



## *NWT Indigenous Leaders Economic Forum 2024*

# ***SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES***

**Bertha Rabesca Zoe**, Tłıchq Executive Officer is a Tłıchq citizen who has made significant contributions in various capacities. Born and raised in Behchokò, a community in the Northwest Territories of Canada, before attending law school, she worked in the region in multiple roles.

She received her law degree from the University of Alberta in 2003 and has been a member of the law society of the NWT since 2005. Throughout her career, she has been involved in legal matters related to the Tłıchq Government, including work on self-government and land claim agreements.

Bertha has held several positions with boards and committees outside the Tłıchq Government. Her experience and education position her well to continue the momentum of growth and empowerment within the government. Her role as Tłıchq Executive Officer involves leadership and administration within the Tłıchq Government, with a focus on protecting and promoting Tłıchq language, culture, and way of life.

Bertha Rabesca Zoe is a dedicated leader who has contributed significantly to the Tłıchq community and government.

**Caitlin Cleveland** is a Canadian politician who represents the Kam Lake electoral district in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. She was first elected in the 2019 election and was acclaimed for a second term in the 2023 Territorial Election. On December 8, 2023, she was sworn into the Executive Council.

Ms. Cleveland has a diverse background. She was raised in Yellowknife, NT and graduated from École St. Patrick High School. Her career includes roles as a Communications Officer Intern with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), marketing work at Northwestel, and serving as a Senior Policy Analyst in the Department of Finance (GNWT). Before entering politics, she was known as a respected northern entrepreneur.

In her personal life, Ms. Cleveland enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing, skiing, and traveling with her family. She is married to Jeffrey Bowden, and together they have three motivated and independent children: Jackson, Owen, and Dalyn

**Caroline Wawzonek** was first elected to the 19th Legislative Assembly in 2019 as the Member for Yellowknife South. Ms. Wawzonek served as Minister of Justice, Minister of Finance, Minister responsible for the Status of Women and the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. In 2023, Ms. Wawzonek was acclaimed to the 20th Legislative Assembly and

returned to Executive Council as Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance, Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister Responsible for the NWT Power Corporation.

Ms. Wawzonek holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Calgary (2000) and a law degree from the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law (2005). Her academic journey included language studies in China and Taiwan, as well as legal internships in the Philippines and England. Born in Calgary, AB, she has called Yellowknife home since 2007.

After establishing her criminal law practice post-admission to the Law Society of the NWT, Ms. Wawzonek appeared in all levels of NWT courts and engaged in circuit court travel. She later joined Dragon Toner, expanding her practice to general litigation and administrative law until becoming a member of the 19th Assembly.

Since 2007, she has taken on leadership roles in the legal community, including the presidency of the Law Society of the Northwest Territories (LSNT), section chair for the Canadian Bar Association Northwest Territories Branch (CBA-NT), and committee membership in various working groups. Her community involvement extends to

appointments in multiple Yellowknife organizations, and she received a national award in 2017 for her contributions to Canadian Women in Law.

Ms. Wawzonek, a mother of two, enjoys running, paddleboarding, and time outdoors.

**Chief Danny Gaudet** is known as an inspirational Aboriginal leader who has worked tirelessly for the Déline community on the shores Great Bear Lake, a region where people still follow a traditional hunting and fishing way of life. He had served previously as chief negotiator for the Déline Final Self-Government Agreement. His achievements in the Sahtu Region of the Northwest Territories include serving as chair of the Canada/Déline Uranium Table, which sought recommendations regarding injuries caused by the Port Radium uranium mine. He has served as chair of the board of North-Wright Airways, President/Owner of Déline Construction, senior advisor to the Indian Government Support Panel and chair of the NWT Community Mobilization Initiative. In 2015, Danny Gaudet received an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from the University of Alberta.

**Chief Fred Sangris Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Ndilo)** was born in the Yellowknife Bay area to parents Morris (Tia Chee) and Theresa Sangris Nee' Black and grandfather, David (olter'caulther) Kamelli Sangris – grandson of the famous 1860 chief of the Coppermine River, Nayatii. Fred is a part of the long-standing leadership from the Kemili/Sangris family lineage and is a direct descendant of Chief Nayatii of the Copper Mine River and the edge of the wood Yellowknives Dene.

