

The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians



Seven Nations Working for the Next Seven Generations

2021 - 22 Annual Report
Strengthening Our Relations



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 Batchewana First Nation

Welcome to Batchewana First Nation

On behalf of Batchewana First Nation it is my pleasure to welcome each of the delegates participating in the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians 53rd Annual General Assembly to our beautiful Ojibway Territory.

We are thrilled to be the host community and are honoured to be part of a forum that facilitates decision making, action and advocacy for each of the AIAI member Nations. The Leadership of BFN truly appreciates the opportunity to learn from our fellow Nations; Delaware, Oneida, Hiawatha, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Wahta Mohawks, and Caldwell. We look forward to the important discussion ahead as we chart a collective path forward in the best interest of our communities. When our 7 arrows are pointed together in unity there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Our Territory has plenty to offer conference participants from our warm community spirit to our traditional grassroots values. We can accommodate everyone and I encourage you to get out on the land and see what our area has to offer.

We hope to see you at the film screening of our newest documentary, “Lake Superior – Our Helper” on June 7, 2022 at 9pm. This will be a great opportunity to network and unwind. The documentary follows BFN leadership through a series of conversations with community members to reveal the cultural, political, and ecological relationships surrounding the fisheries. The film shares the messages of Elders, youth, fishers, community leaders, and their visions for the future of Batchewana’s fisheries.

I commend you on dedicating yourself to the hard work that lies ahead and I look forward to working with each of you towards advancing our Nations in the most positive ways possible.

We look forward to sharing and showcasing all that our beautiful home at the heart of the Great Lakes has to offer!



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



It has been a privilege to represent AIAI member First Nations over the last year and over my term. I would like to send my sincerest gratitude to Batchewana, Caldwell, Delaware, Hiawatha, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Wahta Mohawks. With the COVID-19 pandemic seemingly improving with each day, our communities are able to start, or continue, the healing process and head into relative normalcy.

I am very happy that meetings are once again starting to be held in person. In many cases, the pandemic negatively impacted our communities, but I am extremely appreciative of the leadership within AIAI and the decisions that were made to protect our community members from the early and devastating days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is evident that much of our newly adapted practices have become the new normal in our ways of conducting business. Even though online tools can be difficult to maneuver at times, I am grateful for our team to be able to continue doing such great and important work. Throughout the difficult times, AIAI has continued to work on achieving the goals and aspirations that we have strategically implemented for the benefit of the people that we represent and the communities that we fight for. It has been a unique year for us at AIAI as there was a federal election and a provincial election. Responding to the commitments that the federal and provincial governments have made during the election time has been of great importance to us. We are keeping the federal and provincial governments accountable for their commitments at AIAI. One of the commitments that we made in the past federal election was a commitment to reconciliation. The current view in Canada of reconciliation remains problematic as it is still underpinned by the Doctrine of Discovery in the viewpoint of the federal government where the colonial ideologies have led to practices that continue through modern-day laws and policies within Canada today.

AIAI has taken a major role in addressing problematic acts such as the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2020, where there is a potential clash between the lawful exercise of existing aboriginal and treaty rights and the power of landowners to arrest a person in an animal protection zone. We have argued in many instances that the rights of Indigenous Peoples to carry out cultural and economic practices such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and harvesting are secondary to and trumped by the landowner's rights in this act which could lead to a potentially dangerous and lethal conflict between individuals. We continue to address this issue at AIAI.

A few weeks ago marked the one-year anniversary where there were 215 children recovered from unmarked burial sites in Kamloops, BC. Over the past year at AIAI, we have worked with First Nations leadership, the federal government, and the provincial government, specifically the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs (IAO), to obtain Indian Residential School funding that is available for burial sites, community wellness, and survivors of the residential institutions that were labelled as schools.

I assisted with the Child Welfare Agreement negotiations where we reached an unprecedented Agreement in Principle (AIP) of \$40 billion that will assist First Nations directly impacted by discrimination in the child welfare system. The money will not change the wrongs in the past but will allow for supports and resources to be available to those who have been directly impacted by systemic discrimination in the child welfare system. I cannot express enough, the great work of our youth council and the wisdom that comes from our elders at AIAI. The youth council and the elders bring great insight and perspective to the way we conduct our business and decision-making processes. I want to thank our current elders, Harvey Bell from Batchewana, and Olive Elm from Oneida Nation of the Thames. AIAI lost such an important and meaningful person in April 2020. Today, we honour our elder who has passed with the Lois Cornelius Education Scholarship.

