



# NATIVE COURTWORKER

AND COUNSELLING ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

# ANNUAL REPORT

**As of April 1, 2004 the provincial government is reducing its grant to the Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of BC from \$2.04 million to \$1.3 million**

By a letter dated February 27, the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General asked the NCCABC to submit a proposal to the Ministry. The Ministry suggested an alternative means of service delivery in which the NCCABC would operate from Corrections Branch offices to save on the federal/provincial cost-shared agreement. The letter goes on to state that if the NCCABC cannot provide an adequate level of support on a budget of \$1.3 million, the government would not renew its contract and would seek alternative means of service delivery.

*Lydia Whitsum*

Lydia Whitsum  
Task Group Member  
First Nations Summit

*Stewart Phillip*

Chief Stewart Phillip  
President  
Union of BC Indian Chiefs

*Herb George*

Herb George  
Task Group Member  
First Nations Summit

*Harley Desjarlais*

Harley Desjarlais  
President  
Métis Provincial Council

*Grand Chief Edward John*

Grand Chief Edward John  
Task Group Member  
First Nations Summit

*John Braker*

cc Grand Chief Edward John  
Task Group Member  
First Nations Summit

BC Attorney General Geoff Plant  
Premier Gordon Campbell  
First Nations in BC



FIRST  
NATIONS  
SUMMIT



Union of  
British Columbia  
Indian Chiefs



Métis  
Provincial  
Council of  
British Columbia



Assembly of  
First Nations  
BC Region

February 27, 2004

Honourable Rich Coleman  
Solicitor General  
PO Box 9053 STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Coleman:

**Re: Native Courtworker Program Budget Reduction**

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the recent announcement by your Ministry officials that the Native Courtworker Program budget will be severely reduced in the next fiscal year. This budget reduction was made without any level of consultation with First Nations and will greatly impact the Program and its services.

This proposed budget reduction is the second major cut to the program in recent years. In June 2002, the Province cut the program by \$400,000 which resulted in a major reorganization within the Courtworker Association. Nine staff positions were eliminated, including two board of director positions.

Currently, more than thirty positions are funded by the Native Courtworker Program budget with the majority of the positions being Courtworkers. A Native Courtworker and Counselling Association analysis of the 2004 funding cuts will result in another nine positions being eliminated. This budget reduction, along with the cuts two years ago, will virtually cripple the Program as less than twenty Native Courtworkers will remain to service the entire province.

Now, more than ever, the Courtworker Program is a necessary component of the justice system in BC where a disproportionate number of Aboriginal people are represented. The numbers of Aboriginal people in BC requiring the services of a Courtworker have been increasing at an alarming rate over the past several years, especially since the closures of all Native Community Law Offices. For instance, from 2002 to 2003 the number of clients rose from 7,560 to 13,384, a 73% increase.

Should the proposed budget reduction occur, it will mean that more Aboriginal people will be processed through the justice system without adequate services. Adequate financial resources are required to assist those in need of Courtworker services as well as to address the underlying causes of why Aboriginal people are disproportionately represented in the justice system.

The last two provincial Throne Speeches made specific government commitments to work with First Nations. Furthermore, a recent draft discussion paper prepared by the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services confirms the government's commitment to increased Aboriginal management and control over programs and services. We question why such cuts are being made to the Courtworker Program when your government has made specific commitments to work together with First Nations?

Additionally, we recommend that the Native Courtworker Program be transferred back into the Ministry of Attorney General. The Program was originally funded under the Attorney General's ministry but was moved in 2002 to the Solicitor General's ministry. These changes have resulted in the Native Courtworker Program not being provided a high level of government commitment, protection or service. The programs administered by the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association clearly fall within the justice services responsibilities and mandate under the Attorney General's office rather than the enforcement and punishment responsibilities of the Solicitor General's office.

The three Provincial Aboriginal organizations and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) BC Regional Chief support the Native Courtworker Program and the work of the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association. We view the services they provide as an integral part of the justice system in BC.

We wish to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss these serious matters. Please contact Colin Braker of the First Nations Summit office to coordinate a meeting among the three major Provincial Aboriginal organizations, the AFN BC Regional Chief and you.

Sincerely,

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2003 year was both eventful and inspiring. What began as a busy year with the new Youth Criminal Justice Act replacing the Young Offenders Act in April 2003 became hectic with our association hosting the second Aboriginal Courtworker Conference in Vancouver.



HUGH BRAKER | PRESIDENT


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As this was only the second time in the history of the Aboriginal Courtworker Program that all Courtworkers from across Canada were in attendance, we found the conference to be both interesting and informative communicative event. It is our expectation that Courtworkers attending the conference have returned to their respective regions with the new information and knowledge necessary to assist the courts and communities to work cohesively on innovative and effective approaches to youth crime. Other agenda items included restorative justice practices, peer resolution conferencing for youth, fetal alcohol syndrome, victim issues, youth violence and harassment, trial processes and writing gladue reports. As a result of this conference, this association felt it was helpful to produce a permanent record of the conference proceedings. We created a video CD-ROM which included all the highlights of the conference proceedings, which was distributed to all participants of the conference.