While growing up, Fred had to endure the residential school system for many years. Although this was a very bad period in his life, Fred acknowledges the skills he learned such as reading

and writing in the English language. In the early 1970's, having left residential school, he returned to the land with his family for many years. During his time on the land, he was taught the travel routes, place names, burial sites, and family names for many, many areas. The YKDFN Elders taught Fred the history and leadership he relies on today.

Fred is a well-known and experienced hunter and trapper, Fred has been trapped for a considerable amount of time on some of the most difficult land terrains, including trapping on the barren lands north of Yellowknife. He used to spend up to five months of the year in the barren lands trapping white fox just south of Lac de Gras where the diamond mines are today.

In the late 1990s, Fred was elected Chief for our Community of Ndilo and again in 2006 until 2010. In 2015, Fred became the Community Negotiator, negotiating the Akaitcho Land Claim on behalf of the Community. Fred was recently re-elected as Chief in 2021 with a focus on settling long and outstanding land settlements for governance, lands, and resources. Fred has extensive experience in leadership, politics, and the priorities of our community and frequently demonstrates this knowledge as our Chief.

While Fred is very busy with his duties as Chief, he still enjoys giving lessons on history, treaties, and land use as well as the Dene way of life. He is an advocate for passing on knowledge, especially to the next generation. Fred also continues to spend time on the land, setting nets, trapping, and hunting.

**Chief Robert Charlie-Tetlich** was born in Fort McPherson, raised by his parents John Alfred Tetlich (originally from Old Crow) and Annabella Robert (from Fort McPherson). Robert attended Residential School in Fort McPherson (Fleming Hall) and Inuvik (Stringer Hall). Robert spent his summers at their summer fish camp at Road River, learning traditional skills and conversing mainly in the Gwich'in language. Upon graduation, Robert attended the Adult Vocational Training Center in Fort Smith, taking a course in Basic Electronics. He then joined CN Telecommunications (Northwestel) and worked there as an electronics technician.

Robert has been active as a Councillor for the Inuvik Native Band/Nihtat Gwich'in Council and a Director for the Gwich'in Tribal Council. Robert was the past GRRB Chairperson for over 15 years and was responsible for establishing the office in Inuvik. Robert is currently the Chief of the Inuvik Native Band. Robert would like to see our youth graduate from High School, pursue further studies at a post-secondary institution and return to work for our organizations. Youth should also learn their traditional cultural on-the-land skills. Robert looks forward to working with the Communities and Co-management partners on wildlife, fish and forest management.

**Darrell Beaulieu** was appointed President and CEO of Denendeh Investments Incorporated (DII) and group of companies in October 2005. DII holds investments on behalf of the NWT Dene First Nations in Mineral Exploration, Communications Infrastructure Logistics, Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution, Food and Supplies Distribution and Real Estate. He is also Founding Director, President and CEO of DEMCo Ltd., a 100% Indigenous

owned mineral exploration company established in 2013. Darrell was honored in 2016 by the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada with their prestigious Skookum Jim Award, for exceptional Indigenous achievement in the mineral industry.

Mr. Beaulieu served as Councilor for 2 years and 8 years as Chief of Ndilo, Yellowknives Dene First Nation. He is a founder and past president of Det'on Cho Corporation from 1990 to 2000 and served as CEO from 1997 to 2002. He is a founding director and served as President of Det'on Cho Diamonds Inc. from 1998-2002.

Mr. Beaulieu was co-chair of the Mine Training Committee from 1996-2004. He also served on the NWT-Nunavut Chamber of Mines from 1998-2001 and was reappointed in 2015 for another term. And on the Government of the Northwest Territories Mineral Advisory Committee. Currently, he serves on the Northwestel's Community Advisory Board and ATCO's Indigenous Advisory Board, and is the co-chair of Northland Utilities Enterprises Ltd.

