



NWTTA NEWS

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AMCC 2018 Working for You

The Annual Meeting of Central Council (AMCC) 2018 took place in Yellowknife on April 20-21, 2018.

Central Council is the governing body of the NWTTA. Central Council membership is made up of the Central Executive and one Councilor for each fifty active members or major portion thereof, from each NWTTA region. The regional members of Central Council are members of your Regional Executives.

Some examples of the duties of Central Council include receiving reports from Central Executive and Chairpersons of Committees and to give direction and advice to the Executive, exercise control over financial affairs of the Association, amend the Constitution Bylaws, award Association bursaries, determine matters of general policy and confer Honorary memberships. *Caption for photo below on back page of newsletter.*



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Status of Women Committee Women's Symposium 2019

Fraser Oliver, President

In the coming weeks, a call for interest from members to be part of Central Executive Committees for 2018-2020 will be sent out. I encourage everyone to consider putting their name forward for a committee they are interested in to help guide decision making for the NWTTA. Look for a mass email in May calling for interest.



One of the committees I am Executive Member in Charge of is the Status of Women. The committee is planning on hosting a Women's Symposium in the spring of 2019. The theme of the symposium will be to explore benefits in our collective agreements as well as women's engagement and leadership in the NWTTA. The NWTTA membership is made up of 70% women members.

Over the past couple of years the NWTTA Status of Women committee has researched representation of women vs. men members in leadership roles in the NWTTA. The committee has found that approximately 70% of the NWTTA leadership roles are filled by women members. This would include Local Receiving Officers (LROs), Regional Executives and Central Executive members.

In preparation for the 2019 Women's Symposium, the Status of Women committee will be seeking representation from all NWTTA regions as well as women members who have a variety of teaching experiences in the NWT, which would include members who are new to teaching as well as veteran teachers.

If you are interested in examining the three NWTTA collective agreements as well as engagement and leadership opportunities in the NWTTA for our women members and being part of the leadership for the 2019 Women's Symposium, please you put your name forward for consideration! I hope you do!

Mahsi Cho

Fraser

2018 Conference Memories



Northern Lights

Meet Robin Dhanoa from Lutselk'e (South Slave region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew up on a small farm in the south of British Columbia in a town called Langley.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
I love learning and I think this makes me passionate about teaching. I began tutoring after-school high school classes and teaching martial arts when I was seventeen years old. My natural instinct is to learn and help others grow so deciding to become a teacher wasn't difficult. It's who I am.

Q. What do you teach?
This year Math & Science (Grades 6-12), Psychology and Legal Studies.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
I like creating the Aha! Moment in the classroom. These are moments when insight emerges and becomes visible. Something clicks within a student's mind and they begin to see the world in a slightly different way. For example, when a student looks under a microscope and sees free-living cells in pond water for the first time or learns about astronauts who are living in space or learns that their brain contains billions of neurons that coordinate their every emotion and movement. I guess my favourite thing is seeing their understanding of the world come alive.

Q. How do you engage your students?
Learning has a lot to do with belief. It is the belief that you can succeed that helps propel you to success. So I try engaging my students by developing their self-confidence and encouraging effort. Their hearts matter just as much as their minds. I have to take my students' emotional intelligence just as seriously as I take their cognitive intelligence. I think great teaching cannot be reduced to lesson planning and techniques. Great teaching and learning comes from the heart.

Learning on the Land
When Spring began, I joined the Chief and seven Lutsel K'e hunters on their traditional Caribou hunt. We packed our snowmobiles and headed north, above the tree line, to the Barren Lands. We were gone for a week in one of the most remote and rugged terrains. It was an experience of epic proportions – unlike anything I've done or seen before. When we came back, we were hauling caribou on the sleds behind our snowmobiles. In keeping with the Dene tradition of food sharing, the hunters gave portions of the meat to family members, friends and elders. In the end it left me with a spiritual appreciation of the Indigenous way of life, a sore back, a new group of friends and a set of memories I'll cherish for a lifetime.

School Profile



NWTTA Region: YK1 (Yellowknife Education District No. 1)

Governed by: Dettah District Education Authority

Community: Dettah

School: Kaw Tay Whee School

Grade Range: JK to 12

Student Population: 38

Staff: 6

Indigenous Language Instruction: Wiiliideh



School Staff (left to right)

Neil Penney - I grew up in Labrador and I am the PST and STEM Coordinator.

Léa Lamoureux (Principal) - I'm from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and the best part of my day is teaching reading.

Sally Drygeese - I'm from Dettah and I teach the Language.

Laura Digness - I'm from Yellowknife, and I teach grades 2-4 and Physical Education.

Christina Boggis - I'm from Yellowknife and I teach JK-1 and love it!

Hillary Tapper - I'm originally from Toronto and I teach grades 5-9.

Students, Staff and Community Working Together to Make a Difference

Kaw Tay Whee School staff fully believe that parents and guardians are the first and most important teachers of their children and that all parents do the best they can. A strong belief in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and a high level of initiative are also present. In this spirit, the school offers a no-fee breakfast, hot lunch and snack program each day to all students.

The school and board have much support and continue to nurture relationships with many stakeholders, including parents, community members and Yellowknife Dene First Nation, many outside agencies and members of the private sector. The school designs and carries out a variety of unique programming made possible through proposal writing and acquired grants.

The school has earned many awards and accolades over the past few years. These include the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence Certificate of Achievement, a Ministerial Literacy Award and a Science Teaching Award. Most recently, Principal Léa Lamoureux was named An Outstanding Principal by the Learning Partnership.

While school staff are very happy with the school's progress, they continue to strive toward further growth and student achievement. Following is an outline of some programming that has made a difference for students at Kaw Tay Whee School.

On Time By Nine & Alarm Clock Program

It is a struggle for some children to wake up in the morning to attend school, or to attend school on time. An alarm clock program was introduced. The oldest sibling in each family, or the only child, was taught how to use the alarm clock and instructions were written as part of an expository writing lesson. After demonstrating that the students knew how to use it, an alarm clock was given to each family. There is an ongoing battery replacement program.

School staff also offer other supports to help students to attend school on time, including phone calls, texting, door knocking or networking with extended family members to find creative and respectful ways to help children arrive "On Time By Nine".

A special program to celebrate and increase on-time attendance called On Time By Nine was developed. It is tracked in a prominent area in the school. Attending school on time by 9:00 am a certain number of days in a row makes sure the students get a recognition seat at

a per-determined event (chosen by the students as a group). Past events included Wii Fit and popcorn, cake decorating, skiing, painting and nachos, a salad bar party, a Lego bash, bowling and spooky surprises. This program is funded through proposals written by the Principal. In September, to set the stage for a strong year and with the goal of on-time attendance becoming a habit, several special draws and extra events are held.

Since this program was implemented, there is an average of 80% on-time attendance each day. Notice that attendance is not just expected; being on time is.

Being "On Time By Nine" and present all day are criteria for participating in extracurricular clubs and activities.

