

Newsletter

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BY DYLAN PEYACHEW, COMMUNITY ANALYST

Visiting Brokenhead

Dylan is one of our newest Community Analysts. Dylan and members of our team recently facilitated a community engagement session on agriculture for Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. Dylan reflects on his experience below.

During my third week with Strategies North, I was lucky enough to contribute to a community engagement in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (BON) where I learned the ropes of running these sessions and got to work with three of Strategies' finest. Getting to collaborate with Darren, Lauren, and Emily on this project was fantastic. They each had tons of knowledge to share but were also so keen on ensuring my voice was heard in every discussion. We shared some good laughs, ate MANY good meals from Mangoes (maybe a few too many), and definitely left with a feeling of accomplishment.

But before I write this entire piece about the team, I should touch on the sessions themselves.

We held four engagement sessions, where key staff and students from BON were invited to share their ideas for agriculture in their community, participate in multiple visioning activities, and had the opportunity to voice their own thoughts in roundtable discussions.



*Dylan, Emily Huntinghawk,
Lauren McIvor, and Darren
Shankel.*



I felt very privileged to be in the room while they shared their, at times, personal stories and it definitely had me pondering my own thoughts about culture and agriculture for Indigenous peoples. There was no shortage of great ideas during these sessions. We heard Elders share stories detailing the importance of reconnecting with traditional practices and others spoke to the value of re-engaging community youth in agriculture. **There were so many ambitious yet actionable ideas that I can't wait to see Brokenhead realize over the coming years.**

Many similarities arose from the stories and ideas put forth by the community but one was unanimously shared amongst all; they wanted to ensure that this program held culture at the forefront of all decision making in order to implement the healthiest practices for the community. I thought it was very special to watch them find common ground and a direction to head towards with this project.

The earnest conversations from the community pushed me to deeply self-reflect, contemplating my own ties to culture and the land.

I used to feel detached from my cultural identity, almost watching it from the outskirts trying to find a way in. **I had an underlying desire to explore it, little did I know I already had begun.** Many stories from the engagement sessions revolved around lessons learned from elders or participating in farming/gardening practices, all of which I had done in the past; I was just slightly too naive to understand what I was actually doing.

While preserving vegetables with my grandma or tending to a garden with my mother, I was actually strengthening familial ties through agriculture and they were able to pass on lessons they had learned in their earlier days. Though it was a small victory for me to acknowledge this, it was still a worthwhile realization. My yearning for cultural immersion was no longer as intense, rather showed me the areas that could still be developed. These stories that were being shared not only validated my experiences, but highlighted my desire to further strengthen my cultural ties, **and that's something I am very thankful for. •**





Talk about a participation incentive - attendees of the strat plan sessions got to take home their own farm-fresh eggs!

Part of Brokenhead's future harvests will go to the community food bank, helping community members get better access to a diversity of fresh, healthy food.



In the distance: Brokenhead's new arbor, which will be used for powwows and community events.



Envisioning Health & Wellness

Developing a 3-5 year plan for Adams Lake Indian Band



This puzzle is a team-building activity focused on teamwork, communication and strategy

What does the future of community health & wellness look like for Adams Lake?

This was the question that members of the community's Health & Wellness Department came together to figure out in a recent strategic planning session with Strategies North.

The sessions helped the team develop a clear vision, priorities, and goals that resonate with the entire team. People's passions shone through, and by the end, everyone felt good about the vision that they had helped inform. Anna, Yana, Ronda and Marcy from SN feel privileged to be a part of the process. •





A FIRST LOOK

BLNDC'S New Maintenance Shop!

Burns Lake Native Development Corporation has made great progress on their new machine maintenance shop, thanks to a grant from Northern Development Initiative Trust. In addition to storing heavy machinery and equipment, the shop will host training classes and will be available for use by apprentice mechanics.



BEFORE



AFTER



Welcome to the SN Team!



Dylan Peyachew

COMMUNITY ANALYST

Dylan Peyachew is a member of the Skownan First Nation on Treaty 2 Territory in Manitoba. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the University of British Columbia with a major in Psychology. Dylan has professional experience providing behavioral intervention for clients with disabilities and working alongside and tutoring Indigenous students. Dylan has a passion for providing equal opportunities to marginalized populations while ensuring their cultural needs are held at the forefront.



Ben Bogstie

COMMUNITY ANALYST

Ben Bogstie is based out of Terrace, B.C. Originally from the Calgary area, he received a degree in anthropology and history from the University of Victoria before moving across the country to study journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax. Ben started his career with the Terrace Standard as a reporter and editor covering community, business, sports, politics, regional news and more in northwest B.C. Ben has a passion for research and understanding how history influences the world today. He loves projects that help people stay active and healthy while having fun. In his free time, Ben enjoys team sports, staying up to date on current events and exploring the outdoors.

