

OTIPACIMO

Storyteller

Charles Williams, Youth Counsellor



Charles Williams

Empowering youth in Cat Lake First Nation

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Message From

BRIAN CALLEJA

Chief Financial Officer



It is my pleasure to present the SLFNHA's winter edition of Otipacimo, Storyteller.

As we move beyond the winter solstice (December 21), we acknowledge a time for renewal. It's a reason to celebrate, a perfect time of year to reflect on times past and look forward to the "new sun" of the future. Winter represents an ancestral spirit. Reflecting on the past by sharing stories and thanking our ancestors is an important part of honouring where we are from, especially as we plan for the cold months ahead. Many months of cold weather still remain before the spring thaw, but we realize that the return of the warm season is inevitable, thus we celebrate.

The organization's financial focus continues its work towards creating more stable funding. This will assist in putting more time and effort toward community care and less toward administrative functions.

As we move into the winter season, our last quarter of the fiscal year, we prepare for the accountability and audit of 2022-2023 budget. This also includes planning and preparations for the new budget of 2023-2024.

SLFNHA's Health Hub initiative was launched this fall and secured facilities for health care in four of our communities. The health hubs allow for increased multidiscipline health care services to be delivered at the community level. They also provide the addition of two overnight accommodations for visiting health care providers and educators. Over the next four years we will be working to secure funding for more community health hubs and offer more services at the community level.

We continue with our focus on a procurement strategy, building on our business exposure, prioritizing relationships with Indigenous-owned vendors, and adopting a corporate social responsibility perspective.

We are grateful for the opportunity to continue working for the 33 First Nations we serve. We will continue to build new financial funding opportunities that are in line with the messages received from the Fall Annual General Meeting.

Please enjoy this edition of stories and updates from SLFNHA.

Wishing you the best throughout the winter season.

Chii Miigwech

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**The face
you make**

when someone tells
you they haven't had
their flu shot yet

Get poked and prepared
acwinfo@slfnha.com

**That feeling when you get all
of your vaccines up to date**



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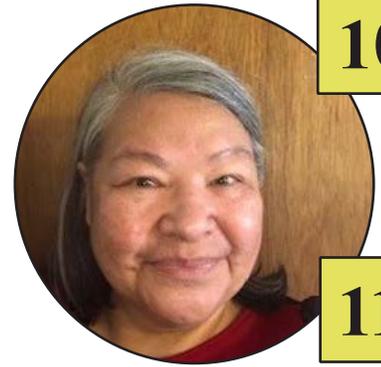
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Community Sunlight: Charles Williams, Youth Counsellor

Charles Williams is a Children’s Mental Health and Addictions Worker based in Cat Lake First Nation. He has committed much of his time facilitating activities and giving positive experiences to youth in the community. His goal is to empower youth. Charles has several traditional skills like hunting, fishing, smoking traditional meat, and living on the land.

‘First Nation communities are not similar to living in the city or towns’ says Charles. ‘They are very isolated. Most communities are fly-in access in the summertime with road access to towns and cities only in the winter months.’

Charles understands that the social and cultural divide between northern communities and cities on major highways can challenge youth to make wise, healthy choices.

‘Many of the youth have little awareness of how to navigate living in urban centres,’ Charles continues. ‘At one time, here in the community, there was a high rate of youth crime. They were burning down warehouses, abandoned vehicles and houses, vandalizing private property, schools, and garages, Opioid abuse crisis could have been a factor to this behaviour and caused child neglect in the families. Many children showed signs of poor nourishment and hygiene.’

Seeing that he had to do something to help the younger generation, Charles took action. As he explains:

‘So, I began to involve elders, families, and police to help with outdoor camping, outdoor traditional teachings, donations of fish and moose. Engagement with the elders and community functions, like feasts and school graduations, make a difference in a child’s life and learning.’

Below: Youth learning about bike safety
Right: Fishing with local elder



“Engagement with the elders and community functions, such as feasts and school graduations, makes a difference in a child’s life and learning.”



