



# CAREER JOURNEYS



**FIRST NATIONS**  
ROLE MODEL PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 2015 DRAFT

## FIRST NATIONS CAREER ROLE MODELS

A RESOURCE BOOK FOR  
TEACHERS

For video interviews and classroom resources:

**[fnesc.ca/careerjourneys](http://fnesc.ca/careerjourneys)**





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# FIRST NATIONS CAREER ROLE MODELS A Handbook for Teachers

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# Presidents' Message

On behalf of the BC First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and First Nations Schools Association (FNSA), we are very pleased to introduce this new set of materials for students, parents, and teachers.

The topic of education and career planning is central to the work of our organizations. We want our students to dream big, and we are committed to helping our students find the best ways to achieve those dreams.

We sincerely believe that a strong education is one of the most important factors in life-long success. Attending school regularly, being engaged in school and classroom life, and coming to school ready and eager to learn are ways that students can work toward educational success. The support and encouragement that parents and families provide at home also makes an invaluable contribution to student achievement. Teachers can support students by encouraging them to make choices in K-12 that will open up a wide range of opportunities in post-secondary and the world of work.

But we know that providing support and encouragement can be complicated – especially when it comes to education and career planning. Today's world is changing rapidly. New careers and career paths are continually evolving. What is needed in the work force is constantly shifting, and the kinds of post-secondary programs responding to that today are very different from those that existed in the past.

How can students successfully navigate these moving waters?

Helping students make positive choices requires careful planning. Teachers, parents and students need to know how to get useful information about the range of options available. You also need to know what questions to ask, who can offer help, and how to address any challenges that might arise.

And today more than ever, planning should start as early as possible. New technologies and businesses will continue to create exciting new opportunities. By carefully developing a set of goals and ensuring that a strong educational foundation is in place, our students will be equipped to take advantage of future changes in our economies and job markets.

We know our children can be prepared to find great careers that are right for them.

That's why this set of resources was developed. It is meant to provide some useful suggestions for getting started on the education and career planning journey. We hope that it helps students, parents, and teachers start preparing now, no matter what stage of schooling they are at. It is never too early – and never too late – to begin thinking carefully about where our students want to go and how they can get there.

Tyrone McNeil, President, FNESC  
Pamela Lee Lewis, President, FNSA

# CAREER JOURNEYS FIRST NATIONS ROLE MODELS

## Introduction

This guide accompanies the poster and video series *Career Journeys First Nations Role Model Program* developed by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations School Association. It features 12 First Nations Role Models who represent success in a variety of careers.

The full colour posters feature each First Nations Role Model in their workplace setting. These distinctive photographs are motivational in themselves, and lead students to view the accompanying videos. The posters are available as PDF files for download by teachers and students.

The videos are 3 to 4 minute interviews with the Role Models in their work place. They are significant because they illustrate the diversity of occupations First Nations people have in our communities. As well, they open a window for students to see some of the career options they can pursue. The videos are available on line for anyone to view.

To access the posters and videos, go to **[www.fnesc.ca/careerjourneys](http://www.fnesc.ca/careerjourneys)**.

The Careers Journeys program also includes the resource *Guiding Your Educational Journey, A Handbook for First Nations Parents and Students*. It is also available for download at [www.fnesc.ca/careerjourneys](http://www.fnesc.ca/careerjourneys).

### Goals of the First Nations Role Model Series

- to inspire First Nations students to set career goals
- to create for students the awareness of possible educational and training pathways to successful careers



## Summary of Resources

The role model resources consist of a video interview and accompanying poster for the following First Nations Role Models:

- |                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Dr. Nicole Jamieson | Veterinarian                    |
| 2. Chris Hunt          | Bank Manager                    |
| 3. Jamie Fletcher      | Welder, Small Business Owner    |
| 4. Carrie Dan          | Archaeologist                   |
| 5. Carey Stewart       | Principal                       |
| 6. June Williams       | Water Technician                |
| 7. Krisandra Gomez     | Registered Nurse                |
| 8. Sonya Pighin        | Lawyer                          |
| 9. Barb Cranmer        | Filmmaker, Small Business Owner |
| 10. Aaron Camille      | Underground Miner               |
| 11. Brianna Quock      | Pilot                           |
| 12. Denise Williams    | First Nations Clothing Designer |

The role models were selected through a province-wide nomination process conducted by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association.

# Using the Poster and Video Series in the Classroom

The poster and video resources provide an excellent opportunity for student generated inquiry to explore career opportunities and planning for post secondary education. The posters provide an initial stimulus, and the videos give details of what is involved in aspects of the careers, and individual career path experiences.

The First Nations Career Role Model series can be used in any intermediate or secondary Career Education course. In addition, it can be used by teachers of subject specific courses to help students learn about careers that require specific subject area expertise.

## Guide Overview

This guides provides concise information to use with each of the role model posters and video. They may be used as teacher information or as student handouts. Content for each role model includes:

1. Overviews of the content of the video, classified under the following topics. As discussions with each role model vary, some topics may not be fully covered for each person.
  - First Nations Affiliation
  - Occupation
  - Location
  - Job Activities
  - Job Qualities
  - Career Path
  - Motivation and Support
  - Quotes
2. Related Career Information
  - Other related careers. These suggest a few examples of careers in a similar field to that of the person in the video.
  - Sample post secondary educational opportunities. These give some examples of the variety of post secondary programs available around the province. Where possible, programs with a First Nations focus are highlighted.

