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HAIDA LAAS

News from the Council of the Haida Nation

Summer 2019



Photo: Shaah Kavaas Lucy Bell

Skil Jaadee *White* and Guudangee *Xahl Kil Amelia Rea* at the HELISET TFE SKÁL *Let the Languages Live* Conference
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HAIDA LAAS

NEWS of the COUNCIL OF THE HAIDA NATION

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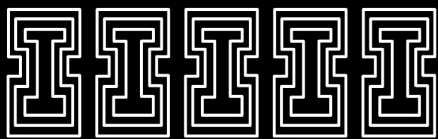
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What a time to be XaaydaGaay!

The work of self-governance requires a great deal of discipline, strength, perseverance, and resilience. It is an intergenerational commitment that calls on the physical, mental, and spiritual energy of our people. With this great mission, it is important to pause and appreciate the successes and good news within our nation. In my first year as elected president, I have looked to our citizens and communities for inspiration and regeneration as we work together in this journey to self-determination.

First in acknowledging recent achievements, we wish congratulate the nine SHIP elders who received their honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from Vancouver Island University and all of our elders, teachers, and learners who commit themselves to preserving and revitalizing the Haida language.

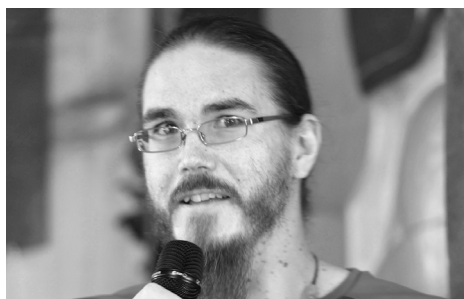
Our young people continue to shine as they begin to pick up the torch as our future leaders. Haana Edenshaw has made us all proud, speaking to the United Nations in *Xaad kil* about the importance of indigenous languages. *Xanjuu Gwang Chelsea Gladstone*, recent University of British Columbia graduate, has been awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Medal, following in the footsteps of her great uncle, Percy Gladstone, who was an academic and scholar committed to bettering the lives of our nation.

SGaawaay K'uuna Edge of the Knife, filmed entirely in the Haida language, is screening around the world. The Haida actors, directors, writers, costume designers, producers, and production crew continue to be recognized for their work in storytelling and language revitalization.

Sustained efforts of the Haida Gwaii repatriation committee continue producing results as our cultural treasures travel back to the homelands. Chiefs are exchanging coppers, carrying on our traditions and sharing history. Brave people are coming forward to speak about healing from trauma and addictions, breaking detrimental cycles of behaviour. Youth are marching for climate change and our stores are beginning to move away from single-use plastic bags thanks to our young leaders. Working together with other coastal nations, the Council of the Haida Nation supported the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, protecting our waters from large shipments of crude oil. At the same time, the Old Massett Village Council and Skidegate Band Council are working together and leading the way in renewable energy and increasing our local, clean energy independence.

We are not without challenges, distractions, and realities like climate change. Yet we continue to strive for a society that operates in balance and with recognition and respect for the interconnectedness of all things, just as we always have. On Haida Gwaii, we are able to maintain our sense of connection to place, history, culture, respectful relationships, and common responsibility to make things better for Haida citizens and all those who call Haida Gwaii home.

Gaagwiis *Jason Alsop*
President of the Haida Nation



Celebrating the SGaan Kinghlas – Bowie Seamount Management Plan

On July 10 the Council of the Haida Nation and Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced the completion of the SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount Gin Siigee Tl'a Damaan Kinggangs Gin K'aalaagangs *Marine Protected Area Management Plan* at Thluu Xaada Naay Canoe People House in Gawa Tlaagee.

The completion of the SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount Management Plan marks the conclusion of more than 10 years of work by the governance partners. It identifies goals and objectives for the management of the protected area, including objectives related to ongoing cooperative governance and adaptive co-management, research to support conservation outcomes, monitoring, and education and outreach.

The Management Plan is now available for download on the Council of the Haida Nation and Fisheries and Oceans Canada websites.

Haw'aa to everyone who came out to celebrate this important milestone and to all who contributed to its development!

Xaad kil · Xaayda Kil

Council of the Haida Nation wants to support our people in learning, speaking and using our language everyday. We are committed to incorporating as much Xaad kil and Xaayda Kil as we can in our publications. Any errors or inaccuracies are on the part of the editor(s). All clan and Haida citizens' names are printed as submitted to us. Corrections and updates are always welcome: info@haidanation.com.

Gaaysiigang Sding/Sdang

On March 1 and 2 over 200 people attended Gaaysiigang Sding/Sdang at the Haida Heritage Centre at Kay Llnagaay. Since the first Gaaysiigang forum took place in 2009, the Haida nation has been working with the provincial and federal governments to implement recommendations put forward at that gathering. Ten years later, it was time to look at the actions that had been taken, celebrate what has been achieved, and write the next chapter of Haida Gwaii's ocean story.

Some of the highlights of Gaaysiigang Sding/Sdang included talks by Māori entrepreneur Hone Mihaka and Tofino Mayor Josie Osborne. Breakout sessions followed to generate solutions to issues related to Haida and Islands culture, the marine environment and the diversification of Haida Gwaii's marine economy. At the end of the forum, Gaaysiigang Sding/Sdang participants committed to work together through yahguudang *respect* and the spirit of reconciliation to bring about justice, truth, responsibility, and transformation for Haida Gwaii.

Stay tuned for the forum proceedings for Gaaysiigang Sding/Sdang!

Photo: Jason Shafto/Full Moon Photo



Canada catches up to Coastal Nations with Bill C-48

The Haida nation and our coastal neighbours can rejoice now that Bill C-48, the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, will soon become law within Canada. The bill, passed on June 18, protects the North Coast from ships carrying more than 12,500 metric tonnes of crude oil through Haida waters. Member of Parliament, Nathan Cullen, first introduced the bill in 2017 and it formalizes decades of work to safeguard this priceless coastline. The Liberal government approved an amendment that requires the bill to be reviewed five years after it comes into effect.

President of the Haida Nation Gaagwiis Jason Alsop, as well as Coastal First Nations Special Advisor Gidansda, were among many fellow Indigenous neighbours who testified in support of this bill at Senate Hearings this past spring. This federal protection aligns with the Coastal First Nations (CFN) Declaration prohibiting crude oil tankers through our territories. The CFN Declaration was signed in 2010 as a result of the Enbridge Northern Gateway proposal and it prevents all oil supertankers from transiting the signatories' territories.



