

Newsletter

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HIGHLIGHTING BCNWA AND YAWC

International Women's Day

March 8 is International Women's Day. It's a day to recognize the strength and achievements of women across the world. For us at Strategies North, this means celebrating our clients and projects that are dedicated to supporting the mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and girls in their communities.

Today, we're highlighting the missions of the BC Native Women's Association (BCNWA) and Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council (YAWC). BCNWA and YAWC are run by committed staff as well as volunteers who take on responsibilities outside of their day jobs because they are passionate about supporting and advocating for Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse peoples. Both organizations are provincial/territorial members of the Native Women's Association of Canada.

Over the past two years, BCNWA has addressed the negative emotional impacts that COVID-19 had had on its members. They delivered Wellness Kits and hosted a virtual wellness series which focused on spiritual and emotional resilience through an Indigenous lens, supports which were warmly welcomed during a time of isolation.

BCNWA also operates a skills, employment and training program that has empowered many women to find meaningful work.

Meanwhile in the Yukon and Northern British Columbia, YAWC has been 'Empowering Indigenous Women, Advocating for Change, Celebrating Success' for almost 50 years.

YAWC provides connections to elders and knowledge keepers, access to ceremonies, land-based camps, and outreach events.



*BCNWA's Board of Directors
at a recent Strategic
Planning Workshop with
Strategies North.*



From 2019 to 2021, YAWC led the Finding Peace Commemoration project, in collaboration with a Local Project Advisory Committee and other partners and supporters, which created a monument that recognizes and honours MMIWG2S+ victims and their families in the Yukon and northern BC.

YAWC and BCNWA work tirelessly to support healing and wellness for Indigenous women, girls and gender diverse people across the Yukon and all of BC. Both organizations are working on a number of exciting projects that will greatly benefit their members and continue to help them heal, connect to culture, and advance the lives of Indigenous peoples.

We look forward to seeing what BCNWA and YAWC accomplish in 2022!



TOP LEFT: BCNWA's Board of Directors engaging in visioning and brainstorming exercises.

BOTTOM LEFT: YAWC's Christmas hampers programs for community members in need.

TOP RIGHT: YAWC's Elders in Residence program - free beading workshops four times a week.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Close-up of the Finding Peace Monument near Rotary Park, Whitehorse.



*BY EMILY HUNTINGHAWK,
COMMUNITY ANALYST*

Trauma & Resilience Training: My Experience

SN's head office in Kamloops welcomed a big crowd this week. Allaura and Emily H. travelled to join Anna, Grant, Marcy, Yana, and Jane (Grant's mom) in a very special three-day Trauma-Informed and Resiliency Training led by our own Darren Shankel, Director of Education and Agriculture, and Ronda Ziakris, Education Advisor. Darren and Ronda recently became certified facilitators through an organization called Starr Commonwealth. Emily reflects on her experience below.

Over three sessions, the dynamic duo of Ronda and Darren facilitated Strategies North's first cohort of Trauma-Informed and Resiliency Training.

When I heard that I was going to be taking this training, my thoughts immediately were how beneficial this training will be not only for myself but the team and our clients. I definitely had my reservations but Ronda and Darren fostered an inclusive and safe environment for the group that made engaging and being vulnerable in the sessions easier. Although the three sessions provoked many thoughts and feelings about my own personal trauma as an Indigenous woman and the trauma that has been passed down intergenerationally on a grander scale, it made me feel hopeful that there is work that can be done to move past those experiences and create resiliency. **My most important takeaway from this training is that trauma-informed and resiliency-focused care is a mindset and that it's the shift and curiosity that can create positives resulting in change.**



Emily and Ronda.

With the work that Strategies North does, we interact with many communities across Canada who have experienced and continue to experience the detrimental effects of colonialism which has included severely traumatic events. **However, the piece that is important to remember is the resiliency that Indigenous communities exhibit and how they continue to work despite the past.**

In my work, this training will shift my mindset and bring forward curiosity in my relationships with the team but also the relationships that we build with the communities which will hopefully build upon not only their resiliency but also my own. This training has been extremely beneficial and a great learning experience and I look forward to see how this will positively impact the team and the work that Strategies North does.



ABOVE: The Kamloops crowd had the chance to visit Adams Lake Indian Band this week. This is the site of the band's future Multi Use Facility.

LEFT: Darren and Ronda facilitate the Trauma-Informed and Resilience Training.

RIGHT: The sun sets over memorial to honour Secwepemc Veterans who fought for Canada in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War.



WANT A SNACK?

Anna's Flourless Chickpea Blondies

INGREDIENTS

Cooking Spray

1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed and drained

1/2 cup all natural peanut butter (or almond butter)

1/3 cup pure maple syrup or honey

2 teaspoons vanilla

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon baking soda

1/3 cup chocolate chips plus 2 tablespoons

Coarse sea salt, for sprinkling

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and spray 8x8 inch pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In a food processor, add all ingredients except chocolate chips and process until batter is smooth.

Fold in 1/3 cup of chocolate chips.

Spread batter evenly in prepared pan then sprinkle 2 tablespoons of chocolate chips on top. (Tip: spray your spatula with nonstick cooking spray first.)

Bake for 20-25 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean and edges are a tiny bit brown. The batter may look underdone, but you don't want them to dry out!



Cool pan for 20 minutes on wire rack. Sprinkle with sea salt then cut into squares. Makes 16 blondies. Store covered in the fridge for up to 3-5 days.

ENJOY!



CHECK OUT THE

WORD OF THE MONTH:

kí7ce: "mother" in Secwepemctsín.

"kee-ha" (rough pronunciation). In Secwepemctsín, the letter '7' represents a 'glottal stop' or pause, where the air is cut off momentarily.

Fun Fact: There are three dialects of the language (northern, eastern and western) spoken by the Secwépemc.