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Biographies of the K-12 Advocates

Ha7lh Skwayel (Good Day),



My name is **Vanessa Small Legs (Paul)**. My ancestral name is Chemkwat. I am honored to share that I have transitioned from the K-12 Elementary School Advocate position into the K-12 High School Advocate position with the Squamish Nation, Ta7lnewás – Education, Employment & Training Department. My primary focus will be with the Grade 10 – Grade 12, while supporting all grades when needed from K – Grade 9 as well.

I come from both the Squamish Nation and the Sechelt Nation, but I was born and raised in the beautiful Squamish Nation territory for most of my life. Here I have built roots and raised my own family of 3 boys and 2 girls.

As an Indigenous person who was raised on the North Shore, I went to Queen Mary Elementary School, Carson Graham Secondary School and Mountainside Secondary School throughout my own educational journey so it is my joy to work with our “men men” (children) and their parents throughout their educational journey in the very same territory where I have built many of my own memories.

I look forward to supporting and advocating for our children in High School as they continue to build the foundation and pave the pathway for success throughout rest of their life-long learning experience.

Chen kw'enman-túmi (I thank you),

Bio of Tim C. Manuel



My name is Tim Manuel and I am the new K-12 School Advocate with the Squamish Nation Education, Employment & Training Department, my primary focus will be **Grade 5-9**. I was born and raised in a small community called Spaxomin (Upper Nicola Band), which is 45 kms east of Merritt B.C. I carry the traditional Sylix name of N'petkwulax, which means “nailed to the earth”. I am from a Northern Sylix (Okanagan) speaking community, which is part of seven (7) communities that make up the Canadian part of the

Okanagan Nation. My wife of 11 years, is Sxwpilemaat Siyam, Hereditary Chief Leanne Joe from Squamish Nation and we have a 13-year-old son named Isaac. We relocated our family from Merritt to North Vancouver for both personal and professional reasons just over 3 years ago.



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I have been on my own healing journey for 21 years to become a better man, leader, father and husband. My paternal lineage comes from a hereditary chieftainship that can be traced back nine (9) generations. I was raised in the strong culture and traditions of the Syilx and N’la’kampux people of the Interior of BC.

I was a Cultural Resource Teacher in the Merritt School District for five (5) years, as well as a First Nations Support Worker. I have held positions throughout the Nicola Valley and on the Coast as a Cultural worker for various Indigenous and non-Indigenous entities working with Indigenous youth and families.

I have served 10 years on band council 5 in council and five (5) years as elected chief for my community. I have a great passion for the rich and diverse cultures of our First Nations, as it defines who we are as Indigenous people of this land. I am much honored to be a part of the team with the Squamish Nation Education Dept. and look forward to continue to foster transformation for our greatest resource, our children.

Ha7lh Skwayel (Good day),



My name is **Toni (TJ) Nahanee**, my ancestral name is Xwelapault. I come from the Nahanee, Lewis, Thorne, and Brown families. I was born and raised here in the beautiful Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) territory. It is with great excitement that I introduce myself as the K-12 Advocate for the Squamish Nation, Ta7lnewás – Education, Employment & Training department my **primary focus will be Kindergarten- Grade 4.**

I am a mother to a beautiful 2 and a half year old boy and my education background stems from working with children who have learning differences. I was lucky enough to experience working in both elementary and high school settings as an Education Assistant. I am honored with this opportunity to support & advocate on behalf of the children and families in my home community.

I am eager and excited to help nurture & nourish our men men’s (children) educational journey in any way possible, to help give them the best quality of life, and lay the foundations for success in life.

Huy chexw a,

Toni Nahanee, Xwelapault

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