

AGENDA

Monday, December 5

14:00 - 18:00 REGISTRATION

18:00 - 20:30 RIVER CREE BALLROOM

CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

1. Indigenous Tourism Artist Showcase
2. River Cree Food Tour
3. Enoch Traditional Grounds Experiences (offsite)

Tuesday, December 6 MORNING SESSIONS

07:30 - 12:00 REGISTRATION

08:00 - 08:30 MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE
BREAKFAST

09:00 - 09:45 MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE
OPENING CEREMONIES
Emcee: Lance Cardinal

Opening prayer, Grand Entry

Opening remarks: Brenda Holder Chair of ITA, Shae Bird CEO of ITA, Ministers

09:45 - 10:30 MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE
OPENING KEYNOTE
Shae Bird & Tom Babin

10:30 - 10:45 BREAK

10:45 - 11:30 MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE
PARTNERSHIP PANEL
Shae Bird, Chelsey Quirk, Angela Avery & Traci Bednard
Moderator: Teresa Ryder

ITA, EIA, WestJet and Explore Edmonton

11:30 - 12:00 LUNCH



AGENDA

Tuesday, December 6 AFTERNOON SESSIONS

12:00 - 12:45 **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
LATERAL VIOLENCE TO LATERAL KINDNESS IN TOURISM
Marilyn Jensen & Thomas Shepherd

12:45 - 13:00 **BREAK**

13:00 - 13:45 **RIVER CREE 1**
DEFINING AND PRICING YOUR PURCHASEABLE EXPERIENCE
Juanita Marois & Leon Boychuk-Hunter

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 2
LEARNING/WORKING MORE WITH TRAVEL TRADE PANEL DISCUSSION: HOW TO CREATE NET-RATES/ FLAT SHEETS
Darlene Redoroshyn, Matricia Bauer & Brenda Holder

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 3
WORKING WITH TRAVEL MEDIA
Erica Richardson

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 4
MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT
Jim Dehart & Rod Taylor

Breakout Session

13:45 - 14:00 **BREAK**

14:00 - 14:45 **RIVER CREE 1**
NORTHERN REGIONAL NETWORKING SESSION
Facilitated by: ITA

RIVER CREE 2
CENTRAL REGIONAL NETWORKING SESSION
Facilitated by: ITA

RIVER CREE 3
SOUTHERN REGIONAL NETWORKING SESSION
Facilitated by: ITA

RIVER CREE 4
ROCKIES REGIONAL NETWORKING SESSION
Facilitated by: ITA

14:45 - 15:00 **BREAK**

15:00 - 15:45 **RIVER CREE 1**
SHARING INDIGENOUS STORIES RESPECTFULLY & AUTHENTICALLY
Lysandra Nothing

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 2
SOCIAL MEDIA 101: PANEL DISCUSSION
Heather Black, Joe Urie & Sarah Magyar
Moderator Tom Babin

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 3
BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ONLINE PRESENCE: WORKING WITH THIRD-PARTY PLATFORMS
Jason Streach

Breakout Session

RIVER CREE 4
ALBERTA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS: GRANT FUNDING FOR ARTISTS
Kari McQueen

Breakout Session

18:00 - 20:00 **REGISTRATION**

18:00 - 21:00 **EVENT CENTRE**
ARTISAN MARKET OPEN

18:30 - 22:00 **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
CITE GALA/RECEPTION STYLE DINNER AND DRINKS
18:30 - 20:00: Taste of River Cree Reception Dinner & Networking
20:00 - 21:30: CITE Award Ceremony
Opening Dance performance, CITE Awards
21:30 - 22:00: Networking