On occasion, to celebrate and support families who have shown an improvement in on-time attendance, recognition is given through special notes, certificates or "Family Nights Out" with tickets to the movie theatre and a gift certificate to a local restaurant. This is done privately, along with a phone call or meeting with those parents or guardians.

Culture, Language and Aboriginal Role Model Program

Each month, the school learns about a monthly culture-related theme from the guiding curricular document *Dene Kede*, as well as a traditional Dene law to promote character education.

Students also participate in instruction in the local Wiiliideh language on a daily basis and have increased both their ability to speak and write the language. This is a work in progress; the addition of exciting "Willideh Mystery Words and Phrases" on a weekly basis has increased the use of resources related to learning the local language.

In 2012, Kaw Tay Whee School introduced the Aboriginal Role Model Program with the intent to promote careers and post-secondary education. Students co-constructed criteria related to what they thought a role model should be and decided that high school graduation, current full-time employment and going on a vacation were the requirements. Students have had guests including famous Aboriginal authors, singers, Elders and a naturopathic doctor. Other Aboriginal special guests who do not fit this criteria also visit the school and teach about traditional skills and arts and share stories.

Students also participate in a variety of on-the-land activities, including canoeing, spring and winter fishing, dog sledding, birch water camp (where they are part of a cooperative and produce their own birch syrup from tapping trees for a two-week period) and traditional and key cultural experiences related to the cleaning and preparation of local animals such as rabbit, duck, ptarmigan and others. Students participate in a variety of traditional arts as well and in 2013 each student designed, beaded and sewed a pair of moccasins with the guidance of our Respected School Elder.

Sleep Study

Many students were arriving at school too tired to learn. Students identified this fact aloud, so staff decided to do some research to find out how much sleep our bodies really need to

function. The sleep study is linked closely to self-regulation, which is a big focus in education in the Northwest Territories.

Together, we examined the sleep recommendations from the Canadian Paediatric Society and started tracking our sleep on a nightly basis. Students set up a weekly sleep goal based on their research and created charts. Then they recorded the time they went to sleep each night and the time they woke up each morning. Next, they calculated to see if they were carrying a debt or surplus.

This work fits nicely with our learning outcomes in math, health, English language arts and ICT. Students tracked their sleep for two weeks at a time and created a plan to "pay themselves back" if they were in debt; students also learned how to build up a surplus in advance of a big planned event like a sleepover.

Class discussions about bedtime routines, use of a wake-up method and sleep hygiene take place as part of brainstorming sessions on how to improve. Discussions focus on how adequate and lack of sleep can affect our brains and our ability to learn.

Experiences Program

In an effort to make sure there is a wide general knowledge base and that students have a variety of engaging, student-centered learning experiences, students at Kaw Tay Whee School participate in an attitudes and beliefs/experiences survey outlining things they'd like to try each school year. The survey is basic and includes many open-ended questions. Younger students are interviewed and older students are given the survey to complete by hand. Many school experiences are funded through partners in other agencies or in the private sector:

In the past ten years, in addition to local and culturally relevant experiences, students have:

completed cycles in modern, jazz, hip hop and interpretive dance and yoga; made hand-formed pottery; recycled glass to produce art; gone swimming; attended the theatre to watch live performances; visited the local museum; eaten in restaurants; gone grocery shopping; written scripts; filmed/produced/edited videos; planned annual Family Nutrition Fairs; made robots and rockets; gone skiing; researched/shopped for/cooked/eaten food from numerous cultures; worked with a variety of local artists

Because of the Experiences Program, the school now has an annual Super Duper Razzle Dazzle Show, Pinata Day and an annual Spirit Week. We also offer a BMX Bike Program, a Canoeing Program, a Gymnastics Program, a Winter Outdoor Education Program that includes skiing, snowshoeing and ice fishing and a year-round indoor food garden using natural and artificial light and hydroponic.

Family Outreach

Wishing to be community-centered, Kaw Tay Whee School engages in a number of programs to support families. Programs include: The Prenatal, Family Library, Family Dental Health, the JK/K Readiness and Family Night in projects.

Together We Can Grow Our Languages

Havaqqatigiiklutta Atautimut Uqauhiqput Naupqaqtaaqaqut

Inuinnaqtun

Photo: T.Macintosh

What Teachers should know about Inuinnaqtun

Inuinnaqtun, which is part of the Inuit linguistic language family, is recognized as an official language of the Northwest Territories (NWT) and is also spoken in parts of Nunavut. Kangiryuarmiutun is a dialect of Inuinnaqtun spoken Ulukhaktok.

According to the 2014 NWT Community Survey, there are a total of 195 territorial resident speakers of Inuinnaqtun aged 15 years and over residing in Ulukhaktok, Yellowknife/Ndilo, Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, and Tuktoyaktuk (source: 2014 NWT Community Survey).

Writing systems for Inuinnaqtun include many of the same letters as the English alphabet. The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is coordinating standardization of the writing systems of Inuit languages across Canada, including Inuinnaqtun, through the interjurisdictional Atausiq Inuktitut Titirasiq (AIT) Task Group.

The NWT *Official Languages Act* protects the rights and privileges of speakers to access Government of the Northwest Territories public services utilizing Inuinnaqtun interpretation and translation and ensures the right to use Inuinnaqtun in the NWT Legislative Assembly.

Did you know there are 11 Official Languages in the NWT?
Learn more at www.ece.gov.nt.ca and stay tuned for the next newsletter for another NWT Official Languages feature!



Resources:

NWT Bureau of Statistics – GNWT. *Language*. Available at: <http://www.statsnwt.ca/language/>

Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre. Available at: <http://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/service/inuvialuit-cultural-resource-centre>

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. *Unification of the Inuit Language Writing System*. Available at: <https://www.itk.ca/amaujaq/unification-writing-system/>

Inuinnaqtun\English Dictionary. Available at: http://en.copian.ca/library/learning/nac/nac_dictionary/nac_dictionary.pdf

For more information visit: www.ece.gov.nt.ca

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Removal Benefit

What am I eligible for?

Adrien Amirault, Executive Director

All three bargaining groups (GNWT, YCS and YK1) have benefits for removal after the end of your teaching career in the NWT. Each collective agreement is unique and members are encouraged to read theirs carefully and follow the rules to ensure the benefit is received. The following articles apply to removal:

[GNWT - Article B2](#)

[YCS - Article 8.04](#)

[YK1 - Articles 23.04 and 23.06](#)

Though the years needed to qualify for assistance are different for each bargaining group and the benefits are not the same, there are some key points that all members should be aware of:

1. There are time requirements to qualify for benefits, and the longer you stay, the more you are entitled to. The exception to this is term employees in the GNWT who immediately qualify for a removal benefit (60% of the community rate) when their term employment is over.
2. The two Yellowknife collective agreements have fixed rates for removal benefits, the GNWT removal rates are based on the community you work in.
3. In all cases, removal must be completed within one year of your last day of work.