This term I have been approached by many media outlets for various topics and issues ranging from the Residential Schools to discussing Bill C-15 and much more. I am pleased to help spread awareness and understanding of Indigenous issues on media outlets, from print and radio, to TV, and online. While all of them were valuable opportunities, one that comes to mind was an appearance on the Business News Network on the Bloomberg show to discuss Bill C-15 on UNDRIP. Others such as the radio show 980 CFLP, CTV, and CBC are just as appreciated, and I am grateful to them for approaching AIAI with these opportunities.

Raising awareness in our member First Nation communities about the role and importance of AIAI is one of the main areas that we have come across in our Strategic Plan. As many others during these times, I have had what seems like an innumerable amount of Zoom or Microsoft Team meetings with government officials or representatives, with AIAI Chiefs council, and the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Leadership Council. I will continue to chair our Health/Social Advisory Board (H/SAB) meetings and will continue to attend meetings that pertain to my Social portfolio at the COO. There are many collective needs for our member First Nations in areas such as health, education, access to mental health supports, adequate, safe, and affordable housing, increased water infrastructure and funding to support existing infrastructure, access to reliable and affordable broadband, etc. We must continue to fight for our member First Nations while reminding and pressuring the provincial and federal governments on their fiduciary duty to Indigenous Peoples.

A sacred connection between Mother Earth and our people was made when the land was entrusted to us by the Creator centuries ago. This responsibility to care for the land was passed down from generation to generation and now it is our time to uphold this honour. The path we create going forward to care for the land is one that will be travelled by our youth when it is time for them to make their way, just as they will do for their children and so on. In advocating for a number of environmental issues, we are fighting not just for our rights to the land, but to teach our youth to stand up for themselves, their communities, and their people. In this, we are honouring the teachings gifted to us by the past seven generations and helping to keep them strong when we pass them on for future seven generations to ensure a long-lasting legacy with Mother Earth."

In Peace and Friendship



Yaw^ko

Grand Chief Joel Abram

A.I.A.I. Deputy Grand Chief Stacia Loft

She:koli, Aanii, Kwingaa-Neewul, She:kon sewakwekon!



What an honour and privilege it is to be able to serve our member Nations this past year and over the course of this term. Although we are not entirely done with COVID-19, I am pleased that we have begun to reconvene some of our meetings in person. I think it is fair to say that our ways of doing business have changed permanently. Tools such as Zoom, and Teams have become part of our vernacular and have allowed us some additional time to achieve our goals and outcomes without having to step outside of our homes. Moving forward, hybrid meeting options will become the new normal, but we can all agree that nothing replaces the opportunity to meet face-to-face. As we continue on our path to wellness it is important for us not to lose sight of the need to work towards physical wellness and to focus on our mental, emotional, and spiritual health in our personal and professional lives. This is a balance that we need in order to serve our communities.

Achieving balance also applies to our organizations and governance structures. Discussed at our last AGA was the need for AIAI to work towards drafting and implementing a 5-year Strategic Plan. This past year, AIAI's Chief Council and AIAI staff met regularly and worked diligently to share their vision for AIAI. As we get closer to finalizing our plan, what has become clear is the need for us to return to a rights-based agenda that encompasses the collective priorities of our member First Nations to address fundamental human rights such as access to clean and safe drinking water, the urgent need for affordable and safe housing, the establishment of mental health and addictions centres in our communities, and access to adequate education at all learning levels. Additional priorities stem directly from our inherent and treaty rights as First Nation Peoples which requires dedicated advocacy on hunting and fishing rights, tax immunity, jurisdiction over our lands and resources, and ensuring that consultation and consent protocols and processes from our communities are obtained and respected. Communication, capacity and collaboration will be longstanding pillars that AIAI as an organization must work towards in order to ensure that the needs of our communities are met, but also that we work together in ways that strengthen our relationships. Our leadership and the decisions we make today will impact on the next Seven Generations to come.

It is important for me to highlight that we, AIAI, have continued to demonstrate our role as a leader throughout the province. Our leadership is always available and willing to step up and take on responsibilities to support the collective. Grand Chief Abram played a pivotal role in the Child Welfare negotiations processes achieving a historical Agreement in Principle (AIP). Our focus since the signing of the AIP is to now look at how our existing political structures function in order to ensure that access to resources, financial or otherwise, are fair and equitable as it pertains to the Federal Prevention Services Funding Allocation, among others. This requires, as noted earlier, that our organizations are operating from a place of overall wellbeing, drawing upon the principles and teachings of our Original Instructions that remind us to come to the table and to each other with Sken:nen (Peace), Kahsatsteh:sera (Strength) and Kanikonhri:yo (A Good Mind).



