

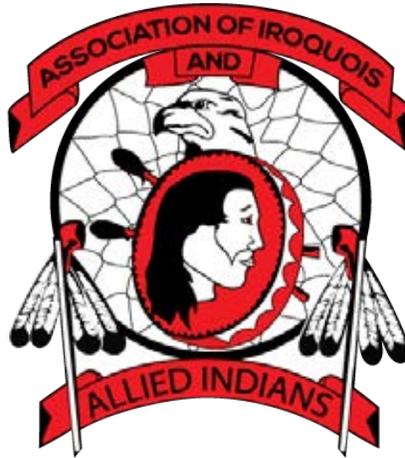
# *The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians*



## *REBUILDING OUR CANOE*

**2020 - 21 Annual Report**

**Travel Down the River of Life**



## **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 Hiawatha First Nations

## Aanii, Boozhoo!

### Welcome To Hiawatha First Nation



On behalf of the Hiawatha Citizens and Council, I welcome the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians Member Nations' representatives to our territory. We would have loved to have welcomed you in our new Cultural Community Centre but are honoured nonetheless to be able to virtually host the 2021 Annual General Assembly.

#### Hiawatha First Nation - Past

This area was once known as Pamitaashkodeyong, meaning 'where it burns and where it travels', because our people used to burn the south shore of Rice Lake to maintain a mishkode – a meadow or a prairie. Our people are Michi Saagiig who, along with five other Communities make up the Michi Saagiig Nation.

The other Communities are Alderville, Curve Lake, Mississauga First Nation, Mississauga's of the Credit and Mississauga's of Scugog Island.

"Michi Saagiig" means the place of many river mouths. The traditional territories of the Michi Saagiig is vast and our people would travel our homelands extensively. The Michi Saagiig were a highly mobile people, travelling great distances to procure subsistence for their people. They moved around according to the seasons and would travel all through the Great Lakes. They would travel from Fort Albany to the east and up and down the St. Lawrence River, and as far as Sault Ste. Marie, down into Michigan and around Lake Huron and over to Lake Erie. Our Peoples were also known as the "Salmon People" who occupied and fished the north shore of Lake Ontario where the various tributaries emptied into the lake. Their winter hunting grounds extended north, and they would break off into smaller social groups for the season, hunting and trapping on these lands.

The Michi Saagiig are part of the larger Anishinaabeg peoples which is commonly translated to mean "Good Humans". The Michi Saagiig were represented by the Mgizi Dodem, the Eagle Clan. They were also known as the "Peacekeepers" among Indigenous Nations. The Michi Saagiig homelands were located directly between two very powerful Confederacies; The Three Fires Confederacy to the north and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to the south. They were the negotiators, the messengers, the diplomats and successfully mediated peace throughout this area of Ontario for countless generations.

In 1828 an area along the north shore of Rice Lake was officially designated as a reserve under the name "the Mississauga's of Rice Lake Reserve". During this time our Clan representations were drawn in early documents with the symbols of the Crane (Ajijaak), the Fish (Ginooze), the Partridge (Bine), the Snake (Gnebig) and the Caribou (Atik).

Prince Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, visited in 1860 what was then known as British North America. One of his stops was the north shore of Rice Lake, where he was greeted by the “Mississauga Tribe of Indians”. The story goes that, while on the ship to Canada, the Prince was so sea sick his physician, Dr. Henry Acland, would read to him with one of his readings being the ‘The Song of Hiawatha’ (1855), by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. It was said that George Copway, a Michi Sagiig author, lecturer and missionary had met Longfellow in Boston in 1847 and become friends. He had told tales of the area and the people to Longfellow which is said to have helped inspire him in writing ‘The Song of Hiawatha’. When the Prince arrived on the north shore of Rice Lake he was so moved that he gave the Community the name of Hiawatha.

Our People still lived off the land during this time where they hunted, fished, trapped, harvested and farmed. The land base was approximately 1,120 acres with a population of 130 adults, and 90 children. Our village had a store and post office, a schoolhouse (1827) as well as a teacher's residence and Church (1827).

## **Hiawatha First Nation – Present**

Even though our Peoples have had many struggles since the colonialists arrived we remain a strong, proud and beautiful People, Community and Nation. Hiawatha has a population today of just over 800 Citizens with approximately 225 citizens living in the Community. We have a land base of 2,145 acres, own and operate a convenience store, gas bar, restaurant, as well as two parks, one of which, Serpent Mounds, is a significant spiritual location and a designated historical site. There is an elected Council consisting of 1 Chief and 5 Councillors. The Hiawatha First Nation offers the following services and departments: Administration & Finance; Child Health & Social Services; Housing; Lands; Citizenship Registration; Public Works & Water Operations.

