



***A VISION FOR
ASSERTING OUR
RIGHTS***

2019 - 2020 Annual Report
Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians



VISION

We, the original peoples of Turtle Island, knowing that the Creator placed us here as sovereign Nations will continue to exercise our full jurisdiction in accordance to our own traditional laws and practices with respect to the land, water, air, fire and peoples.

MISSION

The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians will enhance and protect the inherent rights, languages, cultures, and laws of its Member Nations.

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Welcome from Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit



Chief Denise Stonefish

DELAWARE NATION COUNCIL

Welcome to Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit

Kuwiingu-neewulohmwa. On behalf of the Eelūnaapèewi Lahkèewiit people, I welcome the Association of Iroquois and Allied member Nations' representatives to our territory located here in Southwestern Ontario. Our community is proud and honoured to be your host for the 2020 Annual General Assembly.

Eelūnaapèewi Lahkèewiit

This has been our home for the last 228 years and has been referenced under different names ranging from Indigenous Services Canada's moniker "Moravian of the Thames" to "Moraviantown" to "Delaware Nation" and to our recent incorporation of the Lunaapeew language, "Eelūnaapèewi Lahkèewiit". Also, we cannot forget our claim to fame as a fastball community, known as "Bucktown".

We are one of the oldest settlements in this region. After the 1782 massacre of ninety-six Christian Lenape by the American colonial militia at Gnadenhutten, Ohio, our ancestors arrived in Upper Canada (*southern Ontario*) in 1792. Along with the Moravian missionaries, a new community (*known as Fairfield*) was established.

During the War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States, our community played an integral part in the Battle of the Thames (*also known as the Battle of Moraviantown*), as we stood next to the Shawnee Warrior Chief Tecumseh and other allied forces (*both First Nations and British*). Chief Tecumseh died on the battlefield and we would pay a price for our allegiance, as our original village (*located on the north side of the Thames River*) was burned to the ground by the retreating American soldiers at the end of the war.

While history recorded this battle as a decisive U.S. victory, today our community is located on the south side of the Thames River and continues to stand as a testament to our resiliency.

"OUR VISION IS A COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE CAN DEPEND ON EACH OTHER, ARE RESPECTFUL, AND HAS THE COURAGE TO SHAPE OUR OWN FUTURE." - Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit

A Vision for Asserting Our Rights

Aboriginal inherent rights do not exist because the Canadian courts or the Crown has recognized them. They have never been granted from external sources. Our rights to land, resources, self-determination, self-government, to culture, to traditions, and to language is what indigenous peoples have practiced and enjoyed long before European contact.

From the day that the settlers stepped onto Turtle Island, First Nations have consistently asserted their rights. We will continue to be guided by the visions our ancestors and Our Rights will not be silenced, subjugated nor infringed upon.

The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians is powered by its member Nations who recognizes the collective and individual Nations' needs and respects that each member Nation is different. In our Nation-to-Nation relationships, there is an acknowledgement that the vision and resiliency to assert Our Rights will always be there.

We are Nations of people. We are guided by our ancestors. We are preserving and protecting our language, our traditions, and our way of life. We are Sovereign Nations!

On behalf of the Eelunaapeeewi Lahkeewiit people, its community and Council, we welcome you to our community and anticipate that your stay with us is most enjoyable.



A.I.A.I. Grand Chief Joel Abram



Shekoli, Sheko, Aniin, Koolamalsi. As you already know, this past year has brought many changes and challenges. From COVID 19 to police brutality against indigenous people, to continued challenges dealing with government policy and legislation there has been no shortage of issues to consider. Perhaps the issue that has affected us the most no matter where we live has been dealing with a pandemic. Not only must we consider the best path to protect our Nations, and particularly our most vulnerable including our elders and seniors, and those with preexisting health conditions. We saw a variety of actions taken by AIAI leadership from utilizing checkpoints, obtaining and using PPE, to partial shutdowns of our administrative and program services, opening testing sites, and social distancing guidelines. I must commend you all for doing what you did within the confines of your resources, geography, and capacity because as of this date to my knowledge there have been zero confirmed cases in the AIAI Member Nations. It has certainly been a stressful time for all of us, and your steadfastness in the face of the uncertainty of this virus I'm sure is appreciated.

Yet the pandemic is not over, as the situation is constantly evolving. Although the rates of new infections have been steadily declining in Ontario and Canada at large it is expected that there will be a second wave of the pandemic to deal with. As we can see from the current situation in the United States, we must not allow the pandemic to become politicized and continue to let our decisions as leadership be guided by science and the knowledge of medical professionals. I know that in a lot of ways this is the new normal and a post-pandemic world will continue to maintain many of the measures in place now. I think it is going to take some time to process and figure out what changes will stick and what will remain as it was before, and AIAI is no exception to this fact. For instance, it has become apparent how much people are able to work from home depending on their duties, and we must figure out as society and workplaces open back up how many of our employees can continue to do so. Since the beginning of the pandemic, I've never been on so many Zoom video conferences as many of you have and it's taking some getting used to but it has been an eye-opener as to how many meetings that were previously always in person can now be handled this way in the future. There are still a lot of unknowns going forward that we must consider from reopening schools to the resumption of crucial programs and services to our Members.

