



NWTTA NEWS

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Building Capacity

In order to build capacity and encourage more members to participate in leadership positions within the NWTTA, a Capacity Working Group was formed with representatives from all nine NWTTA regions. The group met for the first time on February 10, 2023 in Yellowknife.

The primary focus of this meeting was looking at incentives and motivators for those active in the association at the school, regional and territorial levels. They also examined potential barriers to remove or diminish those barriers.

Recommendations from the group will be presented to Central Executive prior to AMCC 2023.



*L-r Amy Wilkinson (YCS), Pierre Cook (CSFTNO), Paul Geerds (South Slave), Joseph Virassamy (Fort Smith), Matthew Miller (NWTTA President), Jeff Milligan (Sahtu), Steve Dagar (Beaufort-Delta), JP Bernard (Dehcho), Stephen Offredi (YK1)
Regrets: Nick Fullerton (Tlicho)*

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President's Update

Matthew Miller, President

I hope this message finds you well. As I reviewed past issues of our NWTTA newsletter, it is incredible to see its transformation over the last decade. It is one of our best tools to inform members and highlight the wonderful things our members do. It ensures that everyone is aware of the NWTTA's goals, priorities, and activities. Our newsletter allows members to share their ideas and opinions, which can contribute to the support offered to members and generate discussion.



Encouraging clear and open communication between teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders in education is vital for the system to improve. We must communicate effectively to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity. Many of the day-to-day concerns NWTTA Central Office addresses are based on poor communication whether it be a lack of communication, stifled communication or miscommunication. This often leads to misunderstandings, lack of trust, and frustration while effective communication helps build trust, transparency, and credibility between members, the Employer and the education system as a whole. It ensures that everyone is aware of expectations, fostering a shared sense of purpose which can contribute to better working conditions and the best possible education for students.

As noted on the cover of this issue, we recently hosted the Capacity Working Group, which was created through a motion at the 2022 Annual Meeting of Central Council (AMCC). We have been noticing fewer people putting their names forward for leadership positions, which seems to be a trend across the country, and we want to know how to reverse this trend and build a stronger Association. We believe we need a variety of voices to be heard, as it enables a broader understanding of the issues at hand and to develop more effective solutions.

As educators, we understand the value of investing in the growth and development of our students. However, it is equally important to invest in the growth and development of our Association. By building our capacity, we can ensure that we have the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to tackle the challenges facing our profession.

Each of us has unique skills and perspectives that can contribute to the success of the NWTTA. Through collaborative efforts and knowledge sharing, we can achieve greater accomplishments than we could individually. Having members take on leadership roles is crucial in bringing about substantial and meaningful changes in our profession. There are opportunities at the school, regional, and territorial levels for members to actively engage themselves, meet members from other communities/regions, acquire new knowledge regarding collective agreements, and better understand the Association's Bylaws and Policies.

It is also crucial for us to understand the legal protections available to us as teachers. One of these protections is Section 43 of the Criminal Code. This is a topic at the Canadian Teachers' Federation, recent media publications, a

2004 Supreme Court of Canada decision, and Call to Action #6 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I have brought this to Superintendents, Department of Education, Culture & Employment, and Michael McLeod, Member of Parliament for Northwest Territories for discussion.

Section 43 provides teachers with the legal authority to use reasonable force in the course of their duties, including to correct a student's behaviour. This provision ensures that teachers can maintain a safe and respectful learning environment for all students while also allowing us to uphold the expectations and standards of our profession.

However, it is essential to note that this provision should only be used as a last resort in circumstances where there is no other reasonable alternative. The use of force should always be proportionate to the situation and should not cause harm or injury.

As educators, we have a responsibility to ensure that we are using Section 43 of the Criminal Code in a responsible and ethical manner. We must prioritize the well-being and safety of our students while also upholding the values of our profession. I encourage all members to familiarize themselves with Section 43 of the Criminal Code and to use it responsibly and ethically. Your Superintendents may have additional expectations, which should be clearly communicated to you.

We are still working to ensure the bargained language of the GNWT COVID-19 Leave is respected. We will use Arbitrator Andrew Sims and the courts to ensure the Employer is held accountable for wrongly making the decision to alter COVID-19 Leave without consultation with the Association. This is the second time they have made changes unilaterally giving minimal notice of the change. Negotiations for the GNWT membership is quickly approaching and trust with the Employer will likely be reflective of the diminished rapport they have shown us. As the territorial elections for the next Legislative Assembly draw near, I hope the government will demonstrate its appreciation of teachers by offering an agreement that reflects all that educators do for their students, schools and communities.

On behalf of the Association, I thank you for making a difference, and I hope we have the opportunity to connect during the remainder of the school year.



L-r Matthew Miller & Michael McLeod

Northern Lights

Meet

Angela Peters
from Hay River (South
Slave region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I decided in High School that if I became an art teacher, I would never have to do math again. Little did I know that I would end up teaching math for almost ten years! Now I miss it :)

Q. What do you teach?

Right now I teach Grade 8 English, Social Studies, Health and a few other subjects.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I enjoy helping people and sharing ideas with others. Like all teachers, I love that moment when a student figures out something they have been struggling with and their face lights up.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I connect with my students by learning as much as I can about them: their interests, strengths and background. I try to build positive, healthy relationships so that they can feel comfortable and a sense of belonging in my classroom. When planning lessons I really try to take my students' interests into account, and to incorporate games and hands-on learning whenever possible.

Thank You for Supporting Kids' Journeys

I think this job can feel at times like an uphill battle, but is also extremely worthwhile. I want to thank teachers for their hard work and dedication to their students. Teachers don't often get to hear how great of a job they are doing, or how big of a difference they are making in kids' lives. So thank you to all of our school staff who support kids in their personal journeys to become the best version of themselves.

Fort Smith 3vs3 Basketball Tournament

Michael Small, Teacher, Paul W. Kaeser High School (Fort Smith region)

During exam week, **Allie McDonald** and **Anna McDonald** (teachers at PWK) organized a 3vs3 basketball tournament to promote the sport and run additional programming for youth while school was on pause. This tournament was held over two nights at the community rec centre and was open to any community member 12+. What started as a small tournament for basketball players to gain some game experience, soon grew to a tournament with more than 35 participants of all ages. On the first night, players signed up, got drafted into teams and from here the round robin started. As there were ten teams, this took up the entire first day. Then players returned the next night to play in the playoffs. Winners of the tournament received prizes donated by Basketball NT. It was great to see so many athletes and spectators come out and support the event. Our hope is that this promotes further rec programming for our adolescent youth and show that there is lots of interest!



l-r Gaylen Pischinger, Allie McDonald, Jacie Macdonald, Michael Small

Thank You

for making a difference!

Merci

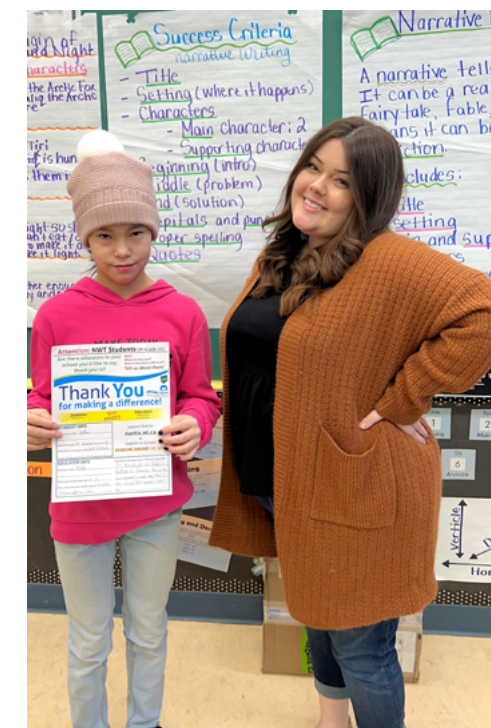
d'avoir fait une différence!