Hiawatha First Nation continues to work towards meeting the needs of our growing Community through human resources and providing the necessary programs and services to ensure our Citizens and Community's health and safety needs are met.

## **Hiawatha First Nation – Future**

Our past provides us with a long rich history of the paths of our ancestors, our culture, our language and traditions.

Our present provides us with continued learning, growing and working towards a brighter, self-sustaining future for our many generations to come.

Our future is to continue to re-learn our culture, language, traditions, ceremonies and to continue to prosper and grow as a People, a Community and a Nation.

We must always remember to embrace our past, our present and our future so that we can live the life Creator intended for us, the good life, the Mno Biimadzaawin.

Once again, we welcome you to our Community and our Traditional Territory!!



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

It has been my pleasure to serve our member nations over the past year and term. Of course, the major development has been the COVID 19 pandemic that has reshaped so many aspects of our lives and has been the major focus of leadership everywhere. Although the pandemic has and continues to negatively impact our communities, I am very proud to say that our leadership in AIAI has done an excellent job in protecting their communities from the Coronavirus and its' variants up to and including the present time. In a lot of ways new realities are beginning to be shaped from social distancing to wearing masks to working from home. How many of these practices will continue to be maintained into the future is yet unknown, but at the same time I think it's safe to say that we are all looking forward to relative normalcy. The toll this has exacted on us has not only been in terms of physical health but also our mental health. Being isolated from loved ones, friends and family has not been easy for any of us. Through this all, we have also done our best to keep up with all the other files for the benefit of the people we serve.

Responding to legislation has been a major focus at AIAI. Bill C15 on the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples might be the one with the longest lasting impacts. Our analysis has revealed deficiencies within the legislation, foremost among them the apparent domestication of this international instrument under Canadian law. Considering that Canadian law is underpinned with Doctrines of Superiority under Sec. 35 of the Constitution Act; the application of UNDRIP seems to be contradictory to the spirit of it as it was intended to be an anti-colonial document. The other major flaw is that the engagement was sorely lacking with actual rights holders and has highlighted a disturbing trend of Canadian government reliance on the AFN as the primary mechanism of consultation and engagement which does not respect the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). As we all know the AFN is not a rights holder, did not have a mandate to support the Bill, and has not really advocated for that nation-to-nation relationship to be respected. We submitted letters on behalf of leadership advancing our opposition, we did many media appearances including the Business News Network on the Bloomberg News program, and APTN on Nation to Nation, as well as various radio and newspaper articles. Our major highlight was a joint media junket with the national Green Party leader Annamie Paul which was a great success and had much impact. Finally, we were invited by the Senate Aboriginal Affairs Committee to present on Bill C15, which we did. I think this was particularly important as usually you must submit a request to appear but were invited to appear, which I think speaks to our media presence. We are also involved in the judicial review of the provincial omnibus Bill 197. The Bill was rammed through with minimum consultation and input. Our major issue with it is it will remove standard Environmental Assessments on certain projects at the discretion of the Minister of Environment. In no way should the environment be politicized, especially as it has the potential to do damage to traditional territories of our member nations and others as well.

Media has always been a focus, and either myself or the DGC have done numerous appearances and have managed to build a good relationship with many outlets. During the past year I have appeared on CBC on both radio and print, APTN, BNN, CTV, and many other local and print media. We generally get media requests weekly, although we do not do all of them or have no comment. Another undertaking we have gotten going is the Our Stories radio show and podcast. It currently airs on Fanshawe Radio on Sundays and will soon be available on Spotify. The show concentrates on an Indigenous perspective on both historical and modern-day issues.



