

Elders & Youth Council's Biographies



Alexandra (Ali) Darnay is Anishnaabe from Garden River First Nation. Ali recently received Anishnaabemowin Certificate 2005, and graduated the Anishinaabemowin Bachelors of Arts program with distinction in 2004. Ali completed a Bachelors of Education-primary/junior concentration, Nipissing University 1998. She also has a Bachelor of Arts - major in English, minor in Indigenous Studies, McMaster University 1997. Ali is an advocate for the revitalization and preservation of Anishnaabemowin and Indigenous Knowledge. She has volunteered her time to work on gatherings sponsored by McMaster University and Six Nations. She has worked with Elders as a helper for the last decade and is committed to learning traditional knowledge, her language and cultural heritage.



Amber Hill is from Six Nations Reservation. She is Mohawk, Wolf Clan. Her name is Gowan do:wih which means "They Chase Her". Amber attended full Immersion School on Six Nations where she learned the Cayuga Language along with her Culture and Heritage. Amber has graduated with Honors from Mohawk College Native Community Care Counselling and Development Program and is currently enrolled in Child Health Honors Program at Brock University. Amber is interested in working with Aboriginal children and youth in the area of health. Amber has also traveled, and lived in numerous communities around North America such as Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota, and Little Buffalo the Lubicon Cree in Alberta. She is a Unity Rider, having traveled over 2000 miles on horseback. She has visited many communities such as Old Oriabi, Hopi, Arizona and Cononcito, Navajo of New Mexico. Amber has also attend many gatherings and conferences; Drum Beat I, II and III, Cry of the Eagle Conference 1995, Indigenous Knowledge Conference 1997, and recently the International Elders Summit.



Mike Peters is from Sisseton Wahperton, South Dakota and is currently practicing traditional medicine and ceremonies that has been handed to him from spiritual leaders. As a youth he is extraordinary committed to helping his people achieve wellness. Mike has presented numerous times at aboriginal gatherings from NAHO's annual national gathering to communities he visits on the topic of youth and traditional knowledge and healing.



Raymond (Stuff) Smith is from Six Nations. Stuff is Onondaga, Large Eel Clan and is named Nihugwe:howe which means “Little Indian”. Stuff has been volunteering for several years with community gatherings and ceremonies, willing to helping anyway that he can. He has met dozens of Elders from across North America and has learned many things from the Elders he has gotten to know very well. Raymond is practicing traditional medicine and ceremonies, and a Professional Hypnotherapist.



Katsi Cook is a Mohawk Nation Wolf Clan. Katsi is a Midwife, mother of six and grandmother of six. Since 1983, she has conducted award-winning community-driven environmental justice health research in her home community of Akwesasne, one of many member communities of Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy, Located along the St. Lawrence River between northern New York and western Quebec/ eastern Ontario. In 1984 she initiated the Akwesasne Mother’s Milk Project, developing connectivity among community members, health care providers, and research scientists. Having been honored as a “Success Story” in 1991 at the Global Assembly of Women and Environment Project which brought together Native American women’s leadership in reproductive and environmental health issues, conducting outreach into Native American communities in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. From 1992-1996, Katsi served as a member of the International Joint Commission Science Advisory Board’s Working Group on Ecosystem Health. Katsi served a four year appointment (1994-1998) as a Lecturer in the Department of Environmental Health and Toxicology at the University at Albany School of Public Health, where she was Principal Investigator for First Environmental Communications, one of three Environmental Justice Partnership for Communication national demonstration projects, funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) of the NIH. As a visiting Fellow at Cornell University’s American Indian Program in those same years, Katsi focused her work on environmental justice issues within the communities of the Six Nations Iroquois and if founding member of Akwesasne Task Force on the Environmental and Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force. Her work in ecosystem recovery focuses on socio-cultural systems and health issues. She served as founding Aboriginal Midwife for Six Nations Birthing Centre at Six Nations, Ontario. For her work in Aboriginal Midwifery and Environmental Justice, she was 2001 honoree at the New York Open Centre 2001 Awards in New York City. In 1999, she received the Calver Award from the Environmental Section of the American Public Health Association, a 1998 Annual Award from the New York State Labor and Environment Network at the 20th Anniversary of Love Canal Conference, 1997 Green Medicine award from Bioneers, and is a Murray Visiting Scholar in Medicine Humanities at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Co-author of “Holistic Risk-Based Environmental Decision Making: A Native Perspective” published in April 2002 of the Environmental Health Prospective, Katsi is also a 2004 and 2005 recipient of an Indigenous Knowledge Cultural Researcher Award from the Indigenous Health Research Development Program at McMaster University with which she is writing part of a community and cultural based Aboriginal Midwifery Education curriculum.

