

# Dream Speaker

## Surrounded by Cedar Child & Family Services Fall 2019 Edition

### Welcome Ceremony

On November 20, 2019, Surrounded By Cedar hosted a Welcoming Ceremony for children and youth who have joined our Agency. Families, Community and Surrounded by Cedar staff all gathered at Wawadit'la (Mungo Martin Big House) where we were witness to a wonderful afternoon of cultural sharing and a delicious meal. We were grateful to have Elder Alex Nelson guide the night and ensure we follow Kwakwaka'wakw protocols while conducting ceremony in Wawadit'la. The youth and children being welcomed in, were all stood up in a long row where they were each blanketed and gifted with a devil's club necklace. Time was taken as they stood to introduce each of them, where they were from as well as hopes/aspirations they carry. Community knowledge keepers also shared words of encouragement to help guide them as they grow.

### Orange Shirt Day

*The Surrounded by Cedar team  
(including Apache) wore their  
orange shirts in recognition of  
Orange Shirt Day on  
September 30th, 2019*



*(Back Row L-R: Alana, Dawn, Maria, Lee,  
Shelley, Bel, Alysha Kacie)*

*(Front Row L-R: Maren, Jennifer, Brandi,  
Apache, Sarah U)*

# STAFFING CORNER

## THE SURROUNDED BY CEDAR FAMILY

### ***New Faces Around the Office***

**Nicole Leggeat, Administrative Assistant:** Nicole has joined the SCCFS team as the Reception/ Administrative Assistant until June 2020. She was raised on Vancouver Island, but also carries a connection to Prince Rupert through her Fathers lineage. She has previously worked for the Victoria Native Friendship Center, as well as the Saanich School District and hopes to continue on her education journey and carry on working with Indigenous communities.

**Nathalia Gagnon, Child & Youth Clinical Counsellor:** We welcome Nathalia Gagnon as our new child and youth counsellor in the clinical program. She is from Montreal, the unceded land of the Kanien'kehá:ka Mohawk Nation. She has a mixed heritage of settlers and Mi'kmaq ancestry. She completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at Concordia University and received her Masters' in Art Therapy from Aotearoa New Zealand. Nathalia completed post graduate Art Therapy training in Victoria and is a registered art therapist with the Canadian Association of Art Therapy. Her background includes child and youth counselling, transcultural mental health, somatic psychotherapy and multimedia arts. She is a lifelong student of Chinese medicine, yoga, qi gong, tai qi and meditation.

**Heather Teit, Guardianship Social Worker:** Hello Surrounded by Cedar community. Since starting here, I have been amazed at the warm welcome I have received – thank you all so much. While I grew up in the interior of BC close to Williams Lake, I have been living in Victoria on traditional Lkwungen territory for the past 12 years. Before coming to Surrounded by Cedar, I worked for the Ministry of Children and Family Development for 3 years, but I am very happy to have made the transition to Surrounded. I love working with children and youth, being a part of their journey to adulthood, and making sure they remain connected to their families and communities.

**Kacie Poskitt, Métis Guardianship Social Worker:** The agency welcomes Kacie Poskitt as one of our Social Workers who will also be working with our Métis children and youth. Kacie completed her degree in Social Work at UVic in 2017. She is Cree from Sagkeeng Cree Nation in Manitoba and has experience working for Cool Aid Society, Nil/Tu,O and the Ministry of Health. Kacie was the temporary Lifelong Connections worker from September to December 2019. We are excited Kacie has permanently joined our team!

**Natalie Henderson, Métis Guardianship Social Worker:** SCCFS also welcomes Natalie as one of our two Social Workers who will be working with and supporting the Métis children and youth who will be transferred to our organization. Natalie completed her degree in Child and Youth Care with a specialization in Child Protection from the University of Victoria and completed her practicum placement with the MCFD Saanich Peninsula Child Protection Office. Welcome Natalie!