One of the leading challenges continues to be our ability to survive the Ministry of Solicitor General's cut from the Native Courtworker Program budget. The Board of Directors for the association is fully aware that the need for native courtworker services in their community is considered necessary. This association continues to receive letters from the judicial system and community members asking for services where there is limited or no services at all. Inevitably, these cuts mean our clients will suffer and there will be greater delays in the courts.

### National Courtworker Program

Darlene Shackelly, Executive Director continues to participate on the Department of Justice - Tripartite Working group. Issues being discussed are results-



based accountability framework (RMAF), database, communications/promotion initiative, training and funding, The Department of Justice completed a cd entitled “draft aboriginal courtwork basic curriculum”. This association will be using this curriculum to design online internet access training for Courtworkers.

Also, a revised, interactive website is being developed to better reflect the associations needs.

### Thirty Year Anniversary

Next year will begin a number of organizational and community events in celebration of thirty (30) years of service for the association. Darlene Shackelly and Arthur Paul, Regional Manager for the Lower Mainland made a presentation to University of British Columbia, First Nations Studies Program to request the services of a practicum student to undertake writing a report on our 30 year history and to interview key people who have helped shape the organization over the past 30 years.

Some of the key points to be covered in the research are:

- reviewing how the association was formed
- how the board of directors arrived at its current structure
- how the term “counselling” was added to associations name
- how the goals, challenges, mandate and philosophy changed over time
- how the association unionized under BC Government Employee Services Union
- complete an “oral history” of the association by way of video tape interviews with key people.

The association has also secured the services of a facilitator through Canadian Executive Services Organization (CESO) to assist with our five year organizational plan.

### Research Project

The First Nations Summit passed a resolution in the sum-

mer regarding “too many shootings of aboriginal people by police and too many deaths of aboriginal people while in police custody”. The Summit requested that this association provide a report to them on aboriginal people in British Columbia and Canada, who in the last 50 years have been shot by police, have died in custody or have died as a result of police action or inaction. In December, the report was tabled at the First Nations Summit meeting.

### Union Negotiations

This association and BC Government Employee Services Union (BCGEU) met on July 18, 2003 and reached a tentative agreement for a new collective agreement expiring March 31, 2004.

### United Way of the Lower Mainland

We have been proud members of the United Way of the Lower Mainland. We were honoured to receive an additional \$12,000 funding allocation to our program.

Finally, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend our tremendous appreciation for the work of all staff and volunteer board members. With everyone’s continued support, we can maintain quality services amidst increasing demands.

### Terry Fox Run and AIDS Walk

For the past three years, more and more of our staff are participating in community events such as the Terry Fox Run and the AIDS Walk. This year I am proud to announce that Diane Louis, our native courtworker for the Kelowna/Vernon area raised the most pledges for the Terry Fox Run. Congratulations Diane for your participation in this annual event.

Respectfully Submitted

Hugh Braker | President



# LAW & ORDER

Economic conditions blamed for aboriginal people being disproportionately represented in our justice system



*TRYING STOP THE CRIME* Crystal Schooner and Shawn Desjarlais outside of the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship centre on east hastings, with their ideas on why Native youth crimes have sharply increased. | Vancouver Sun.

Courtesy of The Vancouver Sun

**N**ative court workers are reporting a dramatic surge in the number of aboriginals they help in B.C.'s court system and a caseload that has almost doubled in just one year.

Never before has the three-decade-old Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of B.C. seen so many native Indians facing criminal charges across the province, from Bella Bella to Surrey.

During the association's 2001-2002 fiscal year, employees of the non-profit government-funded association assisted a total of 6,240 adult aboriginal men and women.

In the following 12 month period, that figure almost doubled, to 11,153 adults. The trend is the same for aboriginal youth.

The number of aboriginal youths seeking help almost doubled during the same period of time, to 2,187 youths from 1,269.

Darlene Shackelly, the association's executive director, pointed to long-standing reasons why First Nations people in Canada are more likely to end up in courts and prisons than other ethnic groups.

"Aboriginal people are disproportionately represented in the justice system because, for most of them, their

# Trying to break the cycle of natives and the law

**FATEFUL MIX** Trouble always comes with alcohol, drugs and crime, aboriginal court workers say, but the reasons run deeper

**CRIME AND CONSEQUENCE**  
DAN 19 NATIVE JUSTICE



BY PATTY EDGAR  
VANCOUVER

Justine Withey walks timidly through the alley behind East Hastings, wide-eyed and holding her nose to ward off the stench of urine. Watching junkies jab themselves with needles is disturbing — especially for this 15-year-old. Her transient mother, who died of a drug overdose when Withey was seven, likely spent some of her short life on these streets.

"This is harsh," said the Nanaimo high school student, who is of native ancestry. "People are out here looking for anything they can to help themselves, but they aren't getting help. They are getting worse."

Morris Bates, a native victim assistance worker with the Vancouver police department, has led more than 3,500 aboriginal and "at-risk" youth on this tour.

He warns the teens that junkies steal and sell their bodies for the next fix and if the drugs don't kill you, a criminal record can destroy your life. How aboriginal people are caught up in crime is one of the focuses of *Crime and Consequence*, this Vancouver Sun series.

But people like Bates say the cycle of addiction and crime in places like the impoverished Downtown Eastside — home to more than 1,400 aboriginal people — is not the real reason aboriginals are over-represented in Canada's prisons. The problem runs deeper.