**Dawn Madahbee Leach**, Chair, National Indigenous Economic Development Board, an Anishinabe-kwe and member of the Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation, has been the General Manager for the Waubetek Business Development Corporation since 1988. Waubetek is a leading Indigenous Financial Institution that provides financial services to Indigenous entrepreneurs and 27 First Nation communities in Northeastern Ontario (central Canada). She is the first Indigenous woman in Canada to head up a regional financial lending institution. At Waubetek, Ms. Madahbee Leach has been instrumental in the establishment of major regional initiatives as well as \$100 million in investments in Indigenous businesses and economic projects. Nationally, she has helped design programs that meet the capital needs for Indigenous businesses and First Nation communities.

Ms. Madahbee Leach also currently serves on the Boards of Peace Hills Trust and NioBay Metals Inc. She has also served on her First Nation Council and was the former Chairperson of the Northern Policy Institute and the Northern Ontario Development Corporation and a former director of the North-East Integrated Health Network, the Ontario Development Corporation and Innovations Ontario Corporation. She has spoken and promoted Indigenous businesses internationally in regions such as Australia, Sweden, Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom. Ms. Madahbee Leach is the owner of Indigenous Business International, a company that provides advisory and strategic planning services.

Dawn is the recipient of a 2020 Indspire Award for Business and Commerce and was recognized as one of Canada's 100 Most Powerful Women in 2018. She also received the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General in 2018. She has also received the Anishinabek Nation Achievement Award in 2011. In 2004, she was recognized as a *Mover and Shaker* for economic development in Northern Ontario Business. Ms. Madahbee Leach was contributed a chapter in the book *"Changing Lives: Women of Northern Ontario"*. She also contributed to a book compilation entitled *"Governance in Northern Ontario – Economic Development and*

*Policy-Making” by Segsworth and Conteh with her chapter “First Nations Inclusion: A Key Requirement to Building the Northern Ontario Economy”.*

Ms. Madahbee Leach graduated from the University of Waterloo’s Economic Development Program and holds a degree in Political Science and Law from York and Laurentian Universities.

**Eira Thomas**, Chair, North Arrows Minerals is a Canadian geologist whose mining career in spans more than 30 years in exploration, management and directorship. In 2008 she was one of only four Canadians to be named Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum.

Thomas' career includes leadership roles at prominent companies such as Stornoway Diamond Corporation, Diavik Diamond Mine and Harry Winston Diamond Corporation.

**Francis MacDonald** has 15 years of experience in the mining industry and is an exploration geologist. He co-founded Kenorland Minerals, a North America-focused company generating greenfield exploration opportunities across different commodities. Prior to 2016, Mr. MacDonald worked with Newmont Mining doing greenfield exploration in Nunavut, West Africa, and East Africa.

**Gerald Antoine** currently holds the position of Dene National Chief and also serves as the N.W.T. Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. Born in Fort Simpson, he has a rich history in Dene politics. Prior to his current role, he was the Chief of the Łíídlı́ Kú’e First Nation. Additionally, he has served as the Grand Chief of the Dehcho First Nations. Antoine’s leadership and experience contribute significantly to the Dene community and its representation on regional and national platforms.

He has held numerous leadership positions and played important roles in the Berger Inquiry, the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, Nahᑭᑦ Dehé Strategic Plan, and promoting Dene heritage through his work with Native Communications Society CKLB, the Canadian Museum of Civilization and Parks Canada.

**Grand Chief Jackson Lafferty** was elected Grand Chief of the Tłı̨ch̨ Nation in November 2021. Prior to being elected as Tłı̨ch̨ Grand Chief, he served in the Legislature of the Government of the Northwest for five consecutive terms, a period of over 16 years. As MLA for the riding of Mq̨whì, he served as the Deputy Premier, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Justice, Public Works and Services, Official Languages and Worker’s Safety and Compensation Commission.

During his time with the NWT Government and throughout his career, Grand Chief Lafferty served on numerous boards and agencies, where he was a fierce advocate for education, youth, languages, and culture. He was often seen speaking his Tłı̨ch̨ language at the legislature during question period.

