

# Kwanlin Dän Ch'a

KWANLIN PEOPLE OF WHITEHORSE, HOW ARE YOU?

FALL 2021



Liam B. participating in one of KDFN Youth Recreation's scavenger hunts over the summer.



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# Who you gonna call?

We'd like to remind everyone it's important to reach out for support if you need it.

FOR MENTAL WELLNESS SUPPORT:

## KDFN's Natsékhi Kų Health Centre

Information and support for KDFN Citizens on mental wellness supports and general health info.  
Mon to Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Phone 867-668-7289

## Rapid Access Counselling, Yukon Mental Wellness Substance Use Services

Mon to Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Phone 867-456-3838

## National Indian Residential School Crisis Line

24 hours a day  
Phone 1-866-925-4419

## Canadian Mental Wellness Distress Number

Mon to Fri 2 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Phone 1-844-533-3030

## Hope for Wellness National Crisis Line

24 hours a day  
Phone 1-855-242-3310

## Emergency in Whitehorse

Phone 911

## RCMP non-emergency in Whitehorse

Phone 867-667-5555

## KDFN Community Safety Officers

Phone 867-332-9551

FOR COVID-19 & VACCINE INFO:

## KDFN's COVID-19 Information Line

Information and support for KDFN Citizens on COVID-19 and vaccine  
Mon to Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Phone 867-335-5051

## Yukon's General Health Line

24 hours a day  
Phone 811

## Yukon's COVID-19 and vaccine information line

Daily 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
If you don't get an answer, leave a message.  
Phone 1-877-374-0425



You are not alone.



CUT OUT THIS PAGE AND KEEP ON YOUR FRIDGE FOR QUICK REFERENCE.

# A Message from the Chief...

## It's fall time.

For me, fall is a time for reflection and a time to be thankful. As we go through difficult times, I find gratitude is more important than ever.

Günáłchish to the citizens who have stepped up to get vaccinated, those who have made sacrifices to follow COVID safe recommendations, and those who have supported others to be safe. And I thank you for your continued patience as we navigate the next phase of COVID-19.

Shāw nítān to the Community Safety Officers, the RCMP, the staff at KDFN's Natsékhi Kų Health Centre, and all of the staff who worked to keep our community as safe as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak in Whitehorse.

Special thanks to Council and the Pandemic Planning Team, made up of Executive Director Roxanne Vallevand, Health and Wellness Director Christina Sim, Finance Director Gordon Campbell, Safety Consultant Amber Shewan, and Communications Manager Leighann Chalykoff. So many people contributed to help guide our Nation through these extraordinary times.

Māhsí'cho to the Yukon government for bringing a rapid testing clinic to McIntyre when we needed it most. And for providing training to our nurses to continue to administer these tests.

We know that this virus has impacted First Nations people more than others in the Yukon.

Between June 1 and August 19, First Nations people made up 56% of all cases in the Yukon, but just 23% of the population.

During the COVID-19 outbreak over the summer 76 KDFN Citizens got sick from COVID-19, and sadly we lost one of our Elders.

Our community is grieving. Make space for those feelings. And reach out for help.

Let's work together so we don't lose anyone else. COVID-19 variants, such as the Delta, are already in our territory and we need to do everything we can to stay healthy. If you have been waiting to be vaccinated, now is the time to step up.

Let's not let this virus affect our people any more.

# SHOUT OUTS

## Language Leaders...

KDFN Elder Ānji Átā Louie Smith and KDFN Citizen Shayawdustee Pricilla Dawson were recognized for their commitment to learning and teaching Southern Tutchone at a ceremony in late-May.

Ānji Átā was honoured as a fluent language speaker. Shayawdustee was one of eight graduates of the language proficiency certificate program that was delivered through a partnership between Simon Fraser University, the Yukon Native Language Centre and the Council of Yukon First Nations.

Read more about Shayawdustee's language journey on page 20.

AND... Congratulations to CAFN Citizen Vera Brown for winning the 2021 Council of the Federation Literacy Award for Yukon in September. Vera has been inspiring the next generation of language learners through her work at KDFN for more than 10 years.



Vera Brown (right) works alongside her granddaughter Nikki-Lee (left) at Dusk'a.

Photo courtesy of YG.



## Honouring the 215...

Through the Northern Nations Alliance, KDFN Citizen Jacqueline Shorty helped organize events in Whitehorse to mourn the 215 graves discovered at the Kamloops Residential School, other children who were lost at Canada's residential schools and survivors. Jacqueline founded the Northern Nations Alliance.

Hundreds of children's shoes were placed on the steps of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Whitehorse.

Then on May 31, people from all parts of our community walked the shoes from the cathedral to the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

The shoes were displayed behind the centre during a four-day sacred fire. Over those days, the community came together to mourn the immense loss, share stories, and work towards healing.

Shāw nithān to Jacqueline and everyone who contributed to these healing events in Whitehorse.





## Offering a 'Yukon First Nation world-view and energetic, Indigenous lens'...

Congratulations to KDFN Citizen Rae Mombourquette! In June, Rae was appointed as the new Yukon member on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.



*I am excited to apply my Yukon First Nation world-view and energetic, Indigenous lens to discussions, as well as to expand my own understanding of the commemoration of people, places and events on a national level."*

**Rae Mombourquette**



## Working together to tell our stories...

Well done to the group who worked with Parks Canada on 23 new interpretive panels now installed outside the S.S. Klondike. This summer, they received a Parks Canada CEO Award of Excellence.

The award recipients who worked with Parks Canada are Linda Johnson, Derek Cooke, Rae Mombourquette, Anne-Marie Miller, Nakhela Hazel Bunbury, and KDFN Heritage Assistant Diana Jimmy.

