

# SPEAKER PROFILES



**GERALDINE "GER" CARRIERE** AUTHOR. BUSINESS OWNER. INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER. CERTIFIED LIFE COACH. PERFORMER. STYLIST.

From the Métis settlement of Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, she is the Founder & CEO of Wild Woman Personal & Professional Development which provides Life & Business coaching through a variety of services. Wild Woman addresses the war within by uncovering the roles women are forced to live. It provides alternatives by introducing another type of woman, one that is mythical, nomadic, matriarchal, and intuitive. Wild Woman infuses these things into the professional development, producing fearless and lasting results for the wild feminine. Trained in Sociology, Entrepreneurship, Social Work, and Indian Communications & Arts, she has hosted INCA Inspired TV and the First Nations Summer Games and reported and produced for CBC News Regina. Ger has devoted her life to empowering others in discovering their authentic self and sense of belonging through healing and self-mastery.

Her book Wild Woman: Master the Art of Pride, Presence and Productivity will be released in the fall of 2021.

Her self-titled EP Ger Carriere was released December 2019.



**SHAE BIRD** CEO  
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ALBERTA

Shae is originally from the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, but is now proud to call Alberta home. Shae has an extensive background including multiple years working as the VP for Tundra North, an Indigenous tourism company, where he led both business development and marketing. In addition to his work with Tundra North, Bird has also sat on the board of directors for the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada as a proxy representing the Northwest Territories.

Bird has also helped Tourism Saskatoon with experience development and travel trade. After the successful completion of his contract there, he moved to Edmonton Tourism to work with their product development team, before accepting the new Executive Director role with ITA. Bird also does various tourism consulting work, which includes a past contract with ITA as a Project Manager.



**DAVID GOLDSTEIN** CEO  
TRAVEL ALBERTA

David has a long and distinguished career in Canada's tourism and media sectors, with extensive experience in national leadership and strategic business planning as well as deep knowledge of communications and stakeholder relations (government, media, and investors).

David comes to Travel Alberta from Gusto Worldwide Media, where he served as Chief Operating Officer. Prior to that, he spent a decade at the forefront of several important initiatives driving Canada's tourism sector forward, first as President and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada before joining Destination Canada, the Government of Canada's marketing and research organization, as President and CEO. During that time, David led the development of the Federal Tourism Strategy, changes in aviation and visa policy, increased investments in global marketing, and modernizing an aligned strategy to develop the Global Team Canada strategy, NorthStar 22.



**BRIGETTE LACQUETTE** AMATEUR SCOUT  
CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS

Lacquette was selected to represent Canada's National Women's Team at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, South Korea, making her the first First Nations athlete to play on Canada's Women's Olympic hockey team. Lacquette made her debut in Canada's National Women's Team Program in 2008 with Canada's National Women's Under-18 Team. She is a two-time participant at the IIHF U18 Women's World Championship winning gold in 2010 and silver in 2009. As a member of Canada's National Women's Development Team, she appeared in 21 games, winning gold at the Nations Cup in 2013 and 2016. She has been part of the National Women's Senior team since 2015, participating and winning medals in 2015, 2016 and 2019.

Brigette's success in hockey shows young Indigenous girls that they belong in sports, they can be successful in sports, and they can achieve greatness. Brigitte is a role model for our youth and has used her platform to visit schools and communities to speak about the determination and resilience that led her through her hockey career.



**TEARA FRASER** LEAD EXECUTIVE  
ISKWEW AIR

Becoming a pilot was transformational, truly giving this young Métis woman wings. Teara is the first Indigenous woman to launch an airline in Canada – Iskwew Air. Iskwew Air is the bridge between traditional air service and the sustainable technology of the future. She believes that together in this innovative space we will rematriate, reimagine, and rebuild our air transportation system - centering equity, resilience, and sustainability. Teara serves as a BC Executive Committee member of CAAM, the Canadian Advanced Air Mobility consortium, where Iskwew Air is a proud founding member.

Iskwew Air understands the power and possibility of Indigenous tourism and is committing to inspiring, elevating, serving, showcasing, and uplifting authentic and sustainable Indigenous tourism - and all Indigenous businesses.