As Williams continued to bring youth closer to the land and the ways of their elders, he began to see positive results.

“One time children donated fish to the leadership gathering and they were honoured to serve the food. Another time, a moose was killed by one of our elder chaperones and the meat was donated to all of the elders. In return the elders blessed the children for their good work.”

His work is community based and brings people together, but Charles is very much committed to the youth on an individual level as well.

“A highlight for me is one-on-one counselling on the boat while fishing, setting rabbit snares, or partridge hunting with sling shots,” recalls Williams.

“Children also enjoy activities outside the community like visiting Dryden McDonald’s during the winter road season or a trip to Winnipeg. The more awareness and sharing of life experiences, the more open youth are to counselling sessions and the desire to learn. It’s great to see these young people now pursuing high school and eliminating past negative behaviours. To be accepted for who they are is a child’s need as well.”

Community Sunlight is a recurring feature article in Otipacimo that highlights and celebrates work of SLFNHA staff and partners in communities across Kiiwetinoong. To suggest a person to feature in Community Sunlight, please contact the Communications Department, communications@slfnha.com or 807-697-3206.

Below: Cooking over an open fire



Above: Out on a moose hunt
Below: Smoking moose meat



You're the Chef: Meat Balls

Bi-izhaa wiisini (come to eat!). We have a school cooking program for kids called You're the Chef that we want to share!

Meatballs - 2 Ways *Savoury or Sweet and Sour*

These meatballs can be made savoury and added to YTC Fresh Tomato Sauce with Pasta or made with the sweet and sour sauce and served with brown rice and steamed vegetables.

Ingredients

½ cup	rolled oats or breadcrumbs	125 mL
1 tsp	salt	2 mL
1 tsp	savoury seasoning blend* (savoury meatballs only)	2 mL
¼ cup	liquid (milk for sweet and sour, tomato juice for savoury)	60 mL
½ tsp	Worcestershire sauce	2 mL
1 lb	ground wild meat (moose, caribou, deer, goose, duck)	500 g
2 tbsp	onion, finely chopped	30 mL
1	egg, beaten	1
1 tbsp	vegetable oil	15 mL

Sweet and Sour Sauce

¼ cup	brown sugar	30 mL
1 tbsp	cornstarch	15 mL
1 - 398 mL can	pineapple chunks	1 - 398 mL can
1/3 cup	vinegar	75 mL
1 tbsp	soy sauce	15 mL

Ready in

40 min



Serves

8

2 Meatball Servings



Source: Kanina Terry, 2019



Mental Health on the Move: SLFNHA's Mobile Outreach Program



Mobile Outreach workers Rose McKay and Zoe Howlett

Written by: Reece Van Breda

Communications Department

Since January of 2022, SLFNHA's Nodin Mental Health Services has joined a collaborative project with the Northwestern Health Unit, Sioux Lookout Ontario Provincial Police, and the Kenora Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association on a Crisis Response and Harm Reduction Mobile Outreach Team for Sioux Lookout.

The Crisis Response and Harm Reduction Mobile Outreach team is a client-focused program that efficiently connects individuals who have complex needs and who have difficulty accessing or navigating the healthcare system via traditional streams with appropriate services. These services may include health care, mental health care and social services. The Mobile Outreach Program provides services to vulnerable persons, and those living with substance use and mental health disorders. For example, the Mobile Outreach Program has partnered with the friendship centre to help provide meals to our vulnerable population while Sioux Lookout Emergency Shelter is unable to do so. The Mobile Outreach Program also works with NIHB and communities' band councils to help people get back home when they have had difficulty navigating the system or have been excluded from health services due to mental health or addictions concerns. The Mobile Outreach Program also assists with connecting vulnerable populations to housing opportunities and offering people from the ER for minor first aid situations through the partnership with community paramedics and the Northwestern Health Unit.