A.I.A.I. Deputy Grand Chief Stacia Loft

This past year I have continued to support the work of the collective by taking the lead on Education, Justice, Law-Making and Women's Initiatives at AIAI and a COO portfolio holder. Our work in Education supports Education Directors in our member First Nations by hosting monthly meetings to discuss concerns regarding funding, mental health supports, and curriculum review, and by hosting forums, engagement sessions and symposiums for workers, parents and support persons. Our focus these past few months was completing the 'Seven Nations Strong' video which provided an opportunity to hear from Elders and Youth in our communities who shared their thoughts and personal experiences on the COVID-19 pandemic. Our next priority is to finalize AIAI's Post-Secondary Education Engagement report so that we can share these findings with our Nations and to identify areas that require advocacy.

On the Justice front, COO's Justice Committee solidified appointments to the AFN's Federal Policing Taskforce, finalized Duty to Consult Guiding Principles support materials, and supported First Nations Leadership on UNDRIP Action Planning through engagement sessions for leadership and technicians. Our Law-Making work currently centres on the Tobacco Project. Through the support and guidance of the Tobacco Task Force, member First Nation representatives meet regularly to share updates on their projects, increase their knowledge on traditional legal principles, and build community capacity in order to prepare for future negotiations. Our Tobacco and Law-Making Summits provide enhanced opportunities to hear from leaders and experts in the field, and to share perspectives on jurisdiction, traditional laws, and law-making. Finally, the work of the First Nation Women's Council culminated with the completion of Ontario's MMIWG Action Plan through facilitated sessions, engaging with survivors, families and support persons at the MMIWG Virtual Family Gathering, supporting anti-harassment/violence/racism projects, and by advocating for safe spaces so that our women and girls, including women leaders are protected from harm, harassment, reprisal, sexual violence, misogyny, and sexism.

Moving into this final year of the term, it will be imperative for us to prioritize our activities to ensure that they align with the direction set by the Chiefs Council during our Strategic Planning processes. This will further ensure that our work is purposeful and intentional in addressing the needs of our member First Nations. Enhanced communications, capacity building opportunities, increased lobby efforts and renewing our relationships with each other will move us forward in a powerful way laying the foundation and taking on the necessary groundwork for the next Seven Generations to thrive.

Nya:wen kiwahi tanon

Sken:nen kenhak!

Deputy Grand Chief

Stacia Loft



SOCIAL

IELCC (Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Initiative)

In the Fall of 2018, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) announced the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care framework, a new initiative meant to enable new and enhanced existing Indigenous early learning and childcare programming. Under this new initiative, communities are eligible for new funding. For fiscal year 2021-2022, ESDC has received endorsement from all partners for continued use of the OFNLP funding allocation formula. 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 ESDC on this file. 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 2022-23.

AIAI remains active in contributing to a system that transfers Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC). AIAI provides support to our member communities in relation to IELCC co-development activities, evaluation of the IELCC framework and coordinating early learning and childcare systems.

In March 2022, as part of the Social Services Coordination Unit, Chiefs of Ontario hired Sisco & Associates Consulting Services to complete an Early Learning and Asset Mapping report. The 40-page report provides findings, recommendations, and an environmental scan of First Nation IELCC in Ontario. This report provides short, medium, and long-term recommendations including reallocating current First Nation IELCC funding, increasing IELCC funding as a whole and supporting IELCC service providers with accessing funding. AIAI, as part of the Social Services Coordination Unit, remains engaged with our member First Nations to deliver the key priorities of IELCC funding.

Child Welfare

AIAI continues to actively participate in technical and political discussions on *Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nation, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families*. Collectively, AIAI Chief's Council opposed the legislation and seeks amendments for the Bill to recognize and support jurisdiction in First Nations communities. AIAI leadership and policy advisors attended the *We Will Look after the Children*, a *Bill C-92* conference. Hosted by Hiawatha First Nation and Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services in Rama, Ontario.

As part of the focus of First Nation Child Welfare, AIAI is involved in funding distribution for our member First Nations. The funding includes First Nations Child Welfare Systems Planning and First Nations Child and Family Reform, funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and Indigenous Services Canada, respectively.

SOCIAL

AIAI is an active participant on The Technical Table on Child and Family Well-Being and First Nations Technical Table, both of which are working towards the reform of First Nation Child and Family Services in Ontario. Focus at the First Nations Technical Table includes Child Welfare Redesign, Customary Care, Child Welfare Data, Adoption Modernization, and Child, Youth and Family Well-being. In April 2022, AIAI attended the First Nation Child Welfare and Data Symposium held virtually by the Chiefs of Ontario. The all-day symposium discussed OCAP principles: (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession), data sovereignty, data governance, and collective issues with Child Welfare Data. AIAI leadership have been involved in the Agreement in Principle (AIP) of the Government of Canada and the Caring Society. The Agreement in Principle is summarized as follows:

The Government of Canada and the Caring Society are in the final stages of negotiations for the Agreement in Principle (AIP) of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) proceedings. The AIP serves as a foundation for reform of Canada's First Nations Child and Family Services program. As the negotiations toward the AIP are confidential and protected by "settlement privilege", information sharing is limited in nature until the negotiations are finalized.