The *Thank You for Making a Difference* (TYFMAD) program is an organized opportunity for students to send messages of appreciation to their teachers. The program, in its 26th year in 2023 is funded by the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

For three weeks in January, students can send a message to their teachers online on the NWTTA website or on paper at their school. At the end of the campaign a school prize drawing is completed at each school to pick one winner where the teacher who was written about and the student who wrote about them win gift card prizes. All messages written about the teachers are delivered to those teachers.

All active NWTTA members are then included in grand prize drawings where the winners receive a gift card from the vendor of their choice.

Scattered through this newsletter are photos of some of the school prize winners.



Thank You

for making a difference!

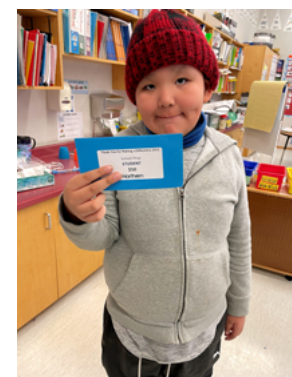
Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Angik School** in Paulatuk (Beaufort-Delta region) student **Leigha** and teacher **Katie Fontaine!**

Merci

d'avoir fait une différence!



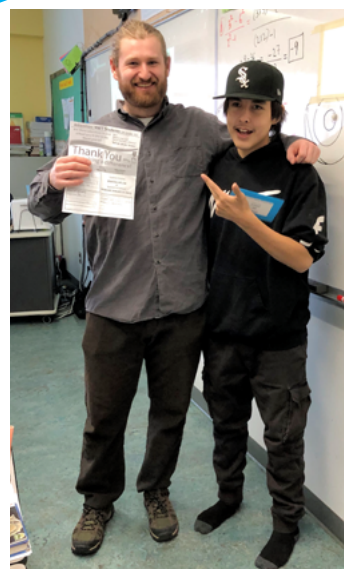
Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Charles Tetcho School** in Sambaa K'e (Dehcho region) student **Sumer** and teacher **Kristy Nicholls!**



winners from **Chief Julian Yendo School** in Wrigley (Dehcho region) student **Xavier** and teacher **Lydia Boadi!**

Thank You

for making a difference!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Chief T'Selehye School** in Fort Good Hope (Sahtu region) teacher **Jack Raithby** and student **Hendrick!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Weledeh Catholic School** in Yellowknife (YCS region) teacher **Teegan Rendell** and student **Ella!**

Merci

d'avoir fait une différence!



Northern Studies 30 (NS30)

NS30 is a new made-in-the-NWT course geared toward Grade 12 students! Small-scale pilots have already begun in some NWT schools.

Reconciliation, wellness, land, and governance are the focus of this practical course. NS30 is also the first NWT-created course to use British Columbia's curriculum framework.

The GNWT is gathering feedback on the course, with an aim to launch it in all NWT schools in 2023!

Find out more by visiting www.ece.gov.nt.ca/northernstudies

Government of
Northwest Territories

Working for Our Members A Glimpse of What We Do

David Murphy, Executive Director

In my December 2022 newsletter article I provided information regarding the important work the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF/FCE) does on behalf of all members and the support it provides to Member Organizations such as the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association. Recently I attended the Western Staff Conference where staff from Member Organizations meet once a year to learn, share and develop their work together. This year's meeting was hosted by the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and attended by staff from member organizations in Manitoba (MTS), Saskatchewan (STF), Alberta (ATA), British Columbia (BCTF), Yukon (YAEP) and Northwest Territories (NWTTA). The topic of the conference, "Rethink: What's changed? What's next?" seems very appropriate after going through COVID-19 restrictions.

The conference keynote speaker was Shachi Kurl, President of the Angus Reid Institute, which is a non-profit foundation committed to independent research on a number of matters they deem important to Canadians and the world. She spoke about a number of things including things not working like they used to, last couple of years of dysfunction, some people feel that there isn't room to question things anymore, create safe spaces for our members to take time to hear other's points of view, there is a perceived lack of trust and how to regain trust in our organizations and with employers. One comment that she made resonates with me and has caused me to reflect on quite a bit is "have we lost compassion for one another?" I certainly hope we have not lost compassion but if we have lost compassion for one another is that an effect from living in a COVID-19 world for the last couple of years?

During the conference staff were invited to participate in a number of group workshops focusing on their work responsibilities with their organizations. These included sessions on how to identify stress and skills to use to better cope, wellness, balance and resilience, rethink our language to choose words and messages that reflect the needs of our members, a decolonization journey through journalism and embroidery providing a space for discussion of how we can examine our past to help build a more just future, engaging members through research and human rights in the workplace.

Member Organizations were asked to identify one topic their organizations are working through and present this topic for discussion. These included Recognition, Reconciliation and Employment Equity for Indigenous Members, The Future of Volunteerism in Teacher Organizations, Connect Through Technology, Teacher Recruitment and Retention and Increase in Hiring Non-Certified Teachers. All of these issues presented by the other Member Organizations, especially the teacher concerns and volunteers in our Association, are very relevant to our organization and members as well.

The topic I choose to present was "Teacher Wellness in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic." Teacher wellness is a concern that many teachers have contacted us about this year. Members have reached out to seek support and advice on a number of issues affecting their wellness. These include anxiety in having to speak to their supervisors, fractured professional relations with colleagues and experiences of physical violence and verbal threats from students. We, at Central Office, have experienced many more calls and follow-up calls this year on these concerns as compared to other years related to personal wellness. These calls include allegations of harassment, code of ethics breaches, suspensions, investigations, notice to attend meetings, human rights complaints and student behaviour.

Perhaps some of the concerns that members are having are related to COVID-19 restrictions where staff and students were kept away from each other for the past couple of years. Hopefully as time goes on and we get back into better routines we do not experience the wellness concerns that are presently affecting many of our members. This year I have had more members contact me to ask for the contact information of the [Employee & Family Assistance Program](#) and [Starling Minds](#). These are two great resources members can use if they need to seek professional help with wellness concerns they may have.

If there is a concern that you are having and you believe that we can assist or provide support, please give us a call as well to discuss.

In closing, please remember, if you do encounter any bumps along the way please contact us and we will try our best to level them for you so your journey is more pleasant.

Thank You for making a difference!

Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Range Lake North School** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) student **Ryder** and teacher **Andrew Austin!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Mangilaluk School** in Tuktoyaktuk (Beaufort-Delta region) student **Scarlet** and teacher **Tori Constant!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Colville Lake School** in Colville Lake (Sahtu region) student **Alica** and teacher **Linda Manuel!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Echo Dene School** in Fort Liard (Dehcho region) teacher **Lauretta Allen** and student **Amori!**



Merci
d'avoir fait une différence!

Northern Lights

Meet **Katherine Joyce** from Behchoko (Tlcho region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up outside of Toronto, in the towns of Thornhill and Stouffville.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
I was always interested in working with youth, but I didn't think that I would want to work as a classroom teacher. In undergrad, I made sure to take the classes I would need to get into a B.Ed. program, in case I wanted to apply later on. When I found out that Ontario was going to switch to a 2-year B.Ed., I applied for the final year of the 1-year program, and I discovered that I loved being in the classroom!

Q. What do you teach?
I currently teach senior high ELA and Social Studies.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
My favourite thing is when a student 'gets' something; when something clicks and they understand how to apply a concept, use a skill, or understand an author's intent.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I try my best to be 'warm-strict'; demonstrating care while upholding high expectations. I firmly believe all students can achieve at a high level with the appropriate support. I also try to pick texts that I think my students will be interested in!

Creating Better Futures
I believe that we educate to help our students create better futures for themselves and for their communities. I am honoured that I get to play a small part in helping students shape their futures into what they want them to be.

Inspired Thoughtful Students Draw National Media Coverage

Jasmine Marianayagam, Grade 3 Teacher, École Jt't'o (YK1 region)

When I first heard about Roy and Sylvia Klengenberg's love story through CBC News, I was deeply touched by their unconditional love and commitment to each other. After sharing it on social media with friends and family, I knew it was something I had to share with my Grade 3 students. The next day I brought up the article on our classroom screen and recounted the Klengenberg's love story with the class. A couple of students had heard about it after family discussions at home the night before, but it was a new story to the majority of my class. My students were inspired and in awe of the Klengengbergs and how they were married in the hospital since Roy is facing terminal cancer. Many of my students have attended weddings and knew this was not a typical way to celebrate marriage, yet they understood that at the forefront of it all, Roy and Sylvia simply wanted to celebrate their love and that is what mattered most.