2nd Annual Haida Heiltsuk Women's Gathering

September 9-10, 2019
Waglisla Bella Bella

'IDEAL Woman'

Indigenous Decolonized Empowered Active Leaders



For more information contact:

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THE NATION'S BUSINESS: Summer Session

The living generation accepts the responsibility to ensure that our heritage is passed on to following generations. - Haida Proclamation

Council of the Haida Nation held the Summer Session July 4 and 5 at the Old Massett Community Hall. Gaw Tlagee was hot under sunny skies and cool winds burst off Massett Inlet. As the summer weather called many to the beaches, out on the water, and to pick freshly-ripened berries, Haida citizens settled in to attend day one of the Seasonal Session.

Forty Haida citizens must be present for a Special House of Assembly (HoA) according to A12.S7 of the Constitution of the Haida Nation. At the time of the financial report, less than 40 citizens were present, so the meeting proceeded as a regular Seasonal Session rather than a Special HoA.

Annual Audit

The Summer Session started with a review of the recently completed 2017 audit, presented by Lead Auditor for the Secretariat of the Haida Nation, Melissa Riechel.

The audit started earlier this year and this past spring the SHN board reviewed the completed financials and approved for the SHN Chair and Treasurer to sign off on it. From there, the audited financial statements were brought to citizens at the Summer Session. Taaw.ga Halaa' Leeyga May Russ, SHN Senior Executive Director, co-presented the audited statements and answered citizens' questions. An elected CHN representative moved and the session voted to accept the report as presented.

SHN staff are now working with Riechel to complete the 2018 audit.

Archipelago Management Board

Members of the AMB were on-hand to deliver their report and updates. Last winter was especially hard on SGang Gwaay with hurricane force winds that downed towering spruce trees all over the island. The south-end of the island was especially impacted. The AMB closed the

site for a short time while crews assessed damages and planned repairs. The village site has since re-opened and Watchmen are conducting tours focusing on improved security and taking actions to help ensure remaining cultural treasures are protected.

Executive Report

The CHN Executive makes operational decisions and is accountable to the full elected council. The current Executive Committee consists of: President of the Haida Nation Gaagwiis Jason Alsop; Vice-President Gin wadluu un uula isda ayaa-gang Trevor Russ; Kung Xangajii Shawn Cowpar; and Stephen "Buck" Grosse. In the past, the executive has organized its report to address progress on a series of important outcomes. At the last session, the executive redesigned the reporting process to speak to specific articles within the constitution.

A6. S1 The mandate of the Council of the Haida Nation is to steward the lands and waters of the Haida Territories on behalf of the Haida Nation, and to perpetuate Haida culture and language for future generations.

LAND

Solutions Table

The Solutions Table has been without CHN staff since December 2018, and the Haida nation is currently seeking new team members to complete this crucial work. The Solutions Table is where Haida and provincial representatives review all land and resource applications, to ensure all technical considerations are met, including the Haida Gwaii Land Use Objectives Orders, for regulating access to Haida land and for more sustainable resource management. Solutions Table members advocate for the Islands and seek to establish land and resource decisions consistent with Haida values and laws.

Haida citizens interested in developing careers can send their resume and cover letter to careers@haidanation.com.

Haida Gwaii Management Council

The Timber Supply Review (TSR), a process that will inform the Annual Allowable Cut for Haida Gwaii, continues to advance, slow and steady. Upon completion, HGMC will solicit feedback on the TSR and all members of the public will be able to provide input about the content of the TSR package. HGMC received direction from the two parties – CHN and the province of BC – about developing heritage policies for Haida Gwaii. The parties agree that heritage policies should be consistent across the Islands and HGMC is now working with the AMB to ensure of this.

WATERS

Gwaii Haanas Marine

On April 30 CHN issued direction that all commercial and recreational fishing will be prohibited in strict protection zones identified in the 2018 Gwaii Haanas Gina 'Waadluxan KilGuhlGa Land-Sea-People Management Plan. Consistent with the constitution, Haida citizens are allowed to harvest for personal use in all zones in Gwaii Haanas.

The plan is available at [haidanation.ca: Documents and Agreements > Marine > Gwaii Haanas Gina 'Waadluxan Kil-GuhlGa Land-Sea-People Management Plan 2018](http://haidanation.ca/Documents and Agreements > Marine > Gwaii Haanas Gina 'Waadluxan Kil-GuhlGa Land-Sea-People Management Plan 2018).

A6. S2 The Council of the Haida Nation shall strive for the full independence, sovereignty, and self-sufficiency of the Haida Nation.

Haida Title Case

The Haida nation is currently in preparation and pre-trial phase and our legal team continues to work on gathering evidence, document disclosures, completing expert reports, consolidation of pleadings and negotiating admissions of fact with Canada and BC. A hearing date has yet to be determined by the court.

HaiCo

The HaiCo Board now consists of six Haida directors and one Haida Gwaii resident. Interim Chief Executive Of-

ficer, Candace Dennis, joined the staff in April and spends half of her time on Haida Gwaii. In her short time as Interim CEO, Dennis has implemented organizational restructuring to help ensure a stable future for HaiCo and its subsidiaries. In the spring, SHN and CHN met with the HaiCo board and chair, Kilslaay Kaajii Sd-ing *Miles Richardson Jr.*, to develop clear lines of communication.

Atmospheric Benefits

To date, CHN has received all payments for atmospheric benefits from 2011-2015. In March of this year, CHN signed a 40-year Indigenous Atmospheric Benefits Agreement with BC at an 80/20 split for Haida/BC. CHN will use income from carbon credits to fund Kunst'aa guu – Kunst'aayah stewardship activities and to support other budgetary priorities.

Atmospheric benefits, or “carbon credits,” certify that an entity has protected ecosystems that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Government and industries can purchase these “carbon credits” to offset emissions.

Energy

Earlier this year, CHN participated in the Generating New Opportunities: Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative. Funded by Natural Resources Canada, this 4-phase program has the potential to contribute

training, mentoring, and funding to a Haida-owned renewable energy project. Phase-1 focuses on developing a community energy plan in partnership with village councils and BC Hydro. CHN is in discussions with OMVC and SBC to develop a community engagement process and protocol to guide future all-Islands energy planning.

In June, the Danish Ambassador to Canada and a delegate from Samso Island came to Haida Gwaii for their second visit. With a strong interest in renewable energy, they discussed how Haida Gwaii can achieve energy independence and move away from diesel-generated electricity.

A6. S3 The Council of the Haida Nation shall protect the domestic and foreign interests of the Haida Nation and territories through long-term strategies, negotiations, and steps consistent with this Constitution.

