

# Inspiring Possibilities

Aboriginal  
Role Models  
Share Their Stories



Alberta  
Government

# Inspiring Possibilities

## Aboriginal Role Models Share Their Stories

### Educators and career practitioners

This publication is for Aboriginal youth who are exploring career options and Aboriginal adults who may be considering a career change. The stories inside illustrate rewarding and meaningful career choices in the social work field with Child and Family Services, Alberta Human Services.

**Inspiring Possibilities: Aboriginal Role Models Share Their Stories** presents the stories of six Elders, two youth and 18 staff who work for Alberta Human Services. The stories, from interviews conducted in 2012 and 2013, are about real people, where they came from and where they are on their career journeys. Regardless of where their personal journeys take them in the future, their messages will still hold true.

Explore how these role models' stories can be a source of information for your own career planning.

Inside you'll find:

- personal stories about the role models' lives and career journeys, the challenges they faced and overcame and the lessons they learned along the way
- inspirational messages from each role model
- information on various jobs available in the social work field and supporting administrative areas within Alberta Human Services
- helpful resources, including the Human Services website, which contains information on the many, varied job opportunities that exist throughout the ministry.

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Information in this publication was accurate, to the best of our knowledge, at the time of printing. However, legislation, labour market information, websites and programs are sure to change, and we encourage you to consult additional sources of information when making career, education, employment and business decisions.

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# A Career in Human Services

## Is a social work career with Child and Family Services for you?

Whether you are choosing a career for the first time or considering a change, a career in social work with Alberta Human Services may be just the perfect fit for you.

Diverse careers and opportunities exist for you to:

- make a positive difference in the lives of Albertans
- grow professionally and personally
- enjoy work-life balance
- work collaboratively with others inside or outside of government.

Learn more about Alberta Human Services at [humanservices.alberta.ca](https://humanservices.alberta.ca).

For current job opportunities, visit [jobs.alberta.ca](https://jobs.alberta.ca).

Read about the [possibilities](#) that await you in Child and Family Services with Alberta Human Services.

[Inspiring Possibilities: Aboriginal Role Models Share Their Stories](#) brings you the personal stories of six Elders, two youth and 18 Alberta Human Services staff.

- Get [inspired](#) by the Elders' stories and words of wisdom.
- Find out how two cousins got connected as they started out on their career journeys.
- Discover why Aboriginal staff say their jobs in the field of social work are challenging and rewarding.



# Setting the Stage

## What kinds of social work-related jobs does Child and Family Services offer?

The Aboriginal staff who are featured as role models in this publication hold a variety of social work jobs in Child and Family Services within Alberta Human Services. Some work in the administrative support area, some do front-line social work and some are in supervisory and management positions. Each role model brings unique life experiences and knowledge to the job. Read these role models' stories to learn how they feel about their jobs and what working in the child intervention area means today.

## What do the job titles mean?

Each Aboriginal staff story begins with the role model's name and job title. Following are the job titles referred to in the stories, along with some general information about job duties.

### Administration, Levels 1-2

Staff in the administration area work in jobs at different levels. Duties include:

- Providing senior administrative services where the administration is integral to the efficient operation of program delivery or represents the highest level of administering program services.
- Applying technical knowledge of a subject area in administering program operations where required.

### Administrative Support (AS), Levels 1-6

Staff in the administrative support area work in jobs at different levels, from entry-level to senior-level positions. Duties include providing secretarial support and/or providing one or more of the following services:

- Office support, such as accounting, purchasing and human resource support.
- Program support, such as program delivery support and program information centre services.
- Information support, such as records management, desktop publishing and word processing.
- Data management support, such as collecting and compiling data and/or creating, recording, processing, manipulating, formatting, retrieving, printing and coding of data.

### Child and Youth Care (CYC), Levels 1-3

Staff work at different levels, either as front-line or supervisors. Duties include:

- Working with children and youth in both secure and open care centre environments.
- Maintaining or re-establishing the family unit.
- Working within a multidisciplinary team and ensuring that the treatment plan that is developed by the team for each child is followed.

### Human Services Worker (HSW), Levels 1-7

Staff work at different levels. Their work is done within legislative parameters and includes providing a range of services and supports to Albertans who rely on the social services system. These services include, but are not limited to, adoption, foster care, family support for children with disabilities and licensing child care facilities. Duties include:

- Making informed decisions, apprehending children from high-risk situations, ensuring that services provided by external agencies are community appropriate, developing policies and procedures, implementing related regulations and legislation and reunifying children with their families, community and culture.
- Determining eligibility for program assistance and/or for elements within a specific program.
- Supervising staff.

Staff take many factors into consideration when they are doing their jobs. These factors include the importance of culture, family and extended family, and family reunification. The goal is to foster self-reliance and strong, positive families.

Visit [jobs.alberta.ca](https://jobs.alberta.ca) to find available positions with Alberta Human Services, including current qualifications and salary.

# Gilman Cardinal

## Treaty 8 Bigstone Cree Nation

# ELDER

I was born in Chisholm, Alberta, and grew up in the Calling Lake community. There were 13 of us, six brothers, six sisters and me. My parents were my role models and they taught all of us about respect, honour, responsibility and commitment to work. My mom was the leader of the family, even though my dad didn't know it. She was the one who prepared all of us for the day when we would leave home to find our own path.

To be successful in life, I believe you must value work and stay active—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. When I was growing up, I had seasonal jobs like fishing, trapping and firefighting—not long-term career options. My parents persuaded me to pursue a career with the Alberta government when I was in my 20s. During my employment with the government, some of the jobs that I had included career counsellor, trades consultant, labour market manager and manager of Aboriginal Job Corps. My last duties included working with Aboriginal leaders on community capacity-building strategies, and I also provided training in Aboriginal awareness for my colleagues and others.

I'm proud and honoured to be a mentor to our Aboriginal people so they can have a greater quality of life. When I was 50, I had a heart attack and was cured by both western medicine and a traditional medicine man. I made an agreement with the medicine man that I would pursue my role in Eldership and that I would teach and mentor youth and others about our beautiful culture. I have been, and continue to be, mentored by a lot of great Elders.

I am also very proud and honoured to have been the Elder on the committee that developed this publication, *Inspiring Possibilities: Aboriginal Role Models Share Their Stories*. The stories have been collected from many different role models: Elders, youth who are starting out on their career journeys and staff who work in different kinds of social services and related jobs throughout the province at Child and Family Services, Alberta Human Services. These role models share where they came from, the challenges they overcame, where they are now in their careers and how they feel about the work they do. And they provide their personal messages for you.

Like I am, they are speaking to you. I invite you to listen to their stories and get *inspired*.

Set your goals high and don't be afraid to take risks. Be proud of who you are!



I am Métis and was born in Owl River on June 10, 1921—the night of the big tornado. We moved to Fort McMurray when I was six months old. Dogsled was the only way to travel at first, and then the bush pilots came with supplies and took the very sick to get medical care.

At 16, I was married off. My husband was abusive. He would disappear for weeks in the winter and leave me and the kids alone in the backcountry with no heat and no food. I had to cut wood, fetch water and become a trapper and hunter so we could eat. One day, a bear threatened my kids, so I got out my .22. I held my gun as the bear towered over me. My little ones tugged on my legs and sobbed. They were so scared. I shot that bear dead in the only place you could penetrate his body, in the eye. I shook all over as he dropped!

In 1958, I left my husband and moved to Edmonton with my four children. I married again, this time to a good man, and we lived very happily until he passed away in 1987. I feel blessed to now have six grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

I started working with Aboriginal people in 1958 and I haven't stopped.

In 1974, I went to Fort McMurray to work for an Aboriginal employment office. Syncrude was getting established as a company, and we worked with their president, government officials and the unions. I helped develop Syncrude's Aboriginal recruitment policy. Keyano College opened and offered short courses to help folks get job ready. I served on the board of directors for the college for a time and am the proud recipient

of the Keyano Board of Governors Distinguished Citizen Award.

As I recruited Aboriginal workers, it was exciting to see women starting to get hired as pipefitters and truck drivers and getting paid the same as the men. Along the way, I started an Aboriginal women's pre-employment program and I'm happy to say it is still being used in Edmonton. After all these years, I am still connected to Syncrude and travel there every month to speak to their Aboriginal staff.

I served as a board member for Child and Family Services with Alberta Human Services. I'm proud to be one of the first women to work for the Métis Nation of Alberta. It seems I was the first woman all over the place! I am the vice-president of the Métis Child and Family Services Society (Edmonton).

Strong women like my mom and Muriel Stanley Venne are my role models. Mom was a hard worker who taught us all to be self-reliant. She couldn't read or write, but she could sure play the fiddle and accordion! Muriel and I started out together in the working world. She became a politician and an Aboriginal women's activist.

To ensure I left something for my grandchildren about their heritage, I wrote a book entitled *Memories of a Métis Woman: Fort McMurray Yesterday and Today*. It was well received, and I would like to write another book. I feel that all Aboriginal children are mine. There is still a lot of work to be done out there. My plan is to keep going and advocating for Aboriginal people as long as I can.



Learn the teachings of the Elders and your parents.  
Ignore the bad crowd. Respect and be sure of  
yourself. Be a good person and find the strength  
and courage to help others less fortunate than you.

# Charlie Evalik

## Kitikmeot Inuit

I was born in an outpost called Sherman Inlet and lived most of my life in Cambridge Bay. Dad was born in Alaska and my mom is from Kitikmeot, Nunavut. They had 13 kids. If you count all the grandkids and great-grandkids, there are 140 of us now! Dad was my role model. He was a trapper and a hunter. But he knew that way of life was coming to an end and he promoted education so that we could have career opportunities.

I went to two Anglican residential schools for grades 1 through 12. I wasn't aware that there were problems in other residential schools until after graduation, when I read about it in the newspapers. That wasn't my experience—mine was a good one. We were all taught about discipline and the importance of going to bed early and getting up early.

And we had to do our homework. If we didn't have a 75 per cent average or better, we weren't allowed to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities. Some kids got homesick. But we could go home on weekends and for the summer.

In 1971, I got my Grade 12 in Yellowknife and started a career journey that provided a variety of learning opportunities and included several occupations—chief operating officer for the community, community administration and management work for the Cambridge Bay Hamlet Council, and social worker in the adoption and income support area for the Northwest Territories government. Then I received training in contract negotiations and real estate while working for the Nunavut Ministry of Economic Development. I have also worked with the Department of Local Government—assisting the hamlets in the Kitikmeot Region—and have been very involved in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement negotiations.