In the meantime work on other matters has begun to be restarted or continued. AIAI has done our best to provide up to date information regarding the pandemic and will continue to do so. We have also have had to deal with new legislation from Ontario such as Bill 156 which has the potential to harm our hunting rights within our traditional territories and actual physical harm as it allows farmers to take matters into their own hands and conduct citizen arrests. We have communicated our opposition to it, and are considering further actions.



(Left, Lela George, Right, Grand Chief Joel Abram)

Over the past three years, I have had the pleasure of serving as the Grand Chief and am in the final stretch of my term. I am thankful for the opportunity, and it has also been a learning experience for myself. I have been the chair of H/SAB and have also taken on the Social portfolio for the Chiefs of Ontario. I have a passion for a lot of different issues and to be able to work in areas such as Child Welfare, Income Security, Jordan's Principle, and other areas has been particularly meaningful for me. I would be remiss not to mention the efforts of my predecessor on these files, Denise Stonefish, and thank her for all the years she carried this file forward in a good way. Through this, I have been supported most ably by AIAI staff whom I must single out for my appreciation as to the jobs they do on behalf of all of us.

I also appreciated and benefited from the vast experience and knowledge of our Deputy Grand Chief Gordon Peters. If he decides not to run for the Deputy or Grand Chief position it is a loss for us, but I am sure he will remain able to provide advice from time to time. Whether or not my name will be put forward again is inconsequential at the moment but this has been a time I will be forever grateful for. From constant media appearances, interviews, statements to lobbying, rallies, presentations at committees, to countless hours on the road I can say that AIAI has done its best to serve our Member communities with great results at times.

From our efforts to halt the Framework for the Implementation and Recognition of Rights to the news that several of our Member Nations have secured new water treatment facilities we know that by working together with the direction given to us by our Members in the assembly, Chiefs Council, and various committees we can do good things for our people. Yet there remains much work to be done, and many battles to come and we must remain vigilant. I'm proud of the reputation that AIAI has both regionally and nationally as staunch protectors of Our Rights and I am sure this will continue into the future

Yaw^ko

Grand Chief Joel Abram



(Left, Grand Chief Joel Abram, Right, Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald)

A.I.A.I. Deputy Grand Chief Gordon Peters



While the world has come to standstill due the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen astounding positive impacts in our natural world. Humans worldwide are helping to heal our first mother earth by changing the way we live our daily lives. The changes this year could be catalyst for a better appreciation and understanding of our relationship to the natural world much better, and, subsequently, help us improve our relationship with Canada.

Over the past year, we saw the Wet'suwet'en take a stand for their jurisdiction over their lands and fight for consent. This turned into derailments and stoppages of Canada's trade and commerce, which are now incomparable to those caused by the Corona virus pandemic. It is unfortunate that the LNG and the Trans Mountain Lines continue to be

built even though crude prices have dropped to unprecedented lows. This is a great time for our peoples to invest in green energy, gardens, and planting of trees and natural grasses. It is important for us to continue to find better ways to prosper and protect our mother.

This term as Deputy Grand Chief, my focus has been on jurisdiction, Treaties, and processes or mechanisms related to our development as Peoples and Nations. There are other commitments I have continued to hold, including, the Sovereign Wealth Fund, and the urban file for Chief of Ontario. Although Health is not my portfolio, I have also spent time with the AIAI Health sector and the Health/Social Advisory Board working towards a new funding mechanism intended to provide funding to our communities in a manner that allows them the ability to design, develop, and deliver their own programs in a manner that is consistent with our political relationship.

AIAI POSITIONS

First Peoples and Nations have maintained a never-ending responsibility over their lands and waters as provided by the Creator. Only through Treaty making, a diplomatic process, is the Crown able to establish a foothold on turtle Island. The Honour of the Crown requires Canada to act with honour, integrity, good faith, and fairness in their relationship with First Peoples and Nations. Canada, to uphold the honour of the Crown, is therefore obliged to respect the sovereign status of First Peoples and Nations and the status of Pre-Confederation and Numbered Treaties as international legal instruments. There are several documents developed to explain and promote the position of AIAI Chiefs Council and General Assembly which have been the focus of national debate.

Our stand continues to be based on the principle that our inherent responsibilities (Rights) remain intact. That we do not support, follow, or adhere to Canada's policies and legislation for Indigenous Peoples as their process is designed for our demise. The position stated by our Peoples is that, unless we have provided clear consent, we have given nothing up to the Crown. This view is affirmed and supported by Section 94 of the United Nations' Treaty Study, which affirms, "States should provide unassailable proof that the Indigenous Peoples have expressly and of their own free will have renounced their sovereign attributes."

Finally, we understand and accept that all international covenants apply to First Peoples and Nations. Covenants such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which declares that all peoples have the right to self-determination, including the right to freely determine their political status, pursue their economic, social and cultural goals, and manage and dispose of their own resources. It also recognizes that a people have the right to not be deprived of its means of subsistence.

FEDERAL PROCESSSS FOR CHANGE

With all the change happening as a result of the global pandemic, the relationship with Canada remains the same. While the rhetoric, including the use of words like reconciliation and Nation-to-Nation continues, Canada openly espouses First Nations as a fourth order of government.