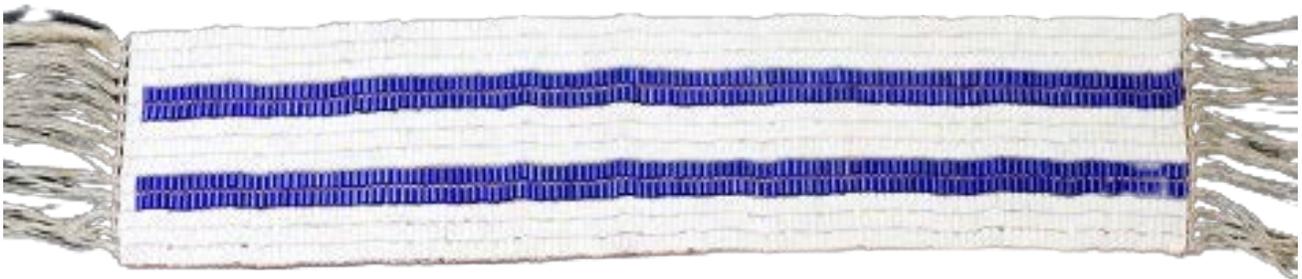
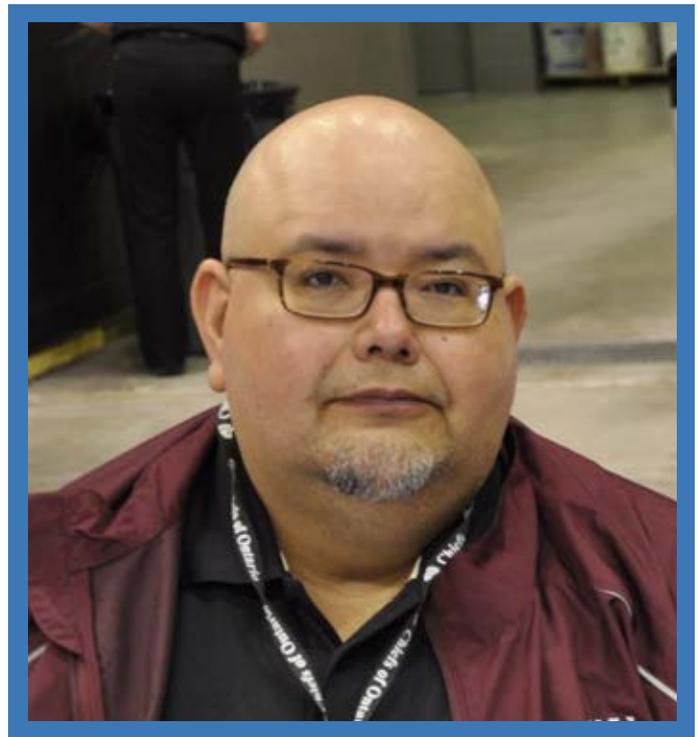
Ira Timothy co-hosts the show with me although due to the pandemic he does the intro and I do most of the content and I edit the final version that airs. In the future I expect that will change. I have also spoken with the youth council and they will also be taking more of an active role in the show, and we will give them space to produce content as well in the future which I great. It has been running since January 24th of this year, and we hope to continue this going forward. It's a great opportunity to educate the general public on our history stories, and perspectives and create more allies, especially young people as it airs on a college radio station.

I have also attended as many of you have countless Zoom or online meetings for the AIAI Chiefs Council, the COO Leadership Council, meetings with government officials and representatives. And meetings associated with my Social portfolio at the COO, or chairing our H/SAB meetings. We have been keeping busy and we will continue to advocate soon on a Federal and Provincial lobby. There are so many needs for our communities in critical areas such as water infrastructure, housing, mental health, broadband, education, health, etc. We must continue to press the federal and provincial governments on their fiduciary duty to our people. Above all we will fight to maintain our inherent rights and jurisdiction and to enhance it in areas where it is lacking. Like the symbolism of the Two Row Wampum, where the federal government has overstepped the limitations of that relationship and has not stayed in their boat, we will help our member nations to paddle their own canoe as much as we can and help to restore the proper balance of that relationship.

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!



I would like to acknowledge and send greetings to each AIAI Nation; Batchewana, Caldwell, Delaware, Hiawatha, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Wahta Mohawks. I would also like to acknowledge and send greetings to our Elders, the AIAI Youth Council, as well as all front-line, essential and grassroots workers in each of our communities. This past year has brought significant change to our personal lives, within our families, throughout our communities, and in our Nations. I would sum up this year as one of reflection, restoration, resilience and resistance.

We have been met with opportunities to reflect on matters that are important to our well-being, and many have begun the journey of restoring those essential pieces that may have been missing or underserved. Our resilience has dug deeper roots as we have found new and insightful ways to persevere in our efforts to support our

families and community members. These responses have manifested in creative approaches in our communities including vaccine rollouts, distribution of food boxes, and the delivery of virtual activities that have developed and enhanced our ability to learn our languages, pick up tangible skills such as painting and sewing, and addressing food sovereignty by growing herbs, vegetables and medicines.

This year has also highlighted the need to resist and challenge colonial responses that do not respect our inherent and Treaty rights as Indigenous Peoples. We have been met with and have responded to provincial and federal agendas to push through legislation without our free, prior and informed consent; Bills such as 156 and 197, and C-15, Canada's UNDRIP. Over the past six months I have had the honour and privilege to learn and work alongside our member Chiefs as well as Grand Chief Abram, and AIAI staff to respond to and address these attacks on our sovereignty. I think it is fair to say that even with lockdown and stay-at-home measures, our work does not stop. I would like to recognize all of you that have risen to the challenge to protect our communities and Nations. Although we do not have the luxury to sit by and wait until the pandemic passes, we do have the privilege to do this very important work. We know that there are continuing priorities that require immediate attention such as mental health and addictions, access to healthy foods and safe drinking water, emergency safety measures for women and children fleeing violence, and access to education, health services and housing.