In the early 2000s, Mr. Lafferty worked in the mining industry with Rio Tinto at the Diavik Diamond Mine. During this time, he contributed to the implementation of DDMI's Participation Agreement with northern indigenous groups and played a key role as liaison for communities and indigenous mining employees. Grand Chief Lafferty remains committed to working with the mining industry from closure to remediation, work that will be conducted through collaborative consultation.

**Heather Exner-Pirot, MacDonald** is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Natural Resources, Energy and Environment program at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute and a Special Adviser to the Business Council of Canada. She is a Global Fellow at the Wilson Center in Washington DC, the Research Advisor for the Indigenous Resource Network and the Managing Editor of the Arctic Yearbook. Exner-Pirot is also a Coordinator at the North American and Arctic Defense and Security Network and sits on the Boards of the Saskatchewan Indigenous Economic Development Network and Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation. Dr. Exner-Pirot obtained a PhD in Political Science from the University of Calgary in 2011.

**Hillary Thatcher**, Senior Director, Project Development Indigenous Infrastructure, Canada Infrastructure Bank. As Managing Director, Investments, Hillary leads the CIB's Indigenous relationships and opportunities to engage with Indigenous communities. She is part of the team offering advice and making investments consistent in CIB's priority initiatives.

Previously Director General of Innovation and Services at Indigenous Services Canada, Hillary spent 15 years with the Ontario government in senior roles across Indigenous Affairs, Energy and Infrastructure and Natural Resources. Hillary has a proven track record of building linkages among government, industry and Indigenous interests.

Hillary is Métis and has been an active member of the urban Indigenous community of Toronto through her volunteer roles at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Red Sky Performance and the Downie Wenjak Fund.

Hillary graduated from Concordia University in Montreal and the University of Victoria.

Hillary is based out of the CIB's Toronto office.

**Jeff Hussey**, PGeo., President and CEO, Pine Point Mining Ltd. has 35 years of professional experience in the mining industry. He has worked in both open pit and underground mine operations at various stages of mine life, from start-up to mine closure, and more recently, working in mineral exploration and development projects. He spent nineteen years with Noranda/Falconbridge. His mine operation experience includes work at the Brunswick No. 12 mine, Gaspé Copper mines, the Antamina mine start-up in Peru, as well as the Raglan mine in Northern Quebec. As Senior Scientist with the Mining Technology Group at the Noranda Technology Center in 2002, he enhanced his network into the metallurgical research and mining innovation fields. As a consultant since 2007, Jeff Hussey and Associates Inc. has helped junior mine development companies by offering exploration, mining and geo-metallurgical support services. These include Champion Iron Mines, Focus Graphite, Puma Exploration and Starcore International in Mexico.

While at Champion Iron Mines, he participated in building significant high quality iron ore resources, completing feasibility studies and participating in raising more than \$70 million for corporate development. While working with Focus Graphite, development responsibilities included a feasibility study and associated work with community stakeholders and governments. Mr. Hussey has a Bachelor of Science in Geology from the University of New Brunswick.

**Jessica M. Shadian, Ph.D**, President & CEO, Arctic 360, spent 20 years living and working throughout the Nordic and North American Arctic as a researcher, professor, and consultant. Her research and publications focus on Arctic geopolitics, Canadian Arctic foreign policy and diplomacy, Arctic infrastructure, critical minerals, and innovation. Her expertise is regularly solicited by international media outlets, governments, think tanks, and other institutions throughout the circumpolar region and globally.

Shadian's 2014 book entitled: *The Politics of Arctic Sovereignty: Oil, Ice, and Inuit Governance* (Routledge) is the first in-depth history of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and Inuit sovereignty in global politics reaching back to pre-European discovery. Shadian holds a Ph.D. in Global Governance from the University of Delaware (2006) during which she wrote her dissertation at the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI), University of Cambridge, UK on an NSF award.