I currently hold an elected position as the president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association and have worked with the association since 1993. I'm proud of the benefits brought to the Inuit through the negotiations on land claims. The association has a diversified portfolio, which includes catering, land claims, mining and part ownership of an airline. Some of the dividends go

# ELDER

towards supporting community culture and sports activities. We also hold regional Elders gatherings where Elders determine how they want to assist with culture and language revitalization.

The government has programs where students can consider social work as a career opportunity, and annually we send some of our youth from each of the communities to Edmonton to explore post-secondary educational opportunities. I support our youth both professionally and personally—by giving presentations to youth on the importance of continuing education and by discussing job opportunities.

I think Elders are responsible for promoting the importance of things like self-discipline and for looking at the community to see what's lacking, so that we can assist in making change.

In 2011, I was presented with an honorary doctorate of law from the University of Alberta for my work on the land claim. My family was there to share in this recognition with me, which made it even more special. Most recently, I was honoured to be presented with the national Indspire Award in recognition for achievement in business and commerce.

Ironically, as I get older, my spare time seems to be shrinking—but by choice. When I'm not working, I like to hunt, fish and go to our cabin. And I also enjoy curling. My wife of 39 years recently retired from a career in finance and administration. We are blessed with four sons and four terrific grandchildren, and we really enjoy spending time with our family.

Be yourself. Get educated and don't drop out. Discipline yourself. Strive to achieve something and make a difference in your life and in your community. Open opportunities for yourself.



I was born in Lac La Biche and grew up in Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement. I always knew what I wanted out of life—to graduate, travel the world and help people, especially the youth.

There were a lot of negative things happening in our house when I was growing up. I knew I couldn't reach my goals staying there. I had to get away.

After graduating from Grade 12, I took a year off before heading to college to get my social work diploma. I did my five-month practicum in the Métis Settlements Child and Family Services regional office. That office has great mentors, and it's where I met mine.

My mentor taught me to look at life differently and showed me that it is possible to succeed. I was invited to participate in the building of the Métis Settlements Youth Network Society. Its purpose is to promote the prevention of teen pregnancy, suicide, family violence and bullying, and to help others make positive changes in our communities. I became the co-chair, and later on, I became the president.

The TAPWE Warriors program started in this regional office. This program was originally developed by Native Counselling Services to help inmates in penitentiaries heal themselves and prepare for their release. I believe we were the only youth group to receive this training. The program taught us that we must first heal ourselves before we can help others. As a member of the TAPWE Warriors, I facilitate the program in our communities.

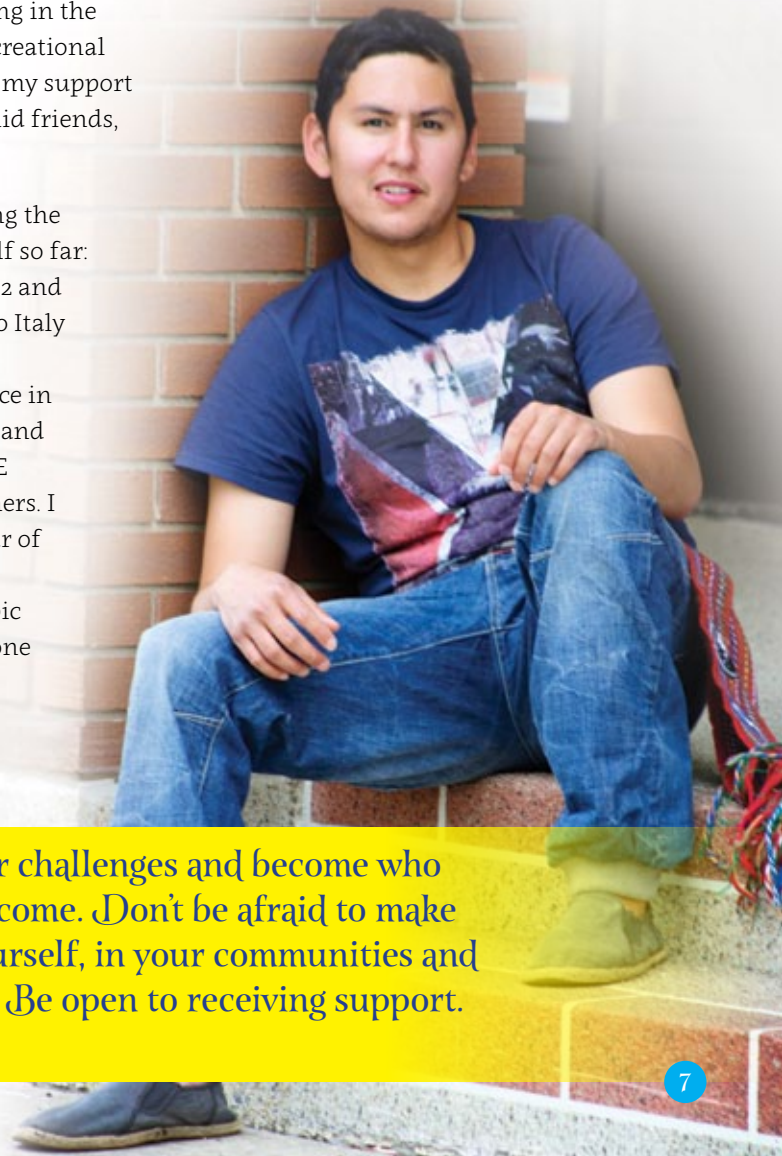
When I was working for the University of Alberta, teaching a life skills program in the Métis Settlements, I took a leave to go and work for a joint venture company that sent Aboriginal interns overseas to do different types of work. I chose to go to England for six months to help people rediscover themselves through nature. I plan on incorporating what I learned there into my career. There is always room for improvement, for learning.

Today, I enjoy spending my free time with my friends and cousins, playing sports, taking pictures, sitting by the fire at the lake while listening to music and volunteering in the community by doing recreational work with the kids. I get my support from family, cousins, solid friends, the office staff and God.

I'm very proud of meeting the goals I have set for myself so far: graduating from Grade 12 and then college, travelling to Italy on a high school trip, presenting at a conference in Hawaii, working in England and bringing the TAPWE Warriors program to others. I have also had the honour of representing the Métis people at the 2010 Olympic opening ceremonies as one of 25 Métis dancers.

In the future, I hope to go backpacking in New Zealand, stay with friends we made in Hawaii and then attend the Healing Our Spirits conference in Australia in 2014. I am saving for that now. In the next year or two, I see myself becoming a motivational speaker.

**Overcome your challenges and become who you want to become. Don't be afraid to make a change in yourself, in your communities and in your nation. Be open to receiving support. Find a mentor.**



# Waylon Sparklingeyes

## YOUTH

Mom is Bill C-31 and Dad is Métis. They split when I was a baby. I moved a lot with my mom and two older brothers because my mom had problems with alcohol.

I was in Grade 2 the first time I was apprehended because of my mom's actions related to her alcohol problems. Unfortunately, my mom also had other issues, and I had a problem dealing with all this.

When I was 14 I did a stupid thing and tried to harm myself and ended up in the hospital. I was apprehended and sent to a group home for five months. I got some help, but it didn't work because I fibbed all the time to make it seem like I was all right.

Back at home, it wasn't even a month and things were bad with Mom again. I couldn't do it anymore, so I acted out and hung out with the wrong kids, got into trouble and skipped out on school. From being in care I knew this was not right, to live like this.

I went to live with my dad in Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement and things started changing for the good. I became self-sufficient and independent—I had to. I started hanging out with my cousin, Matt. He was living a healthy lifestyle and was travelling. I thought if I finished school, I could actually have a shot at being successful and could travel like Matt did.

Matt belonged to the Métis Settlement Youth Network, and I wanted in too. Matt wouldn't allow that until I made changes in my life and became a positive role model. I was in an outreach school, so I was able to move to Edmonton and continue with school. I did presentations in northern and rural communities for the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights.

When I was 17, I was asked if I wanted to take the TAPWE Warriors training. I did. It has done amazing things for me. It helped me to find balance in life and heal from the trauma I had experienced. And it shaped the person I am today. It gave me confidence to speak to the things I am open about now. I have been to a conference in Hawaii and done presentations on drinking and driving, violence and bullying prevention, lateral violence, and the temptations and troubles we face. I speak from where I come from and where I am today.

I'm 20 years old now. I got my Grade 12 this year. It took me four years and I'm very proud to have graduated. I faced a lot of barriers, but I got focused.

I just got some great news! I have been accepted into the aboriginal community support worker program. I'm going to be able to work in the social work field. Other Aboriginal children and youth are going down the path I did, the path of destruction. I want them to see the positives about child intervention staff—that they are here to help. I want our youth to understand why sometimes children have to be apprehended. I don't want them to be scared and think everyone is against them.

Some of the people closest to me did not believe in me and told me, "You will never be successful." I am working on proving them wrong.

Don't change who you are for anyone—do it for yourself. It's all about gaining control of yourself, knowing where you are going and staying focused. Be true to yourself. Stay in school.



# STAFF

## Shawn Auger

### Child and Youth Care Level 2 Team Lead

I'm from Woodland First Nation. After graduating from high school, I took a certificate program in Aboriginal policing at Northern Lakes College and did one year of correctional studies at Lethbridge College. My practicums were with the Lethbridge police and with the Edmonton maximum security prison. I decided that working in policing and in prisons was not for me, so I went to work for Child and Family Services in Lethbridge. But I got homesick for High Prairie and I applied for an internal ministry competition at the Youth Assessment Centre. I was successful at getting employed and I have been working here since 2010.

I currently supervise four permanent and some casual hourly staff. The youth at our centre range in age from 12 to 17. They tend to have behavioural issues and many have addictions. Lots come from broken homes. They aren't bad kids; they just have not learned how to interact with people and have not been taught how to behave. You have to see things from their perspective. When youth first come here and we tell them they can be better, they think we are only blowing smoke. It's difficult for them to accept there is something better for them, and a lot of them sell themselves short.

Working here, every day is different from the next. It is not a routine job. It's not always the most fun place to be either. Sometimes we may have to restrain a youth. Other times we can get physically assaulted and called every name in the book, and then—20 minutes later—the youth apologizes to us. One of the youth I worked with had issues with social boundaries

and was diagnosed as having fetal alcohol syndrome. I discovered that he really liked hockey, and I started a recreational hockey team so he could come out and play with us. He slowly learned right from wrong. He learned that there are referees out there in life too—and that you need to follow the rules or you get put into the penalty box. He made a lot of positive changes because of hockey.