## Musical Magic...

Congratulations to Natilee Thompson, who received a scholarship for the Yukon Music Camp held July 26 to 30 at the Yukon Arts Centre. She was nominated for the scholarship by Ms. Cranfield, music teacher at Elijah Smith Elementary School.

Natilee attended four classes: choir, master vocals with Diyet, keyboard and master keyboard. She worked hard all week and put on a fabulous performance at the Arts Centre on Saturday July 31. Accompanied only by piano, Thompson performed like a seasoned singer: relaxed, clear and on point! Great work Natilee!

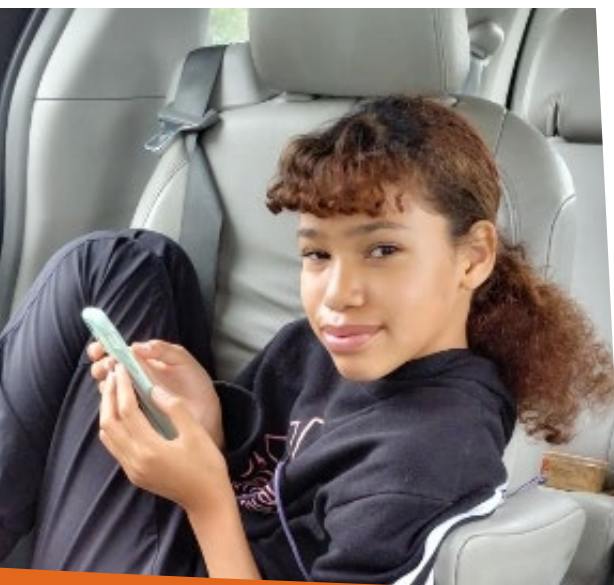


Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Shorty.



*Getting involved with this walk helped with my healing process. For me, it was acknowledging the pain and moving from a place of pain and victimization to a place of healing."*

**Jacqueline Shorty**

## Warrior Walk from Whitehorse to Kamloops, B.C...

It started with a vision—After hearing the devastating news of the 215 graves found at the Kamloops residential school, Tahltan member Jamie Henry had a vision about walking from Telegraph Creek to Kamloops to bring western Canadian First Nations together for healing.

He got in touch with KDFN Citizen Jacqueline Shorty, who suggested they start the walk from Whitehorse. And so the idea for the Warrior Walk was born, a 2,180 kilometre 6-week journey from Whitehorse to Kamloops.

Supported through the Northern Nations Alliance and Jacqueline, the walkers began the healing journey with a ceremony at the former site of Yukon Hall residential school in Whitehorse in late June.

Along the way, dozens more people joined to walk portions of the route. They were supported and encouraged by many nations along their journey.

When they arrived in Kamloops on August 9, many Yukon First Nations joined the celebration as they were welcomed by the Tkemlúps te Secwépemc Nation.



Photo: Steven Dubas



## IN HER OWN WORDS: Sheilah Sutherland's COVID-19 story



"My name is Sheilah Sutherland. I am a Citizen of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I am a court worker, a Community Safety Officer and a mother of 3. I'm here to tell you my COVID-19 story.

"My son suffered from respiratory issues from birth and was hospitalized many times as an infant. I was worried about how COVID would affect him and our family if anyone caught it. So, I got vaccinated to do everything I can to keep them safe.

"During the recent outbreak, 2 of my children unfortunately tested positive for COVID. We were in isolation for 20 days straight over the summer. It was one of the scariest times of my life. And also one of the most difficult things I've had to do.

"Two of my kids weren't allowed to play with their little sister because she wasn't sick, they couldn't eat dinner with their family.

"It was hard for everyone, mentally and emotionally.

"Thankfully, they didn't become severely ill, but that doesn't mean it can't happen.

"Everyone displays symptoms differently, some more severe than others.

"Our children under 12 cannot get vaccinated yet, but the best way we can protect them from getting sick is for everyone who is able to get vaccinated get it done."

## And the survey says...

Shāw nithān, gúnáłchīsh, mähś'cho, thank you to all the Citizens who completed the COVID-19 and Vaccination Survey in July 2021. Congratulations to our two prize draw winners, Rick O'Brien and Sarina Sydney.

Here is an  
overview of  
the results:

**108**

Citizens  
responded

**56%**

live in McIntyre,  
Crow and Swan

**62%**

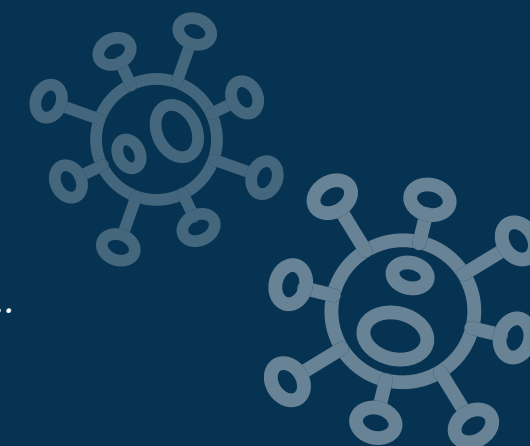
say they have  
been or will be  
vaccinated

**73%**

say they have enough information  
to make an informed decision on  
whether to get vaccinated.

“

*I encourage everyone to get vaccinated...  
We would even get our crazy old dog  
vaccinated if we had to!!"*





# From background extra to the big screen

## KDFN Citizen Kiri Geen builds a career in Hollywood North

By Skyler Isaac with files from Alexander Gatensby  
Photos courtesy of Luka Cyprian

KDFN Citizen Kiri Geen says she got her first job in the film industry almost by accident. A friend was casting background extras—the people you see walking behind the main characters in a film scene—and Kiri stepped forward for the job. Little did she know that side gig would turn into a life-long love and lead her to a career in writing, acting and producing.