The negotiations for the AIP include reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program, policies, and governance system; funding and capital for FNCFS; reform to some aspects of the implementation of Jordan's Principle; Ontario-specific reforms for First Nations Representative Services (Band Representative Services) funding; and compensation for victims of discrimination. Ontario-specific sections are being negotiated as per the Indian Welfare Agreement (1965 Agreement). The 1965 Agreement is broken down into funding that the province of Ontario allocates to defined social service program areas to First Nations Peoples. Canada then reimburses Ontario on a set percentage.



SOCIAL

Housing

AIAI remains active in regional discussions on Housing and Infrastructure and participates in the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCOHI). In the later part of 2020, CCOHI was granted funding by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to host Housing Engagement Workshops. In 2021, CCOHI hosted four housing workshops followed by a Housing Sovereignty Summit. The housing engagement is in accordance with the Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) National Housing Strategy. Housing, Infrastructure, and homelessness remain a priority for AIAI, and First Nation partners. The Roadmap to Wellness was announced in a news release by the Ontario government on January 13th, 2022. The plan is geared to focus on mental health, addictions support, and Indigenous led, culturally appropriate long-term housing solutions. The Ontario Government has committed to investing \$10 million in annual funding to the Roadmap to Wellness plan. AIAI will explore a new Housing Study of our Member First Nations AIAI also plans to revise and undertake a new approach to collecting information about our member First Nations' housing needs.

Income Assistance

AIAI continues to participate in the Province's Social Assistance Reform initiatives. AIAI, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and First Nations partners comprise the Joint Social Services Technical Table (JSST). This 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. 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. The table is focused on delivering income assistance programs on reserve. However, in light of the focus of the Agreement in Principle, the JSST has been on pause.

Department Highlights

Agreement in Principle

Leadership and OKT Law have been working tirelessly on the Agreement in Principle for the Caring Society prevention funding which is to be allocated between First Nations and First Nation Child and Family Services. The total amount of prevention funding is around \$245 million, with some variation occurring depending on the chosen distribution model. There are two funding models- the Equalization Model and the Regional Model. Leadership Council was unable to reach a decision on which funding model to allocate for fiscal year 2022- 2023. Overall, all First Nations in Ontario will be receiving an increase in funding. As the negotiations toward the AIP are confidential and protected by "settlement privilege," information sharing is limited until the negotiations are finalized.

Looking Forward 2022 - 23

AIAI's Social Development sector is looking forward to hosting in-person meetings and conferences in 2022-2023. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unforeseen challenges in relation to in-person meetings. The Social Development Sector is looking forward to exploring the new housing study which will provide accurate and current information about our member nations' housing needs.



TOBACCO & LAW-MAKING

In Tobacco & Law-Making, we are building capacity and determining possibilities for First Nation law-making using the tobacco industry as an area of focus. This work is based on the cultural foundations and collective inherent rights of the Nations.

This work is guided by the AIAI Tobacco Task Force and mandated by the AIAI Chiefs Council via AIAI Resolution 004/2021. Deputy Grand Chief Stacia Loft is the political portfolio holder, Gordon Peters is the Special Project Advisor, and Tina Powell is the technical project lead.

Department Highlights

Throughout the 2021/22 fiscal year, our work has been strengthened and expanded. The AIAI Tobacco Task Force was able to come together in person for the first time this year. They have established clarity on collective directions forward and processes for community work.

This year, the member First Nations were provided community support funding to do their own capacity building work in the areas of Indigenous law-making, tobacco, trade, and commerce. Task Force reps have a critical role in this work, acting as a liaison between their communities and the Task Force. They also play a key education/communication role, acting as the link to get the project off the ground in the communities.

The AIAI Tobacco Task Force meets monthly to provide strategic direction, review and assess the collective workplan, discuss and advance technical work, and share community perspectives. The Task Force is elemental in the ongoing development of technical documents. They provide critical direction for internal preparation processes for potential future negotiations with Ontario and they also provide guidance on the development of educational resources and communications materials.

