

# STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SERVICE INSTITUTIONS INITIATIVE

A collaboration between the FNPSS & BCFC

# YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

June 2020 to June 2021

A collaboration between  
the First Nations Public Service Secretariat  
and the BC Federal Council



First Nations  
Summit



FIRST NATIONS  
PUBLIC SERVICE SECRETARIAT  
Courage to Excel



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We would like to thank Kayla Uren, who is Skwxwú7mesh and currently works at PSPC, for her work and design on the cover. Photos in this report came from several sources. IILP interns provided their headshots. The report also includes informal photos taken at various BCFC / FNPSS events.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## - YEAR TWO IN REVIEW JUNE 2020 TO JUNE 2021

It has been two years since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by the British Columbia Federal Council (BCFC), the First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS), and the First Nations Summit (FNS) in support of the Strengthening Public Service Institutions Initiative (Initiative), and there is great work to recognize and growing relationships to celebrate.

Despite the countless challenges of the past year, activities adapted and efforts pivoted under the Initiative to meet the needs of the ever-changing environment in which we live and work as public servants – in both the Government of Canada (GC) and First Nations contexts.

It is within these contexts that we share the Initiative's accomplishments and highlight the importance of the Initiative – that of reciprocal learning. In Year Two of the Initiative, GC public servants learned more about First Nations Peoples in British Columbia (BC) (including their histories, cultures, traditions, languages, and governance). Conversely, BC First Nations built their knowledge and skills, plus gained practical experience, through participating in the Initiative's collaborative events and opportunities.

The most significant work undertaken over the year was to launch FNPSS-BCFC support for GC participation in the two-year **Indigenous Intern Leadership Program** (IILP), a collaboration between the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the Business Council of BC (BCBC), and Vancouver Island University (VIU). Based on lessons learned from past internship programs and feedback from First Nations, a comprehensive support framework was developed for the first GC cohort of host departments and interns who were recent graduates from one of BC's 25 post-secondary institutions. As of June 2021, the GC welcomed 10 interns into five departments and agencies. An important component added to the IILP experience, to reflect the larger objectives of the Initiative, was the inclusion of an external placement in a First Nations community or Indigenous organization in year two. Our approach to welcoming and supporting recent graduates received interest across Canada, due in part to the participation of Regional Chief Terry Teegee and Deputy Minister Gina Wilson at our first of two GC-wide orientations. Within the pages of this report, we are proud to introduce you to these interns and future leaders.



**Brena Robinson**

Lyackson First Nation and Internship Coordinator, SPSII

*"The IILP is a good example to show that the federal government is willing to do things differently. Through the IILP, we are building relationships, not only with the interns, but also with their families, networks, and communities."*

Another new initiative that received GC-wide interest was the launch of our **Reverse Town Halls**. This was an opportunity for First Nations to share their knowledge, priorities, and realities with GC public servants. One benefit of the virtual environment was that GC public servants outside of the BC Region were able to attend, which resulted in almost 1,400 GC public servants from 52 departments and agencies participating.

One of the successes with the farthest reach may be the strengthened communications between First Nations and GC representatives in BC, as a direct result of the relationships and awareness built through the Initiative. FNPSS and GC departments worked closely to host informational webinars and to share high-priority information through FNPSS' channels and networks. With the pandemic going through its second and third waves, keeping the FNPSS **COVID-19 website hub** current and updating existing / creating new "COVID-19 At A Glance" communication tools that summarized supports for BC First Nations continued to be priorities and resulted in over 4,600 website views.

None of this great work would have been possible without the financial and in-kind contributions of the GC signatories to the MOU, the FNS, and FNPSS. The MOU Team was able to welcome two additional full-time employees, one on interchange with FNPSS and the other within the BCFC Secretariat dedicated to supporting the ILLP interns. It is also important to recognize the many public servants from both First Nations and the GC who worked on committees, volunteered at virtual events, and participated in micro-missions.

The activities and accomplishments achieved through the Initiative in Year Two continue to demonstrate an innovative and agile approach for the GC and BC First Nations to collaboratively strengthen their respective public services, and through these efforts, contribute to the important work of Nation Building and reconciliation.



*"This Initiative and the MOU are the best examples of meaningful collaboration and authentic co-development that exist between the Government of Canada and BC First Nations that I have personally witnessed."*

Jehan Casey, Director, FNPSS

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – A Year Two Summary of Accomplishments