Shadian spent 5 years in the Norwegian High North as a post-doctoral researcher at the Barents Institute and then as a Senior Researcher at the High North Center for Business and Governance, Nord University, Bodø. During this time, Shadian became the co-creator and organiser of an Arctic Dialogue series which brought together state and local political leaders, oil and gas and other industry leaders, local Indigenous communities, and academia (from Norway, Alaska, and Greenland) concerned with Arctic offshore oil and gas development to share knowledge and ideas. Through a Marie Curie COFUND Fellowship award, Shadian served as an Associate Professor, Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS), Denmark before completing a two-year Nansen Professorship, co-funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Akureyri, Iceland in June 2017. Having settled in Canada, her experiences around the Arctic made it clear that Canada needed its own Arctic specific think tank and working in collaboration with colleagues she dedicated herself full-time to build Arctic360.

**Kimberly Lavoie**, Director General of the Policy and Economics Branch in the Lands and Minerals sector of Natural Resources Canada, is responsible for key areas related to Canada's mining sector. This includes the Critical Minerals Centre of Excellence, the Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan and relations with provinces and territories, International Affairs and Trade – including investment attraction and export promotion, Strategic Policy – including innovation, as well as Economic Analysis.

In January 2019 Kimberly joined Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) as a Consultation Director for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project (TMX), building on over 20 years of experience working with Indigenous Communities. Subsequently, Kimberly took on the role of Executive Director of the Phase IV Partnerships Office, designed to provide a single window into government with respect to TMX accommodation measures and to address questions, issues and concerns as they arise.

Prior to joining NRCan, Kimberly held several roles at Public Safety Canada, including Director of Crime Prevention and Aboriginal Community Safety as well as Director of Drug Policy. She also has experience in evaluation, program development, working with industry and nongovernmental organizations, as well as federal, provincial, territorial and international relations.

Kimberly is a mother to a teenage boy and a member of the Qalipu First Nation. She graduated from Carleton University with Honours in Law. Over the past 24 years, much of Kimberly's work has focused on responding to needs and concerns of marginalized Canadians, in partnership with organizations and communities across the country. One of Kimberly's greatest gifts is her ability to bridge the divide between community and government.

**Louise Corriveau**, Research Scientist, Geological Survey of Canada, NRCAN. A Doctor of Philosophy and an adjunct professor at INRS. Her current research focuses on the field geology of mineral systems with iron oxide-copper-gold (IOCG) and affiliated critical metal deposits, including those metamorphosed to high grade. With her national and international collaborators, she has developed alteration mapping and lithochemical tools and an ore deposit model to optimize discovery of critical metal deposits in Canada and globally. She has led series of projects in the Great Bear magmatic zone, the Grenville Province and the Trans-Hudson Orogen (e.g. Romanet Horst) under the Targeted Geoscience Initiative and Geomapping for Energy and Minerals programs.

**Mark Podlasly**, a member of the Nlaka'pamux Nation in British Columbia, is the Chief Sustainability Officer at the First Nations Major Project Coalition, a national 145 First Nations organization dedicated to ensuring Indigenous environmental and economic values are incorporated into major projects (>\$100m) in traditional territories. He counsels Indigenous governments across Canada on the establishment of trusts to invest revenues from resource development.

Mark's international experience includes the planning, permitting and construction of large capital projects related to energy, resource development and community infrastructure around the world. He has designed and delivered corporate strategy, leadership and globalization programs for a client list that includes GE, Unilever, General Mills, Clorox, Goldman Sachs, and Praxair. He is also a frequent contributor on the subject of industry-Indigenous economic reconciliation, with writings covering a range of issues including ESG, climate change, economic wellbeing and governance.



Mark is a board director of Hydro One, serving on the audit and human resources committees, and a trustee of his First Nation's mining revenue trust fund. He is also a board director at CIBC, one of Canada's leading financial institutions.

Mark holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University, and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by the Governor-General of Canada for the founding of Teach for Canada, a non-profit organization that works with northern First Nations to recruit and support committed teachers.