AGENDA

Wednesday, December 7

- 08:00 - 09:00** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
BREAKFAST
- 09:00 - 09:45** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
INDIGENOUS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF CANADA KEYNOTE
Teresa Ryder
- 09:45 - 10:30** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
TRAVEL ALBERTA KEYNOTE
David Goldstein
- 10:00 - 16:00** **EVENT CENTRE**
ARTISAN MARKET OPEN
- 10:30 - 10:45** **BREAK**
- 10:45 - 12:00** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
ELDER AND YOUTH PANEL
Elders and Youth Working in Tourism
Moderator: Mackenzie Brown
- 12:00 - 13:00** **LUNCH**
- 13:00 - 14:00** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
INCLUSIVITY IN TOURISM/ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION PANEL
Nicole Peterson & Tanelle Bolt of Soulfly Experiences, Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo of Wase Saba Experiences, Tania Carriere of Air Canada
- 14:00 - 15:00** **MAIN STAGE EVENT CENTRE**
SUSAN AGLUKARK KEYNOTE
Susan Aglukark
- 15:00 - 15:30** **CLOSING**



SPEAKER PROFILES



SUSAN AGLUKARK

Performing Artist - First Nation Expert & Indigenous Advocate

Susan Aglukark is the first Inuk artist to win a Juno and a Governor General's Performing Arts Award for lifetime artistic achievement. She is an officer of the Order of Canada, holds several Honorary Doctorate degrees and has held command performances; but Susan also acknowledges the path has not been easy. She is also a sought-after public speaker.

"Here I was, living a life I never imagined, but I was struggling to understand who I was. There was no opportunity growing up to learn about who we were, the Inuit, from our own perspective. In essence, we were institutionalized by being told who we were, how we would live and when you are told a story for so long, you learn to believe it," explains Susan Aglukark. During the past 25 years of reflection and songwriting, Susan Aglukark kept coming back to one area of profound knowing, the Inuit are an extraordinary people deeply grounded in a culture forged by their Ancestors, their journey is what shaped them. "Their life experience is the foundation on which our precepts of determination, adaptability and love for life are built, they began the journey to our present-day Nunavut."

"The conversations around reconciliation have provided an opportunity to begin to re-write our narrative. The Indigenous people in Canada come from highly organized societies built on knowledge, process and organization - without which none of us would have survived." For Susan Aglukark, art has played a significant role in her healing journey and in the re-writing of her narrative, she believes it plays an important role for indigenous youth who are dealing with contemporary identity issues today. "Our children and youth are strong and resilient, they still believe very strongly in their culture, in Inuit or Indigenous culture, and they are still fighting every day to find their place."

"They need to be anchored to an identity and so much of those connections are in our ancestors and their stories and we have a duty and a responsibility to engage our children and youth in the process of connecting with and helping them write those stories."

Susan Aglukark has always been very open about how her own fears and personal trauma that left her disillusioned and disconnected. Born in Arviat, Nunavut, her parents formative years were in traditional Inuit culture, her formative years were not traditional and were somewhat disconnected from her culture. Despite the success Susan Aglukark experienced in the 1990s, by 1998 she was suffering from post-partum depression and found herself in a dark place in need of time to reflect and heal, what followed was the several years of reflection, healing and making deeper commitments to her singing/songwriting career.

And so, began what Susan calls her "awakening". As she learned more about her culture and the strength and resilience of the Inuit who have been on this land for over 5,000 years, Susan was also engaging her own "inner artist" and falling in love with performing, sharing stories and singing.

"We have an extraordinary culture and an extraordinary past, we must embrace the opportunity to learn about our very own heroes, write those culture bridges and reframe who we are in today's world." Through her music, Susan Aglukark continues to share her experiences as an Inuk growing up in Nunavut, as well as the challenges faced by northern communities and Indigenous youth. Susan Aglukark is actively involved in various projects to bring food and support to northern communities and in 2016 the Arctic Rose Foundation gained charitable status with a focus on helping youth in the north through art and other engaging creative projects.



SPEAKER PROFILES



DAVID F. GOLDSTEIN

Chief Executive Officer, Travel Alberta

As CEO of Travel Alberta, David leads a dedicated team responsible for the development of tourism products, services, and destinations, and promoting Alberta as a desirable place to travel, work, live, play, invest and learn—capitalizing on the province's breathtaking landscapes and world-class hospitality to develop unique experiences for Albertans and visitors to enjoy in all regions, year-round.