The federal Liberals continue to push modern treaties as the only answer to jurisdiction, but this form of jurisdiction is drawn down from federal authorities. It is delegated jurisdiction and includes requirements, such as contributing own source revenue, changing legal status of land issues. The federal machine never rests. It continues to advance its own agenda, operating on the false promise of First Nation-led change and opt-in legislation. The Liberals have co-opted and manipulated phrases like **co-development** and **cooperative consent** to bring forward legislation that ultimately achieves their goals at our expense.

Our desire for change is so dramatic that even when we know there are problems with negotiations, we continue to push forward, seemingly accepting that any movement is positive. Some of Canada's processes taking root with First Nations are being driven by economic opportunities in resource development and other areas. The Federal Government has long used First Nation champions to push their agenda, and today is no different. The proposed Indigenous Rights Framework is a product of the Assembly of First Nations' Executive that AIAI has fought to kill. The Federal Government has continued their work, rerouting the implementation of their plans through sector specific pieces of legislation, which the C-92 Child Welfare bill is a perfect example of.

The First Nations Tax Commission, developed some 25 years ago, has been used as the catalyst by the Federal Government, which pours millions into self-serving think tanks, discussion papers, and general propaganda promoting their goals of fee simple land and full ownership and control of all lands by Canada.

Canada has requested that Indigenous Peoples tell them what they need done so Canada can get out of the way of Indigenous Peoples sovereignty. The following is the AIAI Chiefs Council response to date:

- Removal of Canada's *10 Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*.
- Removal of the Inherent Rights and specific claims policies
- Removal of the concept of "justifiable infringement" from Canadian law
- Removal of the "Integral to a Distinctive Culture Test" from Canadian law



(Left, Tuma Young, Right, Deputy Grand Chief Gordon Peters)

TOBACCO JURISDICTION

For the past three years there has been ongoing work regarding a potential agreement with Ontario regarding tobacco. We have been building capacity, bringing leaders together in forums to share and discuss information, learn from experts in the field, and to develop our potions moving forward.

The First Nations indicated that, first and foremost, all direction forward will be based on the exercise of inherent jurisdiction. Our starting position must be that any table or trade agreement must be built upon our inherent authority to establish governance, our laws, and systems for tobacco from seed to sale, including licensing, permitting, transportation, sale, etc.

The following have been developed for moving forward:

- Economic Impact Study on Tobacco in First Nations
- Principles of Trade and Commerce
- Direction for the development of an intertribal trade agreement amongst AIAI First Nations
- AIAI Tobacco Preparation Task Force

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUND

The Board of Directors of Sovereign Wealth Fund have been charged with the responsibility of managing 14,391,012 shares plus 29.0 seed capital. To date, the Board has achieved the following:

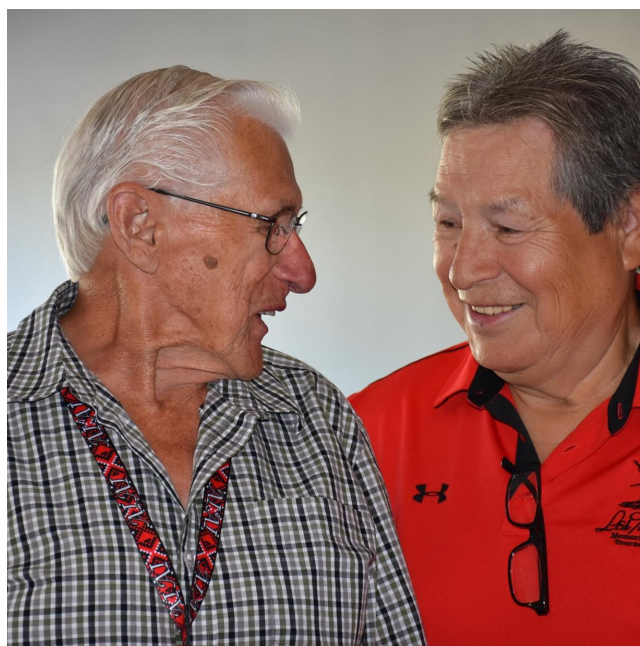
- Established a corporation with a Board of Directors with director duties and responsibilities
- Established an investment policy
- Invested seed capital with Conner Clark and Lunn
- Established services for managing day-to-day requirements
- Contracted legal services for day-to-day from Mike Sherry
- Confirmation that Annual General Assemblies are to be conducted the same day and place as the Ontario First Nation Limited Partnership Agreement

First, allow me to extend my full appreciation to the AIAI chiefs, leadership and communities, over the years for your support in allowing me to carry out your collective vision and the blueprint that you have crafted.

We believe that our peoples can continue to contribute to the survival of all living beings in a time when the destruction of natural world is threatening all species which includes human beings.

Our community development is the key to freeing our Peoples from colonial shackles, not only from the Indian Act, but from the belief systems the Europeans brought to our lands. Let us continue to liberate our minds and the minds of our Peoples so that we can freely express our consent and flourish as Creation intended.

