

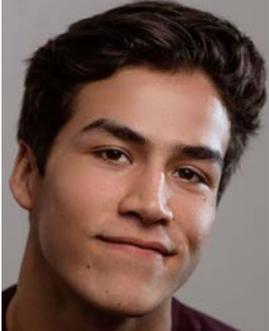
# HOPE IN THE DARKNESS YOUTH CONFERENCE BIOS



## CONFERENCE HOSTS

### ANNA LAMBE

Anna Lambe is an Inuk actress known for her roles as 'Sarah' in CBC's Trickster and 'Spring' in The Grizzlies. Raised in Iqaluit, Nunavut, she is now a student at the University of Ottawa studying International Development and Globalization. Outside of acting she works with Indigenous youth, particularly those living up North, to uplift and empower them through delivery of class sessions with Connected North on self care and getting involved in the arts.



### JOEL OULETTE

Red River Metis and Cree from Cumberland House First Nations, Joel Oulette has always liked acting and storytelling. Growing up in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Joel started to act at the age of 5, playing as an extra in movies which led him later in life to star in "Trickster."

## YOUTH CO-CHAIRS



### CORBIN JACOBS

Boozhoo! I'm Corbin Jacobs, A member of Walpole Island First Nation (Bkejwanong) and I currently study at Fanshawe College. I am working towards to get my degree at Western University for Indigenous Studies, miigwech.

### KAT JACOBS

My name is Katryna Jacobs, I am from Curve Lake First Nation Indian Reserve 35. I am a 16-year-old girl and attend the Youth Leadership in Sustainability (YLS) class in the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board. I play multiple sports including hockey (goalie), rugby (fullback), baseball (3rd base) and field lacrosse(back). I take joy in celebrating my culture and have co-founded a Nonprofit Organization called GrowthCanada to fight for Indigenous, Environmental and Social Rights.



## CONFERENCE CHAIR

### KEVIN REDSKY



Kevin is the Founder of Hope in the Darkness and the National Walk for Youth Mental Health. Through the walk, Kevin has walked over 7600 kilometres across Canada for youth mental health. Kevin is Anishinaabe from Shoal Lake #40 First Nation, and has had a career in community policing spanning over 17 years.

Kevin has worked with at-risk youth and missing persons cases and has personally felt the effects of youth mental health issues. Kevin is a father of four and a grandfather to one. He is an avid sports enthusiast and fisherman who loves being outdoors.



## CONFERENCE ELDER

### HECTOR COPEGOG

Medwayosh ndishnakas. Waabzhashi ndodem. Fourth Degree Midewiwin. Three Fires Lodge. Born in Toronto raised on Beausoleil First Nation, currently living in Wasauksing First Nation. My wife and I have raised 2 children. Between the 2 of our children, we now have 6 grandchildren. Traditional ways such as sweats, fasting, different healing ceremonies and being Midewiwin has helped me to be clean from alcohol and drugs for over 30 years and to be a better person. I also had help from my teachers Eddie Benton, Jim Dumont and the late Merle Pegahmagabow. I have been given the privilege and honour to conduct sweats and some ceremonies to help our people. Along with this privilege, I have been raised to Chief status in our lodge. Education completed grade 10 PSS, Georgian College Lens grinding, George Brown College Truck Driving Class D Course, FNTI Social Worker Diploma Program, volunteered at Wasauksing Fire Department, and Parry Sound Friendship Centre. My passion is to help our people to regain their tradition helping with their learning and healing.



## OPENING PLENARY PANEL 1: CREATIVITY + PURPOSE PANEL

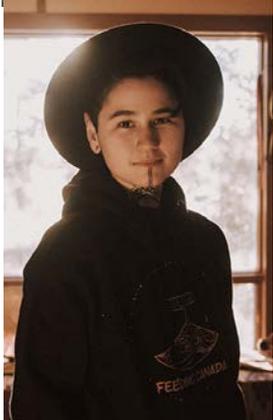
### JUSTIN JAH'KOTA HOLNESS Afro-Indigenous - Artist/Entrepreneur

Justin "Jah'kota" Holness is a 2019 Indigenous Music Award Nominee for best rap hip hop album of the year for WOKE. His song WOKE also hit number one on the Indigenous Music Countdown for Aug 3-9, 2019. He made history for being the first Native Hip-Hop Artist to drop a verse in the Senate 2016. He is an award winning entrepreneur receiving the 2018 CBC Trailblazer Award for TR1BE Music. He is an award winning youth worker receiving the Youth Community Service Award from the Committee of Youth Officers Ontario while working at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health as an Indigenous Youth Diversion Coordinator. His life purpose is to help young people nurture their gifts and talent. He is an advocate for the repatriation of turtle island and believes through entrepreneurship we can achieve self determination.



