

Human Resources Management for Indigenous Communities

FACULTY PROFILES



James T Arreak

Executive Director

The Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities

James is the Executive Director for the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities. He lives in Iqaluit, Nunavut. James recently completed his MBA from Western University's IVEY Executive Master of Business Administration program. He also holds undergraduate degrees in Business and Management.

Mr. Arreak has been a key contributor to the, April 1, 1999, creation of the Nunavut Territory. As an example, he opened the first bank accounts of the Government of Nunavut; James facilitated the first pre-budget consultations of the Government, as well as framing the unique needs of Nunavut that led to the appropriation of the Territorial Financing Formula. Furthermore, he played a central role in developing relationships in preparation for financing the infrastructure investment that built the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut as well as the 11 regional Government offices that included Staff Housing. James assisted with the development of an Investment Policy for the \$1.14 Billion Nunavut Trust portfolio. The Investment Policy determines the overall portfolio asset mix and ranges of variability, investment objectives, establishment of performance measurement standards used to measure progress against long term goals and objectives and the approval of the selection of investment counselors.

James has played a pivotal role in bridging the north to, and from, the south, including bridging between cultures, as well as bridging generational gaps. Having grown up within a strong family structure that values its Inuit identity, culture, traditions, beliefs and language. Despite these valuable foundations, James has been able to live in various parts of Canada continuing his education, training, working and gaining valuable experience. In recent years, James has continued developing the territory of Nunavut by conducting policy and program reviews involving procurement, as it relates to the Nunavut Agreement; conducting the non-emergency medical travel program; furthermore, large scale reviews included the 2nd Review of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. Recent accomplishments involved leading the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. through settling a \$255 Million litigation lawsuit between the plaintiff, Inuit of Nunavut, and defendant, the Federal Crown (Government of Canada) for failing to fulfill their contractual obligations as defined by the Nunavut Agreement. James went through residential school. Though the residential school era was a very difficult time for the Inuit of Nunavut and Canada, James caught the tail-end of the residential school era. Carving his way through difficult cross-cultural adjustments, James was able obtain an athletic scholarship at Mount Royal while obtaining an undergraduate Business Degree.

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Mr. Arreak has held a number of jobs and positions including: junior officer roles in Government, junior accounting roles; sales & marketing; senior banking positions for a big five bank; senior director positions in finance for the Government of Nunavut; a management consultant; president; Chief Executive Officer; board roles for Nunavut Trustee, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc, arts and performance. James is married to Looee, who is an original recording artist, plus a mother of 6 children.



Christine Bajona

Director, Human Resources, Indigenous Inclusion

First Canadian Health

Christine Bajona is the HR Director of Indigenous Inclusion at First Canadian Health and also the HR Advisor to it's parent company and family of companies. She is responsible for implementing HR strategies for the direction, vision and growth of the business, ensuring Indigenous cultural considerations are interwoven into all strategies. Christine has a shared familial passion for service in support of the Indigenous communities of Canada. With the trajectory to raise awareness and advocate for promises made to the Indigenous Peoples, Christine has charted her professional path in aligning with many esteemed legal and professional change makers to promote knowledge and growth and hold Corporate accountable in their commitments to inclusion of all diverse groups, most specifically to Indigenous People.

Through her academia in Business and Human Resources Management with Guelph University and Humber, Christine is an accredited CHRL with the HRP, currently on track to acquiring a specialized CCIP designation to be recognized as a Canadian Certified Inclusion Professional with the governing Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion.

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Carey Calder

Founder & Principal

Nakanagis Consulting Inc.

Carey Calder has over 15 years of senior management experience within Indigenous organizations and specializes in not-for-profit (NFP) organizational development and strategic direction.

Originally from Thunder Bay, Ontario, Carey is a proud member of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (Sand Point First Nation) and has called Ottawa home since 2003. Carey holds her Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Athabasca University and is an experienced administrator with corporate financial expertise and solid governance understanding.

Carey holds a passion for team building and sees a direct connection between progressive Human Resource (HR) management strategies and successful organizational and business growth. She is a strong Indigenous advocate and supports innovative work environments that seek to include approaches to reconciliation demonstrated in policies, vision, planning and strategies.

With her extensive experience in management and specific Indigenous recruitment and retention initiatives, Carey is compelled to spark conversations and dialogue about positive working environments, collaborative workplace cultures and progressive HR strategies. Her focus is to support and celebrate contributions of employees in a way that is demonstrated through competitive compensation packages and build healthy positive workspaces.

