



Our Board and staff would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in our community of stakeholders for their ongoing support and contributions to the continuing success of FNWACCB. During our ongoing growth and development, we have much to share with you.

What's new at a glance:

- Training Program Accreditations
- New and Upcoming Certifications
- Certification Exam
- A Journey of Cultural Awareness and Inspiration
- Sharing Our Caring - One Story
- Board of Directors Update



FNWACCB 2013 SNAPSHOT: The team at Bow Valley College beaming over the newly accredited Aboriginal Addictions Services Counselling Certificate.

Training Program Accreditation

Bow Valley College

We are pleased to announce the accreditation of Bow Valley College's exciting new Aboriginal Addictions Services Counselling Certificate program, specifically designed to incorporate Aboriginal holistic healing approaches to addictions treatment.

Students in this 8-month full-time certificate program will learn to support Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal individuals, families and communities in identifying and managing addictions through prevention and treatment programs. Students will acquire the multilevel intervention skills necessary to clinically address dysfunctional behaviours from substance abuse to gambling and prepare for careers in the wellness field.

This unique program addresses the standards and requirements of FNWACCB certification as Indigenous Certified Addictions Workers. Upon successful completion of this program, Bow Valley graduates with the required length of relevant work experience will be eligible for certification as Indigenous Certified Addictions Workers or Specialists.

Graduates of the Aboriginal Addictions Counselling Services Certificate will have a variety of career opportunities available to them, such as work in correctional institutions, social and child services facilities, emergency shelters, and community-based addiction centres. The program is open to all who want a career in wellness and their

professional certification with FNWACCB will be a valuable addition in their professional career. For more information on this program: <http://www.bowvalleycollege.ca/programs-and-courses/human-services/aboriginal-addictions-services-counselling-certificate.html>

Wellness and Addictions Programs – Nechi (Alberta)

The Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute offers specialized training to addictions counsellors working in Aboriginal communities. For over thirty-eight years, Nechi has been a leader in addictions treatment research and training. People who walk through the doors of the Nechi Training, Research and Health Promotions Institute experience a unique blending of academic curriculum and traditional Aboriginal culture; a powerful combination that ensures a greatly altered frame of reference. Nechi also incorporates traditional Aboriginal spirituality to enhance each student's learning experience.

FNWACCB has accredited several of NECHI's programs. With the necessary work experience requirements, graduates of the following NECHI programs and courses may qualify for certification:

- The Indigenous Addictions Services Certificate (IASC) qualifies for Wellness and Addictions Worker Certification (CIWAW)
- A combination of the Indigenous Addictions Services Certificate (IASC), the Advanced Counsellor Training (ACT), and Community Addictions Training (CAT) qualifies for the Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist Level 1 (ICAS1)

For more information: <http://www.nechi.com/apply-now/nechi-programs>

Nicola Valley Institute of Technology - Chemical Addictions Worker Program (British Columbia)

We are also very pleased to add the Chemical Addictions Worker Program offered by NVIT in British Columbia to our list of accredited programs.

This program was specifically designed to meet FNWACCB academic and training requirements for Addictions Counsellor certification. It provides students with the core skills required for First Nations Wellness Addictions Workers, and includes Aboriginal-specific content. This program will assist individuals who are currently addictions counsellors and/or addictions workers and may need to obtain professional development to meet job requirements. In addition, this program is open to individuals who wish to seek employment in the addictions field.



FNWACCB 2013 SNAPSHOT: Circle time opens a class at NVIT during the accreditation site visit.

Students can progress through a three-year program from a Certificate (1 year) to Diploma (2 years) and Advanced Diploma (3 years).

All 90 credits from this program have been accepted by the University of the Fraser Valley, so that students may pursue the UFV Bachelor of General Studies program by completing the 30 credits left to fulfill the 120 credits required to obtain a BA in General Studies with a specialization in Addictions. This achievement demonstrates the solid value of the NVIT Chemical Addictions Workers program and we are very proud to have added it to our list of accredited programs.