One exciting accomplishment of 2021/22 was the development of a video. This video is intended to increase community awareness and stimulate dialogue around tobacco and law-making. The video features community members, leadership, youth, and cultural practitioners, highlighting the importance of tobacco and the development of potential trade and commerce solutions by First Nations. Another significant accomplishment this year was the launch of a Tobacco & Law-Making website. This site serves as a resource hub for community members on project topics and also acts as a document portal for the Task Force.

<https://tobacco.aiai.on.ca>



TOBACCO & LAW-MAKING

In October 2022, AIAI hosted the Taking Our Place: Resistance and Recovery Summit. This Summit provided an opportunity for the Task Force to present their work and garner feedback on our collective directions forward. It brought participants together to discuss best practices, community processes, and the re-establishment of inter-Nation trade relations. It also provided an opportunity to celebrate our achievements to date. A ceremony bringing life to the Inter-Nation Trade Protocol (previously adopted by the AIAI First Nations) was facilitated, and a Round Dance to celebrate friendship and unity was participated by all present. Legal research and strategic analysis work also continued this year ensuring accurate and up-to-date information on surrounding legal landscapes and changing possibilities for asserting Indigenous authorities.

Looking Forward 2022 - 23

Moving into the 2022/23 fiscal year, AIAI has secured funding from the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Finance to continue our work on tobacco, trade, and commerce. Community support funding for the AIAI member First Nations was included so community processes may continue and expand.

The Task Force will continue to provide strategic direction for our work, meeting monthly to complete technical tasks and share perspectives on community processes. Communications with the AIAI Chiefs Council will continue according to regular processes.

Areas of focus already identified in the 2022/23 AIAI Task Force Strategic Work Plan include, skill building and negotiations training, community dialogue and education, relationship building with businesses, First Nation environmental scans, communications and information materials, internal negotiation preparation work, and legal research and analysis.

In the 2022/23 fiscal year, AIAI will build upon the work already advancing to develop strategies to support Indigenous law-making in a broader sense. With funding secured through Justice Canada for this purpose, AIAI will advance both research- and education-focused activities to help support the re-establishment of Indigenous law-making institutions and processes. Potential activities include, clan/family governance training exercises, development of creative content & communications materials, research summaries and compilations, institution modeling, and the advancement of a potential pilot project.

An AIAI summit, bringing together representatives from each of the AIAI member First Nations to focus on key areas pertaining to both tobacco, trade & commerce, and Indigenous law-making is also being planned for Fall 2022. Over this past year, leadership have continued to make clear the value of rooting our work in our cultures - in the knowledge and values of our Peoples. AIAI looks forward to maintaining this foundation as we continue with our directions forward in Tobacco & Law-Making throughout 2022/23 and beyond.



POLITICAL OFFICE

The Political Office Policy Advisor gathers, analyses, reviews and reports data related to government initiatives, legislation, and policies in order to advise the AIAI Executive of any potential impacts relating to our Member First Nation communities. The Political Office Policy Advisor ensures that data is presented in a clear and actionable way while supporting key stakeholders with information that assists in their decision making and enhancing the process of reporting on policy development. The focus of the sector is to provide technical advice to the AIAI Executive as well as create and maintain positive relationships with government stakeholders.

Department Highlights

In November of 2021, the AIAI Political Sector analyzed and developed a report that dissected the 2021 Speech from the Throne that was delivered by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada that opened the first session of the 44th Parliament and outlined the federal government's agenda.

The AIAI Political Sector completed a 2021 federal election summary report that gave insight on any progress and commitments that have been made by the federal government that could impact our Member First Nations. A visual report card with a grading scheme was generated to complement the report.

AIAI is part of the The Tripartite Collaborative Technical Table for Enforcement and Prosecution of First Nations Laws where a technical representative participates at the table. The Political Sector executed a major presentation that highlighted some of the issues our Member First Nations face when trying to enforce various laws while providing potential solutions.

Looking Forward 2022 - 23



AIAI is part of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) First Nations Child and Family Services Program Reform that assists with the work of the Caring Society and Indigenous Nations across Canada where there is an agreement in principle (AIP) that acknowledges that First Nations children were harmed by the underfunding of child welfare in Canada.

The federal government has agreed after many Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) complaints to provide \$20 billion for compensation and \$20 billion on reforming the system over the next five years. As the AIP is in a non-binding stage, AIAI looks forward to continuing to do good work to bring justice to First Nations children.

AIAI supports Nation-based, Nation-developed and Nation-delivered life-long learning programs that are based on holistic learning and strong connections to our families and communities. Our survival depends on our words, our ways, and our views of the world around us; and our education system is the vehicle to ensure all learners have the skills and knowledge required to become leaders of our Nations.