He 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).

Prior to joining Travel Alberta, David was Chief Operating Officer of Gusto Worldwide Media, and spent a decade driving Canada's tourism sector forward 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 modernized an aligned strategy to develop the Global Team Canada strategy, NorthStar 22.

David holds a bilingual Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science from York University.



THOMAS SHEPHERD

President, Social Innovation Consulting

Thomas spent the first decade of his career in Ottawa leading the development of new social policies and programs, culminating in ground-breaking work on the state of Canada's pension system. He left Ottawa for Whitehorse in 2009 to begin a new chapter of his career working with Indigenous communities in the North. Based in Whitehorse, Yukon, Thomas is President of Social Innovation Consulting Inc. He is most happy when he's helping a group of people come together, find common ground, and take collective action. With Nelson Lepine, Thomas has developed and implemented several successful community-based initiatives like the The Tiny Houses Project: Small Homes, Big Dreams.

More recently, Thomas led the project team for The Peacemaking Circle: Our Families, Our Way which won the 2018 Arctic Inspiration Prize. He is also well-known for his work with Marilyn Jensen to support Lateral Kindness within Indigenous workplaces and communities. Thomas is recognized in Yukon as a social entrepreneur who has a unique capacity to facilitate community-based teams to achieve great things for their own people. Thomas has a B.A. in Political Science from McGill University and a Master's in Social Work from Carleton University.



SPEAKER PROFILES



MARILYN JENSEN

Indigenous Artist, Advocate, Speaker, Educator, Consultant

Marilyn is an active Indigenous artist and advocate of Indigenous people speaking and teaching on many important matters relevant to her community. Her passion lies within reclamation and revitalization of ceremony, songs, culture and everything foundational to her identity. Yadultin, Dūsts'ādle, and Shaawát goox is Inland Tlingit and Tagish Khwáan from the Carcross/Tagish First Nation; belonging to the Dakhl'aweidí Clan under the Tagish Keét Hít (Killerwhale House) in the Southern Yukon Territory. Through her Father's lineage, her ancestry is also British and Scottish which she equally honours. She has taught First Nation Governance at Yukon University and works closely with many Indigenous communities as a consultant focusing on wellness, governance and cultural strengthening. Her main methodology in speaking, teaching and facilitating has always been through storytelling and sharing the beauty of her culture and identity.

Marilyn has taught important and engaging training for Yukon Government on Indigenous history, land claims, self-government and self-determination for over 20 years and for numerous First Nation Governments and organizations in countless communities. She has worked for her Nation as the Senior Government Official in governance and with the Self Government Secretariat of the Council for Yukon First Nations. More recently she has developed a new company called Lateral Kindness Inc. (officially being launched soon) in partnership with her colleague, friend and adopted brother, Thomas Shepherd. Their workshops deliver awareness and understanding around Indigenous lateral violence, offering tools, and calls to reclaim kindness instead as a form of resistance. Marilyn has traveled all over the North and elsewhere to share her knowledge and bring awareness to Indigenous narratives.

She celebrates and honours her culture by engaging in traditional dancing, singing, drumming, choreographing and storytelling with an Inland Tlingit dance group she founded and leads; the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers. They have danced and promoted their culture internationally in New Zealand, Taiwan, Japan, across Canada and the U.S. They have been honoured as the recipients of the National Indigenous Tourism Award and nominated for an Indigenous Music Award. In 2016 Marilyn was honoured by the Governor General of Canada as a recipient of the Polar Medal for Cultural Reclamation in the North. She has earned a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Alaska and a M.A. in Indigenous Governance from the University of Victoria. Marilyn speaks professionally as a Keynote with the Speakers Bureau of Canada often sharing her knowledge on topics such as Reconciliation and wellness with large corporations and Indigenous communities. She currently serves as the Chair of Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and as President of Yukon First Nation Culture and Tourism Association.