Mark and his family reside in Vancouver, BC

**Steve Berna**, Chief Operating Officer, First Nations Finance Authority (FNFA) manages the loan programs (debenture issuances and the Interim Financing Program) and the investments of the FNFA, as well as the relationships with the bondholders, rating agencies and the banking syndicate.

Steve moved from Victoria, B.C., in 2008 to help develop the FNFA's operating policies, and the Other Revenues Regulations. Prior to commencing work at the FNFA, Steve was the CEO of the Municipal Finance Authority of BC. Steve received his accounting designation as an employee of KPMG.

Several times Steve has, upon the request of the World Bank, developed and presented the beneficial concepts of pooled borrowing models for developing countries. He has also taught courses in finance at colleges in the Vancouver area.

**Michael McLeod** was born and raised in Fort Providence, and continues to live in the community with his wife Joyce. Prior to entering federal politics, he served Northwest Territories residents as a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1999-2011, and advised clients in the tourism industry as Tourism Development Officer for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Michael also previously served as mayor of Fort Providence, president of his Métis Local, and vice-president of Deh Cho Regional Council.

Michael earned his diploma in Management Studies from Arctic College and began his career as a self-employed contractor. This experience provided Michael with an understanding of the needs of small business owners and their families. He has been a member of the Northwest Territories Tourism, NWT Public Utilities, and Mackenzie Valley Environment Impact Review Boards. The latter's mission, conducting fair and timely environmental assessments remains a key interest.

Michael is active in his community and has served as a Master Corporal in the Canadian Junior Rangers. He enjoys spending his free time outdoors hunting and fishing.

First elected as the Member of Parliament for Northwest Territories in the 2015 federal election,

Michael currently serves as a member of the Standing Committee on Finance and as Chair of the Arctic and Northern Caucus.

**Nancy C. Southern** is Chair & Chief Executive Officer of ATCO Ltd., and Chair & Chief Executive Officer of Canadian Utilities Limited, an ATCO Company. Reporting to the Boards of Directors, she is responsible for the leadership, strategic direction, and operations of both companies. She also serves as Executive Vice President of Spruce Meadows Ltd. and is a founding Director of AKITA Drilling Ltd., a Director of Sentgraf Enterprises Limited, an Honorary Director of BMO Financial Group, and a Director Emeritus of the Rideau Hall Foundation.

Ms. Southern has long played a prominent role in advocating on social issues of global importance—most notably, the rights of Indigenous peoples and the role of women in business. She is an Honorary Chief of the Kainai (Blood Tribe of Alberta) who bestowed the name Aksistoowa'paakii, or Brave Woman, upon her in 2012.

Over the course of her career, Ms. Southern has served with many respected business and academic organizations. She is a member of the Business Council of Canada, the U.S. Business Council, the American Society of Corporate Executives, and is a Canadian member of the Trilateral Commission. She is also a member of the University of Calgary School of Public Policy Advisory Council.

Ms. Southern is the recipient of numerous honours for her community leadership and commitment to democratic principles and free enterprise. In 2023, she received the Lifetime Business Achievement in the Americas Award from the Canadian Council for the Americas and was named Energy Person of the Year by the Energy Council of Canada. In 2022, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce honoured her with the Canadian Business Leader Lifetime Achievement Award. Also in 2022, she was honoured with the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal and, in 2020, she was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to British equestrian, military, and commercial interests in Alberta. In 2018, she received the Canadian Business Leader Award from the University of Alberta and was named a Distinguished Policy Fellow by the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy in recognition of her lifetime commitment to Canadian public policy. She was inducted as a Companion into the Canadian Business Hall of Fame in 2017.

Ms. Southern has been recognized by Fortune on its list of the "50 Most Powerful Women Outside of the U.S." as well as its list of the "50 Most Powerful Women in Business: The Global 50." She has been named one of the "50 Most Important People in Canada" by Maclean's. Born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Ms. Southern studied economics and commerce at the University of Calgary, which also awarded her its highest academic honour, an Honorary Doctor of Laws, in 2014. She also holds Honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from Mount Royal University, the University of Lethbridge, and Western University.