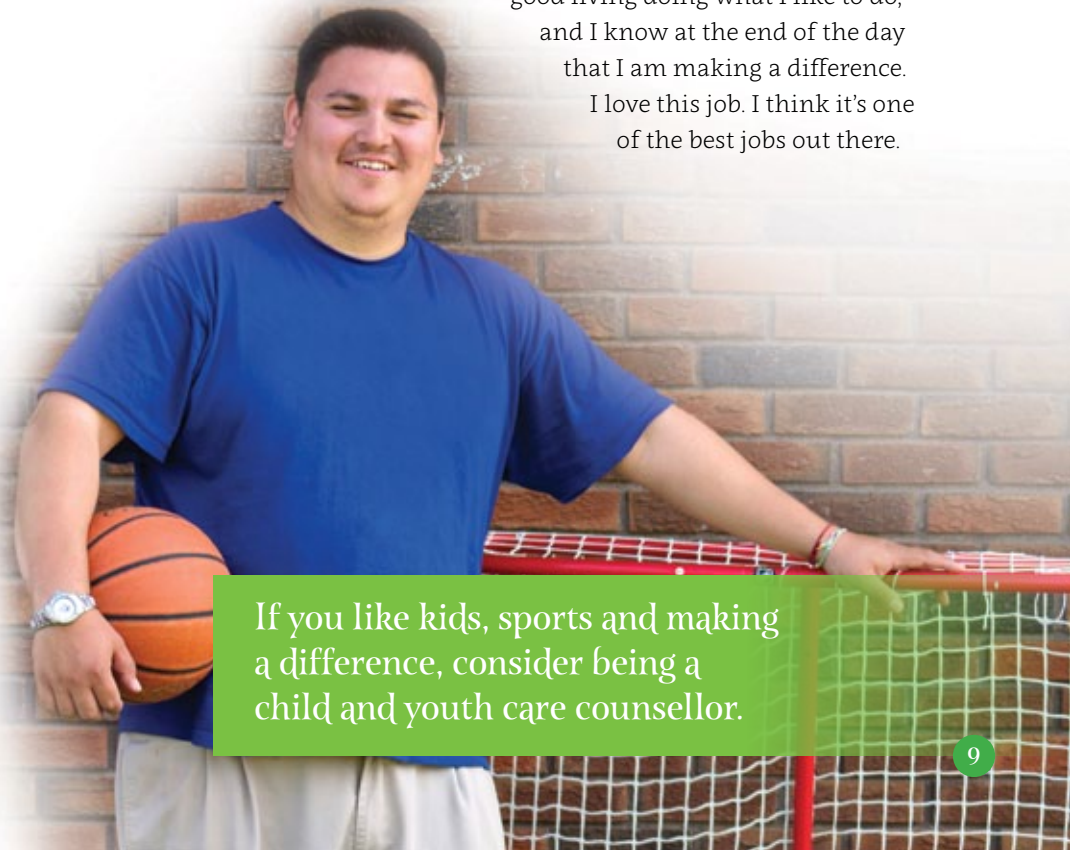
I am proud that I am helping these kids to make good choices. I enjoy seeing that they can do well and like building relationships that help them to better themselves. A male youth who had left us called today to say he has two jobs. About a third of the youth call us after they leave here to let us know how they are doing and to keep in touch. My greatest rewards are those moments, when I know there are changes being made.

To do this job well, I think you need to be the kind of person who is non-judgmental and easygoing, who can let things go without reacting and who can be strict when needed. You need to be able to follow direction and contribute to a positive work culture. And you need to be an active person who likes sports and will get to work on time.

I enjoy hunting, quadding and playing hockey and baseball. I am a T-ball coach in High Prairie for four- to five-year-olds and coach my two daughters and my son. Hockey players were my role models. I used to want to be an NHL player. I still like the team stuff—the bonding and the friendships.

You know something funny? My mother used to work at the Youth Assessment Centre, and I never knew what this place was or what she did here. I used to sit in the car outside this building and wait for her to get off work. Now I work here! I make a good living doing what I like to do, and I know at the end of the day that I am making a difference.

I love this job. I think it's one of the best jobs out there.



If you like kids, sports and making a difference, consider being a child and youth care counsellor.



# Renee Bratrud

## Caseworker Human Services Worker Level 5

# STAFF

I am First Nations. I was born in Edmonton and I grew up in a small community southeast of Edmonton. I was in the intervention system—a child in care—until I was three years old. Then I was fortunate to have a caring and loving family adopt me. Mom stayed home with her five kids, was very supportive and always put family first.

I completed Grade 12 in 1997 and became a mother at the age of 19. I knew from a young age that I wanted to be part of a helping profession, so I went to school and received my diploma in social work in 2004.

Having always been curious about where I came from, at 21 I made a decision to find out about my roots. I researched my birth information and discovered that I had two birth brothers and one half-sister. It was very exciting to meet my birth family for the first time. Now I try to get in touch with them a couple of times a year, particularly with my half-sister.

My career journey in social work started with Child and Family Services, working as a case aide. I had that job for about a year. Then I worked at a few non-profit agencies and returned to Child and Family Services in 2006, again as a case aide. In 2007, I became a caseworker in the Edmonton office and after a year I transferred to the Stony Plain office because I wanted more experience working with First Nations people. I have been here for nearly six years now. It takes time to build relationships with the community and build trust and rapport with families. We really get to know the families and their needs. Our office works exclusively with two First Nations communities.

My job is to ensure the well-being and safety of the children, promote health and wellness in the community, provide support and ensure that children's needs are met until they are 18 years old. When a child becomes subject to a permanent guardianship

order, I am responsible for ensuring that the child's emotional, medical, physical and spiritual needs are met. I strive to find permanency for the child. I have a responsibility to connect the child to his or her family and to support reunification if the family circumstance changes for the best.

To do this kind of work, I think you need to have compassion for people as a whole and knowledge of family dynamics. You need to have the ability to look outside the box and be ready to listen and interpret what people are really saying. My supervisor is very supportive and readily available to consult with. My colleagues are always willing to extend a hand. I'm happy knowing I'm doing my best each day.

I make sure that weekends are kept for my daughter and me. We like to camp, travel, exercise and spend time with family, friends and pets. I'm interested in learning more about the topic of coping with grief and loss.

My goal is to continue my career with Alberta Human Services. I would like to travel and learn how other countries address social issues and cultural dynamics. I want to obtain my bachelor of social work degree and eventually get my master's degree. My daughter keeps me grounded and reminds me constantly of what is really important in life.

If your passion is to reach out and help others, then this career is a good one! I'm doing what I love, every day.

Discover what you are passionate about. Make a commitment to be successful and don't second-guess yourself about what you can achieve. When you put your mind to achieving something, anything is possible.

# STAFF

## Shannon Tail Feathers

### Administrative Support Level 4 Office Administrator

I was born and raised in the Kainai First Nation with my three siblings, except for two years when Mom went back to school and we lived in Lethbridge.

When I was 18 I moved to Lethbridge and had a summer job working for the Blood Tribe Lands. When I graduated from Grade 12, I decided to take a break from school to join the workforce as an administrative assistant for the Blood Indian Hospital. Then I went to work for the Red Cross to do administrative work before going back to school to take a two-year microcomputer business management program at the Academy of Learning College. After graduating, I went back to work for the Red Cross for six months.

I applied and got a job with Sifton Family and Youth Services. On my first day at work, I asked what the child intervention program was because I truly didn't know. I learned that we have kids here who are in care—kids who have been apprehended from unsafe living conditions who may have behavioural and/or addiction problems. Our staff help these kids. My job does not involve working with the youth, but because they live here, I know many of them.

I am working my way up the administrative support career ladder. I started out as an AS 2. Then I was an AS 3 for three years. I have been working at the AS 4 level as an office administrator for the past seven years. I have overall responsibility for the administration of the office. I look after the personnel files, approve and process timesheets, consolidate information, assist with the budget, supervise an administrative assistant and work closely with one program supervisor and three team leaders. I'm proud to have been with Child and Family Services for 12 years.

I have taken a lot of courses on supervision and am learning about the different supervisory styles required to manage staff. Experience builds your skills and competence. I think that all supervisors need to be approachable and have good communication skills.

We have staff recognition activities here and we all know we are appreciated. I feel rewarded when people compliment me and tell me I am doing a good job and when my supervisor, my biggest supporter, tells me I'm a valuable employee.

Our son is our success. We travel a lot as a family and value our family time. I occasionally attend powwows and have had my face painted by a spiritual leader, but I wasn't raised traditionally. My uncle was my role model because he encouraged me and was successful himself as an artist and as a musician.

I wake up in the morning and know I'm going to enjoy my day because of where I work and the people I work with. It would be a very hard place to leave!



Everyone is different. Some have talents like art, music or sports. Find what your talent is. Take responsibility for your own success. Success will follow.

# Nicole Samoisette

## Manager

# STAFF

I am Métis and was born and raised in Calgary. In my family and community, leadership is greatly admired and respected. It's something we are taught to strive for—to become leaders.

Two individuals that I admire and respect modelled the way for me: my grandmother and a previous manager. Both overcame life's challenges and adversities and were hard-working, educated individuals who served their community and helped others.

Although they were outspoken and not always politically correct, they always had love and good intentions behind what they said or did, and they treated everyone with respect. They strived to do the best by people and thought of unique ways of doing things that were not always by the book or accepted by the majority.

They didn't let their situation or experiences hold them back or use them as an excuse. They chose to learn from their experiences and used them as motivation to become better people and to help and support others going through the same situations. They both modelled respect, accountability, integrity and excellence in all that they did. I became who I am today through their encouragement, support and guidance.

I graduated with a diploma in criminology from Mount Royal University in 2000 and got an honours bachelor's degree in criminology and criminal justice with a concentration in law from Carleton University in 2002. All my options for my degree focused on the Aboriginal population. That's where I wanted to work and where I felt comfortable.

After graduation I wasn't sure what I wanted to do or be, so I started filling out applications for jobs. I did some security work, volunteered at the Calgary Police Service and held a variety of jobs, such as Aboriginal youth worker, youth counsellor and program support worker. I was employed by non-profit organizations and worked my way up to being the program coordinator at an organization that offered programs for Aboriginal families. I was there for a few years.

Needing a new challenge, I applied and got a job with Child and Family Services, where I've worked for the last seven years. I progressed on my career path from caseworker, to intake worker, to investigator, to casework team leader and then to investigations team leader.

In 2012 I was the successful candidate for a managerial position at the Aboriginal Services office. Five team leaders and their respective teams report to me. I am responsible for providing leadership, mentorship, coaching and supervision. I make sure that operational and policy guidelines are followed, that standards are maintained and that families are healthy and safe. My responsibilities also include consulting with the bands with regard to children and families and permanency planning for the children. I integrate Aboriginal culture into my work, consulting with Elders and making referrals to appropriate cultural resources to assist families. I participate at regional and local meetings and on committees. My teams do excellent work with families to help them be successful in addressing child protection concerns. They work hard to connect children with their families and communities.

