

NORTH

NORTHERN FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY NEWS | APRIL 2022

IN THE GALLERY

THE ALL NATIVE TOURNEY 2022

SHARING STRENGTHS

GOING BACK TO THE STREETS TO HELP

**HAVE WE GOT A
JOB FOR YOU!**

DETAILS ON PAGE 4

BONFIRE CHAT

FORT ST. JAMES PREPARES
FOR THE FUTURE OF
INDIGENOUS HEALTH CARE

FROM THE LAND

STUDENTS & LAND
GUARDIANS AT
FISH CAMP IN NE



NORTHERN REGION
First Nations Health Authority

STORIES FROM THE LAND

SMALLER CATCHES AND THICKER ICE AT TĻU TUE

IN MARCH STUDENTS FROM THE CHALO SCHOOL IN FORT NELSON FIRST NATION headed out to TĻu Tue (fish lake)—now known as Sandy Lake or Maxhamish Lake—to do some fishing and check for signs of climate change.

They worked with the Land Guardians to take water samples and gather climate data.

On the lake the ice was thicker than last year, and where they'd caught an average of 12 fish per net, this year nets yielded only four fish. And the fish were more sluggish.

Using funds from the [Indigenous Climate Health Action Program](#), through the FNHA, students are able to monitor things like water temperature and acidity, weather patterns, and plant/animal/fish health.

It's a hands-on way to see if environmental studies might turn into a career, and to experience firsthand the effects of climate change on the land.

And it also provided really tasty fish to share with Elders!



Youth prepare fish to share with Elders



Land Guardians gather samples and data with students

Download a digital copy of NORTH:
<https://fnha.bmeurl.co/DC52C4B>

SHARING STRENGTHS

RISING UP FROM THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

JAMES WAS 14 THE FIRST TIME HE RAN AWAY. He ran away from the violence at home and the pain inside. For a long time drink and drugs were the answer.

One day in East Vancouver he was taking another hit off the pipe when he saw a black figure in front of him. He'd been up for seven days and nights, without food or water and paranoia set in. The figure said "Get out or we will make you disappear."

He fled and ran. Up Granville to Broadway, then back to the Downtown Eastside until he could run no more. Exhausted and now wandering aimlessly in the rain James had the epiphany that changed everything. He wanted to go home to Kitamaat.

Back in his community he and his wife, Jan, attended 90 meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous that turned into 365 days straight.

But just over a year into sobriety Jan was diagnosed with breast cancer so they moved to Vancouver for treatment.

There James found himself back in the Downtown Eastside in pain. Where every other person was using. He prayed a simple prayer over and over again to help him stay clean and sober and then he found another way to give back.

"Hey, can you help me find my son?" asked a man from Kitamaat. "I've been here two weeks and have to go back home."



"Outreach is a vital missing link to healing,"
says James Harry

He found the young man, beaten up and seeing things, so James gave him his number. Two days later he received a call.

"I miss my dad and the boat," the young man said. Eighteen hours in an old van later he was with his family back home.

This act of kindness landed James a job as the Haisla outreach worker. He has a vision that all Nations come to do this work with

their people. "Outreach is a vital missing link to healing." And after more than eight years clean and sober, James says: "I want people to feel how I do now."

James continues to walk the alleys in his blue Haisla Outreach jacket. For many, he is the only person who speaks to them. And he is one of them in every way.

HAVE WE GOT A JOB FOR YOU!



- ✓ **POSITION:** Regional Mental Health & Wellness Liaison
- ✓ **LOCATION:** Northern BC
- ✓ Help to link mental health and substance use services to those who need it, and work with partners too!

You provide expert level navigation on available mental health and substance use services

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES? Perhaps you have worked with individuals and families—particularly First Nations—who have accessed these services. You know that each person who needs services is unique and that their experiences and background affect their wellness journey. Notice where there are gaps? You can be part of the change to recommend innovative new responses and ensure that care continues for the long haul for those who need it. Join a committed FNHA team to help people navigate the existing system, and while you do, continue to build strong partnerships with other organizations who provide services. Influence policy, advocate for change and transform lives. Come and join us at the FNHA. [Here are more details on this position.](#)

FNHA JOB OPENINGS IN THE NORTH (click for more info)

Community Engagement

Coordinators:

- [Gitxsan Wet'suwet'en](#)
- [Prince George](#)

[Crisis Response Coordinator](#)

[Environmental Health Officers](#)

[Indigenous Educator, Harm](#)

[Reduction](#)

[Regional Financial Consultant](#)

[Regional HR Generalist](#)

[Licensed Practical Nurse](#)

[Project Management Lead, eHealth](#)

[Regional Mental Health & Wellness](#)

[Liaison](#)

[Senior Business Analyst, eHealth](#)

[Senior Specialist, Mental Health and Substance Use](#)

[Training & Education Support](#)

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES

[Gitanyow & Gitwangak](#)

[Fort St. John](#)

[Gitga'at](#)

[Kwadacha Fort Ware](#)

[Kitkatla](#)

[Kwadacha](#)

[Lax Kw'alaams](#)

[Telegraph Creek](#)

[Tsay Keh Dene](#)

[Resource Team across BC](#)

NURSES IN CHARGE

[Telegraph Creek](#)

[Kwadacha](#)

[Tsay Keh Dene](#)

Check out all our jobs at
fnha.ca/careers

BONFIRE CHAT

WITH JULIE MORRISON VP REGIONAL OPERATIONS



I WENT TO VANCOUVER RECENTLY AND SAW WHAT THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE WILL LOOK LIKE for our people - warm, inviting, human and culturally safe.