As the visionary of the Raven Institute, she is particularly inspired by the RavenSPEAK initiative (Indigenous changemakers – visible, masterful, amplified, and connected). RavenSPEAK is elevating the voices, stories, and remarkable profiles of Indigenous peoples.

Teara founded the not-for-profit Indigenous LIFT Collective and launched Give them Wings (Indigenous Youth Taking Flight) and the LIFT Circle (collectively co-creating the conditions for Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs to THRIVE).

Teara has been actively engaged in the British Columbia Aviation Council for over a decade and is a Board Director for Unmanned Systems Canada. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade.

Teara holds a Master of Arts in Leadership degree from Royal Roads University, and she is a Certified Executive Coach. The journey of learning now takes her back to Royal Roads as Associate Faculty and to Fielding University where she is studying in the Human Development Ph.D. program.

Teara has been named WXN Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100, Top 25 Women of Influence, YWCA Woman of Distinction, and one of 24 'real world heroes' in the DC Comics Wonder Woman anthology – Wonderful Women of the World. In 2021, she ranked 44 on Maclean's Power List.



**RHONDA HUGHES** MANAGER, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
TRAVEL ALBERTA

Rhonda has over 20 years of hospitality and tourism experience and has been working for Travel Alberta for the last 7 years. All throughout her career, Rhonda has been committed to working with the travel trade to continue to grow their knowledge of Alberta and the experiences that are offered in the province. She is also committed to helping educate the local industry partners on working with the travel trade. Rhonda will share her knowledge, passion and experience in this area during the seminar.

Rhonda has her Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of Calgary and is working on her Strategic Management Certificate from Mount Royal University. Rhonda is also on the Board of Directors for CITAP (Canadian Inbound Tourism Association for Asia Pacific).



**GREG HOPF** CO-OWNER/OPERATOR  
MOCCASIN TRAILS INC.

Born and raised in the Northwest Territories (NWT) Greg's Indigenous Culture and background is his identity. Once Greg received his post-secondary education in Alberta, he went on to successfully manage a tourism hunting and fishing lodge in the NWT where the focus was on developing and providing Authentic Indigenous experiences.

He later built the Aboriginal Sport Circle of the NWT where he worked for more than 10 years, building relationships and programming in 33 Indigenous communities. To this day, thousands of community members benefit from the organization's thriving sport programs and structure.

In 2016, Greg left the north and moved with his family to Kelowna, BC, where he was responsible for developing an Indigenous cultural tourism strategy for the Thompson Okanagan region on behalf of the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association and Indigenous Tourism British Columbia. Greg led the successful bid to host the International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC) in Kelowna. IITC is the largest Indigenous Tourism Conference in the world.

In 2017, Greg joined forces with his now business partner Frank Antoine and started an Indigenous tourism company called Moccasin Trails. Together they grew the business into an award-winning tourism company, receiving the tourism business of the year award from All Nations Trust in 2019, also being nominated for Provincial and National awards. Moccasin Trails is founded and deeply rooted in sharing Indigenous cultures to guests from around the world in a respectful way where Indigenous protocol is followed.

Greg has presented at many conferences on Indigenous issues around the world, as well as inspirational topics around Indigenous business development, partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, youth empowerment, revitalization of Indigenous cultures, and much more.

Greg currently resides in West Kelowna with his wife Sharon Hopf and two children, Keaton and Presley.





**TERESA RYDER** DIRECTOR, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

As the Director of Business Development, Teresa is responsible for overseeing the development and stability of Indigenous tourism associations across Canada as well as product development and grant initiatives to support Indigenous tourism entrepreneurs and Indigenous communities investing in tourism. In 2020, Teresa led the \$16 million Stimulus Development Grant program for ITAC - an effort made to stabilize more than 675 Indigenous tourism operators as they navigated the loss of travellers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. She has also overseen the growth of the International Indigenous Tourism Conference – the largest Indigenous tourism conference in the world – since 2018, being a part of this project for many years since its inception.

Teresa is proud to be of Musqueam descent. Upon finishing her Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology at Simon Fraser University, Teresa has spent more than 10 years in Indigenous tourism development, starting her career with Indigenous Tourism BC. She has worked with Indigenous tourism operators and partners to grow Indigenous tourism while implementing regional and provincial destination development strategies and improving the market readiness of operators. She is an experienced speaker, facilitator and trainer and advocate for the betterment of Indigenous Peoples. Teresa is passionate about Indigenous tourism not only for the economic benefits but also for the social impact on Indigenous People and communities who thrive in business while sharing unique stories from coast to coast to coast.