AIAI continues to champion these areas of need for our Member Nations. I am humbled and proud that we are often looked to for support and guidance from other Nations in the Ontario region. Now more than ever, the mandate of AIAI so important and I will continue to listen and learn from each of you who have paved the way forward. Even though we haven't been able to gather together, lobby or rally in person, our advocacy efforts continue in the virtual spaces and platforms we have available to us, and we will continue to take up this space as we are called to fulfill our responsibilities.

Nya:wen kowa

# SOCIAL

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.

## **Indigenous Child and Family Services**

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, Chief's Council opposed the legislation and seeks amendments for the Bill to recognize and support jurisdiction in First Nations communities. AIAI has been an active participant on technical tables working towards the reform of First Nation Child and Family Services 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 trilateral table completed a study of First Nation Child and Family Services in Ontario, called the Ontario Special. 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.

## **Income Assistance**

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.

## **IELCC Initiative:**

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. 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.

# SOCIAL

## **Housing and Infrastructure:**

AIAI completed a Housing Study of Member First Nations in 2020. The survey was undertaken by First Nation Engineering Services Limited. Due to the pandemic and unforeseen circumstances, the data collected was inconclusive. AIAI going forward, plans to revise and undertake a new approach to collecting information about our member nations' housing needs. With some changes in the Social Development Policy Advisor position, AIAI has been more active in regional discussions on the Housing and Infrastructure file. AIAI participates in Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCOHI) meetings and participates in technical meetings on housing. In the later part of 2020, CCOHI was granted funding by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to host Housing Engagement Workshops. CCOHI is directed to conduct engagement on Ontario's implementation of the Assembly of First Nations' (AFN) National Housing Strategy. As such, there will be four workshops beginning May 2021, followed by a Housing Sovereignty Summit in September 2021. The Summit will be an opportunity for AIAI to bring forth a decision on the transfer of care and control of housing from our member nations.

## ***Looking Forward 2021 - 22***

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

- Supporting member First Nations with the understanding and implementation of An Act Respecting First Nation, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families
- Advancing recommendations from the Ontario Special Study
- Advocating for exploratory discussions on the 1965 Indian Welfare Agreement and the implementation of principles for reform



# TOBACCO

## ***Tobacco Project – Phase IV***

The Tobacco Project Phase IV was built upon the work completed through Phase III (June 2019 – March 2020) Phase II (December 2018 – March 2019), and Phase I (September 2017 – March 2018). Comprehensive reports on Phases I, II, and III have been provided to Ontario and to the AIAI First Nations.

### ***Department Highlights***

Outputs from Phase IV include the establishment of the AIAI Tobacco Task Force, a Tobacco Discussion Paper for Community Dialogue, the development of the AIAI First Nation Inter-Nation Trade Protocol, and an AIAI Tobacco Task Force Strategic Workplan, and the creation of innovative tools for community education and awareness.

A virtual capacity building session, Tobacco: Nation Market, Nation Growth, Nation Economy was hosted on March 4th and 5th. The session built upon the community governance and law-making capacity work completed in previous project phases, including the work that took place during the Indigenous Transformation Summit 2020 and Indigenous Law-Making Summit 2019. The virtual event featured presentations on lessons learned and our collective direction forward. Guest speakers shared specialized knowledge on tobacco origin stories and avenues for carrying out inherent responsibilities. The session provided an opportunity to showcase some of the community educational materials developed during this phase of the project and enabled feedback on the project direction forward.

### ***Looking Forward 2021 - 22***

Funding from the Government of Ontario has been secured to continue the project into fiscal year 2021-2022. This year, community capacity funding has been increased significantly to support each AIAI First Nation in their work to increase awareness and dialogue around tobacco within their communities. AIAI looks forward to supporting the communities in the development and implementation of community workplans we continue to advance collective goals.

The AIAI Tobacco Task Force, comprised of representatives from each AIAI First Nation, continues to guide the project forward ensuring community realities, perspectives, and challenges are at the forefront. As we continue the forward into this next phase of the project, regular Task Force meetings will continue to be held virtually with the hope of in-person meetings becoming a possibility later in the year. Deliverables for this phase include the continued development and implementation of the Strategic Workplan, final signing and adoption of the Inter-Nation Trade Protocol, development of First Nation positions and approaches for potential future negotiations processes, continued research and information sharing for possibilities of achieving community goals, and further development of education tools to enhance community dialogue and community capacity building work.