For more information: <http://www.nvit.ca/program.x?pgmID=48&expandDept=true>

Conference Training

FNWACCB has accredited training offered at NNADAP conferences in Ontario and BC. The training sessions are accredited free of charge for NNADAP conferences but the registration of trainers, which is an inherent part of accreditation, is subject to trainers registration fees. Our trainer registration system ensures that content delivered by trainers fulfill FNWACCB's accreditation criteria (whether independent trainers, conference facilitators, trainers employed by organizations/companies, institutes, colleges etc.). Registration through conference training applies only to trainers facilitating workshops, not guest or plenary speakers. All registered trainers are listed in our Trainer Registry. The registry allows Aboriginal organizations and employers to connect with FNWACCB recognized trainers to deliver training on topics they are interested in offering their employees, with hours that can be applied to certification.

If you are interested in accrediting training on topics related to wellness and addictions, whether as an employer, institution, a company, institute or if you wish to be registered as an independent trainer, please contact the Registrar's office: registrar@fnwaccb.ca or call: 1-877-974-7425.

FNWACCB continues to respond to requests for training program accreditation from colleges across the country. In the last year, we have accredited programs at Bow Valley College and NECHI in Alberta, NVIT in British Columbia, and the Kiuna Institution in Quebec (bilingual program). Now, we are in the last phase of accrediting a program at Canadore College with an on-site visit in April 2013.

Certification

New Certification in Prevention

Are you doing prevention work in your community? Our new certification for Addiction Prevention Workers and Chemical Addictions Specialists will attest to the knowledge skills and professional integrity you possess in this important field.

This certification is for professionals assisting a targeted, at-risk population showing early signs of a substance use issue or at risk of developing a problem. The approaches of these professionals reduce risk factors, promote protective factors, limit disability, prevent future addiction issues, promote community and cultural connections, and help break the multi-generational patterns of addiction in First Nation communities. The new certification focuses on reducing chemical addictions, which is still the priority in the majority of communities, and centers on individuals, families and special groups (pregnant women, women, the incarcerated, two-spirited, seniors).

This certification recognizes the skills of workers who bring change at individual, family and special group levels in their effort to reduce the risk of chemical addictions. FNWACCB is developing other certifications that will highlight the skills of professionals who are agents of change at a global, community level, with a focus on community wellness: community development, universal prevention and health promotion.

For more information: <http://fnwaccb.ca/prevention/>

ICAS Level IV - Clinical Supervision

In order to hone the standards and requirements for our new Clinical Supervision certificate, we've consulted several key contributors. FNWACCB wishes to recognise and thank the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation (in particular the Guidebook for Supervisors, Program Managers and Clinical Supervisors)

and the Youth Solvent Addiction Committee for their crucial participation in the development of this certification. The Youth Solvent Addiction Committee contributed to the workbook and developed a Clinical Supervisor Competency and Training Needs Assessment. Each year, YSAC offers courses in clinical supervision and ethics. The 28 hours of these courses are accredited by FNWACCB.

The FNWACCB Clinical Supervision certification standards are also on par with those of other mainstream certification boards. Among the mainstream works consulted in the development of this certification are *"The Clinical Supervision Handbook – A Guide for Clinical Supervisors for Addictions and Mental Health"* (CAMH), and *"Competencies for Substance Abuse Treatment Clinical Supervisors"* (US Department of Health & Human Services).

Certification Exam

With the growing acceptance for the need for professional certification of addiction workers across Canada comes the responsibility to ensure that certification services recognize and celebrate the vast cultural differences among people in Canada. In order to keep our credential relevant and of the highest professional calibre, FNWACCB recognized that we would have to develop a certification exam that would objectively measure the acquired knowledge, both academic and experiential, of our skilled Aboriginal addictions workforce. In order to make sure that our examination is relevant to addiction counsellors working with Indigenous people, it was essential that FNWACCB consult directly with our addiction and wellness workers in the field so we initially chose to field test the exam in several BC locations. We needed to determine whether the questions we are developing accurately assess the real world knowledge necessary for our addictions work force. We also needed to determine some base lines for things like how many questions can be reasonably answered in a set period of time; this will help us determine how many questions to include in the exam, how much time should be provided to take the exam, whether or not the questions were easily understood, and what would be the average score (given that no one studied for the exam).