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Norma Jean General is Wolf Clan, Cayuga Nation. Norma's interests lie in seeking wellness for the Ogweho:weh people. Norma says, "The history of our people is vital to our existence, to know the wisdom, language, ceremonies, values, and our relationship to ourselves, our families, our clan, our Nation, and to Creation is of the utmost importance." Norma has presented at the University of Oklahoma wellness programs. She has served as facilitator for cultural sensitivity and as a facilitator/lecturer at McMaster University. She has earned a Certificate in Addictions and Mental Health from George Brown College. Norma is a mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, and friend.



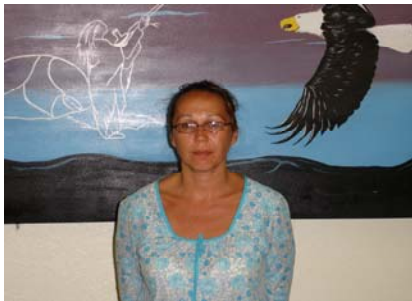
Kenny King is from the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Kenny is an Ojibway, Bear Clan. Kenny is one of twelve children, with three children of his own and seven grandchildren. Kenny is self employed as an auto mechanic, and is former Band Councilor for the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Presently, Kenny is Chairman of the Mississauga's of the New Credit Community Trust Fund. Kenny also volunteered at the 2004 Indigenous Elder Summit. He is involved in many Ojibway and other non-Ojibway ceremonies. Kenny also raises Bison as an effort to improve the health of his peoples. He also donates meat for various ceremonies.



James Lamouche is Cree/Métis and grew up in Northern Alberta. He has experience working as an educator developing science curriculum which respects Indigenous Knowledge and attempts to engage Aboriginal students more fully. His research experience includes the Pulmonary Research Institute at the University of Alberta as well as the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Mass. James has also served as coordinator for the Four Directions Summer Research Program at Harvard Medical School. James works with the National Aboriginal Health Organization. One of the main goals of the organization is the protection and promotion of traditional healing practices and medicines for the improvement of the health of Aboriginal Peoples.



Chief Arvol Looking Horse was born on the Cheyenne River Reservation, South Dakota and was raised by his grandparents. Lakota is Arvol's first language. At the age of twelve Arvol was given the responsibility of becoming the 19th Generation Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe. Arvol was conferred an Honorary Doctorate by the University of South Dakota. He has an extensive portfolio focusing on international peace and spirituality and had met with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. As a lecturer since 1976, he has addressed such groups as the United Nations International Indigenous Peoples Day and has been a keynote speaker at many universities across Canada and the United States. He was bestowed The Wolf Awards, Canada, in 1996.



Dawn Martin-Hill, Mohawk, Wolf Clan. Dawn holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology and is one of the original founders of the Indigenous Studies Program at McMaster University, where she is currently the Academic Director. She is a mother of four children, ages six to twenty three, and resides at the Six Nations of the Grand River. Currently Dawn is interested in developing a curriculum with recognition of Aboriginal thought. Her research interests include Indigenous Knowledge and Aboriginal women, spirituality and Indigenous medicine, the contemporary practice of Indigenous traditionalism and global cross-cultural comparisons of Indigenous People. Along with three other colleagues, she has received a research grant in Aboriginal Capacity & Development Research Environments (Canadian Institutes of Health Research), which has been named the Indigenous Health Research Centre. Central to her research interests is the development of "Indigenous Knowledge- Theoretical methodological inquiry" as a paradigm for Indigenous Studies. Dawn has organized conferences on Native issues which include: Drum Beat I, II, and III, Cry of Eagle, Indigenous Knowledge and recently the International Elders Summit. Her work in organizing conferences has always focused on Native elders guiding scholars in articulating Indigenous Knowledge.

Liliana Madrigal, Executive Director of the Amazon Conservation Team, has been working in the conservation field for over 20 years. She served as the Director of the Costa Rica Program with the Nature Conservancy where she managed the Parks Campaign through which most protected areas in Costa Rica were established. In 1987, she helped found Conservation International and served as the Director of the Southern Central American Program, responsible for all organization activities on Costa Rica and Panama. Ms. Madrigal is a graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles.



Tewakierahkwa, Indian name means “Gathering Snowflakes” her English name is Louise McDonald, is Mohawk Nation, Bear Clan. Louise resides in Akwesasne and is a mother of five children and committed to promoting the Mohawk language, culture, and way of life. Recently, Louise went through the ancient ritual of Condolence and accepted the duties of Clan Mother for the Bear Clan under the Tehanakari:ne (Dragging Horns) title. Tewakierahkwa is also working toward resurging ancient rites of passage for women and children.