SPEAKER PROFILES



TERESA RYDER

Director of Partnerships, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

As the Director of Partnerships, Teresa is responsible for supporting relationships and partnerships as well as developing and implementing programs across Canada to establish and grow regional Indigenous tourism associations. She is also responsible for overseeing corporate communications, internal market research, international projects and membership.

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 as a board of director for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada where she advocates alongside national tourism professionals for tourism.



CHELSEY QUIRK

Manager, Indigenous & Stakeholder Relations, Edmonton International Airport

Chelsey is focussed on making space and cultivating change. As a proud Métis woman, she has spent much of her career advocating for Indigenous rights and diversity, equity and inclusion, through non-profit, government and private sector positions.

Chelsey joined the team at Edmonton International Airport in 2015 and focuses on creating meaningful and collaborative relationships that drive economic growth and reconciliation for the Edmonton Metro Region. Most recently, she led the opening of the first-of-its-kind, Indigenous Interpretive and Retail Centre at YEG, shining a spotlight on the vibrant Indigenous history, culture and retail offerings in and around the region.



SPEAKER PROFILES

BRENDA HOLDER

Owner/Operator of Mahikan Trails, Chair Indigenous Tourism Alberta, Vice-Chair Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Board Member Destination Canada



Brenda was born and raised in the Rockies in Jasper National Park and has spent a vast amount of time trekking from valley to valley. She is pleased to follow her lineage as a traditional guide from the Kwarakwante of Jasper.

Brenda is a Master Interpretive guide and is an active advocate of Aboriginal Tourism.

She is a past member of the Métis Women's Economic Security Council for the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. In addition, she is a board member for the Interpretive Guides Association and represents Aboriginal Interpretive Guides. She is the Vice-Chair for the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and is the Alberta Director. Brenda is also the Chair of Indigenous Tourism Alberta, a board member for Sundre Tourism Association and sits on the Ministry of Red Tape in Alberta.

Brenda has been the recipient of several prestigious awards for her work in using her company both in the entrepreneurial spirit and in educating the public about Métis culture. One of these awards was the Aboriginal Woman Entrepreneur Award of Distinction presented from the Alberta Chamber of Commerce.

She was awarded the Esquao Award from the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women (IAAW).

In 2004, Métis Nation of Alberta Region III awarded her the Métis Entrepreneur of the Year.

In addition Brenda took part in several film documentaries and one television series: Mahikan Trails was presented on Profiles of Success on Aboriginal People's Television Network. In addition the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada released a video series called "The Power of Aboriginal Tourism" Featuring Mahikan Trails and Painted Warriors.

Tomiuk Productions filmed Mahikan Trails in a documentary/training video to be used in a Lakeland College training course for Adventure Tourism. Mahikan Trails was showcased as one of the Adventure Partners in the Aboriginal Tourism Sector.

As part of Alberta Economic Development, Brenda was also filmed with the Story Tellers documentary series on being an Aboriginal Woman in Business.

Brenda is most often found guiding clients into the high alpine zones of the Rockies, or leading traditional medicine walks down in the valley bottoms.



SPEAKER PROFILES



SHAE BIRD

CEO, Indigenous Tourism Alberta

Shae Bird is the Chief Executive Officer of Indigenous Tourism Alberta, responsible for the development and growth of Alberta's Indigenous tourism industry.

As the CEO, Shae has been responsible for steering ITA through one of the most difficult times in tourism history. Through his leadership, ITA has created the Indigenous Tourism Alberta Strategy 2020-2024 to drive its business, while growing ITA's members to more than 180. Additionally, Shae has secured necessary funding grants to stabilize Indigenous businesses during COVID-19, including the Stimulus Relief Fund which provided relief to more than 80 businesses alongside Provincial and National partners.

With education through the Masters in Tourism Management program from Royal Roads University and corporate experience that covers strategic planning, organizational renewal, operations management, government relations and capital project oversight, Shae is now proud to call Treaty 6 & Metis Region 4, Edmonton, Alberta, home. Shae has quickly become recognized and respected as a leader in Indigenous tourism across Alberta and Canada with interview requests, speaking roles and involvement in multiple economic recovery task forces across Alberta.