**Jaquelynn LaFlamme, Administrative Assistant:** Jaquelynn (Jax) is the newest member of the Admin team to join SCCFS. She is originally from Treaty 7 Territory in Alberta and is Métis on her father's side. She recently graduated from UVic with her degree in Geography and Environmental Studies with a concentration in Environment & Sustainability. Jax comes to us with experience working and volunteering in the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve with Parks Canada and from the Water Management Branch in the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

# STAFFING CORNER

## THE SURROUNDED BY CEDAR FAMILY

### *Staff in New Roles*

**Courtney Amos, Intensive Youth Support Worker:** In October, Courtney moved into her permanent new position as the IYSW with Surrounded by Cedar! Courtney completed her degree in Criminology from VIU and is very excited to be working and supporting youth and young adults.

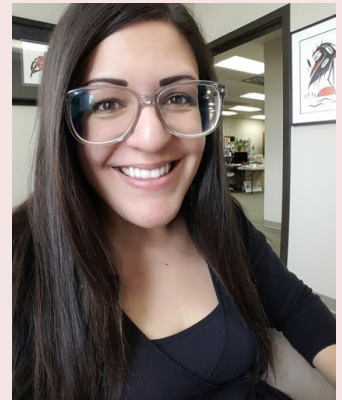
**Shelley LaFrance, Resource Social Worker:** We are excited to announce that Shelley LaFrance has moved permanently into a new role at the agency as a Resource Social Worker. Shelley has been with the agency for 3 years and has spent the majority of her time as a Guardianship Social Worker. Congratulations Shelley!

#### **We have a Master in the House!**

**Everyone at Surrounded wishes a heartfelt CONGRATULATIONS to Alysha Brown, Team Leader for Guardianship and Permanency Planning on completing her Master's of Social Work from the University of Victoria!**

**Alysha's thesis was on "Connection between Culture and Wellness for Indigenous Social Workers"**

**A tremendous accomplishment Alysha and we are all proud of you!**



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Pro-D Day Camp	February 14th, 2020
Traditional Story Time	February 15th, 2020
Family Day (office closed)	February 17th, 2020
Open Studio Group	Thursdays starting February-May 2020
Moose Hide Campaign	February 24th, 2020
Adoption Delegation Community Mtg	February 26th, 2020 11:00-1:00pm

# CULTURAL PROGRAMS UPDATE

SARAH UNDERDOWN & BRANDI LANCASTER

## Pro-D Days

September brought us together to do wool weaving in the old style. The kids were quick learners and were proud to take their bags home to put their special things in them.

In October, we saw a film with a few of our kids and treated them to a nice lunch. It was a nice way to spend the day!

## Lunch and Learn

We continue our partnership with Foster Parent Support Services in offering Cultural Lunch and Learns once a month for our families. We share a meal and learn various Cultural teachings at each gathering. In October we gathered at the Songhees Wellness Centre where we shared teachings of medicines both local and from across the mountains. Participants had the chance to make a medicine bag as well as a beaded necklace with Devil's Club. We hosted over 50 community members! Watch our website for the next gathering date

## Building Our Bundles

Building our Bundles continues to bring new cultural learning. In September we gathered to learn and create wool bags, in October we had special guest Natasha Pittman (Nehiyaw/Kwagu'l) who shared her personal story in growing up and how she came to reconnect with her culture. Natasha, who is also a hairdresser gave haircuts in exchange for a cultural or handmade gift. Natasha had been travelling BC, AB, MB, and ON with her sharing of her gift of hair, and it was a special gift for her to come spend time with us.

## Winter Feast

This year brought so many wonderful memories as we gathered for our annual Winterfeast, sharing a delicious meal catered by Toque Catering! We enjoyed cultural sharing by 3 drum groups from different territories (Lkwungen, Kwakwaka'wakw and Lachwalis) as well as cultural crafting; paddle necklace making, medicine ornaments and reindeer candy canes. Mr. and Mrs. Cedar Claus were in attendance which brought joy to our young ones.

This event is always our favorite way to end the year and we appreciate all those who were in attendance. We hope you had a relaxed and enjoyable Winter Solstice and look forward to seeing you all in this new year!