**Paul Gruner**, is a senior executive leader with a background in renewable energy, oil & gas, and mining. He brings a wealth of experience in Indigenous business leadership across diverse regions, having previously served as the CEO for Det'on Cho Management LP, the economic arm of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation in the Northwest Territories, and the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation, the economic arm of the Tahltan Nation. Mr. Gruner currently serves as the CEO for Tłjchq Investment Corporation, which is the economic arm of the Tłjchq First Nation whose traditional territory includes the area where the Yellowknife Lithium project is located. His track record speaks volumes about his ability to achieve outstanding business results while collaborating closely with Indigenous stakeholders. He has a dynamic range of experience in strategic leadership, mergers and acquisitions, business development, strategic partnerships, financial management, project management, corporate governance, contract negotiations, capacity building and job creation for citizens, and environmental, social, and corporate governance

**Reggie Leach**, was a hockey hero to many when he played for one of the greatest hockey teams ever. Now he is even a bigger champion to a generation that is too young to recall the right-winger's record-breaking games and legendary slapshot.

Playing 14 seasons in the NHL, Leach became the first First Nations player to reach super-star status. His achievements have inspired junior and amateur hockey players worldwide. He is in the Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame and the Philadelphia Flyers Hall of Fame. Today Reggie teaches his skills to Aboriginal youth across Canada, gives numerous presentations about his prolific NHL career and raising awareness about the harmful effects of alcoholism.

Visiting with schools, friendship centres, golf tournaments, charities and remote First Nations, Leach also a successful entrepreneur, has found an eager audience in awe of his storytelling abilities and his likeable, down-to-earth manner.

Nicknamed the 'Rifle', Leach was known for his hard slapshot, mostly by the goalies of the NHL who were intimidated by his strength. It is reported that it was clocked at 115 mph, and that was with a wooden stick.

His infamous quote is "Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire."

Always willing to chat with a fan or sign an autograph, Leach will always be the young man his grandparents raised on the small farm in Riverton, Manitoba.

**Robert Campbell**, Partner, is MNP's National and Provincial Director of Indigenous Services. A trusted and respected executive, leader and entrepreneur with effective long-term working relationships in a wide range of diverse settings, Rob provides consultation and support on community, economic and business development, governance and leadership issues at the local, regional and national levels.

With strong interpersonal and communication skills and a high degree of empathy, Rob – who is from the Kinosao Sipi Cree Nation (Norway House) - brings an in-depth understanding of Indigenous issues and opportunities to his role. He supports and helps oversee MNP's services and programs for Canada's Indigenous communities. This includes team development, new product development, client relationships, and subject matter expertise for community and business initiatives. He also helps with marketing, promotions, public relations, sponsorships and other outreach initiatives for Indigenous clients.

In a career spanning three decades, Rob has held senior posts within government and the corporate and Indigenous sectors. Prior to joining MNP, Rob operated a boutique Indigenous business services consulting company, and he has worked as an economic development advisor and officer.

Rob is a Professional Aboriginal Economic Developer (PAED) and Project Management Professional (PMP). He sits on numerous boards and committees, and also serves as a consultant, advisor, facilitator, motivational speaker and emcee at conferences, youth gatherings and corporate events. He is a guest lecturer at Canadian universities, colleges and high schools. Rob has been recognized by the Globe and Mail's Report on Business as one of Canada's Top 50 Executives.

**Roy Erasmus Jr.**, CEO, Gwich'in Development Corporation, has extensive experience in putting together teams to tackle some of the largest projects in the Northwest Territories. He was the President and CEO of Det'on Cho Corporation for 10 years, during which time, the company formed several companies and joint ventures, successfully bidding and completing work for 3 major diamond mines, Territorial and Federal Governments and the private sector.

Projects include Giant Mine Care and Maintenance, Underground Stabilization, and Roaster Deconstruction; Tundra Mine Remediation; Camp Catering and Services for the Diamond Mines; winter road construction and maintenance; highway construction; and construction management of the Chief Drygeese Government building in the Yellowknives Dene Community of Dettah. New companies that were created include Detoncho Logistics, Trinity Helicopters, Det'on Cho Training and Conference Centre, Bouwa Whee Catering, and Det'on Cho Construction.