The goals of the Mobile Outreach Program include collaboration amongst local and regional service providers for timely access to services. This enhances access to primary care, harm reduction and crisis response for those living with substance abuse and mental health issues in Sioux Lookout. This reduces the number of incidents that result in emergency department visits and criminal charges. Outreach allows for the team to meet individuals where they are at and help them access appropriate services, such as:

- Harm Reduction Services (naloxone, harm reduction supplies, needle pickup)
- Resource Management (working with individuals to fill in gaps in service and to connect people to supports)
- Counselling (support and intervention services for those who are experiencing addiction problems)

Nodin Mental Health Services Mobile Outreach Program:

For more information about the Mobile Outreach Program, please contact team members Zoe Howlett at zoe.howlett@sfnha.com or Rose McKay at rose.mckay@sfnha.com

SLFNHA Photo Contest

A prize for every season

SLFNHA is holding a photo contest throughout 2022, and we're looking to you for your pictures!

SLFNHA needs photos of you and your community to better represent the people we serve on our website, social media and our publications. Enter for all 5 categories to receive a \$25 Visa Gift Card! Every submission is entered into the Grand Prize of an iPad!

We are having 4 different rounds of contests, one for every season:

- Spring / Ziigwan -> June 21, 2022
- Summer / Niibin -> September 21, 2022
- Fall / Dagwaagin -> November 25, 2022
- Winter / Biboon -> March 3, 2023

For more information on the SLFNHA Photo Contest, please email the Communications Department at communications@slfnha.com or visit www.slfnha.com

Categories:



1. On the Land / Ah-Ki-Kank



2. My Community / Nitashiikewin



3. Family / Tipenchikewin



4. Meal Time / Miichim



5. Get Moving / Majaan

Winter / Biboon Photo Contest

-  ON THE LAND
AH-KI-KANK
-  MY COMMUNITY
NITASHIKEWIN
-  FAMILY
TIPENCHIKEWIN
-  MEAL TIME
MIICHIM
-  GET MOVING
MAJAAN

Spring Winner

Summer Winner

SEND IN YOUR PHOTOS:
SLFNHA.COM

SLFNHA Photo Contest: Fall Winners!



On The Land / Ah-ki-Kank:
Roseanne Bluecoat, Big Trout Lake



Grand Prize Winner:
Danielle Beardy, Sachigo Lake



Get Moving / Majaan:
Steph Carson, Sioux Lookout



Meal Time / Miichim:
Camelia Anderson, Kasabonika Lake



My Community / Nitashiikewin:
Cheryl Thompson, Sioux Lookout



Family / Tipenchikewin:
January Crane, Slate Falls

Congratulations to each of the Fall Photo Contest winners! We got so many great photos from around the region and are very grateful for every photo that came in. Miigwetch to everyone that submitted.

Bear Ceremony at Lac Seul First Nation

Written by: Reece Van Breda

Communications Department

In October I was honoured to join cultural advisors Charles Meekis and Dieter Sainnawap from Developmental Services in skinning a bear at the Lac Seul First Nation school.

The bear had been a hazard for several weeks, scaring local dogs and getting into household trash and litter around the community. Previous efforts to scare away the bear did not work. There was no choice but to eliminate the bear before something bad happened. What it turned into was a learning opportunity about the importance of living in balance with nature and showing the local schoolchildren how to properly skin a bear while paying respect to the animal.

First, Dieter and Charles explained the importance of the bear. The black bear is a sacred animal in the traditional way of life. The black bear gives the teaching of medicine because of all the medicinal plants eaten during the spring, summer and fall. All those medicines go into the body, and the bear's body becomes medicine, such as the bear grease that is rendered from the fat.



Ceremonial items used by Dieter Sainnawap and Charles Meekis



Winter Moons:

Lyn-Marie Manitowabi,

Healing and Wellness Coordinator



I begin by acknowledging that I am a visitor to northwestern Ontario. I was born and raised near Georgian Bay, N'Swakamok, where the three roads meet. There are different teachings and practices wherever you go. I encourage you to explore with your teachers and Elders the moon phases and life practices in your communities.