4. GNWT Ultimate Removal may or may not be a taxable benefit depending on the community you move from. In YCS and YK1 it is a non-taxable benefit as it is a direct reimbursement of expenses.
5. In all cases, removal is only payable to one member of a family. So if two teachers are married to each other, only one of the partners can receive the benefit. This is even if one of the partners works for a different employer. It is usually the person who has the longest service that should apply for the benefit. If there is more than one employer involved, look each plan over carefully and use the plan that has the greatest benefit.
6. In all cases the arrangements and payment of moving expenses are the responsibility of the employee. YK1 and YCS require receipt of moving expenses, the GNWT requires proof of relocation (utility bill, deed, etc).
7. It is important to consult the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) rules in relation to moving expenses that can be claimed. If you are relocating to another job, the approved moving costs (consult the CRA guide) can be claimed on income earned at the new position. If you are retiring and will not be working at the new location, this is not an option.

As is always the case, members are encouraged to contact the NWTTA Central Office if you are uncertain of benefits or if you run into difficulty trying to access the benefits.

Professional Development Upcoming Deadlines:

Amanda Mallon, Professional Development Coordinator

- [Summer Non-Credit Courses](#) Application deadline May 30
There is \$500 available for GNWT NWTTA members who wish to take Non Credit course(s) during the summer.
- [Summer Credit Courses](#) Application deadline May 30
There is \$2,500 available for GNWT NWTTA members who need to be on campus for their courses. These courses are designed to assist people on the Masters track as there is often a residency requirement.
- [Education Leadership Program](#) (ELP) deadline May 30
There is \$2,500 available annually for GNWT NWTTA members to attend ELP. ELP is being offered in Inuvik this summer; the cap is at 30.
- [Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute \(CILLDI\)](#) deadline May 30
There is funding up to \$6000 available annually for GNWT NWTTA Indigenous members to attend the summer [CILLDI](#)



Learn Strategies to Improve Your Resilience to Stress



We know how hard this time of year is for teachers. This May, register for Starling Minds to learn how to better manage stress and strengthen your mental resiliency.

The Starling Program is an online mental health and wellness tool that helps you assess, monitor and improve your mental wellbeing.

As a member of The Northwest Territories Teachers' Association, it's available to you to use anywhere and anytime you want, for free. **Starling is and will always be 100% confidential.**

The Northwest Territories Teachers' Association together with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, through the NWT Education Renewal Initiative, are proud to support the Starling Program for NWT educators.



2018 Territorial Educators' Conference Memories from February 19-21, 2018

Amanda Mallon, Professional Development Coordinator

Conference statistics:

Total number of registrants = 966
GNWT NWTTA members = 441
YK1 NWTTA members = 229
YCS NWTTA members = 87
YCS SAs = 47
ECE Staff = 26
ECE SAs = 92
Others = 44

Travel Facts:

- 41 charter and scheduled flights
- Six buses/vans
- Eight Northern Airlines
- Two delays – The first one in Norman Wells with 32 folks from Fort Good Hope, Colville and Ulukhaktok, most of whom ended up spending the night in Trumpeter Camp Company. The second delay was Tuktoyaktuk with back-to-back blizzards. Everyone did make it home by Friday, February 23.

Here are some post-conference survey comments:

- The schedule booklet was extremely convenient for me. All the information was nicely organized and that was very handy.
- Learning new strategies that I could use right away in my class.
- I really enjoyed the We Matter and learning about Hyper Docs, using Twitter to gain education resources and interacting with teachers from across the NWT!

That is a blessing to be able to speak to others who teach the same grade and discuss what's working and not and sharing ideas for lessons and assessments!

- Having so many options of sessions to take and being able to choose how to lay out our own days (full day, 1/2 days, 1/4 days or mixed)
- The ability to share professional development experiences with a large group and discuss the P.D. with colleagues immediately after taking part in it.
- I enjoyed the variety of presenters and that many of them had a 'northern' connection".
- I feel like there was enough choice for people that anyone should have been able to make the conference a valuable experience.
- There were 30+ NWTTA presenters, some quite experienced, others challenging themselves.
- "I just want to take a few seconds for having giving me the opportunity to offer a workshop during the NWTTA conference a few weeks ago. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and since I received a lot of positive feedback from the people who attended my workshop, I think they enjoyed it too. Thanks again for organizing such an event and for giving me the opportunity to try something new!" - Patrick Poisson, Enseignant, École Boréale, Hay River, T.N.-O.



Aurora GSA at E3SS

Deirdre Dagar, East Three Secondary School (Beaufort-Delta region)

Jill Nugent, a teacher at East Three Secondary School, (E3SS), and her intrepid group of young, ambitious students have been quietly working away over the past few months to put together Inuvik's very first Pride Parade and associated Pride Events. The students, who are the founding members of the East Three Secondary Gender Sexuality Alliance (Aurora GSA), had been working diligently to bring visibility and attention to the LGBTQ2+ community in Inuvik by organizing, securing funding, and garnering local support for Pride Day. The schedule of events, which were a huge success, took place on April 21st, consisted of a Pride Parade that began at 11:30 AM and was followed by a free community BBQ with entertainment, that included many local musicians. Notable attendees included the RCMP, Inuvik Firefighters, Inuvik Physicians and about 200 members of the community.



Jill Nugent ready for the Pride Parade

In 2017, Jill, (along with three students from East Three), was a delegate at the Territorial Rainbow Youth Conference which was pivotal in pushing forward safe school legislation for LGBTQ2+ youth. Jill established the Aurora GSA with several students to create a safe place within the school for LGBTQ2+ students to meet. The group had been meeting weekly since the beginning of the 2017/18 school year to plan and implement the day's events. Jill and the Aurora GSA recognized that youth who have historically been marginalized, bullied, or ignored by their community and family needed visible and public support. The creation of the Aurora GSA was a necessary first step in establishing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive school for LGBTQ2+ youth and the ensuing Pride Day was a successful culmination of the group's hard work. East Three Secondary is proud to have Jill and the Aurora GSA as members of the school and greater community.



2018 Conference Memories



Northern Lights

Meet
Garry Dormody
from Yellowknife (YCS region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Grand Falls, Newfoundland, a paper mill town in the middle of the island.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I remember that it was in Mr. Edwards' Math class in grade ten. Mr. Edwards was a new teacher in our school and he always seemed to be having a ball when he taught Math. He did some fun activities but he never lost the serious side of the subject despite having the ability to treat it lightly and joke around with it. It was noticeable that many who often had trouble with Math in previous years did well in his class and never saw it as the burden it was before. I distinctly remember saying to myself after watching him have fun in class one day: "I want to do what he does." That was the day I decided.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach mainly Math, Science, and some Social Studies, but after having spent 15 years teaching in middle school, 18 years in a K-8 school and three years in high school, I've done pretty well everything from the Alphabet to Zoology. I've been teaching since 1981 and have been in French Immersion since 1984.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

This might sound like a cliché but it still gets me when a student has an Ah-ha! moment. There's a certain self-satisfaction when I know that I've gotten someone to understand or do something that they had never been able to do before. I honestly don't know who gets the bigger thrill - the student or me! There's also the fact that working around young people all day can be draining at times but we have some really, really nice kids in our school and it's great to be there with them.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I try to integrate to a reasonable extent the latest things we do in Professional Development, but mostly I like to get at students through their own challenges. I like to zero in on that one item that just bugs a student because he or she constantly gets it wrong, so I push and remind and prod and guide until they reach a point where they do it without my help. I want them to be able to do it until they can't get it wrong. I want them to know what I know and then go on from there.