Roy has worked to promote responsible resource development in the North by working collaboratively with mining companies like Avalon Rare Metals, Diavik Diamond Mine, Dominion Diamond Ekati Corporation and DeBeers Canada.

Roy has strong community ties and has served a 3 year term as a Band Councillor for the Yellowknives Dene, two terms as a Director of the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre in Yellowknife, is a Director of the Chamber of Mines since 2013 and is a founding member of the Aboriginal Affairs Committee. He is also a board member of the Akaitcho Business Development Corporation.

Roy has owned a small retail outlet in Yellowknife selling traditional Dene arts and crafts as well as current fashion and household items. He is current owner of a consulting company Bows & Arrows Inc. providing business development services to northern businesses.

Roy has a Bachelor of Management from the University of Lethbridge, a Certificate in Conflict Resolution from the Justice Institute of BC, and a Certificate in Project Management from Genesis Group.

**Tom Hoefer**, is currently Senior Advisor with the N.W.T. & Nunavut Chamber of Mines. His experience spans previous roles as Executive Director with the Chamber, with the Government of Canada, Diavik Diamond Mines Inc., and Highland Valley Copper.

An advocate for the mining industry, Tom Hoefer has been instrumental in promoting the benefits of mining in the region. In the early 1990s, when the gold mines in Yellowknife were aging and public sentiment around the environment was high, he worked tirelessly to reinvigorate interest in mining. His efforts have contributed to shaping policies and discussions related to mining royalties and resource management in the Northwest Territories.

Tom Hoefer plays a crucial role in advocating for responsible mining practices and ensuring that the industry benefits both the economy and future generations in the territories.

**William Lomax**, is a member of the Gitksan Nation and grew up in Terrace, B.C. In his most recent role as Vice President, Wealth Management with Goldman Sachs in Seattle, WA, he has a primary focus on wealth fund strategies and investment management for Tribal Nations across the United States. He brings more than 20 years of international experience in financial management and wealth creation, having represented Indigenous clients across North America.

Mr. Lomax, who did undergraduate studies and earned a law degree at the University of British Columbia, served as legal counsel for the Federal Department of Justice and as a Treaty Analyst with the British Columbia Treaty Commission. He earned a Master of Business Administration (Finance) degree at Columbia University in New York, NY, and began a 20-year career in the financial industry, including two years as the Senior Portfolio Manager for the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in California, one of the most financially successful tribes in the United States. Mr. Lomax joined Goldman Sachs in 2015 and has grown a portfolio of more than \$2 billion, working with Indigenous clients on investment strategies and communication to their membership.

Throughout his career, Mr. Lomax has been active in building financial capacity in Indigenous communities. He is an Adjunct Lecturer on Tribal Economic Development and Sustainability at Stanford University and has been a frequent speaker and panelist at national and regional events related to the interests of Indigenous financial development.

**Bernd Christmas** is Senior Counsel for JFK Law LLP and a Director on Denendeh Investments Incorporated. **He** is a recognized and accomplished leader in the Indigenous and business communities. He was the first Mi'kmaw to become a lawyer in Canada and is currently the President and CEO of the Nch'kay Development Corporation. He was previously the Managing Attorney of the Bernd Christmas Law Group, specializing in corporate and commercial law as well as Indigenous Peoples law. He is a member of IG Wealth Management Board of Directors and past member of the Board of Directors of Outside Looking In. He is also a director on two Indigenous development corporations. During his career, Mr. Christmas has served as the CEO of the Membertou Band of Nova Scotia and the Membertou Corporate Division. He has also negotiated on behalf of many First Nations bands.

**Grand Chief Herb Norwegian**, from Łíídlıı Kúé First Nation (LKFN), is a former chief of Dehcho First Nation as well former chief of LKFN. He's worked as a negotiator on issues of land withdrawals, the Nahanni Park and the boundary agreement between the Tłıchǫ and the Dehcho lands