Reconciliation with BC & Canada

CHN remains in discussions with the provincial and federal governments regarding reconciliation. The Haida nation recently tabled a draft Reconciliation Framework Agreement that identifies long-term and short-term objectives for negotiation and management, and defines an approach to reconciliation of title and jurisdiction to

Haida Gwaii. CHN is working towards a deadline of September 30 for this agreement to formally initiate negotiations.

A6. S4 The Council of the Haida Nation shall promote peaceful co-existence with other people and governments without compromise to the objectives of the Haida Nation.

Relationships up and down the coast have continued to grow through legal, economic, cultural, social, and personal spheres. In June, CHN and Nuu-chah-nulth nations entered into an agreement to collaborate on oceans issues. This emerging partnership affirms a shared interest in advancing recognition of title and rights and confirms a common goal of responsibly stewarding oceans and the coastal way of life.

Additional committee reports were delivered swiftly throughout the 2-day Summer Session. Meeting packages are available to Haida citizens at the CHN offices in Gaw Tlagee and HIGaagilda.

Heiltsuk will open the Big House in Waglisla Bella Bella October 13-17. Witnesses will raise a Heiltsuk/Haida cedar monument to further the peace treaty with our coastal neighbours. The Haida nation sponsored the carving of the monument and will send a delegation to participate and witness this historic event.



Photo: Sarahinda Nany Haida Gwaii Museum

HAIDA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

October 22-25, 2019

HGaagilda Skidegate

Naagudgiikyagangs Community Hall

9:30am-4:30pm

Lunch will be provided. Please bring your own plates, bowls and utensils.
For more information contact 250.559.4468

K'uud Gang Wishing for food that someone else is eating or has



Photo: Haida Laas/Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Eager learners stand at attention as Staajing thinly slices the chiina.

Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Thinly sliced red *taaxid sockeye salmon* glistens with natural oils. Some of the thick oil dribbles and gels on the damp earth. It is an uncharacteristically sunny afternoon for January. Chiina *fish* lies waiting to be raised up high into the smokehouse on a cedar stick.

"It was so hot this past summer that many people had to freeze their salmon," explains Staajing *Chris Moody* as he closes his smokehouse. A billow of smoke engulfs him as he latches the door.

"We have to turn it every two hours so that it doesn't stick," Staajing says smiling. "All the while we keep the smoke and low fire going for the next 24 hours." After so many years, he could probably do this work in his sleep. He motions to the bucket of scraps and begins the walk to the ocean shore just across the street from his home in HIGaagilda *Skidegate*. "Let's go and feed the eagles," he says as he notes three gigantic *sk'iina seagulls* perched on the top of his smokehouse and the *k'aalts'ida crows* that gathered while he chopped aged *kal alder* beforehand.

Earlier that afternoon, Staajing had walked into Sk'aadga Naay Elementary School to teach children about *ts'iljii dried fish strips*. Fourteen eager and easily-distracted grade three students had marched into the room. With constant reminders of

respect, Staajing instructed the children over their busy energy and excitement. Staff treated minor but dramatic bumps and bruises while the class' math geniuses calculated the number of days it would take to process 1,000 *taaxid*. The keen kids stood at attention at the table with their tiny fingers ready to assist the guest speaker.

"Ts'iljii." Staajing pushed his head forward to stress the proper pronunciation as he repeated the word three times with the class. The students copied his movements, exaggerating them until they looked like a group of youthful head bangers.

Staajing explained that he began working at age 13 on boats under Gaaying.uuhlas *Roy Jones Sr.* Captain Gaaying.uuhlas worked hard, at times only eating peanut and butter sandwiches, but he would encourage his young crew to eat. "He worked very hard and he was fair," Staajing said of Gaaying.uuhlas. Staajing brought many a fine catch home and the years of experience have honed his filleting skills.

"*Taaxid* is one of the best staples for you in your life," Staajing advises the class as students begin to tell their own fish stories. Most of the students eat fish regularly while some had never eaten fish. Some love fish while others did not like it.

"I love catching fish, cleaning fish, cutting fish," says Staajing as he shows the class how to clean the *taaxid* that Willie

Davies donated to the class. He noted that Davies had already removed the head, tail, stomach and guts. Next Staajing removed the cheeks, fins, and belly. The fish was still thawing. The firmness of the fish when frozen often determines the density and quality of the strips.

"Our elders never wasted anything," he said as he gathered all the scraps and bones. He gave the skins to Sian Nallewag, the school's food coordinator, to crisp in the oven.

"My nanaay loves the salmon heads," said a young student who stood eagerly at the table.

"If I had the head here, you'd be taking that home to her," Staajing responded smiling. "Our elders eat more than we do nowadays. It's always good to think of them when we are cleaning our fish."

"I figured it out. You can do 30 fish a day!" yelled a young boy from his spot at the blackboard.

"Yes. It's a long day," confirmed Staajing. He only had to fillet three *taaxid* for the third-grade class. He had processed 77 in the last three weeks, he later confided.

The smell of salmon skins fills the room. The filleted *taaxid* is thinly sliced in the pan. The children begin to break up and settle in their desks. Drumming fills the air as First Nations School Resource Worker Jaad TI'aaw *Paula Varnell* and Local Food Coordinator Jenn Dysart focus the attention of the students. Their tiny chorus fills the room with the Haawa song for their guest.

After filleting, Staajing cleans up and says he will return with the finished *ts'iljii*. It is the end of the school day, but just the middle of the long smoking process.

Back on the beach the sun is beginning to wane. Staajing stands near the shore as a veil of approaching rain falls in the inlet in front of him. The squawks of *sk'iina*, *k'aalts'ida* and *Guud eagle* fill the air. Wings flap in the trees as he returns the first backbone. The cycle of thanks and life from beginning to end is practiced in this whole process. By Friday night the *ts'iljii* will be dry and ready to package for delivery to the students on Monday morning, just as he promised.



Photo: Haida Laas/Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Yearning to stay, the harvesters plod their way to the waiting boats to be whisked away back to school and home.

Bountiful Harvest

Rhonda Lee McIsaac

The dark choppy ocean water and cold winds did not dissuade curious and excited youth from clambering over the intertidal zone in search of dark black and frilly fronds of sGiw *Purple laver seaweed*. The cold waves slosh between the rocks below their feet. The tree line to the north is heavy with the jagged squawks of hlGuu heron roosting.

The Highland Ranger and the Haida Fisheries Program skiff took 10 grade eight students for a day of harvesting. Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay Secondary School students in Kwiiagee iiwaans *Maureen Brown's* class had been busy harvesting foods for a school feast for the past few months.