He was the reason why I became a teacher

I graduated high school in 1975 and started teaching in Nigeria in 1981 and Newfoundland in 1984. In 1991 I was visiting my mother and as I was driving into town I passed Mr. Edwards' (my grade ten math teacher mentioned above) house. He was on the roof installing a satellite dish. I pulled my bike over and called out to him. He came down and we had a nice chat. I told him then that he was the reason why I became a teacher and I know it made his day. I know that because a few years ago I had two former students contact me and tell me the same thing and it certainly made mine.

Conference Corner

Upcoming Professional Development Conferences to Consider



CTF - The Canadian Forum on Public Education

Edmonton, AB
July 9-10, 2018

<https://goo.gl/UoaqVX>



EECOM 2018 - Classrooms to Communities

St. Eugene Mission Resort, BC
October 18-21, 2018

<http://eecom.org/eecom-2018>



ECE is planning an exciting opportunity for early childhood educators to learn together and from each other. Junior Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Early Childhood staff will be brought together to develop a shared understanding of preferred valued practices in the NWT.

Research shows that overlapping or joint pre-service training can help to bridge the gap and foster common understandings and shared approaches (Neuss et al., 2014). This approach combines the best parts of both sectors' conceptions of learning and development, and by doing so, allows a smooth experience for children (Lillejord et al., 2017).

The Learning Together: Right From the Start Symposium will be held in Yellowknife from August 22-24, 2018.

Highlights:

- Learn and share with other early childhood educators in various early childhood programs including pre-school, licensed daycares, dayhomes, etc.
- Collaborate with other JK/K teachers across the territory
- Hear from experts including Kim Barthel on early childhood topics
- Self-select workshops to focus on areas of interest including:
 - Indigenizing Programming • Children with Exceptionalities
 - Self-Regulation • Physical Environments • Language and Literacy
 - Supporting Play-based learning • and More...

This training is an open invitation. It is not mandatory for teachers to attend. However, if you are a JK/K teacher returning for the 2018-2019 school year then you may be interested in learning more about this incredible opportunity to learn with early childhood educators from a variety of environments.

Please contact your school principal to inquire about the possibility of attending.

ECE will provide additional information including registration, agenda, travel, and accommodations.

Any questions can be addressed to Ms. Kerry Egan, Early Childhood and Inclusive Learning and Wellness Coordinator at Kerry_egan@gov.nt.ca.

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NWTTA Members Represent at South Slave Arctic Winter Games

Colin Pybus, East Three Secondary School (Beaufort-Delta region)

The 2018 South Slave Arctic Winter Games (AWGs) were a huge undertaking for the communities of Hay River and Fort Smith. For the week of March 17-24, 2018 the region hosted over 3,000 athletes, coaches, officials, dignitaries, families and friends for the largest youth competition in the Arctic Circumpolar world. The week went off smoothly; a tribute to the organizers and countless volunteers that came together and help make the week a success. Within that large group of volunteers, countless NWTTA members donating their time, working through their spring breaks and giving their best for students and community. Not only during the actual week of competition but for the months and in some cases years in advance of the Games.

NWTTA members and Support Assistants (SAs) took on many different roles within the Games. Many members in the South Slave region donated their time volunteering to help with the organizing and daily operations of the events. **Richard Letourneau**, principal at École Boréal in Hay River, acted as a residence mayor; managing athletes and coaches who used his school as their accommodations during the week. **Allie McDonald**, teacher at Paul W. Kaeser School in Fort Smith, was the chairperson for the female hockey; responsible for the successful organization and running of the ladies hockey competition. **Gina Michel** (teacher at Weledah Catholic School in Yellowknife) was the coach for the juvenile girls futsal soccer team. **Val Gendron** (teacher at Thomas Simpson School in Fort Simpson) and myself, **Colin Pybus** (East Three Secondary School in Inuvik), acted as Regional Coordinators (RC) for the Mackenzie Valley and Beaufort-Delta-Sahtu regions, respectively.



Colin Pybus with AWG 2018 Caldron in Hay River

This is my second go-around with Sport North, the AWGs, acting as the RC and as mission staff at the actual Games. I feel fortunate to be able to support sport within the Territory, am grateful for the friendships and contacts I have made and the relationships that have been strengthened with students and parents from my Region.

The position of RC is quite in depth. Starting back in October 2017, our main responsibility was registering athletes for the territorial trials. The territorial trials are a massive operation. Combined between two weekends, over 800 individuals are traveling around the Territory trying to make Team NT or support someone competing. Team sports held their trials in December 2017; individual sports in January 2018. The coordination of these competitions was great to be a part of and ran smoothly because of the teams of volunteers.

In advance of these trials, recruitment and advertising needed to be done. For me, this meant relying namely on NWTTA contacts within the Beaufort-Delta and Sahtu regions. Without the support and efforts of teachers like **Morgan Fairweather** (teacher at Chief T'Selehye School in Fort Good Hope), **Paige McDonald** (teacher at Mackenzie Mountain School in Norman Wells), **Richard McKinnon** (Principal at Helen Kalvak School in Ulukhaktok), **Erica Thompson** (teacher at Chief Paul Niditchie School in Tsiigehtchic) and **Sierra Daley** (teacher at Chief Julius School Fort McPherson), to name a few, student-athletes within our schools may not have had the opportunity to register. Scanning and emailing documents, utilizing online registrations and just having the information being posted or announced at schools went a long way to informing participants.

RCs also work with transportation companies to set up the safe travel of everyone from their home communities to the regional centres for air travel to the trials and the Games. This includes 5:00 am bus pickups, coordinating plane charters and ultimately making sure that all traveling participants arrive and get home safely. In some cases, this means staying at the airport waiting for word of a safe landing in Aklavik or driving athletes from Inuvik to Fort McPherson when their transportation falls through. The job is not done till you have 'wheels up' on

the plane or that anticipated text saying everyone is home safe. A huge thank you to all the transportation drivers for your amazing efforts in getting everyone to and from competitions safely.

The trials are complete and excited athletes from across the Territory are preparing for the AWGs.

Behind the scenes, we begin the process of registering athletes for their specific competitions, collecting payments, scheduling transportation again and sizing over 500 individuals for Team NT gear. This just happens to all be happening during East Three Secondary School's exam schedule, semester change-over and a whole batch of new classes. Everyone is busy, I get that; but wow, was I busy.

Short of actually going to the Games, I think the most exciting moment for the athletes is when the team clothing comes in. The swag, the gear, the proof that you are going to the AWGs. Handing out the clothing, having younger siblings looking in awe, or listening to parents sharing stories of "when I went to the Games..."; are some of my most memorable moments in the whole process.