## **Themes**

A number of themes which emerge in the videos may be highlighted for inquiry:

1. Career Path - What steps did the person take to get to where they are in his or her career?
2. Skills - What types of skills are required to be successful in each of these occupations?
3. Family Support - What role do families play in helping people achieve their goals?
4. Motivation and Interest - What motivated the people in the videos to successfully achieve their goals?
5. Inspiration - What understandings about their own career paths do students take away from the videos?

## **Questions for Inquiry**

1. Setting questions prior to viewing videos
  - If posters have been displayed in the classroom prior to viewing, students can develop questions they would like to find out about the person and the job.
2. Questions for students to consider as they watch videos
  - How do people choose their careers?
  - What occupations interest me?
3. Further questions to explore career options
  - What can I do now to ensure success later in life?
  - What are my strengths, interests and passions?
  - How do I see my life and career in the future?
  - What can I do now to have influence my future life choices?
  - Where do I want to work and live in the future?
  - What occupations are the best options for me?

## **Using the Career Options information**

1. Choose one of the careers listed to find out more information such as training required, expected salary, and job duties. Refer to [workbc.ca](http://workbc.ca) and other sources.
2. Brainstorm other occupations in the career field.
3. Investigate one of the sample post-secondary educational options in depth. What requirements are needed to enter the course? What types of jobs does this training prepare you for?

## Follow-up activities

### 1. Create a Career Brochure

Ask students to design and create a brochure that highlights a career that interests them. It should be informative and visually appealing.

### 2. Interview a Professional

Students will interview a person working in a career or field that interests them. This could be a face to face interview of a local person, or an interview done by emailing the questions. Teachers will need to set up a procedure for contacting prospective interviewees.

- Students choose a career and collect basic information about the job, such as the job description, educational requirements, workplace characteristics.
- Students develop questions to ask the expert.
- Students conduct the interview in person or by email.
- Students prepare a written report or oral presentation.

### Potential Sample Questions:

- How did your secondary school experiences influence your choice of career?
- What opportunities for advancement are there in your occupation?
- How important is technology in your day to day work? How did you get training to use this technology?
- What parts of your job did your education not prepare you for, if any?
- What personal qualities does a person need to be successful at your job?

# Nicole Jamieson

*Lax Kw'alaams, Tsimshian Nation*

Veterinarian  
Prince Rupert



## Job Activities

- Surgery
- Emergencies
- Patient follow ups
- Appointments to diagnose and treat animals

## Job Qualities

- Needs life skills to deal effectively with people in emotional situations
- Love of working with animals

## Career Path

- College in Prince Rupert
- Wildlife Biology degree Prince George
- Experience working in a variety of jobs in Forestry, then in Oil Industry as First Aid Attendant
- Made a choice between human and veterinary medicine
- Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
- Regular upgrading and refreshing courses required

## Motivation and Support

- Decided at the age of ten to become a veterinarian
- Support of parents
- Importance of base in home community, even when away studying and working

## Quotes

"If you're planning on going into medical field, go live life first. Do the preliminaries first and work in as many different jobs as you can. In the medical field you're dealing with a lot of emotion."

"Learning those life skills applies to just about every professional career out there, but when you're doing an emotionally charged job every day, you have to be able to talk to people and get them to understand when their world is ending."

"Choose something that challenges you every day. Choose something that you are passionate about. Make sure that you have something outside of your job that keeps you happy. If you don't live life, you can't do your job well."

"Pure stubbornness is the only way you can get through school. There are always distractions where ever you go. You have to maintain that goal."

# Careers in Animal Sciences

People who love working with animals can find hundreds of interesting careers, from farmer to zookeeper, from dog groomer to research biologist. Some work with wildlife, others with domestic animals. All require an interest and understanding of animal biology and behaviour.

## Careers Related to Animal Sciences

### **Agriculture and Fish Products Inspectors**

Monitor and inspect food production facilities such as fish and meat plants or fruit, vegetable and grains producers. May work for governments or private companies.

### **Animal Care Worker**

A person who feeds, handles and grooms animals, usually cats and dogs, in animal shelters, boarding facilities, dog training schools or pet grooming businesses.

### **Conservation and Fishery Officer**

Officers who enforce and educate about regulations for wildlife, fish and other natural resource protection and collect information on resource management. Usually work for a government department.

### **Horse Massager**

Trained therapists who provide massage and other therapies to horses and other animals. Usually work independently in their own business.

### **Registered Professional Biologist**

A scientific professional certified to work in a variety of biological and environmental positions.

### **Veterinarian Assistant**

Works under the supervision of a vet; duties include testing, surgical assistance, office management and conducting medical procedures.

## Sample Educational Options

### **Animal Health Technology Diploma Program, Thompson Rivers University**

Two year diploma program training for employment in the field of veterinary medicine. Can lead to Bachelor of Science degree.

### **Agricultural Technology Diploma, University of the Fraser Valley**

Two year program with range of courses in economics, livestock and vegetable production, and marketing.

### **Bachelor of Science, Major in Biology and Life Sciences, Thompson Rivers University**

A full four year degree program offered on line, with a partial residency requirement for people who want to pursue a career or further studies in life sciences.

### **Recreation, Fish and Wildlife Technology Diploma, Selkirk College**

Two year diploma program based in Castlegar preparation for jobs such as Park Ranger, Fisheries and Wildlife Technicians, and outdoor recreation.

### **Renewable Resources (Fish, Wildlife and Recreation) Diploma of Technology, BC Institute of Technology**

Two year program offers hands on training in managing fisheries, wildlife, parks and recreational lands. Leads into Bachelor's Degree in Ecological Restoration.