TOM BABIN

Director of Marketing, Indigenous Tourism Alberta

Tom Babin lives with his family in Mohkinstsis, Calgary, where he was born and raised, and is responsible for all of ITA's marketing activities, including its storytelling and content, campaigns, sponsorships and communications. He previously worked as Manager of the Travel Alberta Content Studio, creating award-winning content for use in the organization's consumer marketing activity.

He spent several years in journalism, working as an editor at Postmedia and Swerve magazine, and writing for publications such as the Guardian, the Los Angeles Times and the National Post. He is the author of the book Frostbike: The Joy, Pain and Numbness of Winter Cycling.

In his free time, you'll probably find Tom riding a bike, sometimes creating videos for his YouTube channel Shifter.



SPEAKER PROFILES



DARLENE FEDOROSHYN

Director International Business Development, Travel Alberta

Darlene Fedoroshyn has over 25 years of tourism experience; starting her tourism career as a travel agent before moving on to marketing a Calgary tourism attraction at Winsport's Canada Olympic Park, and then moving onto a Destination Marketing Organizational role at Tourism Calgary. Darlene joined Travel Alberta in 2007, specializing in business development in both the European and Asian markets before taking on a lead role working with global tour operators and OTAs to further support international distribution of Alberta tourism products and marketing programs to defend and grow Alberta's tourism revenue.

Darlene is a goal-oriented tourism professional able to identify market trends, forge relationships and build partnerships that drive awareness, consideration and conversion. Her client experience showcases working with some of the world's largest tourism brands in both business to consumer (B2C) and business to business (B2B) companies.

Darlene holds a Bachelor of Arts in Leisure, Tourism and Society and a minor in Communication Studies from the University of Calgary. She also has recently completed her Strategic Management Certificate from Mount Royal University in 2019.



MATRICIA BAUER

CEO of Warrior Women Inc., Board of Directors for TIAC, Jasper Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Central FASD

Matricia has had the privilege of sharing her culture over the last 20 years to schools throughout the Yellowhead Region. Matricia is a singer, songwriter, musician, drummer and an artist.

Matricia teaches drum making and leather binding, makes moccasins, traditional fur mittens, and other traditional workshops. She has her own jewelry line infusing First Nations culture into modern jewelry designs.

An experienced large tour operator with APT Tour, Rocky Mountaineer, and Jasper Parks, Matricia is equally an experienced guest lecturer touring schools across the province, performing internationally in San Diego, New York and Africa, and presenting at a number of national conferences over the years.



SPEAKER PROFILES



JUANITA MAROIS

CEO, Métis Crossing

Juanita Marois is a proud Métis citizen, mother, wife, auntie and daughter. She is also the CEO of Métis Crossing, where she has the honour of being the “master puzzle maker” putting together the many pieces that people contribute to build the amazing place we know as Métis Crossing.

Juanita earned her MA degree in Responsible tourism development from the University of Alberta where she continued as a lecturer for 2 years in the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation. She has had amazing opportunities to work in the tourism sector as a practitioner, planner, researcher and consultant. Her experiences come from working with organizations such as Princess Tours, Northlands Park, University of Alberta, and Athabasca University where she was able to support and grow tourism and Indigenous culture. Currently, Juanita is also a board member of Travel Alberta and a member of the Native Studies Faculty Council at the University of Alberta.



LANCE CARDINAL

CEO, Soulflame Creative Services

Lance Cardinal is one of Alberta's leading First Nation artists and entrepreneurs. He is a member of the Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory and comes from Calling Lake, Alberta. His 30-year journey in the arts has allowed him to work with world class organizations all over Canada, including IKEA, Rugby Canada, Unbelts, Telus World of

Science, Edmonton Public Library, Fort Edmonton Park, and Re/Max Field. Lance also works as the Indigenous consultant and designer for the Edmonton Oilers, writing the new pre-game land acknowledgement video and designing the new Turtle Island Oilers team logo.