Kiri has been involved in the Vancouver film industry—affectionately known as Hollywood North—for a decade now. During that time, she’s been involved in hit shows, such as CBC’s *Arctic Air*.

Kiri spent two years earning a Fine Arts diploma at the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art in Terrace, B.C. KDFN’s Post-Secondary Program supported her through this training.

Now she is preparing for the debut of her new short film *Kiri and the Girl*, which she produced and co-wrote with collaborators Christopher Logan and Ken Shapkin .

“Chris and I wrote a script about a girl, we used my name [for the character], who has lost her mother,” explains Kiri, “She and her mother were very tapped in to the spirit world and her mother was her guide. So young Kiri feels a little lost and disconnected from the world and her dad, and she finds herself through the powwow culture and culture of ceremony.”

Kiri’s First Nations ancestry plays a large role in her creativity. In addition to her busy film schedule, she spends time with bead work, painting and carving.

“

*Just take your time with these things and believe in yourself. You’re capable of more than you give yourself credit. It’s like bungee jumping. You’ve got to take that first leap. That’s the most terrifying, but once you do it, it’s amazing.”*

“I think it’s amazing timing right now for a film like this because it’s such a positive story and it’s about healing, it’s about community, it’s about culture, it’s about healing through your culture. And I think it’s a good time, especially with the children being found right now, to have a positive message. And even my own personal healing journey, the majority of my healing has been done through ceremony and First Nations culture.”

*Kiri and the Girl* was a low budget, independent production. As such, it came with its own unique set of challenges.

“Our biggest challenge, I think, was filming in the time of COVID,” says Kiri. “We had a lot of safety precautions and a lot of planning to make sure everybody was safe because we did have Elders and children on set. But it worked to our advantage.”

“I might sort of call it a COVID opportunity because we got the crew we wanted because the whole industry was shut down.”

Kiri’s dream cast and crew includes director Grace Dove, an established First Nations actress who has been featured in *The Revenant* and *Monkey Beach*. And Whitehorse actor Tahmoh Penikett, who was a series regular on *Battlestar Galactica* and *Dollhouse*. Newcomer Isla Grant plays the main character Kiri.

The film may have an extremely talented and respected cast and crew, but its existence was never a guarantee.

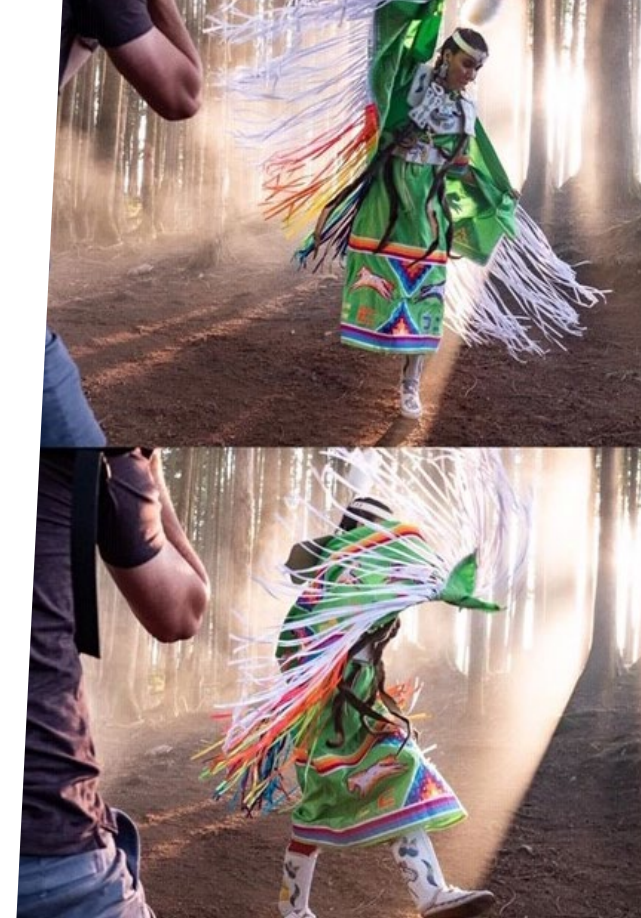
“When we applied for the grant to the Canada Arts Council, we never thought we’d get it,” says Kiri, “But we spent five months researching which grant would work best for us.”

The hard work and dedication paid off. And, Kiri has some advice for those looking to pursue their dreams.

“Just take your time with these things and believe in yourself because you’re capable of more than you give yourself credit for,” she says. “It’s like bungee jumping: You’ve got to take that first leap. That’s the most terrifying, but once you do, it’s amazing.”

*Kiri and the Girl* has been selected to screen at the Vancouver Film Festival in October. You can watch it in cinema or stream it online.

**If you’re a KDFN Citizen looking to explore or expand your career options and future studies, please connect with Mark Smith, Post-Secondary Coordinator at [post.secondary@kdfn.net](mailto:post.secondary@kdfn.net).**



# Storytelling specialist honoured for excellence and leadership in teaching

KDFN Citizen Patricia Joe has been nationally recognized as an Outstanding Indigenous Educator. She credits her grandparents with her success and dedicates the award to them for gifting their knowledge to her.

Pat Joe is a KDFN Citizen from the Tagish Nation and the Dak'laweide Clan. This summer, she won a Canadian Teachers' Federation award for leadership in Indigenous education and excellence in teaching that reflects Indigenous culture. The award was presented on July 15, 2021.