When I'm not at work, I like to keep busy. I enjoy playing baseball or floor hockey and doing hot yoga. I'm proud of graduating from high school and university and being the first of all my cousins to do so.

I enjoy working with children and working for the government. I like my job. I make a difference, and there are lots of opportunities to learn and grow.

You can do anything you set your mind to do. There are supports out there; get them. This is very rewarding work, both personally and professionally. You get to make a difference! Help us to take care of our kids—they are the Elders of the future.



# STAFF

## Human Services Worker Level 7 Casework Supervisor

### Ron LaRiviere

Born and raised in High Prairie, my brothers and sisters and I often visited relatives in Sucker Creek First Nation. We were always provided for, protected and supported by our parents. I got my drive from my dad, my role model. He taught us that we had to earn the things that we wanted. Dad was well-liked, polite and happy and he told great jokes. There was always an open door in our home, and we shared our food. My uncle was a medicine man, and I got to attend some sweat lodges with him.

While I was in high school, I participated in a lot of hockey camps. I played Junior B hockey in British Columbia and went on to play senior hockey for the High Prairie Regals. But I got exhausted playing hockey at that level. I realized that I needed to get my education.

I did an extra six months of school to get my Grade 12 and got a part-time job working at the Youth Assessment Centre in High Prairie. The assistant director liked how I connected with kids and offered me a job as the recreation coordinator. I was there for two years and I ran the youth program, taught hockey and helped to build a hockey rink. Then I took the child care development program at Grant MacEwan. I did front-line work and became a supervisor at the Yellowhead Youth Centre for Child and Family Services. I worked there for 22 years before coming to the Stony Plain office, to my current role. Working in this field was my real destiny. It turns out I really wasn't meant to be an NHL player!

As a supervisor of front-line caseworkers, I provide support, guidance, mentorship, consultation, assistance and to help staff make the tough decisions. I also work with agencies, other professionals and the band to bring the best possible services to families. Having good working relationships is a good feeling and allows for good communication. Our families have a strong sense that we are there for them.

To be successful in this line of work, I think you must be able to recognize your own ability, know what you can do and be able to leave your own baggage at the door. Our office is about supporting and caring for families and providing resources for them. The toughest decisions are about apprehending a kid. Believe me, the family reunification part of the job is huge. For example, after supporting and working with a mom and dad for a while, we recently returned their child to them. You should have seen the smiles on everyone's faces—including ours!

As an Aboriginal man working with First Nations, I know how tough it can be in their communities, so it's important to provide services—and sometimes just to lend an ear and listen. I really enjoy it when the children in care step up, graduate, get jobs and become successful. It feels great

when they come and tell me about their successes, and that although I was tough, it was good!

I've been married for 22 years and have two wonderful children who mean the world to me. My wife grounds me. She is very insightful and provides me with comfort and security. It will be no surprise to hear that I still enjoy hockey, and as a Knights of Columbus member, I coach hockey. I also like going to the gym daily and playing golf. It's important to stay healthy in mind and body as this can be a demanding job and you need a release. When I retire, I would like to contribute my expertise and experience by being a board member for Alberta Human Services.



It's OK to say no to the many negative influences. Empower yourself one step at a time and enjoy life. Don't be afraid to ask for help. It's OK to be you.

# Ann Wilton

## Contract Coordinator Administration Level 2

# STAFF

I am Métis (Cree and French), originally from Peace River, and I am the eldest of nine children. My mom married a non-Aboriginal man who had problems with alcohol, and it negatively impacted him and my mom. We lived in a small town. As a child, I encountered a lot of prejudice and name-calling and was treated like an outcast. The result was that I had low self-esteem—no self-confidence—and kept to myself. I am glad to say that things changed for the better as I grew up.

After graduating from Grade 12, I worked for a year in a hospital as a ward aide, looking after the elderly. I got married in 1973. A year later, I went to work for the Government of Alberta in the forestry area and was there for about 10 years until we moved to Red Deer.

In 1985, I got a summer job with the social assistance program and they decided to keep me on for the year. Then I went to Child and Family Services, in an administrative support position. In 2000, I became a business manager in the specialized program services areas of adoption, foster care and family support for children with disabilities. In 2003, I joined the regional office, working in a variety of positions until I started my current job.

Now I work with contracted agencies that provide services to children and families who need counselling, access to resources or ongoing Aboriginal service support. I always communicate with our stakeholders in plain language and interpret contract language when needed. My job requires attention to detail, accuracy and getting the work done on time. I love hearing the success stories of families who have used our services and received our support.

My supervisors and managers have always provided me with guidance, encouragement and support. My co-workers and I work together and are always there for each other.

During the past few years, I took a public speaking course through Dale Carnegie. I am very proud that I went from being too shy to speak up in front of anyone to being able to give a speech to a roomful of people. In 2009, I was presented with the Aboriginal Worker of the Year award for our region.

I have seen what a lack of motivation and desire can do to people, and I constantly remind myself of where I'd be now if I hadn't made the positive choices I've made in my life.

Outside of work, I like to spend time with family and friends, play a little bingo and help out with the grandchildren. My husband of 38 years continually supports me. We are blessed with one biological child, one adopted child and two grandchildren.

If you are a person who wants to be part of an organization that works towards producing positive outcomes for children and families, this is the place for you. I love my job and am proud of being a 35-year employee at Alberta Human Services!

Hard work and dedication will result in self-satisfaction and benefits for our families and communities. Look for positive influences in your life and avoid the negative ones.

# STAFF

## Kelly Richard

### Human Services Worker Level 6 Assessor

I was born in Victoria, and my mom's family originated in Cowessess First Nation, Saskatchewan. My father's family is from Scotland. My dad was in the armed forces and was transferred to Calgary. We were the only Aboriginal family in the army barracks. I hadn't realized I was Aboriginal until I was in Grade 4. I had only a few friends, and students called me names. When I was growing up, it was not a good time to be a First Nations person, and I believe my mother kept the culture and traditions from us to try to protect us.

After Grade 12, I went on to earn a diploma in criminology and an addictions certificate at Mount Royal College, and I did volunteer work. After graduation I worked in construction with my brother for a few months. Then I worked as an in-home support worker for five years, working with Aboriginal families with newborn babies. I left this job when a supervisor directed a derogatory remark at me. Ironically, that remark just made me push myself to be successful.

A friend was working as an investigator for Child and Family Services and recommended that I apply. I became a caseworker and worked with children who were involved with the ministry. My responsibilities included putting in supports for families and foster families, doing paperwork and going to court.

Later, I moved on to an intake position in a pilot project where I was responsible for receiving and documenting calls from the community about possible safety concerns involving children. I took pertinent information, generated screenings when necessary and consulted with my supervisor regarding whether an investigation needed to occur. I enjoyed this position but missed the challenge and fast pace of casework, so I went back to being a caseworker for a couple of years.

In February 2012, I moved to my current position, and other assessors helped to mentor me. Now I am responsible for assessing risk and determining if children are safe. If not, I must determine what will help the child and family to maintain a safe environment. I also identify what family supports are needed to give the families a hand up. Making a decision about taking a child into care is very difficult, as apprehension occurs only when there is imminent risk to the child. I consult with my supervisor and manager in these situations. I feel blessed to have had good role models in all of the positions I have held at this office.

When I was in my early 30s, I went to Cowessess First Nation for the first time. I had the overwhelming feeling that this was home. So many family members welcomed me. Mom hadn't

been there for 30 years, so I took her to meet with our relatives and attend the powwow. When Mom told me about her life experiences, she helped me to understand who we were and what our challenges had been over the years. Together, we explored this First Nation community and checked out the names on the gravestones. The trip was a bonding moment for us.

In my personal time, I enjoy reading, playing guitar and spending time with my family. At some point, I would like to be a team lead.



You can be successful. Don't let a negative home environment stop you from believing that. Use that experience to help you understand what the families you work with are experiencing. Help them with their healing process to make those needed changes. If you've lived it, you really do understand.



# Jennifer Ruthenburg

Foster Care Support Worker Human Services Worker Level 5

# STAFF

My family is from Fishing Lake Métis Settlement. My grandmother and great-grandmother, my role models, raised me. It was an inspiration to see the compassion of these strong women as they acted as surrogate mothers to some of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren when their children and families needed help. Although my grandmother was illiterate, she promoted education to us.

I've wanted to be a social worker since Grade 6. After my first year in college, I became pregnant with twins, but my grandmother inspired me to keep going with my dream. I was a very young mom, and although I am married now, I was a single mom for a lot of years. My five kids were and still are a huge inspiration to me. The Alberta Human Services Métis and Non-Status Indian Bursary helped me get through college and earn my social work diploma.

I attended Maskwachees Cultural College. It was more than a place to learn. It was also the place that helped me to reconnect with my roots and made me feel very proud of who I am and where I came from. That experience also contributed to my success.

I started my career working for two years as a crisis intervention worker in a women's shelter. Then I became a child and youth care counsellor for a couple of years. For the next 10 years, I worked for Child and Family Services, doing case management, intake and investigations. I developed an interest in the foster care program, applied for a job and have been working as a foster care support worker since 2011. My role is to support foster parents, provide or acquire training for them and provide advocacy for them and the children in their care. I think that all my previous experience in child intervention has helped prepare me for this job and enabled me to help foster parents understand why the children are behaving the way they are.

I am very proud of the many accomplishments of the youth and families I have worked with. One young woman in particular stands out. She is 20 years old now, and I have been working with her since she was 13. I had the honour of being invited to her graduation as I'm still a part of her life, although no longer professionally.

She's a young mom who overcame a lot of obstacles. She has told me that I made a difference in her life. To be a part of someone's success is rewarding in itself. One of the many events that seems to keep me motivated is witnessing that drive to keep going that this young woman and others like her have. Knowing that I am making a difference in people's lives and seeing the dedication and commitment of the foster parents to these young people makes my job very rich.

I enjoy seeing children return to their home and families being brought back together. This can result when the whole team works together, and the foster parents, as part of the team, certainly share in this success. The difficult part of the job is getting to this stage and helping everyone to understand that we are all members of a team working together for what is best for the children. I have a terrific team at work and know that I can count on them, my supervisor and my manager for support.

I find my balance by smudging, gardening, doing yoga and debriefing with co-workers when necessary. My husband and I love to travel and are considering doing a missionary trip in the near future.

If you want to work in this kind of job, go for it. It is very rewarding and there are lots of wonderful things about this career.



Persevere and never give up on your dreams.