Presentations and consultations were held in Armstrong (Round Lake); Williams Lake; Vanderhoof (Ormand Lake); Terrace (Kitimat and Kitwanga); and Haida Gwaii. We are planning a return trip to Williams Lake and to Vancouver Island, where programs in Nanaimo, Port Alberni, and Port Hardy will be consulted. In addition, we will do a second round of consultations in a number of locations across the country, including Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.

A Journey of Cultural Awareness and Inspiration



For two weeks in October, our Executive Director took the exam on the road to field test the exam and get feedback from addiction counsellors around British Columbia. We asked Alan to write an account of his experience travelling around the province with his son Zach to share with you all. This is what Alan had to say.

It seemed fitting that the first program we visited was Round Lake, just outside Armstrong, British Columbia, where we were warmly received by their enthusiastic staff. Round Lake is the first Aboriginal treatment centre to be established in BC (1979)

FNWACCB 2013 SNAPSHOT: Welcome to Round Lake Treatment Centre!

and has a well founded reputation for excellence in the addiction treatment field.

Since our exam includes both written and oral components, we needed to discuss some examples of the questions we developed. First, the group was presented with various questions. We then brainstormed what they considered relevant responses. All the team members were engaged and provided their perspectives with enthusiasm. Since essay and oral questions have a broad range of appropriate responses, we were able to ensure that all the counsellors had an opportunity to share and discuss what they felt were the most important responses. This proved to be a very effective way to ensure that the best responses to these questions would include real world perspectives from those most aware and in touch with the people receiving counselling.

Our next stop was in Prince George. We met with Mary Hanna, the new Director of the Carrier Sekani addiction treatment program, for a visit to their residential centre on the shores of Ormond Lake. Nothing could have prepared us for what we encountered there; a treatment centre with no running water, hydro, or indoor plumbing! In spite of this, the log facility was incredibly hospitable, with wood burning stoves, a generator for electricity, and clean fresh water brought in. Add to that a caring, dedicated staff and incredible food and we almost didn't want to leave.

From there we travelled to Terrace where we met with staff from the Gya'Wa'Tlaab Healing Centre in Kitimat and the Wilp Si' Satxw House of Purification from Kitwanga for a joint session. Once again the input from the staff, and their compassion and dedication to their work was truly profound. Our discussions were enthusiastic and we learned a great deal about many of the challenges facing First Nations healers working in remote areas.

From Terrace we headed north to Prince Rupert and boarded the ferry for Haida Gwaii. Travelling on Haida Gwaii was the most inspiring and spiritually fulfilling trip of our lives. I cannot begin to describe the overwhelming beauty of this magical land. It was amazing to see so many signs up and down the island protesting the pipeline proposal. For anyone who is even remotely supportive of such madness, being in such a gorgeous and vulnerable environment would surely make them think twice. Three days after we left for home, the big earthquake hit but fortunately, almost miraculously, no one was injured.



During this leg of our trip, Zach and I met with Sandra Dan, the addictions counsellor at the Haida Health Centre, to discuss certification issues and the introduction of our exam. We learned about some of the challenges facing the Haida, especially the young people trying to find their place in an ever shrinking and interdependent world.

We spent three glorious sunny days "off the grid" near Rose Spit, on the very top of Haida Gwaii where the Haida's creation stories take place. Looking north to Alaska from the beach, it was easy to feel an incredible sense of spirituality, of coming home, of being an integral part of nature, and of the Creator's wondrous plan.

On the way back down to the ferry we stopped at the Haida Heritage Centre, one of the highlights of our trip. As we approached the carving shed we could see a young man working on a totem pole. We could hear the music he was playing, an African-American blues tune from the southern USA. Zach, who is African-American, was immediately drawn to the music. There we met Tyler York, a 23 year old member of the Skedans Raven clan, who

was carving the totem. He is working under the guidance of master carver Jaalen Edenshaw, a member of the Ts'aahl-Eagle clan. It was incredible to see how happy Tyler was carving, and wonderful to see how quickly he and Zach, representing two amazingly resilient cultures, struck up a conversation.



FNWACCB 2013 SNAPSHOT: Tyler at work on the first totem to go up in Gwaii Hanaas in over 100 years.