Right away the students realized that Roy and Sylvia are away from their home and would likely be in the hospital for a little while longer. My class wanted to do something to decorate Roy's hospital room, and also send the couple some wedding decorations and good cheer! My students began diligently writing cards and drawing pictures for the Klengengbergs. They were thrilled to know that their papers would end up in the hands of the Klengengbergs, a couple they had grown to love after hearing their story through the article



and the audio clip from CBC's The Trailbreaker. Eventually, [CBC North](#) heard about my Grade 3 students' act of kindness. A television and radio interview was set-up with the class! The camera crew visited our classroom and the students had a chance to learn about reporting in the North from Hilary Bird and Travis Burke. This was a very special moment for my students and they were honoured to share their drawings and cards with the reporters. Later I received word that CBC's The National picked up our story!

Our class was featured as "The Moment" on January 13's broadcast across the country. My students had friends and family from across the world tune in to hear all about Roy and Sylvia's inspiring love story.

I received messages of gratitude and thanks from the newlywed lovebirds, Mr. and Mrs Klengenberg. They expressed how loved and lucky they felt knowing that a Grade 3 class cares so much about them. "Koana", they said, which means "Thank you" in Inuinnaqtun from the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut. They said: "Please tell your class that we're very surprised to get beautiful drawings that touched us deeply. Friends and family forever. We're blessed to have you all as family now. Thank you for all the support and encouragement for us. Greatly appreciated to call you family."

Thank you, Roy and Sylvia, for making this world a better place!

Catching Up Members' Life Events



On November 29, 2022, **Jennifer Schuett** (East Three Elementary School) and her husband, **Justin Guy** (Beaufort-Delta Divisional Education Council), welcomed **Wesley David Guy** into the world. Wesley is Jen and Justin's first child.



Incorporate human rights learning into your classroom with ease.

No matter what grade you teach, we have a selection of ready-to-use human rights lessons.

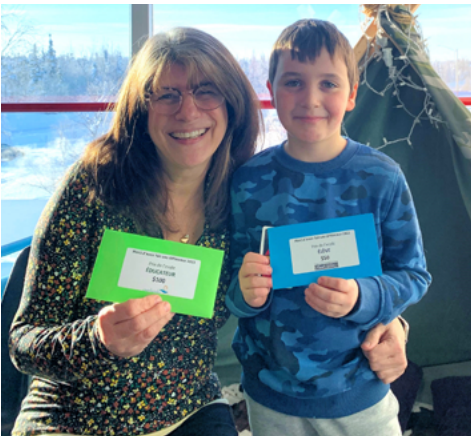
Resources are

- FREE
- downloadable
- organized by grade
- tied to the social studies curriculum
- curriculum objectives are included

We also have information on creating accessible classrooms, sexual harassment at school, supporting LGBT youth, building equal and health relationships and anti-racism resources.

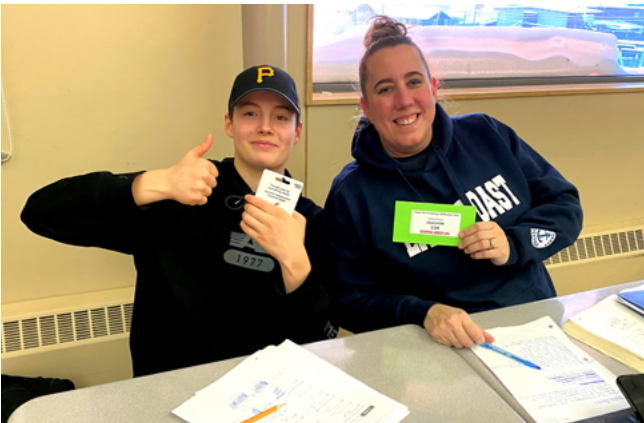
Visit our website to access the Teachers' Toolkit!
nwthumanrights.ca/resources/forteachers/

nwthumanrights.ca



Thank You for making a difference!

Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École Allain St-Cyr** in Yellowknife (CSFTNO region) teacher **Sylvie Malo** and student **Charles-Olivier**!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **East Three Secondary School** in Inuvik (Beaufort-Delta region) student **Jaxon** and teacher **Stephanie Parkes**!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Harry Camsell School** in Hay River (South Slave region) teacher **Amanda Roach** and student **Noah**!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winner from the **Tlicho Community Services Agency** in Behchoko (Tlicho region) Literacy Coordinator **Annette Stehouwer**!

Thank you teachers for the guidance and knowledge you have given

Tara Achkar, Customer Engagement Manager, Starling Minds

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in the world. They are our role models during our formative years and help shape who we are to ourselves, our family, our friends, and society. They give students support and purpose and inspire generations of leaders to make the world a better place. But as we grow up, we tend to forget our teachers' impact on our lives.

But we see you and everything you have done for your students, their parents, and our communities.

Thank you for your dedication to your students, the patience you have shown, the encouragement you have given, the countless lessons you've taught, and the positive impact you have had on students.

Because of you, our students persevered despite facing constant school shutdowns, remote learning mandates, and ever-changing pandemic protocols.

Teachers deserve the best support for their mental health and well-being. We can help.

Designed for teachers, Starling Minds is a free, confidential digital mental health program that is right



Thank you for your dedication.

It's time to take care of you.
Discover the power of digital mental health support.



for you. In simple, easy steps, you can build powerful habits to help you take control of your life—anytime and at your own pace.

Make self-care your priority with Starling Minds.

Ready to get started? Visit member.starlingminds.com and enter your access code.

Your access code: **NWTMEMBER**

Invite family members 16+ years old with the access code: **NWTFAMILY**

[Register now](#)

Questions? We'd love to hear from you. Email our Support Team at members@starlingminds.com.



Career and Education Advisors

Are your high school students getting the support they need?

Career and Education Advisors are in every school and region!

They support Grade 9-12 students in their next steps after graduation. They also provide practical support with applications, resumes and cover letters.

Find out more by emailing cea@gov.nt.ca or visit www.ece.gov.nt.ca/CEA

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Northwest Territories



above - Cultural Leader Destiny Rabesca demonstrates to a student how to fillet a fish
below - Teacher Mike Pickles and a student showing off fried lake trout

Students at N.J. Macpherson School (YK1 region) were fortunate to learn how to cut, prepare and cook fish, and how to snare, skin and cook rabbits in the schools culture tent, a great learning experience with local elders outside of the classroom walls.



Northern Lights

Meet

Joseph Virassamy
from Fort Smith (Fort Smith region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Mauritius, a small island located in the Indian Ocean. Mauritius is a tropical paradise known for its stunning natural beauty. The island is surrounded by crystal-clear waters, white sandy beaches and lush green vegetation. The island's interior is home to a mountainous rainforest that offers a glimpse of the island's unique flora and fauna. The Black River Gorges National Park, a popular spot for hiking, offers a breathtaking view of the island's rugged interior. The park is also home to an array of rare and endemic plants, birds, and animals. Another unique feature of the island is the Seven Coloured Earth, a natural phenomenon located in Chamarel, where the soil is naturally divided into seven different colours. Mauritius's beauty is not only limited to the natural, but also the cultural aspect. The island has a rich history and multicultural heritage, reflected in its colourful villages and towns.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

As an educator I have the opportunity to make a real impact in the lives of my students. I can inspire and motivate my students, helping them to reach their full potential and achieve their goals. I am a lifelong learner, and I find that teaching allows me to continue learning and grow in my own field. I am a PhD candidate in languages, literacies, and culture at Simon Fraser University and planning to make significant contributions to the field of language education.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach French as a second language, I play an important role in helping students learn and communicate in a new language. French is a beautiful and widely spoken language, and learning it can open up many opportunities for students, both personally and professionally.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Being an educator gives me a sense of purpose and meaning to my life. I enjoy sharing my knowledge and expertise with others. I find joy and satisfaction in helping students learn and grow.

