founding board members of the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario in Toronto, which provides direct legal services for low-income people of South Asian heritage.

Minister Virani has been an active volunteer in his community. He is a supporter of The Redwood, a shelter for women and children fleeing abuse, has frequently helped at the Parkdale Community Food Bank, and still maintains his role as “Sorauren Park Hoser” – assisting with the community rink build each winter. Prior to his first election, he was also an active volunteer with RoncyWorks, a network of neighbours, business owners, and organizations that work together to improve community space, and led community efforts in Parkdale—High Park to address mental health stigma.

Minister Virani received the 2001 Harold G. Fox litigation scholarship at the Middle Temple in London, United Kingdom, and the 2008 Wilson-Prichard Award from the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Law in recognition of his contributions to the legal profession and his community.

Minister Virani holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science (Honours) from McGill University, and completed his Bachelor of Laws at the University of Toronto, where he graduated as valedictorian. He speaks English, French, and some Hindi – his Polish, Ukrainian, and Tibetan are works in progress. He is married and the active coach of his two sons.



SPEAKERS



Hon. Dominic Leblanc

First elected in 2000 and re-elected seven times since, the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc has represented the riding of Beauséjour for over 20 years.

He has previously served as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, as President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade, as Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, and as Leader of the Government in the House of Commons. He was previously Senior Advisor to former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, Deputy Government Whip, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

Before entering politics, Minister LeBlanc attended the University of New Brunswick and later Harvard Law School, before beginning a career as a lawyer with Clark Drummie in Shediac and Moncton, New Brunswick.

Minister LeBlanc is married to Jolène Richard, a former Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of New Brunswick.



SPEAKERS



Colleen Spier, K.C., Assistant Deputy Minister – Indigenous Justice Secretariat, Attorney General

Colleen Spier is a Métis-Cree lawyer, called to the Bar in 2008.

Colleen has pursued a legal career that aligns with her interests advocating for Indigenous Peoples and has represented Indigenous clients in both family law matters and child protection proceedings at both the Provincial and Supreme levels of court.

In 2010, Colleen founded Spier & Company Law, and since 2011, in her role as an Indigenous mediator on Mediate BC's Aboriginal Child Protection Roster, assisted parties in resolving child protection matters in a collaborative, culturally relevant and child-focused way. In addition, Colleen provided Family Duty Counsel Services, as requested, on the Haida Gwaii Circuit Court since 2011, and in her current position, manages the Indigenous Courts portfolio within the Provincial government.

From June 2012 to November 2018, Colleen worked as the Executive Director at Island Métis Family & Community Services Society, while simultaneously managing her law firm and mediation practice.

In November 2018, Colleen joined the Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch, as Executive Director, Indigenous Justice Strategy and in March 2023 she was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister of the Indigenous Justice Secretariat. In this role, Colleen continues to support the collaboration and advancement of the Indigenous Justice Strategies, which focus on reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, decreasing the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the justice system, addressing violence against Indigenous Peoples especially women and girls, improving access to justice and justice services for Indigenous Peoples, and designing services for Indigenous Peoples that are culturally relevant and appropriate.

Colleen has served on several not-for-profit Boards, including two terms through ministerial appointment on the Board of the British Columbia College of Social Workers, and served four years as an inaugural Director on the British Columbia Aboriginal Justice Council, now the British Columbia First Nations Justice Council. Colleen has been recognized with numerous awards including from the Victoria Bar Association for her volunteer commitments (2014), Premier's Award Leadership Category Provincial Finalist (2021); MediateBC Susanna Jani Award for Excellence in Mediation (2022); and in 2023 received a King's Counsel Designation.

Colleen resides in Victoria, BC with her husband and two children, who are members of the Lake St. Martin Band in Manitoba. She loves the outdoors and is an avid animal lover.



SPEAKERS



Marty Maltby

Marty Maltby is the Director General, Indigenous Initiatives Sector at CSC. He has worked with CSC for over 20 years, including 12 years in the Indigenous portfolio. Marty brings with him a deep understanding and commitment to meeting the needs of Indigenous offenders and is passionate about the collaborative work that CSC and the Justice System overall are doing to address these needs.



Lori Pruce

Lori Pruce is a Metis woman of Ojibway, Cree, French, and English descent. Her mother's family is from Baie Ste. Paul (Ste. Eustache, MB). Lori grew up in Alberta, has lived in British Columbia for almost 40 years, and currently she and her children reside in the traditional territory of the Tsa'wout.

Lori has worked in corrections, mental health, and family services, and holds a master's degree in criminal justice. Her research and practise interests are in ending over-representation, promoting an understanding of intergenerational trauma, and in helping people understand the role of culture, cultural identity, and connection to community to supporting healing and change.

Lori has worked for the BC Public Service for 34 years and has dedicated most of her professional career to shifting policy and practise to better support Indigenous clients. Currently, she works for BC Corrections as the Director of Indigenous Programs and Relationships.



