

Calvin Darrell Helin



Mr. Helin is a member of the Tsimshian Nation from the northern B.C. community of Lax Kw'alaams (Port Simpson). He is also a lawyer and business person with extensive experience as Senior Executive.

President and CEO of Eagle Group of Companies, LLC, and Orca Spirit Publishing & Communications, Inc. Presently, a practicing lawyer, President of the Native Investment and Trade Association, and Founding Director and Vice President of newly formed B.C. Oil & Gas Association.

Chosen as one of the top "40 Under 40" entrepreneurs in British Columbia by Vancouver based news publication, Business in Vancouver. Recipient of "Top 40 Under 40" national award sponsored by The Financial Post Magazine (now sponsored by the Globe and Mail) and other major Canadian corporations. Leader of international trade missions to China and New

Zealand. Author of several publications relating to law, Aboriginal business, and related issues.

Trina Maher



A member of Mattagami First Nation, near Timmins, Ontario, Ms. Maher is a certified project manager and essential skills analyst with a background in small business and community development. She brings to the council her particularly rich experience in alliance-making and follow-up facilitation. Prior to joining the council, Ms. Maher oversaw several partnerships between bands, government, and employers. She was instrumental in accelerating the dialogue between 26 regional First Nations in northern Ontario and pivotal employers in mining and resource extraction industries. One of the initiatives she managed and coordinated, The Workforce 2000 Initiative, became the subject of two television documentaries and received the City of Timmins Chamber of Commerce President's Award.

Ms. Maher was also heavily involved with launching Aboriginal Awareness Week in Timmins. The initiative continues to grow years after her departure, thanks to the dedication of the partners she originally brought together.

Widely recognized as an accomplished international workshop and keynote presenter, Ms. Maher oversees the council's Guiding Circles program. She not only delivers practitioner workshops across Canada, she aggressively promotes Aboriginal career awareness as a vital component for an expanding number of trades and skill-developing initiatives throughout Canada.

Shane Yellowbird



Shane Yellowbird's debut album, "Life is Calling My Name", may have just arrived in stores in November 2006, but the handsome young country singer is already creating a stir.

On a recent trip to Vancouver a flight attendant recognized Yellowbird from his music video and announced to her fellow passengers a celebrity was onboard. Though unaccustomed to the attention, the shy Yellowbird obliged his fans with autographs.

In just a few short years, Yellowbird has gone from quietly pursuing a fine arts degree at Red Deer College to a budding country music star, with a hot selling record, major awards and nominations, and two Top 10 radio hits and videos to his credit.

Growing up in Hobbema, AB, Yellowbird, who is Cree, was a typical cowboy. His parents participated in the rodeo circuit and their son learned early on to rope and ride, fully embracing the cowboy lifestyle and accepting

that it would one day be his future.

A strange twist of circumstances, however, put Yellowbird on the country music path. Born with a severe stuttering problem, he began seeing a speech therapist who suggested that he sing his sentences to help him speak clearly. The technique proved successful and also instilled a budding love of music in Yellowbird.

After entering several singing contests and winning, it seemed life was calling the young cowboy to fulfill another dream, that of a country music artist.

Spotted by O'Reilly International, Yellowbird signed on with the management company who had directed the successful careers of Brad Johner and Patricia Conroy.

"We knew Shane could sing and song write. But when we talked to him about his speech impediment and realized what he had overcome to get this far, we knew he had the drive and determination you need in this industry," says Louis O'Reilly president of the company.

"Life is Calling My Name" features radio-friendly tracks in the traditions of George Strait or Garth Brooks and showcases Yellowbird's amazing voice.

Yellowbird chose each track on his album much as he does everything in life - with thoughtful care.

"There's no break up songs or unhappy songs," Yellowbird says. "The whole album is positive. It's about having fun, being in love. I wanted the first album to be positive."

Close to his heart, the album's title track "Life is Calling My Name" talks about the freedom to just be oneself.

"This song really hits home for me," explains Yellowbird. "Life is before you, leave your problems behind."

He adds, artists like Mel Tillis - known for his noticeable stutter - serve as a role model.

"(Tillis' stutter) was part of who he was," says Yellowbird. "And people liked that about him. It made him unique and didn't stop him from having a successful music career."

Yellowbird hopes to inspire others to pursue their dreams. Wherever you come from, whatever obstacles you face, your dreams can come true - something Yellowbird knows firsthand.

Yellowbird is proud of his country roots and still breaks horses and competes in calf-roping whenever he can. But given the exceptional early fan response to his songs, Yellowbird's future seems destined to deliver more outstanding country music.

Crystal Kosa



Crystal Kosa is a respected professional in the field of Aboriginal Human Resources. Her wealth of experience and sensitivity to the range of issues in the field make her an indispensable asset as the National Director, Human Resources Strategies.

For 13 years Ms. Kosa worked with the telecommunications giant TELUS. While at TELUS she earned her diploma in Human Resources Management. Her rapid movement at TELUS led to her assignment as manager responsible for outlining employment equity objectives and developing diversity strategies. As equity and diversity advisor at TELUS, Ms. Kosa initiated a range of diversity programs to accelerate diversity competence both internally (within the workforce) and externally (in the company's relationship with its customers).

Crystal also brings an abundance of experience in melding corporate and community participation in outreach activities. She is responsible for researching and developing strategies to increase employer awareness and understanding of Aboriginal Inclusion. Ms Kosa

offers employers expansive new connections to the Aboriginal labour force.

Ovide Mercredi



Chief Ovide Mercredi is a Cree, a lawyer, a negotiator, an author, a lecturer in Native Studies, and an activist on behalf of First Nations in Canada. He was born into a traditional trapping hunting and fishing lifestyle in Grand Rapids, Manitoba in 1946. He is currently serving as Chief of the Misipawistik First Nation, Grand Chief of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council, and is also National Spokesperson for Treaties 1 through 11.

Chief Mercredi is perhaps best known to most of us for his deep involvement in constitutional law reform issues, and Aboriginal and Treaty rights negotiations. He acted as a key adviser in First Nations' opposition to the Meech Lake Accord, and in 1989 was elected Manitoba Vice-Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. He was first elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations in 1991, and served two terms until 1997. He also led the First Nations negotiations in the Charlottetown Accord.

He is the recipient of numerous awards and honours. In 2006 he was invested with the Order of Manitoba; the province's highest honour. He was nominated for the Gandhi Peace Prize and has received honorary degrees from Bishop's University, St. Mary's university and Lethbridge University. He has published a collection of his speeches in a book entitled *In The Rapids - Navigating the Future of First Nations*, and has contributed articles to two other recent books. He is the subject of two Canadian documentary films.

Chief Mercredi has spoken at hundreds of venues, from small community gatherings to universities and colleges throughout North America and internationally about his experiences.