Teresa currently sits on the board of directors for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada where she advocates alongside national tourism professionals for tourism.



**JILLIAN HALE** MANAGER, CONSUMER MARKETING  
TRAVEL ALBERTA

Jillian Hale is a digital marketing expert with over a decade of experience executing large-scale marketing campaigns in Canada and across international markets. As the manager of consumer marketing at Travel Alberta, Jillian works alongside industry partners in the development and delivery of strategic marketing programs that drive visitation to Alberta. Before Travel Alberta, Jillian developed high-impact digital marketing campaigns for West Jet, United Way of Calgary, and Mount Royal University.

Jillian holds a Master of International and Intercultural Communications, a Bachelor of Communications, and professional certifications in Public Relations. In her spare time, Jillian enjoys a good Netflix binge and feeding her two young daughters copious amounts of snacks.



**MITO OTA** COORDINATOR, TRAVEL TRADE TEAM  
TOURISM CALGARY

Mito Ota is the Coordinator for the Travel Trade team at Tourism Calgary where she supports the development and execution of travel trade initiatives in markets around the world. Mito's passion for tourism developed while working for a tour operator in Banff and continued into an 18-year career with Travel Alberta where she provided strategic direction, leadership and management of consumer-direct campaigns and travel trade programs, as well led destination marketing and brand partnerships with global airline partners.

Before joining Tourism Calgary, Mito supported the development and implementation of tourism sales programs at the Calgary Stampede working with the travel trade and travel media.

On her days off, she enjoys taking road trips with her family to discover and experience the gems around the province of Alberta.



**JASON PICARD BENNET SALES MANAGER**  
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Graduated in marketing for tourism and hospitality from St. Lawrence College in 2008, Jason held several jobs in the field of Indigenous tourism: tour guide, officer in charge of wildlife management at an outfitter's, officer in charge of welcoming visitors in the Montmorency Forest. When the Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations opened its doors in 2008, Jason was hired as the Sales and Banquet Coordinator. In 2010, he joined Tourism Wendake and was in charge of sales development and marketing for the entire tourism infrastructure of the Huron-Wendat Nation. He was also actively involved in media relations, in the publication of the tourism guide and in setting up the website to promote Wendat culture in Quebec, the rest of Canada and abroad.

Later on, as Projects Officer (Outfitters) for Quebec Aboriginal Tourism (QAT), Jason drew his expertise and dedication to supporting managers and owners of Indigenous outfitting businesses in Quebec. He worked closely with the Quebec Outfitters Federation and contributed to the adoption of sustainable and authentic business practices that meet international standards. This, in turn, helped to overcome current industry challenges while attracting more foreign customers to the outfitters.

In October 2018, Jason became QAT's Marketing Advisor. In this new role, he worked towards promoting Quebec's Indigenous cultures and tourism enterprises in key markets such as France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. Besides participating in a number of international trade shows and fairs, he oversees nearly thirty FAM and press tours within the province's 11 nations and 55 Indigenous communities every year, supervises the editorial process of the Origin(e) magazine and advises the 37 regional and sectoral tourism associations in Quebec on Indigenous tourism. Jason was also involved in Indigenous gastronomy by organizing the Indigenous culinary event À la rencontre des Grands Chefs in collaboration with Fairmont Le Château Frontenac.

Finally, he offers personalized marketing support to QAT members, he was the lead of the Indigenous traditions round-table of the Alliance de l'industrie touristique du Québec, Member of the board of directors of the Association des réceptifs et forfaitistes du Québec and represented Quebec on the board of directors of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. Toward that combination of experiences and career success of the last 12 years, he built an impressive network of contacts in the tourism industry.



**CLINTON BELCHER FOUNDER & CEO**  
CANADIAN ECOTOURISM SERVICES

As an Indigenous person from South Africa, Clinton brings an innovative approach to community tourism development gained through his entrepreneurial abilities and community driven tourism ventures such as cultural infrastructure projects, tourism strategies, business planning, technology, and product development. As founder and CEO, he has operated Canadian Ecotourism Services for 24 years, providing sustainable economic development solutions with a social conscience.