- **1,813** GC public servants in **52** departments built their knowledge of First Nations, deepened their understanding of our shared history, and strengthened their cultural competencies through involvement as participants, volunteers, and speakers
- **1,873** First Nations representatives strengthened their administration skills and increased their knowledge through involvement as participants, volunteers, and speakers
- **10** interns were hired by **5** GC departments and agencies as a result of launching FNPSS-BCFC support to GC participation in the BCAFN-BCBC-VIU Indigenous Intern Leadership Program (IILP)
- Over **1,900** participants attended the first **2** Reverse Town Halls on the subjects of “How Best to Engage and Consult with First Nations during COVID-19” and “First Nations Youth – Bridging the Gap between Community and Opportunity”, of which almost **1,400** were GC public servants from **52** departments and agencies
- **68** participants, most of whom represented First Nations communities / organizations and the GC, took part in the second “Collaborative Learning Day”, with **15** speakers and **10** sessions held over 2 days
- **2** new “COVID-19 At A Glance” communication tools were developed, and all 7 tools were continuously updated, involving over **30** GC departments / agencies, First Nations organizations and Provincial / external partners; the FNPSS COVID-19 website hub received over **4,600** views with multiple GC departments and agencies regularly contributing and posting up-to-date information
- **40** First Nations representatives responded to a survey on the development concept of a “BC First Nations Guide to GC Programs and Services – A Navigation Tool”, and a resulting framework and example sector tool was drafted for further review

Medicine pouches made by IILP interns at the first cultural event held in June 2021.



For more information on the Initiative, please contact the BCFC Secretariat ([bcfc.secretariat@pacifican.gc.ca](mailto:bcfc.secretariat@pacifican.gc.ca)) or FNPSS ([info@fnps.ca](mailto:info@fnps.ca)).

# BACKGROUND ON THE INITIATIVE

## The Context for Collaboration

First Nations leadership in British Columbia (BC) has consistently identified strengthening the First Nations public service as a top priority. It is widely recognized that building this capacity is essential for successfully closing the socio-economic gap between First Nations and other Canadians in order for First Nations to take on the full scope of self-government and self-determination.

Concurrently, the Government of Canada (GC) is committed to advancing reconciliation and renewing its relationship with Indigenous Peoples. This commitment is based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership, guided by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the *Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action*, in particular #57, which calls on governments to educate public servants on our shared history, anti-racism, and UNDRIP while building their cultural competencies.

## Strengthening Public Service Institutions Initiative

In 2018, the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) in BC endorsed a strategy jointly developed by the First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS) and the Indigenous Interests and Issues Committee (IIIC), a sub-committee of the BC Federal Council (BCFC): the **Strengthening Public Service Institutions Initiative** (Initiative).

The Initiative is based on the principle of **‘reciprocal learning’**, with the dual objective of achieving increased experience and knowledge within First Nations administrations and improved Indigenous awareness and understanding within the GC public service.



MOU Signing, FNPSS team members

## Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) was signed June 4, 2019, between the First Nations Summit Society (FNS), FNPSS, and the BCFC to formalize the Initiative. With the Chair of the BCFC as the primary signatory on behalf of the GC, and an additional 17 GC departments and agencies signing annexes of support, the MOU represents an innovative, cross-government approach to collaboratively enhancing public service capacity development for BC First Nations and GC public servants. A work plan was co-developed for the Initiative, based on three pillars:

### **Training and Education:**

To provide mutually beneficial opportunities for knowledge transfer, training, and capacity building for BC First Nations and the GC

**Employment:** To encourage porous employment opportunities and 'learning through doing' for BC First Nations and the GC

### **Communications and Coordination:**

To support enhanced communications between BC First Nations and the GC

# SIGNATORIES TO THE **MOU**



**First Nations Summit Society**

**First Nations Public Service Secretariat**

**British Columbia Federal Council, including 17 GC departments and agencies:**

- Canada Coast Guard
- Canada Revenue Agency
- Canada School of Public Service
- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Indigenous Services Canada
- Department of Justice
- Natural Resources Canada
- Parks Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Public Service Commission
- Public Services and Procurement Canada
- Service Canada
- Statistics Canada
- Transport Canada
- Western Economic Diversification<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In August 2021, the GC announced Pacific Economic Development Canada as the new federal regional economic development agency dedicated to serving BC.

## Initiative Partners

**First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS)** – The FNPSS is mandated by the BC First Nations leadership to provide capacity support to First Nations communities and organizations in BC and to facilitate intergovernmental coordination.

**First Nations Summit Society (FNS)** – The FNS provides a forum for First Nations in BC to address issues related to Treaty negotiations and other issues of common concern.

**First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC)** – The FNLC is comprised of the political executives of the **BC Assembly of First Nations**, the FNS, and the **Union of BC Indian Chiefs**. This group works together to develop coordinated approaches to issues relevant to First Nations communities in BC.

**British Columbia Federal Council (BCFC)** – The BCFC is comprised of senior GC officials representing approximately 45 GC departments, agencies, and organizations that are responsible for programs and activities in BC. It provides a mechanism for whole-of-government coordination.

**Indigenous Interests and Issues Committee (IIIC)** – The IIIC is a sub-committee of the BCFC which provides for a whole-of-government approach to reconciliation and renewed relationships with Indigenous Peoples in BC.



Remembering Caroline Caza, Regional Director General, Environment and Climate Change Canada at the 2019 MOU Signing

# Financial and In-kind Contributions

Deep appreciation goes to the following GC departments and agencies that financially contributed salary, operating, and/or grants and contribution dollars in 2020/2021.