(Left, Murray Jones, Right, Deputy Grand Chief Gord Peters)



Community Safety Sector

The AIAI Community Safety Sector covers a wide range of issues, including policing, corrections reform, re-establishing First Nations justice systems, human trafficking and enforcement and prosecution of First Nations laws and by-laws.

Over the past year, AIAI has participated in a number of community and justice related activities, including:

- Advocating for increased funding for human trafficking prevention on reserve through Indigenous Affairs Ontario and the office of the Solicitor General. On March 6, 2020, it was announced that an additional \$4 million annually has been made available through the Indigenous-led Initiatives Fund as well as increased funding for the Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaisons program to build capacity to address trafficking and support Indigenous survivors.
- Continued support for AIAI Member First Nations who are negotiating the Ontario First Nation Policing Agreement and advocate for essential services status for First Nations policing in Ontario; needs-based funding for infrastructure, administration, and police governance; and needs assessments for member First Nations to determine policing standards and requirements.
- Advocating for corrections reform, including improved restorative justice, diversion, and Gladue programming; better access to Elders, Native Inmate Liaison Officers (NILOs), and Community Correctional Workers (CCWs); creation of healing lodges in Ontario; and research and development of Indigenous legal principles and systems.
- Seeking funding through the Department of Justice - Justice Partnership and Innovation Program to provide supports for AIAI Member First Nations to develop law-making institutions and assume jurisdiction over justice systems.
- Working with the Ministry of the Solicitor General to address issues with the provincial engagement strategy regarding regulations for the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019.

Looking Forward 2020-21

In the coming year, the AIAI Community Safety Sector will continue its work on justice and community safety. AIAI will work with the office of the Solicitor General to access funding from the Indigenous-led Initiatives Fund and the Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaisons Program. We are looking forward to participation in a working group with Ontario First Nations and Elson Advocacy to address the issue of prosecution of First Nations by-laws. The Solicitor General has committed to work with Ontario First Nations and the Attorney General to move forward.

Environment

The AIAI Environment Sector covers a wide range of environment related issues, including access to clean drinking water, water takings/permits to take water, climate change, ecosystem restoration, Great Lakes water quality, nuclear waste disposal, species at risk, traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), resource extraction, and the environmental assessment process.

Over the past year, AIAI has participated in a number of environment related activities, including:

- Advocating for a new regulatory framework for drinking water that ensures funding for First Nations is triggered as soon as water does not meet quality standards; establishment of a needs-based budget to ensure safe drinking water; establishment of budgets for operations and maintenance that ensures water standards are maintained; and fulfillment of Crown's fiduciary responsibility to fund 100% of capital projects related to drinking water;
- Working with water non-government organizations (NGOs), the Ontario Green Party, and Municipal representatives from across the province to address the issue of water taking in Ontario, including a several meetings to discuss the possibility of a First Nations water authority;
- Advocating for the formation of a discussion table with the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, comprised of both political and technical components, to give due attention to First Nations issues regarding permits to take water;
- Development of an AIAI Climate Change Network strategy and workplan to be carried out during the 2020-21 fiscal year;
- Advocating to end the applicability of the carbon pricing program (i.e. carbon tax) through work with the Chiefs of Ontario, meetings with federal officials and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, and correspondence with pertinent federal agencies and ministries.

Looking Forward 2020 - 21

In the coming year, the AIAI Environment Sector will continue its advocacy work on priority environment issues. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to help host our yearly World Water Day activities in Batchewana but are looking forward to next year's event. Given the growing intensity of the global climate crisis, we are looking forward to launching the AIAI Climate Change Network to build capacity within AIAI communities and better understand, mitigate, and prepare for climate change impacts. More specifically, the AIAI Climate Change Network is designed to:

- Create a mechanism for decision-making regarding climate change impacts for AIAI member First Nations;
- Engage AIAI member First Nations on how Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) should be protected;
- Enhance monitoring and response to climate change impacts on First Nations way of life, including availability of traditional medicines and food sources;
- Create a better understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities to First Nations associated with climate change;
- Develop culturally responsive strategies for ecosystem restoration and protection of Great Lakes water quality that account for the changing climate.

Tobacco

This year saw the completion of another phase of the AIAI Tobacco Project. This third phase of was built upon the work completed through Phase II (December 2018 – March 2019) and Phase I (September 2017 – March 2018), which the Nations have previously received comprehensive reports on.

For AIAI First Nations, this third phase was a “make or break” stage of the project, requiring decisions to be made by leadership in terms of direction for continuation of the project and future progress in the area of tobacco, trade, and commerce.

Outputs from Phase III include the development of an AIAI Tobacco Discussion Paper, the establishment of Principles of Trade and Commerce, the establishment of future direction for the Tobacco Project, and the facilitation of an Indigenous Transformation Summit.

The Indigenous Transformation Summit was held in January 2020. It brought leadership and key community representatives from the AIAI First Nations together to discuss and establish direction for tobacco. The Summit provided an opportunity for participants to hear directly from legal and economic experts hired to complete research throughout Phase III and to discuss approaches to tobacco, law-making, and trade and commerce that support the inherent jurisdiction, local businesses, and community well-being.

Critical dialogue was facilitated through small break out groups, groups organized by community, and collective group discussions, and participants were also able to engage in a clan-based governance exercise designed to support capacity building for governance and community decision-making. Support was provided to the First Nations to further capacity building in the areas of tobacco, governance, and law-making outside of the Summit according to their own processes, teachings, values, and cultures.