Q. How do you engage your students?

Encouraging a positive and supportive learning environment can help students feel more comfortable and confident in their ability to learn French.

Flexible and Adaptable

It is important to be flexible and adaptable as a teacher of French as a second language, and to be open to trying new methods and approaches. With hard work and dedication, you can help your students achieve their goals and become proficient speakers of French.

Protecting Copyright Laws for Canada's Kids

Canadian Teachers' Federation, Canadian School Boards' Association, and the Canadian Association of School System Administrators

Public-school systems—the school buildings, teachers, and education workers that make them function—allow students to have opportunities to access the vast resources to obtain knowledge and tap creativity.

Those resources include excerpts from books, digital content, and music. All these materials are protected by copyright, but are legally available for students through a process called fair dealing—that is, the right of educators and students to use excerpts of copyrighted materials for educational purposes.

But if the publishing industry has its way, fair dealing is destined for the history books.

Aside from addressing password sharing on digital streaming platforms and illegal downloading, copyright laws are not something that the average Canadian contemplates much, if at all. But for the last decade a behind-the-scenes effort has been underway to make legal access to copyrighted material more expensive and less accessible to those who need it most: educators and their students.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns made it clear that Canadians were far from equal. Those who could work at home could stay safe, while those who could not faced daily risks to their health and limitations to their access to information and learning. This inequity was made even clearer by the recent and lengthy school closures.

Suddenly, thousands of students and their families were left to fend for themselves. It became more evident that children and their families are dependent on public schools not only for quality inclusive education, but as safe spaces, places to receive a nourishing breakfast, and for much needed social supports.

In fact, when the doors closed and many schools went virtual, inequity was impossible to ignore. Large percentages of our students had no access to the internet and information and resources required for learning. The closures were proof that schools and

publicly funded education systems—essential to Canada's communities and to its next generation of leaders—are key to fostering equity in our society.

As publicly funded education begins to recover from the pandemic, another struggle within education persisted under the radar. The outcome of this struggle, fought by the publishing industry's lobbyists to rewrite copyright laws (expected before the next federal election), could upend public education for generations to come.

In 2012, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of fair dealing—a decision the Canadian School Boards' Association, the Canadian Association of School System Administrators, and the Canadian Teachers' Federation fought hard for. Think of the countless lessons developed by teachers that are supported by passages from books, articles, or videos and digital images, and imagine all of it locked behind a paywall. That is exactly what the publishing industry, and their teams of lobbyists have been trying to achieve.

In practice, fair dealing guidelines are exactly that—fair. Educators are not permitted to copy full works, but that's not what the publishers would have you believe. Throughout this process they have repeatedly made baseless claims of teachers regularly infringing copyright law, almost single-handedly taking down an industry. In 2019, as the result of an ongoing lawsuit launched by Access Copyright against school boards throughout the country, a federal court order required teachers in various provinces and territories to turn over all lesson materials, seen by many as an act of intimidation.

And if pointing the finger at teachers wasn't bad enough, the publishing industry has worked to convince artists and authors that they are being shortchanged by fair dealing practices—that teachers and students are robbing creators of a living. In reality, it is the industry that is set to profit the most should fair dealing be dropped, and tariffs reintroduced.

Our next generation of writers, artists, thinkers, and readers is only possible if we help nurture their curiosity, creativity, and intellectual pursuits, and only by ensuring equity in education can we make that

happen. By having access to enriched materials made available through fair dealing, students' worlds expand beyond the classroom and teachers' ability to connect and engage has a chance to flourish; to write the next great book, or simply buy one. Instead, publishers want to narrow or eliminate teacher and student access to online resources in sacrifice not only of children's potential, but Canada's too.

We want to see a balanced approach to copyright law, one that recognizes the rights of content producers and users. We want authors and artists to be properly recognized financially for their cultural contributions. We also want teachers and students to continue to have "fair and equitable access" to the wealth of publicly available resources to enrich the learning experience, and a Canada where future artists are cultivated from all walks of life.

The way forward is not to do away with fair dealing but to strengthen it to ensure that publicly funded education systems in Canada are stronger, more inclusive, and more equitable than they are today. The pandemic showed us all just how essential access to information and learning are to Canadian society, let's not ignore that lesson.

Project Overseas 2023

Congratulations to **Julie Donohue-Kpolugbo** from the Beaufort-Delta Divisional Education Council office (Beaufort-Delta region) who will be travelling to **Ghana** in July 2023 as part of a team of volunteers from Canada for Project Overseas 2023! Julie had been selected for Project Overseas in 2020, but the program was suspended for the past three summers due to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

[Project Overseas](#) is a joint endeavor of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and its member organizations to support overseas partners in developing countries as they deliver professional services to teachers. Since 1962, Project Overseas has assisted teacher organizations in over fifty countries in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean. Project Overseas places over fifty volunteers in approximately ten countries every July. NWTTA members have participated in Project Overseas since 1969.



Prince of Wales
Northern Heritage Centre



The museum has lots to offer NWT schools

Edukits

We ship themed kits to schools containing lessons and props in a box ... for free!

Online Resources

Our website has virtual activities, audio, and exhibits – including 'Big River Journey.'



School Programs

Available for a variety of grade levels at the museum in Yellowknife. Programs available in English and French.

For a full list of resources:

www.pwnhc.ca/education/educational-programs-and-services

For more information:

Email: pwnhc_education@gov.nt.ca
Website: www.pwnhc.ca

Teaching Outside the Classroom – Vimy Ridge

Loralea Wark, École St. Patrick High School (YCS region)

In 2007 I took the first students in the École St. Patrick High School (St. Pat's) Canadian War History class on a battlefields trip to France and England. I hadn't planned for it to be an anniversary trip, but when I started looking for a trip in January 2006, the top banner on the travel company's website was for the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the re-dedication of the monument. Call it fate or destiny or a master plan, but I knew as soon as I saw it that that was "the one." And it was.

We toured England before taking an overnight ferry to France, and I cannot put into words the emotions I felt as a teacher and as a Canadian when we got off the bus at Juno Beach. The kids had all been chatting as they made their way to the break in the dune to access the beach itself, and something happened as they walked through that break: they fell silent. Not because we'd told them to, not because there was a sign telling them to be respectful, but because they "got it." The tide was out and the sun was just coming up, and as we walked out to the water - still in silence - we all understood what that beach meant to us as individuals and a nation: we were able to walk it on a calm, peaceful morning because our ancestors had stormed it in a hail of bullets and shells.

As we stood in the Atlantic freezing our feet - it was only April - one of the kids standing beside me looked out across the water and said, "You might think I'm crazy, but I can see the ships out there, moving in with the men." Another student on my

other side said, "You're not crazy. I can see the water turning red." I knew in that second that those kids would always remember, and that they would pass that on to their children.

Commitment to Remember

*They were young, as we are young.
They served, giving freely of themselves.
To them, we pledge, amid the winds of time,
To carry their torch and never forget.
We will remember them.*

All respond: We will remember them.

Our morning culminated in a remembrance service on the beach, and one of the chaperones spontaneously said we should go around the circle and say what we were thankful for. There was not a dry eye on the beach that morning, and that experience led to the creation of The Soldier Project that I have done every trip since then. In this project, the students get the name of a soldier that fell and is buried in Cemetery No. 2 at Vimy Ridge to research. When they first get the assignment they think it's just regular research. However, as they find out more details about their soldier - his height, eye colour, next-of-kin and so on - and they learn about the battles and conditions he fought in, he becomes real to them. People who don't spend a lot of time with teens often think they are self-centred and focused solely on themselves, and I wish those people could see these teens weeping at the grave of a man they never knew who has been dead for over a century, or trying to pledge the Youth Commitment to Remember or sing O Canada with their peers, all of them so choked up they can hardly get the words out.

If that morning at Juno Beach was

moving, you can imagine what the anniversary at the monument was like, surrounded by 5,000 other students from across Canada. It was an absolutely incredible experience for everyone who attended. The best part of the day for me, however, was the bus ride back to our hotel.