# STAFF

## Human Services Worker Level 7 Adoption/Permanency Supervisor

### Scott Haryett

I am Métis, born in Edmonton and raised on a farm near Westlock. My dad was a single parent. If he could do that, then I could do anything. He was my role model. After getting my BA and my social work diploma, I worked at the Youth Emergency Shelter and various group care facilities in Edmonton. I moved to Victoria, British Columbia, and worked for an organization that supported Aboriginal families while completing my BSW. I received the Dianna Fowler LeBlanc scholarship and the Métis Nation British Columbia sponsored me for one year. After graduation, I spent a year in England working for the Buckinghamshire County Council, in the care and protection unit. It was a life-changing experience.

Seeing the possibility for change in people inspires me. That is where the hope is, and that is why I chose this career. As an Aboriginal person, being able to help other Aboriginals is something I am very passionate about.

I work for Child and Family Services. While there may be other jobs offering a higher salary, this career is a matter of the heart for me, not the wallet. When I was a kinship/permanency planning worker, my duties included finding permanent homes for the Métis Settlement children in our care, preferably with family (kinship) members. I worked with the family to develop a plan that supported the child staying in the family and to identify how various other family members could also contribute to the upbringing of the child. Placing children in culturally matched homes supports the preservation of the Métis culture for the next generations. The challenge

was to find the right family member, and the reward was when it happened.

The kokums—grandmothers—often take on the role of caregiver. I had five siblings assigned to me who had come into care. All five children were placed with their aunt. One year later, four of the children were reunited with their family. The fifth child, who had special medical needs, went to be cared for by his kokum under private guardianship. The whole family worked hard as a unit and shares in this success story.

Recently I received a promotion from an HSW 6 to an HSW 7. My duties entail supervising a unit of seven staff that include adoption and permanency workers and a case aide. I also oversee duties related to moving children towards adoption or permanency and transitional planning for our youth who are moving to adult support systems. To do my job, you need competencies in critical thinking and priority setting, and you have to remain current on the status of each caseload for all your staff.

I find balance by setting and keeping boundaries around my work and my family and having outside interests. In 2003, I wrote about my story, my ancestry. It was turned into a documentary and aired on

television. I enjoy playing basketball, Métis dancing and spending time with my son and daughter. My wife is a strong support and influence for me. She is First Nations. We blend our heritage by going to the round dances at Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation as well as partaking in Métis feasts. My goals are to return to school to get my MSW and someday to have my own private practice.

The biggest influences on my success have been the emotional and financial support I received and the ongoing support I still get today. People saw the potential in me, even when I didn't.



There is a need for Aboriginal social workers, and we have a big contribution to make. We cannot underestimate our value. Consider being involved in the possibility for change.



# Pam White Quills

## Caseworker Human Services Worker Level 5

# STAFF

My family is from the Kainai Blood Tribe, and I was born and raised in Calgary. My mother and father separated when I was five. Mom remarried and they had a son. I spent most of my time with my mother, stepfather and brother as I was growing up. Mom gave me a good life and wanted the best for me.

At 18, I was a Grade 12 grad. I had worked in several clothing stores at various malls in Calgary before I went to Bow Valley College to get my clerical certificate.

I had my first daughter in 2001, and six months after my daughter's birth, I went to work at the courthouse, doing data entry. In 2003, I got a job as a receptionist with Child and Family Services and worked there until 2005, when I was pregnant with our second daughter. My manager encouraged me to go back to school and I applied to Mount Royal College in September 2006. I got my diploma, transferred to the University of Calgary and got my BSW in June 2011. I came back to the Child and Family Services office for my first practicum and did a second practicum elsewhere, to get experience working with different minority populations.

In May 2011, I became a permanent employee as a caseworker. I am responsible for putting supports and resources in place to help people become healthier parents and to inform them about the various resources available in Calgary. I'm here to work with, support, be with and advocate for families. It feels good when I gain a family's trust and they are willing to work with me. It's very rewarding to see parents grow and learn and to be able to return their children to them. My goal is to get my MSW and work my way up in the office. My clerical job was a good stepping-stone to my career because I learned the information and computer systems that I use today.

I like doing casework, and I'm not here for the money. I do it for the kids! If we can do good casework, then we can prevent families from needing to come back to us. Families can become healthy.

Over the course of my journey, I found out I was a strong person. I surprised myself by continuing on to university because I had always thought I wasn't smart enough. But I made some huge discoveries. I discovered that I could get As, that studying really did make a difference, that anything could be accomplished when I put my mind to it and that I just needed to believe in me.

When I am not working, I spend time with family. Since my girls are involved in a lot of sports, I do a lot of driving. Although I grew up Catholic, I have since learned about my culture and now I smudge regularly and attend powwows.

My mom is one of my role models because, despite all she's been through, she is successful. She has been an accountant with Husky Oil for 32 years! Mom went to residential school, and as a result of her experience, we are not very lovey-dovey. I've been changing this with my kids. I tell them I love them and I hug them every day.

Gloria Skinner was my manager and another of my role models. She was highly regarded by all. Gloria really pushed me to continue my schooling and become a social worker. In 2008 she received the Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award in recognition of her leadership in the Aboriginal community. Sadly, she passed away in 2010. I graduated in 2011 and I just know she was there with me.

Stay in school. Inform yourself about the resources that are out there. Access them. You have to take care of yourself before you can take care of others.



# STAFF

## Human Services Worker Level 7

## Jesse Jackson

### Casework Supervisor

I was born in Cochin, Saskatchewan. My dad and granddad were Métis and proud of it. My grandma, who was First Nations, would never speak about that.

Mom and Dad separated when I was five, and Mom went back to school in Saskatoon. Mom got married again, and we moved to Speers. I was a teen when that relationship ended.

After graduating from Grade 12, I moved to Edmonton and worked in minimum-wage jobs. But I wanted more, so I took my first year of the Bachelor of Arts program at North West Regional College in North Battleford. I didn't think I was good enough or smart enough to go to university, and felt ashamed. But Mom submitted my application, and I got in. I learned that education is power. The shame went away! I graduated with honours in sociology and history from the University of Saskatchewan, the first one in the family to finish post-secondary school. Some of my cousins are now following this path.

I moved to Calgary and worked in an Aboriginal group home, where I really loved working with the kids. Then I worked for the Métis Calgary Family Services stay-in-school initiative and ran the Aboriginal student program and the family violence prevention program for a couple of years. It was an amazing experience. Sometimes our programs were the only safe place for the kids. My job was to help them be proud of who they were. Wanting more of a challenge, I went to work for the Aboriginal office in Child and Family Services as a caseworker in family enhancement and then in

investigations. I also did a pilot project for six months as a member of a team assigned to the Tsuu T'ina band to build and enhance relationships.

Now I am a supervisor and I love my job. My team works with Stoney and Tsuu T'ina files. I oversee and support 150 to 200 case management files, including files for children in care and for children still at home with their parents. I provide support and direction to my five case managers, ensuring that the children receive daily care and are safe, and that parents are supported to succeed in their case plan. I also have administrative and financial duties. I am responsible for developing and enhancing relationships with directors and band designates to enable better outcomes and the right permanency for children in care. One example is when I arranged for foster parents and the children in care to tour the children's First Nation, see the museum and the sacred places of land and hear Elders explain who the Sarcee people are. My team and I keep posted on cultural events and community programs so the children we work with can take part.

I have always wanted to be involved in social change for Aboriginal people. Having people trust and stand behind me, building relationships with families and communities, and advocating for families and what's important to them are the most satisfying components of my job. I feel part of the bigger picture. I believe that change is possible and that there is hope. My goal is to go all the way, to be an executive manager with Alberta Human Services.

I am proud of many things. Children who had never set foot on their nation before have done so because my team helped make it happen. I'm also very proud of my beautiful little daughter.

If you are considering this career, you need to make sure you stay grounded, understand there is only so much you can do and stay very closely tied to your family and culture. Family keeps you grounded and humbles you.

Our families need you!

# Myrna Pretty

## Adoption/Permanency Worker Human Services Worker Level 5

# STAFF

Mom went to residential school from the age of two to 18 and never got to go home. That experience made her ashamed of her Aboriginal culture, and she didn't want us to be connected to it. Later in life, Mom reconnected with her culture to learn where she came from. She tried finding her family, but only knew her siblings by first name. She searched, but until the day she died in 1995, she never uncovered her family history. Mom was a very good, kind, sincere, genuine woman who had a really tough life. But she endured and always told me to be proud of who I am and to stand up for myself.

When I was a youngster, my community said I wouldn't be successful, so I didn't believe in myself. Things changed after my mother's death. I had to process what her life had meant, and how it had affected me and my children. I realized that the hard road my mother travelled was meant to show me that life didn't have to be that way, and that people need guidance and support so they can find their path. I focused, made a plan and followed through on it.

I wanted to make a difference with families and children, and Child and Family Services was my path to do so. I didn't know why, but it felt right. In 2000, I was 34 years old and went back to school and got my diploma in social work with the help of the Alberta Human Services Métis and Non-Status Indian Bursary. I did my practicum with Child and Family Services and started working full time as a case aide a few days after graduation. In 2001, I became a protection caseworker, and in 2008, I worked as an adoption and permanency worker. I wanted to be part of helping children belong when their birth families were unable to care for them.

I find forever homes for our children in care, someplace where they can belong, wherever that may be. It feels great when I make that match, when I have that right family for that child. That's the most satisfying moment of my job. When I work with new adoptive parents, it's important to me that they honour where the child

comes from, regardless if the child is Aboriginal or not. I inform adoptive families of their role and provide them with supports and learning opportunities. We help families. This is not the 1920s; things are different. Never in my 13 years working here have I received a derogatory remark or experienced any negativity directed towards me. I have earned respect.

My work is very rewarding. For example, a young girl had given birth and was under the influence of drugs. She abandoned her baby at the hospital, and an apprehension order was obtained. Not being able to find the mom, the worker started looking for adoptive parents. A couple of months later, I was at the courthouse and saw the mom's name on the list. I spoke with her lawyer and then with her. She was coming off the drugs, and I saw something in her, something others were missing. I never gave up on her, and because someone believed in her, she didn't give up on herself. She has been clean for over a year now—another feel-good moment of my job.

My husband and children, co-workers, supervisors and managers all support me. My children are a great foundation for me. My daughter just opened up her own business, and I'm extremely proud of her.

I like to walk. I'm just learning how to bead moccasins. Next I want to learn about other cultures and travel more.

I think this career chose me. It feels good to know I make a difference in some way. My goal is to continue doing what I'm doing. I'm a lifer—I love my job!

There are only two things you can't control: the weather and the past. Believe in yourself and there is nothing you can't achieve.