## Department / Agency

British Columbia Federal Council (BCFC) Secretariat	\$45,400
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)	\$45,000
Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)	\$10,000
Transport Canada	\$40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$140,400</b>

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): Instrumental to the success of Year Two was CRA's commitment to support one full-time CRA employee to act as the IILP Coordinator.

Service Canada: It is important to recognize the role Service Canada played in Year Two to underwrite salary needs until other GC departments and agencies were able to secure and contribute funds.

Note: In November 2020, it was decided to use surplus BCFC Secretariat funds towards salary, which were available due to the onset of the pandemic and restrictions on all travel and in-person events.

FNPS and the FNS also provided many services and in-kind contributions without which the Initiative would not exist. Contributions included, but were not limited to, providing management and administrative support, hosting webinars, providing virtual platforms, logistics and planning, offering technical Zoom support, and facilitating cultural support, including the invitation of Elders.

Finally, we raise our hands in gratitude to the following GC departments and agencies for their generous support of micro-mission positions that contributed to many Year Two activities: Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC), Service Canada, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and CRA.

# Thank You



## **Catherine Lappe,**

Executive Champion of the Initiative, December 2019 to April 2020, and previous Regional Director General of Indigenous Services Canada, BC Region

*- Thank you, Catherine, for your unwavering support as the Initiative's Executive Champion during an incredibly demanding year, and congratulations on your important post as Assistant Deputy Minister of Family and Child Services at ISC.*



## **Howard Grant,**

Executive Director, First Nations Summit

*- We raise our hands to you, Howard, for your vision and perseverance to realize this collaboration and its MOU; we would not be where we are without you.*



## **Kliiaht'ah / Nadine Spence,**

IIIC Co-Chair and Executive Director Operations, British Columbia and Yukon, Parks Canada

*- Welcome, Nadine, and thank you for stepping up as the new IIIC Co-Chair. We speak on behalf of everyone to say we are looking forward to working with you in the coming years.*



# PUBLIC SERVICE TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Reciprocal learning and collaboration are at the heart of the Initiative. Beyond activities tied specifically to the MOU, FNPSS supports First Nation public service capacity building through learning events, including webinars, workshops, and mentorship networks. As a result of the strong relationships built between FNPSS and the GC, GC public servants have supported many of those events as expert speakers and advisors, and have participated as learners. Capacity building of public servants is the objective, and in this regard, success is reflected in the numbers:

**1,813 GC public servants** had the opportunity to learn more about First Nations and build their cultural competencies through volunteering, participating in joint committee work, and attending and/or presenting at virtual webinars

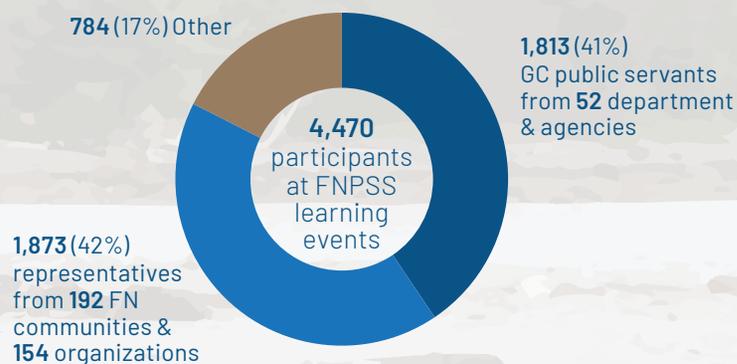
**1,873 First Nations** representatives strengthened their skills and awareness through participating in and/or contributing to learning events as volunteers, committee members, and presenters

## BY THE NUMBERS

### - Impact Beyond the Initiative

Beyond the specific activities organized through the BCFC-FNPSS collaboration, First Nations representatives, GC public servants, and others were involved in **43** FNPSS learning events with an extended reach of **2,777** YouTube views.<sup>2</sup>

- **4,470** participants attended FNPSS events
  - **1,813** GC public servants (41%) from **52** departments and agencies
  - **1,873** representatives (42%) from **192** First Nations communities and **154** First Nations organizations and Tribal Councils / affiliates
    - **1,371** from First Nations communities
    - **502** from First Nations organizations, Tribal Councils, and affiliates
  - **784** participants (17%) from provincial, local government, educational, and other organizations
- **175** volunteered as speakers, panelists, moderators, event supporters, and work group members
  - **72** First Nations volunteers
  - **68** GC volunteers
  - **35** volunteers from other organizations



*"The opportunity for Employment and Social Development Canada's Labour Program to work with the BCFC Secretariat and FNPSS has been instrumental in building and supporting relationships with BC First Nations."*

Melissa Morden,  
Senior Investigator, Labour Program

<sup>2</sup> The number of YouTube views is as of November 2021.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

PILLAR |

Highlights of Year Two include organizing our second “Collaborative Learning Day” and launching our first Reverse Town Hall with record-breaking registration.