# Chris Hunt

*Kwagiulth First Nation*

Bank Manager

Victoria



## Job Activities

- Working with staff members
- Customer meetings
- Much time spent on the phone

## Job Qualities

- Mobility needed - involves transfer to branches in different cities
- Interest in financial security
- Ability to work with people

## Career Path

- College - variety of courses; enjoyed accounting and finance
- Studied finance in school
- Took opportunity to take training position in Prince George
- Coursework to become financial advisor
- MBA (part time while working)
- Branch manager training program

## Motivation and Support

- Influence of parents support and modelling
- Family support
- Desire for First Nations communities to achieve financial success
- Supportive workplace

## Quotes

"Have fun. Be involved in extra curricular activities. But also get the grades you need in order to get into the university you want to get into."

"The only thing you can control is your attitude."

"I believe that in life you can do anything that you want. The only limitations that you have are the ones that you put on yourself."

# Careers in Business

The field of business offers a wide spectrum of opportunities for careers, in areas such as finance, management and marketing. Workplaces range from large financial institutions to small owner operated businesses.

## Careers Related to Business

### **Bookkeeper**

Bookkeepers maintain financial records of companies, and may prepare payroll, invoices, tax reports, and financial statements. Usually works in an office situation, but may be self employed.

### **Chartered Accountant**

Experts in the management of financial systems and budgets, providing financial advice. May work with individual clients, large firms or governments.

### **Economic Development Officer**

A business leader responsible for managing economic development plans in business and governmental settings.

### **Real Estate Agent**

Real estate agents handle the processes and transactions involved in selling and buying land, houses, commercial buildings, and other real estate.

### **Tourism Business Operator**

A small business entrepreneur who provides services to the tourism sector, such as ecotourism, transportation or accommodation.

## Sample Educational Options

### **Aboriginal Community Economic Development Certificate or Diploma, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

Students study topics such as accounting, marketing, negotiations and contract management, and First Nations law. Can lead to Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers certification, and coordinates with a Bachelor of General Studies Degree from SFU.

### **Adventure Tourism and Business Operations Certificate/Diploma, College of the Rockies**

Offers training in entrepreneurship, marketing, sustainability, business, and adventure skills. Prepares students for financial positions in Aboriginal organizations. Provides credit towards a tourism degree. One year (certificate) or Two year (diploma) programs. Includes a practicum.

### **Bachelor of Commerce Degree, University of Northern BC**

Possible majors include Accounting, Finance, General Business, Human Resource Management and Marketing. Four year full time course.

### **Chinook Business Diploma, Langara College**

Program designed to provide Aboriginal students with marketing and management training to prepare for First Nations business operations. Includes paid summer internship. Two year diploma program.

# Jamie Fletcher

*High Bar Band, Shuswap First Nation*

Construction Business Owner, Welder  
Clinton



## Job Activities

- Operate all aspects of his welding business
- Oversees structural building crew in different work sites
- Supply equipment, workers and management systems related to welding and ironwork

## Job Qualities

- Work with many different people
- Learn new things every day to progress business

## Career Path

- Began work in sawmill, took opportunity to work on construction as iron worker
- Moved into welding
- Level 2 degree in welding inspection
- Tickets - certification, e.g. "B" pressure ticket, structural tickets
- Red Seal welding (a national trades certification program)

## Motivation and Support

- Providing for family is the most important reward

## Quotes

"You've got to keep positive. Set those goals and don't make them too unachievable."

"Motivation goes a long way, and a positive attitude. Being a sponge. Take every bit of knowledge you can gain out there. You never know who's going to give you key knowledge."

# Careers in Construction

The busy construction industry provides many opportunities for employment, from entry level work to highly trained journeymen in a variety of specialized trades. Learning and training are on going as workers attain different types of tickets and certificates that improve their skills and employment prospects.

## Careers Related to Construction

### Carpenter

Work with wood and lightweight steel to build and repair a variety of structures in houses, cabinetry, bridges.

### Solar Energy Technician

Workers in this growing field install and maintain solar panels in a variety of settings. They may work for solar energy companies, governments or construction companies.

### Iron Worker

Works with iron, concrete and other construction materials to build and service structures such as buildings, bridges, roads and dams.

### Plaster and Drywall Installer

Apply plaster or drywall to interiors and exteriors of buildings. Employed by construction companies, contractors, or are self employed.

### Safety Officer (Construction Inspector)

Inspect construction sites to ensure they are following workplace safety regulations, and work to control risks and hazards.

### Transport Truck Driver

Operate heavy trucks to transport many types of goods and materials, such as dump trucks, logging trucks, tractor trailers or tow trucks.

## Sample Educational Options

### Aboriginal Construction, Vancouver Island University, Nanaimo

Entry level certificate and apprenticeship program which includes learning about coastal First Nations construction history and methods. 10 month certificate program.

### Bachelor of Business Administration for Trades Management Degree, University of the Fraser Valley

Preparation for owning and managing a trades business. Requires a certificate of qualification in a trade.

### Construction Electrician Citation, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Foundation training for employment as a construction electrician apprentice.

### Plumbing and Piping Trades Certificate, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Introductory program to learn about residential, commercial and industrial piping systems. 25 week certificate program.

### Residential Construction Certificate, Okanagan College

A pre-apprenticeship foundation program providing theoretical and practical knowledge to seek employment as an apprentice carpenter. 30 weeks.