"I owe this honour to my grandparents, Julia and Johnnie Joe," she says. "I was born on the trap line, and raised by my grandparents. During long winter evenings at the family homestead, grandmother would pull out the National Geographic magazine and teach us about the world and its people by the light of the old oil lantern."

"Grandfather could read the land and he survived like our ancestors before him. He told the creation and oral stories to me that had been passed down to him for generations."

Pat is a teacher, mother, grandmother and knowledge keeper. She specializes in oral stories and oral histories. As a former Deputy Chief and Chief Land Claims and Self-Government Negotiator, she also has many years of experience in politics and business.

"Yukon First Nation people are Potlatch People and that means we give gifts," she says. "Our Elders have left us with many gifts, and they have left us their stories in written form—stories not only about the past, but also about the present and future too."

Pat is a third-generation survivor of residential school, and she diligently teaches about the legacy of residential schools and the impacts on First Nations. Throughout her career, she has been an outspoken advocate for her culture, history, beliefs and values.

"I accept this award, acknowledging that many Yukon First Nation Elders, past and present; colleagues, friends and family have supported me on my path and in my work," she says. "Because of the knowledge gifted to me by the ancestors, it is my duty to give back by supporting teachers and working with students from K-12 in delivering Yukon First Nation curriculum."



# The man behind the camera

Wayne Vallevand's skills and quick thinking have taken him far throughout his career, and this summer they took him all the way to the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

This summer, KDFN Citizen Wayne Vallevand went to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics as a camera operator for CBC.

For the first 14 days he was quarantined as a precaution against COVID-19. And then, he worked long hours in the international media centre, filming interviews with Canadian athletes.

"The cool part was seeing all the athletes come in and hearing their stories," says Wayne. "They were pouring their hearts out to Canadians. And they thanked us for being there because their families were not able to be in the stands but at least they were able to see them on TV."

The hard work paired with the COVID-19 restrictions meant that Wayne wasn't able to explore Tokyo as much as he wanted to. But he did get to go out once to taste the salmon sushi and make some new friends.

"We met some journalists from Tokyo and when I told them I was from the Yukon near Alaska, their eyes bulged out of their heads and they shivered. Then, in perfect English, they said: 'Very cold,'" he says with a laugh.

Wayne was selected for one of the few spots on CBC's Olympic team because of his ability to solve problems and think on his feet.

Last year a producer in Quebec, Sylvain Archambault, asked Wayne to film a local francophone musician on Fish Lake. During the

recording they started having sound issues. And despite being out of the studio with few resources, Wayne was able to quickly fix the problem.

"He said I was a bit of a technical MacGyver," Wayne says with a laugh. "He was so happy he recommended me to go to the Olympics."

Wayne grew up in Whitehorse. His grandparents, Julia and Johnny Joe, were from Marsh Lake. He is proud to be a descendant of the Tagish Kwan.

Wayne has been "carrying a camera" since 1988. He started working in the library at Northern Native Broadcasting in 1986. Then, he was in sound and worked his way up to being a camera operator.

He started working at CBC in 1994. Over the years he's won awards for reporting, and he had lots of on-the-job training and many big adventures travelling across Canada and the North to cover amazing stories.

"I've been doing it a lot of years and I'm still happy to go to work," he says. "Every day is a new challenge and I am grateful for the career I have had."

At the time of printing, Wayne is submitting his credentials to cover the Winter Olympic Games in Beijing. So, it looks like he'll have another Olympic experience coming up in 2022.

**Wayne filming Olympic medalist and flagbearer Damain Warner.**

**Photo courtesy of Wayne Vallevand.**



## Rennes Lindsay is building a career in architecture



*If you would like to learn more about the Post-Secondary Employment Program, or how you can get support, please contact the ISET Program Coordinator at 867-633-8422 ext. 516 to book an appointment.*

KDFN Citizen Rennes Lindsay took dedicated care during her final year of high school to complete all of the requirements for graduation, including purposefully taking classes that would look good on her transcript.

Last spring, she was on the waitlist to get into an interior design program. Then she found out she'd been accepted into the Bachelor of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Urbanism at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

"I had a tough decision to make, but ultimately I thought the architecture program would give me more options for my future," says Rennes.

It didn't take long for her to realize she had made the right choice.

"As soon as I started my classes, I was in love with it," she says. "Architecture has many visual aspects that can make a space beautiful, but the main reason I like it is how it shapes the environment of a space. Design greatly impacts how you feel in a room."

After finishing her first year Rennes was eager to get work experience in her field. But, finding an architecture job for the summer would prove to be more difficult than she anticipated.

Given this, she decided to reach out to KDFN's Education department for support.

"I remember getting an email from KDFN about being able to help with wage subsidies, and helping citizens find jobs," she says.

"I sent Bryan [Unruh] an email and I said: 'This is my school, this is the kind of job I'm looking for. I could really use help. I definitely want to work full-time this summer'.... He got back to me really quickly and straight off the ball he was like 'Ok we have this option, this option...'

This support is possible because of the Employment Placement Program funding that is available to Citizens who are post-secondary students through KDFN's Kenādān Kų - House of Learning.

Rennes was matched with Taylor Architecture Group (TAG), a firm that is known for working with First Nation communities.

"It was so quick and it was so great," she says. "I couldn't have hoped for any better way to get the job... it's great because the job relates to what I'm doing in school, and it stays fresh in my mind over the summer."

This job experience proved to be valuable for her future. Being able to work for a firm provided her with on-the-job experience that you cannot get in the classroom.

"Now that I've picked it up in my first year, it's obviously going to stick pretty well. I'm so happy to be fully immersed in it rather than sitting on the outside looking in."

After she finishes her undergrad, she plans to go for her Masters Degree in Architecture.