Tyler was carving the 42 foot totem in honour of the 20th anniversary of the Gwaii Haanas agreement, the cornerstone of a ground breaking cooperative management relationship between the Haida Nation and the government of Canada. The pole will be raised in Gwaii Haanas on August 15th, followed by a feast in Skidegate on August 17th. It will be the first totem raised in Gwaii Haanas in 130 years! When we stopped road side to take a photo, we stumbled onto St. Mary's well, where legend says that all who drink from the spring are blessed to return to Haida Gwaii!

The last stop on our journey was at the Nenqayni Wellness Centre on the outskirts of Williams Lake. While we were able to introduce the concept of a certification exam and get some feedback from the counsellors, some of the clinical

team had a previous engagement so we were not able to field test the exam with their staff. However, once again the response from the clinical team was quite enthusiastic and we were very warmly received. We are planning a return visit in the upcoming months.

This trip highlighted how necessary field testing our exam is and collecting as much feedback as possible from our counsellors in the field. We need to hear, in their words, what they feel are the most appropriate responses to questions we pose on healing. It was so important to have the opportunity to discuss with each clinical team the key issues and concerns they have about their healing work and the challenges they face in providing the very best care to their residents. FNWACCB needs to understand how Indigenous counsellors approach their work, and what training needs they have, if we are to continue to provide first class service to our members.

For the past thirty years, I have worked in treatment centres in the United States and Canada. I have had the privilege of working with some of the most talented and dedicated clinicians in the field. Most had Masters Degrees in counselling and social work, and many had their Ph.D.'s. On this journey most of the counsellors I met did not have a university degree; most did, however, have extensive personal experience with addictions. Most have been working in the field for over a decade. I came away from this experience inspired by the level of compassion, understanding and real-world knowledge demonstrated by our addiction workers. What stood out most was the fact that our Indigenous counsellors don't view the healing they do as work, but rather as extensions of who they are. The people they help on their healing journey are not their clients, but sisters and brothers - part of their family and community. Clearly, mainstream healing professionals have much to learn from their Indigenous colleagues and the spiritual and cultural elements of recovery inherent in our treatment programs are the best place for them to start.

We at FNWACCB are grateful for all those who have assisted us in this process. We look forward to meeting with other workers across the country to seek their guidance in ensuring that our exam and all our services truly meet their needs. It is both humbling and a huge responsibility to realize that our staff is only one person removed (the addiction counsellors) from every Indigenous family in Canada. If there is any way that we can be of assistance on clinical or even program administration issues, we welcome your calls at head office.

Alliance and Partnership Activities

First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission

FNQLHSSC is a non-profit organisation responsible for supporting the efforts of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador in efforts to plan and deliver culturally-appropriate preventive health and social services programs. Its mission is to promote and ensure the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being of the First Nations individuals, families and communities. The FNQLHSSC also aims to foster access to comprehensive health and social services programs that are adapted to the First Nations and designed and recognised and sanctioned by the local authorities while respecting cultures and local autonomy.

Following several months of consultation with the commission's Addiction Advisor, FNWACCB was invited to meet with Marjolaine Sioui, Executive Director of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC), Richard Gray, Director of Social Services and Pierre Rioux, Addictions Advisor and our FNQLHSSC liaison.

During this meeting, we discussed the issue of certification for the First Nations wellness and addictions workers in Quebec as well as their training needs and educational opportunities.

During the second day of meetings, thanks to FNWACCB, negotiations led to a tri-partite agreement between the Commission, N.V.I.T., and Kiuna Institution to deliver an accredited program in Quebec in French and English. All courses provided by N.V.I.T. through the Kiuna Institution are certified by FNWACCB and count towards our professional certification.

We have been invited by the Commission to give a presentation as part of a three-day gathering of addiction workers and directors that will take place at the end of March 2013.