### Welding Foundations / Steam Fitter / Pipefitter, Seabird College, Agassiz

A 34 week course that gives basic welding training certificate plus Level 1 pipefitter/ steamfitter certification

# Carrie Dan

*Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc*

Archaeologist, Cultural and Heritage manager  
Kamloops



## Job Activities

- Translate Secwepemc and English place names, terms
- Teaching field study courses, teaching high school summer students
- Deal with diversity of referrals, e.g. forestry, mining, rip rapping projects on the river

## Job Qualities

- Diversity of the job
- Work with other groups: municipalities, companies
- Working with culture and heritage
- Working with artifacts requires great care

## Career Path

- Bachelor of Arts, studying linguistics at SFU, to learn and preserve Secwepemc language
- Took an archaeology course, and fell in love with it
- Post bachelor in archaeology – 2 years study
- Archaeology permit with Archaeology Branch to work as archaeologist

## Motivation and Support

- Learning culture and language
- Academic and professional mentorship from university professors

## Quotes

“Archaeology is proving our past existence here and how people populated here, that’s the big question.”

“Do well in school, stay in school. Get some basic courses down and look at your options. If you have a mentor, grasp onto them.”

# Careers in Culture, Language and Heritage

The fields of culture, language and heritage are of importance to First Nations communities. Careers in these areas often involve museums, art galleries and cultural centres and are part of a growing tourism industry. Many First Nations communities have their own cultural resource professionals who run programs and projects for the community and for visitors.

## Careers in Culture, Language and Heritage

### Community Language Project Leader

Works with community on projects to revitalize, teach and research local First Nations languages.

### Cultural Resource Manager

This is an important administrative person who runs a cultural or heritage organization, and is responsible for things such as marketing, fund raising and day to day operations.

### Grant Writer

Grant writers develop proposals that request funding from various agencies to support groups such as arts, cultural and heritage organizations, as well as many other types of groups. They need skills in written English and research. Usually they have a Bachelor's Degree in English, Business or a related field.

### Museum and Gallery Technician

Museum technicians support curators and conservators in museums and galleries. They may classify and catalogue artifacts, build exhibits and displays, and maintain collections.

### Heritage Interpreter

Heritage interpreters share their knowledge to help others appreciate cultural and natural heritage. They may work in parks, museums, industrial sites, and interpretive centres. May lead to management or curatorial positions.

## Sample Educational Options

### Aboriginal Tourism Operations and Management Diploma, Native Education College

One or two year program that studies topics such as tourism management, heritage recovery and interpretation, ecotourism and business law.

### Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology, Simon Fraser University

Degree program at one of North America's leading archaeology departments. Students may take Joint Major programs in Archaeology and First Nations Studies.

### Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics, University of Victoria

Undergraduate program in Linguistics, with possible concentration in these topics: Language and Society; Language and Speech; and Indigenous Languages.

### Traditional Ecological Knowledge, University of Northern British Columbia

One year certificate program combining First Nations Studies with Environmental and science courses. It can provide a foundation for a variety of degree programs.

# Carey Stewart

Nisga'a

Principal, Nisga'a Elementary-Secondary School  
District Principal of Literacy  
New Aiyansh



## Job Activities

- Monitor student activities
- Network with students and parents in other villages

## Career Path

- Left school before graduating to commercial fish
- Trained to become Journeyman carpenter, worked in that field for several years
- Returned to complete high school graduation
- Bachelor of Arts, Major in First Nations Studies and Nisga'a studies
- Started teaching in Prince Rupert as teacher on call
- Masters in Multi Disciplinary Leadership (5 years course)
- Moved to work in Nass Valley, moved into administration

## Motivation and Support

- Role model – older sister (working on her doctorate currently)
- Northwest Community College instructors
- Visiting other universities
- Rewards – intrinsic feeling of connection between parents and students working together with teachers

## Quotes

“Realize that the only fear that I’ve had with myself is myself. “

“Understand your barriers and you can overcome every one of them.”

“Aboriginal teachers can be part of the solution for Aboriginal communities.”

“We need to prepare ourselves for the global village.”

# Careers in Education

Education takes place in many different types of training settings, including the public and First Nations K-12 schools, colleges and university and private training institutions. Careers include superintendents, teachers and instructors, administrators (principals and vice principals) and support staff.

## Careers in Education

### Early Childhood Educator

Educators who work in settings caring for young children, such as daycares, nursery schools and preschool facilities.

### First Nations Language Teacher

Specialist teachers who provide instruction in local First Nations languages.

### First Nations Education Worker

Workers who provide support for First Nations students in a school system. May include First Nations Support Worker or First Nations Home-School Liaison Worker.

### School Counsellor

Educator who counsels students in a variety of ways, including personal and social issues and educational planning. May also teach regular classes.

### Speech-Language Pathologist

Therapists who diagnose and assist students with speaking difficulties. May work in schools, hospitals, or privately.

### University Instructor

An educator with expertise in a specialized field who teaches undergraduate and graduate courses. Often also conducts research in their field, and publishes books and articles related to their studies.

## Sample Educational Options

### Aboriginal Early Childhood Education Certificate and Diploma, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

One year certificate program and two year diploma program with courses in personal development and child development.

### Bachelor of Education Degree

Most universities in BC offer Education degrees for training public school teachers. Students usually specialize in Elementary or Secondary levels. Programs exist for people already holding a degree in another field to become teachers.

### Education Assistant Certificate and Diploma, Langara College

One or two year program with preparation for working as Education Assistants with classroom teachers to support students with disabilities.

### Masters of Science in Speech-Language Pathology, University of British Columbia

This graduate level program is the only training offered in BC for speech-language pathologists.