### Collaborative Learning Day

In response to its huge success in 2018, the GC and FNPSS held their second “Collaborative Learning Day” virtually in June 2021 to bring together First Nations and GC human resource practitioners, managers, and band administrators. With a theme of ‘human resources and preparing for the future’, participants, presenters, and volunteers alike were able to gain valuable skills in a highly relevant area of public administration as well as build stronger relationships and networks.

Highlights included the engaging Day One Panel “Human Resources: Current Realities and Charting A Path Forward” and our inspiring Closing Keynote Speaker, Dr. Leroy Little Bear. We were also pleased to offer the much sought-after “Courageous Conversations” workshop (delivered by the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS)).

This virtual event was recorded and those recordings, along with all the presentation materials, can be found at [fnps.ca](https://fnps.ca).



IILP intern employed at ISC, Chris Cardinal, Saddle Lake Cree Nation at Tsuu T'ina Pow Wow.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – Collaborative Learning Day

- **68** participants
  - **40** representatives (59%) from **27** First Nations communities and **5** First Nations organizations and Tribal Councils / affiliates
  - **20** GC public servants (29%) from **11** departments and agencies
  - **8** representatives (12%) from educational and other organizations
- **10** sessions and key notes held over 2 days
- A further reach of **127** YouTube views (as of November 2021)

#### **We want to thank the following speakers from First Nations and GC public administrations for sharing their knowledge and expertise:**

- Leona Baptiste, Osoyoos Indian Band
- Dr. Leroy Little Bear, Blood Indian Reserve and University of Lethbridge
- Liam Campbell, Service Canada
- Qwuyumaat (Eyvette) Elliott, Cowichan Tribes and Ever Plan
- Siobhan Hutchinson, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)
- Scott McCann, Harris & Co
- Melissa Morden, ESDC
- Kelly Parkin, ESDC
- Elder Francois Prince, Nak'azdli Whut'en
- Jeanette Proulx, CSPS
- Melanie Samuels, Singleton Urquhart Reynolds Vogel LLP

- Scott Siemens, Federal Interdepartmental Conflict Management Practitioner
- Joshua Sutherland, Harris & Co
- Jennifer Wiegele, Mathews Dinsdale & Clark LLP
- Sunny Wong, CRA

#### **We would like to acknowledge and thank the First Nation-GC Advisory and Planning Team:**

- Mary Ann Androlick, Upper Nicola Indian Band
- Cathy Murphy, Fort Nelson First Nation
- Elsa Doxtator-Jansson, PSPC
- Madeline Kwun, CRA
- Emily Peden, Public Service Commission
- Larry Shuter, CRA
- Kayla Uren, PSPC
- Amory Adrian, FNPSS
- Colette Anderson, BCFC Secretariat

## Reverse Town Halls

In response to First Nations’ interest to share information with the GC and the GC’s desire to learn directly from First Nations in communities, the first Reverse Town Hall was launched in Year Two of the Initiative with such huge success<sup>3</sup> that a new activity under the MOU was born. Given the virtual work environment, participants were able to join from across Canada.

Reverse Town Halls held in Year Two:

1. “How Best to Engage and Consult with First Nations during COVID-19” was held on January 28, 2021 (**1,341** participants and **1,089** YouTube views)
2. “First Nations Youth – Bridging the Gap between Community and Opportunity” was held on March 25, 2021 (**616** participants and **128** YouTube views)

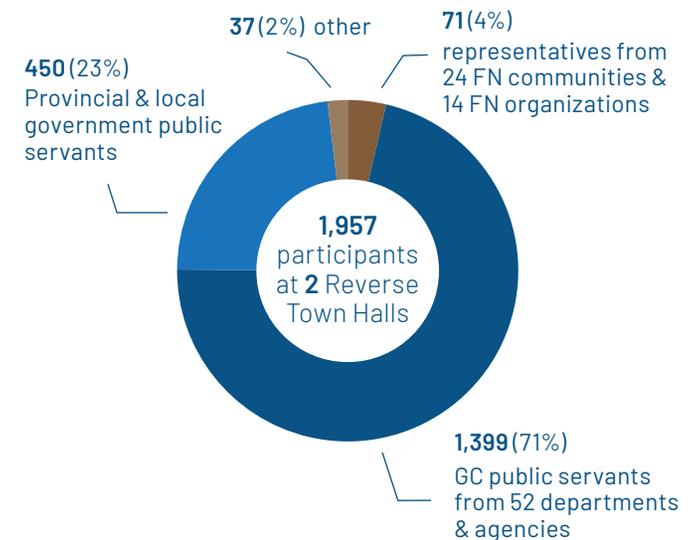
**The GC hosts ‘Town Halls’ regularly, where GC public servants share new program and funding information with First Nations. A ‘Reverse Town Hall’ flips the event around, where First Nations share invaluable insights, context, and stories with GC public servants.**