The students piled their bags and supplies neatly onto the metal deck of the Highland Ranger for a day on the water in Gaw Kaahlíi Masset Inlet. The morning sun was warm. The cool wind was constant company all day as the boats plowed forward through the breaking waves, past the village of Yan, and onwards to find the perfect harvesting grounds.

Haida Fisheries Guardian and cultural knowledge holder Barney Edgars carefully guided the Haida Fisheries Program skiff to shore.

"It may be too slippery there," he said eyeing up the path forward. He maneuvered to the next big, flat rock. Kwiiagee iiwaans and Chief Matthews Principal Michael Hart, field trip helper for the day, stepped out onto the slippery shoreline and headed

up the rocky beach.

Students stepping ashore commented on the slippery eelgrass and the beauty of the shoreline. Soakers were guaranteed for those who did not bring the required rubber boots. Youth and elders spoke breaking the lull of waves as they gathered sGiw by the water's edge.

sGiw grows abundantly along the cold intertidal shores of Haida Gwaii in the spring. It is an edible member from the red algae family, also known as laver. Coastal people affectionately call it "black gold" because it is so highly valued. sGiw is salty with high nutritional value. It is often sun dried and can be oven crisped for extra crunchiness.

It is labour intensive like most harvesting activities. The long fronds grow on rocky shorelines attached by a single node. The plentiful nearly black-coloured clumps of sGiw lie atop the eel grass and rocks. At low tide the frilly edges of the sGiw catch the air and slightly ripple in the wind. It can also plaster a rock as it dries under the hot sun. Its transparency shows clearly against the rocks. The amount of bending, stooping, and kneeling while harvesting makes for a physical workout that stretches muscles you forgot you had.

Onshore, Kwiiagee iiwaans, Xyaahl Gulaa *Colleen Williams*, and Oolangkuhlway *Diane York* set the youth to work. The students were quick to harvest the black gold they found along the outgoing tide.

Kwiiagee iiwaans pointed out chitons, sea cucumbers, and mussels. After a couple hours, rumbling tummies called and a smoky fire was lit, and soon the group was roasting marshmallows and hot dogs. Chat-ter and laughter filled the beach.

Offshore, the Highland Ranger's skipper, Paul Rosang, Principal Hart, and the grade eight boys were unsuccessful in their attempts to harvest any halibut or crab on this field trip. The roar of the motors was barely heard over the rushing surf. "It wasn't meant to be today," says Rosang.

After a leisurely lunch, and as awkwardly as they landed, the students loaded back onto the boat. Their sun kissed faces smiled brightly as yawns quickly followed. They beat a retreat back to Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay with their bags of bounty.

The salty smell of sGiw permeated the classroom as it was quickly spread out onto the tables. The salty black clumps would air dry and shrink to a quarter of its size.

"This is my favorite treat. You dry it out. Crisp it in the oven just a little. It's crispy and light," said a happy Oolangkuhlway as she spreads out the sGiw onto the tables. Slowly the students milled out of the classroom. Passing teachers ogled as they walked by.

The sGiw was left to dry in the classroom. The busy hands of students and chaperons ensured that there was enough for their fall feast. Their first ever feast had been planned, harvested, and hosted by Kwiiagee iiwaans' grade eight class. It is hoped that the community will join them as they highlight their culture and language skills.

Food preparation skills are shared as food is harvested. The chitons rolled up in their hard shells after being harvested off their rock homes. Kwiiagee iiwaans advised that they be boiled and sliced thin when eaten. "It's nice to give the elders a feed," she said as she deposited the chitons and mussels into a pail for later delivery. The oval shaped shell plates are also used on regalia and as pendants on necklaces.

The hallway outside fell silent as the students disappeared to their homes after a long day harvesting, learning, and exploring in the field.



Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth Collaborate on Ocean Protection



Photo: Michael Whyte

Sunset view in Tla-o-qui-aht territory near Tofino.

In June the Haida nation and Nuu-chah-nulth nations entered into an agreement to collaborate on oceans issues. The agreement affirms the common purpose of advancing the recognition of rights and title in the both nations' respective territories and confirms a shared interest in achieving marine and fisheries-related goals. In addition, the agreement establishes a Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth Oceans Dialogue Forum that will create a venue for the nations' leadership to share their knowledge, expertise, and experience to support the protection of lands, oceans, and resources and the flourishing of Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth peoples.

"We have always been connected to our coastal neighbours through travel, trade, and intermarriages," with the signing and implementation of this important agreement, including the Haida nation's recent intervention into the Ahousaht fisheries appeal in support of Nuu-chah-nulth commercial fishing rights, we are showing our commitment to reinforcing our relationship with the Nuu-chah-nulth nations," said President of the Haida Nation

Gaagwiis *Jason Alsop*.

Both Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth nations share concerns about the impacts of human activities on future generations and are seeking to improve protection of the oceans and marine species and to ensure ecologically sustainable fisheries. Key topics for discussion at the first Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth Oceans Dialogue Forum, anticipated to take place in Fall 2019 will include herring and chinook management, shipping issues, and the protection and management of the Offshore Pacific marine protected area. Some of these initiatives could involve other coastal nations.

The Haida nation has previously entered into treaties with neighbouring coastal nations, such as the treaty between Heiltsuk and Haida nations. The Haida and Nuu-chah-nulth partnership is different from other agreements in that it does not clarify territorial boundaries, but is instead an arrangement to support collaboration on marine and fisheries-related issues.

2019 Summer Students

CHN is pleased to welcome 10 summer students to the team! These young adults are gaining work experience, learning about Haida governance, and adding great energy to offices in Gaw Tlagee and HIGaagilda this summer. CHN appreciates their contributions, congratulates them as they return to their studies this autumn, and looks forward to working with these Haida citizens in the coming years.

Citizenship

Aliyah Arens

Finance

Angel Brown

Haida Fisheries

Gin xahlsingee ing ga *Taylor Lantin*

Heritage and Natural Resources

Tsaan Taawee Halaa 'Leeyga *Simon Smith*
Daniel Harris

Human Resources

Alyson Bell

Information Technology

Hldantsixid taagans *Brynna Williams*
Darius Alfred

Protected Areas

Schon Sjolund
Teanna Russ

Xaayda Kil and Xaad kil Haida Gwaii Mentor Apprentice Program Podcast

New Haida-language resources are now openly available to hear online with the Haida Gwaii Mentor-Apprentice Program podcast.

The recording brings Haida Gwaii Mentor-Apprenticeship Program participants to you through the Haida Gwaii Radio Society, with indispensable support from HIGaagilda Xaayda Kil Naay *Skidegate Haida Immersion Program*, Saahlinda Naay *Haida Gwaii Museum*, and Community Resilience Through Arts and Culture funding.

