

Skennen, Mino-Bimaadziwin: Understanding Well Being For Caregivers In Indigenous Wisdom Traditions.

Guest Speaker Bios



Mary Deleary is Algonquin Anishinabe originating from the First Nation community of Kitigan Zibi (Quebec). For Mary, a lifelong dedication to the pursuit of Indigenous knowledge and practice is grounded and nurtured through the Midewiwin “way of the heart”. Mary serves in a leadership role within the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation providing expertise in Indigenous Knowledge Exchange Translation and holds the position of Training & Education Manager. Prior to her current role, Mary served as Executive Director of Nimkee Nupigawagan Healing Centre (a residential youth treatment center). Mary also played a key role in “The Honouring Our Strengths: Indigenous Culture as Intervention in Addictions Treatment (Casl)” research project which has produced the Native Wellness

Assessment; a strengths based, whole person instrument that measures the impact of culture in promoting wellness. Mary has also devoted a number of years to the field of Indigenous-based education including the development and establishment of culturally relevant post- secondary programs to meet the specific needs of First Nation individuals and communities. The combination of years of Indigenous learning within traditional lodges, and a mainstream University education along with career and life experience enables Mary to contribute wholistically to Thunderbird Partnership Foundations implementation of the ‘Honouring our Strengths Renewal Framework’ and the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework.



Ka'nahsohon Kevin Deer is a faithkeeper of the Mohawk Trail Longhouse in Kahnawake and has been there for 30 years. During this time, he has also been a Mohwak immersion school teach, vice principle, principle, and presently the Vice president of Academic at First Nations technical Institute. As a citizen of his own nation and government he’s been deeply involved in many meetings, events and demonstrations in an effort to always try to raise the understanding of Indigenous knowledge and teaching in order to create more peace, harmony, and balance for all people. As an Elder, Kevin had the opportunity to address the Prime

Minister and his Youth Council, he was honoured to do the opening for Montreal’s 375th birthday. He also presented at the United Nations in New York during “World Interfaith Harmony Week’ on native spiritually. Kevin addressed 1000 mayors from around the world who came to Palais de Conres in Montreal under the leadership of former mayor Denis Cordere. Kevin did a tobacco burning ceremony when the new flag

of Montreal was unveiled with the “Tree of Peace in the centre. Kevin was asked to lead an opening for the swearing in ceremony of the new mayor of Montreal Valerie Planet. Kevin attended Standing Rock to perform ceremonies with his spiritual leadership. He was the first keynote speaker in Montreal where over 200,000 people gathered to discuss climate change. Kevin has also been part of the elders advisory council for the Enaahdig Healing Lodge and learning centre for 22 years. Kevin participated in many healing ceremonies and has helped people in numerous ways by performing various ceremonies from burial, marriage, naming at midwinter celebrations, and medicine ceremony renewals.



Theresa Redsky Fiddler is originally from Big Grassy River and Shoal Lake #40. Theresa was married to her late husband Josias Fiddler for 43 years until he passed. Theresa is a mother to 5, grandmother to 21, great grandmother to 14. Theresa graduated from a SSW program in Thunder Bay at the age of 61, and is now engaged in different social fields as a consultant for different First Nations. Theresa is an Elder for many forums and organizations in the NAN territory. Theresa carries a sacred bundle which includes a grandmother pipe. She currently resides in Thunder Bay but has a vision to eventually return to her home community of Sandy Lake First Nation.



Perry McLeod-Shabogesic of the "Crane Clan" is an Ojibway Anishinabe from N'biising (Nipissing) First Nation (NFN). He is the Manager of Cultural Services for the “Niinjaansinaanik Child & Family Services. He is an Elder/Helper/Resource Person for our Member First Nations of Wasauksing, Shawanaga, Magnetawan, Henvey, Dokis and Wahnapiatae First Nations. In this role he has been assisting Children & families and First Nation staff in the area of traditional medicine, teachings, ceremonies and workshops. Perry also acts in an advisory capacity to other organizations and First Nations in the area of cultural and traditional development. Perry's spirit name is "Anzoked", which means "Story Teller" in

Anishinabemowin. He is a “Helper/Oshkabewis” of the Anishinabek Nation Eagle Staff & Bundle. He is also a recognized Traditional Helper/Oshkabewis/Pipe Carrier assisting and facilitating ceremonies and traditional activities such as sharing circles, pipe ceremonies, sweats, medicine wheel teachings, western door/funeral ceremonies/teachings, medicine walks/workshops, traditional art, harvesting game & wild medicines and one on one or group counseling for individuals and families upon request.