



INFINITY WOMEN

SECRETARIAT ∞

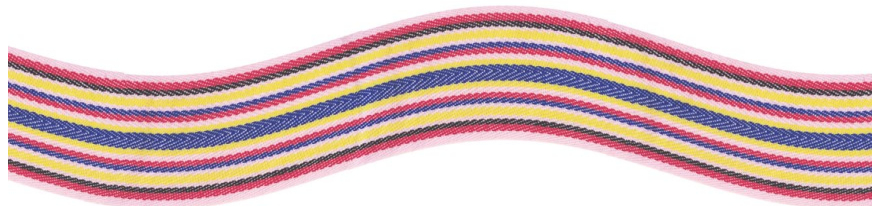


**TOGETHER
WE ARE
STRONG**



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**7th Annual General Assembly
AGENDA
September 20, 2019**

- 1. Opening Prayer**
- 2. Welcoming Remarks**
- 3. Quorum/Roll Call**
- 4. Appointment of Meeting Chair**
- 5. Call meeting to order**
- 6. Greetings**
- 7. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Assembly**
- 8. Audited Financial Statement**
- 9. Appointment of Auditor**
- 10. Spokeswoman's Annual Report**
- 11. Presentations**
- 12. Appreciation & Recognition Presentation**
- 13. Closing remarks**
- 14. Date and time of next AGA**
- 15. Closing Prayer and adjournment**
- 16. Draws and Door Prizes**

*Refreshments are being provided in partnership with Louis Riel Capital Corporation
and Metis Economic Development Fund*



Infinity Women Secretariat (IWS) is a non-profit, provincial organization that works with Métis women throughout the Province of Manitoba. IWS was incorporated on April 23, 2013, and has already become well known in our Métis communities, our Métis Government and all throughout our Métis Nation Homeland.

The key objectives of IWS are:

- ✚ **Promote, empower and enhance** our social, economic, and political well-being;
- ✚ **Preserve and safeguard** our history, values, culture, language and traditions;
- ✚ **Foster** grassroots initiatives;
- ✚ **Advocate and facilitate** effective means of addressing Métis women's issues, either individually or as a collective; and
- ✚ **Encourage and support** the full participation of all Métis women within and outside the Métis Nation.

IWS is comprised of a Board of Directors, the CEO (and Spokeswoman), in addition to two staff. The Board of Directors is comprised of eight Directors. One Provincial Spokeswoman (elected Province wide), seven Regional Directors (elected regionally), and one appointed Youth Representative.

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Infinity Women Secretariat

Spokeswoman's Annual Report September 20th, 2019

Welcome Elders, Special Guests, fellow Métis women and youth, to the Infinity Women Secretariat's 7th Annual General Assembly.

It is truly my honour to be here with you sharing all that we have achieved over this past year and to celebrate those successes.

It has been another very busy year, with the addition of many projects that will be offered as we continue on our path of growth. As we become known throughout our Manitoba Métis Community, our stamp of what we do and how we do it is becoming more and more recognized throughout our Métis Nation Homeland. It is a good sign when time flies by – Being productive and our growth is a great indicator of the progress we have made in our short 7 years of existence! We are definitely making a “home” for the Metis women in this province and largely because of your continued involvement and support of our endeavours.

Infinity Women Secretariat (IWS) was incorporated on April 23, 2013 under the main objective to promote, empower and enhance the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of Métis women in this province. Although we had difficulty to secure 'core type funding' I am happy to announce that we now receive core funding from the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) – our own Métis Government!! This has allowed us the opportunity to build a foundation of human resource and operating capacity potential, as you will see outlined in the remainder of this report.

We continue to build our partnerships and relationships with many entities to increase our support network to offer more programs and services for Métis women throughout Manitoba. In reviewing what was achieved, there are greater opportunities to connect, participate and share your thoughts/ideas on a variety of different subject matters. Be assured, we heard what you said and we are putting those into action.

I honestly believe that IWS is increasing its name and exposure throughout our Manitoba Métis Community and the Métis Nation Homeland. We continue to increase our existence through social media and will be using your email addresses as a way to connect and stay connected on all our programs, services and activities that will be happening in each of your regions. We continue to have our website infinitywomen.org and we now have the capacity to have a staff person responsible for adding, maintaining and updating information on our website to keep you informed. We will be revamping our website to include all the programs, services and events that we have to offer, as an additional way to stay connected with our members. Stay tuned for more to come!