In the first episode Haida language learners Iljuu Xiilaay *Isabel Brillon* and Oweé Jaad *Serena Smith* speak with fluent language teacher Dr Jiixa *Gladys Vandal*. With an introductory interview between Oweé Jaad and program host SGAan Kwahagang *James McGuire* recorded in spring 2019.

To listen to the podcast, go to Haida Gwaii Radio Society at haidagwaiiradio.org.

Honorary Doctorates for Haida Language Speakers

Rhonda Lee McIsaac

The best kept secret on Haida Gwaii has finally been revealed. In their button blankets, cedar hats, and finest clothes, nine honourees stepped onto the brightly lit convocation stage. The sound of bagpipes, clapping hands, and cheers from their proud escorts greeted them. The nine Haida language speakers took their seats on the convocation stage at Port Theatre in Snuney-muxw territory.

The nine *k'aay.yas elders* were on stage to receive honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from Vancouver Island University's Faculty of Health and Human Services on June 3. Their magnum opus, the SHIP Glossary, results from 21 years of language and culture preservation in HIGaagilda. Together they have created books of *Xaayda Kil* words and phrases including 85 children's books, archived audio recordings, over 280 CDs, translations for private and public purposes, a language app containing 200 words and 500 phrases, the HIGaagilda *Xaayda Kil K'aalang Haida Glossary* containing over 26,000 words, and an ongoing evolution of new words and phrases. Learners and teachers use their language resource materials throughout Haida Gwaii.

"It is everything that residential school was not," said Luu *Gaahlandaay Kevin Borserio* of the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program. SHIP was founded in 1989 to preserve and revitalize *Xaayda Kil*. Luu *Gaahlandaay* was hired to be their teacher and is now the director.

The stage at Vancouver Island University (VIU) was set with a ceremonial convocation suite including two carved chairs upon which the Chancellor Louise Mandell and Vice-Chancellor President Dr Ralph Nilson sat surrounded by faculty and graduates. The chairs were carved by artist Arthur Vickers. Graduates touch a carved bentwood box upon receipt of their parchment paper. A paddle and a mace to honour both indigenous and Western ways of knowing were placed in the front of the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor to witness the events of the day.

The Registrar welcomed and introduced the procession as they came onto the stage. The procession of over 200 graduands and their professors joined the *k'aay.yas* already seated onstage.

Opening the convocation, VIU Chancel-

lor Mandell spoke. Her speech included a history of colonization and its effects on language. She acknowledged how the graduates exemplify the power of Haida ways of knowing; how different modern education is from Indian Residential Schools; and how the graduates' experiences are highly valued. Applause rang loudly as Chancellor Mandell completed her address.

Faculty of Education professor Les Malbon helped spearhead the honouring of these nine knowledge keepers. He stood with Luu *Gaahlandaay* on stage. Luu *Gaahlandaay* called out the name of each recipient as the Haida contingent cheered loudly from their seats in the audience.

Chancellor Mandell and Vice-Chancellor Nilson conferred the honorary doctorate degrees. One by one, each *k'aay.yas* was bestowed their honorary doctorate degree.

From Dr Gaaying.uuhlas, whose eyes widened at the presentation of his parchment, to Dr Niis Waan who wiped away tears of joy, the importance of this event was profound for all the happy recipients. Dr Jiixa exuberantly clapped her hands and smiled widely when her name was called out. Dr Sgaana Jaads K'yaa Ga *Xiigangs* looked amazed as she rubbed the rough top of the cedar box of knowledge. The crowd gave shouts of appreciation and pride. "Way to go, Mom!" shouted Dr Gwaaganad's son,

Guud T'awt'is Judson Brown.

Dr Gaaying.uuhlas Roy Jones Sr., Dr Yang K'aalas Grace Jones, Dr Sgaana Jaads K'yaa Ga *Xiigangs Kathleen "Golie" Hans*, Dr Ildagwaay Bea Harley, Dr Taalgayaa'adad Betty Richardson, Dr Sing.giduu Laura Jormanainen, Dr Jiixa Gladys Vandal, Dr Niis Waan Harvey Williams and Dr Gwaaganad Diane Brown wore their new VIU capes with pride. The graduates received the highest honour that university can bestow.

Those fluent language speakers who have gone before weighed upon their minds. Their spirits continue to hold the new graduates up as they preserve and revitalize *Xaayda Kil*.

Luu *Gaahlandaay* also received an Alumni Honour Award for outstanding work in education with HIGaagilda *Xaayda Kil Naay* for the last 21 years. After receiving the award, he thanked each SHIP *k'aay.yas* with love and respect. "I know the Skidegate Haida language will go on," he said to a throng of Haida well-wishers after leaving the stage.

The event culminated with a celebration dinner hosted by VIU. The doctors were honoured by their community and leaders for their hard work and dedication to language and the preservation of *Xaayda Kil*.



Recent doctoral graduates and SHIP director Luu *Gaahlandaay* pose for a celebratory photo.



Photo: Haida Laas/Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Haida language learners, teachers and advocates at the HELISET TFE SKÁL *Let the Languages Live* conference.

litl dlaa tlaats sang salaanaa aa t'alang kil 'laagang

Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Skil Jaadee White and Gundangee Xahl Kil Amelia Rea were two youth representatives of the more than 1,000 people who gathered to celebrate the United Nations International Year of Indigenous Languages in June in Victoria. In their presentation entitled "litl dlaa tlaats sang salaanaa aa t'alang kil 'laagang *After us, the language will continue,*" they share their mutual passion for Haida culture and language revitalization.

The conference room was small and filled with engaged listeners. The Haida youth appeared a little nervous at the start, but put everyone in the room at ease through story and laughter. They both acknowledged the cultural, spiritual, and social connections that have guided them to HELISET TFE SKÁL *Let the Languages Live* conference in Lkwungen territory earlier this summer. It was an important learning opportunity and a celebration of emerging language learners, advocates, and champions.

The work that Skil Jaadee and Gundangee Xahl Kil do has been curated by matrilineal influences steeped in culture. Through their clans, both language learners talked about how they can trace their lineage into deep time. Being able to fully identify their family line puts them in a powerful place to know who they are, where they are from, and their role within the Haida nation. They become more than dots on the family tree and know

they are responsible for maintaining their language, culture, and clan stories.

In their presentation, both Skil Jaadee and Gundangee Xahl Kil joked about "being dragged around" to different culture and language events as children. Now, they realize the values and knowledge that was instilled in these formative years. They have pride and a desire to continue learning about their culture and language and both young women give credit to their mothers, Candace "Kaanii" Weir and Sdaahl K'awaas Lucy Bell, for guiding and teaching them. The strong appreciation for their mothers was heard and the audience could feel the importance of female leadership.