We were bus 206 of 225 buses, so we were near the end of the queue getting off the hill. The chaperones were all at the front of the bus, with the kids behind us laughing and chattering excitedly about the day. As we turned the first corner to leave the hill itself, an elderly couple was standing by the gate to their walkway, their grandchildren perched on the fence between them. All of them were waving Canadian flags and smiling, so I called to the back of the bus for the kids to wave back.

As the bus inched along past more houses, more and more people lined the road, all waving Canadian flags, some were yelling, "Bienvenue,



canadiens!" and "Merci." As we saw these people, the bus grew silent as the kids thought about what we were seeing and what it meant. Then we turned onto the main road and we were greeted by about 150 French citizens, all with signs saying "Welcome back!" and "Thank you!" in both English and French, standing in the middle of the roundabout. They were waving Canadian flags, and had Canadian maple leaves drawn on their cheeks. We had tears on our cheeks.

As we continued down the road and into the town we had passed through on the way to the ceremony, we noticed the flags on the flag poles. Instead of the French tricolore, the Canadian maple leaf was flying proudly; at some point after we had all passed through in the morning the French citizens had taken down their flags and replaced them with ours. As a Social Studies teacher, I can tell you that a country rarely takes down its own flag to fly the flag of another country. And yet France had done it that day for us. It still gives me goosebumps and brings me to tears thinking about it a decade and a half later. I have never been so proud to be a Canadian as I was on that day, and the kids relayed the same feeling that night and ever since then whenever I run into them

and we talk about that trip.

Since 2007 I have led 288 St. Pat's students and staff on general battlefields trips in 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2019. We also participated in the 65th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands in 2010, and we attended the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in 2017. Our 2021 trip had to be postponed due to COVID-19, so I am thrilled to say that at the time I am typing this, our group of 45 only has 11 sleeps left until that trip finally departs! And, I have already sent in an itinerary for 2025 to be priced out. Every trip I have taken with my students has led to dozens more stories just like those from that first trip, and it is those moments that make the hundreds of hours that go into planning these trips - by the kids, their parents, the chaperones and me - worth every second.

In order for St. Pat's students to participate in a battlefields trip, they have to take an after-school Canadian War History class. (They get special project credits for this: 2 for the course itself and one for the Soldier Project. They can also get optional credits for pre- and post-trip assignments). Teaching an entire course is obviously not mandatory for any teacher or group interested

in travelling with students, but I have personally found that when the kids have to work for it they are committed and they understand that this is an experience and a journey, not simply a trip; their behaviour and their attitude and what they take from the experience are enhanced because of their prior knowledge. So, if you are thinking of taking a group overseas for any reason, my biggest piece of advice would be to do some pre-teaching on the key sites you'll be taking in so they appreciate what they're seeing a bit more.

I could write pages about how we set up a trip, ways that we fundraise, what we talk about in class, the Soldier Project, where the best restaurants and bathrooms are in each of the towns we visit, and general tips for travelling with students. However, there's not enough room for all of that so you can contact me at loralea.wark@ycs.nt.ca if you want to know more. I am happy to answer any questions anyone might have about planning a battlefields trip or any other kind of school trip, or travelling with students. It is such a worthwhile experience for everyone involved, and I encourage teachers to try it!

Additionally, I will be leading my second adult/family battlefields tour this summer, from July 4-15, 2023. If you're interested in leading a school trip but want to see how one operates first, I think you may be able to use your Professional Development fund to go on this one, and there may be a discount with the company I use if you decide to book a trip through them after. For more information on that you can check out: <https://www.explorica.ca/Wark-1969> (If that link doesn't work, simply go to www.explorica.ca, go to the students tab, click on "sign up for a tour" and enter the code wark-1969).

Lest we forget.



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École Sir John Franklin High School** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) student **Amna** and teacher **Tomiko Robson!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Princess Alexandra Middle School** in Hay River (South Slave region) teacher **Alexis Pearn** and student **Kathryn!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Mildred Hall School** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) teacher **Maggie Chouinard** and student **Trinity!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École William McDonald Middle School** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) student **Deklan** and teacher **Olivier Fortin!**



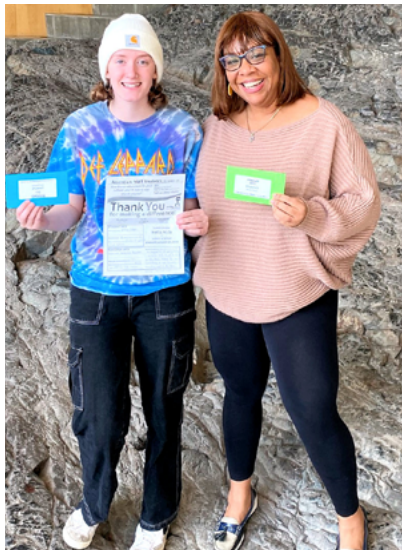
Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **?ehtseo Ayha School** in Deline (Sahtu region) teacher **Lily Kelly** and student **Krista!**

Thank You

for making a difference!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École St. Joseph School** in Yellowknife (YCS region) student **Jane** and teacher **Daniel Rainville!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École St. Patrick High School** in Yellowknife (YCS region) student **Emily** and teacher **Keneisha Buddoo!**

Merci

d'avoir fait une différence!

"Never Say Die"

Song Production in Aklavik

Amanda Reynolds, Teacher, Moose Kerr School

Ooooo
Remember what our elders say
Ooooo
Everything will be okay
Ooooo
You're never alone
I can feel it in my bones
The culture will bring us home

In January 2023, **N'we Jinan** brought their mobile production studio to Aklavik, working with a group of grade 9-12 students at Moose Kerr School to write and record an original song "Never Say Die".

"Never Say Die" is the motto of the hamlet of Aklavik. The motto came about in the 1960s when the Government of Canada wrote that "Aklavik was expected to die a natural death" due to the Peel Channel cresting its banks, threatening the community with flood every spring. **Moose Kerr School**, which opened in 1969 is named for the principal who fought to save Aklavik. Although Aklavik has experienced flooding, the residents have been steadfastly unwilling to let the hamlet die, focused on the importance of the continuation of the culture and traditions of the Indigenous people of the area.



WATCH

Aklavik's NEVER SAY DIE: Mobile Production Studio N'we Jinan's First Time in NWT

WATCH a making-of video:
<https://youtu.be/ANPGEUqC1ns>

LISTEN

LISTEN to the produced song:
<https://on.soundcloud.com/HQX4Z>





Share What You Have

Chipewyan:	ʔasíe nets'ı́ dé dēne ghółchu
Tłıchq/Yellowknives Dene:	Asıı naxıts'q sıı, wet'à done ts'àhdi
South Slavey:	T'ahsıı gots'gh nıde gonáá goghaets'edęndıh
North Slavey:	Yerı ts'et'ı́ ɤehgha ɤets'edędı wóle
Gwich'in:	Jıdıı hoh'ıı valát gwats'an ohtsıı

Sam Dehdashti (Mackenzie Mountain School, Sahtu region) and his students made pizzas to share with the whole school, upholding the Dene Law of *Sharing What You Have* with others.



Child and Youth Counselling (CYC) Program Evaluation

The GNWT is evaluating the Child and Youth Counselling (CYC) program and we want to hear from you.

Counsellors are in NWT schools and communities to provide direct mental health and wellness services to children, youth and their families.

To provide your feedback or ideas on the program, contact us by
Email: cyc@dpra.ca Phone: 1-888-292-0084 Text: 867-446-4873

Find out more at haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca

Government of
Northwest Territories

Math Puzzle!



There are 7 students in a school bus.
Each student has 7 backpacks.
In each backpack, there are 7 big cats.
Each big cat carries 7 little cats.
How many legs are there in the school bus?

By Mr. Sushil Jasper M.Sc., B.Ed.,
Mathematics and Science Teacher
Liıdlıı Kue Regional High School (Dehcho region)

Answer on page 27



Northern Lights

**Meet
Jackie Hawthorn**
from Yellowknife (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I was born in Unity, Saskatchewan but moved to Yellowknife with my parents when I was in grade four and Yellowknife has been my home ever since.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I think that I always wanted to be a teacher. You would always find me setting up a mini classroom in the basement of my Grandmother's house so that I could "teach" all my cousins over the summer break. I am sure they loved it as much as I did. ;) Then when I graduated from high school and was attending University, I was able to substitute teach here with YK1 and that did it for me, so I returned to school to get my teaching degree.

