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**Council of Yukon
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Youth Climate Action Fellowship Initiates Programming for Newly-Appointed Youth Fellows

WHITEHORSE – The Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship announced that programming is underway for 14 First Nations youth that were selected to participate in a 20-month fellowship. Building upon the Yukon First Nations Climate Change Emergency Declaration and the Youth Vision and Principles developed during the 2020 Yukon First Nations Climate Action Gathering, the initiative aims to decolonize climate policy in the North by empowering youth to lead the charge.

The Fellowship consists of four distinct phases, culminating with the co-creation of a Yukon First Nations Climate Vision and Action Plan. Fellows are currently engaged in the first phase of the project focused on building emotional and spiritual competency and expanding their knowledge to aid them in approaching climate change in a wholistic way and from their Yukon First Nations worldviews. This phase also involves the undertaking of two projects including participation in an online international symposium and leading a local place-based project.

The fellows were selected in December and began attending virtual sessions in late-January. They represent a diverse cohort of Yukon First Nations and transboundary First Nation youth from all linguistic groups across Yukon and range in age from 23 - 30 years old. The 2021 Yukon First Nation Climate Action fellows include:

- Nika Silverfox Young, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- Skaydu.û/Autum Jules, Teslin Tlingit Council
- Geehaadastee/Shaua Yeomans-Lindstrom, Taku River Tlingit First Nation
- Ékè Éwe/Carissa Waugh, Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- Jewel Davies, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Selkirk First Nation
- Kadrienne Hummel, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
- Mats'äsäna Mą/Sarina Primozic, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Jennifer Mierau, Tr'ondëk Hwëchin First Nation
- Bill Smarch, Teslin Tlingit Council
- Ryan Newman-Kay, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
- Nehaní Dene/Robby Dick, Ross River Dena Council
- Dustin McKenzie-Hubbard, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Jared Dulac, Kluane First Nation
- Jessi-John Whalen, Kwanlin Dün First Nation

This initiative is designed to hold young people up as the leaders of tomorrow through strengthening capacity, resilience and building the knowledge required to fulfill future leadership roles in their communities. The program will provide opportunities to upskill in areas that will strengthen their capacity to



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act, and further their careers through connection with leaders in the areas of reclaiming culture, climate science and policy, Indigenous law, and regenerative economy building.

Quotes:

CYFN is proud to be a part of this initiative that combines western knowledge and skill building with our traditional ways. Empowering our youth fellows in leading the way to identify the path forward around climate action on behalf of Yukon First Nations people is essential.

Grand Chief Peter Johnston, Council of Yukon First Nations

We are so proud of the 14 First Nation Emerging Leaders who are continuing to advance climate action in their communities. In the spirit of 'A Yukon that Leads', these Fellows truly embody what it means to lead from a place of values. We look forward to supporting their work, and wish them all the best as they continue to make a difference in the Yukon and beyond!

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, Assembly of First Nations - Yukon Region

Yukon First Nations are really at the forefront of upholding youth and taking climate action. Youth Climate Lab is proud to support that work with our diverse partners and the fellows. Together we are identifying synergies and scaling opportunities for youth to lead the just, climate-resilient futures they deserve. This is an amazing opportunity for youth to explore their role in the climate movement, develop leadership skills and have a real impact.

Dakota Norris, Programs Manager, Youth Climate Lab

Quick Facts:

- Yukon Government recently launched a Youth Panel on Climate Change. We are working together to braid offerings where mandates align.
- Youth Climate Lab is providing climate related curriculum as part of the Fellows journey between January 2020 to July 2021 as part of the Climate Resilience Collective. The Climate Resilience Collective is a large-scale, multi-partner initiative formed around regional pilots, and focused on creating enabling conditions to scale youth-led action.
- The Climate Action Fellowship launched the website www.yfnclimate.ca that includes information on the origin and purpose of the project and biographies of the Youth Fellows and the project's Advisory Committee.

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