



“Live life to the fullest with no regrets. I came to Coady to expand my knowledge and experience to enhance my skills needed to help my community. I hope to become a more effective, stronger leader.”

Kelly Anderson

Ojibway Lac Seul First Nation

Sioux Lookout, Ontario

I am a very active community member and sit on various community boards and committees. I sit on a provincial board known as Ontario Native Women's Association as treasurer. I am a certified instructor and teach essential employment skills in first aid and CPR, Workplace Hazardous Material Information System, life skills and a few others. I am an activist involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and violence against women.

I am interested in starting up a transition house for our Indigenous people. In my community of Sioux Lookout, Ontario our members have little resources to help them improve their lives upon returning from alcohol and drug treatment centers. To help them improve their lives, I want to help bridge the gap in services by building or sustaining housing for them to live in. I will offer them a place to build their employment skills, education or training, and life skills to become successful individuals.

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“I do hold the hope that one day we can walk together as a strong people and eliminate racism and discrimination towards First Nation people. I think the answer to this begins with our education, and that it will help shape the current negative narrative of our culture into a positive and allied force.”

Mallory Yawnghwe

Cree

Edmonton, Alberta

My name is Mallory Grace Yawnghwe. I’m a Bachelor of Commerce student at MacEwan University studying Supply Chain Management. I’m also a social entrepreneur interested in solving problems and raising awareness in and about First Nations communities and beyond. As a First Nations person from Saddle Lake, Alberta, I believe that by advancing sustainable development and promoting enterprise within Canada’s fastest growing population, we can create a brighter future for all Canadians.

First Nation people know all too well the trauma and crisis in our communities. It’s the dominant narrative. But what if all that misses the rest of the story? What if that narrative misses all the beauty. RedefineRezLife wants to tell those other stories. We want to choose to dwell on what makes us great, and what makes Rez life beautiful. We want to tell everyone the success stories, the funny stories, the happy stories. We want to imagine the possibilities and create the future that we want.

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“I had come to Coady to gain useful tools and skills I can use in my community, to develop an action plan to help revitalize our Mi’kmaw culture and traditions. I hope to gain lifelong friendships from each of the amazing women in the program and learn from one another’s life experiences. We may look at our experiences as something negative, but they are what shaped us into the women we are today.”

A strong and fierce woman leader for our communities!”

Karla Stevens

Mikmaw

Paqtnkek First Nation, Nova Scotia

I am from the Paqtnkek First Nation, and I identify as a Mikmaw woman. I am currently the Community Facilitator for The Responding to and Prevention of Sexual Violence Project - Paqtnkek. This is a collaborative project between the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre and the Paqtnkek First Nation.

I am the mother of two wonderful and amazing daughters (Jada and Gwendolyn) who are the driving force behind the work I do in my community.

I plan to enhance the health and well-being of the male youth in Paqtnkek, giving them a sense of pride about their culture and traditions - knowing more about self-care, milestones, and acknowledging and honouring their life stages, helping increase culturally relevant practices such as healing circles, sweats, trapping, hunting, gathering medicines, and fishing.

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“Don’t let the past take away your future; and miracles happen every day! I applied after taking time off for family and wanted to reconnect to community and support initiatives that make a difference.”

Chantell Quill

Cree/Mohawk/French

Sapotaweyak Cree Nation and Winnipeg, Manitoba

My home communities are Sapotaweyak Cree Nation and Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am Cree, Mohawk and French. I am a proud Kookum and Mother of two amazing Daughters. I am passionate about reclaiming identity and traditions and language. My heart belongs to community and I enjoy giving back while learning and receiving teachings. I have experience in community involvement as a regional representative for the Aboriginal Human Resource Council; Young Indigenous Professionals (YIP), President/Board Member of Payuk Inter-Tribal Co-op and member of the Red River College Students’ Association.

My proposed initiative is to start a family business with my two Daughters which we will name Quillz. We would provide traditional crafts for purchase as well as opportunities to teach crafts and connect with organizations. I’d like to develop a workshop that will assist in strengthening identity and awareness of resources in the city. Supporting social enterprise is important to me and I want to connect with the community while sharing my gifts, knowledge and experience.