In British Columbia, 17 per cent of adult prisoners and 29 per cent of incarcerated youths are aboriginal. Statistics Canada says Canadians claiming some aboriginal ancestry represent 4.4 of the population in the 2001 federal census.

The head of Canada's prison services warned in 1999 that if the trend continued, the percentage of aboriginals behind bars could soar to 40 per cent in the next decade.

See PRISON CIRCLES B4



Willard Cook runs the sweat lodge program at Burnaby's Secure Youth Centre.

## WHAT DO YOU

Do you think "sentencing circles" are a good way for the courts to deal with aboriginals convicted of minor offences?

To register your view and see what others say about

*'It's always alcohol and drug-related, stemming back to residential schools.'*

WILLARD COOK



## Prison circles hear tales of abuse

By [Name] VANCOUVER

Every morning meeting, David [Name] sits with a group of aboriginal men in a room at the Burnaby Secure Youth Centre. They are there to discuss their lives and the challenges they face.

David [Name] is a 21-year-old aboriginal man who has been in and out of the justice system since he was 15.

He says that his life has been a cycle of abuse and addiction, and that he has never been able to break free from it.

David [Name] is one of many aboriginal men who are caught up in the cycle of crime and addiction.

He says that the justice system is not working for him, and that he needs a different way of dealing with his problems.

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**CRIME AND CONSEQUENCE**

## All things are connected, including victim and offender

Commissions and inquiries have changed the structure, but not the issues



BY [Name] VANCOUVER

Aboriginal people are over-represented in the criminal justice system, and the reasons are complex. It's not just about alcohol and drugs, but about the legacy of residential schools and the loss of culture.

The justice system has tried to change, but the issues remain the same. Commissions and inquiries have been set up, but they haven't been able to address the root causes of the problem.

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## Street talk WHICH CRIMES DO YOU FEAR MOST?

By [Name] VANCOUVER

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## Red Road Warrior steers the young from addiction

By [Name] VANCOUVER

Willard Cook, who led of the drug and beer in 1995, is now a mentor for young people. He has helped many young people get off drugs and alcohol, and find a better way of life.

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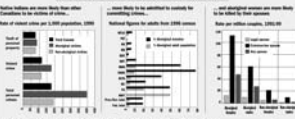
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## Remote, rural but far from tranquil

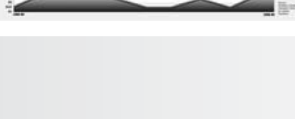
THE STATISTICS: Native communities have the highest crime rates in the province



OVER-REPRESENTED AS VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS



NEW PERSPECTIVE: Percentage of aboriginal British Columbians placed in probation over 10-year period



## Facing a judge would have been easier than this

By [Name] VANCOUVER

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By [Name] VANCOUVER

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economic conditions are so adverse, their educational and social circumstances so depressed, and their prospects so dismal, that they fall into alcohol and drug abuse and crime," she said Friday.

That said, Shackelly attributed the sudden spike to the B.C. government's decision two years ago to cut the \$88 million annual legal aid budget by 40 per cent.

The counselling that aboriginals used to get at about a dozen native community law offices across B.C. was one of the services eliminated. Shackelly said more natives are turning to native court workers for help, although the cutbacks also led to the layoffs of four of the 31 native courtworkers employed in 2001/2002.

Now, she said, a ballooning backlog of charges in the courts means defendants have to wait longer for trials and sentences, so there are more aboriginals entangled in the court system, for longer periods of time.

Shackelly said she's concerned about the number of aboriginal youths -- especially aboriginal girls -- facing serious charges for crimes of violence. For instance, courtworkers saw five youths in 2001/2002 who faced murder and homicide-related charges, but that number climbed to 12 youths during the next 12-month period.

Charges for violent crimes like assault, sexual assault and robbery also shot up for youths.

For instance, in that same one-year period, the number of aboriginal youths facing robbery charges climbed to 202 from 132. During the last fiscal year, more than 1,400 of the youths were male and about 750 were female, compared to 870 males and about 400 females the previous year.

A courtworker association report doesn't disclose the



*In its 2003 series "Crime and Consequence", The Vancouver Sun reported extensively on the disturbing increase in the number of natives going through the court system.*


male-female breakdown for different types of charges laid against aboriginals under 18.

But Shackelly said an increasing number of young offenders charged with violent crimes are female.

"Historically, some 10 years ago, there weren't really a lot of female youth, but they too have jumped quite dramatically," she said.

Shackelly said the increase in aboriginals is occurring province-wide, but the Vancouver and Surrey courts account for the largest number of cases, perhaps 60 or 70 per cent. At the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre on East Hastings, a young aboriginal woman who works for a "Take Charge" safety and crime prevention program suggested that prejudice against aboriginals is one of the reasons why more aboriginals are ending up in court.

Crystal Schooner, 18, said she was charged with assault at age 16 when she fought with a Caucasian girl who called her a racist name.



"The charges were dropped but I got kicked out of school for reacting to it [the name-calling] with violence, Schooner said. Peer pressure is also part of the reason why so many aboriginals commit crimes."

"They think it's cool to steal cars, so that's why they do it," she said. "And drugs and alcohol have a lot to do with peer pressure. They react in a violent way."

Shawn Desjarlais, 27, a youth advocate who was also at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, alleged that police are more prone to lay charges against aboriginals, because politically active aboriginals threaten the status quo.