# Government Relations

## ***The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)***

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (“UNDRIP”) or also known as Bill C -15. The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians opposes C-15 because of the lack of consultation, interpretation and many unknowns regarding legal application.

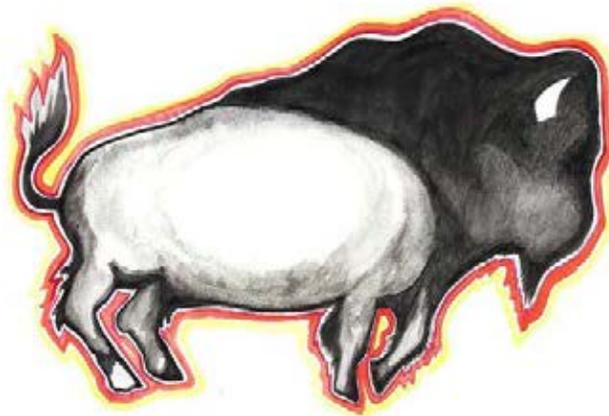
AIAI recently co-partnered with the Green Party of Canada to use their platform for a round table/press conference to express our concerns. The event created a lot of positive opportunities such as the Grand Chief interviewing on BNN and Bloomberg. AIAI will continue to advocate and push for a fresh start in drafting C-15 with the consultation and collaboration of Indigenous peoples.

### ***Policing/Justice:***

AIAI is part of “The collaborative table on the enforcement of First Nation laws” where a technical representative participates at this table. The goal of the table is to provide options and solutions for First Nation communities to ensure laws will have the same legal standing as other laws, and when needed will be enforced and prosecuted.

### ***Law Making/Law Building:***

This is a new project that begun in April 2021 and will end March 2024. It is still at the preliminary stage. The focus is on the inherent and jurisdictional rights of Indigenous law making and building.



# Education

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, weekly education team meetings, and monitoring the COVID-19 weekly memo in relation to schools, students, educators, and parents. 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 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 PTO's 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 will continue to refine the Interim Funding Approach annually. In order to enhance the formula, AIAI sits on OTTIFA and the provincial student support task team in efforts to bring forth AIAI member Nations' priorities to increasing student success.

## ***First Nations Lifelong Learning Table/Initiatives***

In January of 2020, a First Nations Lifelong Learning Coordinator was hired to carry out the five priority areas identified in the 2020-2021 AIAI Lifelong Learning Work Plan which are: Language and Culture, Policy, Relationships with provincial school systems and institutions, Relationship with self and community: Focus on community and mental health and, Innovation and Inspiration for Indigenous led programming. AIAI looks forward to contributing to student health in 2021-22 through:

- Summer Sensory Kits
- COVID-19 Youth & Elder Video/Resource
- Jordan's Principle School Related Symposium
- Language Speakers Series
- Land-based Learning Symposium
- Social Media Contest
- 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 will be ongoing is post-secondary education. The Government of Canada has 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 forward on this engagement work. Interviews with post-secondary counsellors and other education personnel from AIAI member Nations have been completed and a survey for reaching past and current post-secondary students has been created. As well, a Post-Secondary Engagement Committee was established to foster collaboration between First Nations and Provincial-Territorial Organizations during the post-secondary engagement process. For 2021-22, the engagement work will continue as we seek additional stakeholders.

## ***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), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and five AIAI member Nations who actively participates 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) - August 2021
- Language Champions Community Initiatives
- Wahta's Sharing of Expertise
- Batchewana's Wellbeing Program
- Oneida Nation Raising Achievement Group
- New Teacher Induction Program - Testing of Material

In keeping in mind the lifelong learning mandate of education, the department conducted the following in 2020-21:

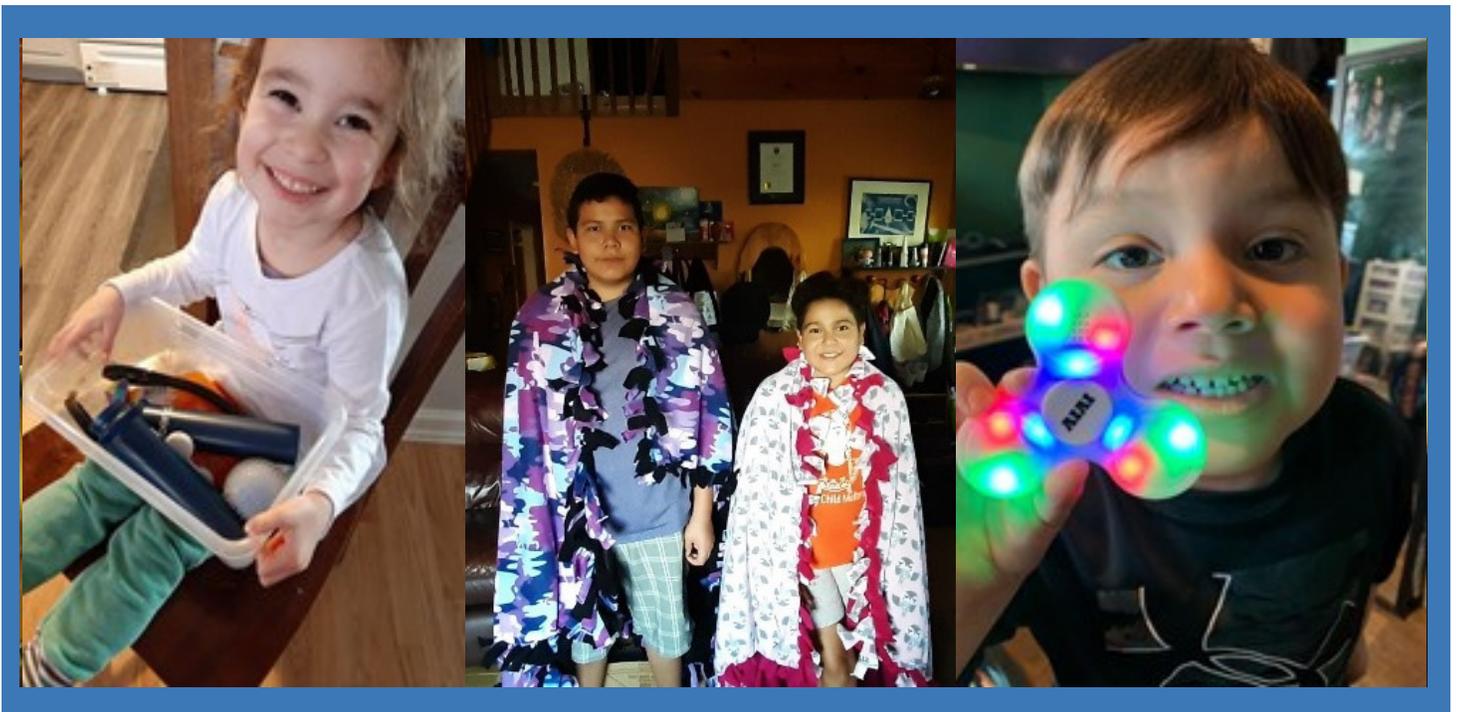
- Distribution of sensory kits to enhance cognitive skills for student JK to grade 4.
- Youth development camp (2020) for grades 5 to 8
- Two student paint nights (secondary & post-secondary) inclusive of self care kits.
- Indigenous language gathering
- Comparative tuition agreements workshop for education committee
- Review in collaboration with the Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA) to increase transitional student supports.

Moreover, the education department will continue to seek collaboration within other departments such as health and social, to which AIAI facilitated a Jordan's Principle virtual forum with emphasis on special education needs.

# Education Con't

## Looking Forward 2021 - 22

- Education Directors Forum - Fall/Winter 2021
- Editing the Adaptive Learning Test Tool Project
- Brainstorming workshops with Education Directors and Post-Secondary Counsellors
- Monitoring the Education Bilateral Process with ISC and contribute to work of the Committee
- AIAI Lois Cornelius Education Scholarship Winner
- AIAI Student Transitional Support Report
- AIAI Post-Secondary Engagement Report



# Youth

The 2020/2021 year has provided many challenges for the Youth Council including a new youth coordinator, youth representatives that move on to other opportunities as well as the pandemic. Youth council along with the rest of the world had to learn new ways to navigate meetings and virtual events. Youth Council representatives continue to attend Youth Council meetings, Chiefs Council, and Health Social Advisory Board meetings. Also participating in national and regional meetings with Chiefs of Ontario and the Assembly of First Nations. Youth council continues to demonstrate a passion for making a change and plan on coming back stronger than before.