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“We, Indigenous women, recognize our inner power & reclaim our rightful place as leaders. When we share our knowledge, we propel ourselves, our families and our communities forward to liberation.”

Danica Denommé

Urban Indigenous & Black Canadian

Vancouver, Salish Coast; Matsqui, Stó:lō territory

Danica is a skilled facilitator with a depth of knowledge in anti-oppression, accessibility, and diversity. Since 2007, she has worked in a variety of leadership and community development roles, most prominently with Abbotsford Community Services. Danica is president of the Parents Association of Anne-Hébert School and co-chair of the Burnaby Art Gallery Advisory Committee. She holds a Certificate in Professional Communications and a Diploma in Social Work from the University of the Fraser Valley.

I am an urban young person, passionate about forming spaces for creative expression and belonging. I am an artist and community organizer. My activism centers on social justice, by dismantling oppression through a decolonizing and re-Indigenizing worldview. My current work is to use my experiences in program and project development & coordination; communications; and popular education to produce multimedia art that interprets the lived experiences and ancestral roots of my people.

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“Coming to Coady was an opportunity to embark on an adventure of love, acceptance and leadership.”

Jasmine LaBillois

Mi’kmaq

Eel River Bar First Nation, New Brunswick

Working with and on behalf of Indigenous youth has been my focus and passion from a very young age. My drive for change has granted me the opportunity to advocate in support of the expectations and realities of Aboriginal youth across Canada. My advocacy emerged from community-based work and has expanded with my position in the Mi’kmaq Maliseet Atlantic Youth Council. My regional delegation has enabled me to take my journey to the national level and champion for youth within the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council.

Inspiring Indigenous youth to have self-determination in all levels of life is something I strive for. My enthusiasm comes from youth empowerment. I want to engage my community in a meaningful way.

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“I believe that art can help transform the world in a peaceful way. We all have gifts; let’s find them, heal and share with our community.”

Jasmine Tara

Indigenous, Cree, Saulteaux

Winnipeg, Manitoba

My name is Jasmine Tara. I live in Winnipeg, Manitoba with my seven year old daughter, Amellie. We live in West Broadway and I sit on the WBCO Board of Directors. I graduated from Creative Communications in 2011 with a major in public relations. I work in food security in Winnipeg’s North End. I’ve been doing this community work for over four years now. I teach cooking classes, run a farmers market and work on food policy in our city. My passions include fashion, writing, photography and art.

My project will focus on photography and stories. Winnipeg was named the most racist city in Canada - we have lots of work to do. Sexism is also prevalent so I’d like to focus on those affected by everyday racism and sexism.

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“The Creator has blessed us with the gift of opportunity. Welcome it, embrace it and it will become great!”

Patricia Thomson

Cree/Saulteaux

Carry The Kettle First Nations, Saskatchewan

I am a mother, grandmother and a leader from Carry The Kettle First Nation. I have a profound respect for my cultural upbringing and spirituality. I prioritize and foster relationships that build trust and understanding amongst partners. I have extensive knowledge and background in the areas of program development, management and implementation in the delivery of services to First Nations and Métis people. I have served and continue to serve on numerous boards locally, regionally and nationally.

I am getting ready for another stage in my life. I want to understand my role and become a better person and educator as a result.

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“I strive each day to impact one person to live the best life possible. To encourage everyone to do this with another person makes my spirit soar with joy! I know IWCL at Coady will help me on this quest.”

Kitty R. Lynn Lickers

Bearfoot Onondaga of Six Nations of the Grand River Territory

Hagersville, Six Nations Reserve 40, Ontario

Working as a greenhouse grower and educator at Our Sustenance food program appeals to the lover of magic in me. I am able to grow food, herbs, medicines, help people grow, and grow our community to become a caring wonderful place for the generations to come. Working with other programs enables me to share my passion for being sustainable as a strong Haudenosaunee community. I encourage all of the youth and various groups to interact with the magic of growing their own food as medicine. Niaweh.