Finally the day comes. Parents, friends and family send youth off from the community bus pick-ups, or regional airports and so begins the start of the whirlwind adventure that is the AWGs. Originally started as an alternative to the Canada Games, the AWGs were founded as a place for Northern athletes to compete and have success against a level playing field. Since inception with three contingents (NWT, Yukon and Alaska), the AWGs have grown in size and scope – bringing together nine different distinct regions and 3,000+ participants.

Once at the Games, athletes and coaches are housed in the schools. Desks were pushed back and 20 bunk



Team NT Ski and Snowmobile Biathlon Teams

beds are set up in classrooms. In Hay River, meal services were set up at the new arena. RCMP from across the Territory were brought in to help with the influx of people, as were buses, with drivers coming from as far away as Red Deer, Alberta to help with moving athletes. Campgrounds in Hay River opened to allow for winter camping for some individuals that could not find any accommodations. The main point I'm trying to stress is the huge and encompassing

undertaking that hosting the AWGs was for the region.

Mission staff at the Games are the key liaison for information to participants. Any issues faced by our assigned teams comes to us to deal with quickly and appropriately. Food allergy issues, call the mission staff. Athlete's village not quieting down after hours, mission staff. Protesting a game result, it's the mission staff who file the paperwork. With the vague job description, you never know what you might be dealing with. Long days are a guarantee; typically starting at 7:30 am and not ending till 9-10:00 pm. Sporadic meals are also a norm and a large cell phone usage bill is always expected. Sounds glamorous right? We are the go-to for the athletes and coaches, hopefully helping them to focus on why they are really at the AWGs and allowing them to compete to the best of their abilities.

The AWGs are an amazing event for our students to showcase their athletic talents on an international stage. They highlight the culture of the region and provide a platform for communities to share themselves with the circumpolar world. The South Slave region put on a wonderful event that the Northwest Territories can be proud of. We don't get to rest long though...it's less than two years until Whitehorse 2020 Arctic Winter Games and the whole process starting again.

Deninu Culture Camp

Jessica Connors, Deninu School (South Slave region)

On Thursday, March 15, 2018, students in grades 7-12 headed outside to participate in cultural activities and open the new Deninu Culture Camp. Students opened the camp through drumming and a prayer ceremony, made bannock, held an outdoor feast and headed out on the land on snowshoes and on skis.

Our culture camp currently features an outdoor picnic area and fire pit and a Fort McPherson tent and stove. As we grow, we intend to create a culture station on the school grounds where classes and groups of students can reconnect with their culture and language.



The Messed Glitch with the Air

After the 2018 Territorial Educators' Conference, some NWTTA members had an adventure getting home from Yellowknife. Michael Duclos shares his story in rhyme.

Michael Duclos, Principal, Mackenzie Mountain School (Sahtu region)

(to the tune of the Fresh Prince of Bel-Air theme song)

This is a story all about how
Our flight got messed up on the ground
And I'd like to take a minute
Just sit right there
And I'll tell you how our flight went up in the air.

In the best teacher union with the conference craze
In the airport is where we spent most of our day
Learnin' lots maxin' interactin' all cool,
And debriefing 'bout how we'd apply it to our schools.

When a big burst of wind that was up to no good
Starting making trouble like I knew it would
We got on one little flight but then got scared
Because everything was grounded from Northwright Air.

I whistled to the group and made it clear
"The union booked rooms so have no fear"
If anything I could see that this group did care
But I thought, "yeah, I said it"
"There are lots of rooms to spare!"

They pulled up to their rooms about 7 or 8
And they yelled to the cabbie, "Yo June, check ya later"
They looked at their dwellings
They were finally there
To sleep for the night and get back in the air.

The Cliff King Award presented to Lorna Jones-Martin

The Cliff King Award recognizes the outstanding contribution of members of the NWTTA in service to the Association. This prestigious award is considered to be the highest honour the Association bestows upon a member.

On April 21, 2018, Lorna Jones-Martin from Inuvik was presented with The Cliff King Award by Matthew Miller, Beaufort-Delta Regional President. Lorna has been a teacher in the Northwest Territories for 17 years and has been an active, contributing and key member to the NWTTA Beaufort-Delta Region and Central Executive committees throughout her career.



GNWT Education Leaves 2018-19

Amanda Mallon, Professional Development Coordinator

The Central Professional Development Committee (CPDC) is pleased to announce the following two GNWT members were granted Education Leave With Allowances for 2018-2019:

- Lori Rutherford, SSDEC – Master of Arts in Integrated Studies, Athabasca University
- Patricia MacAulay, BDEC – Art and Social Practice MA, University of the Highlands and Islands

The following member was granted an Education Leave Without Allowances for 2018-2019:

- Nashra Kamal, SSDEC - Masters of Education with Concentration in Studies in Teaching and Learning, University of Ottawa

2018 Conference Memories



Northern Lights

Meet Kamey Fenwick from Yellowknife (YK1 region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Prince George, B.C. I spent most of my childhood there from the ages of 5 to 18.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I first studied to become a social worker, so I was always interested in the helping fields. I was pushed towards a music degree by my family who recognized it was a passion for me. Once I started down that path, I realized quickly I had little interest in the pressure of a performance career, so I moved towards education.

Q. What do you teach?

I am currently teaching only middle school music/band. After a few years as a homeroom teacher, I am happy to be back focusing on my favourite parts of teaching in the music room.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I love that moment that comes after hard work where students really achieve success as a group. Music is such a team effort, there is a such energy about preparing and the presenting a piece of music for an audience. The sense of pride and accomplishment that is written on their faces and that hangs in the air is such a rush every time. I love being able to bring students to that moment.

Q. How do you engage your students?

Music is a different subject, and not everyone excels at it. However everyone can experience it, and providing a space for students to make music together, at whatever level they are at, is key. That's why it's important to mix things up a bit. Sometimes we play three-part pieces on buckets, sometimes we play eight different band instruments, and sometimes we all play the ukulele, and sometimes we sing three-part Pop Songs as a school, but through variety and support - I hope to find something that every student can feel successful and a part of the whole. I want to really allow students that space and time where they are part of something awesome.

Thank you for making music with me

I love teaching music. That moment when all the hard work becomes apparent, when all the struggles and frustrations becomes MUSIC is the most amazing for any musician and sharing it with students is heart warming. I cannot imagine doing anything else with my life. I enjoy my job and I enjoy the many times I bump into former students in the strangest of places and they ask with bright eyes, "Do you remember me!?" Yes, I do. Thank you for making music with me.

Disability Insurance - GNWT, YCS and YK1

Are you covered well enough?

David Murphy, Assistant Executive Director

NWTTA members have provision for disability insurance in the event that they find themselves in the unforeseen position of not being able to report to work as a result of illness or injury. Injury on duty is usually followed up by a Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) claim, while injury off duty and illness, which require an extended time off work, are usually covered under the disability insurance plan in effect in the bargaining unit.

Members employed by Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS) and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) have negotiated disability insurance plans into their collective agreements while members with the GNWT are automatically enrolled into the disability plan as employees of the public service.