Looking Forward 2020 - 21

Based on the direction established in Phase III, AIAI is moving forward with Phase IV of the Tobacco Project. This phase will involve the development of an AIAI Tobacco Preparation Task Force, comprised of representatives from each of the AIAI First Nations.

This task force will take the lead on the development of consensus-based recommendations regarding tobacco, an inter-nation trade protocol agreement, and potential future negotiations with the Province of Ontario. The work of the Task Force will be supported by technical experts and AIAI staff. All work will be conducted with the utmost transparency and in following with the directions and principles established by community leadership.

This next phase will also further community capacity building work in the areas of law-making, governance, and tobacco with support flowing to the First Nations to support their processes.

Though the funding agreement with Ontario required to support Phase IV has been delayed due to the COVID-19 crisis, this work will get underway as soon as possible. AIAI is working to propel momentum on the project while ensuring protective public health measures are respected.



Social Development

Over the past year, AIAI has been active in the Social Development portfolio with technical and political advocacy in the following areas: First Nation Child and Family Services; Income Assistance; Early Learning and Child Care; Family Well-being Program; and Housing and Infrastructure.

First Nation Child and Family Services

With the Introduction of the Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nation, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families in the early 2019. AIAI actively participated in technical and political discussions on the Bill, reiterating the Chiefs Council's collective opposition to the legislation and seeking amendments for the Bill to recognize and support First Nations jurisdiction. One of the major highlights of these advocacy efforts, was Grand Chief Abram's Bill C-92 presentation to the Senate Committee in April 2019. The legislation has since come into effect as of January 1st, 2020.

Outside of the advocacy efforts on the Legislation, AIAI has been an active participant on technical tables working towards reform of First Nation Child and Family Services Reform in Ontario. The Technical Table on Child and Family Well-being is a trilateral table comprised of representatives from the Chiefs of Ontario's Social Services Coordination Unit, Indigenous Services Canada and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. This table has recently completed a study of First Nation Child and Family Services in Ontario, called the Ontario Special Study. The Study was led by the First Nation representatives and calls for key systemic and funding reforms for First Nation Child and Family Services in Ontario. It is expected that this report will inform future reform on this file.

In the Fall of 2019, AIAI reconvened the Family Revitalization Working Group to re-initiate a technical bilateral relationship with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. Under AIAI's Health and Social Advisory Board, this working group will work with and build a relationship with the Ministry to support and advance the Member First Nations Child Welfare priorities. The group held its first meeting in November 2019.

Income Assistance

In early 2019, AIAI undertook a series of meetings within the Member First Nations to discuss current challenges the Income Assistance/Social Assistance system and identified areas for reform. The feedback was then used to develop the Income Assistance Report (2019). This report has been used to support AIAI advocacy on this file.

AIAI has been an active participant in the Province's Social Assistance Reform initiatives that were announced in the Fall of 2018. In the Spring of 2019, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services reinitiated their discussions with First Nations through the Joint Social Services Technical Table. The technical table is coordinated by the Chiefs of Ontario and is comprised of First Nation Ontario Works Administrators/Managers and representatives from the Ontario Works branch under the Ministry. At this table, AIAI is represented by the Social Development Policy Advisory and technical representative, Samantha Maracle, Ontario Works Administrator, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte. Through this table, AIAI has advocated for reforms that will enhance First Nation's administration and jurisdiction over Social Services like Ontario Works and Ontario Disabilities Support Program.

Social Development (con't)

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Initiative

In the Fall of 2018, the Federal Government announced the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care framework, a new initiative meant to enable new and enhance existing Indigenous early learning and child care programming. Under this new initiative, communities are eligible for new funding. In early 2019, AIAI has been working through the Chiefs of Ontario, advocating for the timely and equitable distribution of this funding. As well, AIAI has been working towards fostering a better working relationship with Employment and Social Development Canada on this file.

Family Well-being Program

Under the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' Family Well-being Program, AIAI has taken a coordination role to support the Member First Nations Family Well-being programs. Beginning in the Fall 2019, AIAI has coordinated training and conferences for the member First Nations' Family Wellbeing program workers to attend. The coordination of training opportunities will continue in 2020-2021.

Housing and Infrastructure

AIAI has initiated a Housing Study of Member First Nations current housing needs. This work is being undertaken by First Nation Engineering Services Ltd. A report is expected in the late Summer of 2020. As well, AIAI is seeking to be more active in regional discussions on the regional Housing and Infrastructure file.

Looking Forward 2020 - 21

The associations Social Development Policy Advisory is looking forward to supporting and advocating member First Nations on a number of initiatives and issues such as:

- Supporting the member First Nations with the understanding and implementation of An Act respecting First Nation, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families. To support this work, AIAI is in the process of securing resources.
- Advancing the recommendations from the Ontario Special Study and advocating for exploratory discussions on possible reform of the 1965 Indian Welfare Agreement.
- Advocating for Social Assistance reforms that better support First Nation recipients.