### NITEP The Indigenous Teacher Education Program, University of British Columbia

A teacher education program leading to a Bachelor of Education, with special Aboriginal focus. Offered in Vancouver, Bella Bella, Duncan and Kamloops.

# June Williams

*Lake Babine Nation*

Chief Operator, Tachet Water Treatment Plant  
Tachet, Babine Lake



## Job Activities

- Treat domestic and drinking water
- Provide safe drinking water to community
- Understand working and operations of every piece of equipment

## Job Qualities

- Rewarding to produce good safe drinking water

## Career Path

- Grade 12 graduation
- Worked in a variety of jobs: archaeologist assistant, sawmill, band office, construction
- Began work in 1999 in her 40s
- Became CEU after 50 hours of work to take certification training courses: level 1 in water treatment, level 1 water distribution, water treatment level 2
- Water treatment technology diploma, Thompson Rivers University

## Motivation and Support

- Parents had a huge part in life and learning. They instilled how important learning was, and they made learning fun for me when I was growing up
- Their passion for learning and experiencing new things stayed with me
- Family support during training, especially spouse

## Quotes

“Being out of school for so many years, it was a challenge for me to get back into the rhythm. I had to learn how to study all over again.”

“I still find that passion for learning new things exhilarating, because my Mom and my Dad instilled that in me. It’s inside me. My Mom and Dad put it in there, and it hasn’t gone away.”

“I want to encourage my family to value the world and its surroundings, including this most precious thing we have, water.”

“Find something that will interest you and develop it further. If you find something that you like and enjoy, it won’t seem like work. Desire, commitment and perseverance.”

“Develop thick skin. Ask a lot of questions. You’ll never know if you don’t ask the question. If you think it is a silly question, ask it any way. Always be approachable. Accept help when they offer it.”

## First Nations Community-Based Careers

For many students it is important for them to stay and work in their home communities so they can be close to their families and culture. There are a number of areas of opportunity depending on students' skills and interests and the needs of the community.

### First Nations Community-Based Careers

#### Community Health Representative (CHR)

Works with the Community Health Nurse to make connections and referrals to other health programs, both on-reserve and in town.

#### Finance Administrator

Under the management of the Band Manager, is responsible for all finances of Band Council business and operations. Generally requires Bachelor's degree in Business or Administration.

#### Home Care Worker

A Home Care Worker supports Elders and other people who need support with home care (laundry, house cleaning, cooking, etc.) and personal care.

#### Lands Manager

The Lands manager is responsible for the management of all of a Band's reserve lands, including surveys, permits, leasing and any specific claims issues. Also maintains all lands records, and oversees the Lands budget.

#### Operations and Maintenance Manager

Manages the operation of the community's infrastructure, including roads, water, community buildings and fire department.

### Sample Educational Options

#### Aboriginal Human Services Diploma, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

This two year diploma program prepares students for a wide variety of social and human resources programs for Aboriginal communities. Combines foundations of Social Work, Sociology, and First Nations culture.

#### Bachelor of Social Work

Professional training leading to many careers in the field of Social Work, including services to First Nations communities. Offered by most universities, but some have strong Aboriginal components, such as Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, University of Victoria and University of Northern BC.

#### Bachelor of Recreation Management Degree, Langara College

A degree completion program (third and fourth years) for students with a recreation diploma. Leads to careers in recreation and sports directors, managers and facility operators.

#### First Nations Housing Manager Certificate Program, Vancouver Island University

This is an online program of 6 courses with training for housing managers who work with on-reserve housing programs, or who wish to do this in the future. Also useful for people involved in First Nations governance and administration.

# Krisandra Gomez

*Wetsuwet'in, Ojibway*

Registered Nurse

Port Alberni



## Job Activities

- Take care of patients
- Collaboration with other workers
- Many nursing skills such as IV starts, medication

## Job Qualities

- Patience in busy environments

## Career Path

- High school upgrading
- Volunteer work in health care (requirement for nursing program)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Vancouver Island University)

## Motivation and Support

- Family support
- Role models: sisters-in-law who held Bachelor Degrees

## Quotes

"Finish high school and go right into university, to get it out of the way and keep that mind frame."

"It's a battle, but it is doable. If I can do it, you can do it."

"If you're going into nursing do the whole shebang... go right into nursing and become a registered nurse."

# Careers in Health Care

Health care provides many challenging and rewarding job opportunities as workers all make a difference to people's lives in one way or another. There is a demand for First Nations professionals in health care, from the community to provincial levels.

## Careers in Health Care

### Community Health Representative (CHR)

The CHR works with other health professionals in First Nations communities, including in-clinic services and performing basic screening procedures. Employed by Band Councils and the First Nations Health Authority.

### Dietician

A dietician is responsible for planning and implementing nutrition and food services in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, schools, sports organizations or company cafeterias.

### Occupational First Aid Attendant

Health care professionals who are first responders at occupational worksites.

### Licensed Practical Nurse

Frontline nurses who provide a wide range of nursing care in many settings working with a health care team.

### Medical Laboratory Technician

These workers conduct medical laboratory tests for patients in a variety of settings such as hospitals, private laboratories and research facilities.

### Paramedic

Worker who assesses and gives emergency medical care to patients with injuries or medical issues and transports them to hospitals for further care.

## Sample Educational Options

### Bachelor of Psychiatric Nursing, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

A four year nursing program specializing in training for psychiatric and mental health nursing. Graduates write exams to practice as Registered Psychiatric Nurses in B.C.