### NICOLE EMMONS

Nicole Emmons is a filmmaker and mixed media/ installation artist specializing in stop motion animation from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She received her MFA in Experimental Animation from the California Institute of the Arts School of Film and Video as a Jacob K. Javits Fellow, and her Bachelors in Animation and Film from Columbia College Chicago. She is a dual citizen of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and the United States. Her short films have screened in film festivals nationally and internationally. Her work can be seen on network, streaming, and web formats in series, music videos, feature films, and commercials. She works professionally as a director/ animator / artist / educator. She is a member of the international Bodewadmi Kwe Arts and Crafts Collective, the Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, and the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Women's Drum.



### NANOOK FAREAL

Nanook Gordon is Inuvialuk, non-binary from Inuvik, Northwest Territories who have been residing in Toronto. Nanook began their accomplishments at a young age, where they became a 3 time National Tae kwon do champion and helped to open the largest non-profit Tae kwon do school in Atlantic Canada. They continued their charitable work by founding Feeding Canada in 2015, an initiative to address food insecurity and send baby supplies and basic necessities to some of the most impoverished communities in the Arctic. Nanook is also a professional artist who is passionate about the cultural resurgence of Inuit and Indigenous tattooing. They are also a professional silkscreener and designer, providing important designs for Feeding Canada to raise funds as well as support other Indigenous designers in their endeavors. Nanook recently founded another important initiative called Toronto Indigenous Harm Reduction, where they have

provided critical health support and access to ceremony to vulnerable community members during the current global pandemic. They are also in the process of opening an Indigenous Art Studio and Gallery to support and provide access to creative arts for the Indigenous street community here in Toronto. Nanook is committed to supporting and uplifting their community and is honored to be part of this important initiative.



### **REGIONAL CHIEF KLUANE ADAMEK**

Kluane Adamek (traditional name is "A\_a\_g\_é"), has served as the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Yukon Regional Chief since January 2018. She is a proud Northerner and citizen of Kluane First Nation. Regional Chief Adamek belongs to the Dakl'aweidi (Killer Whale) Clan and comes from a diverse background with Tlingit, Southern Tutchone, German and Irish origins.

After completing a Bachelor of Arts in Canadian Studies from Carleton University in 2009, Kluane returned home to work with Yukon First Nations and local communities in the areas of education, economic development and governance and in 2019, she completed her Master of Business Administration at Simon Fraser University. She has proven experience in both the private and public sectors, and has served on a number of boards and committees throughout her career including the Yukon College Board of Governors, Kluane Dana Trust, Actua, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, and the Aboriginal Sport Circle.

Kluane has always been incredibly passionate about supporting youth and emerging leaders in the North and beyond. While pursuing her Jane Glassco Northern Fellowship with the Walter and Duncan Gordon Charitable Foundation, she led and founded "Our Voices," a collective of Northern Indigenous emerging leaders. Kluane was recently featured as a keynote speaker at the 2020 TEDWomen Conference and in early 2021, she was named one of 2021's Top 25 Women of Influence.

Regional Chief Adamek currently holds the AFN National Portfolios for Climate Change and the Environment, Youth and Modern Treaties. As the youngest serving Yukon Regional Chief, and the youngest ever woman Regional Chief, she is a strong advocate for the empowerment of women, youth and emerging leaders in the North and beyond. She continues to press for changes in the ways young people and the next generation are included in decision making forums, and she is committed to advancing solutions and approaching leadership from a place of values.

### **WORKSHOP 1: SPOKEN WORD & SLAM POETRY FOR EXPRESSION**

#### **BOBBY SANCHEZ**

My name is Bobby Sanchez, i use any pronouns. I am a poet, model and painter. I am 26 years old born and raised in Siwanoy and Lenape land. My indigenous blood comes from Ayacucho Peru. I am a descendant of the Wari and Chanka people. I use poetry and modeling to express my cultural and gender identity, and raise awareness on indigenous and environmental issues.

