



**YUKON
REGION**



**Council of Yukon
First Nations**

News Release

Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship Present Yukon First Nations Chiefs with Reconnection Vision

FOR RELEASE

February 15, 2023

Whitehorse, Yukon – The 20-month Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship concluded with the presentation of its Reconnection Vision to Yukon First Nations Chiefs and graduation ceremony today.

The Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship is comprised of 13 Yukon First Nations youth Fellows from across the territory that were empowered by Yukon First Nations Chiefs in 2020 to lead the charge on decolonizing climate policy in the North.

This initiative was 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 provided opportunities to upskill in areas that have strengthened the Fellows' capacity to 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.

From January 2021, the Fellows who see themselves as the 'Children of Tomorrow' have been working diligently on the Reconnection Vision. Through sharing conversations, ceremony, art, storytelling, they have deeply explored important questions about disconnection, reconnection, barriers to reconnection, climate action and the Yukon First Nation Final Agreements.

The RVAP presents the philosophy of 'Reconnection is Climate Action' and the theory of change – where the Children of Tomorrow are developing a climate action plan rooted firmly and solely in the traditional values and teachings held sacred by Yukon First Nations. The goal of this action plan is to encourage all people in the Yukon, Canada, and beyond towards their own reconnection journey.

The Reconnection Vision will be publicly released in the spring of 2023 following ratification by Yukon First Nations Chiefs.

Quotes:

It has been a privilege to witness the youth of the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship rise to the challenge presented by Yukon First Nations Chiefs to set the vision when it comes to climate action in the north. CYFN is proud to support these 13 young leaders in engaging a Yukon First Nations worldview to address the complexities of climate change through this fellowship.

– **Grand Chief Peter Johnston**

These 13 Fellows – who refer to themselves as the Children of Tomorrow – have spent the last two years on their own individual and collective journeys of reconnection.

They have worked tirelessly on innovative and community-based climate solutions to support a holistic vision for the future of climate action in the Yukon, Canada, and beyond.

This Reconnection Vision truly presents a Yukon First Nations-led paradigm shift in how the climate and mental health crises are understood, and how we may step forward together, ensuring Emerging Leaders are leading the way. As we celebrate their graduation this week, I raise my hands to each of the Children of Tomorrow for the heart work that they have poured into this Reconnection Vision document.

Gunalcheesh to all the Steering Committee members, Elders and leaders who have guided the Fellows along the way. Because of your leadership, I remain optimistic and full of hope, that we will continue forward in a good way for the next generations to come!

– **Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Kluane Adamek**

The Fellows:

- Nika Silverfox-Young: Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- Ryan Kyikavichik: Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
- Kadrienne Hummel: First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
- Jennifer Mierau: Tr'ondëk Hwëchin First Nation
- Jessi-John Whalen: Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Dustin McKenzie-Hubbard: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Mats'äsäna Mą Primozic: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Jewel Davies - Yekhunashîn - Khatuku: Carcross/ Tagish First Nation
- Carissa Waugh - Ékè Éwe: Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Robby Dick - Nagodigá: Ross River Dena Council
- Jared Dulac - Kamära: Kluane First Nation
- Skaydu Ū Jules: Teslin Tlingit Council
- Shauna Yeomans-Lindstrom - Geehaadastee: Taku River Tlingit Council

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