

Union of Nova Scotia Indians

Quarterly Newsletter

Pjila'si

Welcome to the first Quarterly UNSI Newsletter for 2015/2016.

This newsletter reflects our work from April 1st to June 30th, 2015 and contains the latest information on our programs and activities.

If you would like further information or clarification about what you've read in this newsletter, please feel free to phone the UNSI office or send us an email and we will direct you to the appropriate person regarding the program or activity that you are inquiring about.



Executive Director's Message

As previously stated, UNSI has entered a new mode. Where we no longer perform Aboriginal Rights research, UNSI is attempting to assist the Assembly of Nova Scotia Chiefs with the rebuilding of our Mi'kmaw Government in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Chiefs and their Councils have agreed to govern together and be a part of managing the resources and land in Nova Scotia. In order to actively participate in the administration and management of our claimed land and resources, we must first build the required capacity to do this among our people. Therefore, UNSI's new strategy involves the training of community members to develop the knowledge and expertise in many of the components required to build our government and economy.

To kick-start this process, UNSI will be organizing community workshops dealing with the workings of Economic Development, Financial Management, Land Management and Resource Planning and other subjects a community may request. UNSI staff will assist with existing workshops and help to plan new workshops. In this way, UNSI hopes to assist communities prepare to take on the job of self-government.

– Joe B. Marshall, L.L.B., Executive Director

Governance Capacity Development

By Doug Brown, Community Capacity Development Officer – Governance

Due to the structural change of UNSI, as of April 2014, Doug Brown (former legal counsel for UNSI) is now the Governance Capacity Development Officer. The role of the Governance Capacity Development Officer is to assist member bands with their governance issues and aspirations. Under this new role, Doug will make use of AANDC's Governance Capacity Planning Tool, which was developed to allow First Nations communities to create a community-focused, long-term plan for governance capacity development.

The GCPT focuses on 10 core functions that encompass activities performed by both community leadership and community administrators on a regular basis, and which all other activities and functions are built upon. The 10 core functions are Leadership, Membership, Planning and Risk Management, Community Involvement, Law-Making, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, Information Management and Information Technology, External Relations, and Basic Administration.

Doug will also assist bands with other concerns that relate to governance such as the Matrimonial Real Property issue as well as Electoral Codes.

Economic Development Update

By Louis Joe Bernard, Community Capacity Development Officer – Economic Development

At the Atlantic Region Aboriginal Lands Association (ARALA) meeting on October 28-30, 2014, Louis Joe Bernard was selected as the regional Chair for ARALA for a two-year term commencing January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2016. This in turn gave him a seat on the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (NALMA) Board of Directors. NALMA has chosen Louis Joe to represent NALMA as an advisor to Matrimonial Real Property. NALMA's first national board meeting was held February 2014 in Winnipeg; followed by a meeting in November 2014 in Vancouver; and the last one was held June 2015 in Toronto.

As AANDC is moving into Lands and Economic Development, it is important that Lands and Economic Development have a working partnership. NALMA has signed a partnership MOU with the University of Saskatchewan to assist in the certification of land officers to bring capacity to land officers in our First Nations communities. NALMA have found that economic development needs land tenure knowledge to work hand-in-hand to be successful. Things like land designation, permits, ATR, and commercial leases are needed to bring own source revenue to our communities, which in turn, lead us to become more self-sufficient.

NALMA is a non-political organization that has grown to 123 member First Nations and consists of 8 regional associations.

Tripartite Forum Update

By Joan Sack, Tripartite Forum Liaison Officer for UNSI

Formerly referred to as the Annual General Assembly (AGA), this year's Working Development Session (WDS) was held May 28-29, 2015 at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre. With its first year under the new name, the WDS focused on fostering collaboration amongst working committees and sharing best practices on how working committees can enhance their workplans. The WDS resulted in a number of new and renewed collaborations amongst working committees.

As always, each Working Committee meet around four times a year throughout our NS Mi'kmaw communities. The following Working Committees met over the last quarter: Justice – April 7 & 8 in Membertou and June 18 in Sipekne'katik; Culture & Heritage – April 16 in Wagmatcook; Education & Economic Development Joint Meeting – May 12 in Eskasoni; Health – May 14 in Acadia; and Sports & Rec – June 18 in Bear River.

You can also find the latest information at www.tripartiteforum.com including: *Aknuntmaqn*, Tripartite Forum's quarterly newsletter, the annual report, as well as a calendar of upcoming meetings and events.

Home & Community Care Update

By Beverley Madill, Home & Community Care Coordinator (NS/NL)

Community visits are always a priority for the role of coordinator and were very much a part of the role this spring. For community coordinators who cannot attend our quarterly meetings due to distance, lack of access to video conferencing, or being part-time in the community, actually meeting face to face with home care program staff is vital. These visits provide an opportunity to share information from the national and regional levels of First Nation and Inuit Health Branch, and to discuss service delivery concerns within the community. Visits are always done at the discretion and schedules of the community coordinators.