"I think they look at aboriginal people as a threat more than anything else," he said. "That's why they're treating us differently." The sudden spike in the number of aboriginals seen by native courtworkers was one of the issues raised by a prominent native Indian leader earlier this week.

Grand Chief Edward John, one of the three elected members of the political executive of the First Nations Summit, was speaking to a Vancouver Sun reporter before a five-hour private meeting Wednesday of B.C. cabinet ministers and about 100 aboriginal leaders to discuss land claims and efforts to reconcile historic injustices.

John, a child and family services minister in B.C.'s last New Democratic Party government, noted that aboriginals were already over-represented in the court system. He said legal aid cuts imposed by the B.C. Liberal government were making the problem worse. John pointed to the social and economic conditions on reserves when talking about the reasons why so many aboriginals face criminal charges.

"You have to ask: What are the root causes?" he said, then answered his own question: "Poverty and lack of employment." In a separate interview, B.C. Attorney-General Geoff Plant conceded that aboriginal people in B.C. have been "over-represented" in the criminal justice system for years and acknowledged that government needs to do more to encourage economic development that helps aboriginals.

"Today, the incidence of aboriginal representation in prisons and in criminal court proceedings is significantly higher than their percentage of population as a whole," he said, without offering any numbers.

"It's also the case, tragically, that many aboriginal communities experience all of the social and economic conditions that tend to produce these outcomes."

On Friday, Plant conceded the government has closed offices that gave legal aid to aboriginals and others, but said it has tried to continue providing services for people who face criminal charges.

"While offices in some communities were closed, they were replaced by 1-800 telephone access and other forms of access that were intended to ensure that people who needed legal aid for criminal matters had access to a service," Plant said.

Crown counsel Geoff Gaul said Plant's ministry does not keep statistics on the ethnic background of people who are charged with crimes in B.C.

An official snapshot of prisons in B.C. suggests the percentage of aboriginals in prison has also increased in recent years even though the actual number of natives and non-natives in prisons declined.

In other words, there's no official B.C. government measure of whether the doubled caseload of the aboriginals helped by native courtworkers also means that the number of aboriginals going to court has doubled. Another measure of the extent to which aboriginals are in conflict with the law doesn't occur until an accused has been convicted and a jail sentence is imposed. About 114,000 natives live in B.C., which has a population of more than four million people.

Wayne Willows, a B.C. attorney-general ministry spokesman for B.C. corrections, said aboriginals accounted for 235 of the 1,242 of the people sentenced to provincial prison terms in B.C. in 2002. That was 18.9 per cent of the convicted criminals who were sentenced last year, although Indians account for 2.8 per cent of B.C.'s population.



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# REGIONAL REPORTS

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*Board member Henry Hall lends a helping hand to Jaden Shackelly during the Terry Fox Run*

## LOWER MAINLAND REPORT

# the REGIONS



*Alice Louie, Merce Dita, Jackson Dionne, Hugh Braker, Byron Louis, Henry Hall, Darryl Shackelly*

**H**ello from all of us from the Lower Mainland Region. This year we want to make sure, we thank all of those individuals that has assisted at our offices and helped us on our caseloads. Specifically to the Criminology students of the Native Education Centre, your practicum placement with our office makes a difference to the services we can provide to the aboriginal community.

To the UBC First Nation Legal Clinic and Law students, we at the 50 Powell street office thank you for your time and efforts you have put toward the betterment of aboriginal people.

To those agencies that have partnered with us to offer better service to our aboriginal individuals, who required our assistance, together we have made a difference.

And thank you to our Board of Directors who has volunteered their time and expertise to the organization and staff.

Thanks to Native Courtworkers who offer a specialized court service to aboriginal people across Canada and there is a growing population coming up from the United States as well. The Native Courtworkers are diligent and resourceful in their provision of services to individuals who seek our assistance in the courthouse. I have

also found that the lawyers, judges and other personnel recognize Courtworkers as the aboriginal resource in the judicial system.

I believe along with the Lower Mainland Native Courtworkers that we make a difference in the courtroom and in the community. Capturing the imagination of the community is always difficult especially in the attempts to promote a restorative justice approach

As a supervisor of the Lower Mainland office, I am always collaborating the partnership of organizations, which are committed to integrating the advancement of any of the First Nations restorative justice models and practices. The Native Courtworkers in the lower mainland are committed to networking and developing relationship with agencies that will provide the best services to individuals, families and groups.

The Lower Mainland office is seeking a partnership with an agencies or organization that has hands on approach in activities or program that works toward the Youth leadership development. The program or activities must be volunteer verses a cost method in both informal and formal learning environments. That also supports open-ended experimental design, to help to address elements of aboriginal youth issues

## LOWER MAINLAND REPORT

### NATIVE COURTWORKER | ANNUAL REVIEW

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Last summer, NCCABC began an awareness project called the Aboriginal Concurrent Disorders Awareness Project, a project about aboriginal individuals who are housed at the Collinwood Farms Forensic hospital. The specific goal of the program is to assist individuals to gain access to aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Treatment program throughout BC. The first steps that needed to be taken was the dissemination of information about the Forensic Hospital services and gather support for Collinwood Farms to face and meet the needs of the lack of culturally appropriate services for aboriginal, who are housed at Collinwood Farms. This is completed as a joint project between the NCCA and Collinwood Farms Forensic Hospital through a series of workshops and networking meetings throughout the BC. Together the NCCABC and the Forensics Hospital and clinics will make a difference for individual who have concurrent disorders.