## Tips for back to school

**School attendance is the key to success. Kids need to learn good school habits early. Kids with good school habits graduate.**

### Kindergarten to Grade 3 are the most important school years because:

- This is when kids learn to read
- This is when kids learn basic math
- This is when kids form attendance habits

Good attendance habits in Kindergarten to Grade 3 also sets the stage for good attendance habits throughout future school years. This means students are way more likely to graduate with the skills to go on to further education or employment.

### What can parents (and older siblings) do to support their children's education and good attendance?

- Send your child with a nutritious breakfast and a good night's rest.
- Make playtime and reading together a part of every day.
- Get involved at the school, parent-teacher conferences, etc.
- Get kids involved in the cultural activities that take place at the school.
- Send your child on time every day (unless they're sick).

Remember that there are resources for your family at Kenādān Ku House of Learning.

Phone 867-633-8422 for more information.

# KDFN'S Education Support Coordinators

KDFN's Education Support Coordinators—formerly called Community Education Liaison Coordinators or CELCs—help students, parents/guardians and school staff achieve student success.

They do this by coordinating support and services that assist the student. They also ensure that students have access to cultural experiences both within and outside the school, by working with the KDFN Cultural Educator, Cynthia James.

The ESCs also help preschool families transition children to kindergarten, Grade 7 students transition into high school and offer advice to graduating students.



**Christine Pottie** works with elementary schools



**Brandie Chetcuti** works with high schools

Shāw nithän to Evelyn Troy, our high school CELC who retired in June 2021, after 20 years of work providing support to KDFN High School students.

Our Youth Rec and Youth Outreach team ran a booth at the Fireweed Market in August and September to sell handmade items by KDFN community members.

"We covered the cost of the booth so that artists would make a 100% profit off of the things they had made," says Youth Outreach worker Frances Langtry. "We were hoping to support artists that do not have many ways of selling the items they have made. We are also hoping to help some youth sell their arts and crafts, and begin to show them how to market their things."

Shown in the photo are Sarina Sidney, Frances Langtry, Molly Sam, and Jasmine Rosentreter.



## WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK!

### KDFN's Child and Family Liaisons

We're here to help support healthy connections with family, community and culture. We can also help you understand your rights under the Yukon's *Child and Family Services Act*.

**Get in touch with our team:**

Chris Newman: 867-334-4900  
Crystal McLean: 867-334-4341

## Find out how KDFN's Child and Family Services team can help you

### Community and Family Support Workers

Has unresolved trauma affected your family? KDFN's Community and Family Support team can host family circles, and parent/caregiver group circles. We'll work with your child and family where you are most comfortable.

**Get in touch with our team:**

Karole O'brien: 867-336-0483  
Gwyneth Williams: 867-334-2968

### Youth Outreach

**We provide one-on-one support and help youth with:**

- developing on-the-land and life skills
- accessing housing
- planning for education
- employment training
- writing a resume
- cultural programs that support individual wellness

**Get in touch with our team:**

Frances Langtry: 867-334-5427  
Jasmine Rosentreter: 867-333-0585



**Deadline to apply  
for post-secondary  
financial assistance  
for Winter:**

**Monday,  
November 15**

If you know you need post-secondary education but aren't sure what course of study to follow, please contact Kenādān Ku, House of Learning staff at 867-633-8422 to talk about your options.

There are many resources available, and staff at Kenādān Ku can help you to decide what would work best for you.



## Congratulations to the 2021 **DUSK'A GRADS!**

Here are some families  
celebrating their  
little ones together.



# KDFN Elders!

## We need your help with hiring for our First Nation

We value the knowledge and input of Elders. That's why Elders are part of our hiring process. They help review resumes, participate in interviews, and give opinions on applicants.

### To apply you must be:

- a KDFN status Elder (60+);
- a strong communicator;
- able to keep information confidential; and
- good with time management, organization and remembering information.

Time commitment: 7 to 10 hours per competition spread over 3 to 4 weeks.

Honorarium rates are provided.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Sandy Secord at [sandy.secord@kdfn.net](mailto:sandy.secord@kdfn.net) or call 867-334-5841.

## 'It's a vital piece

Shayawdustee Pricilla Dawson has spent many hours learning Southern Tutchone. Recently, she graduated from the First Nations Language Proficiency Certificate Program.

Next Step: her diploma.



*At the end of the day, we need to help create fluent speakers to pass the knowledge down. It's important to me because the language is a part of our identity as Yukon First Nations people."*

**Shayawdustee**

**Äyinzhi Pricilla Dawson ch'e.**

- My name is Pricilla Dawson

**Tlingit k'e Shayawdustee üüye.**

- My Tlingit name is Shayawdustee.

**Kookhitaan ich'e.**

- I am crow clan

## of who I am as a KDFN citizen'

For Shayawdustee Pricilla Dawson, being able to speak Southern Tutchone, the language of her ancestors, is an important part of her identity.

"I see that our language isn't being spoken," she says. "And our Elders who are fluent and really know the language are passing away so quickly. It's really sad to see."

So, Shayawdustee is doing all she can to help the language live on for her children, her students, and for future generations.

This fall, Shayawdustee is headed into her ninth year of teaching. She started off with Kindergarten, but then realized her passion lies in teaching language. So in 2017, when Bertha Moose, the previous language teacher, wanted to retire, Shayawdustee took on the role as a trainee to learn to teach Language and Culture at Takhini Elementary School in Whitehorse.

To strengthen her skills, she enrolled in the First Nations Language Proficiency Certificate Program at the Yukon Native Language Centre. There, she mentored under Elders and peers to learn Southern Tutchone.