Carey has worked at the local, provincial and national levels and understands the intricate level of complexities that exist within the Indigenous community and government relationships. Her work in a leadership capacity with Indigenous organizations include serving as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Aboriginal Sport Circle, managing Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagement with the National Association of Friendship Centres social impact funding within urban Indigenous planning and as Executive Director of Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start which led to the expansion and acquisition of capital to enhance core services for Indigenous families in Ottawa including Indigenous child care services.

In early 2020, Carey proudly launched Nakanagis Inc., an Indigenous owned Canadian consulting firm that weaves her unique first-hand knowledge and perspective into tailored approaches and solutions to Indigenous businesses, corporate executives and not-for-profit service delivery organizations.

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Nicole Callihoo

Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Directorate

Alberta Education

Nicole Callihoo is the Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Directorate at Alberta Education. In this position, Nicole works to advance Alberta Education's goal of an education system that honours the history, cultures, languages, and perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities with support from the Directorate and the Ministry. Nicole is from the Treaty 6 Territory (Paul First Nation, AB) and is an alumnus from the Johnson Shoyoma Graduate School of Public Policy. She obtained a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Saskatchewan in 2014 and a Bachelor's Degree in Native Studies from the University of Alberta in 2002. She brings with her a very strong leadership background with more than 15 years of working with Indigenous communities.

Rose Anne Daniels

Director of Operations

Red Earth First Nation

A First Nation Indigenous woman growing up in REFN, living with all the impacts of colonialism, became actively aware of the injustices at an early age for First Nations through oral tradition passed down by her father & mother, John and Stella McKay and Grandparents, Chief Robert McKay, grandmother, Medicine Woman, Amelia McKay (Paternal); Anglican preacher, Alfred Head and Sofia Head. (Maternal). Through their teachings, the strength and resilience was gained to obtain a higher education. Later in years, completed the program of Public Administration from the University of Saskatchewan to understand the Federal and Provincial Government Policies that affected her life and many other indigenous peoples across Canada.



Allen Deleary

Human Resource Developer

Mnaasged Child and Family Services

Allen Deleary hails from the First Nation community of Walpole Island, unceded Indian Territory.

He has for his entire professional career been in service of Canada's Indigenous peoples. His experience has been at the National level, to Provincial to Community and as a private consultant. He has served as a Senior Manager or Policy Advisor, including the Assembly of First Nations, Federal Government as well as a Director of Operation for 3 communities. He has managed staff ranging from 275 to small teams. He is a firm believer in fair, equitable and human rights in the application and development of policy parameters in Human Resource management.

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David Desormeaux

Manager of Human Resources

Tsawwassen First Nation

As the Manager of Human Resources with Tsawwassen First Nation for the past five years, David draws from a wealth of human resources management experience spanning 20 years in a variety of industries, including government administration, security services, hospitality, and high tech. David is a Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR), holds a Graduate Certificate in Strategic Human Resources Management from Royal Roads University and an Executive Leadership Certificate from Cornell University. David leverages his human resources management expertise and his team's collective strengths to provide tactical and consultative support to supervisors and management while maximizing the employee's positive working experience with Tsawwassen First Nation.

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Jackson Dionne

Executive Director

Indigenous Wellness Training Society

Jackson Dionne's mission is to train First Nations Individuals who have addiction issues using Indigenous Health and Wellness principles to achieve financial independence. He has used himself as an example to achieve this. Jackson has been married for 20 years, has been a homeowner for 20 years, is very, very close to being financially independent, and has done a bit of travel in his recovery journey.

Jackson's core mission is to train other individuals to be financially independent.

To accomplish this Jackson has been working in the Addictions Field since June 2001. He started as an intake worker, then Alcohol and Drug Counsellor, then senior counselor and Team Leader, and manager of 4 programs located in two locations. He has created and developed his society, his website and has created and published recovery-related tips on YouTube. His five main drivers of empowerment are Recovery, Education, Employment, Culture, and Life Skills.

Jackson's education includes a certificate in Fisheries Technical Assistance Program, a diploma in Forest Resource Technology, a Certificate of Counselling Science with a Specialized Addiction Counsellor Certificate, a BA Psychology Major, and a Masters of Arts Degree in Professional Communication.

Jackson is also very involved in the community. He has completed the Dale Carnegie Course and was also a Graduate Assistant three times. He has been a member of Toastmasters and has led a group of learners for the Aboriginal Run Walk program hosted by SportMed BC for approximately ten years.