Food is our medicine and the key to our sovereignty. These are important pieces of who I am and that I need to share. I want to encourage our children to recognize the importance of being self sustainable in regard to their food, in a fun and informative way. Encouraging intergenerational communication about who we are in relation to our food will provide an opportunity for health and wellness for the entire community. Utilizing our languages to express concepts about food completes the circle.

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“This program is both a gift and an honour. The facilitators are amazing but what I didn’t expect was how impactful my time listening and learning from my fellow Indigenous women would be. Hiy Hiy.”

Angela Ferguson

Métis

Edmonton, Alberta

At the age of 18, I started at the University of Alberta pursuing a Bachelor of Native Studies degree. At the time a few comments were made to earn a “real degree”. But my response was always the same: “I don’t know what the job is but all I know is that I want to work with and for my people and I’ll be happy for the rest of my life”. I have been able to realize this goal in both my government and private sector career. I completed my MBA and am unwavering in my love of working with my people.

There is a very large young urban Aboriginal population in Edmonton. While there are many amazing programs and services that include cultural programming, I see a gap in the transition for our young people as they journey from high school completion into either the workforce or higher education. I would like to design and deliver a financial literacy program that prepares them as they move into adulthood. I see this as an integral skill set for our youth along with the opportunity to mentor.

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“I came to Coady to be exposed to strong Indigenous women; to better understand challenges and opportunities faced by other First Nation communities; and to inspire my community to strive for leadership within themselves.”

Rae Mombourquette

Tlingit

Kwanlin Dün, Whitehorse, Yukon

A Tlingit member of an urban self-governing Nation, I feel passionate about organizational accountability to ensure continued access to collective territories and traditions for future generations. *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* outlines the imperative for Yukon Indigenous peoples to have meaningful and continuous access to their traditional territories and traditional ways of life. This is a motivator for my commitment to continued community involvement.

Working for eight years in the heritage sector has granted me access to the incredibly rich and diverse cultures and histories of my Nation. Our ways of life have been threatened by colonization and in many respects we have lost our identity and connection to each other, to our landscape and our traditions. My project will be centred around cultivating cultural “revive-alization” of language, arts, expression and the coming together of the many rather than the few.

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“It’s all about decolonization and reclaiming our Indigenous culture, history and traditions. I came to Coady to strengthen my voice, learn from other Indigenous women and develop my leadership skills to better support my community.”

Nicole Lamy

*Member of the O-Chi-Cha-Ko-Sipi First Nation and of Métis Ancestry
Winnipeg, Manitoba*

I grew up in Winnipeg’s north end and completed a B.A at the University of Winnipeg in Urban and Inner City Studies on Selkirk Avenue. I have always had a passion for community development, Indigenous rights and food security issues. As a Northern and Indigenous Liaison at Food Matters Manitoba, I get to build relationships with communities in Manitoba and connect through a variety of food projects. These projects work towards decolonization and reclaiming our Indigenous identity through food.

I will be finding out the food story of a northern community by completing the Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool (FSAT). This process will create a dialogue about the current food system to create a better understanding of the local economy, social and cultural aspects of the food and consumption occurring in the community. I hope to encourage the passing on of traditional knowledge to the younger generations and the importance of having traditional foods in our diets.



“I have lived many lives, had many names and faces. So by the time you read this I will have already changed. And to the purest essence of my being that is why I came - for change.”

Jade Willoughby

Black Indigenous Multi Racial Person of Color

Whitesand First Nation - Ojibwe Territory

I am merely a footprint in the continuation of a timeless journey. Ultimately one day my memory will fade and my face will be forgotten but the legacy of change I wish to become will remain. I walk a fine line between multiple worlds and with that comes a degree of comfort in the unknown. Since birth I have been driven by an invisible fragment. That I have come to trust more and more in the correctness of my decisions as such love-based decisions are at all times in alignment with the whole.