I like to watch the celestial dances that the heavens offer, there are many teachers from above and below. The experience we have on Earth is a result of the heavenly dance and the earth dance. The intersection creates unique events. What is magical is how our bodies interact all around us. We receive messages through our senses. We use our eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and skin to experience life. They are messengers, interpreters, that help our mind, hearts, and spirit make sense of life. Some people believe that a higher power sets in motion all that exists and the rhythm in which all expresses itself. I have learned we are spirit experiencing life in our bodies. Let me share what I learned about the Winter months after which the solstice marks the sun dance of the shortest daylight.

Winter is full of rest, dreaming and storytelling; the snow provides a blanket for the hibernation of many creatures. It also helps some creatures make very warm coats to protect themselves from the harsh elements of the season. Winter is a time of spirit connections. The darkest of days bring the brilliance of

the star world. Imagine all those distant suns that have their own dances with all the objects that are attracted by the gravitational pulls, if that is how it works out there too.

Relationships with the land are continued by hunting, trapping, scouting the dens, observing the animals as teachers. Before reservations the people followed the game and were the teachers. How do you practice winter traditions? On Manitoulin, Debajehmujig (storytellers) bring people together in closed environments for crafting and working with hands, and to hear and learn the stories. People learned how to receive teachings in the dream state, it was safe to talk with spirit and share those spiritual stories.

According to one of the many medicine wheel teachings, it is said that the north is represented by the colour white. It is the place where spirit sits. The north represents midnight and is considered the life stage of grandparents and Elders who pass on teachings. I was taught Cedar is the medicine of the north where we clean and clear our space and make our sleep/dream land safe. Some people put Cedar in the doorways of their home. I have also heard that some people use spruce or pine boughs. Evergreens like Cedar have good medicine for preventing illness. What are the practices in your community? Ask your Elders what life was like before the reservations. Mino Pimaadizwin (a good life) is filled with purpose, meaning, hope and belonging.

"Not long ago people lived freely in the natural environment. Every day was Earth Day. Relationships with sky beings were honoured morning and night. Teachings provided balance with all earth life."

Dates To Remember

January 6 – Full moon – Spirit Moon – Mnidoo Giizis

January 21 – New moon

February 5 – Full moon – Bear Moon – Mkwa Giizis

February 20 – New moon

March 7 – Full moon – Ziisbaakdoke - Giizis

March 20 – Spring Equinox

March 21 – New moon



Ask elders in your community, what does this season teach?

What are the names and meanings?

Safety at JMK Hostels

Earlier this year, Communications Officer Nick Sherman sat down with Security Team members Ernie Carson and Tareq Alshamaileh to learn more about their efforts to ensure a safe space at JMK.

SLFNHA has had many milestones in its history. One that has benefited the health and wellbeing of visiting patients to Sioux Lookout is the construction of the Jeremiah McKay Kabayshewekamik (JMK 1) hostel in 2011, along with the expansion into JMK II in 2019. 'Kabayshewekamik' is an Anishinabe word that translates to 'home away from home'. These two hostels in Sioux Lookout exist with the purpose to create a warm, welcoming, and secure residence for clients traveling to Sioux Lookout for medical reasons. With this purpose came the development of the SLFNHA Security Team.

Providing a safe space at JMK I and II comes with many responsibilities, some of these include:

- Conducting hourly checks at hostel buildings, parking lots and other SLFNHA property.
- Patrolling parking lots by taking note of any suspicious behavior.
- Contacting local police for trespassing violations.
- Covering front reception and front desk.
- Assisting the maintenance team when required.
- Reporting incidents to the Director of Client Services.