# CULTURAL CONTINUITY UPDATE

SARAH LEGGEAT

## September

### Rescindment Ceremony

In September, the staff at SCCFS held a ceremony at the Victoria Provincial Court House to honour a family as their relationship with SCCFS came to an end. At the end of the court proceedings, the judge addressed the courthouse, gifted the family, and SCCFS staff blanketed them. Hereditary Chiefs from the family's Nation shared some words and acknowledged the family for their hard work. The family had asked for a drummer/singer from their Nation to share a song in the courthouse. The drummer sang a song and it brought a crowd of sheriffs, lawyers, and the public into the room. After the ceremony at the courthouse, we arranged for a dinner at the Wawadit'la (Mungo Martin House) for the family and their guests. At Mungo Martin house, several dancers, drummers, and singers arrived to share songs and dances in honor of the family.

## October

At SCCFS we have children and youth from Nations all over Canada. We strive to connect children and youth to their culture despite not living near their community. One of our Cree youth wanted a ribbon skirt to wear for special events or in ceremony. Luckily, in Victoria we were able to find an artist who was able to make this youth a custom ribbon skirt. The youth picked the fabric, ribbon colors, and the custom animal design on it.



*Cedar Headband made by Cultural Continuity worker Sarah Leggeat. Sarah was able to create and gift this to a very special family.*



*Sarah's position as the cultural continuity worker has led her to experience the traditional territories and culture of some of the youth we work with.*



# CULTURAL CONTINUITY UPDATE

SARAH LEGGEAT

## December

December was a busy month at SCCFS! We had Winterfeast and another court ceremony to plan. This court ceremony was to honor a father as his involvement with SCCFS came to an end. We were able to support close relatives to travel to Victoria to witness this ceremony. The family were given the opportunity to speak in the courthouse and the Matriarch of the family shared some words. Afterwards, SCCFS staff shared a song and we were joined by some of the family members. The family were so happy to be present at the ceremony and shared how powerful it was to see Indigenous people singing and drumming in a courthouse.

I've been in my position for almost a year. I've travelled to 13 places, witnessed grandchildren visit grandparents after not seeing each other for some time. I've watched siblings living city's or provinces away reunite, tease and love each other up like a day has not gone by. I've witnessed youth connect with culture and flourish. It's been wonderful connecting with caregivers, family members, community members, children & youth in care. I feel grateful to be able to do the work that I do and to work with such a wonderful team at SCCFS.

*Submitted by Sarah Leggeat*

**Photo:** A traditional jingle dress made for a child from the Muskeg Lake Cree band. This child remembers having a jingle dress when she was very young and loving to dance in it, but it went missing after she had to move homes. Her social worker and cultural continuity worker joined together to find an artist to create her a new jingle dress. This dress was created by a Tsartlip First Nation artist to have traits of the child's personality embedded in the design, which can be seen in the bright pink fabric and heart appliques.



## Métis Sashing Event

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, I had the great honour of attending a sashing ceremony at Island Métis Family & Community Services, co-hosted by the Métis Commission for Children & Families of BC. What I witnessed was a strong, proud community wrapping itself around its children and youth, reminding them of where they belong. Each of those children and youth were so proud to identify as being Métis as they received their sashes, and it filled my heart with so much love and happiness. I raise my hands to Melanie Hudson for extending the invitation and for making me feel so welcome. I also raise my hands to Sherri Wildman for the beautiful gifts and for sharing some of your teachings with me about Métis culture.

*- Submitted by Jennifer Chuckry*



## Foster Parent Appreciation Luncheon October 30, 2019

Foster Parent Appreciation was a success again this year. The event was held on October 30th at the Songhees Wellness Centre. Every year, caregivers receive acknowledgement of their years of service with special mention of 5, 10, 15, and 20 years. This year Surrounded by Cedar honoured nine caregivers whose service ranges from 5 to 35 years. I would like to give honourable mention to Pat and Dave White who have been caregivers for 43 years. I would like to thank Skip Dick for welcoming our family and guests to the traditional land of the Lkwungen People and sharing his experience and knowledge about the current foster care system and the old ways of doing this work. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of the Songhees catering department. The food is always top notch. Finally, I would like to thank Kacie Poskitt who was instrumental in pulling this event together.