Lance is also a television and youtube personality, appearing regularly on CTV Morning Live Edmonton, featuring segments from his YouTube kids show, “Indigenous Art Adventures”, a half hour Mr. Dress-Up style program that brings families together through art, culture and language. This show was recently picked up by APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network), and the first season will be airing soon!

Lance keeps his career diverse and inspired, allowing the Creator to guide his path and inform his work.



SPEAKER PROFILES



TANIA CARRIERE

Manager of OTA Sales, Air Canada

Tania Carriere is Air Canada's Manager, OTA Sales based in Vancouver BC. In her role, Tania has oversight on the overall Online Travel agency portfolio for North America. In her role, she is responsible for all aspects of account management with travel partners including marketing activities, operational strategies, business development, contract compliance and fostering positive relationship with our partners.

Tania joined Air Canada in 1997 as administrative assistance Human Resources in Winnipeg Manitoba and has worked through numerous roles in Global Sales.



SISSY THIESSEN KOOTENAYOO

Owner/Operator, Wase Saba Experiences

Sissy Thiessen Kootenayoo is an IndigiQueer, Two Spirit and disabled business owner & operator, cultural facilitator, Powwow dancer, artist, advocate & community leader with ancestral roots in both Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation and Steinbach, Manitoba.

Sissy lives as an intersectional being in many ways, including living with multiple health diagnoses, including: Post Concussive Disorder, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, chronic pain and multiple mental illnesses. However, they have learned how to make adaptations for themselves to live their passion of educating visitors of all ages on Indigenous history, culture, reclamation and resistance. She does this through her former role as Community Educator role with the Edmonton Two Spirit Society and her current role of owner/operator of Wase Saba ("Walk-Say Sah-Bah"- Black Bear) Experiences.

Sissy has received formal education in professional writing through the Bachelor of Communications - Journalism program at Mount Royal University. And is the proud recipient of a recent Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth Changemaker Award, as well as a former recipient of various awards in the areas of community enrichment, cultural involvement, and journalism. Sissy says her work allows her to heal, while also educating and inspiring others, keeping the teachings of her ancestors alive and being a role model for her community.



SPEAKER PROFILES



JASON STREACH

Director, Integrated SEO – Reprise Digital

Jason is a digital jack of all trades. In his 10+ years of experience in digital marketing, he has been on all sides of the conversation in roles as a designer/creator, a web developer, and of course his true passion – as a search marketing experience consultant.

His consulting experience encompasses clients both large and small and covers a wide variety of verticals, ranging from large sites such as Walmart Canada, Kraft/Heinz, Travel Alberta and CBC.ca, to non-profit awareness campaigns such as Black & Abroad and SKYN's pleasure parallel, to small local businesses with hyper-local strategies.

Ask Jason about local search, organic discovery, online community management/engagement, Technical SEO, user experience and conversion rate optimization, and any other general internet nerd-ery.



ERICA RICHARDSON

Account Manager, Tartanbond

Erica Richardson is an Account Manager at one of Canada's leading PR & Marketing agencies, tartanbond.

Erica works with a variety of clients in the tourism industry from hospitality to outdoor adventure. She leads the management of tartanbond's media relations clients including coordinating travel media press trips, securing news coverage, organizing large-scale press conferences and managing influencer campaigns.

Erica has strong media relationships with editors of the top international travel publications as well as close ties to Alberta's newsrooms. She is passionate about supporting businesses to bring their stories to light through the power of earned media.



SPEAKER PROFILES



ROD TAYLOR

Chief Executive Officer, Legacy Tourism Group

Rod is the Chief Executive Officer of the Legacy Tourism Group, a company that develops resorts and other tourism assets as well as providing a wide range of management services for the tourism industry. 70% of Legacy's clients are Indigenous entities. He is the former owner/operator of Uncommon Journeys Ltd., a high-end adventure travel company based in the Yukon that operated for 15 years, specializing in remote wilderness travel by dogsled and canoe in Canada's Far North. The business was selected as one of Destination Canada's first iconic, "Signature Experiences" and was named Canada's best dogsledding company by the Globe and Mail. A member of the tourism industry for over 30 years, Rod was President of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, a Director on the Board of the Canadian Tourism Commission (now Destination Canada) and a Director on the Board of Northern Vision Developments, one of the largest tourism developers in Canada's north.



