

# NOVA SCOTIA NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

## March 2022 Newsletter



### A Message from the Executive Director, Karen Pictou

It is truly remarkable how much things can change! In those early days of 2020, we had no idea how the world would change and how those changes would affect us all in ways both large and small. After two years living in the pandemic, NSNWA continues to adapt and pivot to meet any challenge and support women in our communities, and we will continue to do so moving forward.



Karen Pictou, Executive Director

NSNWA is working on many new initiatives this year, and I am happy to share some highlights with you. WAGE has funded our Nationhood Housing Strategy. This will allow us to hire a Director of Housing Strategy. Additionally, we purchased Cedar House located in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Cedar House is a transitional and supportive housing initiative designed to provide service and programming to Indigenous women, Two-spirit people, and their families who are experiencing family violence. The new Director of Housing Strategy will provide services and supports in a manner that is safe, culturally appropriate and is sensitive to the trauma experienced by this population.

We have also recently provided each community chapter with \$5,000, a laptop, and a printer to increase capacity at the chapter level. Stay tuned for more community-based programs, events, and workshops in 2022! If your chapter hasn't received funds or set up a bank account, please contact Ellen Marshall, [events@nsnwa.net](mailto:events@nsnwa.net) for assistance.

I am so proud of the work of our staff and chapters. I am excited about NSNWA's future and look forward to seeing everything we can accomplish together.

### NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

- First Annual NSNWA Mawio'mi! (pg. 2).
- NSNWA elects new President and Executive Committee (pg. 3).
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## A Message from the President, Bernadette Marshall

It is my absolute privilege and honour to be elected as the President of NSNWA. I am looking forward to representing NSNWA and working with the chapters and other executive team members to advance NSNWA's mandate.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing President, Annie Bernard-Daisley. The present success of NSNWA would not have been possible without her leadership and for all her contributions and the hard work that she put in over the years.

I hope you are as enthusiastic as I am to see what kind of changes all of us can make together in 2022 and beyond!

Wela'liq,  
Bernadette



## First Annual NSNWA Mawio'mi in September 2021

We were pleased to host the 1st Annual NSNWA last fall! The Mawio'mi was hosted at the Windhorse Farms located on Wentzell's Lake on the South Shore of Nova Scotia from September 10 to 12, 2021. It was a great day and we are looking to this year's event!





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## NSNWA Elects New President and Executive Committee

On October 17, 2021, the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association (NSNWA) held an election at their annual general assembly, electing the new president and executive committee of the association. There were over 60 women from across the province in attendance, representing each first nations community in nova scotia, at the delta hotels by Marriott Dartmouth in Dartmouth, NS. After several hours and three voting periods later, a new president and executive committee was elected. The executive will represent the NSNWA for a period of two years.

The results are as follows: Secretary – Karina Matthews-Denny (Membertou Women's Group Chapter President), Treasurer – Sarah McDonald (Annapolis Valley First Nation Women's Group Chapter President), 3rd vice – Janey Michael (We'koqma'q Women's Group Chapter President), 2nd vice – Annie "Gibbet" Stevens (Eskasoni Women's Group Chapter Delegate), 1st vice – Karen Boyles (Pictou Landing Women's Group Chapter President) and President – Bernadette Marshall (Potlotek Women's Group Chapter Delegate). Congratulations to everyone who ran and those elected!



Pictured left to right: Janey Michael, Sarah McDonald, Karen Boyles, Bernadette Marshall, Annie "Gibbet" Stevens, Karina Matthews-Denny.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED



## Upcoming Election Dates

Covid protocols will be in place at each location.



### **Bear River Women's Group Chapter Election**

**Date:** Tuesday, March 22, 2022

**Time:** Nominations 6-7 pm, Voting 7:30-8:30 pm

**Location:** Bear River Heritage Centre

### **Potlotek Women's Group Chapter Election**

**Date:** Tuesday, March 29, 2022

**Time:** Nominations 6-7 pm, Voting 7:30-8:30 pm

**Location:** Potlotek Community Centre

### **Sipekne'katik Women's Group Chapter Election**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 30, 2022

**Time:** Nominations 6-7 pm, Voting 7:30-8:30 pm

**Location:** Sipekne'katik Community Centre

## Introducing Suzanne Brooks, Wellness Advisor!

Suzanne Brooks came on as the Wellness Advisor at Nova Scotia Native Woman's Association in Early October, 2021. Suzanne was born and raised in Millbrook First Nation by the late Lavinia Brooks and Kenneth Gloade. She is the proud mother of daughter, Keaghan Arianna. Suzanne has been brought up with a strong sense of community and believes that if we are going to build up our people, our people must have a voice in all aspects of policy building especially when it comes to our healing practices.