- Submitted by Wes Haase

## OPEN YOUR HEART, OPEN YOUR HOME



We recognize that all parents want to provide the best care for their children, but at times this is not possible without support. Family Care Homes provide safety and care to Indigenous children and youth while they are away from their parents. Many Indigenous community members already provide this type of care to Indigenous children and youth. This has always been our way. Becoming a foster parent is a way to extend our hearts and homes to other Indigenous children in community.

**Want to know more?** Take the first step in your journey to make a difference in the lives of our Indigenous children. Please call or email to speak with one of our Resource Social Workers.

**Email:** [becomeacaregiver@sccfs.com](mailto:becomeacaregiver@sccfs.com)

## Honouring UVic Friendships

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, SCCFS was honoured spend some time connecting with the School of Social Work's faculty members. A huge thank you to Jacquie Green for making this happen. SCCFS values its longstanding relationship with UVic, and it was wonderful to meet the new faculty members.

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, SCCFS had the great privilege of hosting Jeannine Carriere and the students of her "Protecting Indigenous Children" fourth year BSW course. What an amazing afternoon! We are so grateful for the amazing conversation! So many courageous and necessary questions were asked of our staff in regards to our practice and beliefs as an urban Indigenous organization. We were humbled to share some of our wise practice with each of you and look forward to meeting all of you in the field!



## Provincial Employee Community Services Fund (PECSF) Campaign

PECSF, also called the Community Fund, is the Province of British Columbia's unique, employee-driven workplace giving program. Over the past few years, Surrounded by Cedar has been asked to participate in Kick Off events for various ministries wishing to learn more about the charities and organizations they can support through their donations.

In October, SCCFS was invited to host a table at the kick off events for the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Attorney General/Public Safety and Solicitor General. Maren and Alysha presented to the Ministry of Attorney General Justice Services Branch. Our presentation was opened with a Territory Acknowledgement and song, followed by an introduction of who we are, our vision, mission and an overview of agency programs. With the support of PECSF contributions, we've received over \$18,600 for our Back to School Picnic Program.

**THANK YOU PECSF!**

## Regional Gathering: CFCSA Amendments

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, SCCFS, in collaboration with MCFD, hosted a regional leadership gathering. The intention of this gathering was to discuss the amendments made to the CFCSA and Bill-C92, also known as *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families*, which is law and came into effect on January 1, 2020. Presenters from MCFD shared valuable information on the amendments to the provincial legislation as well as information about work that is underway to align BC's child welfare policies and practices with the requirements of Bill C-92. Both MCFD and DAA practitioners are required to utilize both Acts within their practice as of January 1, 2020. There was lots of good, honest conversation that took place throughout the day and lots of hope for a different way forward in Indigenous communities. We are grateful for Yuxwelupton who offered a welcome to the territory and provided such meaningful teachings about the land we were situated upon for the day. We are also grateful for Wedlidi Speck and Stephanie Papik for their wonderful facilitation skills!

## Surrounded by Cedar Swag Available for Purchase

All proceeds go directly towards agency programming



Hoodies  
\$40.00



Sweatpants  
\$30.00



Lunch Kits  
\$5.00



Totes & Water Bottles  
\$5.00 \$10.00

## **Circle of Security Parenting Series**

Sponsored by SCCFS and open to Foster Parents, Caregivers and parents who are caring for children 0-14 years of age.

The Circle of Security Parenting Program is based on decades of research about how we can build secure parent-child relationships to support and strengthen our child's development.

**Dates:** To be determined

**Times:** 10:00am –12:30 (or evenings) (light lunch provided)

**Contact SCCFS Child & Youth Counsellor Dawn at  
250-383-2990 Ext 218 for more information or to register**

## **Traditional Storytime**

Join us at the Bruce Hutchison Library, at the Commonwealth Pool, for a monthly storytelling group for families featuring: traditional story tellers, art & songs, and free Indigenous children's books to take home for your family.