# STAFF

## Administrative Support Level 6

## Darlene Lambert

## Administrative Team Lead

I am First Nations (Bill C-31). I was born in Fort Vermilion and have four brothers and two sisters. My parents instilled in us the importance of hard work, honesty and striving to be the best you can be. I am a single mom of a beautiful six-year-old daughter, my little fancy shawl dancer. She makes me be a better person!

In 1992, I was accepted into Grouard College to take social work, but during the interview, I decided that path was not for me. I didn't think I was emotionally stable enough to do it. I thought social work was only about apprehending children. It wasn't until later in life that I would learn it was so much more, with so many different positive aspects to it.

When I worked as a waitress and then a front desk clerk, I decided I wanted more for myself, and knew I would have to go back to school to get it. The experience from doing the front desk job helped me realize that I enjoyed administrative work, so I pursued and earned my office administration diploma with a major in accounting and information management.

I worked for the QEII hospital in Grande Prairie for three years and then moved to High Level, as my partner at that time got a job there. I applied and was successful at getting an administrative job working for Child and Family Services. Three years later there was a reorganization in the ministry, and I was offered and accepted an administrative position in the Grande Prairie office. I have been here ever since.

I used to be so shy. Public speaking was certainly not my strong point. In 2004, I took a course to prepare

myself for training our staff on a new computer system. I'm proud to say that my confidence in my speaking ability kept increasing as I provided the training.

I supervise and provide leadership to two excellent, hard-working staff who provide administrative support to both the foster care and the family support for children with disabilities areas. My staff always make me look good. My duties also include doing payroll, assisting with forecasting and budgeting, and processing payments. I really enjoy the people I work with. There is a purpose to the work I do—it feels meaningful.

I seek advice from my manager and receive a lot of support from her as I try to continually improve my skills. My mom always helps me with parenting and in other ways, while being a busy working lady and foster parent. I am grateful for all the support I receive.

The Native Friendship Centre is where I learned about my culture. I served on the board of directors and am still involved as a volunteer.

Two of my nephews currently live with us, and with the assistance of the eldest one, I look after the 15-year-old. I made my daughter her first drum. With my friend's help, I also made her regalia and moccasins for her dancing.

If it wasn't for my employer, I wouldn't be able to balance my work and personal life, not as a single parent anyway. It means a lot to me.

My brother, who passed away in 2000, was and still is my role model. He fearlessly lived life to its fullest, and although he struggled a lot, he just kept ticking. My other role model is my regional director. He has been my mentor for five years and has made me a better supervisor.



Continue your post-secondary education. Find out where you came from and where you want to go and, like my brother used to say, "Fight for your dreams and work to achieve them."



# Anita Cunningham

## Generalist Human Services Worker Level 6

# STAFF

I am from Driftpile First Nation but I grew up in Prince George. At 19, I moved back to Driftpile, met my future husband and moved to the Peavine Métis Settlement. We have been here for 23 years and became foster parents in 1990. We were asked to keep an extended family member for three years and provide respite for other people. I have five biological children, one stepdaughter, two foster kids and five grandchildren. We got married five years ago on my birthday.

All my kids were a part of my wedding, which made it so complete.

As a young girl, I dreamed of being a secretary. I quit school in Grade 11 because I was pregnant. I knew that to be a good mom I would need an education, so I got my Grade 12 as an adult. Then I took secretarial arts and a year of business administration. But that wasn't enough for me. I decided to pursue a BSW so I would have even more opportunities.

I breast-fed my babies, so I had to take them to class with me, driving back and forth daily from Peavine to Grouard. I also commuted to Slave Lake to finish my degree. I wanted to be a role model for my kids.

While I was attending school, I worked for Marigold Enterprises in High Prairie and did my practicum with Child and Family Services. Then I worked for the Peavine Parent Link Centre as a coordinator for a couple of years. To challenge myself further and to allow myself to continue to learn and grow, I applied and got a job with Child and Family Services.


I started out as a kinship foster care/caseworker. Now I work in the child protection area. The work is fast-paced and I love it. I have a strong passion about fostering and advocating for children in care. When a kid comes into care, it's important to keep family connections.

Living and working in your community can be challenging. You need to detach yourself from the fact that you know people. You learn a lot about people and your community. We are taught that we are there to support and not to judge.

In my spare time I love to go to our lake lot and spend time with my family. Being with family is very important to me.

My reward from my work is just being able to help people and know I'm supporting positive changes in someone's life. I treat our families how I would like to be treated if I were in their shoes—with respect.

My mom made a huge difference to my success. She promoted education and supported me in many ways so I could complete my education. My husband is my biggest supporter. He always believed in me, even when I didn't. I would not have come as far as I have if it wasn't for the help I've received.



Get your education; it allows you to experience many things and to grow. Find your supporters; you can't do it all by yourself.

# STAFF

## Human Services Worker Level I Community Resource Worker

I'm Métis from the Peavine Métis Settlement. I have seven sisters and two brothers. My family moved to Grouard when I was eight. We had a troubled family setting. My parents separated when I was 8, and we moved to Prince George.

I attended school and took the high school diploma equivalency program. After that, I worked as a cook's assistant and a daycare helper and I did some waitressing. Then I went back to school and obtained a certificate in addictions counselling. I worked as a school counsellor for 10 years and left to go back to Grouard and get my teaching degree. Unfortunately, I had to quit after the first year due to a lack of funds. I did secretarial work for a year, and in 2000, I started my career at Child and Family Services.

Conklin is a small community with limited resources, and my job is to support families and individuals of all ages in different ways, including advocacy, counselling, consulting and developing partnerships with members of the community. On behalf of the community, I assist in the writing and presentation of proposals. Examples include proposals for Meals on Wheels, Prevention of Family Violence, the Community Incentive Grant, Aboriginal Youth Enhancement Services and an annual talent show that highlights the Métis Red River Jig. I also assisted the Conklin Community Association in finding funding to run a medical van for four days a week.

I establish relationships and work closely with all the resources within our region and enjoy bringing these new partners and resources to our community. I've done this job for 12 years. Aside from being my bread and butter, my job makes me feel really good because I know I'm doing something positive. I'm part of making the difference!

Teamwork is important to me and building partnerships is key to all that we do. To do this job well, I think you need to be a neutral, positive person. You need to understand the importance of confidentiality, follow through on commitments, be flexible and be punctual. Having a sense of humour doesn't hurt either. My partner, my older sister, my supervisor and the community all support me in my work.

In my free time, I like to pick roots and berries, plant flowers and decorate my yard. I enjoy doing volunteer work and am a member of the Conklin Enhancement Society Committee, the Conklin Resource Development Advisory Committee and the Métis Local 193. I have been recognized for my volunteer work and am the proud recipient of the 2002 Distinguished Citizen Award, the 2003 Conklin Outstanding Volunteer Award, the 2003 Female Citizen of the Year Award and the 2010 Regional Aboriginal Recognition for Volunteers Award.

## Peggy Beaudry

There was a lady from Grouard who was like a mother to me. She was my role model. When I lost her in 1998, I was devastated and I still think of her often. She gave me the confidence to believe I could be a role model if I chose to be—to live and walk that path.



It's important to reach out to a friend or a family member. When people believe in you, good things will happen, but you have to be the "first believer".



# Leona Boyer

## Counsellor Child and Youth Care Level I

# STAFF

I am Ojibway First Nation from Manitoba, and I was born during the '60s Scoop. Before I was born, some of my 16 siblings were apprehended and placed, in pairs, with other families. We missed out on the experience of growing up together as a family, and my parents coped with that loss by using alcohol. I left home at 15 and became a parent at 17.

Later, I married a Métis man and we moved to the Peavine Métis Settlement to establish roots and have a place we could call our home, our community. I got tired of living under the poverty line and trying to make ends meet by working as a maid and a janitor. I wanted to make a difference somehow, so I went back to school and got my child and youth care diploma. I worked for the Sucker Creek Emergency Women's Shelter as a crisis intervention worker for two years.

Then I applied and got a job with Child and Family Services as a child and youth care counsellor at the High Prairie Youth Assessment Centre.

My life experience helps me know and understand what the youth at the centre are going through and where they are coming from. I am responsible for developing a unique plan for each youth assigned to me. The plan contains information on the reasons they are here, identifies issues and states program goals. I also do individual and group counselling. The youth are taught basic life skills like cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene. They are also given tools to learn how to manage their behaviour.

As the Aboriginal resource lead, I introduce youth to their culture so they can have a sense of belonging, stay connected and feel grounded by knowing who they are and where they came from. I take them to powwows, Aboriginal youth conferences, meetings with Elders, sweat lodges and smudging and talking circles. Or if a youth prefers, we go to church together. To assist the youth with their transition planning to adulthood, I bring in an Elder who teaches them about the medicine wheel and explains the different stages in life. This helps the youth identify with where they are now and where they will be when they are older. It is a powerful tool.

My mother-in-law, my mentor, made a difference to me and my success. She kept striving to do well, no matter how bad things got. Although I was baptized Roman Catholic, I use native spirituality because I am from both worlds. My spirituality is what keeps me strong to get through everything.

To be successful in this job, you need to have empathy, compassion and a drive to make a difference. Being a calm person and having a sense of humour doesn't hurt either. I enjoy passing on my knowledge to the youth and giving them new tools to use in their life journey. It's very satisfying and rewarding to know I'm making a difference and helping someone. It's my 10th year working here. I love my job!

When I'm not working, I enjoy being with my family, doing yardwork, beading, reading, going on long walks with my dogs and exercising. Don't laugh, but I ride my stationary bike during *The Price Is Right*.

In 2011 I was the proud recipient of an Esquao award for my work with youth. I'm proud of my education and have just started on my BA in child and youth care from the University of Victoria. You are never too old to learn!



Education is important to survive in society. It will help you raise your family. Even if you come from poverty, you can work your way up. If I can do it, you can!



# STAFF

## Karen Acuna

### Human Services Worker Level 7 Team Lead

One of my grandfathers is from Saddle Lake and married a Métis woman. My other grandpa, from the Red River Settlement area, married a First Nations woman. Dad said I was smart and could go far in life. He only had a Grade 6 education, but he was a great role model.

I was born and raised in Calgary. I remember my first day on the school bus. I was greeted by a sea of blond hair and blue eyes, and I was petrified. Racism was evident then. I stuttered, I was taller and bigger than the other kids, and everyone else had gone to kindergarten and I hadn't. I was put with the special needs kids and I was very happy with them; they didn't care about my heritage. I did their homework for them. My teacher asked me why and I replied, "They said I'm smart." I was moved to Grade 2, became reclusive and was sent back to Grade 1.