The spring was especially busy with many committees trying to finish work projects and get work plans sent to funders and committee members. The coming fall promises to be busy as well with nurses training and Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) plus Personal Support Workers from across the Atlantic Region coming together to learn about Dementia, Healthy Ageing, Nutrition, and other topics that help with the work we do.

The HCC program is always looking for ways to improve how we deliver service to all of our communities across Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador. The sharing of information and resources is important to make sure our patients and clients receive the most up to date quality home care that can be offered given our limited funding. We are always advocating for more training, resources and funding to continue and improve the Home and Community Care program.

Looking forward to visiting your community and meeting the people that make our program so valued.

First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education and Employment Survey (FNREEES) & First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS) Update

By Mindy Denny, Project Manager, Gerald Gloade, Statistical Analyst and Rachel Paul, Support Personnel

It is definitely exciting times for the research team. We've officially launched the FNREEES/RHS website. Information about our on-reserve research projects can be found at mawkim.ca. On the website, you will find information about the projects, our guiding principles, OCAP info, and so much more. What we're most proud of is the online data tool. Using the online data tool you will be able to instantly populate statistics from the RHS phase-2 report (August 2010). There is also links to other websites and downloadable versions of our published reports.

Most recently, the FNREEES advisory committee met to review the youth dataset and draft chapter that is being written by Dr. Heather Castleden of Queens University. The FNREEES advisory will meet again over two days in Halifax on September 29-30 to review the child and adult datasets and draft report. In our best efforts to align regional report dissemination with the national FNREEES dissemination, the research team is working very hard to see our report completed by mid-November. A venue is yet to be determined.

We are happy to report that the RHS has officially launched its third phase of data collection in four First Nation communities – Potlotek, Miawpukek, Glooscap and Eskasoni. Over the summer, various other First Nation communities will launch and all 13 Nova Scotia First Nations will participate. In total, the research team aims to collect 2248 surveys and will have random prize draws after completion.

An additional component to the RHS questionnaires will also be launched. The new and improved community survey component has 12 sections and will be completed by the respective directors and managers in the community. The community survey will provide First Nations with an instant report that can be distributed to leadership and community-level personnel.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the research team at UNSI. Wela'liek.

Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI) Update

By Ann Gottschall, Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI) Coordinator

Spring came with much to be done! Among some of the highlights are two community-based mini diabetes self-management journeys. The first one was held in beautiful Eskasoni with a large attendance and the second one in scenic Wagmatcook for community members from both Wagmatcook & Waycobah First Nations. These events occurred with much help from local health staff, everything from getting participants, coordinating lunch and snacks, ensuring an appropriate venue and helping with presentations!

A couple schools enjoyed a visit from an X woman basketball player who talked about healthy eating and provided some basketball skill development! Students enjoyed hearing about healthy eating from someone who ensures they have appropriate nutrition for success. She provided participants with water bottles and fridge magnets.

Many (4) communities are enjoying a foot care session focusing on taking care of your feet to prevent foot problems. The foot care conversation maps provide a visual education tool that enhances the learning experience! Following the education session community members enjoy a game of diabetes bingo!

Potlotek Living in Balance Program continues to be a success! Educational sessions are coordinated around community members identifying what they want to learn about. The program includes setting personal goals and tracking the amount of steps taken each week by each person participating in the program. The ultimate goal is to reach 10 000 steps every day to enhance overall well being.

Nutritionist Update

By Angela MacDonald, Nutritionist

April was a busy month trying to get caught up with all of the events cancelled due to snow days. Child screening days were popular where children were screened between the ages of birth to 2.5 years as well as 2.5 to 5 years. A nutrition screening tool was used to help families see how to better mix and match meal/snack and drink choices to meet Canada's Food Guide.

Prenatal classes helped to teach moms how to prepare meals and snacks to help meet the needs of pregnancy. Follow-up prenatal classes were given to help teach parents how to make homemade baby food. The baby food classes provide excellent opportunity to discuss the importance of breastfeeding and to review infant feeding guidelines up to two years. Prenatal classes are well attended and the parents learn a lot from the discussion that takes places each session.

April and May were popular months for healthy living programs. The sessions were held over 5-6 weeks and helped teach participants how to count calories, follow proper portion sizes, read labels, share recipes and cooking techniques as well as how to grocery shop to meet heart healthy guidelines. Participants were given lists of healthy drink and snack options as well as tips for foods to choose while on the go. Exercise was built into each session by giving instructions for pedometers as well as how to use resistance bands.

Cooking classes are gearing recipes towards seasonal fruit and veggie options. This summer fish and seafood will be popular cooking class themes. With the food guide recommending fish at least twice per week, classes will help teach how to properly cook fish as well as how to stretch the fish to help feed a large family. Classes are offered to all age groups. Some communities are offering cooking with kids classes for HeadStart, YUM cooking programs for school-aged children as well as various adult/senior programming.

If you would like to book a nutrition event for your community please do not hesitate to contact Angela MacDonald via email: amacdonald@unsi.ns.ca or via cell (902) 577-0575.

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