

## **Northern Resident Scholarship, \$ 10, 000**

### **Lucy Bell**

Masters Candidate, Indigenous Language Revitalization, University of Victoria

Title: *Giving Strength to Our Voice*

With less than 20 fluent speakers remaining in the Haida language of Haida Gwaii BC and Alaska, the language and in need of innovative and immediate revitalization. It is a critical time for us to look back in history for the clues to revitalize our endangered language isolate. Haida ancestors once used ceremonies, prayers and medicines to empower their speech, songs, memories and place in this world. They called upon the Creator, Saa Nang Iitl'aagdaas and spirits of Story-woman, Lady Luck and others for help. They used traditional Haida medicines, beliefs and songs to help with language retention and being gudinee tlatsga, strong-minded. Ts'iihlanjaaw, devil's club and xilguuga, single delight flowers are just two of these important medicines that new language learners could be using. There is a great need amongst the Haida and other indigenous peoples to have a deeper understanding of indigenous epistemology, traditional practices and spirituality to ensure our languages survive. My research will bring together the voices of my ancestors, elders, fellow learners and researchers to allow us to be gudinee tlatsga, strong minded in our language revitalization efforts.



### **Sarah Daitch**

Masters Candidate, Dispute Resolution, University of Victoria

Title: *An Ethical Space for Dialogue About Difficult History: Program Evaluation of a Residential School Education Unit in Canada's Northwest Territories and Nunavut*

Born and raised in Inuit, Dene and Métis communities in Nunavut and the NWT, Sarah Daitch was brought up appreciating Northern lands and cultures. After immigrating to Canada, her family worked as educators across both territories. They call Thebacha/Fort Smith, NWT, home.

As a student at the University of Victoria, Sarah is working on a Master of Arts in dispute resolution in the School of Public Administration. For her research, she is collaborating with the governments of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut through their departments of education. The territorial education departments developed a mandatory curriculum unit regarding the history and impacts of residential schools, piloted in high schools during the 2012-2013 academic year. Sarah's work explores how this new education unit influences student thinking and behaviour, including critical thinking skills and sense of community and civic engagement. Because it is a region undergoing rapid development, fostering critical citizenship amongst students is vital not just to the North, but to all of Canada.



Sarah's study follows a mixed methods design. The project relies on a pre and post survey of students and teachers, followed by student sharing circles in nine communities. These methods

fit the study's overall critical social science research paradigm, using a decolonizing approach. The results of this study will be made available to government, schools, school boards and Indigenous governance organizations in all participating communities in Nunavut and the NWT.

### **Cathy Lee**

PhD Candidate, Educational Leadership, University of Toronto  
Title: *Inuit Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing: The Creation of a Community School with Elders as Teachers*

The creation of an education system in Nunavut, grounded in Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) is a critical part of healing from a colonial past and in creating a decolonizing future. Documented accounts of best practices in Inuit education as part of healing from this colonial past and in the creation of a decolonizing future are few and greatly needed. A process of community consultations grounded in Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing is an essential part of this process and of conducting research in a respectful and reciprocal way (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2006 and Nunavut Department of Education, 2010).



The main intent of this inquiry focuses on how a community worked together to create a community school, grounded in Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) with Elders as teachers. This will be accomplished by working with community to share the story and to celebrate the process and work of creating a community school and to document the creation of this community school as best practice in Inuit education.

This inquiry will be framed in the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles of (inuuqatigiittiarniq-respecting others, tunnganarniq-being welcoming and inclusive, pijitsirarniq-serving, piliriqatigiingniq- working together for a common purpose and qanuqtuurunarniq-being resourceful to find solutions). The information gathered from the meetings and conversations with community members will be organized by themes and will be further developed to form a documented account of one communities work to create a community school.