I desire to feed the beauty of our people: I am in a position through my personal endeavours, where the eyes are on me. I wish to change the reflection and provide opportunities for awakening consciousness of the self and our world around us, to encourage the positive developments and nurture the negative ones to utilize them all as a power source. I hope to share my understanding of the world as I know it through my lived and shared experiences.

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“This has been the most amazing inspirational leadership program I have ever experienced. I believe there is a reason for everything and that we were all meant to cross paths to support one another in our journey’s in being successful indigenous woman leaders for our communities. I am beyond grateful to have such a supportive family who is taking care of my baby boy so I can be here and focus on my learning. All my relations.”

Samantha Lewis

Mi’kmaq

Lennox Island First Nation, Prince Edward Island

My name is Samantha Lewis. I am the mother of my amazing two-year old Wowkwis Lewis. We are from Lennox Island First Nation, Prince Edward Island. I’m very passionate about preserving cultural knowledge through drumming, singing and native dancing.

I work with Aboriginal women in PEI, providing leadership and guidance in areas of social, economic and political aspects. Aboriginal Women’s Association of PEI (AWAPEI) provides supporting programs like capacity building, focus groups, prevention and awareness. These programs have not only helped me but have taught me how to help others. My most recent project is called “Women Helping Women”, which has given me the opportunity to reach out to my community and province to assist in identifying the barriers to employment, education and training.

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“The quote I have chosen is the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia Nationhood Proclamation because I often see that there is imbalance between the treaty partners. I hope to encourage others to recognize the importance of the Mi’kmaq government in honour of our ancestors. *‘Two hundred and fifty years ago the Mi’kmaq signed the Treaty of 1752. This is one within the Covenant Chain of Treaties signed between the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia and the Crown from 1725 to 1761. We recognize and affirm that our Treaties are made Nation to Nation by their respective governments. The chiefs of Nova Scotia hereby come together to proclaim and assert Nationhood of the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia over our traditional lands and waters. We the Chiefs and Councils of Nova Scotia, as the elected representatives of the Mi’kmaq, agree to work together to develop a Mi’kmaw governance structure that unites and empowers our Nation to enhance the quality of life and well-being of our people.’*”

Tamara Cremo

Mi’kmaq

We’koqma’q First Nation

Kwe’ my name is Tamara Cremo. I am the proud daughter of Karen and John “Tiny” Cremo. I was selected as an honorary youth witness at the Halifax National Event of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Together with other students, I helped produced the video “Our Legacy, Our Hope,” a documentary bearing witness to the intergenerational effects of Canada’s residential schools and was able to present it to the United Nations in New York and other universities around Canada. I am a strong believer in defending my language and culture.

I am also part of the planning for the Feathers of Hope national forum, it is an action plan that is helping youth to realize they can use their voices and leadership skills in their communities to help create real change. X-Project is the oldest society at StFX and it is based on helping students who are having difficulty with their homework and giving them a place where they can have activities and learning workshops. I am also the X-Project Student Branch Executive and it is what I will be doing as part of my IWCL development project plan. I will be helping students who need help in school work and have cultural activities, outside learning history, story-telling of the community and the teachings of mother earth. I will be bringing together elders and youth to pass the important teachings down to the youths.

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“I am honoured to join these amazing women in this journey and opportunity for learning. I’m excited for all of the new skills and knowledge that I’ll be able to take home and apply in my community.”

Aimee Johnson

Anishinaabe

Bkejwanong Territory, Walpole Island First Nation, Ontario

Boozhoo! I am a member of the Walpole Island First Nation and have had the privilege of working for my community for many years now in the fields of environmental advocacy, youth programming, community-based research, intergovernmental relations, communications, governance and now comprehensive community planning. I am passionate about bringing my community together to identify a vision for a healthy community and a road map for achieving that vision.

My project will engage the youth of my community in planning using a grassroots approach that uses the concepts of asset-based community driven development and comprehensive community planning. I will be facilitating focus groups with youth to design a framework for broadly engaging youth in the planning process and then actively engage as many youth as possible to begin defining a holistic community vision and plan that everybody will contribute to.

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