



SIEF

SASKATCHEWAN INDIGENOUS ENTERPRISE FOUNDATION INC.

SIEF is now known as the Saskatchewan Indigenous Enterprise Foundation Inc. having adopted a new name and logo.

This update supports SIEF's goal to assist in the creation of jobs and to foster economic growth for First Nations people because a strong Indigenous business community means financial independence for all First Nations people.

SIEF's new logo was developed by Tim Neal of the Engagement Party, a First Nations advertising design company in Saskatoon. The logo incorporates the

colours of the medicine wheel as well as core arrow shapes derived from the star blanket pattern. They are linked showing unity and collaboration and are pointing in opposite directions to indicate choice with the lower arrow recognizing and acknowledging the past while the upper arrow is forging forward and looking to the future. The overall concept is a modern look with distinctive traditional elements from the Indigenous cultures of Saskatchewan.

Contents

MAY 2023

New Directors	3
Livestock Producers Conference	3
SIEF Staff Recognized.	4

Dr. Karissa Brabant

As a family physician, Dr. Karissa Brabant is on a mission to provide patients continuous care that is safe and culturally appropriate in a clinic she owns.

Brabant started the Circle Medical Centre on the Main Street of Moose Jaw in August 2020.

“When doctors start their own clinic, they need to pay for everything. The government doesn’t actually provide money to open a clinic,” said Brabant before starting another day of work.

“All of that is many, many thousands of dollars and, when you’re brand new in practice, you don’t have that money. So, I had to get a loan from the bank.

“Then, the SIEF grant made a huge difference because it essentially allowed me to get started.”

Keeping the clinic running has been a challenge. What the government pays family physicians under Medicare can not be enough to cover the costs of operating their clinics. As the sole owner, Brabant is responsible for paying all

the clinic’s bills while other physicians working in her clinic contribute a portion of their income to cover its costs.

Brabant was having to branching out from the clinic to find income from other sources to subsidize her clinic. So, she got involved with the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) to advocate for physicians to be paid differently than fee for service which meant what a family physician was paid depended only on how many services they provided.

Now, a new model recommended by a group formed between the SMA, Saskatchewan Health Authority and the Ministry of Health has been announced by the Saskatchewan government. She is excited about this updated compensation model, which will provide two streams of income to family physicians. One stream will be for providing a set of services for each patient with the



amount depending on their age, gender and complexity and the second will be a fee-for-service for providing extra services.

It is important to her that she can offer the kind of care she identified has been missing in the community. She has been eager to see this change so that others thinking of following her path have it easier.

She explained how she found her way to Moose Jaw. While in medical school, she was matched to that city for her residency program, where she specialized in family medicine. Being in a regional centre allowed her to branch out into other areas in her training. For example, she was able to assist in surgeries and deliver babies. Moose Jaw began to feel like home to her and her husband, so they chose to stay.

"It covered all of the bases and it was that continuous care that I always wanted to provide."

While there, she began to recognize the needs she felt were underserved in the community.

"When I moved to Moose Jaw, some of the attending physicians said 'Oh, we don't have a huge Indigenous population here,'" said Brabant, who recognized that was a misconception.

"They're just not presenting to care because they don't know where to go to get safe and culturally appropriate care."

Inside her clinic, she along with three other physicians do not want their patients to feel judged and provide care that reflects that intention. She has built a relationship with those at Ranch Ehrlo, a non-profit organization delivering a wide range of accredited mental health and addiction services. Those being served by Ranch Ehrlo requiring medical attention for family treatment and addictions find care at Brabant's clinic. She can treat their diabetes or high blood pressure, for example. She can check over their children to ensure they are growing and developing well.

"Honestly, that's been one of the more rewarding parts of my job," said Brabant.

Every physician and team member in the clinic understands addiction and knows to offer care in a variety of ways. There are supplies for cultural ceremonies, should they be requested.

"It essentially makes it an open space. If they want something involved in their care, all they need to do is ask for it. The clinic is set up in a way that feels more like home and less like a clinic."

She also offers abortion care, which she said some other physicians are not always comfortable providing. She was advised by older physicians to offer the service, but not advertise it. As the owner of her clinic, she can promote this option to those seeking it.

"We offer very nonjudgmental care. The medicine wheel tells people that this is like a safe space. You're not going to be judged here," said Brabant.

She chose to locate a medicine wheel on the outside wall of the clinic.

"I wanted to be able to be a beacon for other Indigenous patients, so, they knew that I was here, but also be able to provide care that other physicians were not comfortable with," said Brabant.

"I wanted to be able to actually advertise and say this is where you can find that type of care."

Starting this clinic has meant she had to be ready for more learning.