Education

The AIAI Education Partnership Program, also known as the EPP program is a tri-lateral partnership program between AIAI, the Ministry of Education (EDU) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and five AIAI Member Nations who actively participate and receive financial resources to conduct education enhancement programming and language revitalization. Through the tri-lateral partnership program the education sector has been working on community initiatives that target student transitions, relationship building, and languages and culture.

AIAI Education also engages in a several EPP Initiatives highlighted below:

Youth Development Camp (YDC)

Each year the YDC is held in July. In 2019 Caldwell First Nation hosted the YDC camp. The youth engaged in fun hands-on learning activities. The presentations and workshops focus on math, science and technology activities, as well as, the four sacred teachings of air, land, water and fire. Twenty-seven youth from AIAI Member Nations actively participated in the camp activities.

The Education Directors Forum

This initiative is about creating better working relationships with Provincial School Board Directors and our First Nation Education technicians. The purpose is to create education strategies for Indigenous students to feel welcome and comfortable in their provincial schools, as well as, to promote and increase graduation rates for Indigenous students.

The strategy focuses on the importance of cultural studies, Indigenous languages and having safe places within the schools for Indigenous students to go to. The theme for the 2019 Education Directors Forum was to promote AIAI's newly created Indigenous education resources. The forum was an excellent platform to test run on how well the resources would be received and how we might market them for future use.

Creation of Education Resources

AIAI EPP had two initiatives that are performed by professional consultants.

1. **New Teacher Induction Program's** Phase II was been completed. The Oneida Community profile has been completed and a final draft was to be presented to the Oneida Chief and council for their approval. The Batchewana Community Profile is close to completion as well. We are now looking forward to developing pilot testing of the toolkit for the fiscal year of 2020-2021.
2. **Adaptive Learning Test Tool Project's** final draft is currently being completed. The purpose of this project is to identify and enhance students' natural born abilities and talents that will promote a more positive learning environment and will lead to potential career pathways. We are currently looking forward to developing pilot testing of this test tool for the fiscal year of 2021.

Youth

This past year has kept the Youth Council representatives busy as they continue to attend Youth Council meetings, Chiefs Council meetings and Health Social Advisory Board meetings as well as participate in national and regional meetings with the Chiefs of Ontario and The Assembly of First Nations. The AIAI Youth Council representatives continue to demonstrate leadership while making a difference in their communities

Youth Council Representatives:

Caldwell First Nation- Kia Peters

Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware First Nation) - Megan Logan & Kamryn Whiteye

Oneida Nation of the Thames - Brandon Doxtator, Dominique Ireland & Kathleen Doxtator

Hiawatha First Nation- Ryan Gray-Brady

Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte- Melanie Grey

Wahta Mohawks- Brooke Temple

Batchewana First Nation- Hanna Sewell & Juliana Lesage-Coribere

In August 2019, the Youth Council met with Indigenous Services Canada to discuss the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy. They also participated in the annual Elders Gathering hosted in Tyendinaga ON.

In October 2019, the Youth Council participated in SafeTALK training where they learned how to prevent suicide and recognize signs, engaging someone, and connecting them to an intervention resource for further support.

In January 2020, the Youth Council had a meeting where they met with Lindsay Mathysen, Deputy Whip of the NDP Ontario First Nations Young Peoples Council. Julianna Lesage of Batchewana and Kamryn Whiteye of Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit proudly represented AIAI at the regional level on the Ontario First Nations Young Peoples Council (OFNYPC).

OFNYPC alongside various partners have hosted these gatherings:

1. Stories from Our Roots Photovoice project driven by First Nations Youth, held sessions across Ontario.
2. Second Annual Tobacco and Cannabis Gathering
3. OFNYPC in-person meetings

Looking Forward 2020 - 21

The Youth Council is looking forward to focusing on new goals such as Environment and Land based learning by building partnerships with organizations with similar goals. Accessibility and ASL training, Team building and Capacity Building along with Housing for youth.



Health & Wellness

Health policy focus is based on direction from the AIAI Chiefs Council and the Health/Social Advisory Board. For fiscal year 2019-2020, priority areas of research and advocacy included: Mental Health and Addictions; supports for seniors, chronically ill and disabled; and First Nation priorities pertaining to Ontario Health restructuring. Within these broad priorities, sub-categories enabled the establishment of achievable goals to help advance AIAI First Nations positions across multiple sectors.

Supports for cannabis education and awareness; home renovation and repairs; in-home and long-term care; and, culturally relevant mental health supports in the communities, including services specific to youth, males, and LGBTQ2S.

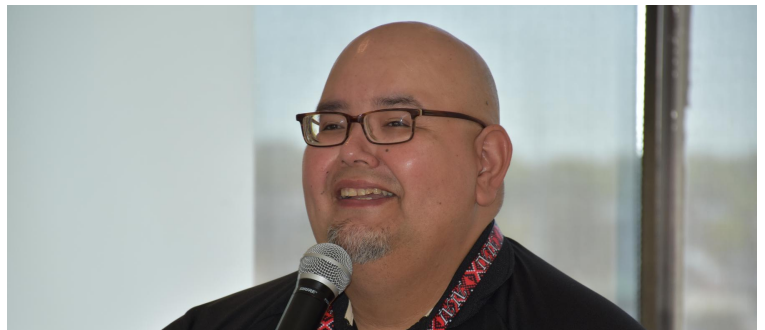
AIAI continues to participate in the regional Mental Health and Addictions Working Group, which functions as a working group of the Chiefs of Ontario Health Coordination Unit. Through this group, AIAI helps to progress the facilitation of First Nation specific research projects that help to better understand trends, progressions, and needs across Ontario in the area of mental health and addictions. This group also provides direction on regional training sessions for frontline mental health and addictions workers and youth life promotion activities, such as Photo Voice. The group provides advice to government partners regarding relevant initiatives, policies, and programs to advance collective concerns and priorities of First Nations in the region.