This insurance is intended to assist members retain a portion of their earnings while on disability leave. It is very important to realize that, depending on your personal situation, the disability insurance amount you receive may or may not cover your current financial obligations. In some circumstances income received from another source may be deducted from the amount of disability insurance you may receive. It may be prudent for you to review your financial situation and ask yourself the question, “If I am unable to work as a result of illness or injury, will I be able to effectively meet my financial obligations without hardship?” If the answer is no, or not sure,

it may be time to look for other types of insurance to supplement the disability insurance you would receive. You may look at mortgage insurance to assist you with those payments, you may need additional health care benefits, critical illness insurance or life insurance.

It is important to note that although all members have access to disability insurance in the event of injury or illness that prevent them from reporting to work, not all plans provide the same salary and benefits. For example, members working for the GNWT who are on long term disability will retain their extended health benefits whereas members working for YCS and YK1 will have their extended health benefits terminated until they are able to return to work. YK1 does provide the option to the member to retain their coverage for benefits if they cover the cost of the premiums.

Another important difference is the waiting period and sick days. Both YCS and YK1 have a 90 day waiting period. During this waiting period you would be able to use sick days, if you have enough, or apply for EI. GNWT members have a 13 week waiting period. However, unlike YCS and YK1 members, they would be able to continue using sick days past 13 weeks until all sick days are used.

The Long Term Disability Insurance chart [on the opposite page to right](#) shows a comparison of the disability plans available to NWTTA members.

Continued from Previous Page: Long-Term Disability Insurance			
	GNWT	YCS	YK1
Carrier	Sun Life	Manulife	Manulife
Qualifying Period	13 weeks or expiration of all sick leave credits (whichever is later)	90 days	90 days
Benefit Amount	70% of your basic salary (no maximum)	75% of monthly basic earnings to a maximum of \$6,000	75% of monthly basic earnings to a maximum of \$6,000
Maximum Benefit Period	To age 65 for total disability, 2 years for partial disability to age 65	To age 65 for total disability, 2 years for partial disability to age 65	To age 65 for total disability, 2 years for partial disability to age 65
Disability Survivor Benefit		3 times your last monthly benefit payment	No
Tax Status	Benefits payment are taxable	Payments are taxable if employer pays the premium. Payments are non-taxable if you pay the full cost of the premium.	Payments are taxable if employer pays the premium. Payments are non-taxable if you pay the full cost of the premium.
Premiums	Employee and employer share premiums	Employer pays 100%	Employer pays 100%
May be reduced by other sources of income	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended Health Benefits	Employees are covered and GNWT pays premium	Terminated until employee returns to work	Employee has option to pay premium to retain coverage
Submitting claims	Contact a Benefit Specialist at HRHelpDesk@gov.nt.ca	Contact Plan Administrator at YCS Board Office 6-8 weeks prior to end of Qualifying Period	Contact Plan Administrator at YK1 Board Office 6-8 weeks prior to end of Qualifying Period

Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers

Congratulations to **Valerie Gendron** (Dehcho region) for receiving the [Sovereign’s Medal for Volunteers](#) from Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada on April 17, 2018 in Ottawa.

Valerie has been a speed skating, minor hockey and soccer coach and mentor with local athletic clubs for more than 17 years. She has trained the next generation of athletes in Fort Simpson, building their confidence and leadership through organized sports.



Photo Credit: Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2018

Staff vs. Students Basketball Tournament at SJF

Stephen Offredi, École Sir John Franklin High School (YK1 region)

Over a three-week period starting after Spring Break, staff and students at École Sir John Franklin High School (SJF) participated in a lunch hour basketball tourney. This tournament happens every year. The teachers were looking to prove that last year’s loss in the first round was a mistake. After two robin round games and two playoffs games, the teachers came out on top winning the tournament. Go Falcons Go!

Pictured at right NWTTA members:
Back: Paul Shearme, Maureen Tonge, Laurene Head, Stephen Offredi, Landon Peters
Front: Jeremy Kielstra, Tomiko Robson, Peter Curran



6th Annual Northern Dene Games A Huge Success

Colin Pybus, East Three Secondary School (Beaufort-Delta region)

For the past six years, students in the Beaufort Delta (BDEC) have circled four days in February or March on the calendars for one reason; the Northern Dene Games Summit (NDGS) held in Inuvik at East Three Secondary School (ETSS). This highlight of the school year has taken place annually in the BDEC region since 2012; bringing together over 200 hundred students, teachers, chaperones, elders and community members to share in the four day athletic and cultural celebration.

The brainchild of former ETSS/ Samuel Herne Secondary school Vice-Principal Lorne Guy, the NDGS showcases the traditional games and cultures of the two Indigenous peoples of the Delta; the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit. Students from

all nine schools in the BDEC region come to Inuvik for this competition. Through a number of grants, sponsors and donations, this event is a free event for all participants. All travel, meals, accommodations, competition and entertainment costs are covered (this past year that cost was just under \$75,000 dollars). Needless to say the planning and preparation for the event starts months in advance, with a team at ETSS taking the early lead in October; reaching out to each community school about two months in advance of the event for help on the ground.

Traveling via plane or bus, 100-120 students and their teacher coaches/chaperones travel to Inuvik and make ETSS their home for four days. Joining another 100 students from ETSS and East Three Elementary School in Inuvik, out of town participants stay at the school in classrooms on gym mats and are fed by a team of student-athlete volunteers. Entertainment is provided via large group games (Hand games for one), a swim at the Inuvik pool and a dance hosted by the ETSS

student leadership council.

The event starts with an athlete parade into the gym, signaling the beginning of the opening ceremonies. Open to the public, and for the first time this year, live-streamed by the Inuvialuit Communication Society, the opening ceremonies feature warm and welcoming words from elders and organizational leaders. Concluding the night is a drum dance and jigging performance before sending students to bed to prepare for a busy two days of completion.

Competition includes a variety of Arctic Sports and Dene Games (This year we had the one foot, two foot

and Alaskan high kicks, along with the triple jump for Arctic Sports; stick pull, snow snake, snowshoe races and team pole push for Dene Games) with students competing in three different age categories (12U, 15U and 19U).

Scheduled over two

days, and ending in the whole of ETSS coming to the gym to watch the one foot high kick competitions; it is a massive undertaking and spectacle.

Closing ceremonies take place in the morning of the leave day. Individual event and overall champions are awarded medals, as well as a single person from each school being recognized as a good sports person. Pictures are taken, thank yous to all involved are said (and I'll take the chance again to give the biggest thank you to all the sponsors, volunteers, officials, coaches, cooks, security, media, organizers, administrators and community members who make this event possible) and students are sent on their plane or their bus back to their homes.

I echo my words from earlier; this event is a massive undertaking for everyone involved, a highlight on the BDEC calendar for both students and staff and an event that I wanted to share with the Association's readers.



Braeden Picek of East Three Secondary School competes in the one foot high kick

Rhythm Games at ESJS

Stephen Richardson, École St. Joseph School (YCS region)

At École St. Joseph School (ESJS) we have been using the African Djembe (hand drums) in inventive ways to prepare the K-4 students for Band in 5-12. (I studied for a few years with Sarah McLachlan's touring hand drummer.)