*“Really enjoying this Reverse Town Hall – a marvelous initiative that will build important bridges of understanding.”*

*“Thank you for hard reminders of what has not gone well in the past and the inspiration to work our hardest to do better.”*

*“Thank you all. I especially enjoyed Chief Derickson’s presentation, speaking to the things people say / ask. It reinforced my naivety and my need to help educate people.”*

- Participants



<sup>3</sup>Following the first Reverse Town Hall, over 200 participants completed a survey, with over 90% reporting that the event ‘mostly’ or ‘completely’ met expectations.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – Reverse Town Halls

- **1,957** participants
  - **71** representatives (4%) from **24** First Nations communities and **14** First Nations organizations and Tribal Councils / affiliates
  - **1,399** GC public servants (71%) from **52** departments and agencies
  - **450** provincial and local government public servants (23%)
  - **37** representatives from educational institutions and other organizations (2%)
- A further reach of **1,217** YouTube views

We would like to thank the following speakers from both First Nations and GC public administrations for sharing their knowledge and expertise:

- Shoshoni Andrew, Ogimaa'biindige (traditional name), Ojibwe and Secwépemc, Negotiations Analyst, CIRNAC
- Dylan Daniels, member of the Eagle Clan and House of Ska Yan in Gitwangak, Community Health Liaison, Gitwangak Health Authority
- Chief Christopher Derickson, Westbank First Nation
- Councillor Howard Grant, Musqueam Indian Band and Executive Director, FNS
- Councillor Brian Holmes, Upper Nicola Band, Okanagan Nation
- Karista Olson, Gitxsan and Dakelh from the community of Sik-E-Dakh, and Senior Community Developer, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Collette Sunday, Band Administrator, Upper Nicola Band, Okanagan Nation

*“Thank you so much for sharing today. I really appreciate these insights. I can’t wait to attend future sessions providing guidance. I especially valued the encouragement to work directly with First Nations on briefings!”*

– Participant





## EMPLOYMENT

One of the visions for Pillar II was to develop an exchange between the GC and First Nations, but the progress made on these efforts in Year One of the Initiative came to an abrupt halt due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In its place, the decision was made to launch FNPSS-BCFC support of GC participation in the **Indigenous Intern Leadership Program** (IILP), which was included as an activity under the Initiative's **Work Plan** (approved by the FNLC and the BCFC in 2020). The first 12 months have proven to be overwhelmingly successful, capturing GC interest across Canada.

### Support for GC Participation in the Indigenous Intern Leadership Program

In the first year of the GC's participation in the IILP, the GC welcomed 10 recent graduates and future leaders into five different departments and agencies.

Working in close collaboration with FNPSS, the role of the new Internship Coordinator, based in the BCFC Secretariat, is to support both the interns and their managers with the hiring process and throughout the two-year internship. Supports include regular check-ins, cultural and learning events, as well as facilitated Indigenous connections through the new Cousins Initiative and the Mentorship Program offered by the Aboriginal Centre of Expertise at the Public Service Commission.

Our first orientation was held in December 2020, and among the 12 special guests and four Indigenous and BCFC Community of Practice networks participating, we were honoured to welcome the BCAFN

**Background on IILP:** The IILP was created through a collaboration between the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the Business Council of BC (BCBC), and Vancouver Island University (VIU).<sup>4</sup> The IILP matches employers in BC with recent graduates, who self-identify as Indigenous, from 25 BC post-secondary institutions. VIU administers the two-year paid work placement, allowing for a rich experience that builds professional capacity and networks, and increases skills and knowledge for all.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee and Gina Wilson, Deputy Minister Champion for Indigenous Federal Employees, Deputy Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Youth, and Senior Associate Deputy Minister, Canadian Heritage.

To meet the objectives of the larger Initiative, it was decided that interns would spend a period of three to six months on an external placement with a First Nations community or an Indigenous organization, with their salary supported by the host GC department. This placement will provide interns with valuable experience and also an opportunity for 'reciprocal learning' by both the placement host and the GC. FNPSS and the BCFC Secretariat began preparations to place the first intern in the fall of 2021.

<sup>4</sup> The Initiative chose to support GC participation in an existing internship program in a comprehensive, coordinated manner, based on lessons learned, rather than re-creating a new internship program and creating unnecessary duplication.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – Indigenous Intern Leadership Program

- **10** interns hired
- **5** GC host departments and agencies participated
- **2** GC-wide orientations held across 4 days
- **41** presentations and meetings facilitated with **19** GC departments and agencies
- **10** public servants participated as peer supports in the new Cousins Initiative
- **3** cultural and learning events organized
- **22** bi-weekly meetings with interns held
- **27** guest speakers hosted, including Elders, BCFC Communities of Interest representatives, VIU representatives, FNPSS staff, and special guests

*“The IILP has been instrumental in starting interns on a path of professional development and full-time employment. The Government of Canada has been a strong partner on this journey, and we look forward to strengthening this partnership as the program evolves and grows.”*

Patrick Brennan, Manager, IILP



Regional Chief Terry Teegee, a member of Takla Lake First Nation, was first elected BCFN Regional Chief in October 2017 and carries the responsibilities of the hereditary name of Maxweeum Tsimghee.