Q. What do you teach?

I currently teach a grade one/two split class and have been teaching this level for quite a long time now. I have had the opportunity to teach most grades up to grade eight and have enjoyed them all. That said, I truly feel that the primary years are where I can make the most impact on students.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I love that I get to work with kids! They keep us young and full of questions. There is never a dull moment in a classroom and every year is different. You will never be bored being a teacher, I guarantee it!

Q. How do you engage your students?

I love to try to find ways to make sure they have a say in what they are learning as well as how we get there. Students are the most engaged when they feel they have a say in what they are learning.

Being a Teacher is a Pretty Fantastic Thing

I feel very fortunate that I have a job being a teacher. Being able to spend my days doing something that I love is a real treasure! I have spent just over 20 years now doing this job and I am sure that I would not change anything. One of the huge bonuses of this job is that I got to spend each day with my own children as they attended the same school as me. Being a teacher is a pretty fantastic thing even with all the challenges - I love it a lot!

Becoming a Teacher

Kathy Pellissey, Teacher, Deh Gah Elementary & Secondary School (Dehcho region)

Hi my name is Kathy Pellissey. I am a teacher at Deh Gah Elementary and currently teach the JK/Grade 1 Dene Immersion class. I was born in Wrigley. I have taught over 25 or more years in the north. I grew up in Wrigley. I come from a big family. My parents are Wilson and Caroline Pellissey. I have 9 sisters and 3 brothers. My Late father Wilson was my hero and teacher. He was my first teacher and taught me to be a hard worker and how to succeed in life. He taught me and my siblings our culture and language at an early age. When I went to school I did not speak English. My dad was very wise man. He encouraged me to continue with my education and return to my home to help our people. As a hunter and trapper, my dad knew the value of hard work and achieving what you put your mind to.

From an early age, I aspired to attend university and pursue higher learning. From then on I worked hard and completed my grade 12. After graduating from grade 12 in Yellowknife, I attended University of Saskatchewan for the next seven years. I earned two university degrees, Bachelors of Arts and Science and Education. It was a difficult transition from living in a small community and relocating to a big city, Saskatoon. I found the transition to city life very difficult and I contemplated quitting many times. It was my wise dad who gave me the courage never to give up on your dream of a good education. With the love and encouragement of my family, I remained at U of S and trained myself to think positive. I learned to motivate myself and I started to enjoy learning and meeting new people. I was taught to be a strong person and always strive to be happy in what I was doing. It was not an easy road to follow for a young Dene woman to be attending university. I knew I was a trail blazer and that I was setting an example for my future students. My dad told me to finish my university education with a positive mind and make new friends and enjoy my time in Saskatoon. I followed my dad's good advice and everything was easier after that. I started to enjoy learning and continued to work hard spending long hours reading and writing essays.

After completing my Bachelor of Arts and Science degree, I decided to go home to Wrigley for a year and work. I wanted to be a politician but soon discovered that I was too shy and not something I wanted to do. I lived for a year with my parents and spent time fine tuning my cultural knowledge. My mother taught me

how to tan hides. I was really missing everything about my Dene culture and language.

It was then I decided to go back to University of Saskatchewan and become a school teacher. I wanted to be like my dad and teach kids that anything is possible with hard work and positive role modeling. My father taught me our Dene values through stories. Our Mountain Dene culture was full of amazing stories of hard work and powerful people. Grandfather James Pellissey was a fearless leader and a traditional healer. He helped many people. My father was also a traditional healer. He healed many people throughout the north. I am so thankful for his great teachings and life's lessons that sustained me and my siblings.

The greatest reward as a teacher is seeing big smiles on the faces of my students when they have applied themselves and excelled in their school work. It is important that students know their identity and to be proud of their many gifts that they have. I believe that students need positive guidance to learn how to be a good person and follow our Dene Values of respect and learning kindness and hard work.

I think students need to learn kindness and respect through cultural and language immersion. I love being a teacher and seeing students become successful in life. They will always come back to you and remind you that you were their favorite teacher. I try to make learning fun and taking the students on the land and teaching them cultural practices. Learning outdoors is the best way to teach kids their culture and about science and other subject areas. They love it and it makes learning fun. I teach lots of hands on learning such as making dry meat. Students learn historical stories from elders of how their ancestors lived long ago. They learn language immersion while they are on the land learning and practicing cultural traditions.

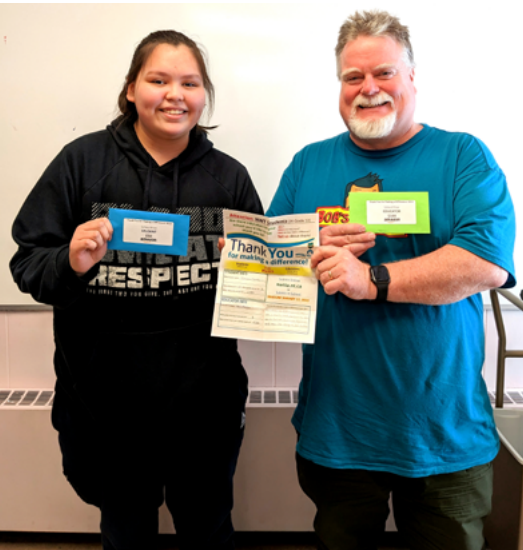
We need more teachers that will continue to inspire students to do their best at all times and never forget their identity.



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Chief T'Selehye School** in Fort Good Hope (Sahtu region) teacher **Tammy Mignon** and student **Logan!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Paul W. Kaeser High School** in Fort Smith (Fort Smith region) teacher **Christie Soucy** and student **Rilynn!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Chief Jimmy Bruneau School** in Behchoko (Tlicho region) student **Tyanna** and teacher **Neil McKee!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Helen Kalvak School** in Ulukhaktok (Beaufort-Delta region) student **Angel** and teacher **Santana Gaudet!**

Thank You for making a difference!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **East Three Elementary School** in Inuvik (Beaufort-Delta region) teacher **Amy Ing** and student **Carter!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **École Jt't'o** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) teacher **Jasmine Marianayagam** and student **Adriana!**

Merci
d'avoir fait une différence!

GNWT Summer Professional Development Funding

Trent Waterhouse, Professional Development Coordinator

One of the Professional Development (PD) benefits available to GNWT members through the Collective Agreement between the NWTTA and the GNWT is short term assistance. In Article 16 of the Agreement there are funded opportunities for summer PD that GNWT members can apply for.

The Deadline to apply is May 30,2023.

Summer Credit Courses

There is \$2500 available to NWTTA GNWT members to attend a university in the summer to take a credit course. Due to the nature of the global pandemic and possibility that restrictions may still be in place at institutions or for member travel, The Central Professional Development Committee agrees to extend the use of this fund for Distance Education credit courses if needed.

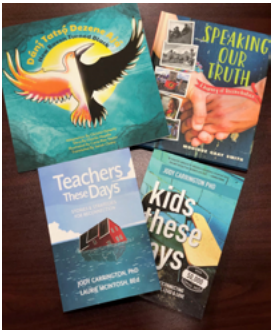
Summer Non-Credit Courses

There is \$500 available to NWTTA GNWT members every summer to support non-credit courses (examples are first aid, computer classes...)