Clinton works across Canada and internationally to develop Indigenous tourism projects ranging from individual grassroots efforts to large scale community developments. He is motivated and understanding of cultural keepers and entrepreneurs and their importance to the sustainability of Indigenous tourism. He is thankful for the opportunity to learn from and empower community champions that believe cultural preservation is central to a vibrant and sustainable community. He believes all good ideas start with a conversation and are brought to life by the willingness of the human spirit.

As a speaker Clinton has delivered over 300 interactive workshops to small, medium, and large corporate and community groups on various tourism development models; and has presented as a keynote speaker at many tourism conferences.



**LEON HUNTER** MANAGER  
METIS CROSSING

Leon Boychuk-Hunter is the Manager of Metis Crossing. Being apart of the evolution of Metis Crossing has taught him about embracing change.

His value based leadership approach focuses on staff development, accountability and commitment to quality.

With a strong background in experience development and hospitality management Leon looks forward to the future of Indigenous Tourism in Alberta.



**FRANK ANTOINE** CO-OWNER/OPERATOR  
MOCCASIN TRAILS INC.

Frank Antoine has been learning and sharing Indigenous culture all of his life. Since the age of three he was introduced to his spiritual & cultural beliefs.

His parents taught him how to gather food through all of the four seasons. He is now passing it on to his children who will carry on these cultural values.



**RYAN ROGERS** COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST  
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

As the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's (ITAC's) Communications Specialist, Ryan Rogers manages corporate communication and media relations. Ryan is passionate about supporting a thriving Indigenous tourism industry both from an economic and social aspect.

A proud member of the Musqueam Nation in Vancouver, BC, Ryan holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of British Columbia and has been working in the Indigenous tourism industry for six years.

Prior to joining ITAC, Ryan worked as the marketing coordinator with Indigenous Tourism BC. He takes great pride in representing Indigenous interests in his career.





**TOM BABIN** DIRECTOR OF MARKETING  
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ALBERTA

Tom Babin is the Director of Marketing for Indigenous Tourism Alberta and the former Manager of Brand and Content for Travel Alberta. He spent many years as a journalist writing for publications such as Postmedia, the Los Angeles Times and The Guardian.

He's the author of the book Frostbike: The Joy, Pain and Numbness of Winter Cycling and he runs the YouTube channel Shifter. He lives in Calgary on Treaty 7 land with his family.



**YVONNE CHAU** MANAGER, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT – CALGARY &  
SOUTHWEST ALBERTA  
TRAVEL ALBERTA

Yvonne enjoys her dream job working at Travel Alberta. She was born in Hong Kong but has spent most of her life in Alberta. She holds a degree in tourism and hospitality and started in tourism working at her family's travel agency. She later worked as a tourism project officer for the federal government.

In her 20+ years of marketing and business development experience, Yvonne has developed a wide corporate network in diverse business sectors. Her understanding of cultural nuances and the importance of storytelling helps tourism businesses realize new opportunities to grow the supply of new experiences for both domestic and international markets. When she is not at her desk, Yvonne enjoys painting, doing yoga, walking with furry son, Pluto as well as planning the next vacation with her family.

Yvonne is currently enrolled in the Community Economic Development Training Program by Economic Developers Alberta so that she can apply the economic development learnings to support the growth of our visitor economy.



**HOLLY ATJECOUTAY** DIRECTOR, INDIGENOUS SERVICES  
BUSINESS LINK ALBERTA

Holly is Cree and Saulteaux from Cowessess First Nation in Treaty 4 Saskatchewan, but calls Treaty 7 and Mohkinstsis (Calgary) her home. As the Team Lead for Indigenous Services at Business Link Alberta, she relies heavily on her fabulous team to provide assistance to Indigenous entrepreneurs in Alberta regarding the startup and expansion of their small businesses, connecting them to helpful resources while also providing guidance.

The Indigenous Services team facilitates workshops, hosts Indigenous-focused events, provides specific programming for Indigenous entrepreneurs and small businesses, and builds meaningful relationships in both rural and urban Indigenous communities. Holly guides the team to success, maintains important relationships and collaboration with partners, and ensures that every First Nations and Metis community in Alberta is aware of the services that we offer.