The AIAI Education department looks forward to continuing monthly education committee meetings and weekly education team meetings. The department utilizes the education committee meetings to update AIAI member Nations on education announcements and initiatives from a local, provincial and federal level. Within these levels exists consistent communication and lobbying efforts with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), the Ministry of Education, the Chiefs of Ontario, other provincial territorial organizations, and at the core AIAI member First Nation schools/institutions on and off reserve. Some of these tables include:

Ontario Technical Table on the Interim Funding Approach (OTTIFA)

Beginning in 2016, the Government of Canada worked with Indigenous partners including the Assembly of First Nations, the Chiefs Committee on Education, and the National Indian Education Council to conduct engagement on and develop a new funding approach for First Nations Elementary/Secondary Education. That work led to a new approach that was resolved at an AFN Special Chiefs Assembly on Education in December 2017. In Ontario Region, Chiefs in Assembly mandated a technical table to guide the implementation of this approach in the Ontario First Nations context. The Ontario Technical Table on the Interim Funding Approach (OTTIFA) consists of Education Directors of the four PTOs and Independent First Nations, as well as Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) both regional and national offices. As per the mandate, OTTIFA examined the Interim Funding Formula and put forth recommendations for adjustments before the first iteration was launched April 1, 2019. OTTIFA continues to refine the Interim Funding Approach annually. To enhance the formula, AIAI sits on OTTIFA and the provincial student support task team in efforts to bring forth AIAI member First Nations' priorities to increasing student success.

First Nations Lifelong Learning Table/Initiatives

In September of 2021, a First Nations Lifelong Learning Coordinator was hired to carry out the five priority areas identified in the 2021-2022 AIAI Lifelong Learning Work Plan which are: Building Organizational Capacity, Policy, Relationships with provincial school systems and institutions, Culture and Language, and Curriculum.

AIAI looks forward to contributing to students' well being in 2022-23 through:

- Human Rights Complaints Procedures within School Boards Survey
- Parents Have a Voice Symposium
- Land-based Learning Gathering
- Curriculum Revisions
- Indian Residential School Awareness
- Contributing to quarterly Regional Education Plan (REA) Working Group
- Contributing to the monthly Southern First Nations Education Task Team

Education

The outcome of the five priority areas of the work plan are to respond to the needs of AIAI member Nation students and communities; support enhanced community and organizational capacity to promote student access and well-being, as well as, increase First Nations students' access to meaningful education.

Post-Secondary Education Engagement

One engagement area that has been ongoing is post-secondary education. The Government of Canada committed to working in collaboration with First Nations partners to better support First Nations students wishing to pursue post-secondary education while respecting the principle of First Nations control of First Nations education. In reflection of this commitment, engagement funding was established from the 2019 federal budget to conduct a First Nations' review of the Post-Secondary Education program.

This past year, we hired an education policy researcher to move this engagement work further. This work has included interviews with post-secondary counsellors, Education Directors, and other stakeholders; a survey for past, current, and upcoming post-secondary students that had 274 respondents; a two-day student engagement event; an engagement event with AIAI's Education Committee, Chiefs, and other stakeholders; an engagement with AIAI's Youth Council; and additional meetings and discussions. As well, collaborative efforts with members of the Post-Secondary Engagement Committee have been ongoing.

Some major overarching themes that came from the engagement work include: student strengths and First Nation commitment to students, the colonial nature of the current Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), administrative barriers and challenges, the translation to student experiences, and system challenges at the First Nation level. We are in the final stages of reporting on this engagement work, which will include several recommendations for reimagining a holistic post-secondary support system.

Education Partnership Program

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 First Nations who actively participate and receive financial resources to conduct education enhancement programming and language revitalization. Within the Trilateral partnership program, the education department has been working on community initiatives that target student transitions, relationship building, and languages and culture. These projects include:

- Youth Development Camp (YDC)
- Education Directors Forum
- Language Champions Community Initiatives
- Wahta's Sharing of Expertise
- Batchewana's Wellbeing Program
- Oneida Nation Raising Achievement Group



Department Highlights

- Completion of the COVID-19 Elder/Youth video
- Jordan's Principle School Related Symposium
- Language Speakers Series
- Youth Development Camp 2021
- Land-based Learning Symposium
- Social Media Contest
- Contributing to the monthly Southern First Nations Education Task Team
- Summer Sensory Kits
- Education Directors Forum - Winter 2022
- AIAI Youth Council Post-Secondary engagement report focus group
- Brainstorming workshops with Education Directors and Post-Secondary Counsellors
- Monitoring the Education Bilateral Process with ISC and contribute to work of the interim tables
- AIAI Lois Cornelius Education Scholarship Winner
- AIAI Student Transitional Support Report
- AIAI Post-Secondary Engagement Report
- Signed the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding between Indigenous Services Canada, Ministry of Education, and AIAI for the Education Partnership Program

The education department will continue to seek collaboration within other departments such as health and social.