SPEAKERS



Chief Judge Melissa Gillespie

Chief Judge Gillespie received her law degree from the University of Toronto, called to the BC Bar in 1991, and appointed a Queen's Counsel in 2009. Chief Judge Gillespie was sworn in as a Provincial Court judge in 2012, and in addition to sitting assignments, was active in delivering education programs to Judiciary members, as well as to the legal community. She also served as a member of the executive of the BC Provincial Court Judges Association.

Chief Judge Gillespie was appointed an Associate Chief Judge for a two year term in 2016 and re-appointed for a three year term in 2018. A member of the Board of Directors of the Justice Education Society, she has participated in a Justice Education Society project to strengthen the criminal justice system in Guyana.

She was appointed Acting Chief Judge on May 7, 2018 and appointed Chief Judge on October 19, 2018.

Since 2018, the BC Provincial Court and Chief Judge Gillespie have worked collaboratively with communities to open indigenous sentencing courts in Williams Lake, Hazelton, and Lillooet.



Judge Tina Dion

Tina Dion is a member of the Kehewin Cree Nation, located in Alberta. She was appointed a judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia in May, 2019. Judge Dion graduated from the faculty of Law, UBC in 1997. She was the first Canadian Law Clerk to the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, Window Rock, Arizona. She was called to the Bars of BC (1999) and Alberta (2014). Judge Dion articulated and worked with a boutique criminal firm prior to joining a national law firm where she practised civil litigation. Later, she was in-house counsel and Director of Legal Services with a First Nation Government located in the Lower Mainland prior to returning to private practice in the areas of civil litigation, administrative, environmental, regulatory and Aboriginal law. Judge Dion served as an adjunct professor at UBC Law over a 12-year period. As a lawyer, the Government of British Columbia appointed Judge Dion as a public member to the boards of various self-regulating professional colleges. Throughout her legal career, Judge Dion was active in the Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch including sitting as a member of the executive committee. She was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2017. Her chambers are located in Surrey, BC. She regularly sits as one of two judges in First Nations Court New Westminster. Since February 2023, she is the presiding judge for the Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene communities in northern British Columbia.



SPEAKERS



Judge Linda D. Thomas, BSW (1991, U of R) LLB (2000, UBC)

Judge Linda Thomas was sworn in as a Provincial Court Judge on July 5, 2018. She is assigned to the Northern Region and has her chambers in Williams Lake, BC.

Judge Thomas is of Cree-English-Norwegian ancestry, and a member of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (formerly Kamloops Band) through marriage. The Tk'emlúps community was her home for over 30 years.

Judge Thomas received her LLB from the University of British Columbia in 2000. She has a background in prison law, experience working as a sole practitioner, and has also worked for First Nations government and non-profit organizations. Her law practice focused primarily on child protection and family law. She has worked extensively to develop and facilitate legal information workshops with law advocates, family support workers, and Indigenous communities.

She led the establishment of the Cknúcwentn - First Nations Court in Kamloops; a provincial sentencing court for Aboriginal people. It is one of eight such courts operating in the BC Provincial Court. Judge Thomas has been recognized for her leadership in establishing the court and improving the relationship between Aboriginal people and the legal justice system with the CBA BC 2014 Aboriginal Lawyer's Forum Special Contribution Award, the 2015 Kamloops YMCA Peace Award, and the 2017 Heart of the Grasslands Award from the BC Association of Social Workers.

At the time of her appointment to the Provincial Court, Judge Thomas was the Executive Director of Secwépemc Child and Family Services; a delegated aboriginal child welfare agency serving 7 Secwépemc band communities and the Kamloops urban Indigenous community. She was also a Board member of the Legal Services Society of BC and member of the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women, an advisory council to the BC Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Since shortly after her appointment, Judge Thomas has been an active presider at the Prince George and Williams Lake Indigenous Courts. She has also been appointed to the Law Foundation of BC board of Governors, and is a member of the Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges (CAPCJ) Indigenous Justice committee.



SPEAKERS



Jennifer Metcalfe

Jennifer Metcalfe is a settler living and working on the unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and Qayqayt Nations. She is the Executive Director of Prisoners' Legal Services, a legal aid clinic for people in federal and provincial prisons in BC. Jennifer has worked as a lawyer at Prisoners' Legal Services since 2006. She is the vice-president of the Canadian Prison Law Association and is a member of the Canadian Bar Association Committee on Imprisonment and Release. She has presented to Senate and Parliamentary committees on the liberty and human rights of people in prison. She received her law degree from the University of British Columbia and was called to the bar in 2004. She has an undergraduate degree in Native Studies from Trent University.



Catherine Dauvergne, K.C.

