



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
Special Chiefs Assembly

December 5-7, 2023

Shaw Centre – Ottawa, Ontario

Ottawa is located on the unceded unsundered Territory of the Algonquin People.

ASSEMBLÉE DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS
Assemblée extraordinaire des Chefs

Du 5 au 7 décembre 2023 - Centre Shaw - Ottawa (Ontario)

Ottawa est située sur le territoire non cédé et non abandonné du peuple algonquin.



National Youth Council

*Interim National Chief Joanna Bernard
(Interim National Youth Council Portfolio Holder)*

History

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Youth Council (NYC) is a key organ of the AFN, as established in the AFN Charter, and represents the perspectives of First Nations youth across the country on issues that impact them. The NYC serves as an advisory body to AFN Chiefs' Committees, the AFN Secretariat, and the AFN Executive Committee on various youth-related issues. The Council strives to influence the direction of the AFN by promoting equality and through their work with all levels of leadership to create opportunities for personal development and empowerment for future generations.

NYC MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

Annually, the Council elects two co-chairs and two executives at the Annual General Assembly (AGA). The Council co-chairs elected at the 2023 AGA were Rosalie LaBillois-Wysote (Eel River Bar First Nation, New Brunswick) and Winter Dawn Lipscombe (Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, Ontario). Winter-Dawn Lipscombe's term as a regional youth representative for Ontario ended in October 2023, leaving the second co-chair position vacant. A by-election for this position will be held at the Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) in Ottawa, Ontario, on December 4, 2023.

The NYC is currently comprised of the following members:

- Yukon – Ethan Lavallee and Nikita Sawrenko-Bailey
- Northwest Territories – Jackson McDermit and Shayla Snowshoe
- British Columbia – Kyle Alec and Crystal Lewis
- Alberta – Roman Buffalo and Khianna Ribbonleg
- Saskatchewan – Hailey Rose and Brock Mcleod-Waditaka
- Manitoba – Ashley Daniels and Carson Robinson
- Ontario – Kieran Davis and Tehya Quachegan, Alternates: Pierre Debassige and Katelyn Peters
- Québec and Labrador – Liam-Nico Awashish, Marie-Philippe Ménard, Véronik Picard, and Kananish McKenzie
- New Brunswick – Rosalie LaBillois Wysote and Darren Saulis
- Prince Edward Island – Vacant
- Nova Scotia and Newfoundland – Billie Julian and Vacant

In 2022, the AFN Management Committee approved amendments to the NYC Terms of Reference, including:

- Two additional council positions from Prince Edward Island.



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- Language reflecting that youth representatives and Chairs may represent any gender/sex, inclusive of 2SLBTQQIA+ peoples.
- Updated decision-making and quorum processes.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The NYC members are involved in various AFN priority areas. Each youth member holds a portfolio to stay current and engaged in their assigned sector's work. Members continue to update the Council on their portfolios at both the AGAs and SCAs.

THE NYC STRATEGIC PLAN

The NYC developed a strategic plan that guides their focus and work. The NYC is committed to ensuring that cultural health, wellness, and unity are grounded in all aspects of work with First Nations youth at community, regional, and national levels. NYC's strategic plan centers around meeting the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of youth. The main priorities are:

- Supporting culture, wellness, and unity
- Strengthening external relationships, regional and international engagement
- Enhancing communications and reporting
- Building governance and policies
- Increasing funding and opportunities

Activity # 1: AFN Safe Drinking Water Summit

First Nations youth from various nations in Canada were invited to attend the *AFN Youth Safe Drinking Water Conference* held in Québec City, Québec, from August 28 to 29, 2023. The purpose of this summit was to bring together diverse youth voices from all nations to share their experiences with water, to learn from experts in water protection and governance, and to develop a youth vision statement for safe drinking water. The primary call-to-action of the NYC and other youth is to address the systemic barriers caused by colonialism and capitalism that hinder access to clean water as well as the immediate improvement of water conditions and treatment facilities in First Nations communities.

Activity # 2: Housing and Homelessness Dialogue Session

Members of the NYC attended the *AFN Housing and Homelessness Hybrid Dialogue Session* in Victoria, British Columbia, July 31 to August 4, 2023. The purpose of this session was to bring together service providers, technicians, Elders, those with lived experience, and other youth to discuss future outcomes to address under housing and homelessness of First Nations. The discussions focused on the following three themes: on/off reserve, jurisdiction, and service navigation; governance and partnerships; and holistic services and specific needs.



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Activity # 3: One Young World Summit

In October 2023, the AFN Interim National Chief and NYC co-chairs were invited to attend and present on First Nations concerns, opinions, and solutions at the 2023 One Young World Summit in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The One Young World Summit is an annual international gathering for the leaders of tomorrow that aims to connect and bring together the youngest and most talented people and ensure their concerns, opinions, and solutions are heard and taken into consideration by those in power, including those in government, business, and other sectors.

One of the main outcomes of the event was the recognition of the significance of mandating the AFN and the NYC to support the success of the upcoming One Young World Summit in Montreal, Québec, from September 18-21, 2024. The NYC determined that it is essential that the One Young World organization works with First Nations to include First Nations protocol, performers, speakers, and guidance in the 2024 summit and will be seeking support from First Nations-in-Assembly.

Next Steps

In the 2024-2025 year, the NYC will continue to:

- Work with AFN Communications on a communications plan to implement components of the strategic plan.
- Work to maintain a visible and substantial presence, and strengthen youth portfolio holder responsibilities, including attending AFN Secretariat meetings, conferences and various AFN committees and working groups.
- Collaborate with the AFN Executive Committee on amplifying youth priorities.
- Collaborate with the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council, Women's Council, 2SLBTQQIA+ Council, and First Nations Veterans Council.

The NYC will meet at the SCA on December 4-7, 2023, in Ottawa, Ontario, where a by-election will be held for the vacant co-chair position. For more information about the NYC, visit the AFN website at <https://afn.ca/about-us/councils/youth-council/>.