There has been a growing need for additional aboriginal Victims Support services throughout the lower mainland. Presently the NCCABC lower mainland 50 Powell street office has only one Victim Support Counsellor. The 50 Powell street office has receive calls from as far out as Hope and Mt Currie area seeking assistance of the Victim Support Counsellor. Due to limited travel budget and time as well as the jurisdiction the Victim Support Counsellor can only cover the Vancouver and those who can travel to the office are assisted. Further networking meeting are being held to find other resources for aboriginal individuals and their families throughout the lower mainland.

The Alcohol and Drug Outpatient program has been very busy this year developing curriculum for the requested working shops, training sessions and scheduling those workshops for the New Year. Further agency

networking meeting and program development workshops have been scheduled for the New Year as well. Thanks to the Detox centres and treatment Centres for your quick responses to assist our aboriginal members needs.

Thinking of helping out in the fight against Cancer and AIDS, well once again we gather up our Board of Directors and staff and walk and ran the Terry Fox Run and the AIDS Walk to raise money for these two very important causes. Please get involved. It's a great social outing and the cause is one that can change an individual's life. Cancer and AIDS affect everyone and has no racial boundaries and knows no age limit, get your family or agency involve.

We thank the United Way of the Lower Mainland for their contribution to our organization without their contribution the workshops and meeting may not have happened.

The Lower Mainland native courtworker and counselling staff want to thank you all for your efforts in the advancement and progress of aboriginal communities

Arthur Paul

Regional Manager

*There was time to reflect on events that marked the year for the Courtworkers.*

*Hugh Braker, Arthur Paul and his daughter Samantha Paul share the evening.*



## NORTH COAST/INTERIOR | SOUTHERN INTERIOR

# the REGIONS

**A**cquired sufficient funding from S.T.E.P and other management training councils in the southern Interior region to carry out staff needs analysis. This analysis identified professional upgrade for staff mostly at the JI. We are almost complete with training hopefully in a short time we will be able to meet new challenges and provide optimum courtwork services.

The directors have decided to relocate the Fort Nelson courtworker office to Fort St. John, B.C. Upon consultation with the aboriginal and area resources in both communities it was decided it would best to relocate due to lack of stats and court sittings. This situation has since improved to the point that we have more than enough work in Fort St. John and on the northern court circuit.

The liberal government program cutback has had a tremendous impact both on staff and program funding for the province. This created hardship with limited travel, long distance telephone and office supplies. During this period I've seen the lowest point for staff morale which affected work to a small degree.

The new youth criminal justice act national conference in Vancouver was both educational and resourceful. With contact with area bands we have provided information and copy of the video. We have work in partnership with the law courts program. The participants seemed to be interested in learning about this new act to deal with the ever growing youth violence within their communities.

The odd-number regional board elections regions #1,3,11 and 13 have elected two new directors whereas two previous members have been returned for two years. An orientation has taken place for new members had been carried out in the September directors meeting.



Upon consultation with aboriginal communities in Fort St. John a Youth And Family advocate proposal for funding has been submitted to the Children And Family Ministry At Fort St. John. This new position will deal with mediation and family matters in provincial court whereas most resources have voice in favour of this needed services.

Another staff training proposal is being considered for the northern, northcoast and southern interior regions. This will allow courtworkers to assist their clients in a criminal trial. As you are aware legal services only cover trials that will result in the possibility of doing time in jail. I will be seeking partnership funding for the next fiscal year.

**Kenneth Peters**

Regional Manager



## THE SOUTH COAST

### NATIVE COURTWORKER | ANNUAL REVIEW

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*Wolves fishing for salmon just north of Bella Bella.*

Once again, 2003 was a year that NCCA had to pull together. The Board needed to make further cuts to the courtworker program from a budget that, at best, was at its very minimum.

We do know that at this moment any further decrease to our funds can result in no provincial courtworker services at all. We have seen the bottom of the well. However, with determination and confidence staff like, Donna, Naomi, Boyd, Georgia, Les, Sylvia and the rest of the courtworkers in BC continued quality front-line justice-related service to aboriginal people.

Then there was our national conference. What a great gathering. Meeting other courtworkers from across our nation, comparing techniques with other managers and just getting into the role of a courtworker was terrific. The individual

workshops that were organized for this convention covered many aspects of our job confirmed for courtworkers just how vital the work is and the alternative approaches courtworkers can take to their day to day tasks.

I will remember the challenge made by a guest speaking Judge Barry Stewart that we should change our name from Native Courtworkers to community justice workers. He felt we are associated with just the courts and that is misleading to what we do. Courtworkers not only work in court but they work also with the communities, with families affected by violent crimes, with children troubled by offenses committed within their homes. And in some way now our association name confines our efforts.

This is also a year were for the first time our island area will see a retirement. Sylvia Brown has spent 28 years with the association and will be recognized for her service at our December board meeting. Sylvia covered the Bella Coola/Bella Bella/Anaheim Lake/Klemtu areas during her time with us and did so in a very credible and respected way.