I name the various rhythm games to maintain the interest of the students in the process.

For example we play "Rhythm Star Wars" based on Star Wars where the students jedi's compete against each other in a rhythm duel.

We play Rhythm Baseball where the djembes are arranged like a baseball diamond and the pitcher throws a rhythm for the batter to "hit" to go around the bases.

We also play "Rhythm Hot Potato" and "Rhythm Trail" and where students "pass" the rhythm faster and faster around the djembe circle under pressure of a timer.

Finally I have introduced "Rhythm Jeopardy" where students hear part of a rhythm and have to answer the "jeopardy question" by playing the second half of it.



Northern Lights

Meet Molly McAllister

from Fort Smith (Fort Smith region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

St. Marys, Ontario

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

High school can be a really difficult time for students, being a teenager isn't easy. When I was in high school I had a band teacher whose classroom became my safe space. It was the only place I felt I belonged and where I could be successful. That teacher had a huge impact on my life and I don't think I would have survived high school without them. It made me want to be a teacher too and have a positive and encouraging influence on youth.

Q. What do you teach?

I teach at Paul W. Kaeser High School in Fort Smith and this year I have taught CALM, Social Studies and our Trailcross program.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

When a student realizes they are capable of doing something they thought they could not do. I constantly hear from youth that they do not think they are capable of this or that, regardless of the subject. I love seeing the excitement and pride they have when they accomplish something they were certain they could never do.

Q. How do you engage your students?

I engage students by finding ways to connect curriculum to their interests, making sure they can see the real world relevance of what they are learning, and making activities hands on when possible. But most importantly by making my classroom a safe and inclusive space. If students don't feel safe, learning can't happen.

Conference Wellness Corner Well Received

*Gayla Meredith, NWTTA Past President
2012-2016*

At this year's NWTTA 2018 Territorial Educators' Conference, the Connect-Balance-Thrive Wellness Corner served 65 conference-goers. It was great to see folks taking time out for self-care! That's where it all begins... slowing down and supporting personal wellness in the midst of life's demands.

The École Saint Patrick's High School (ESPHS) staffroom was a comfortable environment for our offerings of soft music, fruit and herb infused water, healthy snacks and a mini Healing Touch session. Many thanks to the practitioners from the Yellowknife Healing Touch Community who joined me to offer sessions: Cathy Landry, Linda Corkal, Patricia Rapley and Geraldine Byrne.

In addition to receiving energy work, participants picked up information on Healing Touch self-care strategies to use at home, training/PD opportunities and resources and/or requested electronic copies. Seanna Stewart of ESPHS won the Wellness Gift Basket, valued at \$200.

Based on participant feedback, the wellness services were well received:

- "Awesome! Such a good stress reliever!"
- "Very relaxing and calming"
- "Very relaxing and soothing. I could feel my stress melt away."
- "Best session of the conference. Felt amazing. Felt like I relaxed much!"
- "We need this every week!"
- "We know that self care is important, yet we don't do nearly enough of it. Wish I could do more of this"
- "...relaxing, restorative. Every school should have HT [Healing Touch]"

If you (and/or your school) are interested in a Wellness PD session, contact me: ConnectBalanceThriveWellness@gmail.com or 867-445-3634.

Thank you to the conference organizers for the opportunity to support educator wellness. I believe it is vital to support educators in their efforts to learn and develop positive self-care strategies for their mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.



Catching Up NWTTA Members' Life Events

Send your **Catching Up** life events for future newsletters to news@nwtta.nt.ca

Jessica Connors and Robert Heath, teachers at Deninu School in Fort Resolution, got married on March 24th. Both Canadians who have a passion for travel, they met teaching abroad in Sweden in 2013, before moving to the South Slave in 2016. They are excited to embark on the next stage of their journey within the NWT. Congratulations Jessica and Robert!



Jessica Connors & Robert Heath

Sidney Rodnunsky from Chief T'Selehye School in Fort Good Hope (Sahtu region) is retiring on June 30, 2018.

Sidney was born in Edmonton in 1946 and started teaching in Valleyview, Alberta in September 1966 after graduating with his B.Ed. from the University of Alberta. He became a school principal in Lindale, Alberta at the age of 22 and then completed his M.Ed. from the University of Calgary in 1969. Wanting a change of pace, he studied law at the University of Alberta and graduated with his J.D. in 1973. He practiced law for several years and then returned to being a school principal in 1986. Through a career of 52 years, he also completed a B.Sc. degree in Sociology from the University of the State of New York, a Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Administration from the University of Calgary, and a Master of Business Administration from Fitchburg State University in 2010. He also studied for several years at other universities for the fun of it. He took being a continuing learner seriously. He reads a lot and loves his Kindles.

Sidney has been a school principal in Alberta, Dubai, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nunavut, Vietnam and the Northwest Territories. He is presently enjoying teaching senior high school at Fort Good Hope, NT.



Tess & Sidney Rodnunsky

His wonderful wife, Tess, has been a mainstay in his life for the last 26 years and they have enjoyed being a teaching couple for 17 years. Sidney is the father of 7 children and has 13 grandchildren.

Among life highlights, Sidney enjoyed being a ghost writer, court work, President of a Bar Association, a prosecutor, teaching at the elementary, secondary and university levels, serving on the Board of Governors of Grande Prairie College and serving for years as a Justice of the Peace. He loves reading, old time radio programs, jazz, the blues and rock and roll, old cars, and sharing stories with others. He finds people fascinating and thinks that we should take more time for a good chat. Sidney and Tess will be retiring to Vancouver Island where they have kept a home for the last few years, having frequently delayed their retirement for one more year!



Northern Lights

Meet Ed Hartley from Inuvik (Beaufort-Delta region)



Q. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in a town called Stephenville on the west coast of Newfoundland.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?

I became a teacher because from a young age I always loved to coach sports (Judo, Soccer, Hockey). There was something about sharing knowledge that intrigued me.

Q. What do you teach?

Currently I am the Shop Teacher at East Three Secondary School, where I also teach Math 10-3 and 10-4.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?

I most enjoy watching people grow as learners, whether it is learning how to take an engine apart, learning new Judo throws or learning how to convert temperature from Celsius to Fahrenheit. All learners go through different phases of learning and I enjoy helping them achieve their goals.

Q. How do you engage your students?

The best way for me to engage my students is first to get to know them. Find something in common, if not find something interesting about them that I could ask them about. I then tell them some stories of me and how I got to where I am now. Next is to find out how they learn, even in the shop not everyone is good at using their hands, and then try to match projects and assignments to their learning preference.