Jackson has been an executive director for an Indigenous Non-profit organization located at the corner of Main and Hastings in Vancouver BC where he was instrumental in raising close to \$1 Million in one year. He continues to work on and develop a society he was instrumental in developing where he is striving to "Create an innovative, dynamic work environment that supports the health and well-being of the team." He finds it very difficult to talk about himself and finds it very difficult to fit in all his contributions and accomplishments in such a small space.

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Ruth Dorsainville

Talent & Culture Manager

Indigenous Friends Association

CEO

DNA Diversity Executive Search

Ruth Dorsainville is the Talent and Culture Manager for the Indigenous Friends Association, CEO of DNA Diversity Executive Search, a Certified Leadership Coach (CLC), Founder of the Recruiting and Staffing World. While working on Wall Street as the Vice President of New York Staffing, a division of Chartwell Staffing Services, a Certified WBENC (Women Owned Business) and Disadvantage Business Certified (DBE). Achievements and awards in recognition, includes: in 2003, INC Magazine designated New York Staffing Services one of the fastest growing privately held companies in the U.S. It has received many other citations and awards, including an award for Outstanding Business Enterprise by the National Minority Business Council, Inc. in April 2009 and has also been featured on Forbes magazine.

Ruth has a proven record of success assisting world-class organizations with their executive recruitment and leadership development requirements. A trusted advisor to senior management, she builds long-term relationships, and has an established reputation for her commitment to excellence and focus on results.

Although she was living the “Canadian and American Dream”, deep inside she knew something needed to change because even with all her successes, she still felt unfulfilled. Thus she began her transition to find her career of passion. She discovered that in order to live a fulfilled life she needed to pursue her soul’s purpose. By taking charge of her destiny and following her dreams, Ruth finally found peace and felt complete.

Today she inspires individuals to live their essence through their career, entrepreneurial business and promote diversity in the workplace. She does so through many different mediums including her peak performance leadership coaching practice. She has studied and has been coached by world leaders such as Anthony Robbins, Bob Proctor, Darren Hardy, John Maxwell, Barbara Bruno and Chelt Holmes.

Ruth left Wall Street to become a humanitarian and conscious entrepreneur devoted to empowering millions of people to live their true purpose on earth and change the world towards positive consciousness.

She is a member of several professional associations, supports various charitable and community based organizations, and also offers her time coaching recent graduates. She is author of DNA of HappyNess: 30 Minutes Success Strategy for a Better Work Life Balance to help individuals find passion in their career by being true to their life’s purpose. She also wrote, A CEO Guide to Diversity and Inclusion to help organizations create a legacy company.

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Aaron Kaatz

Senior Human Resources Advisor, Policy and Programs

Employment and Social Development Canada

Helping people is my passion! I always knew from a young age that helping people is my passion and the driving factor for my future success but I never knew I could find a career in that. I always thought it was a myth or something that would be good to do “some-day”. But that someday is my daily life now as I slowly gravitated to my current position after figuring out what I wanted to do.

I was recently a part of Aboriginal Centre of Expertise team at the Public Service Commission where I lead the Indigenous Student Employment Opportunity Initiative to help Indigenous students across Canada currently enrolled full time get experience in various government departments. In my later stages at the PSC I was leading the Indigenous Career Pathways which served as an opportunity to further connect hiring managers directly with Indigenous candidates. What’s unique about this is that it is a national recruitment initiative and all the support and programs I run have been delivered virtually with a lot of success. The support and resources I provide to Indigenous students across the country are opportunities for networking, mentorship, training, and career development .

I came to Employment and Social Development Canada where my current position is, after first entering the public service with the Canada Border Services Agency. I worked in Human Resources in a student recruitment hub, but the entirety of my public service career to date, has been primarily in recruitment and program delivery.

When I am not in the office, I am in a hockey rink doing what I love: Coaching. I dedicate my spare time to head coaching youth AAA hockey teams.

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Nelson Onwuliri

Manager, Human Resources

Tsay Keh Dene First Nation

Nelson Onwuliri, Head of Human Resources, is a professional with 5+ years of human resource management experience, the last 3 years have been with First Nations and Indigenous Government. Nelson has a notable experience in strategic human resource planning, performance management, staffing, federal and provincial law compliance, employment contract negotiations, employee benefits, compensation and payroll, training and development, and management coaching.