Suzanne holds a Bachelor of Social Work from St. Thomas University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Cape Breton University. Education has always been a top priority for Suzanne, but her life experiences are what has brought the most knowledge to her practice of work.



Suzanne Brooks, Wellness Advisor

As the Wellness Advisory, one of Suzanne's main responsibilities is to provide policy and procedures for the Cedar House located in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Suzanne has brought together an Advisory Board made up of community voices that work with our Indigenous Woman who may need shelter in a time of need. The Advisory board will meet every second month to provide input on policies such as but not limited to; harm reduction, residential guidelines, risk mitigation, training ect. Suzanne also works closely with the Executive Director on other issues that are identified through the work of Nova Scotia Native Woman's Association.

# STAFF UPDATES



## Justine Maloney, Employment & Economic Development Coordinator

The Employment & Economic Development Coordinator has been recently working with the Invest Nova Scotia, NS Apprenticeship Committee, Tripartite Committee, and the NSNWA Executive Director in seeking funds to start our Tiny Home Project. The hope of this project is to assist homeless families in need of obtaining a house of their own. Many of our families in our communities suffer from trauma, violence, and poverty and for whatever reason are not eligible for housing. A tiny home of their very own could open many doors for them and give them a sense of stability, self-confidence, and growth toward a brighter future.

The e NSNWA ISET program helps Indigenous women and gender-diverse individuals to fully participate in economic opportunities. NSNWA believes that education can help in achieving economic success. Empowered Indigenous women are the foundation for strong families and communities. To date, we have assisted 30 clients in either Target Wage Subsidy Training and or Skills Development. We can provide supports such as tuition, living allowance, childcare, job starts and other resources that can help our clients to reach their employment and skills training goals.

Our Sisterness e-commerce website is having great success, we are seeking more of our women to join and register. We have been attending craft fairs and other events to promote, if you would like us to attend your event, please send us a message. We have also opened our Sisterness Trading Post storefront at 440 George Street, Sydney, NS. Come visit us there for a wide variety of crafts, ornaments, jewelry, and clothing made from our talented Indigenous Women throughout Nova Scotia. You can also visit our website at [www.sisterness.com](http://www.sisterness.com) if you would like to join.



Sisterness Trading Post.

## Paula Robinson, Mainland Covid-19 Coordinator

Funding from Indigenous Services Canada for Covid is limited and not as wide reaching as it has been in the past. The funding that has been received for 2021-2022 has helped with emergencies directly related to covid, this does not include utilities and rentals as it had in the past. The fund can be used to create resources for mental health and social services.

The Jane Paul Centre will also be supported through this fund, it will provide help with the food bank and some transportation supports. More information on these services can be directed to the NSNWA Covid Coordinator, Paula Robinson at [mainlandcovidcoordinator@nsnwa.net](mailto:mainlandcovidcoordinator@nsnwa.net).



# STAFF UPDATES



## Dawn MacDonald, Triparte Coordinator

The NSNWA Liaison along with the Executive Director have worked with the Tripartite Officials table to finalize the new Terms of Reference, which includes a Code of Conduct signed by all members and their respective employers. This is to ensure that all members can work together in a safe and productive environment. The new format will be announced and shared in the near future. Tripartite Communications will provide a follow up to all members.

Justice: Mary Jane Abram

Social: Paula Robinson

Health: Karen Bernard

Sports and Recreation: Ellen Marshall

Education and Economic Development: Justine Maloney

Culture and Heritage: Marie Sack

Officials: Karen Pictou

Executive: Bernadette Marshall



Dawn MacDonald, Triparte Coordinator

During the ongoing pandemic, a few tables have tried to meet in person, with the majority remaining virtual. The tables have been working on their workplans and ensuring that the needs of the NSNWA are presented and that women and girls are represented in the work of the tables. The representatives have been asked to promote the work of the MMIWG and share the final report that was completed in early 2021. If you have any questions on the work of the tables, please contact the NSNWA Liaison, Dawn McDonald, or one of the table representatives.

The NSNWA is also working on the new 5-year Strategic Plan, which will provide a structured approach to the direction of the association and set goals for our future. Although this work has been stalled due to Covid restrictions, the work to date has been compiled and the team will be completing priorities and goals soon which will be the framework for the workplan.



**The Nova Scotia Native Women's Association's** mandate is to help empower Mi'kmaq women by being involved in developing and changing legislation, which affect them and by involving them in the development and delivery of programs promoting equal opportunity for Mi'kmaq women and their families.