Shayawdustee completed her initial course in 2020. She also received recognition of the completion of her certificate from CYFN and SFU, alongside KDFN Elder Louie Smith who received a fluent speaker award, and other Yukon First Nations language speakers. Now, she is on the verge of graduating with her Diploma in First Nations Language Proficiency.

"My ancestors before me, including my grandparents, used to speak more than one language," she says. "I wanted to learn the language because I want to be able to teach it to others, and to use the language at home and in my community."

"It's a vital piece of who I am as a KDFN citizen."

And while Shayawdustee works hard toward completing her coursework, she balances her full-time teaching career, and being "a full-time mom".

It can be challenging, but it also has big benefits.

"At night I listen to Elders' stories and my son listens with me," she says. "My son asks questions, like: 'What's she talking about? What does this mean? What does that mean?' He's genuinely interested in what's going on."

And that gives Shayawdustee a lot of hope for the future of our languages.

"At the end of the day, we need to help create fluent speakers to pass the knowledge down," she says. "It's important to me because the language is a part of our identity as Yukon First Nations people."

*If you would like to explore your education options, please call Kenädän Ku at (867) 633-8422 to book an appointment.*





# What's happening @ YOUTH REC?

## Swimming

In May and June, 6 KDFN youth participated in a Junior Lifeguard swim program, where they learned basic self-safety and lifesaving skills for being around and in the water, and of course had fun along the way! Youth were introduced to first aid skills, practiced their swimming strokes and entries, and rescue skills including ice rescue and self rescue. Since this program, many of these youth have expressed interest in continuing training to become fully certified lifeguards!



## Bike Skills

In June, youth got pumping with our Bike Skills program. They learned how to use the pump track, how to maneuver their bikes around corners, and got to practice on the trails around McIntyre. We are so proud of all the youth who pushed their limits and built the courage to try new skills!

The pump track also got a makeover this summer. The rec department worked in conjunction with the Y2C2 (Yukon Youth Conservation Corps) Green Team to remove weeds, including invasive weeds, and restored some of the bumps and corners.

## Teen Nights!

Teens ages 13 and up had fun at Laser Tag, bowling, swimming at the beach and movie nights.





## Activity Kits

While in-person programming was paused this summer, the rec team got to work creating activity kits for KDFN youth to enjoy with their families. All of our kits were a success, but the beaded key chains and the cake kits were most popular.

Here is a list of all the Activity Kits we sent out:

- Beaded Keychains
- Cake Decorating
- Chocolate Popsicle Kit
- Harvesting / Greens Drop-off
- Haystacks
- Race Challenge
- Scavenger Hunt
- Self-Portrait Kit (Will be put on a mural that will be hung up somewhere in the Multi-Purpose Building)
- Slime
- Summer BINGO
- Salad Wraps

Throughout the summer, we delivered more than 150 kits to KDFN youth all over the Whitehorse area! When we go back to regular programming, we'll keep doing activity kits because they're so much fun.

## What's to come?

Recreation hopes to re-launch in-person programs this fall and winter. Some favourites we're planning to offer are swimming lessons, Mt. Sima skiing and snowboarding, beading and sewing, afterschool programs and indoor rock climbing.

We are excited to see all the youth in-person again!

Keep up with what's happening with Youth Rec on KDFN's Facebook page, by calling or texting 867-332-3060, or on

**[kwanlindun.com](http://kwanlindun.com)**





# Thousands of years later, we're still learning from our ancestors

New research on an ancient dart found in C/TFN and KDFN Traditional Territory shows Yukon First Nation ancestors understood how to use what they found in nature to survive and thrive.

A new study has found beaver castoreum was used in the design and construction of a 6,000-year-old Yukon atlatl throwing dart. The castoreum—an orange sticky substance—was coating the sinews and wood where different parts of the artifact were attached together.

Castoreum is a secretion beavers use to scent-mark their territory. This is the first time it has been found on an ancient hunting tool. Other studies of Yukon ice patch artifacts found a mix of spruce resin, red ochre, and animal fats used in the same way.

This discovery shows that First Nations ancestors were connected to the land, the water, and the animals in our Traditional Territories. They understood how to use the things around them to design complex and ingenious tools.

## WHAT IS AN ATLATL?

An atlatl is an ancient dart that was thrown with a lever-like handle. Atlatls were used by First Nations people in Yukon before the 7th century AD. Bows and arrows replaced atlatls around 847 AD.

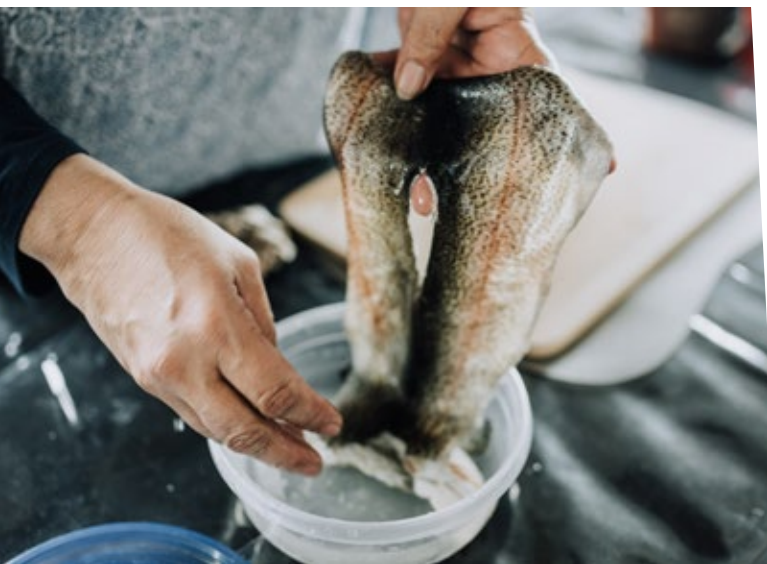
See the full Canadian Conservation Institute study at [kwanlindun.com/dart](http://kwanlindun.com/dart)





## What's up at KDCC? A virtual celebration, 12 working artists and 1,500 pieces of bannock

Over the summer, we've been busy hosting residencies, meetings and events. Here's a snapshot of what we've been up to down at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.