### Doctor of Medicine (MD), University of British Columbia

UBC offers the MD program in Vancouver, Kelowna, Prince George and Victoria. At least 90 credits (about 3 years) of post secondary study in a related field are required for entrance, as well as passing the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).

### Health Care Assistant, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

This one year program give you the knowledge and skills to work as a frontline care-giver and member of a care team in the community or a facility.

### Medical Laboratory Assistant Certificate, Thompson Rivers University

Learn the theory and skills necessary to work in medical laboratories in hospitals or clinical laboratories. Provided in a distance education format, with a workshop and practicum.

### Primary Care Paramedic Program, Justice Institute of British Columbia

Training to deal with trauma, medical and complex cases faced by paramedics. Results in a Primary Care Paramedic Certification, leading to getting a BC Emergency Medical Assistant license.

# Sonya Pighin

*Lheidli T'enneh and Wet'suwet'en First Nations*

Lawyer, Social Justice Advocate  
Victoria



## Job Activities

- Social justice advocacy: mediation, negotiation and advocacy; working with children's and Indigenous rights, working with youth offenders getting fair treatment in the justice system
- As an Aboriginal lawyer, drafting documents and writing legal opinions

## Job Qualities

- Dealing with complex issues involving different legislation
- The work she does contributes to making lives better for future generations of First Nations people

## Career Path

- In secondary school intended to study biology but took Law 12 as an elective and decided to pursue law
- Law Degree in 2010
- Work as advocate for children's rights issues
- Working on treaty negotiations in New Zealand

## Motivation and Support

- Family: Grandfather, group home staff, support workers
- Financial: bursaries and scholarships; Band support

## Quotes

"Don't give up; when you're having a hard time with school or personal issues that you have no control over, stay focussed."

"Work hard and play hard; it shouldn't be all about no work and no play. People should take time for themselves."

"Start volunteering or working early on in life. That will build up your resume in a way that people who are going to university and not working will not get. Employers will recognize that when you're done school."

"Everyone has special talents that are going to get them into a different place, so it's understanding yourself and figuring out what your special talent is, then considering how you can use your special talent to go out and do something with your life."

# Careers in Law and Justice

Society depends on many professionals to maintain order and justice. Careers in Law and Justice are challenging but rewarding as frequently workers deal with people in crisis or significant events in their lives.

## Careers in Law and Justice

### **Border Services Officer**

Working at border crossings and airports, these officers prevent inadmissible people, contraband and other illegal substances from coming into the country. Training for successful applicants who have a Dogwood is provided by the Canadian Border Services Agency.

### **Native Court Worker**

A person who assists Aboriginal people involved in the criminal justice system to obtain fair, just, equitable and culturally sensitive treatment.

### **Paralegal**

These workers help lawyers through such activities as conducting interviews, and researching and preparing legal documents. Usually specialize in specific areas of law, such as commercial, family, litigation or criminal law.

### **Police Officer**

A police officer maintains law and order, with duties that include protecting the public, detecting crime, arresting criminal suspects and attending court. May be part of the RCMP or of municipal police, military police, railway police or transit police forces.

### **Probation Officer**

This officer provides management to youth or adult offenders released into community supervision and helps to reduce the risk of reoffending.

## Sample Educational Options

### **Bachelor of Arts in Justice Studies, Royal Roads University**

A degree program teaching in-depth knowledge of the justice system including criminal justice, human rights, advocacy, conflict resolution, and mediation. Leads to a variety of jobs in the justice system, or to further study for a Law degree or other post-graduate studies.

### **Bachelor of Legal Studies (Paralegal), Capilano University**

The only paralegal training program in Western Canada for students graduating from high school. (Others require work experience in the field.)

### **Juris Doctor (JD) Law Degree, University of Victoria**

Degree program to become a lawyer; usually requires a Bachelor degree for entrance. Once completed the JD, future lawyers complete a period of articling with a law firm, a bar admission course and examination.

### **Law Enforcement Preparation Certificate, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology**

This one year program prepares students for entrance into law enforcement programs such as RCMP, Aboriginal Policing, Correction Services, Security Services, Native Court Workers and Counsellors, or for continuing studies in other aspects of law enforcement.

# Barb Cranmer

*'Namgis First Nation*

Filmmaker, Entrepreneur, Community Leader  
Alert Bay



## Job Activities

- Business operation - cultural tourism
- Documentary film maker

## Job Qualities

- Cultural focus: cultural tourism
- First Nations themed films sharing our own stories; interacting with audiences

## Career Path

- Experience taking pictures - photography
- Media program at Capilano University provided foundation (program for First Nations students)
- Natural ability to tell a story through filmmaking
- Strong cultural foundation

## Motivation and Support

- Family, grandparents and community support to help her make a difference
- Strong cultural foundation growing up
- Promoting economic development for community
- Band Council involvement

## Quotes

“Education is absolutely important in our communities. When you look around at the big world you have to be certified in the area that you want to go into. Education really does form the foundation of what that could end up being for you as a young person. You have to be driven, you have to have passion, and you have to have fun while you’re getting the education you need to do the career that you want to do.”

“Work really hard. Go above and beyond what you have been asked to do. Really persevere at it because I think you will feel rewarded at the end of that, when you reach the goal that you set out to do.”

“For me its about being positive, leading by example and doing good things in your community, to know that you are going to have a legacy when you’re done your career. Just have fun with it, really have fun with it.”

# Careers in Media

Careers in the media are exciting and challenging as technology changes the way we get news and entertainment. BC is a world centre for digital technology and the film industry, as well as having a diverse range of news outlets, from community newspapers to network broadcasters.