Looking Forward 2022 - 23

- Language Gathering - May 2022
- Youth Development Camp - July 2022
- Education Directors Forum - Fall 2022
- Editing the Adaptive Learning Test Tool Project
- Monitoring the Education Bilateral Process with ISC and contribute to work of the Committee
- AIAI Lois Cornelius Education Scholarship Winner
- Finalizing the Post-Secondary Engagement Report



Youth

2021-2022 has provided many challenges due to the ongoing pandemic. It has continued to pose a significant strain on in-person events. Youth council continues to meet biweekly on a virtual platform. Representatives continue to attend Chiefs Council, Health Social Advisory Board, Education Committee, and Law and Tobacco meetings. Additionally, they participate in National and Regional meetings with Chiefs of Ontario and the Assembly of First Nations. Representatives continue to share their knowledge and passion for promoting positive change by being the voice for youth among our AIAI member First Nations.

Department Highlights

During the 2021-2022 year our goal as a collective was to support the balance of emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical well-being of our youth. Some of our highlights include:

- Game night
- Paint night
- Care packages
- The Art of Being Thankful workshop

Looking Forward 2022 - 23

As pandemic restrictions continue to lift, we plan to continue fostering the emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical well-being of our member First Nation youth. Some things to look forward to are:

- Youth Council Podcast
- Governance training
- Leadership training
- Youth Council recruitment
- Other activities deemed necessary by our member First Nation youth



Health & Wellness

The health and wellness sector provides:

- Healthy Lifestyles Education / HIV/AIDS Education
- Community program development support upon request
- Reporting oversight
- Administration of community funding
- Policy development in the area of health and wellness
- Representation at various Chiefs of Ontario tables
- Representation at various bilateral/trilateral tables

AIAI Health Transformation

As per AIAI Resolution 006-2021, the AIAI principles, vision, and declaration for health transformation have been endorsed. Work has been initiated on drafting an AIAI Tri-Lateral Health System Transformation Relationship agreement. In the 2022-2023 fiscal year we look forward to staff recruitment to further establish the AIAI Health Transformation process inclusive of agreement signing, and creation of technical and political tables.

AIAI Jordan's Principle

AIAI continues to support AIAI communities in bringing forward implementation issues for resolution with the federal government and continues to advocate for the implementation of the full scope and meaning of Jordan's Principle.

In 2022-2023 we will continue to seek the establishment of an Ontario First Nations Jordan's Principle Operations Committee as per Chiefs of Ontario Resolution No.2105.

Cancer Care in First Nations Communities

AIAI Resolution 04/2017 mandates AIAI to seek community level funding to address Cancer needs. AIAI also continues to seek a collective approach for Ontario through Chiefs of Ontario Resolution No.2106 – First Nation Community Based Cancer Care Programming. An AIAI proposal has been developed to begin having funding discussions with the provincial and federal governments.

Mental Health and Addictions

In the 2021-2022 fiscal year we have made great strides in terms of quantifying the AIAI Mental Health and Addictions Issues paper. On the shelf proposals have been developed and approved through AIAI processes in the following areas: Addiction Worker, Aftercare, Cancer Care, 2SLGBTQ Services, Comprehensive Mental Health Framework, Health Navigator, Life Promotions, Men's Wellness Hub, Residential treatment, Second Stage Housing, Traditional healing program, and Youth Wellness Hub. In 2022-2023 AIAI is advocating for the identification of funding pathways to address the proposal areas. The mental health and addictions scorecard research project was mandated through AIAI Resolution 01/2020, will show AIAI specific data pertaining to drug use, and mental health touchpoints in the health system. Data from this project will be used to enhance advocacy efforts, through the development of fact sheets and lobby packages.

Health & Wellness

Seniors, Disabled, Chronically III

AIAI continues to advance priorities under this area as directed by the AIAI Health/Social Advisory Board issues paper. A revised AIAI Seniors Fact sheet was finalized in 2021-2022, this will be used to support advocacy efforts in 2022-2023.

Safe Water

The next fiscal year will see a renewed push for water advocacy. First and foremost, in 2022-2023 is the need for an updated water profile on AIAI communities AIAI looks forward to continuing the work in this much needed area.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

AIAI holds a seat at the Ontario NIHB Networking Group. Issue tracking and follow up is an ongoing part of the work under the area of NIHB. In 2022-2023 AIAI will continue to push for a collective approach to addressing the shortcomings of the NIHB National Review process.