"The business ownership part of medicine is something that is not really taught in school. So, it's definitely important to reach out to people who understand business who can support you so that you're not making mistakes.

She encourages those going into business to find mentors to help them along the way.

"The reality is I've gotten a ton of support from my mom and dad who are both business owners," she said. Her father, Allan Brabant, has his own law firm, Brabant & Company, while her mother, Sheryl Brabant, is an accountant, who also has her own company, KCM Accounting Services.

She has plans to expand the clinic to allow for four more physicians to care for patients. She is hopeful she can find some of that financial support through SIEF again.

New Directors

SIEF is governed by a board of nine directors. At the November AGM, Terry Kremeniuk and Lucy Pelletier were thanked for almost 20 years of serving on SIEF's board. Now, two new directors have been welcomed to the board.

Gloria Lee is of Cree and Metis heritage. She grew up in the Chitek Lake area fishing, berry picking, and hunting with a large extended family.

She has worked effectively with First Nation communities for over 25 years advocating and teaching in areas of justice and community development, First Nations Land policy, First Nations law development, Indigenous curriculum development, education, business, and economic development with First Nations.

Gloria's work ethic is guided by the neyhiyow (Cree) cultural teachings and values of her grandmothers and her mother, who communicated the importance of relationship, respect and listening. Through story and observing protocol in everyday activities, Gloria has learned to apply what is taught by the ketayak (old people.)

Gloria is an entrepreneur with the creativity to design new projects to meet the goals of First Nations leadership and Indigenous aspirations for self-determination. Gloria's current interests include Financial and Economic Sovereignty, Duty to Consult and Free Prior and Informed Consent, and the Implementation of UNDRIP.



Gloria Lee

Gloria obtained a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree, and later a Juris Doctor from the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan. She currently develops Indigenous law curriculum for the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan.

Jim Thiessen spent 31 years working for the Credit Union system in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, specializing in financial operations.

He spent 20 years as a Chief Executive Officer and has 32 years experience as a director of private and public boards. Working on the boards of national companies, associations and local clubs, Jim has been very active in understanding the dynamics of board relations.

Since retiring from the Credit Union system, Jim has focused on JHT & Associates Consulting, which specializes in demographic and financial modelling. Jim is the principal behind JHT & Associates Consulting.

Since 2005, Jim has volunteered for the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League (SJHL) as a governor and Chair of their Finance Committee.

Jim developed the current financial modelling systems for the teams and the league.

In 2017, Jim added the demographic component to the financial model to project the financial implications of the community and its citizens on the operation of a local SJHL franchise team.

Jim has a Bachelor of Commerce, Master of Business Administration, and a Professional Director certification.



Jim Thiessen

Conference for Indigenous Livestock Producers

Mentors and young producers in Saskatchewan's beef and bison industry will be brought together in Saskatoon in June at an event sponsored by SIEF.

Known as "Better Together: Saskatchewan Indigenous Livestock Producers Conference", this event begins June 5 with an evening meal and an opportunity to network at the Saskatoon Inn.

The following day is dedicated to sharing knowledge, hearing from experts about grazing strategies, financing opportunities and discovering how we're all better together.



Those more experienced are encouraged to bring a young producer who is 19 years of age or older to the event. This conference is for all stages — start-up, expansion or First Nation community development.

Hotel accommodation is available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, call 306-570-7568.

SIEF staff recognized

April Sanderson is a member of the Chakastaypasin First Nation. She began her career with SIEF in December 2012 as the Loans Clerk and currently holds the position of Administrative Assistant. During her tenure April has acquired many skills that have enabled her to assist in all areas of the organization.



April is involved with continuous learning and has participated in Mental Health and Wellness courses to assist clients, coworkers, and the public to deal with the challenges that were brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Courses such as Mental Health Awareness, Mental Health: Signs, Symptoms and Solutions, Psychologically Healthy Workplaces, and Leadership and Culture: How to Create a Workplace Where People Like to Work.

April states that the best part of her job is watching an Indigenous entrepreneur take an idea and build it into a successful business. As an advocate for Indigenous owned businesses, she encourages everyone to support Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Congratulations, April, on your 10 years of service with SIEF.

Diane Peepeetch is a member of Yellow Quill First Nation. She began her career with SIEF on February 5, 2018 as a Business Development Officer. She holds a Business Management Diploma from SIIT. Diane has an array of experience from various positions she has held such as



Administrative Assistant Officer, Finance Clerk and Band Administrator to name a few. Her education and work experiences provide her the skills and abilities to provide advice to the clients of SIEF and future Indigenous Entrepreneurs. When away from the office, Diane enjoys spending time with her family, grandsons and going on family camping trips in the summer.

Congratulations, Diane, on your five years of service with SIEF.

Staff Directory

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