Storytime Circles will be Saturday's from 10:30AM to 11:30AM

### **Upcoming Dates:**

March 14th

April 11th

May 9th

June 13th



Family members will be invited to join our SCCFS Child & Family Counsellor, before and after sessions to discuss ideas to help foster connection and reclaim traditional practices with children.

\* For registration please contact Dawn by email at [counselling@sccfs.com](mailto:counselling@sccfs.com) or by phone at (250) 383-2990 ext. 218



## **Life Books**

*Working together to record the memories and histories of our children and families*

**“Creating a Path” Lifebook** (for Aboriginal children)

**“My Journey” Lifebook** (for non-Aboriginal children)



\$55.00 each + s/h

Phone: 250-383-2990

Email: [info@sccfs.com](mailto:info@sccfs.com)

## Meeting with Community: Adoption Delegation

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, SCCFS hosted a second community meeting in regards to the agency's plan to acquire adoption delegation. As part of the delegation process, SCCFS will establish an Adoptions Exceptions Committee which is responsible for reviewing all requests where a proposed permanency plan involves a non-Indigenous caregiver who is not related to the child by birth. In meeting with community, SCCFS explored five questions:

1. *Who should comprise the membership of the Adoptions Exceptions Committee?*
2. *How should decisions be made (consensus, vote, etc.)?*
3. *How should outcomes/recommendations be communicated?*
4. *How should disputes that arise be managed?*
5. *How should the agency proceed with permanency planning in situations where Nations do not support adoption planning?*

While attendance at this meeting was limited, the conversation was rich, and we are grateful to those who shared so openly. The information gathered has assisted the agency to shape a Terms of Reference.

The follow-up Community Gathering will take place on **FEBRUARY 26TH** from **11:00 to 1:00 p.m.** in the **Large Boardroom at SCCFS** (lunch will be provided). In this meeting, we will present the draft Terms of Reference that incorporates what we heard on October 2nd and seek any final input.

**RSVP: [frontdesk@sccfs.com](mailto:frontdesk@sccfs.com)**

## Unity Drummers and Singers

Unity Drummers and Singers is an urban Indigenous group of community members who come together to drum and sing, while providing a safe and culturally sensitive space for family and community to gather.

Drum practices are open to anyone who may have an interest in spending time with the community, while drumming until your heart is content.

Practices take place weekly. If you don't have a drum, no worries! Several our members bring extra drums to share.



**Date:** Every Friday Night

**Location:** Victoria Native  
Friendship Centre

**Time:** 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM



## Surrounded by Cedar's 2019 Annual General Meeting

Surrounded by Cedar hosted its' Annual General Meeting on October 23, 2019 at the Burnside Gorge Community Center. We are grateful to **Wushq** (Ron Rice) for acting as Chair of the meeting and to **Yuxwelupton** (Bradley Dick) for opening our time together with a Welcome to the Territory and a song. A wonderful meal was provided by Jessica Sault of SeeFood Catering. This year, we welcomed back Bruce Underwood and Suzanne Wilkinson to the Board of Directors and welcomed our newest Director, Sue Simard.

<i>Bruce Underwood</i>	<i>President</i>
<i>Suzanne Wilkinson</i>	<i>Vice-President</i>
<i>Jacque Green</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<i>Jeanine Cooper</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Lonnie Gosek</i>	<i>Director</i>
<i>Sue Simard</i>	<i>Director</i>
<i>Jessie Jim</i>	<i>Elder</i>
<i>VACANT</i>	<i>Nuu-chah-nulth Representative</i>

**Want to know more about what's happening at Surrounded by Cedar?**

**Join our Membership!**

**Memberships are \$1.00, renewed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Receive updates and invitations for agency events and activities, plus your membership will earn your vote at our Annual General Meeting!**



### SCCFS 2019-2020 Membership

Name (First & Last) : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Contact: (please check one)

Email  Mail

*Please note (as per SCCFS constitution and bylaws), memberships expire the day before the SCCFS AGM.*

#### OFFICE USE ONLY

Membership Fee Received? (please circle)      Yes      No

Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