Best experience I could have ever had as a new teacher

My first job as a teacher was in Aklavik NT at Moose Kerr School. I had just graduated from Memorial University and was ready to take on the world. I finished my last paper a week before our flight to Inuvik, we packed up our two kids, the oldest was 8 years old and the youngest was just 4 weeks old! A few days later we were ready to head to Aklavik for the first time, it was a beautiful day and we were anxious to see our new home. When arriving at the airport, we noticed the only plane on the tarmac was a little tiny Cessna that only had 4 seats in it. Our initial reaction was, "I hope that's not our plane!" The pilot came out and called our names and off we went. I was selected to be in the front as unofficial co-pilot. My wife was behind me with our new baby in a jumper and my oldest boy in the back (along with enough baggage for 20 people for a month!). Off to Aklavik! I will never forget the sight of the mountains from across the delta and landing in our new home. Was worth every moment up to that point and the best experience I could have ever had as a new teacher. I am now living in Inuvik and teaching at an awesome school and enjoying my new adventure at East Three Secondary School.



2018 Conference Memories



SJET 2018 Italy and Croatia

Kirstin Prescott, École Sir John Franklin High School (YK1 region)

Over March Break, a group of 35 students and 6 chaperones from École Sir John Franklin High School traveled to Italy and Croatia as SJET (Sir John Europe Trip) 2018. We visited the Italian cities of Rome, Florence and Rimini. We took an overnight ferry from Ancona, Italy to Split, Croatia. While in Croatia, we toured Split, Dubrovnik, and Zagreb.

The trip takes a year and a half to plan. In the year before we leave, students take turns presenting projects to the group about things we will experience while traveling; many times during the trip someone exclaimed "Hey, that was my project!" While we travel, students see and experience art, history, culture, and cuisine all at the same time. Croatians often finish sentences with "or whatever you like," an indication that you can change the plan if need be.

We visited Academia and saw Michelangelo's David statue; we explored the Colosseum. The Vatican is a work of art in a building, and we climbed 551 steps to the very top of its dome. We walked the walls of the old city of Dubrovnik; this is where the show "Game of Thrones" has filmed many episodes, and has a cistern built in 1440. We ate a lot of gelato and drank a lot of cappuccino.

Student's favourite places were definitely the Dubrovnik walls, the Colosseum, and the view from the highest point in Florence.



Spanish Steps, Rome, Italy



SJET Chaperone selfie: (clockwise from bottom left): Kirstin Prescott, Nathan Doering, Jerome Rondeau, Shellie Trimble, Travis Stewart, Denise Hurley



Highest point in Florence, Italy



On the walls of Dubrovnik's Old City, Croatia

Northern Lights

Meet Karen Gelderman
from Behchoko (Tlicho region)



Q. Where did you grow up?
I grew in the little Dutch farming community of Neerlandia, Alberta and went on to complete a B.F.A. at the UofA and my B.Ed at UNB, Fredericton.

Q. What made you decide to become a teacher?
Initially I decided to became a teacher because it would allow for opportunities and work overseas, but I've only worked in the North and I think that was the adventure I was looking for in the first place.

Q. What do you teach?
I teach high school art and the odd course thrown in.

Q. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
What I love most about teaching is the possibilities that await every day. The classroom is such a dynamic place. I enjoy being around the energy of young people making their way through the last few years of their schooling.

Q. How do you engage your students?
I think my students are engaged because I genuinely love my subject matter.

Connected to the North
I am so fortunate to have been able to teach in the South Slave region, the Dehcho region and now, live in Yellowknife but teach in the Tlicho region. I have colleagues, friends and mentors in many communities and because of teaching I feel very connected to the North.

Newsletter Trivia

Send your answers to the trivia questions below to news@nwtt.nt.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: June 15, 2018



Win a \$50 Tim Horton's Gift Card!

1. Since Kaw Tay Whee School implemented their "On Time By Nine" program, what is the average on-time attendance percentage each day?
2. What was Colin Pybus' role/title with the 2018 Arctic Winter Games?
3. Where did Jessica Connors and Robert Heath meet?
4. What type of drums has Stephen Richardson been using in inventive way?

Jessica Connors from Deninu School in Fort Resolution (South Slave region) won the February 2018 Newsletter Trivia!

Newsletter cover photo:
2018 NWT Educators' Conference audience members during closing keynote.

2016-2018 Central Executive

Fraser Oliver

President

fraser.oliver@nwtta.nt.ca

Matthew Miller

Vice President

beaufortdelta@nwtta.nt.ca

Lenny Hill

Secretary-Treasurer

lhill@ssdec.nt.ca

Sonia Gregory

Member-at-Large

sonia_gregory@bdec.learnnet.nt.ca

Todd Sturgeon

Regional Presidents' Representative

tsturgeon@ssdec.nt.ca



Central Executive 2016-2018

(l-r) Fraser Oliver, Todd Sturgeon, Sonia Gregory,
Matthew Miller, Lenny Hill

Central Council 2018 (photo on cover page)

Left to Right:

Arthur Elms (Tlicho Vice-President), **Wendy Tulk** (Tlicho President) **Amy Wilkinson** (YCS Vice-President), **Miranda Orr** (South Slave Secretary-Treasurer), **JP Bernard** (Sahtu Observer), **Loralea Wark** (YCS President), **Robin Dhanoa** (South Slave Vice-President), **Marnie Villeneuve** (Fort Smith Observer), **Gwen Young** (YK1 Member-at-Large), **Tyson Ruston** (Sahtu President), **Todd Sturgeon** (Regional Presidents' Representative/ Fort Smith President), **Mark Ramsankar** (Chairperson - CTF President), **Val Gendron** (Dehcho South Slave President), **Matthew Miller** (Vice-President/Beaufort-Delta President), **David Murphy** (Assistant Executive Director), **Fraser Oliver** (President), **Colin Pybus** (Beaufort-Delta Vice-President), **Lorna Jones-Martin** (Beaufort-Delta Secretary-Treasurer), **Lenny Hill** (Secretary-Treasurer/South Slave President), **Christy MacKay** (Fort Smith Vice-President), **Adrien Amirault** (Executive Director), **Kirstin Prescott** (YK1 Secretary-Treasurer), **Steve Elms** (YK1 Vice-President), **Stephen Offredi** (YK1 President), **Sierra Daley** (Beaufort-Delta Delegate)

Central Office Contact

P.O. Box 2340, 5018-48 Street,
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7

Phone: 867-873-8501

Fax: 867-873-2366

Email: nwtta@nwtta.nt.ca

www.nwtta.nt.ca

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

Friday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

NWTTA PERSONNEL

Denise Works

Administrative Assistant

denise.works@nwtta.nt.ca

André Corbeil

Finance & Communications Officer

andre.corbeil@nwtta.nt.ca

Phone: 867-873-5711

Amanda Mallon

Professional Development Coordinator

amanda.mallon@nwtta.nt.ca

Phone: 867-873-5759

Fax: 867-873-2590

FOR URGENT MEMBER ASSISTANCE CONTACT:

Adrien Amirault

Executive Director

adrien.amirault@nwtta.nt.ca

Mobile 867-446-8825

David Murphy

Assistant Executive Director

david.murphy@nwtta.nt.ca

Mobile: 867-444-0253

Fraser Oliver

President

fraser.oliver@nwtta.nt.ca

Mobile: 867-447-3636