I recall Sylvia once telling me a number of years ago she went to Bella Bella to visit some relatives during her holidays and while there some people thought it was court today.

Sylvia, you are a trusted person in your area and Congratulations!! On a job well done

Of coarse I cannot forget to mention working with Ken, Darlene, Art, Carol-ann, Alice, Mel and to welcome aboard Jacob at the administration level. Our management meetings, and efforts put out by these people. I look forward to this next working year with these people and the quality work we will continue to do.

**Gord Edwards**

Regional Manager

## COURTWORKER PROFILE

# PROFILE

### GOING THE EXTRA MILE

**D**iane Louis is a member of the Okanagan Indian Band. Diane's late Grandfather is of Okanagan descent, and her late Grandmother is of Shuswap descent.

Diane has been employed with the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association for 20 years from 1976 to 1982, and then from 1990 to the present. Diane currently covers Vernon, Salmon Arm and Kelowna Court, and is a loyal, hard working and dedicated employee. She goes the extra mile to make sure her clients are well taken care of. She is well respected by the judges, crown, lawyers, community bands and by her peers. Diane's greatest accomplishment is helping First Nations people, because for many years there was no one there for them in the justice system, and now the

Native Courtworkers can provide proper help for them by letting them know their rights and responsibilities and any other legal information that they require.

During Diane's spare time she participates in a number of activities and in the fall of 2003 she participated in the Terry Fox run and raised \$400 for the charity. Diane also participates in the Sadie's Walk every good Friday, and this walk is for awareness of Diabetics among First Nations. On a daily basis Diane goes to the Vernon Multiplex and participates in the Road to Avonea a Walk for Fitness.

Diane also is a member of a number of committees such as the Vernon's Local Women's Shelter; B.C. Native Women's Society; and in December of 2003 she was awarded an Honourary Member of the John Howard Society in Vernon, B.C.

Diane's biggest joy is her two grandsons' and two granddaughters'. She loves going to cheer on her grandson's in hockey and baseball. She also loves cheering on the Vancouver Canucks, go Canucks go.

Diane's biggest accomplishment was in 1990 when she went to Berlin, Germany where she gave a presentation on Healing & Wellness and Drugs & Alcohol and how it affects the First Nations and their community.

Diane leaves these words with her clients and to all others-her motto: "We have to heal ourselves to make better choices."

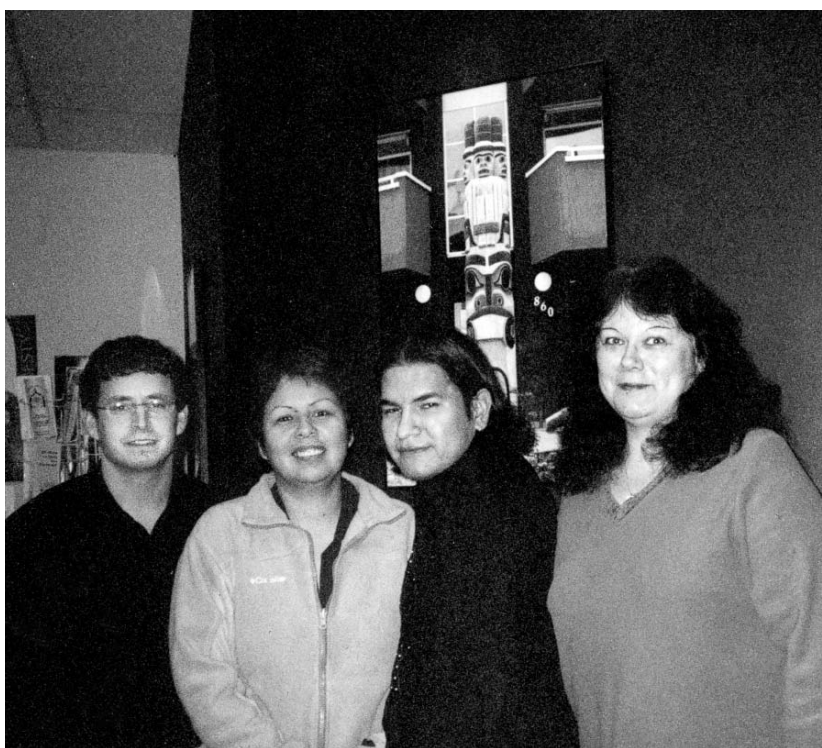


*Diane leaves these words with her clients and to all others-her motto: "We have to heal ourselves to make better choices."*

## THE VATJS An OVERVIEW

### NATIVE COURTWORKER | ANNUAL REVIEW

VANCOUVER ABORIGINAL TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM REPORT



*Barry Warhaft, Christine Smith-Parnell, Jasen Burnstick, Kimberly Graham*

**2002-3** marked the third fiscal year of program delivery for the Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services (VATJS). With it came new challenges and continued successes as the program strived to have a positive and profound impact on those people who come into conflict with the law and those who are harmed by their actions.

For the unfamiliar, the core purpose of the VATJS is to offer offenders and victims a satisfying and culturally appropriate alternative to the mainstream criminal justice system. During a Community Council forum - made up of trained Aboriginal volunteers, an Elder, the victim and offender and their support people - participants discuss the offense, its effects, and the causes of

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VATJS

## THE VATJS Overview continued

### NATIVE COURTWORKER | ANNUAL REVIEW

# VATJS

the behaviour that led to the offense. At the conclusion of the forum, a healing plan is developed with a goal towards making amends and reintegrating the victim and offender into the community.