However, the security job is much more than just a list of tasks. Security team members value the safety of the clients, and this is reflected by the guidelines in place to ensure a safe place for clients and families. The team takes pride in providing a drug and alcohol-free premises for clients visiting Sioux Lookout to heal. Visiting hours end at 9 pm, with quiet hours beginning at 11 pm.

As Ernie Carson, JMK security staff explains, "Looking out for the safety and wellbeing of the clients, elders, and children is number one."



"But there can be challenges along the way. Alcohol and drugs can cause a disruption to an environment that is supposed to be safe for clients. We do our best to contain the situation without involving the authorities, but sometimes people have

Between April and December of this year, the Security Team registered over 1,400 separate incidents. The majority of these were substance related.

The Security Team at JMK hostels has a diverse makeup of backgrounds, with more than 50% of security personnel being Indigenous.

*Lower Left: Tareq Alshamaileh, Claudel Exantus, Ernie Carson at JMK 2
Right: Doug Anderson at JMK 1*



made choices that require us to contact the police."

The Security Team approach their job with empathy and understanding. "We understand that clients that come here have many different backgrounds" says Tareq Alshamaileh, JMK Hostel Security Team Leader.

One of the main ways of preparing staff for their work at JMK is their extensive training, which includes 144 hours that covers everything from CPR to Mental Health First Aid. As Tareq explains, "Security here is different than most security jobs. It's not just parking lots and vehicles, it's the safety and wellbeing of each client in the hostel that is most important."

In addition to the training, there is support within the team to help each team member through some of the more challenging aspects of the job. "We have staff from all over the world, but the idea is to be a team," adds Ernie.

Aside from the intensive training and some of the challenges, there are many rewarding aspects of providing security at JMK I and II. The security team are familiar faces at the hostels for many of the clients. "Some of my favourite moments are when a family thanks me for helping with a situation and keeping them safe or when an elder that comes here for regular appointments comes to hi," says Carson as he reflects on the many shifts he's worked at JMK.

The vision for the Jeremiah McKay Kabayshewekamik hostel is to create a warm, welcoming, and secure residence for clients traveling to Sioux Lookout for medical reasons. It is this vision that the JMK I and II Security Team work diligently to uphold.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN HOTEL!

CLIENTS AND ESCORTS ATTENDING MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS IN WINNIPEG HAVE THE OPTION OF SELECTING THEIR PREFERRED ACCOMMODATION



**1. Upon arrival in Winnipeg call the Transportation Referral Unit
1-877-983-0911**

2. Request accommodation at a pre-selected hotel
(The Patient Navigator Program has provided a list of hotels.)

3. Select three in case your first choice is full

This process will help the Transportation Referral Unit process your accommodations

**Contact:
Patient Navigator Program
navigator@slfnha.com**



Job Openings @ SLFNHA

#SLFNHAIshiring!

SLFNHA is hiring in Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay, and in Northern Communities! We have many job opportunities waiting for you:

- Registered Nurses
- Administrative Assistants
- Mental Health Counsellors
- Manager, Outpatient Mental Health Service
- Director, Information Communication Technology
- Manager, Roots for Community Wellbeing
- Patient Navigator
- Oral Health Treatment Coordinator
- Laundry Aide
- Dispatch Clerk
- Housekeeping Aide
- Dietary Aide
- Interpreter
- Maintenance Worker

See these job postings and more at SLFNHA.com/careers



The ideal applicant:

- Speaks Ojibwe, Cree, Ojibway or Cree
- 5+ yrs experience in:
 - Information Technology
 - Management
- Understands the people, culture, land and health priorities of the First Nations communities in the Sioux Lookout District

ICT DIRECTOR

The ICT (Information Communication Technology) Director is responsible for the effective operations of Information Technology (IT), Communications and Information Management. The ICT Director will provide leadership to ensure IT, Communications and Information Management program objectives are met through overall planning, development, implementation, and effective service delivery.

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Health Authority



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- EMR PROGRAM SPECIALIST
- DIRECTOR, INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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