This past year, the Board of Director's held three (3) face-to-face meetings and held several meetings via conference call. As we all lead very busy lives, there is not always time for face-to-face meetings and we utilize conference calls as often as necessary to discuss and complete tasks. As you can see from the IWS Board of Director's biographies, we are very fortunate to have such a diverse, educated and experienced group of Métis women who have all agreed to put their best efforts towards moving our collective agenda forward. I consider myself quite privileged to be working side-by-side with them.

We continue to have the opportunity to attend and provide greetings and a report at Regional Meetings, in addition to providing gifts to their Rainbow Auction draws. We do attempt to have the IWS Board of Director from that region and myself attend the Regional Meetings when schedules permit, as it gives us an opportunity to connect directly with our Métis women members, among others. We also have very supportive and strong relationships with the Vice-Presidents and Regional Executive Members throughout the regions and we truly do appreciate the time they give us on their Regional Meeting Agenda to provide our report and updates. Without the support and involvement of the Regional Vice Presidents and Regional Executive Members, we would have a very difficult time in achieving our goals.

We are so fortunate to have the support of many people who are giving of their time and resources to help us achieve what we have to date, especially the MMF Staff Members and Affiliates. Just knowing that there are so many more people that want to see us succeed, gives us the inspiration and drive to continue meeting whatever challenges are thrown our way... As we know, we are an integral part of a larger network of amazing people.

Funded Projects

Our 'never give up' attitude has paid off, both in securing our Core Capacity Funding as well as receiving funding approval for our projects. Although I have been speaking about these projects for a while now, it does take time to ensure that they are properly planned and managed. Now with the staffing and partnerships in place, we are proceeding to implement these projects this coming fall – those planned for this coming fiscal year will begin in October, as these are multi-year funded projects.



Human Trafficking Project - Addressing violence against women by creating preventative, supportive and accessible resources

A proposal was submitted to Status of Women Canada as part of their Gender Based Violence Call for Proposals and we received approval for \$50,000.00 to conduct this project. IWS, along with the MMF, the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre (Thompson), and the Joy Smith Foundation, have brought forward a concept that has considerable merit and potential to educate, support and promote Indigenous Communities in Northern Manitoba to become aware of this issue and fight against gender-based violence through a focused lens on human trafficking and missing and murdered Indigenous women & girls.



The project is based on providing a safe common environment to train teachers to present and inform students about gender-based violence and human trafficking. The focus will be on educating educators to teach students, parents and other community members on the hidden truths that exist, the warning signs, making smart choices and availability of resources. This will be communicated in a way that limits shaming and fosters a trusting environment.

“Prosperity through Innovation: Métis Women in Manitoba” Project

Status of Women Canada funding for the “Prosperity through Innovation: Métis Women in Manitoba” in the amount of \$283,800. This 36-month project will address barriers to economic security faced by Métis mothers and caregivers as they attempt to enter, re-enter or remain in the workforce.



TURN AN OPPORTUNITY INTO A CAREER

Are you a Métis mother or caregiver in the Winnipeg Region? Are you looking for employment? Apply now for our free fifteen-week fall program “Prosperity Through Innovation” designed to equip you with the necessary tools to find meaningful employment - including a 6 week placement.

Only 10 spots left
Daycare provided
Qualified participants eligible for training allowance and transportation

Registration Deadline: Sept 20, 2019
Start Date: Sept 30, 2019
Contact Sharon Varga at 204.984.9480 ext. 387 or at sharon.varga@mmf.mb.ca for more information.

Through the development and pilot implementation of individual “pathways to prosperity plans,” Métis women in Manitoba will benefit from increased accessibility and coordination of relevant programs and services, such as childcare. In addition, a network of stakeholders, employers and Métis women in business will participate through targeted outreach for job-matching, learning and skills-building sessions with participating women. Insights generated through the project will inform the creation of Métis-specific childcare programming and will be shared to shape employer human resource and institutional policies where possible.