### Virtual Celebration for National Indigenous People's Day

Given the uncertainty of hosting events in June due to COVID-19, we also worked hard to create this year's Virtual Celebration for National Indigenous People's Day.

This year's film featured performances by Ben Charlie and Carl Carpentier, the Rising Sun Singers, Kwanlin Dahalhaan K'e and more! See a video of the celebration on the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre's Facebook page under videos.

We also hosted a Drive by Bannock event, on Friday, June 18th. We passed out over 1,500 pieces of bannock to the community!



#### PHOTOS TOP TO BOTTOM:

Anne Spice (2021 Shakaat Artist-in-Residence) demonstrating traditional hand poke tattooing. Kailen Gingell Photography

Fish Skin Tanning for National Indigenous People's Day 2021. Emeraude Photography and Design

Eric Porter of the Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle, demonstrating the High Kick for National Indigenous People's Day 2021. Emeraude Photography and Design

### Yukon First Nations Arts Student Showcase

From July to September, we hosted the Yukon First Nations Arts Student Showcase, an exhibition featuring the work of five students enrolled in Yukon University's YFN Arts Program.

The program offers courses in traditional Indigenous visual arts and crafts such as beading, carving, tufting, quillwork, and painting. It also gives students the foundation to explore and develop their artistic technique, while encouraging artists to build their careers in traditional arts. Check out our last newsletter for a feature story on the KDFN students who took part in the course.

### Shakaat Artist-in-Residence

From July to the beginning of September, the KDCC hosted our annual Shakaat Artist-in-Residence Program.

Twelve First Nations artists worked out of the KDCC's Culture Cabins for three week residencies. From October to December 2021, the KDCC will host an exhibit featuring this year's Shakaat Artists.

### Looking forward....

In September, the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre is again proud to host an Urban Hide Tanning Camp along the banks of the Chu Ninkwän.

Each day, registered hide tanning students will be working on their hides, sharing stories and sharing knowledge. We welcome visitors to come and spend some time with us and learn about the art of hide tanning.

## KDFN Traditional Territory Moose Surveys in 2021

In November, we will be surveying moose populations in the Whitehorse area, including the Pilot and Flat Mountain areas, Fish Lake, Wheaton Valley, Mount Lorne, and the Mitchie and McClintock areas.

Most of these places have not been surveyed in the past 10 years, but are all important areas to moose hunters.

These are intensive aerial surveys using helicopters and will result in updated population estimates for moose. Results from these surveys will be used in conversations with Yukon government and neighbouring First Nations about sustainable moose management in our territory.

In the early 1980s, moose populations in Whitehorse and surrounding areas declined. This was because of heavy harvesting.

Calls for moose population recovery have been made throughout the years. They were formalized by governments in the Southern Lakes Wildlife Coordinating Committee recommendations of 2012. This committee was an outcome of the KDFN and C/TFN Final Agreements.



# Two new trainees will support KDFN fishery projects

Meet the two new additions to KDFN's Heritage, Lands and Resources Operations team, Kluane Clarke and Errol Ekholm.

As Fishery Technician Trainees, Kluane and Errol will help support KDFN's Takhini River Chinook Salmon Sonar project and other fishery projects. They will also take training to support other KDFN programming.

## Errol Ekholm

My name is Errol Ekholm. I'm a descendant of the Ta'an and Tagish Kwan people and a beneficiary of Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

My great great-grandmother is Maggie Boss, daughter of Mundessa and Klande (Łande) and sister of Chief Jim Boss. My great-grandparents are Agnes Broeren of Laberge and Captain Frank Slim of Marsh Lake, my grandmother is Virginia Lindsay, (nee Slim) parents are Maxine Lindsay and Tim Ekholm. I belong to the Wolf Clan.

Some of my hobbies include playing hockey, fly fishing, and working on my car. I am really enjoying my fisheries technician job and learning all about the salmon and rivers in our Traditional Territory.

## Kluane Clarke

My name is Kluane Clarke. My First Nation name is Udan Cha', which means "kind". This name was gifted to me by May Roberts of Little Salmon Carmacks.

I am Northern Tutchone and a beneficiary of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. My great-grandmother is Jessie Isaac of Selkirk, and my great-grandfather is Solomon Charlie of Aishihik and Chief of Cracker Creek. My grandparents are Meta and Cary Bailie and my parents are Tina Bailie and Tom Clarke. I belong to the Wolf Clan.

I was born and raised in Whitehorse. I grew up in the community and am quite familiar with everyone. I have a huge appreciation for nature and I am stoked to be working as a fisheries technician trainee and to be a part of the Operations team!

# SPIN Surveys

Over the summer KDFN partnered with YG to study lake trout populations in Fish Lake Łu Zil Män. The survey showed comparatively high populations of healthy fish.

In July, KDFN and the Yukon Government counted lake trout in Fish Lake Łu Zil Män using SPIN (Summer Profundal Index Netting), a method that requires fishing with short-duration (2-hour) gill net sets throughout all depths of the lake.

These surveys allow us to track the health of the lake trout population.

Fish Lake was last surveyed with this method in 2012. The ages and lengths of fish caught during the survey will be used to assess the size restrictions in place to protect large spawners.