Professor Dauvergne has been working in the area of refugee, immigration, and citizenship law over the past quarter of a century. For a decade she held the Canada Research in Migration Law. In 2012, Dauvergne was named a Fellow of the Trudeau Foundation in recognition of her contributions to public discourse in Canada. In 2019 she was honoured with a Queen's Counsel designation. She has written three books that take a broad perspective on the theoretical underpinnings of the interrelated fields that comprise border law, including considering how human rights principles and discourses fit into a migration and citizenship framework. Dauvergne is also an editor or co-author of five other volumes, including Canada's immigration and refugee law casebook. Much of Dauvergne's work engages feminist critique of the law, and the place of women in immigration, refugee, and citizenship laws. Catherine Dauvergne served as the eighth dean of the Peter A. Allard School of Law from 2015-2020.

Harmony Johnson

Principal, Tiskwat Consulting

Harmony is of the Tla'amin First Nation. She provides planning, organizational development, advisory, and data strategy services to Indigenous people and organizations. She also teaches on issues of Indigenous human rights, governance, and cultural safety and has authored a range of publications about these matters and about Tla'amin ways. She has served in senior roles with the In Plain Sight review in BC health care, the First Nations Health Authority, and First Nations Leadership Council, and currently serves as Vice-President of Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation at Providence Health Care.



SPEAKERS

Hannes Edinger

Managing Director, Big River Analytics

Hannes is a member of the Métis Nation, and founded Big River Analytics Ltd. in 2011 with the objective of providing statistical and analytical capacity to benefit Indigenous communities and governments across Canada. Hannes and his team have conducted a wide range of projects in applied econometrics, data analysis, data modelling, acquisition, forecasting, and report writing. Hannes has a broad statistical skill set in a wide variety of data types including biological, chemical, climate, behavioural, and economic data and holds a Masters in Economics from Queen's University.



Norma-Jean Stump

2024 is my 30 years of working in the Justice system. My background experience is in Corrections, Gladue report writing, Justice work, Family support worker and working with MMIWG families.

My name is Norma-Jean Stump, I am from the Chilcotin Nation and live in my community of Esdilahg First Nation. I have always advocated and supported local First Nations in the justice system, for variety of issues such as finding a lawyer, complaints against RCMP, visiting family and much more. Local communities know they can call on me and I will assist them any way I can. I believe the system has always been complex and the numbers of our people incarcerated and also within the Mcfd system is staggering amount. I believe our people need support and healing. My heart is with my people and will continue to speak for the ones who cannot speak up for themselves. I do not let the system or anyone silence me or demean who I am or what I do. I am proud of the who I am and the many people in my path who have given me the inspiration to continue doing what I do.



Tristen Wybou

Tristen Wybou was born and raised in Kxeen (Prince Rupert), his traditional territory as Ts'msyen and where he cultivated his deep interest for psychology, mental health and community and social services. Throughout Tristen's life and work, he has supported others with experiences of prejudice, discrimination, systemic and state violence which, in tandem with his own experiences, guided him in his approach to advocacy and activism



SPEAKERS



Janine Benedet

Janine Benedet, K.C. is a Professor of Law at the Allard School of Law, UBC. Her research focuses on the criminal law of sexual offences, including the sexual assault of adolescent girls, older women, and women with mental disabilities. She also writes on criminal law responses to pornography and the commercial sex trade. She is a frequent presenter at judicial education conferences and an Associate Editor of the Criminal Reports.

Professor Benedet has an LL.B. (1993) from UBC and completed an LL.M. (1995) and S.J.D. (2003) at the University of Michigan Law School. She clerked for Justice Frank Iacobucci at the Supreme Court of Canada and practised law at Heenan Blaikie in Toronto. She was a member of the faculty at Osgoode Hall Law School from 1999-2005.

Professor Benedet is a member of the bar of British Columbia and has appeared before appellate courts as intervener counsel pro bono in a number of cases involving sexual violence against women, representing Indigenous, anglophone and francophone women's groups and disability rights organizations.



Lorelei Williams

Lorelei Williams is a passionate advocate for Indigenous rights and a dedicated voice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Born in Mission, BC and raised in Vancouver, BC Canada, Lorelei is a member of the Skatin Nations tribe on her mother's side and Sts'ailes on her father's side.

Driven by her own family's experiences of loss and resilience, Lorelei has become a prominent figure in the movement for justice and healing. She is known for her tireless work with organizations and committees such as the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Coalition, the Sisterwatch Committee, West Coast Leaf, the National Security Transparency Advisory Group, Sovereign Bodies Institute in California and the National and International Brigades in Mexico.

Lorelei is the founder of Butterflies in Spirit, a dance group that raises awareness about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls through powerful performances. Her advocacy work has taken her around the world, across Canada, the United States, Latin America, and around Europe, more specifically, Austria, Rome, and France. Lorelei has gone as far as Mexico, Colombia, and Europe to speak at conferences, rallies, and events to shed light on the systemic issues facing Indigenous communities.

In addition to her advocacy, Lorelei is a devoted mother to her two children and a loving partner. Through her unwavering determination and compassionate spirit, she continues to inspire positive change and amplify the voices of those who have been silenced.



THANK YOU

Thank you to the following BC First Nations Justice Council staff members for their work as session organizers for the Forum:

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