### **Heather McGregor**

PhD Candidate, Education, University of British Columbia  
Title: *Educational Change in Nunavut: the Role of Histories in Policy, Programs and Pedagogies*

This research explores how the Nunavut school system is drawing on the past (histories, memories, Elder knowledge) to facilitate educational change in the present and future. The premise of the research is that the Nunavut government has called for decolonizing the school system, and that staff involved in the school system require supports to contribute to Nunavut's new educational processes and goals. This research will explore some approaches recently undertaken in Nunavut to develop and implement new policy, leadership development programs and curriculum development programs. The research questions include: How and why



does the Nunavut Department of Education figure knowledge from and about the past in initiatives intended to facilitate change to the education system?; and, How can examples of these practices be used with education staff to learn about more education in Nunavut? Examining government documents, engaging in conversations/focus group with education staff, and incorporating aspects of my own experiences, this research explores the complexity and challenge of reconceptualizing a contemporary school system to reflect foundations of Inuit knowledge, values and principles.

### **Aimee Schmidt**

Masters Candidate, Environment and Sustainability,  
University of Saskatchewan

Title: *Re-Telling the Polar Bear Story: Local Perspectives on Polar Bear-Human Interactions*

Polar bear-human interactions and conflicts are relatively commonplace in northern Canada; however, in the context of climate change they are of increasing significance for northern communities. Despite a relatively large body of scientific literature on polar bears there have been few studies on how northern community members perceive polar bear-human interactions and want to see them managed. Polar bear-human interactions are viewed very differently and have different meanings for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. These differences can lead to conflicts over polar bear management strategies and can polarize debates about polar bear conservation. The purpose of this research is to discover what can be learned about polar bear-human interactions in stories told by residents of Churchill, Manitoba. Narratives about bear-human interactions are a common form of knowledge communication in northern communities and could provide valuable insight into the attitudes and perceptions of local community members regarding polar bear-human interactions. The findings will contribute to the lack of knowledge on the human dimensions of polar-bear human interactions. It will advance understandings of polar bear-human interactions in a way that will improve the well being of northern community members as well as aid in the development of more effective polar bear management strategies.



### **Lori Schroeder**

Masters Candidate, Renewable Resources, University  
of Alberta

Title: *Ecological Impacts of Wood Bison on Grasslands in the Aishihik area, Yukon*

Since wood bison were reintroduced to the Nisling River area in the southwest Yukon in the late 1980's, their population has jumped from 34 to over 1,100. Biologists and members of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations are concerned that the bison may compete with caribou, moose and sheep for forage or physically displace them.



There are also concerns that wood bison (listed as threatened under SARA) may be altering grasslands that contain rare, endemic plant species such as *Koeleria asiatica*. The Aishihik and Kluane areas are interspersed with small grasslands that are considered to be relicts of steppe communities and are home to many rare plant species.

My project will quantify the impact of bison on grassland composition and diversity. I will use analysis of bison location (GPS) data, fecal samples, orthophotos, existing plant inventory data, and consultation with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to test the hypothesis that grasslands will decrease in species diversity under bison grazing disturbance.

### **Kiri Staples**

Masters Candidate, Environment and Sustainability, University of Saskatchewan

Title: *Gender and Participation in Natural Resource Management Decision-making in Yukon Territory*

Across the Canadian North, co-management boards have become a central part of natural resource management. The purpose of these institutions, based on agreements between Aboriginal, territorial and federal governments and resource users, is to manage human uses of natural resources in more sustainable ways by sharing responsibility for decision-making between a diverse range of interests. Despite this objective, a recent study found that the majority of co-management boards in the Canadian North have limited female representation within their board membership. This project will further examine the implications of this finding. Its objective is to investigate the extent to which gender affects decision-making on co-management boards in the Yukon Territory, with a focus on women's experiences as board members. It will consider barriers to and opportunities for women's participation, as well as whether these experiences influence the nature of the decisions that are made by co-management boards. While limited research has been done in the Canadian North on this topic, these issues of gender and participation are relevant to creating socially and ecologically sustainable management decisions based on a diversity of perspectives. In this way, this project has the potential to develop strategies for more effective decision-making processes and outcomes.