### **WORKSHOP 2: STANDING BEAR WORKSHOP**

#### **HILLARY MCGREGOR**

Hillary McGregor is a 25yr-old Anishnaabe youth from Whitefish River First Nation. Hillary received an Advanced Diploma in Sport Management from Humber College in 2017 and a diploma of Anishnaabemowin and Program Development at Georgian College in 2020. Hillary has been a coordinator for the Standing Bear Indigenous Youth Leadership Program at Indigenous Sport & Wellness Ontario from 2017-2021. Hillary was a youth lead in consulting just over 500 Indigenous youth from across North America on leadership, mental health, sport, and wellness. Hillary is passionate about Indigenous community development, and Indigenous youth empowerment.





## PANEL #2: SPORTS + ATHLETICS PANEL

### TAYLOR TOM

Taylor Tom is 21 years old entering her final year of nursing at Norwich University in Vermont, where she also is a member of their NCAA women's hockey team. She is from Naotkamegwaning First Nation

### DALYN WAKELY

My name is Dalyn Wakely, I am 17 years old. I am a member of Curve Lake First Nation, and I live in Port Hope, Ontario. I grew up playing in the LNHL tournament for Cedar Bay / Curve Lake. For the last 4 years of minor hockey, I captained the AAA Quinte Red Devils. In April 2020 I was drafted to and signed with the OHL's North Bay Battalion. I'm looking forward to playing for the Battalion as soon as the OHL resumes play.

### EMILY MANDAMIN

Emily Mandamin is an Anishinaabe female basketball player from Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 First Nation. She belongs to the Elk clan and is a proud jingle dress dancer. From a young age, Emily struggled with her cultural identity, poverty and discrimination in sport. It was difficult for her to figure out the modern world of basketball at first, but through the support of the Indigenous community Emily has been able to battle through her various adversities. At the age of 11, Emily started her basketball journey. It wasn't long before she was invited to play at an elite prep academy in Toronto, Ontario. This past year, she was blessed to be able to play at the college level in Illinois.

### AARON WESLEY-CHISEL

My name is Aaron Wesley-Chisel, and I am a Lac Seul First Nation community member. I am 24 years old, born and raised in Thunder Bay. I grew up playing hockey my whole life. The game led me to be a part of the Lakehead Thunderwolves team and complete my last year of undergrad studies, graduating with a Bachelor of Indigenous Learning.

## VIRTUAL EVENING CONCERT

### KATERI PHILLIPS

Kateri Phillips is a singer songwriter from Shawnee Oklahoma. Her music most closely resembles indie folk with influences such as Buffy Sainte-Marie. Writing her own music has been her biggest passion in life. She loves learning her language and culture and sharing it with the world. She is in the process of transcribing all of her songs into Potawatomi (her native language) which she believes will shed light on the importance of language revitalization. Being Potawatomi is a huge part of her identity, even leading her to run for the title of Miss Potawatomi of 2019 through 2021. Being Miss Potawatomi she gets to represent her people while doing what she loves, sharing her voice and songs. As of now she is attending college to be a plant chemist and a certified Anishinaabemowin teacher. She hopes to pursue her passion for music for the rest of her life no matter where her career takes her.





**WORKSHOP #3:  
MARSHALL MORRISSEAU – HE/HIM/THEY**

Marshall Morrisseau is a 24 year old First Nations, Metis advocate from Opaskwayak Cree Nation. Currently residing in Brandon Manitoba and attending University. Marshall is studying a Bachelor of Arts Degree for the purpose of pursuing law. Marshall is involved with community organizations such as Brandon Bear Clan Patrol where he coordinated a youth mock patrol. This opportunity lets him build positive relationships in the community, educate future generations about harm reduction philosophies and traditional teachings. Marshall also takes part in the We Matter Campaign as a National Ambassador of Hope, delivering messages of hope, culture, and strength for Indigenous youth. In the beginning of 2020, Marshall attended the United Nations Drug and Crime Commission as a Youth Delegate. He now is involved with the International Youth Initiative to help develop and deliver drug prevention strategies. They are now working with Thunderbird Partnership Foundation to help develop youth led projects.

“My biggest goal in life is to help all my relations in a meaningful way and ensure that the next seven generations are agents of culture and traditional worldviews.”



**WORKSHOP #4: #RISINGYOUTH - HELPING YOUTH THRIVE  
MICHAEL SOLOMON**

Michael Solomon Michael’s role at TIG involves serving Connected North partner school communities as well as involving Indigenous youth throughout Turtle Island in leading projects supported by the Rising Youth Community Service Fund. He also loves to travel and has visited Peru, Netherlands, France, Belgium and Germany. In his spare time, Michael enjoys boxing, hockey, lacrosse and other sports.