Skil Jaadee and Gundangee Xahl Kil recalled growing up in Gaw Tlagee when naanalang *grandmothers* and tsiinalang *grandfathers* spoke Xaad kil in the home and around town. This fluency was beneficial to many babies and young children.

In the presentation, Gundangee Xahl Kil shared that she has been doubly blessed to become a good Xaad kil speaker. She briefly described a ceremony while out on the land with her family when she was a young girl. During the ceremony, cones were placed across her mouth to ensure that she would become a good speaker. This ceremony was done not once, but twice.

"The ceremony was done two times on

me because my mom wanted me to become a really good speaker," Gundangee Xahl Kil laughingly says. The second ceremony happened during Sdaahl K'awaas' thesis presentation in Hawaii. Gundangee Xahl Kil also notes her mother underwent the same ceremony when she was younger. "I need to honour her," stated Gundangee Xahl Kil, as she nodded to her mom seated in the audience.

From ceremonies to casual community lessons and more structured educational opportunities, Gundangee Xahl Kil and Skil Jaadee took what they could from all of their educators.

"Chief Matthews school was a good example to show and encourage a child to learn about what it is to be Haida," said Gundangee Xahl Kil. The school established a strong cultural foundation and Skil Jaadee described how she admired the art incorporated throughout the school. What remains special to them both is the Chief Matthew's children's dance group.

"It's totally led by the children, from the introductions and the dance to the song selections," Skil Jaadee adds.

Even with strong influences in the home and community, the loss of Haida culture and language is never too far from the surface. "To think that decades ago, Haida people were not allowed to dance, sing or

speak. For us to have freedom to identify as Haida and to have pride is everything,” said Guudangee Xahl Kil.

Tahayghen Elementary School was also rich with culture and language, in large part, because of her Naanii Rosa Bell and her mother who both taught there.

Going “uptown” to Gudangaay Tlaats’gaa Naay Secondary School (then referred to as “George M. Dawson”) was a bit of a transition, but the cultural connections remained strong. Skil Jaadee’s mother was a Haida language teacher at the school, and she had the opportunity to learn directly from Tsiinii Stephen Brown whose first language was Xaad kil.

As they grew older, their families continued to encourage them to participate in other learning opportunities. Skil Jaadee described that in 2015 she attended a language immersion bootcamp. “A dozen of us gathered in a class to learn the language all day. We’d only speak Haida and that was a pivotal point for learning,” Skil Jaadee said. “I’m a big advocate for immersion.”

Another program that has supported language immersion and revitalization was an off-grid and multi-day course. Guudangee Xahl Kil participated in a five-day language camp on the land in remote T’aalan Stl’ang with other community members.

“We utilized the land, the supernatural beings, and food,” described Guudangee Xahl Kil. “We practiced using some of those ceremonies, rituals, medicines, and foods. It was just such a beautiful week. Of course, learning through food and medicine harvesting, that’s a part of our lives.”

This dedication to the language also



Skil Jaadee White with fellow youth panel presenters at the conference.

sustained Guudangee Xahl Kil during a tough relocation to Victoria with her mom a few years ago. With HIGawangdlii Skilaa Lawrence Bell’s guidance, they translated and edited 3,000 phrases from Xaat Kil hl Sk’at’aa! *Alaskan Haida Phrasebook* into a Xaad kil app. They gathered photos to illustrate the phrases, and her hope is that this will help kids and adults who do not live on Haida Gwaii and cannot attend the programs offered on the Islands to learn.

Museums and repatriation are another passion that emerged through their upbringing. Guudangee Xahl Kil said, “When we were repatriating ancestral remains, the elders reminded us that we need to speak to the remains in Xaad kil. They said that they wouldn’t understand us if we were speaking to them in English.” The elders taught the

Repatriation Committee members and volunteers prayers and phrases to use to let the ancestors know their good intentions.

Skil Jaadee added that bringing home other audio recordings containing the voices, stories, and songs of elders and ancestors is part of future plans. She talked about how important singing, dancing, and celebration are to learning the Haida language.

“Through dancing,” Skil Jaadee explained, “we’ve established the best connections with people ... I feel that nothing brings people together more than good food, good songs, and laughing a lot. That’s always involved when we go somewhere.”

From ceremony to dance and language; it is all connected through the women in their lives, even in simple ways like using Haida to label the items in your freezer, said Skil Jaadee.


“My personal goal is to focus on how I can give to my family in my work and do what I can for myself. Haida culture takes care of me in so many ways. It helps me mentally, physically, spiritually, and through my diet. Being in ceremony, and to grow those relationships with people who encourage me to be closer to myself and to grow more, it has really helped me a lot. In taking care of myself, I can take care of others in the best way,” said Skil Jaadee. She concluded with a message of gratitude and hope, “the wealth of knowledge that we have makes us privileged. I know that after us, the language will go on.”



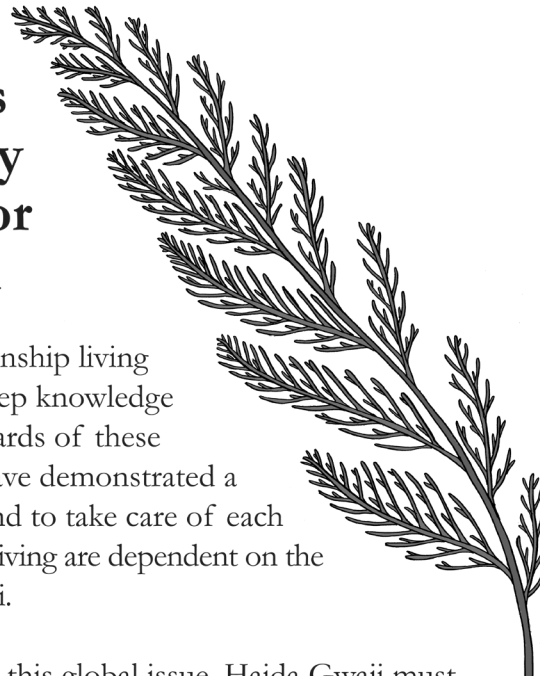
Laanas Tamara Davidson introduces SGaawaay K’uuna Edge of the Knife in Xaad kil at HELISET TTE SKÁL.



In September 2018, the Council of the Haida Nation co-hosted the first ever Renewable Energy Symposium in G̱aw Tlagee. This Declaration was announced at the event. Signed by local governments and Island citizens, it is a shared commitment to see Haida Gwaii increase independence through local renewable energy.