AIAI continues to sit on the regional Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Networking Group to advance community issues and concerns and monitor the completion and implementation of the Canada-wide NIHB review process.

AIAI coordinated a provincial lobby this year which provided AIAI and First Nation leadership opportunities to advance community needs pertaining to health and well-being. This effort was strategically guided by the top 5 priorities of the Health/Social Advisory Board, providing an opportunity for health sector to advance community-

based solutions regarding long-term and in-home care gaps, seniors support needs, and mental health and wellness challenges. Meetings were held with the Deputy Minister of Seniors Affairs, the Minister of Long-term Care, the Minister of Infrastructure, and the Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs, as well as critics from the opposition party focusing in these areas.

A meeting was also arranged for AIAI First Nation political leadership with the Ontario Minister of Health and Associate Minister of Mental Health of Addictions to discuss the development of a process for addressing AIAI First Nation concerns regarding Ontario's health restructuring processes and much-needed community investments to address mental health.



Health & Wellness (con't)

Looking Forward 2020 - 21

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, AIAI health policy has shifted to focus to ensure the First Nations are receiving accurate, clear, and succinct information required to keep their communities safe and protected from the virus as best as possible. This work includes active monitoring of federal and provincial legislation, policies, and resources pertaining to health available through news, media, government contacts, and regional working groups. Active communication with health directors and the Health/Social Advisory board is critical to being aware of community gaps, concerns and needs that can be advanced at both the technical and political level.

In fiscal year 2020-21, AIAI will continue to advance priorities established by leadership and the Health/Social Advisory Board for seniors, chronically ill and disabled, such as long-term care, in-home care and renovation supports. AIAI will continue to advocate for increased community capacity to address mental wellness and healing needs and looks forward to the addition of a ministry-funded mental health coordinator. This position will assist in the development community statistics and project plans for mental health to better achieve results in terms of much-needed community resources.

With successful multi-year funding proposal submitted to Health Canada, AIAI has secured \$2.6 million dollars for community cannabis education and awareness which will begin to flow to the communities in fiscal year 2020-21. Since 2018, when recreational cannabis was legalized federally, access to supports for culturally relevant education and awareness around cannabis has been identified as a priority by the Health/Social Advisory Board and Chiefs Council. AIAI looks forward to supporting the communities in the implementation of the communities' initiatives through this project over the next three years and to seeing the health and wellness benefits it will create.

AIAI will continue to advance First Nations concerns regarding Ontario health restructuring, working to initiate processes to protect First Nation health resources and to establish a bilateral table to address outstanding health gaps. Though Ontario's health restructuring process is largely on hold amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, AIAI will be prepared to re-engage this work as soon as possible.

Mental Wellness Crisis Response Team

A collaboration between the Federal and Provincial governments allowed funding for one Mental Wellness Crisis Response Team to service AIAI communities. The allocation of only one team did not provide the resources to fully accommodate a team approach to address AIAI diverse regional and largely populated needs. Through the Health Social Advisory Board, and Chiefs Council processes a different approach was approved for each of AIAI's Nations to receive funds in order to build capacity to address crisis and provide mental wellness activities in community.

In the 2019/20 fiscal year the team continued to have discussions on their level of crisis preparedness, best approaches to providing assistance to other AIAI Nations, and begin to build a strong network of support with each other. Mental Wellness Team funding has been approved for two years beginning 2020/2021.

Health and Wellness

Health Navigation

A consultant was hired during the 2019-20 year to determine existing Health Navigator supports in the province and to identify gaps in supports for the AIAI communities. Further, they were to identify a plan going forward for AIAI communities to utilize limited Health Navigation funding.

The following recommendations were made by the consultant and these recommendations will be tabled with the Health Social Advisory Board in the 2020-2021 year:

- Recommend to the Ministry of Health to invest in Health Navigation Supports for AIAI community members to improve access to health care and improved health outcomes. This request for funding for community-based Health Navigator positions for each AIAI community (seven Navigator positions). Funding to include related equipment, supplies, travel and benefits. Estimated cost \$100,000 per position/community. Total request: \$700,000.
- Recommend to the Ministry of Health that a culturally appropriate quality improvement process is necessary to address issues of discrimination and racism experienced by First Nation clients. The Ministry of Health to endorse a quality improvement process to be implemented across the Ontario Hospitals. The process to include relationship development, regular meaningful dialogue with hospital staff including Chief of Staff and discharge planners.
- Recommend that an AIAI workshop focused on sharing of 'best practices' discharge planning tools and protocol agreements with hospital or other facilities. The goal is to ensure safe and proper supports of community members as they transition home or to another location.