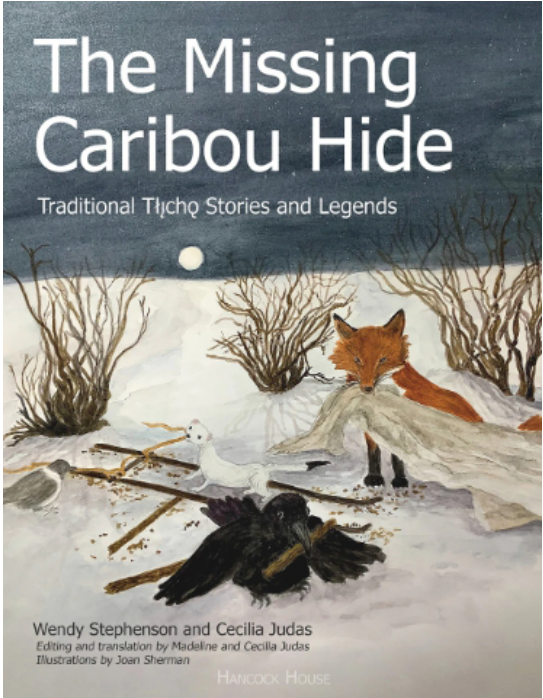
Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI):

The University of Alberta is reviewing their summer programs and not yet indicated if CILLDI courses will be offered. The NWTTA will send out a mass email update with more information when available.

If you are interested in a PD Resource Prize Pack, please send me an email (pd@nwtta.nt.ca) with one of the Seven Mental Health Tips mentioned in the December 2022 NWTTA Newsletter in the subject line. Include your school or mailing address you would like the prize pack sent to. I will randomly draw from all submissions on April 14, 2023. Members who won last newsletter are not eligible. Tell a friend!



PD Prize Pack



Alexis Arrowmaker School in Wekweeti (Tlicho region) teacher **Cecilia Judas** (pictured below autographing copies) and former teacher **Wendy Stephenson** have written a book, [The Missing Caribou Hide](#).

The story tells of times when people lived a simpler life built around the fur trade, hard work and helping one another. It tells of times when relationships with animals and our environment were stronger than they are today.



Northern Lights

Meet **Jeff Milligan** from Norman Wells (Sahtu region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Halifax, Nova Scotia and went to St. Mary's University. After obtaining my Bachelor of Arts in 2004, I moved to Daejeon, South Korea and taught English for a year. I enjoyed teaching but wasn't sure if it was my calling to be an ESL teacher. My next travels brought me to British Columbia, where I learned working for a credit union was not the job of my dreams. Working in the financial sector made me realize I wanted to return to school and get my Bachelor of Education. In 2007, I graduated from the University of Presque Isle in Maine. I then decided to teach in England for almost two years. When my visa for England ran out, I returned to Halifax and subbed for half of a school year. In 2011, at the end of my school year, I had many job interviews, but the one for Deline, NT, was the best opportunity.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
Both my parents were teachers, so that was an influence to a certain extent. I also met educators in high school and postsecondary that motivated me and made me think it would be a good career choice.

Q. What do you teach?
I teach high school English, Social Studies, and Art at Mackenzie Mountain School in Norman Wells.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I enjoy sharing laughter with the students in my classroom and the banter that develops between us during their time in high school. I also enjoy sharing my passions for reading, writing, and art with my students. I often benefit from learning alongside my students while uncovering their interests. A lot of the time, real learning happens with the hidden curriculum.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I engage my students by relating the curriculum to their interests when possible. I have also been trying to gamify my classroom to make learning more interactive.

Someone to Connect With at School
It is essential for high school students to have someone they can connect with at school. I try to be that person for as many of my students as possible.

Despite doing so in my classroom daily, I am not a huge fan of public speaking. I have co-hosted the graduation ceremony held at MacKinnon Park several times. It is an honour to be considered by the grads to be a master of ceremony. I feel privileged to be part of their big day each year. I always wear sunglasses because the ceremony is outside and in case my eyes get misty.



It's an exciting time in Northwest Territories schools!

The GNWT is getting ready to introduce the new adapted Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) curriculum.

It's a modern and flexible curriculum that focuses on literacy and numeracy – not just reading, writing and math, but also communicating and problem solving.

We'll be looking for your feedback as we gradually roll out the new curriculum. Have questions? Email nwtcurriculum_renewal@gov.nt.ca

Find out more about the curriculum, teacher training and timelines here: www.ece.gov.nt.ca/curriculumrenewal

Government of Northwest Territories

Inspiring Artists and Athletes

Launching a new Art/Sports Program at École Allain St-Cyr

Gwenan Guillas-Letaï, Teacher, École Allain St-Cyr (CSFTNO region)

Working in collaboration with other teachers is one of my favourite parts of my job. At Allain St-Cyr I get the pleasure to collaborate with the other specialist teacher in our building, **Martin Deschenes**, who is as passionate about physical education as I am about the arts. For many years we've talked about a program where students could have authentic choice in both of our disciplines, and this year we were able to make it happen. This year we are piloting Arts/Sports, a program for the grade 6-9 students at our school. Each quarter, our students pick between intensive Art or intensive Sport, and get two extra periods a week doing something that they are passionate about and interested in.

We started the year offering improvisation and theatre for Arts, and outdoor education and volleyball for Sports. In that first quarter, we saw students really honing their skills in their chosen craft, and collaborating across grade levels in ways we had not seen before. This led to amazing results, with our grade six boys winning their first ever banner at the volleyball tournament. My actors worked hard to put on *Le Coffre du Terrain Vague* by Denis Boulanger, and welcomed parents and community members to our school for the first public performance in 3 years.

We are nearing the end of semester 1 now, and the art room is filled with personal projects as we finish our second offering of Drawing and Painting and get ready for our winter secondary art show. A series of watercolour paintings inspired by the elements is tucked away beside a collection of Barbies that will soon be dressed in original hand-stitched outfits. Brainstorm pages are piling up as students create original characters, explore with watercolour, and develop 3-D portals to other worlds for their final projects. In the gym, students are developing their basketball skills sometimes up to 6 times a week between practices, gym class, and Arts/Sports class as they prepare for the upcoming Jr Cager.

It is exciting to work with our artists and athletes, and we're looking forward to see where semester two will take the program. Following our students' lead is a core principle of Arts/Sports, and one we hope to bring with us as the program grows in years to come.



above - Gwenan Guillas-Letaï
below - Martin Deschenes



GNWT Members - Positive Enrollment with New Benefits Provider

Sara McCrea, Assistant Executive Director

GNWT members are eligible for Employer paid health benefits provided by the Public Service Health Plan (PSHCP). Currently, PSHCP is insured through Sun Life Assurance Co. of Canada and covers many expenses not covered under the NWT Health Care Plan.

PSHCP provides Extended Health Benefits covering prescription drugs, vision care, psychology services, and massage therapy, to name a few. For benefits-related plans, you can access information on GNWT My HR: <https://my.hr.gov.nt.ca/employees/benefits>

Furthermore, you can access the [NWTTA Benefits 2022 Brochure by clicking on this link](#).

Effective July 1, 2023, the Public Service Health Plan is changing to a new provider, Canada Life.

All GNWT members enrolled in Sun Life Assurance Co. will be required to register with Canada Life; the switch will not be done automatically. This means you must initiate enrolling with Canada Life through "Positive Enrollment." If members do not go through the process, their benefits will be discontinued after June 30, 2023.

Positive enrollment begins in March 2023. You may have received an email from Canada Life canadalife@mail.canadalife.com with information preparing you for when it's time to complete the process.

The email from Canada Life provides the following information:

What to have ready to complete your positive enrollment:

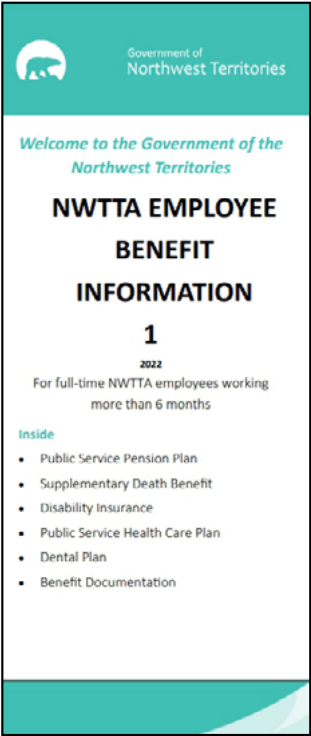
- Your dependents' information including their birth dates
- Your banking information to set up direct deposit
- Information about any benefits:
 - your spouse or common-law partner has through their Employer
 - you have through another employer

- Your coverage remains with Sun Life until June 30, 2023.
- To ensure timely payment of your Sun Life claims and a seamless transition to Canada Life, please keep your personal information (email, mailing address, dependent information) up to date with Sun Life. Any changes to your personal information must be made with both Sun Life and Canada Life until June 30, 2023.
- **Until June 30, 2023**, continue to submit your claims to Sun Life and contact them for your claims and coverage questions.
- **Starting July 1, 2023**, submit your claims to Canada Life and contact Canada Life for your claims and coverage questions, or contact MSH for out-of-province emergency travel assistance and comprehensive coverage.
- **NEED MORE INFORMATION?** Visit Canada Life's PSHCP members services website or call 1-855-415-4414, Monday to Friday from 8 am to 5 pm your local time to learn more.