**KAYLA ROSTESKI-MERASTY**

Kayla Rosteski-Merasty is of Cree and Métis ancestry. She is from Pinehouse Lake, a village located in northern Saskatchewan. Kayla currently resides on Treaty 6 territory and Homeland of the Metis in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. She holds a degree in education through the Indian Teacher Education Program at the University of Saskatchewan. When she completed her degree she took a position at TakingITGlobal within the Connected North program supporting schools in northern remote communities through educational video conferencing. Kayla has been asked to lead various projects and speak on numerous panels that address support in post secondary and daily life as a young Indigenous woman. Kayla is also a part of the #RisingYouth team and her hope is to ensure youth have the opportunity to create positive change within their communities.



**TIA WOOD**

Tia Wood is a recording artist from Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Treaty 6 Territory. From a young age, Tia and her family knew she was born to sing. She started performing with her family at powwows, and shortly after, began to record Indigenous songs on YouTube. This garnered attention, as Tia began to develop into a young role model, beginning to break colonial boundaries, through songs of her ancestors in performances. She began with a mix of songs from traditional round dance, powwow, R&B, country, pop, soul, peyote, and family sweat-lodge songs. Her presence on early social platforms was received well and Tia continued to win prestige within the community at powwow and awards and honors for her singing and dancing. Social media tides began to shift and, led her into big waves of success as a content creator and singer on Instagram and TikTok in 2020 where she now has millions of followers and views across socials. Tia is a leader in the new wave of young, unafraid, and unabashedly Indigenous youth surging on these social platforms. While the title of ‘social media influencer’ and ‘content creator’ have been used in referencing Tia, Tia and her team are moving fast and closing in on her debut project - with recording sessions and building up her team to facilitate all aspects of her music release and related business. Tia’s message is to celebrate the resilient stories that serve to empower youth - especially young Indigenous women. The world is primed for Tia’s rise, and there is a strong and inevitable sense that things are lining up for a big and bright future with Tia’s burgeoning singing career. The door is about to blow off the hinges and Tia is leading the new wave of indigenous youth into the mainstream industry in ways we’ve never before experienced, viewed or celebrated indigenous culture at the highest levels of music.



## **WORKSHOP #5: HISTORY OF THE DRUM & JINGLE DRESS: WHITEFISH BAY SINGERS**

### **WHITEFISH BAY SINGERS**

The Whitefish Bay Singers formed in the 1970's during a time of social and cultural struggles in the community. In an effort to combat this trend Andy White garnered the advice of the elders and with their direction he, along with his brothers and relatives, started the Whitefish Bay Singers. At the time elders directed that he gather many of the young men of the community to begin training them in the ways of the drum, to assist the community in the healing process. The drum began traveling within the local area as a way of practicing their songs, although they experienced and appreciated many different styles of singing they remained true to their style of singing. After many years of singing the old songs traditional to the Lake of the Woods Anishinaabe they began making their own songs that further propelled their name to greater heights. With their own style of singing and their own songs they began getting attention from other areas of the pow wow world. The singers have hosted, visited, competed and won many championships at numerous gatherings throughout turtle island. They continue to travel to different gatherings and still find the very pleasure that is singing for the peoples of all nations. They still carry the sound that made them the respected drum group that they are, with the same powerful delivery. " I remember when we first got our drum, an elder said that that the drum will eventually travel to many places...and that's what happened." We would like to say Miigwetch to those teachers, elders, who have guided through the years. To the creator for all that he gave the Anishinaabe people.

**The Whitefish Bay Singers:** Randy White, Andy White, Ryan White, Ramsey White, A.J. White, John White, Tom White Jr., Charlie Kelly, Jamie Mandamin, Gray Fox White, Freeman White Jr., Elton Bruyere, Robert Lincon

### **MARIAH WHITE**

Mariah White is from Naotkamegwanning (Whitefish Bay) and is 19. Part of the Lynx clan, her tribes are Ojibwe/Oneida. She has played hockey since she was 5, on multiple competitive teams including Aboriginal Team Ontario U19 girls hockey team. She is committed to playing hockey at Sault College in the ACHA division II. She graduated from St.Thomas Aquinas High School with honours and is in her 1st year of College in Early Childhood Education. She plans on becoming an Ojibwe Language Teacher. She has always been a cultural person and is fascinated with her culture. Her kukom Caroline and elementary/middle school Ojibwe teacher Eldon Copenace have inspired her.