Health Bilateral Table and AIAI Funding Mechanism

In 2022-2023 AIAI will be re-establishing the bilateral relationship with Ontario, and further developing the concept of an AIAI Funding Mechanism. The original concept of the AIAI funding mechanism was to keep First Nations funding separate from the Ontario Health Restructuring process.

National Indigenous Health Legislation

As directed by AIAI Resolution 002-2021, AIAI has rejected the language of “co-development” of this legislation and has directed that AIAI apply for engagement dollars for the AIAI communities in order for them to participate as full partners with the federal government, in accordance with Treaty relationships, on the development of National health legislation.

In 2022-2023 AIAI will assist communities with their engagement processes when required, and conduct a review of existing documents, and continue to advocate the AIAI position on the development of this legislation as directed by AIAI communities.



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 First 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 First Nations.

The H/SAB provides a unique opportunity for member communities to come together to discuss current programs and 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; guided by the mandates received from the AIAI Annual General Assembly and the Chiefs Council.

Throughout the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the H/SAB held six meetings via Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. H/SAB also met with the AIAI Chiefs Council to discuss the Health Legislation Engagement funds that were announced by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Information was researched and presented to the H/SAB on several important programs, policies and legislation, including:

- COVID-19 Updates, Issues, Community-Based Needs
- Health Funding Mechanism and Bi-lateral Table
- Cannabis
- Senior's Survey
- Health Transformation
- Health Legislation
- Long-Term Care
- Community Safety (Policing, Corrections Reform, Human Trafficking)
- Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)
- IC/ES Mental Health Score Card Project
- National Water Legislation
- Band Representative Guide
- 1965 Indian Welfare Agreement
- Jordan's Principle and Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
- Child Welfare Compensation/Long-Term Reform
- Child and Youth Family Services Act
- Ontario Works Legislation
- HSAB Five Priority Strategic Planning: Mental Health and Addictions, Safe Water, Community Safety, Child and Family Wellbeing, Supports for Elders, Disabled and Chronically Ill

Refer to the policy unit reports for more detailed information on the above-mentioned items.

Health / Social Advisory Board Members

NATION	NAME	POSITION
BATCHEWANA	<i>Elizabeth Edgar-Webkamigad</i>	<i>Health Director</i>
	<i>Harvey Bell</i>	<i>Councillor</i>
CALDWELL	<i>Jo-D Schiefer</i>	<i>Health Program Manager</i>
	<i>Tracy Simpson</i>	<i>Comm Prev. Worker</i>
EELÜNAAPÉEWI LAHKÉWIIT (DELAWARE)	<i>Valerie Peters</i>	<i>Councillor</i>
	<i>Joanna Noah</i>	<i>Health Director</i>
	<i>Amanda Logan</i>	<i>Social – Ontario Works</i>
HIAWATHA	<i>Tina Howard</i>	<i>Health & Social Manager</i>
	<i>Kathryn Wilson</i>	<i>Councillor</i>
	<i>Laurie Carr</i>	<i>Chief</i>
ONEIDA	<i>Gloria Brown-Doxtator</i>	<i>Councillor (Social)</i>
	<i>Ida Cornelius</i>	<i>Health Administrator</i>
	<i>Adrian Chrisjohn</i>	<i>Chief</i>
TYENDINAGA	<i>Susan Barberstock</i>	<i>Director Community Wellbeing</i>
	<i>Brandy Maracle</i>	<i>A/Program Manager – Mohawk Family Services</i>
	<i>Stacia Loft</i>	<i>Councillor</i>
WAHTA MOHAWKS	<i>Christine Cox</i>	<i>A/Health & Social Services Director</i>
	<i>Philip Franks</i>	<i>Chief</i>

Staff

Geoff Stonefish

Director of Operations

Kyla Stonefish

Education Manager

Tanis Doxtator

Finance Manager

Sydney Maracle

Government Relations
Policy Advisor

Shayna Phillips

Acting H/SAB - CDS Coordinator

Justine McCurdy

Social Development Policy Advisor

Suzanne Nicholas

Health & Wellness Manager

Ira Timothy

Communications Coordinator

Jennifer Elgie

Education Policy Researcher

Natasha Timothy

Youth Initiatives Coordinator

Carolyn S. Doxtator

Healthy Lifestyles Educator

Tristan Nugent

Political Office Policy Advisor

Elly Antone

HIV / AIDS Educator

Ashley King

Education Partnership Program Lead

Tina Powell

Tobacco & Law-Making Policy Advisor

Cheyenne French

Administrative Assistant

Ashley Timothy

Lifelong Learning Coordinator

Sue Ireland

Administrative Assistant



Batchewana First Nation



**Eelunaapeewi Lahkeewiit
(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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