Every job my dad ever had, he ended up being the boss. At his funeral, everyone said he had been a great supervisor, and I made a promise to him, and to myself, that I would go back to school. A pastor recommended social work, but I thought it was out of my reach, so although I read the books, I didn't apply for school. A few years later, with the help of the Alberta Human Services Métis and Non-Status Indian Bursary, I went to college and got my social work diploma at Mount Royal College. I'm happy to say I made the Dean's List. I obtained my degree at the University of Victoria, graduating with honours, and now I'm working on my master's degree at the University of Calgary. I was the first in the family to finish university. With four kids, an ill husband and a student loan, failure was not an option for me.

My career journey started with a practicum that became a full-time job as a youth coordinator. Then I worked for the Aboriginal Resource Centre, the Boys and Girls Club and Calgary Family Services. Six years ago I started working as an investigator with Child and Family Services. I saw the world through my Métis lens, and my job was the most natural fit for me. I loved what I was doing and was successful in getting a team lead position. A year later, I became lead of a new team with private guardianship. We had a record-setting year with a lot of kinship placements. My staff had the children write letters and meet with their bands to share their reasons for wanting to stay with their new families. This process not only was respectful to the band, but it also allowed the children their right to be heard and to establish a connection to their band. By ensuring that the children have a strong cultural plan, we ensure they can return to their band in the future, if they decide to do so.

Now I supervise a staff of seven. I believe a lot of our success is due to the band, Métis Settlement and Inuit consultations we do to establish the children with their community, to develop a meaningful cultural plan and to look for family—within the community and then outside, if need be.

Each fall I speak to students in BSW and MSW programs about what we do. I see the hopefulness in the faces of the people who want to work with Aboriginal people, and I always leave happy. I like to hand out adoption pamphlets at Aboriginal functions, and I get rewarded when someone comes forward who is genuinely interested in adopting.

I am proud of my four children and one grandson. I'm very pleased I joined the Alberta Human Services team. I know I contribute to the community and that I make a difference. Giving to people and treating people with respect and dignity—that's what this job's about. This can be a lifelong, fulfilling career. It is for me!



Ensure you have good strong boundaries. Figure out what works for you and give yourself a chance. Take a chance!

# Tom Chief Calf

## Manager

Born in Cardston, I am from the Kainai First Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy. I have eight siblings. Although my father never went to school and couldn't speak a word of English, he somehow managed to feed and instill a strong work ethic in all of us. He wanted us to succeed and often said, "You got to get up boys. You'll sleep long enough when you're dead."

I went to residential day school until Grade 3 and then I was bused to school in Lethbridge for grades 3 through 12. I have seen and experienced abuse and felt what it is like to be a minority. Despite all that, the exposure to mainstream culture has helped me in life; I speak the language and know the cultural components of both worlds.

As I had always been interested in working with youth, I took recreation management at a post-secondary school in Lethbridge. That's when I met and married Anne, and we had our first son.

My first full-time job was as a butcher. One year later, in 1980, I got a weekend job working as an aide at an alcohol treatment centre. I provided recreation activities and programming. A year after that, I went to work as a child care worker with a contracted agency of Alberta Human Services in a residential treatment centre. I did that for about eight years, and during that time was promoted from supervisor to director. In 1990, the owner of the agency became the regional director of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, and I went there too, to work for her once again.

In 2001, I applied for a regional manager job with Child and Family Services and was hired as the intervention manager. I supervised staff in three rural and two urban units. In 2006, I became the manager of placements and resources. I supervised five staff and was responsible for managing all the contracted facilities and all the placements—residential, foster care, respite care, group and treatment care.

# STAFF

In my current role, I coordinate and provide Aboriginal cultural training and offer Blackfoot language courses. It's important to me that Aboriginal cultural competency is a part of our staff's skill set. It's fun to watch my team learn and grow, and I feel lucky to work with such a committed group. I enjoy my team, co-workers and managers, and I enjoy making crucial decisions. Working in child intervention, I have learned the importance of each staff member's attitude, self-awareness and approach with children, youth and families. It is very traumatic to have to take a child from his or her family. While protecting children doesn't always mean we have to apprehend a child, sometimes there just is no way around it—for safety reasons, we have to take the child. It's how you do this that counts.

I am a proud father of three sons and am also very proud of my wife. Anne obtained a policing diploma, a bachelor of science degree in criminology and a master's degree in education. Now she works for the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate. We celebrated 33 years of marriage this year!

My greatest rewards from work are knowing that our intervention efforts support families to get through the hard times and knowing that I make a difference in the lives of children and families. It's incredible to watch families move from crisis or risk to stable and happy outcomes. The spirit of these people is amazing!

One of my sports role models was Alwyn Morris, a Mohawk Indian who won Olympic medals for kayaking. Alwyn let me wear his gold medal and told me, "If you have it in you to dream it, you have it in you to succeed."

I've had opportunities to do many different roles and I've enjoyed all of them. If you have an interest and passion to work with people, Alberta Human Services is a wonderful place to work. It provides many great opportunities to gain skills and is very supportive.

My life journey started in the Saddle Lake First Nation. All my siblings have gone home to our maker. I had nine children, but sadly I lost two in a car accident. I was also a foster mom to four children. They were entering their early adulthood, so I had them only for a short period. I am blessed with many grandchildren and several great-grandchildren—my precious gifts.

When I was about four years old, my mother died of tuberculosis. It was rampant in those days. A lot of people died from it. My father, with encouragement from the Catholic priest and the Indian agent, decided it would be best to send me to a residential school. There I was firmly discouraged from speaking my given language, Cree, and encouraged to speak only English. I was looked after, primarily, by one particular nun who spoke French. Since neither one of us could communicate very well in English, she taught me French and I taught her Cree. She taught me to be polite and show respect towards older people. But unfortunately I had some bad experiences there too. I was nearly 14 when my father found out about all the abuse and he came and took me home. Now, finally, I had a sense of happiness. I was among my people, with my relatives and with a family who spoke my language. But a portion of my past residential school days is always present with me. I still wear the physical scars today.

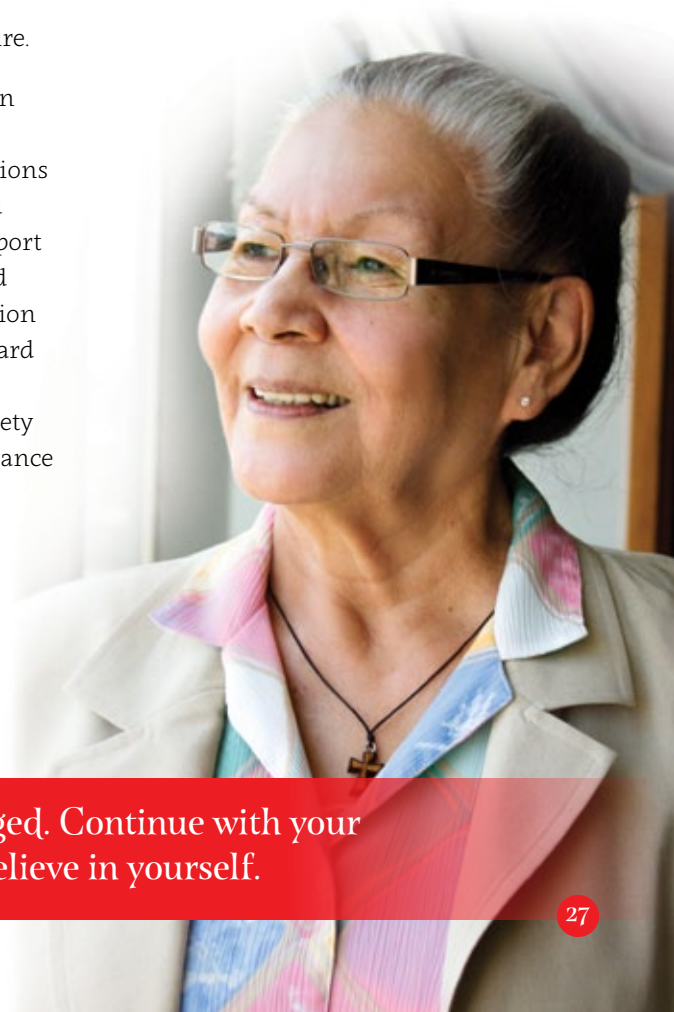
Later in life, I moved to Edmonton to work in a nursing home for seniors. I did that for two years. Working with the elderly, I learned what the word compassion really means.

I went to work for Poundmaker's Lodge Treatment Centre and learned a lot about addictions. I worked there for 10 years and became the first female acting director. A young man from the Edmonton Public School Board invited me to come and work with him on an Aboriginal program called the Sacred Circle. With my new working title of counsellor/trainer, I worked on the design of Aboriginal liaison services within the Edmonton public school system. I was really very fortunate to have met this young man. He was Ojibwa. He was well schooled and very capable of promoting consulting services and helping staff at the school board. We were the only Aboriginals doing this work. I did that for 14 years. I retired and became a student at the Lac La Biche campus of Portage College in the artisan program, and then I really did retire.

I received an honorary doctorate in education in the Cree language. I teach Cree at Blue Quills First Nations College, and still love beading and making moccasins. I proudly support my community through my board work. I sat on the Board of Education for three years and now I am a board member on both the Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society and the Council for Quality Assurance for Alberta Human Services.

I will be forever grateful for the guidance and encouragement I received from the Elders and the grandmothers. They taught me to believe in myself. It feels like they are with me always. I'm also grateful for the change that is occurring in Alberta Human Services, particularly in the leadership. They are consulting and collaborating with Aboriginal people with seriousness.

I'm living back home in Saddle Lake now, and my goal is to continue being physically, mentally, spiritually and culturally healthy.



**Do not be discouraged. Continue with your education. Always believe in yourself.**



# Leonard Bastien

## Treaty 7 Piikani Nation

# ELDER

I am Peigan (Piikani). I eat, live, breathe and incorporate my culture with western philosophy. I choose to wear my regalia for my photo to honour you. The golden eagle headdress is for chiefs and men of honour. The designs and beadwork on the garment represent our relationship and connectivity to the universe.

Born on the Peigan Nation in the hamlet of Bocket, I lived with my parents and eight siblings. Initially, I attended a residential day school. In the '60s, there was a program called Integration—it was like being billeted—and at 14, I was placed in a home in Lethbridge so I could attend Saint Francis School for Boys. My great-grandfather was French.

I was never really treated like an equal by the other boys.

Over the years, I went back and forth to my home community and had a variety of jobs. I was a ranch hand, construction worker, cultural coordinator, land manager for the band and consultant to Health Canada, and I worked on the rigs and in a trailer factory. I worked in governance for Indian and Northern Affairs and became the liaison with the chiefs of Treaty 7. I also had the honour of serving my community for 18 years as councillor and head chief. During this time I married Audrey and we raised a family of four daughters. Now I have four granddaughters and one grandson. I don't wrestle with him anymore though! At 16 years old, he is six feet five inches tall, weighs 260 pounds—with no fat—and wears a size 15 shoe!