The delivery of the VATJS relies upon the skills and commitment of talented and caring staff and volunteers. My sincere thanks and admiration goes out to these fine people for making the program a reality.

Their contributions become particularly noteworthy within an environment characterized by indeterminate funding, and the demands of a job that places them in the role of peacemaker and conflict resolution advocate for people experiencing significant hurt and systemic barriers to the achievement of their hopes and aspirations.

While provincial funding cutbacks forced the loss of two highly valued members of the VATJS family - Carrie Humchitt, Community Coordinator, and Yvonne Campbell, Administrative Assistant - other opportunities emerged that allowed the program to regain and even increase its capacity.

In October, funding from Lu'ma Native Housing Society's Aboriginal Homelessness Initiative brought the talents of Crystel Grisdale to the role of Community Coordinator. And, a successful application to the youth justice section of the Department of Jus-

tice resulted in the hiring of Jason Burnstick as Coordinator of youth programming.

Good fortune continued with the generosity of Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society, which allowed Kimberly Graham to staff the position of Administrative Assistant. Sustained funding from the federal Aboriginal Justice Directorate, the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development ensured program continuity as Christine Smith-Parnell anchored the program's efforts as Justice Coordinator.

In anticipation of the new Youth Criminal Justice Act, which came into force on April 1, 2003, the program immersed itself in preparation for the receipt of youth referrals. Twelve new volunteers completed VATJS training and were welcomed as Community Council members. VATJS staff also met with the Vancouver Police Department to draft a youth referral protocol. Similarly, a draft protocol between the VATJS, Provincial Youth Crown and the Ministry of Children and Family Development was agreed to in-principle.

The coming year holds much excitement and challenge. With an enthusiastic staff, dedicated volunteers and the continued support of the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC, we enter into it with optimism and great hope for making a small contribution to a more peace-filled world.

Barry Warhaft  
Program Director

*The delivery of the VATJS relies upon  
the skills and commitment of talented  
and caring staff and volunteers.*



## STATISTICS

### NATIVE COURTWORKER | ANNUAL REVIEW

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#### CLIENTS ASSISTED

	Description	Adult	Youth	N/A
Clients Gender	Male	8,515	1,430	29
	Female	2,638	757	17
Previous Conviction?	Yes	7,921	1,116	0
	No	2,822	894	0
	Unknown	449	188	44

#### CHARGES

Category	Adult	Youth	N/A
Homicide/Attempt Murder	49	12	0
Assault	4,181	382	5
Sexual Assault	444	50	1
Robbery	696	202	4
Other violent offenses	3,631	712	14
Property Offenses	566	124	4
Morality	892	62	2
Firearms-Related Criminal Code Offenses	0	0	0
Other Criminal Code Weapon Offenses	2,206	22	4
Impaired Driving/Refuse to Blow	491	41	0
Other Criminal Code Offenses	747	70	3

#### FEDERAL STATUTES

Drug Offenses	734	19	3
Firearms-Related Federal Offenses	0	0	0
Other Federal Statutes	2,499	870	4
Provincial/Territorial Statutes	1,060	86	2
Unknown	66	7	0

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

REGION #1  
Ben Cardinal  
Fort St. John, B.C.

REGION #2  
Charles McKay  
Terrace, B.C.

REGION #3  
Andrew Yellowback  
Prince George, B.C.

REGION #4  
Marilyn Baptiste  
Williams Lake, B.C.

REGION #5  
Wally Webber  
Bella Coola, B.C.

REGION #6  
Lynn Lidberg  
Courtenay, B.C.

REGION #7  
Doug White Sr.  
Nanaimo, B.C.

REGION #8  
Hugh Braker  
Port Alberni, B.C.

REGION #9  
Terry Laliberte  
Vancouver, B.C.

REGION #10  
Henry Hall  
Abbotsford, B.C.

REGION #11  
Linda Thomas  
Kamloops, B.C.

REGION #12  
Byron Louis  
Westbank, B.C.

REGION #13  
Donna Frances  
Cranbrook, B.C.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTEE  
Sgt. Brenda Butterworth-Carr  
Aboriginal Policing Services  
Island/South Western Dist. Coordinator  
Vancouver, B.C.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTEE  
Robert Watts, Provincial Director  
Community Corrections  
Corrections Branch  
Victoria, B.C.

## CONTACT A NATIVE COURTWORKER

# CONTACT



Alcohol & Drug  
PROGRAM OFFICES

Gastown Office  
50 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C.  
V6C 1E9