Gina Wilson, Deputy Minister Champion for Indigenous Federal Employees, Deputy Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Senior Associate Deputy Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Youth, Canadian Heritage.

# MEET THE INTERNS!

## Indigenous Intern Leadership Program

A collaboration between the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), the Business Council of BC (BCBC), and Vancouver Island University (VIU).

*"Working collaboratively with the team from the IILP Champions Table and FNPSS has been such a gift. They ground me every day in the work that I do. This is why the federal participation in the IILP is so important and why it is so successful!"*

-Brena Robinson,  
Internship Coordinator, SPSII



**Joy  
William**

Indigenous Intern  
Wet'suwet'en First Nation  
Transport Canada

*"It is important for the government to continue to hire Indigenous workers because of the insight and understanding that they provide. Building better relationships with Indigenous partners will provide a greater path forward."*



**Shayla  
Sopracolle-Tate**

Indigenous Intern  
Métis Nation, Department of  
Fisheries and Oceans

*"Through the IILP program, I have built an incredible support system that has helped me overcome adversity, explore my Métis culture and make me proud of who I am and where I come from."*





**Chris  
Cardinal**

Indigenous Intern  
Saddle Lake Cree Nation  
Indigenous Services Canada

*"Tansi! In the spirit of advancing reconciliation, I am grateful to be part of a program that places value on cultural vibrancy and nurtures professional resilience. IILP provides numerous resources and opportunities for us to learn, grow, network, and thrive together. Moving forward, I hope to share my story and experiences with up-and-coming interns. This is a way of giving back to the Aboriginal community in acknowledgement of the confidence and support invested in me by the amazing folks working with and for IILP. Hiy hiy!"*



**Sarah  
Westbury**

Indigenous Intern  
Michel First Nation / Enoch  
Cree Nation in Treaty 6, Western  
Economic Diversification

*"Through the IILP and working in the public service, I have realized there are a lot of people in the public service who truly care about reconciliation and building positive relationships with Indigenous people. It is important that we continue on this journey and continue to run programs like the IILP that bring Indigenous perspective into government and decision-making processes."*



**Madelaine  
Fisher**

Indigenous Intern  
Métis Nation  
Department of Fisheries and Oceans

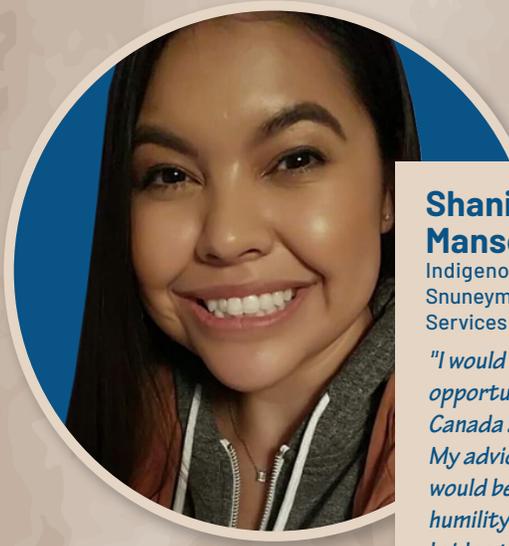
*"IILP is a great start. But it is just a start. There is still much more work that needs to be done on behalf of the government to build a positive relationship with Indigenous peoples. This two-year internship gives people like me the opportunity to possibly create change while gaining an understanding of government relations."*



**Michael  
Barriault**

Indigenous Intern  
Qalipu Nation  
Indigenous Services Canada

*"Going through your career can be a daunting and tough task, and so the best advice I can give you is to never give up on your drive for change and positivity in the face of obstacles. You are an amazing worker, friend and individual all through your unique experiences. So own it and never give up on your dreams."*



**Shanice  
Manson**

Indigenous Intern  
Snuneymuxw First Nation  
Services Canada

*"I would like to thank the ILLP for the opportunity to work within Service Canada and gain public service experience. My advice to the Government workplace would be to incorporate cultural and humility training for all employees to bridge the gap for a better working relationship with Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees."*



**James  
Walsoff**

Indigenous Intern  
Tahltan First Nation  
Services Canada

*"I believe that the ILLP is an excellent opportunity for Indigenous people, including myself, to get their foot in the door of government service, and understand both how the government works and how it is working to better relations with Indigenous communities and pave the way for greater Indigenous representation in the public service going forward."*



**Kristen  
Martin**

Indigenous Intern  
Lake Babine First Nation  
Services Canada

*"I believe that we are on the road to healing but there is still a long journey ahead. The ILLP is an initiative that is part of truth and reconciliation, and I am grateful to be part of this experience. The ILLP has given me the opportunity to use my voice and the skills / knowledge that I worked hard to gain. I hope that initiatives like the ILLP will continue to help close the gaps and inequalities for Indigenous people."*