## Other Careers in Media

### Broadcast Technician

Set up and operate electronic equipment to record radio and television programs and to produce audio and video streaming broadcasts for the internet.

### Costume Designer

Creative professionals responsible for designing and creating costumes worn by actors in plays and movies.

### Film and Video Camera Operator

Operate cameras and related equipment to record news, events, films and television.

### Film Editor

Film editors edit motion picture film and arrange film segments into sequences to achieve continuity and desired dramatic, comedic and thematic effects.

### Manager in Publishing, Motion Pictures, Broadcasting and Performing Arts

Plan, organize and direct many kinds of operations in radio, television, film, theatre and publishing companies

### Public Relations and Communications

Specialists who conduct publicity campaigns, promotions and information programs for businesses, governments and individuals such as performers, writers and athletes.

### Web Designer and Developer

Create internet websites, often working in a team of writers, graphic artists, and programmers.

## Sample Educational Options

### Bachelor of Fine Arts (Film, Video & Integrated Media Major) Degree, Emily Carr University of Art & Design

Training in a diversity of skills and knowledge in film and video production, communications, new media, education and advertising. Four year degree program.

### Bachelor of Journalism, Thompson Rivers University

Four year program training for journalists and communication specialists. Includes topics such as editing, interviewing and photojournalism.

### Indigenous Independent Digital Filmmaking, Capilano University

One and two year programs covering all aspects of filmmaking with a focus on Aboriginal productions.

### Journalism Diploma, Langara College

Intensive two year career preparation program involving news writing and reporting for print, radio and television.

### Radio Arts and Entertainment Diploma, British Columbia Institute of Technology

Two year program which includes advertising, audio and documentary production, radio journalism, marketing online design and voice training.

# Aaron Camille

*Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc*

Underground Miner - bolter operator, driller  
Kamloops



## Job Activities

- Drilling rounds (cylindrical holes where explosives are inserted)
- Blasting with explosives
- Mucking machine operator (moving blasted rock from mine face)
- Spray mine face with shotcrete (a process in which compressed air sprays concrete at high speed to cover a surface)
- Bolter operator

## Job Qualities

- Risks - “keeps you on your toes” “You’re the softest thing down there”
- Adjustment to underground work, darkness
- Pay is “pretty decent”
- Camaraderie with fellow workers

## Career Path

- On the job training and certification (Aaron began working at jobs on the surface of the mine until an opportunity came up for an underground job.)
- Experience operating heavy equipment
- First Aid certification
- Confined Spaces Entry Awareness training
- Blasting ticket (examination and certification by Worksafe BC)
- Support of Chief and Council

## Motivation and Support

- Emphasizes healthy life style (sober, keeping out of trouble)
- Cultural involvement, sundancing, sweatlodges

## Quotes

“Keep our ways strong, keep our people strong.”

“Work hard. See something you like, go for it.”

# Careers in Natural Resources

Natural resources continue to be a significant part of our economy, and require many different types of jobs to harvest and extract the resources, to transport them, and to manage and monitor their sustainability. Increasingly First Nations groups are involved with operating businesses and consulting with other companies.

## Careers in Mining, Forestry and Fisheries

### Fisheries Observer

Fisheries Observer observes, records and reports on the activities of fishing vessels. They collect biological fisheries data and see that fishers follow fisheries regulations. They may work at sea on a vessel, or dockside.

### Fishing Vessel Skipper

Operators of fishing vessels who supervise fishing crew, maintain boat and equipment, keep records of fishing activities and finances. Often are owners of the vessels.

### Heavy Duty Mechanic

Heavy duty mechanics maintain and repair equipment such as graders, loaders, and trucks used in industries like mining and forestry,

### Logging Machinery Operator

Workers run various machines which harvest, transport and process timber.

### Mine Geologist

Mine geologists are scientists who work at mining sites to help direct mining activities. They survey and interpret geological data in order to determine drilling and production procedures.

### Oil and Gas Field Production Operator

Field Production Operators work at well sites operating and maintaining facilities and collect information such as meter and pressure readings.

## Sample Educational Options

### Bachelor of Natural Resource Science, Thompson Rivers University

Four or five year program that prepares students for a diversity of careers in the natural resource field, combining biology, ecology and resource management.

### Bachelor of Science in Forestry, UBC

Four year degree program with specialization in Forest Operations or Forest Management.

### Fisheries and Aquaculture Technology Diploma, Vancouver Island University

Two year program in fish and invertebrate biology and habitat assessment and business management. Leads into Bachelor of Science in Fisheries and Aquaculture.

### Mining & Mineral Exploration Technology Diploma of Technology, BCIT

Provides training in geology, mining methods, exploration technology, surveying, and computer applications for mining operations and mineral explorations.

### Natural Resources and Environmental Technology Program, College of New Caledonia

Two year program qualifies for BC Registered Forest Technologist.

### Oil and Gas Field Operations Certificate, Northern Lights College

Training to become an oil and gas production operator. 18 weeks.

# Brianna Quock

*Tahltan and Nisga'a*

Helicopter Pilot, Stores Manager and Marketing  
Terrace



## Job Activities

- Flies helicopter
- Manages office and supplies
- Markets company services

## Job Qualities

- The people and the variety of work makes her excited to go to work

## Career Path

- In high school considered becoming lawyer
- On the job training
- Commercial helicopter pilot training in Abbotsford (100 hours flying, commercial flight test)
- Flight test every year to maintain pilot's license

## Motivation and Support

- Grandmother and father instilled respect for land and culture
- Company took a chance to hire her, and support her
- Challenges of job make her do things she didn't think she could do.
- BC Aboriginal Mining Training Association (now Aboriginal Mentoring & Training Association)
- Travelling and living in another country built self confidence
- Being in situations with small number of people: from a small school, successful in a small company

## Quotes

"Always push your self even though you think you can't do it."