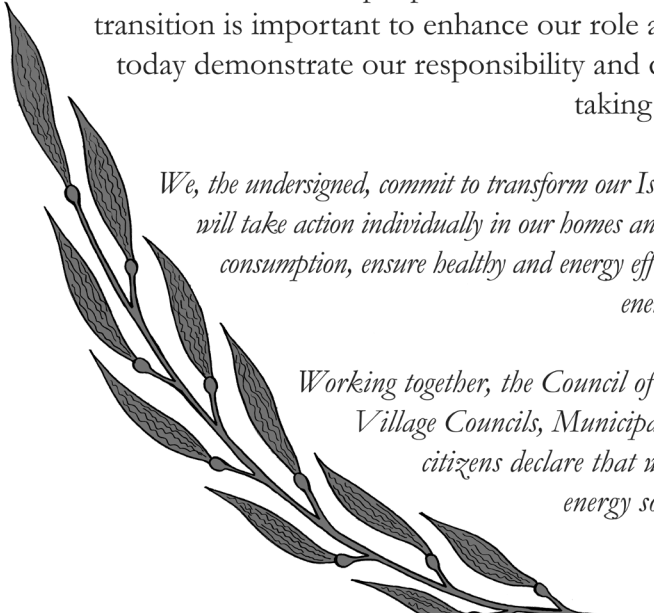
The People's Clean Energy Declaration for Haida Gwaii



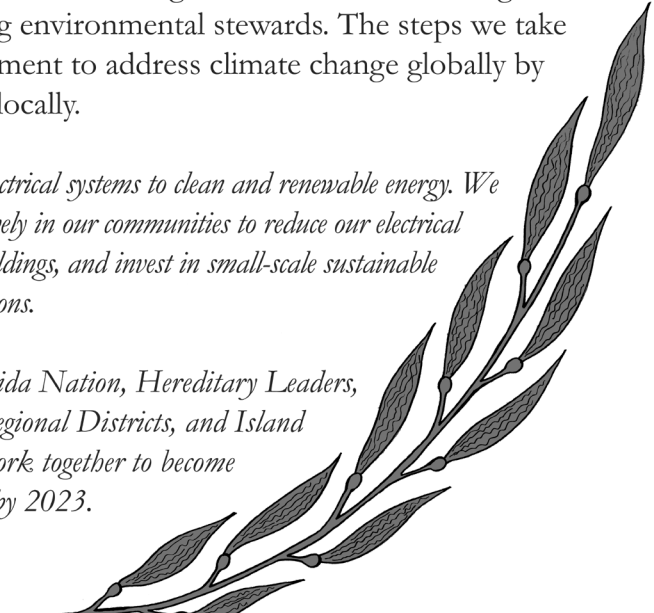
The Haida Nation has a long relationship living with the land and sea, and we have deep knowledge that guides our responsibility as stewards of these Islands. Today, the Islands' communities have demonstrated a commitment to watch over the land and sea and to take care of each other. Together we acknowledge that our ways of living are dependent on the well-being of Haida Gwaii.

Human behavior is changing the climate. To take action on this global issue, Haida Gwaii must turn away from diesel generated energy and invest in clean sources of power. With our geography, resources, and new technology, we are in a unique position to chart a path that will take us to the forefront of ending the fossil fuel era.

Local, clean power systems will ensure our energy security while maintaining an environment that has nurtured the peoples of these Islands for millennia. Being on the frontline of this global transition is important to enhance our role as strong environmental stewards. The steps we take today demonstrate our responsibility and commitment to address climate change globally by taking action locally.



We, the undersigned, commit to transform our Islands' electrical systems to clean and renewable energy. We will take action individually in our homes and collectively in our communities to reduce our electrical consumption, ensure healthy and energy efficient buildings, and invest in small-scale sustainable energy solutions.



Working together, the Council of the Haida Nation, Hereditary Leaders, Village Councils, Municipalities, Regional Districts, and Island citizens declare that we will work together to become energy sovereign by 2023.

Ngaasydli Gud ad is *Heal Together*

Rhonda Lee McIsaac



Photo: Haida Laas/Rhonda Lee McIsaac

Invited guest, former NHL All Star, and author Theoren Fleury enjoys his time learning and sharing on Haida Gwaii.

Men can now ngaasydli Gud ad is *heal together* in a new health initiative.

Standing side by side, Huux Percy Crosby and Taaiyou Robert Russ announced GaaGagaay Canoe Pathways Men's Club as a private space for men to address health issues and healing in HIGaagilda.

"We're on the canoe pathway to healing ourselves," Huux stated as he revealed the club's name. He went on to explain that was one of the main reasons that HIGaagilda Xaayda Kil Naay (SHIP) chose this name for the men's group.

Huux was instrumental in founding GaaGagaay Men's Club, and he expresses humility and grace when talking about the group, "It's not Huux's or Taaiyou's men's club, but it's for all men."

Huux's own personal journey inspired him to ensure men have a safe space to do the hard work of healing. He recently left a long-running political career to pursue his calling in health and wellness. Taaiyou, Xaaynangaa Naay Skidegate Health Centre board member, supports GaaGagaay. The formation of this group meets a strategic goal of the Xaaynangaa Naay Skidegate Health Centre.

Xaaynangaa Naay and Huux invited former NHL All Star, Stanley Cup winner, and Olympic Gold medalist and author Theoren Fleury to speak at a launch event on April 30 at Naagud-giikyagangs Skidegate Community Hall.

While on the Islands Fleury attended the ngaasydli Gud ad is events on May 1 that in-

cluded men's yoga, traditional healing sessions, and haircuts. Fleury also checked out the local youth centre, played a game of street hockey with the QCYC Cookie Monsters, and posed for some fun photos.

"I've been to over 400 communities and this was the only one that has launched a men's group. I will be telling every community I visit after this about this night," Fleury said beaming with enthusiasm.

He has faced off with many of hockey's greatest, but Fleury's own healing from abuse and ensuing addictions proved to be his toughest battle. Since he embarked on his healing journey, Fleury is enjoying life as a healer and motivator to help get people where they want to go.

Fleury's motivational talk, entitled "Me Too," aimed to remind a group of 100 youth, k'aay.yas elders, and mostly men that our struggles are not our own, but are part of a shared struggle. In his book *Conversations with a Rattlesnake*, Fleury says that trauma is a teacher.

He shared about how trauma teaches each of us about abandonment and neglect. It also instills a belief of not being good enough or loveable and ultimately raises questions of purpose and place in the world. He found that trauma manifests within as self-hatred and fear. This becomes central to each relationship and can be damaging, as it was to him and his life. He then found a rewarding path to healing.