For GNWT Human Resources and Benefits information, contact HR Helpdesk: HRHelpdesk@gov.nt.ca

Canada Life and design are trademarks of The Canada Life Assurance Company.

Welcome to Canada Life!



Polar Nights and Polar Days (Midnight Sun)

Sushil Jasper, M.Sc., B.Ed., Mathematics Teacher, Liidlii Kue Regional High School (Dehcho region)

Polar nights and Polar days (midnight sun) are natural phenomena that cause darkness during the day and daylight at night, respectively. It happens because the Earth is tilted through an angle of 23.5° on its axis [Earth's axial tilt], so the areas above the Arctic Circle from 66.5° N to 90.0° N latitude and below the Antarctica Circle from 66.5° S to 90.0° S latitude spend parts of the year exposed or hidden from the sun.

Fort Simpson is located at 61.9° N latitude, and hence the sun rises and sets daily. Nights where the sky never becomes fully dark are known as white nights.

This latitude scale is mathematically calculated by using the Earth's axial tilt as follows:

$90.0^{\circ} - 23.5^{\circ} = 66.5^{\circ}$

In the northern polar region, polar nights and midnight sun occur in the eight arctic countries: Canada, Denmark (Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and the USA (Alaska). Canada is one of the largest arctic countries, with over 40% of its landmass above the Arctic Circle, and hence large parts of Canada experience polar night and polar day.

Polar nights and midnight sun also occur in Antarctica's southern polar region.

Polar nights and the midnight sun occur at opposite times of the year. During the December solstice (usually the 21st or 22nd of the month), it is a polar night at the north pole and midnight sun at the south pole.

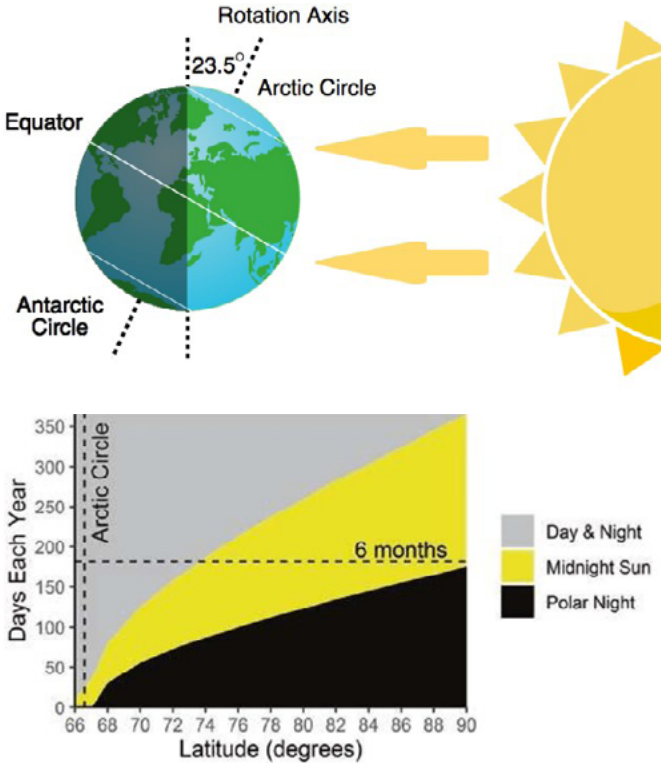
During the June solstice (the 21st or 22nd of the month), it will be a polar night at the south pole and midnight sun at the north pole.

In the Arctic, polar nights are shortest just above the Arctic Circle at 66.5° N Latitude, and they increase in length as we move further north.

The same concept applies in the Antarctic, with the shortest polar night just below the Antarctic circle at 66.5°S Latitude and increasing as we move further south.

The longest polar nights are found directly on the north and south poles, with six months of polar nights directly followed by six months of midnight sun each year.

The following figure shows the midnight sun phenomenon in the Arctic circle and polar night spectacle in the Antarctic circle, and the graph indicates the duration of polar nights and midnight sun with respect to the latitude scale.



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Mackenzie Mountain School** in Norman Wells (Sahtu region) student **Avaya** and teacher **Dora Grandjambe!**



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **N.J. Macpherson School** in Yellowknife (YK1 region) student **Frankie** and teacher **Christal Doherty!**

Northern Lights

Meet

Katie Raska
from Inuvik (Beaufort-Delta region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I had the privilege of traveling around the world when I was younger and living in England, Australia and Japan. I spent the majority of my time growing up in Ottawa, Ontario.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

Like a lot of youth, I decided to travel after completing my undergraduate degree. I ended up travelling with my future spouse who was teaching internationally. At one point I was asked to fill in as a relief teacher role and I instantly fell in love with working with kids.

Q. What do you teach?

I have been teaching grade one for five years at East Three Elementary School in Inuvik.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I particularly enjoy the variety of personalities and enjoy building relationships with my students. Engaging students in my passion for learning something new everyday and inspiring them to be creative brings me fulfillment.

Q. How do you engage your students?

With a variety of learning styles, I believe the best way to engage a group of students is through hands-on learning and bringing students outside of the classroom to engage with the world around them.

Always Learning

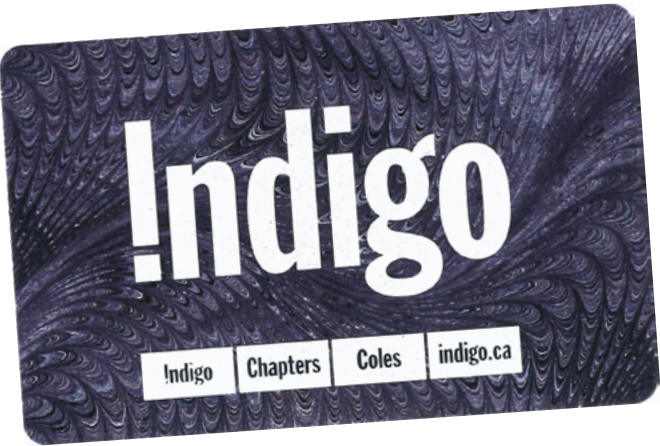
I am always learning from my community, colleagues, family and friends, and my own students. They help me reflect and guide my learning. To them I am grateful and look forward to each and every year.

Newsletter Trivia

Send your answers to the trivia questions below to news@nwttan.ca with subject *Trivia*.

Trivia answers are contained within this edition of the newsletter. Newsletter Trivia contests are open to active NWTTA members.

Deadline for entries: **April 14, 2023**



Win a \$50 Chapters-Indigo Gift Card!

1. Who is your NWTTA region representative on the Capacity Working Group?
2. How many years has the *Thank You for Making a Difference* program been running?
3. What is the Starling Minds access code for NWTTA members?
4. Who is the new GNWT benefits provider effective July 1, 2023?

Jennifer Genge from YCS Central Services (YCS region) is the winner of the December 2022 Newsletter Trivia.

Cover: Thank You for Making a Difference school prize winners from **Moose Kerr School** in Aklavik (Beaufort-Delta region), l-r **Lorna Chambers**, student **Bethany**, LRO **Colin Rose**.

Math Puzzle! (page 19) answer: 10990

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Thank You
for making a difference!

Merci

d'avoir fait une différence!



Congratulations TYFMAD school winners from **Joseph Burr Tyrrell School** in Fort Smith (Fort Smith region) student **Jeter** and teacher **Norma Gauthier**!

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