## ***Youth Council Representatives***

- Caldwell First Nation- Vacant
- Delaware First Nation- Vacant
- Oneida First Nation- Brandon Doxtator & Kathleen Doxtator
- Hiawatha First Nation- Vacant (Ryan Gray-Brady)
- Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte-, Sara Macneil & Taylor- Rain Tobobandung
- Wahta Mohawks- Brooke Temple
- Batchewana First Nation- Hanna Sewell

The Youth Council has had many ideas and planning meetings but many of the events planned were not completed due to limited capacity of the coordinator and council due to small numbers. Planned events included Missing and Murdered Indigenous women's events and a social media campaign. Water day initiatives and social media campaigns on tiktok with the guidance of AIAI Communications Coordinator. The Youth council has been actively working on a recruitment plan and has grown their social media presence on tiktok, Instagram and twitter. The youth council plans to continue to engage on diverse platforms to reach AIAI member youth and fill empty spots on the youth council. Youth council welcomed new members from Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte Taylor-Rain Tabobandung and Sara Macneil they have been such a pleasure to work with and have strong leadership capabilities.

## ***Looking Forward 2021 - 22***

The Youth Council is looking forward to focus on their priority areas such as recruitment and on boarding for new youth council members and youth coordinator. The Youth Council continues to advocate for priority areas such as accessibility, environment, mental health and governance.



# Health & Wellness

Health policy focus is based on direction from the AIAI Chiefs Council and the Health/Social Advisory Board. Priority areas of research and advocacy for fiscal year 2020-21 were centred on mental health and addictions; supports for seniors, chronically ill and disabled; First Nation priorities pertaining to Ontario health restructuring; and, supports for communities pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 initiatives, such as training sessions for frontline mental health and addictions workers and youth life promotion activities with the goal of creating broad improvements for First Nation health and wellness across the province. 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 has had several bilateral technical meetings with the Ontario Ministry of Health to discuss possibilities for the development of a process for addressing AIAI First Nation concerns regarding Ontario's health restructuring. Discussions at this table include exploratory dialogue around a health funding mechanism as well as the address of immediate needs as outlined by the Health/Social Advisory Board. An approach to formalize this table and improve its ability to address immediate and longer-term community health needs are planned for the near future.

Over the past year, Grand Chief Joel Abram has had virtual meetings with several influential provincial figures such as, the Ontario Health Chief Operating Officer, the Ontario Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, and Deputy Ministers of Ontario Health. These meetings have provided opportunities to advance community concerns at a high level and open more direct avenues for communication, understanding, and the development of collaborative solutions.



# *Health & Wellness*

In continued wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, AIAI health policy has continued a focus on COVID-19 to help ensure the First Nations are receiving accurate, clear, and succinct information to make informed decisions and keep their citizens safe. This work includes active monitoring of federal and provincial legislation, policies, and resources available through news, media, government contacts, and regional working groups. With the support of the Education Department at AIAI, the Health team has been able to provide weekly COVID-19 Update Newsletters to the AIAI First Nations providing relevant and general updates as well as resource documents and links to further information.

AIAI has been able to shift a number of its health-related meetings to online platforms enabling continued communications with the health directors and the Health/Social Advisory board. This is key to providing a stronger awareness of community concerns and resource gaps pertaining to COVID-19 so they can continue to be advanced at both technical and political levels.

## ***AIAI Health Transformation***

In 2020 - 2021 further engagement was conducted by Williams Consulting to develop a draft Vision and coinciding strategic plan for AIAI Health Transformation. This is to be finalized at the June 2021 AGA. Once the vision and plan have been approved work will begin in AIAI Health Transformation.

## ***AIAI Health Navigator***

AIAI has received funding from the Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy to support an AIAI model of health navigation. After engagement with AIAI communities it has been decided by the AIAI Health/Social Advisory Board (H/SAB) and AIAI Chiefs Council that the AIAI will implement a pilot project approach to health navigation. As recommended by the H/SAB and approved by AIAI Chiefs Council, Oneida will hold the health navigator position for two years beginning in the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

## ***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 full scope and meaning of Jordan's Principle to be implemented. Further planning to occur in 2021-2022 for the development of an Ontario First Nations Jordan's Operations Committee as per Chiefs of Ontario Resolution No.2105.

## ***Cancer Care in First Nations Communities***

AIAI Resolution 2017/04 mandates AIAI to seek community level funding to address Cancer needs. Further planning is also to occur through a collective approach for Ontario through Chiefs of Ontario Resolution 2106 – First Nation Community Based Cancer Care Programming.

# Health & Wellness

## ***Mental Health and Addictions***

Continued strengthening of advocacy efforts in this area through the development of on the shelf proposals to support community initiatives. The proposal areas are based on the H/SAB Mental Health and Addictions Issues Paper, which is a mandated process that outlines community issues and solutions. Draft proposal areas to be taken to H/SAB for approval before being added to advocacy efforts.

The mental health and addictions scorecard project which was mandated through AIAI Resolution 2020/01 – IC/ES Research project, 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.

## ***Looking Forward 2021 - 22***

In fiscal year 2021-22, 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 additional resourcing to respond to COVID-19. AIAI will also be actively monitoring developments in Canada's National health legislation initiatives, ensuring that the First Nations have the information required to promote their needs and protect the rights of their citizens as the Canadian legal landscape changes.