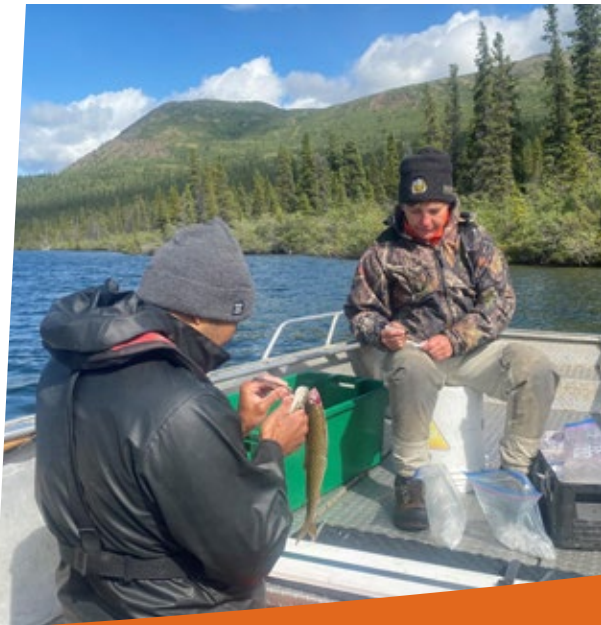
This summer, the number of fish caught per net was fairly high compared to other lakes in Yukon, and the lake trout looked healthy.

We are working with the Northern Contaminants Program to look for any potential contaminants in the fish. A report on the findings should be ready this coming winter.

Fish Lake Łu Zil Män is a critically important area to Kwanlin Dün. It was part of the First Nation's seasonal travels to food sources in what is today the Whitehorse area. Families had camps there. Many would arrive in the summer and stay through the winter. Trout spawned in September, followed by whitefish — Łu Zil Män means "whitefish lake" in Southern Tutchone— in October and November.

After the fish runs, hunters would head into the mountains for sheep, moose and caribou. In the spring, people trapped beaver and muskrat, and grayling spawned in Bonneville Lakes, in the alpine alongside Fish Lake.

RIGHT: Brandy Mayes, KDFN Lands Operation Manager, Lars Jessup, Regional Biologist for Southern Lakes with Yukon and Kenji Tatsumi Yukon Fisheries Technician out on Fish Lake Łu Zil Män conducting SPIN surveys over the summer.



# UPCOMING

**SEPT 30:** National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (also known as Orange Shirt Day)

**OCT:** Women's History Month

**OCT 11:** Thanksgiving

**OCT 21:** Voting Day, City of Whitehorse election for Mayor and Council

**OCT 30:** KDFN General Assembly

**OCT 31:** Halloween

**NOV 11:** Remembrance Day

**NOV 15:** Deadline to apply for post-secondary financial assistance for Winter through Kenādān Ku, House of Learning.

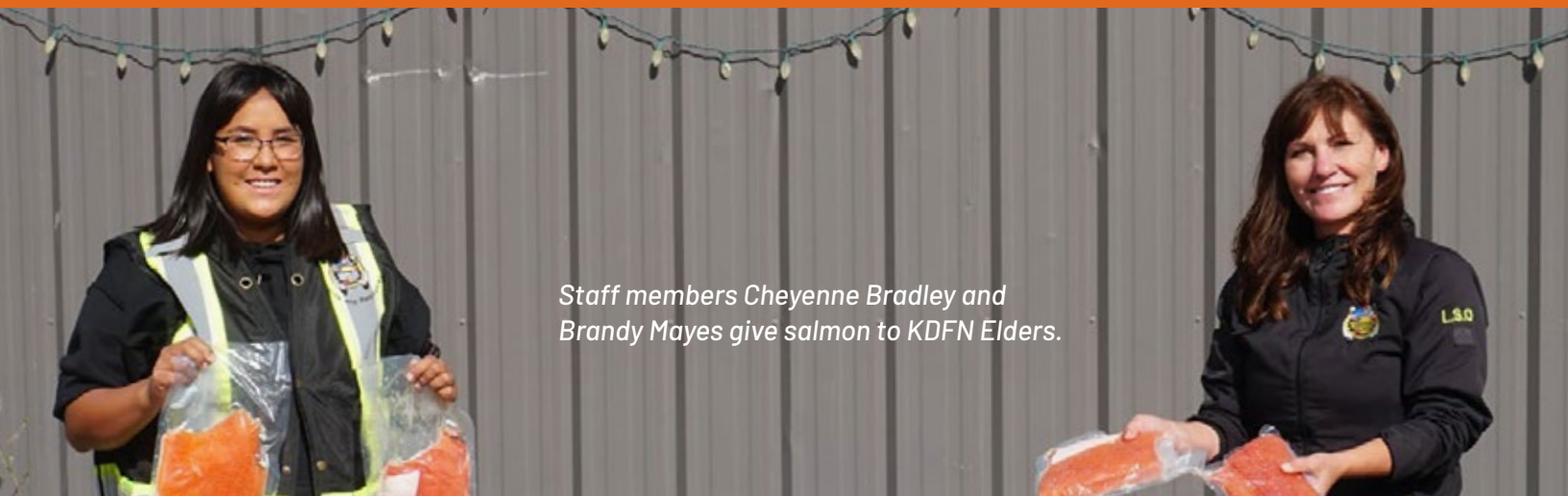
**DEC 6:** National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

**DEC 10:** Human Rights Day

**DEC 17:** Anti-Bullying Day

**DEC 25:** Christmas Day

**DEC 26:** Boxing Day



*Staff members Cheyenne Bradley and Brandy Mayes give salmon to KDFN Elders.*

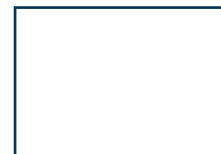
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## DESTINATION ADDRESS