For more information, please contact:

Sharon Varga, Director of LRVC

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Email: Sharon.varga@mmf.mb.ca

“Empowering Indigenous Women for Stronger Communities” Project

Indigenous & Northern Affairs Canada has approved the **“Empowering Indigenous Women for Stronger Communities”** project proposal for \$80,000.00 per year for 2 years. The objective of the ‘Empowering Métis Women’ project is to increase the number of Métis women that return to work and or school and to enhance their awareness and access to leadership positions in a variety of public institutions (Métis institutional bodies, school & health boards, municipal, provincial and federal).

The project addresses the under-representation of Métis women in civic and civil society organizations including Métis governments, institutions, public schools, Health boards, municipal, provincial and federal governments. IWS intends to introduce an experiential learning approach which will focus on the learning process itself: providing concrete experience; observation and reflection; formulation of abstract conceptions; and testing the knowledge gained in new situations. The approach will be to focus on self-efficacy by valuing and recognizing prior learning. It will seek to promote visioning by engendering confidence in Métis women to develop their ability to formulate clear images of an aspired future and their ability to achieve that future. It will focus on the importance of attitude in developing their leadership potential.

Civic Engagement and the Role of Métis Women in Public Institutions - Métis women have played a major role in the re-emergence of the Métis in Manitoba. The MMF has demonstrated at the political level that gender parity is possible (half of the MMF 22-member board are women). Further there is always room for improvement and gender parity is common across the MMF governance system. However, Métis women’s participation in non-Métis public institution is almost non-existent. Apart from some of the northern community councils, Métis women are grossly underrepresented on school & health boards, municipal councils in larger towns, or in the provincial or federal legislatures. Infinity Women Secretariat is seeking to change this by enhancing Métis women’s awareness of how they can participate in these public institutions.

“Enhancing Governance & Advocacy Capacity in IWS”

Status of Women Canada launched a Capacity Building Call for Proposals and IWS submitted the proposed “Enhancing Governance & Advocacy Capacity” project submission that will provide both onsite and online training and facilitation sessions to IWS Board of Directors, Regional and Local Representatives, and Manitoba Métis women who are interested in learning and participating in Métis Governance and advocacy support services for the direct benefit of their community.

The main objective is to improve IWS’s governance and advocacy capacity (at provincial, regional and local levels) and its organizational strategic planning methods to better serve Métis women & their communities in Manitoba. The funding secured under this project will provide incremental support to IWS to ensure that it can sustain and strengthen its organizational and financial capacity. This project intends to partner and collaborate with several entities such as the MMF - Metis Employment Training, Louis Riel Institute, MMF Regions and Locals, along with several other community organizations throughout the Province of Manitoba, to deliver seven regional training sessions per year.



The “**Enhancing Governance & Advocacy Capacity in IWS**” project would also increase IWS’s capacity to advocate the equality of Metis women, increase the input & voice from Métis women, and enhance the Gender-based analysis at the provincial, regional and local levels. It will also increase Métis women’s ability to participate in the development of a planned expanded service delivery in the areas of early learning and child care programs, housing, health and post-secondary student assistance flowing from the federal budget.

Other Activities

IWS participated in the annual **MMF Open House** that was held on December 6, 2018, last year, and although we didn’t win any prizes, we felt it was still a success for us as we had many visitors come through our office to learn about Infinity Women Secretariat and what we do. We plan on participating again this year - come see IWS adorned for the Christmas season!

On January 21, 2019, IWS hosted the **University of Manitoba’s Indigenous Circle of Empowerment (ICE)**. ICE is a student leadership development program rooted in culture and focused on self-development and community engagement. ICE is for Indigenous students who demonstrate drive, determination and leadership. Spokeswoman Anita Campbell was asked to speak on her personal experiences and journey in leadership and the workings of IWS and the MMF.



With 18 future leaders given inspiration, valuable lessons, and insights about leadership, they learned about IWS and MMF governance and how they too could become involved with Infinity Women Secretariat and the Manitoba Métis Federation. IWS is always looking for future opportunities to meet and empower our future leaders!

The **Manitoba Metis Heritage Fund Gala** that was held on May 12, 2019 at the Hotel Fort Garry in Winnipeg, was a very prestigious event. Chaired by Denise Thomas & MMHF Gala 2019 Honourary Chair Sandy Riley, the third annual gala fundraiser, “Embracing Our Beginnings”, supports economically disadvantaged individuals, families and communities of the Manitoba Métis Community. A fundraiser with this year’s receipt being the St. Boniface Hospital Foundation – RBC Youth BIOlab Jeunesse, was created for students and teachers to explore and experience real biomedical science. A sign of our growth, IWS purchased two tables this year to support a very worthwhile cause!