The next fiscal year will also see a renewed push for water advocacy, the need for which has been made clear over the past year. This work will include an updated community needs/costing assessment for AIAI First Nation drinking water, tracking and analysis of Canada's progress on drinking water advisories, and continued monitoring of Canada's processes for the development of National water legislation. Advocacy work initiated during this year's World Water Day continues already inspiring the future planning for next years event.

With successful multi-year funding proposal submitted to Health Canada in 2019, AIAI secured \$2.6 million dollars for community cannabis education and awareness that began to flow to the communities in fiscal year 2020-21. AIAI looks forward to supporting the communities in the implementation of the two-year work plans they developed over this past year and to further successes resulting from the community initiatives fueled by this project.



# Health / Social Advisory Board

The Health/Social Advisory Board 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 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; and will be guided by the mandates received from the AIAI Annual General Assembly and the Chiefs Council.

Throughout the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the H/SAB held eight meetings via conference calls and Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. H/SAB also met with the AIAI Education Committee to collaborate on joint areas such as changes to the Education Act and review of the Post-Secondary Student Support program. Information was researched and presented to the H/SAB on several important programs, policies and legislation, including:

- COVID-19 Updates, Issues, Community-Based Needs (Vaccine Hesitation)
- Health Funding Mechanism and Bi-lateral Table
- Youth Mental Health Investigation Project
- Cannabis Education and Awareness Project
- AIAI Senior's Survey
- Health Transformation
- Health Navigation
- Community Safety (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW), Anti-Human Trafficking (Federal/Provincial Funding))
- Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)
- IC/ES Mental Health Score Card Project
- Early Learning
- Band Representative Guide
- 1965 Indian Welfare Agreement
- Jordan's Principle and Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
- Bill S217: An Act to Establish the office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada
- Land-based Learning Program for Youth at Risk
- Indigenous Victim Program
- Ontario Health Restructuring
- HSAB Five Priority Strategic Planning: Mental Health and Addictions, Safe Water, Community Safety, Child and Family Wellbeing, Supports for Elders, Disabled and Chronically Ill

## Health/Social Advisory Board Members

NATION	NAME	POSITION
Batchewana	Elizabeth Edgar-Webkamigad	<i>Health</i>
	Harvey Bell	<i>Councillor</i>
	Jo-D Simpson	<i>Health Program Manager</i>
	Tracy Simpson	<i>Comm Prev. Worker</i>
Delaware	Greg Peters	<i>Councillor</i>
	Joanna Noah	<i>Health Director</i>
	Amanda Logan	<i>Social – Ontario Works</i>
	Stacey Timothy	<i>Community Health Nurse</i>
	Desiree Logan	<i>Child Advocate</i>
	Justin Logan	<i>Councillor</i>
Hiawatha	Tina Howard	<i>Health &amp; Social Manager</i>
	Phyllis Willams	<i>Asst. Health &amp; Social Manager</i>
	Laurie Carr	<i>Chief</i>
Oneida	Gloria Brown-Doxtator	<i>Councillor (Social)</i>
	Ida Cornelius	<i>Health Administrator</i>
	Adrian Chrisjohn	<i>Chief</i>
Tyendinaga	Susan Barberstock	<i>Director Community Wellbeing</i>
	Brandy Maracle	<i>A/Program Manager – Mohawk Family Services</i>
	Kelly Maracle	<i>Councillor</i>
Wahta Mohawks	Christine Cox	<i>A/Health &amp; Social Services Director</i>
	Philip Franks	<i>Chief</i>

# Staff

**Geoff Stonefish**

Director of Operations

**Tanis Doxtator**

Finance Manager

**Shayna Phillips**

Acting H/SAB - CDS Coordinator

**Suzanne Nicholas**

Health & Wellness Manager

**Jennifer Elgie**

Education Policy Researcher

**Carolyn S. Doxtator**

Healthy Lifestyles Educator

**Elly Antone**

HIV / AIDS Educator

**Tina Powell**

Health and Wellness Policy Advisor

**Kyla Stonefish**

Education Manager

**Sydney Lockwood**

Government Relations  
Policy Advisor

**Justine McCurdy**

Social Development Policy Advisor

**Ira Timothy**

Communications Coordinator

**Natasha Timothy**

Youth Initiatives Coordinator

**Sylvia Plain**

First Nations Lifelong Learning Coordinator

**Ashley King**

Education Partnership Program Lead

**Cheyenne French**

Administrative Assistant

**Sue Ireland**

Administrative Assistant



***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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