Dr. Michael Monture is a father of six children and resides at the Six Nations Grand River Territory. Michael is a M.D, C.C.F.P, and F.C.F.P. Michael is a doctor of medicine and graduate of the University Western Ontario, class of 1992. He holds a general license with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario for independent practice. Michael maintains a practice dedicated to the people of First Nations residents in Canada. He holds a fellowship with the College of Family Physicians of Canada.



Luciano Mutumbajoy, Don Luciano is a taita (shaman) of the Ingano people who started his apprenticeship at the age of seven. He is among the foremost Indigenous leaders of the Colombian Amazon in the struggle for cultural preservation and the perpetuation of authentic shamanic medicine. He has served as governor of the Ingano-Kamtza Indigenous Reserve, and now presides over operations committee of the Union of Yagé Healers of the Colombian Amazon (UMIYAC), a coalition of 40 of the most authoritative shamans from the six tribes of the northwest Amazon.



Sara Smith is of the Mohawk Tribe, Iroquois Nation, and Turtle Clan. She had lived her entire life on the Six Nations Reserve Grand River Territory in Ontario. She is a leader in the movement of Traditional Peoples towards the establishment of World Peace. She has traveled and continues to journey extensively throughout Canada, United States, and internationally carry a Peace Message. She brings the teachings and prophecies of the Grandfathers and Grandmothers as they were taught to her. Sara is the visionary of the Roots 4 Peace Sharing Centre on her Reservation, which she and her husband have established. The prime mandate of the Centre is to promote Peace, Unity, Harmony, and Understanding among All Peoples and is dedicated to the Children of today and “Those-Not-Yet-Here”, the Children of Tomorrow (Seventh Generation). Her love and appreciation for “Dreamtime” and Youth is evident as one listens to her words.



Bertha Skye was born in Northern Saskatchewan to Cree parents. She started cooking foods at Residential Schools at the age of seventeen until she was twenty-seven. She is married to Hubert Skye, and they have raised five children and six grandchildren. In 1992, Bertha was selected to compete in the World Culinary Olympics held in Frankfurt, Germany. Bertha’s team received 7 gold, 2 silver, and 2 bronze medals. Since then she taught traditional cooking to young women and women with diabetes.



Hubert Skye was born and raised at his home on the Six Nations Reserve and is named Sugowunta, which means “Goal Scorer”. Hubert was born to a Cayuga mother and his father was Onondaga, who were both fluent in their languages. Hubert is a member of the Snipe Clan and is a Faith Keeper and speaks of the Cayuga Longhouse. Hubert does religious ceremonies, traditional marriage ceremonies, funerals, and healing ceremonies. Hubert spent 34 years teaching elementary school with 27 years on regular subjects and 7 years teaching the Cayuga Language in the in-school program. With the need for speaker Hubert teaches young men longhouse speeches 2 evenings a week. He goes as far away as Oklahoma for the Seneca-Cayuga nation. Hubert had five children and six grandchildren. Hubert is involved in various activities as; The Native Friendship Centers, Solemnize of marriages, Six Nation Police Commission, R.C.M.P. National Aboriginal Activities Commission (past), Six Nations Champions of Champions Pow Wow Committee, and Native Classes.

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Birgil Kills Straight is Oglala from Pine Ridge. Birgil had been involved in the revitalization of the Oglala culture and traditions. Birgil is a former educator who has long been involved in spiritual work, including the 1986-1990 horseback journeys to Wounded Knee known as the Big Foot Ride. He is the co-founder of the Indigenous Law Institute and presented at human rights hearing at the United Nations. He has long served as a representative of the traditional government. Birgil is working to preserve artifacts, remains, and to secure a healthy Buffalo herd.



Ernest Sundown is of the Cree Nation from Saskatchewan. He was born and raised on the Joseph Bighead Reserve in Saskatchewan and is involved in preserving the traditional and cultural values of his ancestors. His beliefs have led him around the world promoting peace and unity for all nations. Ernest has hosted the Unity Ride, which is a healing journey on horseback to communities and sacred sites for the purpose of promoting sobriety, pride and culture. The Joseph Bighead community still practices their traditions, language, and cultural activities. Their interests include ranching, farming, log harvesting, tree planting, fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering. They have diversified and expanded operations in order to implement self-sufficiency. Ernest was Chief for over 25 years and is now immersed in cultural preservation.

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Jake Swamp, born in Akwesasne, Mohawk Nation, is named Tekaronianeken, which means "Two Skies Together". Jake is a Chief for the Wolf Clan and has held this position for the past 28 years. He has served as the Director of the Akwesasne Freedom School and Director of the Akwesasne Environmental Project. He is currently Chairman for the Tree of Peace Society and maintains an active agenda of lectures, workshops, and school visits, in which he teaches the culture and contributions of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. He had traveled to all parts of the world including his trip to Geneva, Switzerland to lobby for the creation of the Indigenous Working Group under the International Human Rights Commission in 1982.