Nelson Onwuliri holds a master's degree with a merit in International Relations and Security from University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom and a bachelor's degree with a second class upper in Political Science from Madonna University, Nigeria. Additionally, Nelson Onwuliri also has a Post-Diploma in Human Resources Management with a Honours from College of New Caledonia, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Nelson Onwuliri has worked with Prestigious National Multicultural Institute in West Africa to become a master level trainer in cultural competency. Nelson Onwuliri is a member of Chartered Professionals in Human Resources of British Columbia/Yukon and a member of Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM). Nelson Onwuliri is also a Registered Professional Recruiter under the Association of Professional Recruiters of Canada. Nelson Onwuliri is also pursuing his Master of Business Administration with specialization in Project Management with Aspen University.

Nelson Onwuliri works with professionals who are in leadership roles in public education and are looking to understand the strategies they can employ to balance themselves between their personal life and their work life so they can be more effective in their leadership role.

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Jeff Robert

Workplace Harassment Prevention Advisor

Nokiiwin Tribal Council

Owner

Workplace Ki

Jeff launched 'Workplace Ki' as a model to better understand common threads leading to success. Workplace Ki blends thinking from business leaders, traditional practices, and academic research to create inclusive working cultures.

Jeff is a proud member of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek with several family ties to the Fort William First Nation Community. As a seasoned workplace harassment prevention advisor, Jeff has a passion for supporting national Indigenous communities from coast to coast. Jeff has worked on a multitude of initiatives within his community of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek. Over the last 5 years, Jeff has worked alongside Northern Ontario Indigenous organizations in an HR capacity with a focus on compensation, benefits, performance management and employee relations.

Jeff actively demonstrates his commitment to building strong, healthy, and sustainable First Nation Communities. Jeff holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Lakehead University and a post-graduate diploma in Human Resources from Confederation College.

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Tanya Thomas

Senior Manager, Human Resources

Williams Lake First Nation

Tanya Thomas is the Senior Manager, Human Resources at a progressive, First Nation government, Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN). A CPHR Candidate since summer 2020, Tanya is leading human development for a growing First Nation government that is nearing 90 employees – while still under the age of 30. Ever prepared, meticulously detailed, quietly tenacious, and always up for a challenge, Tanya has empowered the WLFN leadership team and employee groups to rethink coaching and peer support throughout the organization. There are 198 First Nation governments in British Columbia. Many of these governments follow an antiquated administration model that is championed by the Indian Act. Traditionally, First Nation governments would place abnormal responsibility and oversight on the shoulders of the Band Administrator (or Chief Administrative Officer), particularly around HR management. The First Nation government landscape has changed significantly over the past 2-3 decades, with many Nations finding new socio-economic outcomes that support independent governance and oversight.

The Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) has enjoyed exciting success over the last 5-10 years, with program delivery and economic enterprises growing at a rapid rate. This organizational growth demanded a new, modern approach to HR administration that necessitated a new HR role to evaluate the employee experience. Tanya has perfectly complemented this transition, taking WLFN from an “Indian Act” organization to where we stand today – a progressive First Nation government that has implemented many initiatives that create measurable outcomes. Tanya has worked tirelessly to compare “old ways” dictated by Indian Act models, to modern employee experience outcomes that would be acceptable in any private practice, local government, or corporation. This accomplishment is not just one of pure function – but of empathy, leadership, and forward-thinking. Born and brought up in Mumbai, India, Tanya has completed her Bachelor’s in International Hospitality Management and Post Diploma in Human Resources Management from India. In 2014, Tanya started her journey in Kamloops, Canada and successfully graduated as the Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops.

Tanya discovered a passion for service at a very young age and strongly believes that giving has its own rewards. She interned for the Borgen Project, which is a not-for-profit organization that aims to eradicate poverty in developing nations. Tanya facilitated several fundraising events by selling her paintings at coffee shops and spread awareness about the project through the local news channel and radio station. Tanya’s final MBA project encouraged universities to help students learn the importance of intercultural communication during their learning phase. The world is coming closer day by day and organizations have diverse employees from different countries, cultures, religions, languages, races, come together and work with each other. As suggested in Tanya’s MBA project title, “Take the confusion out of the fusion”, it is important that we live a life of acceptance and curiosity and have an open mind to break down the barriers of intercultural communication. As an HR Professional, Tanya takes advantage of the opportunities in her personal and professional life to make a positive impact on her colleagues, friends, and family.