JIM DEHART

Chief Operating Officer, Legacy Tourism Group

Jim is the Chief Operating Officer of the Legacy Tourism Group. Jim's experience includes working for BC Indigenous Nations in treaty negotiations and developing impact benefit agreements. He has been active in providing management services in tourism development, government license & tenure management, operational safety procedures, risk evaluation & management, guiding protocols, business development, project management and general operations. He is the former owner/operator of Destiny River Adventures Ltd., a successful river adventure tourism company operating on Vancouver Island that developed a raft and snorkel with the salmon experience named one of the top ten wildlife viewing experiences in the world. Jim has worked in the tourism industry since 1982 and has been a director and the President of the Wilderness Tourism Association of BC, Executive Director of the BC River Outfitters Association, President of Tourism North Central Island, and Executive Director of the International Rescue Instructors Alliance.



SPEAKER PROFILES



LEON BOYCHUK-HUNTER

Director of Business Development, Métis Crossing

Leon Boychuk-Hunter was born and raised on River Lot 11 on the southern banks of Amiskwaciwâskahikan. Early exposure to Ukrainian Folk traditions piqued his interest in global cultural traditions. He graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.A. in Drama. Leon has pursued opportunities in cultural interpretation, arts and culture and tourism management. He has been working with Métis Crossing since 2014. In 2021 he received a Graduate Certificate in Tourism Management from Royal Roads University and became elected as a fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society of Canada.



SEAN GRAY

Youth Representative, Enoch Cree Nation

Sean Gray belongs to Maskekosihek (Enoch Cree Nation) within the Treaty 6 territory through her Kokum, Linda Cardinal. Sean Gray is currently a student enrolled within the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta, additionally she is also an alumni of Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at the University of Alberta - convocating in Spring 2022 with a Bachelor of Education with Distinction. Driven by her commitment to the land and environment, her aspirations include advocating for Indigenous self-determination and sacred conservation as an Indigenous environmental lawyer. In addition to her primary roles within education and law, Sean has been involved in Indigenous tourism efforts as a summer student working within Enoch Tourism in 2021, and acknowledges the abundance of opportunity that resides within Indigenous tourism for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across Turtle Island, and beyond.



JOE URIE

Owner/Operator, Jasper Tour Company

Joe Urie is a Métis guide and the owner-operator of Jasper Tour Company, which helps travellers see the cultural and natural history of Jasper National Park.



SPEAKER PROFILES



TRACI BEDNARD

President & CEO, Explore Edmonton

Traci Bednard grew up around Alberta, also spending time in PEI and Ontario, before making Edmonton home. She went to junior high and high school in Grande Prairie, and then attended the University of Alberta and hasn't left Alberta's capital city since then.

That was only the beginning. Traci is no stranger to the tourism sector after working 24 years at the Edmonton International Airport; for more than a decade, she has served as an executive-level leader at EIA. Her most recent position was as Vice President Strategy, Environmental Social and Governance and Corporate Communications. She was responsible for communications, government relations, advocacy and partnerships including tourism and Indigenous tourism partnerships.

Traci is currently on the Board of Directors for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, giving her powerful insight on the direction of tourism in our country. During her years at the airport, she also travelled extensively selling air services to our city and that gave her the opportunity to view Edmonton and its tourism product through other's eyes. It inspired her to be bolder and more optimistic about the diverse, authentic experiences Edmonton has to offer.

Traci lives in west Edmonton with her husband Deron and her two daughters Ella and Olive. She also has a French bulldog named Murphy, and a cat named Little Black.



ANGELA AVERY

Chief People, Corporate & Sustainability Officer, WestJet

Angela Avery is the EVP, Chief People, Corporate & Sustainability Officer at WestJet where she is responsible for people and culture, communications as well as the legal, community, government and regulatory affairs of the WestJet group of Companies. She has more than 25 years' commercial and legal leadership experience across multiple industries.