**Francine  
Alphonse**

Indigenous Intern  
Cowichan Tribes  
Services Canada

*"As Indigenous peoples, we live in one world, take your opportunity to learn some of our culture and traditions. ILLP has also brought awareness to me as an intern, on how Service Canada is going above and beyond for their part in truth and reconciliation."*





## COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION

An important first step was taken on a high priority work plan activity – assess the need for and feasibility of developing a “BC First Nations Guide to GC Programs and Services”, including completion of a survey, a design framework, and a pilot sector-based “Navigation Tool”. Second, with the pandemic going through its second and third waves, keeping FNPSS’ [COVID-19 website hub](#) current and creating new / updating existing “COVID-19 At a Glance” communication tools continued to be a priority. Finally, one of the Initiative’s successes with the farthest reach may be

the strengthened communications between First Nations and GC representatives in BC, as a direct result of the relationships and awareness built through the Initiative. FNPSS and GC departments, such as ISC, ESDC, CRA, and Statistics Canada, worked closely to host informational webinars and to share high-priority information through FNPSS’ channels and networks. Similarly, FNPSS events and opportunities were shared with the larger GC family through the IIIC as well as the BCFC Secretariat newsletter and social media channels.

### **BC First Nations Guide to GC Programs and Services** – A Navigation Tool Survey and Design Framework

One of the strongest requests from BC First Nations during the development of the MOU workplan was the request for a centrally located, accessible inventory of GC programs and services available to First Nations administrations. Notwithstanding huge efforts by individual departments and agencies on communications, the need is largely left unfulfilled. Not only are departments often working in silos, but there exists the real challenge of creating a communication tool that is accessible, meaningful, and accurate yet does not create an unmanageable burden to maintain.

As a first step to exploring the options and possibilities of creating such a tool, a survey of band administrators was conducted in February 2021. A total of 40 respondents answered questions

around their use and knowledge of funding programs and services. The results suggested that to create a useful yet manageable tool, the band administrator position should be the target audience, the priority information gathered should be application-based funding and training available to all communities in BC, and the tool should be centrally located and ideally searchable.

Guided by the survey results and employing the successful methodology used to develop the “COVID-19 At A Glance” communication tools, a framework and a pilot sector tool was drafted for further review, consideration, and development in Year Three of the Initiative.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – A Navigation Tool Survey and Design Framework

- **40** respondents to a survey of band administrators
- **1** framework and **1** example sector tool drafted



Kootenay River, Ktunaxa Territory

*"The BC / YT Outreach Team at CRA has greatly appreciated the growing relationship we have built with FNPSS and the BCFC Secretariat through collaboration on a number of important MOU initiatives."*

– Karen Martin, Western Region Manager,  
Outreach Team, Canada Revenue Agency

## COVID-19 At A Glance 1-Pagers

A total of seven “COVID-19 At A Glance” communication tools have been jointly developed by FNPSS and the BCFC Secretariat since the beginning of the pandemic, and with considerable, collaborative effort, have been regularly updated throughout Year Two of the Initiative. These tools summarize First Nation- and BC-specific GC COVID-19 benefits and supports, allowing for more immediate and accessible information to reach BC First Nations. In addition to summarizing GC supports, First Nations organizations and the Provincial Government supports were included, engaging over 30 GC departments, agencies, and external partners in the development of these tools.

### **Supports for Indigenous Businesses for First Nation Individuals – newly developed in Year Two**

### **Additional Disability Benefits and Supports for BC First Nation – newly developed in Year Two**

Housing Resources for BC First Nation Individuals

Resources for all BC First Nation Individuals

Benefits and Personal Tax Returns for BC First Nation Individuals

Resources for BC First Nation Post-Secondary Students

Food Security for BC First Nation Communities

The “COVID-19 At A Glance” series were hosted on the [COVID-19 website hub](#), an initiative supported by ISC and developed / maintained by FNPSS. The website hub was critical in disseminating information needed by First Nation administrations, including information from multiple GC departments and agencies such as financial, general, administrative, health & prevention, and emergency response information to BC First Nations, as well as ISC BC Region Updates.



## BY THE NUMBERS

### – At A Glance 1-Pagers

- COVID-19 website hub – **4,600+** page views
- **7** “COVID-19 At A Glance” 1-pagers created and updated regularly

*“The agile and relationship-based nature of the Initiative allows for an immediate and seamless pivot of focus, achieving important and timely results for First Nations.”*

Howard Grant,  
Executive Director, First Nations Summit



Haida Gwaii, Haida Nation Territory



## Communicating More Effectively Together

Due in part to the growing awareness and relationships between FNPSS and GC public servants working in the BC Region, an increasing number of departments and agencies regularly shared information through FNPSS webinars and channels, and conversely, FNPSS news and opportunities were shared through the IIIC as well as the BCFC Secretariat’s newsletter and social media.