"Life isn't as easy as you may think it is, but if you have patience and persevere you can accomplish anything."

# Careers in Transportation

Whether it is moving people or goods, we depend on transportation to keep society on the go. The transportation sector offers careers to fit many interests, from working with people to operating large complex machines in the sea, in the air or on land.

## Careers in Transportation

### Aircraft Mechanic

Responsible for maintaining, repairing and testing all systems of an airplane. Jobs may be with aircraft maintenance companies, with airlines or the armed forces.

### Bus Driver

Bus drivers may work for transit systems, school districts or charter companies. Requirements include High School graduation and a Class 2 driver's licence with airbrake endorsement. Training is usually given on the job.

### Civil Engineer

A civil engineer designs and builds physical structures, including transportation engineers who develop roads, bridges, railways, transit systems, ports and tunnels.

### Flight Attendant

Provides safety and comfort to passengers and crew on aircraft. Employment is with airline companies.

### Flight Engineer (Second Officer)

A flight officer who helps the captain and first officer to operate an aircraft, and is responsible for monitoring the operation of the engines, fuel consumption and other aircraft systems.

### Transportation Logistics Coordinator

Logistics is the business of shipping goods from warehouses or factories to market or consumer. A coordinator manages the shipping, keeps records of shipments and makes sure vehicles are maintained.

## Sample Educational Options

### Airline and Flight Operations - Commercial Pilot, BC Institute of Technology and Pacific Flying Club

This 64 week course combines flight training with academic studies of the aviation industry. Successful graduation includes earning a Private Pilots Licence.

### Aircraft Maintenance Engineer, BC Institute of Technology

Training for Aircraft Avionics technicians responsible for servicing aircraft electronic systems. 48 week program with certification by Transport Canada and Canadian Council for Aviation and Aerospace.

### Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.Sc.) degree in Civil Engineering, University of BC

A four year degree program leading to careers in transportation engineering.

### Railway Conductor Certificate, BC Institute of Technology

This program prepares graduates for employment on all railways in North America. Requirements include 3 credits of post-secondary English, Humanities or Social Sciences.

# Denise Williams

*Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, Nuu-chah-nulth*

First Nations Clothing Designer and Artist  
Victoria



## Job Activities

- Draft clothing patterns
- Draw art designs
- Operate the business
- Consult with clients to customize design for garments
- Attend conferences to promote business

## Job Qualities

- Flexibility in schedule
- Variety of activities every day
- Creativity - ability to make things

## Career Path

- Followed mother's footsteps in sewing
- In high school did well at sewing and art
- Went to design school straight from high school (Kwantlen College, 2 year program)
- Experience through building own business over 20 years

## Motivation and Support

- Parents' encouragement and support. Her mother is the creative influence; her father inspires her to stick to her roots and be proud of where you come from

## Quotes

"You have to be persistent in the art field – it's not always consistent pay. You have to be ready for the ups and the downs. Plan to get through those tough times."

"Anything that I make I make with good materials. It's well made. It's going to last a long time."

"It's important that when people invest a lot of money in a garment they have it for a long time."

"I think about the legacy of what I do and who is going to see that in the future."

# Careers in the Visual Arts

We are surrounded by visual design, from advertisements and the clothes we wear to the interiors of the buildings we live and work in. Most careers in the visual arts involve creativity coupled with technical skills to create a finished product.

## Careers in Visual Arts

### First Nations Carver

Talented First Nations artists create art in wood, silver and gold, as well as other materials, incorporating traditional as well as innovative designs. Many are trained by mentors and master carvers, and also attend training at specialised institutions.

### Graphic Designer and Illustrator

Graphic designers and illustrators create designs and illustrations to communicate information for many types of print and electronic media, such as publications, advertising, posters and websites.

### Interior Designer

An interior designer creates and implements design for interior spaces of buildings including the stylistic appearance as well as the practical structure of the space. They often work for architectural firms, hotels and construction companies, or may be self-employed.

### Photographer

Photographers use cameras to create still images in a wide variety of settings, such as weddings, family portraits, fashion, food, or news events and war zones. They may work for newspapers or museums, or they may be self-employed.

### Printmaker

Printmakers print designs using traditional techniques like silk screen as well as digital technology to make products such as fine art prints, posters and t-shirts. Often are self-employed or small business operators.

## Educational Options

### Bachelor of Design (Fashion & Technology) Degree, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Four year degree program prepares students for careers in fashion design, production, marketing and computer technology.

### Bachelor of Design in Visual Communication, Capilano University

Degree program with specialization in Illustration, Branding or Interactive design.

### Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art, Northwest Community College, Terrace

Offers one and two year certificate and diploma programs in First Nations Fine Art. Includes courses in two-dimensional art and wood carving.

### Foundations in Indigenous Fine Arts, En'owkin Centre, Penticton

In partnership with the University of Victoria, this program has two streams: Creative Writing and Visual Arts. Graduate receive the Foundations in Indigenous Fine Arts Certificate.

### Professional Photography Certificate, North Island College

This ten month program in Comox teaches the basics of photography as well as the application of skills in specialties such as portraiture, advertising photography, editorial and photojournalism, nature photography, and computer photo enhancement.







First Nations Education Steering Committee & First Nations Schools Association  
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