Angela is a respected negotiator leading deals totaling more than \$25B. Her extensive regulatory and compliance background including as chief compliance officer for the global operations of the world's largest independent energy producer. She is a trusted advisor to the board with US and Canadian public and private company experience.

Her international experience includes an appointment to litigate war reparations at the United Nations and she is licensed to practice law in Alberta and New York. She is a committed volunteer and community builder and has served on the boards of directors for the Calgary Zoo, YMCA, Arts Commons and the Canadian Energy Law Foundation.



SPEAKER PROFILES



KARI MCQUEEN

Arts Development Consultant, Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Kari is a visual and media artist with over twenty-five years in the cultural sector, including Artist-Run-Culture, media arts, film, public galleries, festivals, and art education. Prior to joining the AFA she freelanced as a grant writer and consultant for artists and organizations in Southern Alberta, and has an in-depth understanding of the granting process from an applicant's point of view. Kari can help with applying for the Indigenous Arts Individual program, the Visual Arts and New Media Individual Project Funding, and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Scholarship for Visual Arts. She is also a crazy cat lady and is currently working on an art series exploring beliefs around the relationship between cats and cat ladies.



LYSANDRA NOTHING

Marketing Specialist, Indigenous Tourism Alberta

Lysandra Nothing (she/her) is Anishinaabe woman, born and raised in Sioux Lookout Ontario; however, her roots are established in Bearskin Lake First Nation, Ont., Lysandra graduated from the Print and Online Journalism program at SAIT in 2021 and holds a journalism background with a focus on Indigenous news. Lysandra is a strong Indigenous advocate for Indigenous cultural awareness and rights with experience and participation in #IdleNoMore and Orange Shirt Day. Among her role at Indigenous Tourism Alberta, Lysandra also maintains a Youth Leader role at Howl, a non-profit grassroots organization that aims to change the future of education. When Lysandra is not working, she can be found enjoying a cup of coffee browsing the shelves at a bookstore.



HEATHER BLACK

Owner/Operator, Buffalo Stone Woman Indige-scape Tours

Heather's ancestral name is O'takii Tsowakii. A natural-born adventurer from the Blood Tribe Nation. Heather's most rewarding experience is being engulfed in the vast beauty of the mountains, connecting to the land and animals while embracing the spirit of the mountains. What makes each hike special is sharing the beauty of her Indigenous culture and stories of resilience with local and world travellers.



SPEAKER PROFILES



ALEC CARTON

Principal & Founder, Tatâga

Alec Carton (Ali Tapaquon) is a nêhiyaw First Nations and African person whose ancestors are from both Saskatchewan and Ethiopia. Alec is dedicated to the revitalization of Indigenous Ceremonies, languages, and ancestral ways of living. Through the advancement of Indigenous economic world views and the sharing of ancestral teachings, he believes that Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples have a meaningful opportunity to braid a unified path forward together, for all our relations. Alec's passion for learning, ability to catalyze change through strategic direction, and his diverse network of leaders in all industries enable him to serve Tatâga as Principal and Founder.



SARAH MAGYAR

Social Media & Influencer Marketing Specialist, Travel Alberta

Sarah has worked in Social Media and Content Creation in the tourism sector for over 5 years. She currently works at Travel Alberta as their Social Media & Influencer Marketing Specialist managing Travel Alberta's organic social channels, influencer relations and Creator Community. She is passionate about sharing the beauty of Alberta and its communities with the world.



NICOLE PETERSON & TANELLE BOLT

Co-Founders & Partners, Soulfly Experiences

Nicole is the founder and CEO of SoulFlight Consulting Group, cofounder of Trek2Tuk4Kids, founder of charity event Long Night, inclusive travel advocate, and veteran travel and tourism development specialist. Tanelle is a barrier-free design and recreation consultant, founder of RAD Recreation Adapted Society, Team Canada Golf member, interior designer, accessible recreation activist and motivational speaker.