The place was Lu'ma Medical Centre, founded almost two decades ago with \$75,000 and a lot of energy, commitment and hope. Today it looks after more than 2,000 Indigenous people and their families, provides housing for youth aging out of care as well as for large families.

It helps keep those living away from home well and safe in a space that reflects them.

The first time a patient visits, the staff welcome them and a nurse spends an hour getting to know them, getting to know what keeps them well and what ails them. There is an Elder on site and a room for traditional healing.

to stand up across British Columbia, three in each health region.

With the site locked in, we are all working on a service plan to take to the Minister of Health himself for approval. We will then have the funding we need to hire Indigenous doctors and nurses to provide our own kind of health care supported by Elders and counselors and administrative staff trained in cultural safety.

The new centre will be a place where all will be listened to with respect, a place the late Gitksan Hereditary Chief Sim'oojit Ma'os (Bill Blackwater, Jr.) would have loved to visit. He worked tirelessly to encourage people to stand up for the health care they needed no matter how often they were sent home with just an aspirin. He would tell us "if you feel something wrong, don't

"...THE NEW CENTRE WILL BE A PLACE WHERE ALL ARE LISTENED TO WITH RESPECT."

I was there with some community leaders from the North who are building a similar place in Fort St. James. They learned some firsthand information and our Northern Health partners who came with us learned even more.

In Fort St. James the site is secured with ample support from the community, and a society has been formed to run the First Nations Primary Care Centre, although it will likely be called something very different. It is one of fifteen the First Nations Health Authority is working

give up as your body knows best not the doctor who barely pays attention to you."

Fort St James will have a clinic where everyone feels listened to and cared for.

Email SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca
to sign up for our eZine

FYI

FIRST IN-PERSON CAUCUS IN TWO YEARS!

It's been a long time since we gathered where the two rivers meet on Lheidli T'enneh territory for the Northern Caucus.

Have you missed the drum performances? The smiles of old friends? The gala dinners?

It's all back at the Coast Inn of the North from May 9 to 12.

Chiefs and proxies, enjoy a pre-Caucus dinner May 9 to review outstanding items and vote.

The evening of May 10 we invite you to an acknowledgement dinner to honour our Nations for exceptional work during the pandemic.

During the day, focus will be on health emergency management, FNHA regionalization and legislation.

Each Nation is invited to bring your political lead, health lead and a technical lead.

Be sure to register!

NORTHERN REGIONAL CAUCUS REGISTRATION

Monday May 9 (evening)

Pre-Caucus dinners for Chiefs or proxies from each sub-region

Tuesday May 10

First day of Caucus and Acknowledgement Dinner

Wednesday/Thursday May 11-12

Caucus continues through the day

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR YOU

Navigating non-medical cannabis in BC

Since the government of Canada legalized non-medical cannabis in 2018, community leaders have been interested in learning more about the complex topic of legalization to understand how it may affect First Nations communities.

The First Nations Health Authority has developed a guidebook entitled [*Navigating Non-Medical Cannabis in BC – A First Nations Community Guidebook to Cannabis Legalization*](#). The goal of the guidebook is to support community decision-making about cannabis by providing information using a health and wellness perspective and an Indigenous lens.

On the cover

One of the youngest fans at this year's All Native was Kaleo Wolnowski who, at 5 months 1 week, seems very happy to be there. Both mom, Leilani (Wright) Wolnowski, and Kaleo are from the Wolf Clan in Nisga'a.



Have a great picture for our cover or a story idea? Send to SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca

STAFF CHANGES

- After starting out as a temp, **Lynn Flavel** is now an FNHA family member. She's our newest shipping and receiving clerk.
- Harm reduction coordinator, **Bryn Hanks**, has moved on to a new job outside of the FNHA. Thank you for your work to keep people safe Bryn!

THROUGH NORTHERN EYES

WELLNESS AT THE ALL NATIVE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



NEXT MONTH: What's your favourite springtime activity?
Send us your photo to SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

FNHA Virtual Doctor of the Day
1-855-344-3800

First Nations Health Benefits
1-855-550-5454

**National Indian Residential
School Survivors Society**
1-800-721-0066

Kids Help Phone
1-800-668-6868
Text "connect" to: 686868

KUU-US Crisis Response
1-800-588-8717

**Mental Health
(no area code needed)**
310-6789

Health Link BC
811

BC Suicide Line
1-800-784-2433
<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/get-help/>

Northern BC Crisis Line
1-888-562-1214

**Northern BC YOUTH
Crisis Line**
1-888-564-8336
Text: 250-564-8336