I received my teaching training at the Blackfeet Community College in Browning, Montana, and helped the college's cultural and language instructors attain accreditation and recognition as teachers from the state of Montana, USA Education Authority.

I was the first recipient of this accreditation (Class 7, Cultural Expert) and I have provided cross-cultural training to police, judges, administrators, school boards, health

boards, and Child and Family Services boards. I currently provide mentorship at Mount Royal University and serve as a mentor and advisor to the Calgary Board of Education.

A few years ago, my wife and I were invited to help share our culture with the world through the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Along with another couple, we built and painted a teepee. The Blackfoot Nation of Alberta and the Blackfeet Nation of Montana are the only ones to adorn their teepees through a transference ceremony.

My wife is very educated, with multiple degrees. She is key to me being who I am. When my wife got a job offer for a senior position in Calgary, she asked that we leave our traditional home land and move to Calgary. In a way, it was hard to move. I was in my 40s and used to a certain way of life, but I also felt that it was time for a change. That change led me to a new career doing what I love. I have worked as a Traditional Elder in Child and Family Services' Aboriginal services office for the last 11 years. This office is unique in Canada. I work with the bands and incorporate Aboriginal beliefs and spirituality into the services we provide to recognize that each child should have connectivity to his or her culture.

In my spare time, I enjoy playing pool. I'm a regular competitor at the world championship pool competitions in Las Vegas every year. I am the proud recipient of the 2012 David Crowchild Memorial Award for making a difference, as an individual, in bridging two cultures. I currently sit as a member of the Elder Steering Committee on Aboriginal Recruitment for Alberta Human Services.

Keep an open mind. Form a personal relationship with the Creator. Respect yourself. Treat everyone the way you would like to be treated.



I was born and lived my whole life in Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation. I had seven siblings and am the only survivor. Married young, I had 10 kids and also raised two step-kids. I have many grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. If I stopped to add up the total, I would really feel old! I'm 91.

I lost my mom at an early age. Since my dad had no one else to look after me, he put me in an Anglican residential school. I remember a lot of funny things from then. There used to be pigeons flying all over the place in the kitchen. At Christmastime, the priest shot them so each child could have a pigeon to eat for Christmas dinner. It was good meat. There was a nun who was a kind of mother to me. She would talk to me and give me advice, and for a while I thought I wanted to be a nun. She told me it was all right to want to be a nun, but it was also all right to have a family and raise kids. I went to school until Grade 8. I was 14. I had nowhere else to go to live, so I stayed at the school and taught Cree to all the students. When I was 16, the nun started a hope chest for me, just like a mother would do.

I have always been very passionate about families, especially the broken ones. A few years ago my daughter, who is a social worker, asked me to meet with her and a retired judge. He wanted to do a survey on Aboriginal children in care. Our kids were being placed with families outside their home communities, and he wanted to change that. I admit I was a bit curious, so I went to the first meeting in Slave Lake.

After that meeting, I got two other Elders interested in joining our meetings. We became the first three board members. It grew from that to being an Elders Council with two Elders from each band joining us. We met and worked with child intervention workers from Child and Family Services and representatives from the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council. We wanted to make sure our kids kept their Aboriginal culture and connection to their community when being cared for by non-Aboriginal families. We also recommended that our children be considered for placement in Aboriginal homes first, before being considered for placement in non-Aboriginal homes.

Over time, I have assisted our band designate to reunite children with their families.

I also served on the board of the Western Cree Tribal Council Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Agency for many years before retiring in July 2012. I plan to stay involved with my community and support our children in some way.

I love to spend time knitting, sewing, beading and doing embroidery—these are good things I learned in residential school.

You know, I am very proud of all my family, and it made me feel really good when one of my sons, Richard, who is not only the Chief of Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation but also the Grand Chief of Treaty 8, told me that he is proud of me—proud of what I have contributed to our community and our families. Imagine that!



Remember the importance of respect.  
Respect your Elders and respect yourself.

# Resources

The stories in this book are one source of information. There are many other places you can get information and help on career planning.

## Career and Workplace Resources

You can access the government's career, workplace and labour market information in one of three easy ways: click, call or come in.

### Click

#### Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS)

[alis.alberta.ca](http://alis.alberta.ca)

The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website is Alberta's online source for career, education and jobs information, including:

- **Aboriginal Peoples Resources**—Find information on career planning, looking for work, starting a business or finding Aboriginal resources and groups at [alis.alberta.ca/aboriginalresources](http://alis.alberta.ca/aboriginalresources).
- **Alberta Work Search Online**—Learn to use the Internet to find information and find examples and activities to make the most of your work search at [alis.alberta.ca/worksearch](http://alis.alberta.ca/worksearch).
- **ALIS Tips**—View more than 150 easy-to-read articles on career, learning and employment topics at [alis.alberta.ca/tips](http://alis.alberta.ca/tips). Search by topic or audience.
- **CAREERinsite**—Complete online activities to generate occupational options and develop an action plan at [alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite](http://alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite).
- **Certification and Registration Requirements**—Find certification and registration requirements for regulated occupations and designated trades at [alis.alberta.ca/certinfo](http://alis.alberta.ca/certinfo).
- **Post-Secondary Information**—Review Alberta post-secondary schools and programs and distance-learning options in Western Canada at [alis.alberta.ca/edinfo](http://alis.alberta.ca/edinfo).
- **Occupational Information**—View job descriptions, education requirements, salary information, employment and advancement opportunities, and projected growth data for more than 500 occupations at [alis.alberta.ca/occinfo](http://alis.alberta.ca/occinfo).
- **Wage and Salary Information**—Search by occupation, geographic area and industry group at [alis.alberta.ca/wageinfo](http://alis.alberta.ca/wageinfo).

### Call

#### Alberta Career Information Hotline

Hotline staff can answer your questions about:

- career planning
- educational options and funding
- occupational descriptions
- labour market information
- work search skills
- the workplace

Call:

1-800-661-3753 (toll-free)

780-422-4266 (Edmonton)

### Come in

#### Alberta Works Centres

Alberta Works Centres across the province provide information on occupations, career options, ways to find work, education programs and funding. To locate a centre near you, call the Alberta Career Information Hotline or visit [alis.alberta.ca/awc](http://alis.alberta.ca/awc).



## Resources by Topic

### Career Planning

To access self-assessment tools, occupational information and career services, visit [alis.alberta.ca/career-explorers](https://alis.alberta.ca/career-explorers).

**CAREERinsite**—Complete online activities to generate occupational options and develop an action plan at [alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite](https://alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite).

#### ALIS publications

To view, order or download the following publications, visit [alis.alberta.ca/publications](https://alis.alberta.ca/publications).

*Assessing You: The First Step in Career Planning*

*Career Planner: Choosing an Occupation*

*A Guide for Midlife Career Moves*

*My Choices, My Work, My Life*

*Women in Non-Traditional Occupations: Stories to Inspire*

### Education and training

To look at your options and figure out how much education and training will cost, visit [alis.alberta.ca/education-training](https://alis.alberta.ca/education-training).

#### ALIS publications

To view, order or download the following publications, visit [alis.alberta.ca/publications](https://alis.alberta.ca/publications).

*Adult Back to School Planner*

*Education and Training Planner*

*Time to Choose...a Post-Secondary Education Program*

### Job Search and Resumés

To access job postings and resources, visit [alis.alberta.ca/jobseekers](https://alis.alberta.ca/jobseekers).

**Alberta Work Search Online**—Use the Internet to search for work at [alis.alberta.ca/worksearch](https://alis.alberta.ca/worksearch).

**e-Resumé Review**—Submit your resumé online for specific feedback at [alis.alberta.ca/eresume](https://alis.alberta.ca/eresume).

#### ALIS publications

To view, order or download the following publications, visit [alis.alberta.ca/publications](https://alis.alberta.ca/publications).

*Advanced Techniques for Work Search*

*Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job*

*Work Search Basics*

## Post-secondary Funding

To access information on post-secondary funding visit [alis.alberta.ca/payingforschool](https://alis.alberta.ca/payingforschool).

### ALIS publications

To view, order or download the following publications, visit [alis.alberta.ca/publications](https://alis.alberta.ca/publications).

*Money 101: Budgeting Basics for Further Education*

*Stretch Your Dollars: Budgeting Basics*

### Advancing Futures Bursary

Advancing Futures is a post-secondary bursary program for youth aged 18 to 22 who have been in government care. It provides funding for educational expenses and a living allowance for full- or part-time eligible students who are enrolled in an Alberta school and who have one of the following goals:

- Pursuing high school equivalency through adult education.
- Earning a degree or diploma from a post-secondary school.
- Learning a trade.
- Earning a licence or certificate.

Web:

[advancingfutures.gov.ab.ca](https://advancingfutures.gov.ab.ca)

Call:

310-0000 (toll-free in Alberta; enter 780-415-0085 after the prompt)

Call:

780-415-0085 (Edmonton)

### Alberta scholarship programs

To learn more about post-secondary scholarships and bursaries and how to apply for them, visit [alis.alberta.ca/scholarships](https://alis.alberta.ca/scholarships).

Call:

310-0000 (toll-free in Alberta; enter 780-427-8640 after the prompt)

Call:

780-427-8640 (Edmonton)

### Métis and Non-Status Indian Bursary

The Métis and Non-Status Indian Bursary program assists Métis and Non-Status Indian full- and part-time eligible students with their educational expenses as they pursue post-secondary education in the social services field.

For more information, visit

[humanservices.alberta.ca/metisbursary](https://humanservices.alberta.ca/metisbursary).

### Student Aid Alberta

Student Aid Alberta helps eligible Alberta post-secondary students meet the basic costs of learning and living.

The Student Aid Alberta website takes students through the different stages of applying for and getting student aid as well as repaying their student loan.

Web:

[studentaid.alberta.ca](https://studentaid.alberta.ca)

## Thinking about your future?

Definitely. And wondering —  
What do I want from my career?  
What jobs are out there? Is continuing  
my education and training the right  
move for me? Find the answers at ALIS.  
Your next steps are just a click away.



# alis.alberta.ca

CAREER PLANNING • EDUCATION • JOBS

➤➤ **Make the most of your future**

*Alberta*  Government



# Inspiring Possibilities

## Aboriginal Role Models Share Their Career Stories

Are you starting your career journey?  
Are you considering a career change? This book can help.

Inside you'll find:

- information on social work careers with Child and Family Services, Alberta Human Services
- stories from Aboriginal social workers, including what they think about their jobs and what challenges they have met and overcome
- inspirational messages
- helpful resource information.