Through counselling and learning about

compassion and vulnerability, he moved from the guilt and stigma associated with trauma to a place of wellness and healing. He described that, for him, healing came from establishing loving, caring, and empathetic relationships. In finding this spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness he was able to find his place in the world.

The room was silent except for occasional applause and laughter throughout his inspirational talk. He owned his story through relatable anecdotes, humour, and expressive body language. There were many silent nods of affirmation as he spoke. He was able to move with the pain in the room as he shared his deeply personal journey.

"You made space for me. So, now I ask you to make a safe space for the men in your community to share their stories and experiences," he remarked as he commended the crowd.

To help guide Fleury, Huux gifted him an Eagle Transforming cedar paddle by Yahl Aadaa Cori Savard. According to protocol, Hltlaaxuulang Gud ad K'aajuu Friends Together Singing then invited him to dance the paddle to life and help raise up GaaGagaay Men's Club. Fleury was in fine form along with all the warriors who rose from the crowd.

"I can't wait to come back," Fleury stated. "I can't wait to see where this men's group goes. It's going to do good work," he said holding his newly gifted paddle.

Fleury later signed autographs for fans who brought in hockey sticks, jerseys, and even a trading card. He also signed copies of his best-selling books, *Playing with Fire* and *Conversations with a Rattlesnake*.

The event was made possible with the support of Kaa Dllxaaws Naay Skidegate Band Council, Xaaynangaa Naay Skidegate Health Centre, XaaydaGa GidGa ad YaaGalang Naay Haida Child and Family Services, Jesse Jones Memorial Fund, Husby Forest Products, DUDE'S Club, Colin Hansen and family, First Nations Health Authority, and HIGaagilda Xaayda Kil Naay Skidegate Haida Immersion Program.

GaaGagaay Men's Group meets every second Thursday at 7pm at Xaaynangaa gii Alive Forever Adult Day Program. Men of all ages are welcome.

"We're all on a pathway to healing," stresses Huux, "what is said in those walls, stays in those walls." All meetings are confidential.

Join the Facebook page, GaaGagaay- Skidegate Men's Group. Telephone: 250.637.1944.

THE GREAT LIST 2019

This year, the Haida nation is proud to celebrate and acknowledge graduates in Gaw Tlagee, HIGaagilda and beyond. The following is a Great List presenting the names of those who have completed certification in their field of choice! Congratulations to you all and we look forward to acknowledging the many citizens who are furthering their education today and will be graduating in the years to come. If we have missed you or someone you know who has graduated, email us at info@haidanation.com.

Doctorates

Dr Gaaying.uuhlas *Roy Jones Sr.*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Yang K'aalas *Grace Jones*, Honourary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr SGaana Jaads K'yaa Ga Xiigangs *Kathleen "Golie" Hans*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Ildagwaay *Beatrice Harley*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Taalgayaa'adad *Betty Richardson*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Sing.giduu *Laura Jormanainan*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Jiixa *Gladys Vandal*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Niis Waan *Harvey Williams*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Dr Gwaaganad *Diane Brown*, Honorary Doctorate of Law, Vancouver Island University

Deanna Kerrigan, Doctor of Medicine, University of British Columbia

Masters

Kii'iljuus *Barbara Wilson*, Masters in Curriculum and Instructional Foundation, the Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University

Alana Johnson, Masters of Theological Studies: Indigenous, North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies

Bachelors

K'uul Gaada *Laura Beaton*, Renewable Resource Management in Environmental Sciences, Lethbridge College

Xanjuu Gwang *Chelsea Gladstone* double major in First Nations Indigenous Studies and Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, University of British Columbia with a Lieutenant Governor Medal

Taan Tsujuus Jaad *Hailey Bennett*, General Associate of Arts Degree, Langara College

Stihl il jow *Hannah Fregin*, Bachelor of Tourism Management, Thompson Rivers University

Xaayaa hltaaguus *Jaimie Holt*, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, University of Victoria

Geoffrey Martynuik, Bachelor of Science in Economics and Finance, University of Victoria

Cooper Wilson Junior, Bachelor of Physical Education and Coaching, Douglas College

Khataya Brown, Bachelor of Arts in Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Alicia Pearson, Bachelor of Business in Human Resources Management, Thompson Rivers University

Tarah Samuels, Bachelor of Business in Administrative Management, Langara College

Braedon Roberts, Bachelor of Environmental Sciences with a minor in planning, University of Northern British Columbia

Nicole Kuhn, University of Washington

Jayde Doell, Bachelor of Nursing, Thompson Rivers University

Diplomas

Tiffany Story, Art History and Visual Studies, University of British Columbia

Slaay Gulaagaa *Alfred Davidson III*, First Nations Fine Art Advanced Diploma, Coast Mountain College

Emily Manfron

Peter Russ

Jonathan Klick

Charlene Stokes

Certificates

Slaay Gulaagaa *Alfred Davidson III*, Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs for Artists Certificate, University of Victoria

Slaay Gulaagaa *Alfred Davidson III*, Northwest Coast Jewellery Arts Certificate, Native Education College

Xay Kuyaas *Ariane Medley*, RBC Aboriginal Training Program in Museum Practices, Canadian Museum of History

High School Diplomas

GidGalang Kuuyas Naay

Daagwiiyah *William Gravelle*

Xuuya K'aajuu Giis *Teresa Russ*

Kuuya Jiihlil *Avery Robson*

Tanika Brown

Isaac Hill

Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay

Guud Kuyaas *Brannon Bell*

Yaath Gusuus *Jessica Collison*

Sgaaluud Gee *Brooklyn Lantin*

Gudang gaay kii *Coral Reynolds*

xundaayaa *Alyson Bell*

Koyas Morrison

Simon Smith

Darius Alfred

Kaden Andersen-Wood

Markus Edgars-Carty

Destiny Davidson

Kiera Davis

Mary Jane Edgars

Camryn Parnell

Cheyenne Smith

Domanic White

Brodie Williams-Brown

Sandra Amos

Haida Citizens Grade 12 – Off-Islands

Kennedie Montjoy

Linden Montjoy

Devin Stewart

Anthony Allen

Cassandra Edenshaw

Trinity Gladstone

Chantae Helin

Kaitlyn Nyce

Payten Ridley

Kaiya Story

Grayden Miller



HAIDA GWAI YOUTH ASSEMBLY

Registration Now Open

Naa Gaagudgiikyagangs
George Brown Recreation Hall
HI Gaagilda Skidegate

September 26-28

For more information contact:

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