Health Transformation

During the 2019-20 fiscal year AIAI communities participated in a Health Transformation engagement process that was done by survey of AIAI citizens during community events. This engagement process identified the following needs in AIAI communities:

- The combination of traditional and western healing approaches in community
- Health Professionals, Supports and Services to provide wrap around care
- Increased access to Primary Care in home, community, and in hospital
- Mental Health Supports
- Infrastructure to support community need – Medical Transportation, Health Buildings, Water Treatment, LTC/Palliative Care Facility
- Community grocery store with healthy food options
- Education programs and community health programs
- Traditional healing and land-based activities
- Safe water and land
- Direct access to Health Care Benefits
- First Nations Health Governance locally

Next steps in Health Transformation will be determined by the Health Social Advisory Board in 2020-2021.



Health / Social Advisory Board

The Health/Social Advisory Board (H/SAB) is the longest-serving advisory board for the Association. It is comprised of three representatives per member Nation (health, social, political) and is chaired by the AIAI Grand Chief. The board meets bi-annually (conference calls occur as needed) to provide coordinated recommendations to the Chiefs Council on critical health and social services issues affecting the AIAI member Nations.

The H/SAB provides a unique opportunity for member communities to come together to discuss current programs, new proposal ideas, evaluate and plan services, analyze and discuss policies and legislation, share best practices and problem solve jointly. The H/SAB also facilitates a coordinated stance on critical policy and funding issues allowing the formulation of a cohesive voice on position papers and the articulation of local issues and concerns.

The Health/Social Advisory Board is responsible for:

- Identifying health and social priorities based on their community interests;
- Identifying issues and make recommendations related to health and social affairs;
- Acting as a networking body to share information and identify best practices in program and service delivery; and will be guided by the mandates received from the AIAI Annual General Assembly and the Chiefs Council.

Throughout the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the H/SAB held three face-to-face meetings (April, September, January) and two conference calls (May, July). Information was researched and presented to the H/SAB on several important programs, policies and legislation, including:

- Mental Wellness Crisis Response Teams
- Health Transformation
- Jordan's Principle
- Ontario Health Legislation/ Ontario Health Restructuring
- Income Support/Social Assistance
- Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)
- Chiefs of Ontario Funding Formula
- Health Human Resource Strategy
- Federal Indigenous Child Welfare Update
- Early Learning Child Care Initiative
- Child Welfare
- Federal and Provincial Budget Analysis
- Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women/Family Violence
- Health Navigator Program
- MOHLTC Indigenous Systems Coordinator
- Bill 116 Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act
- Social Assistance Reform
- Bill C81 Accessible Canada Act
- AIAI member Nation Health Funding Mechanism
- Public Health Unit Restructuring Impacts
- Bill C92 Child Welfare Legislation
- AIAI-MCCSS Technical Bilateral on Child Welfare
- Housing
- Family Well-being Coordination
- Environment Update
- HSAB Five Priority Strategic Planning: Mental Health and Addictions, Safe Water, Community Safety, Child and Family Wellbeing, Supports for Elders, Disabled and Chronically Ill

Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians

Health/Social Advisory Board Members

NATION	NAME	POSITION	Board Rep	EMAIL
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	Chief Philip Franks		<i>Political</i>	philip.franks@wahtamohawkscouncil.ca

Notable Events

In 2019 Toronto saw The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians organize a rally against the actions of the Canadian Government not consenting with the Indigenous peoples.



In a rally against the construction of the pipeline AIAI participated in a gathering of Indigenous peoples to protest against it's construction and the treatment of Indigenous people by the RCMP



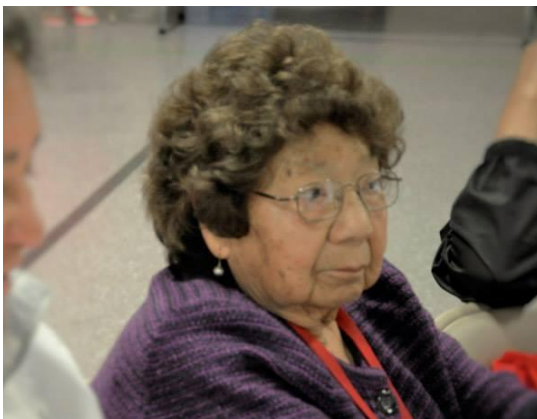
Notable Events

In early 2020, AIAI organized another 'Walking in Balance' conference. With story tellers, teachings, and personal experiences that dealt with family, LGBTQ2S, and people making a connection.



Honoring Lois Cornelius

On April 29th, the world lost a strong and noble spirit as Lois Cornelius began her journey. The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians is proud to have known Lois as she was the Association's elder for many years. She has Attended meetings, offered prayers to open and close various conferences and gave advice to leadership on many issues. We will always remember her and her contributions to her people and thank her for her hard work.



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Batchewana First Nation



***EELÜNAAPÉEWI LAHKÉEWIIT
(Delaware Nation)***



***Oneida Nation
of the Thames***



***Hiawatha First Nation
Mississaugas of Rice Lake***



***Mohawks of the
Bay of Quinte***



Wahta Mohawks



Caldwell First Nation

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