Under the MOU umbrella, FNPSS collaborated with the GC on several webinars, including:

- “New Federal COVID-19 Supports – Canada Response Benefits and Changes to Employment Insurance”, November 2020 (Presenters from Service Canada Community Outreach Liaisons and CRA’s Outreach team)
- “Reopening Offices and Returning to Work”, July 2020 (Presenters from ‘Namgis First Nation and the Labour Program, ESDC)
- “The Power of Our Data”, April 2021 (Presenters from Statistics Canada, National Indigenous Fire Safety Council, and University of the Fraser Valley)

It is important to highlight that not only did the primary audience of BC First Nations benefit from these webinars, but many GC public servants also participated, learning more about the First Nations’ diverse contexts, opportunities, and challenges.

*“Working with FNPSS and the BCFC Secretariat under the MOU umbrella has been great. We have enjoyed having this relationship in place, and we have benefitted from the opportunities it provides. There are chances for capacity development when it comes to working with BC First Nations. And, during the 2021 Census of Population, they assisted with promoting available positions. Valuable resources like their webinars remain accessible on their YouTube page and this allows us to share these resources with new staff or staff who could not attend the live stream. We look forward to continued collaboration with FNPSS and the work we can do together.”*

- Byron Flekke, Indigenous Liaisons Advisor,  
Statistics Canada

## BY THE NUMBERS

### – Communicating More Effectively Together

- **52** FNPSS newsletters distributed with **1,744** subscribers (as of November 2021)
  - **1,082** First Nations communities, organizations, and Tribal Councils / affiliates subscribers (62%)
  - **195** GC and provincial government public servant subscribers (11%)
  - **146** organization subscribers (8%)
  - **321** individual (unknown organization) subscribers (18%)
- **28** BCFC newsletters distributed with **429** subscribers and **507** Twitter followers



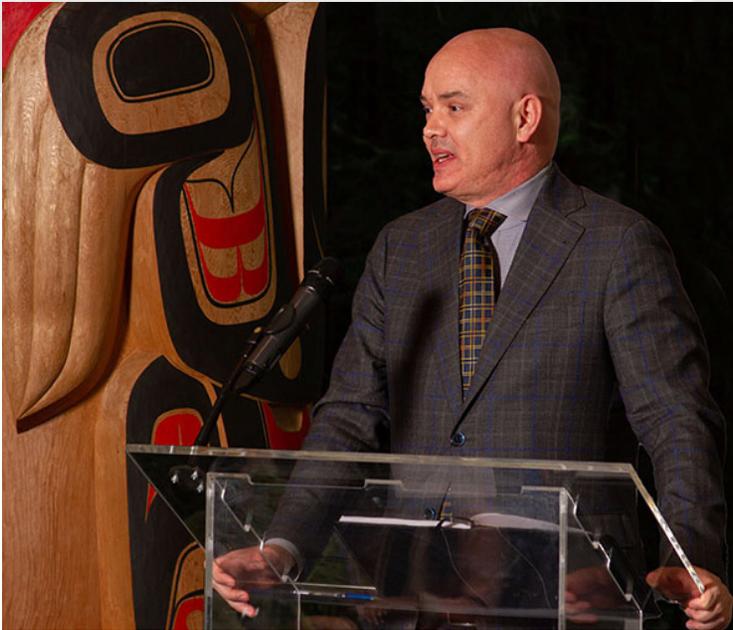
*“The activities and accomplishments achieved through the Initiative in Year Two continue to demonstrate an innovative and agile approach for BC First Nations and the Government of Canada to collaboratively strengthen our respective public services and through these efforts, continue to work towards establishing and renewing Government-to-Government relationships.”*

Kliiaht’ah / Nadine Spence, IIC Co-Chair and Executive Director Operations, BC and Yukon, Parks Canada

# LOOKING FORWARD

The activities and accomplishments of Year Two continue to demonstrate a new and innovative way for the GC and First Nations to work together in BC to help reach their shared goals and to overcome their shared barriers.

In preparation for Year Three, the BCFC is being guided by the [Evergreen MOU Joint Work Plan](#). Consistent with previous years, the Work Plan is ambitious and is recognized as evergreen which positions the Initiative to respond to the current and ever-changing contexts in which we live and work.



MOU Signing, in his role at the time, Dylan Jones, Deputy Minister, Western Economic Diversification Canada

*"This Initiative is an incredible example of a truly authentic partnership between the GC and First Nations, where we genuinely co-develop, co-manage, and co-implement everything under the MOU. It has been a privilege and honour to be part of this collaboration."*

- Colette Anderson, BCFC Secretariat

# FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Strengthening Public Service Institutions Initiative, how to contribute, how to become a signatory to the MOU, how to access learning opportunities, and generally how to get involved, please contact:

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Visit FNPSS' website at [fnps.ca/partners/#bcfc](https://fnps.ca/partners/#bcfc)

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