National Advisory Group on Workforce Development (NAGWD)

In January we attended our first meeting of NAGWD in Ottawa, sponsored by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA). The purpose of this group is "to provide federal, provincial, territorial and organizational representation and leadership in the development, implementation and on-going evaluation of a broad national strategy on workforce development across the continuum of services related so substance abuse." Promoting policies and best practices that enable supportive and healthy workplaces and good self-care in addiction service programs across the country is the first main objective for this year. The second objective is to increase professionalism across the Canadian community of addiction treatment specialists and allied professionals who work with Canadians affected by substance abuse and related mental health issues.

The first day of the meeting, January 24, was dedicated to an expert review panel examination and discussion of the second version of CCSA's technical competencies. The group was asked to pay particular attention to the flow of behaviour indicators between levels of proficiency in each competency, the behaviour indicators that were in the wrong level, and the key behaviour indicators that were not listed, as well as to identify the competencies about which panel members were the most concerned.



FNWACCB 2013 SNAPSHOT: Alan and Giselle pose with the team at FNQLHSSC

Two competencies in particular were flagged for review: Understanding the Continuum of Substance Use and Understanding Concurrent Disorders, as each is considered a critical foundation for the remaining competencies by the CCSA. The group found that terminology proposed in the wording of these competencies had been developed very quickly and without research. They recommended that CCSA conduct its own research and revise the terminology as appropriate.

In the afternoon, the group examined and discussed a rough draft of the tools that CCSA is developing to accompany the competencies: a competency-based reference check, competency-based interview questions, and the rough outline of practice guidelines for working with individuals from historically disadvantaged populations. The group provided feedback on whether or not the instructions were sufficient, the usefulness of the tool and what key concepts could be added or removed to improve the tools.

We are honoured to be a contributing member of this important group with the ability to lobby on behalf of First Nations addiction treatment services. CCSA sought input from the group about their role in researching the effects of substance abuse in the workplace, and whether we thought this was an area of need. The group wholeheartedly endorsed this role, and FNWACCB suggested that when CCSA conducts research that relates to the need for treatment services, Aboriginal addiction services ought to receive a high priority. Many in the group were not aware of the significant disparity between resources allocated to the mainstream addiction services system and Aboriginal addiction services. We shared, as an example, that the salaries of Aboriginal addiction workers is significantly lower (in many cases only half as much) as mainstream addiction workers. We will continue to lobby through this group for additional resources for addiction services in Aboriginal programs and communities across Canada.

Sharing Our Caring - One Story

One story, one voice can create healing and joy in so many others. Our ability to share our personal setbacks and successes helps us to learn and move forward in life as well as to bond with those in our communities. In the field of addictions, sharing different perspectives and stories of trial and triumph enables us to support and celebrate with one another, as well as to heal and be healed. With that in mind, FNWACCB will be launching a new feature in our newsletter and on our website called "One Story," where workers in the addictions treatment and prevention community will have the opportunity for their voices to be heard.

Kicking off the "One Story" initiative, we would like to share with you the story of someone who has dedicated his life to assist his people along the path of healing. Patrick Paul is internationally recognized and highly qualified in behavioral health, organizational development and implementation, and incorporating a systems perspective of operation. He specializes in the art of holistic personal/professional development of addiction/behavioral health counselors that incorporates cognitive, affective, and experiential learning while encouraging the participants to develop intellectually, creatively, emotionally, culturally, and spiritually. You can watch a video of his story at www.fnwaccb.ca If you are interested in sharing your story with us, please email admin@fnwaccb.ca or call 1-877-974-7425. Please only submit stories of your own experience and we will happily accommodate any requests relating to privacy concerns. We welcome your participation.

Board of Directors Update

After many years of invaluable support, Isaac Hernandez has stepped down from the FNWACCB Board of Directors due to ongoing medical concerns. Isaac is one of our founding members and has been involved in the healing profession for over 20 years in several capacities, including as a Minister of Religion, Clinical Counsellor, University Assistant Professor, and Consultant. While in these roles, Isaac has always maintained a close connection with the addictions treatment/recovery field. His expertise is in counselling, spirituality, leadership and management skills.

The Board and staff at FNWACCB would like to acknowledge and thank Isaac for his incredibly important contributions to the ongoing development of our organization. We pray that his health will be restored and that he can continue to provide the inspirational leadership to our field.



“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul
than the way in which it treats its children.”

– Nelson Mandela