Phone: (604) 687-0281  
Fax: (604) 687-5119

Surrey Office  
13629 - 108th Ave., Surrey, B.C.  
V3T 2K4

Phone: (604) 588-8430  
Fax: (604) 588-8430

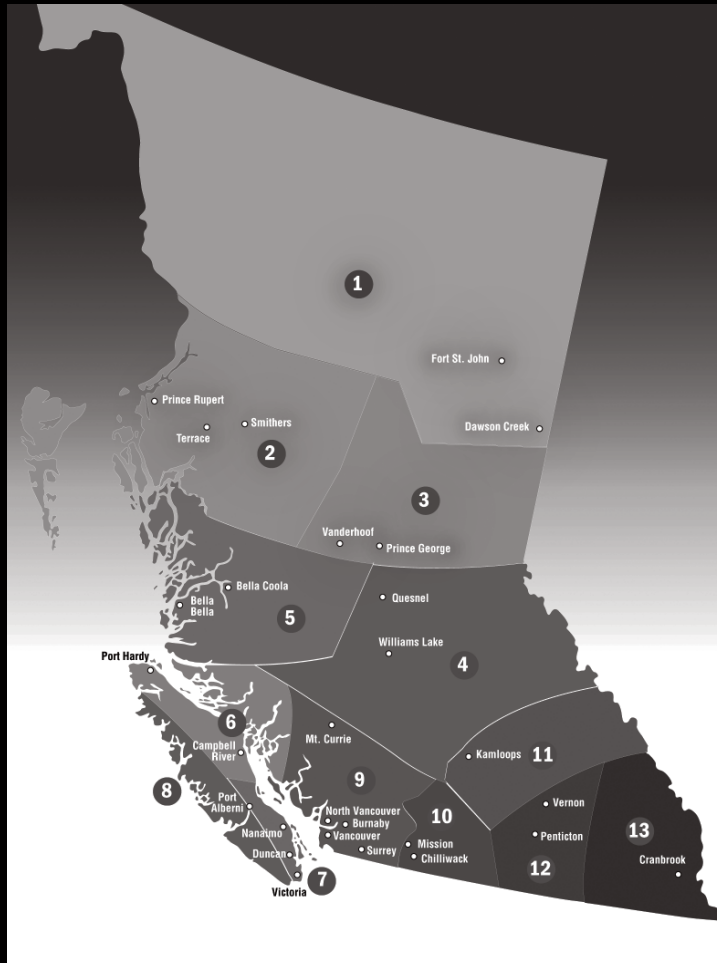
general inquiries  
nccabc@radiant.net

WEBSITE  
www.nccabc.ca

LOWER MAINLAND	Phone	Fax
Toll Free Number	1-877-771-9444	
Vancouver	604-687-0281	604-687-5119
Robson Street Courthouse	604-660-7455	604-660-7455
New Westminster/Burnaby	closed	
Surrey Courthouse	604-572-2293	604-543-3151
Chilliwack/Hope	604-792-5535	604-792-5535
Mission/Abbotsford	604-814-3444	604-826-4056
Mount Currie/Squamish	closed	
North Vancouver	604-981-0225	604-687-5119
Administration	604-985-5355	604-985-8933
Toll Free Number (Administration)	1-877-811-1190	
SOUTHERN INTERIOR	Phone	Fax
Toll Free Number	1-877-811-0206	
Kamloops Office	250-828-9758	250-828-9831
Williams Lake	250-398-6818	250-398-6819
Penticton	250-490-9513	250-493-5302
Vernon	250-545-1264	250-545-8885
Cranbrook	250-489-2464	250-489-5760
SOUTH COAST	Phone	Fax
Toll Free Number	1-877-511-2281	
Nanaimo	250-755-1916	250-755-1281
Bella Bella	250-957-2381	250-957-2544
Bella Coola	250-799-5959	250-799-5426
Campbell River	250-923-2809	250-923-2726
Port Alberni	250-724-3143	250-724-3110
Victoria	250-386-6717	250-386-6760
Duncan	closed	
Port Alberni	250-724-3143	250-724-3110
Port Hardy	250-949-8343	250-949-7201
NORTHERN INTERIOR	Phone	Fax
Toll Free Number	1-877-511-2280	
Prince George Courthouse	250-614-2683	250-562-1578
Prince George	250-562-9513	250-564-1134
Fort St. John	250-785-5516	250-785-5519
Dawson Creek	250-782-7335	250-782-7329
Quesnel	Relocated to Prince George office	
Vanderhoof	250-567-2636	250-567-2637
NORTH COAST	Phone	Fax
Prince Rupert	250-624-4621	250-624-3897
Smithers / Hazelton	250-847-4008	250-847-4082
Terrace/Kitimat	250-638-8558	250-635-8105

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

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03



### COVER ARTWORK

Michael Dangeli

Michael is of the Nisga'a, Tlingit and Tsimshian Nation; his traditional name is Goothl T'similx, which means "the heart of the beaver lodge". He belongs to the Beaver/Eagle clan. The Nisga'a originates from the Nass River valley of northern British Columbia. It is approximately 500 miles from Vancouver, BC.

Michael's works include design, regalia, masks, rattles, paddles, spoons and ladles, skin and box drums, bent wood boxes, several silk-screen prints, and nine totem poles.





THE NATIVE COURTWORKER & COUNSELLING ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
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• B.C. Ministry of Attorney General Community Programs Division and Security Programs Division  
Ministry for Children and Family Development • Canadian Executive Service Organization • North Region  
• Northern Interior • Aboriginal Relations Branch • South Fraser • Vancouver Region  
B.C. Ministry of Economic Security and Social Development  
B.C. Ministry of Health • Aboriginal Health Division  
Correctional Services Canada • HRDC Canada  
Native Programs, Legal Services Society  
Lu'ma Native Housing Society  
Vancouver Richmond Health Board  
BC Ministry of Women's Equality  
Department of Justice Canada  
United Way of Lower Mainland



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