The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) - Indigenous Gender and Wellness Idea Fair and Learning Circle was held on June 18 – 20, 2019 and attended by Julyda Lagimodiere, Vice President of the Thompson Region and Adrienne Carriere, IWS Board of Director – Winnipeg Region.

The purpose of the Idea Fair and Learning Circle was to connect with Indigenous Peoples across Canada to share ideas and possibly create joint-funding applications for a CIHR grant. There were a number of prominent themes for the Idea Fair that focused on Gender-Based Violence, Access to Health Care, Food and Nutrition, HIV/AIDS, Housing and



Homelessness, Mental Health, Poverty and Health, Trauma, Suicide and Gender Norms. A presentation was made on behalf of IWS with a project idea focused on a Human Trafficking Toolkit. The toolkit idea included an IWS App, human trafficking awareness, prevention and intervention Fact Sheets, as well as a list of curriculum resources that can be used to raise awareness about this important and prevalent topic. The toolkit would be piloted with various youth groups in Manitoba, human trafficking survivors and the Regions from across the Province.



We had an opportunity to visit Kahnawake Mohawk Territory, listened to Elders stories and participated in a number of land-based excursions. Overall, it was an informative experience and IWS will consider the feasibility of applying for the next phase of grant funding.

Infinity Woman Secretariat Fundraiser at Riel House - Thursday Night Soiree



IWS had a successful fundraiser on August 1st during Riel House's Thursday Night Soiree, raising **\$589** for IWS Christmas hampers! Hot dogs, chips and a drink were provided for \$5. Tickets were sold for 50/50 (\$177 prize). The raffle was a big hit with 5 amazing prizes donated by IWS: moccasins, beaded flower pin, Métis books, and a decked out mini Red River Cart. This was IWS's first time fundraising at Riel House. Look out for us next summer!



Photo on the left (L to R): IWS Board Member Brandi Vezina, IWS Spokeswoman Anita Campbell, IWS Youth Board Member Alyssa Thomas.

Photo on the right: IWS Fundraiser

Women of the Métis Nation (WMN)

Infinity Women Secretariat (IWS) attended **Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak – Women of the Metis Nation (LFMO - WMN) Annual General Meeting** that was held on October 12 – 14, 2019 in Toronto, Ontario. There were 10 Metis women delegates from each of the 5 Metis provincial governing bodies that attended the AGA. Besides the normal business that occurs at an AGA, there were panel presentations from the LGBTQS and presentations to Métis Women Veterans by Minister Bennett. This year's LFMO-WMN AGA will be held on October 3 – 5, 2019 in Calgary, Alberta.



On March 19th – 22, 2019 in Ottawa, ON, Les Femme Michif Otipemisiwak hosted a three and a half day **Women's Forum** to discuss a variety of topics and to help inform strategic priorities/policy analysis from a grass-roots perspective. This event focused on the topics ranging from Trauma Informed Care, Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy, Métis Early Learning and Childcare, Métis Nation Permanent Bi-Lateral Mechanism, Métis Women's Health Priorities (and forced sterilization), Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy, Disability Challenges, LFMO Needs Assessment Project, just to name a few. I'd like to say thank you to the women who represented IWS at this forum, as they were excellent participants who made me very proud of each and every one of them!!

Kristin Richard, IWS Youth Representative, travelled with IWS for the LFMO Policy Forum Gathering in March 2019. She is a Big Sister to a young Métis girl (registered in the Winnipeg Big Brother Big Sister Program). As a major fundraiser, the agency was holding a boxing championship where Kristin was boxing in support. Minister Joan Ledoux requested support for Kristin and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Minister Campbell quickly indicated IWS would match the donations raised by the women at the Forum. President Chartrand then matched the amount provided by IWS. Kristin successfully reached her fundraising goal in a matter of hours and remains ever grateful for the love and support she received from her Métis family.



I currently hold the position of National Treasurer of LFMO-WMN and am responsible to ensure the preparation and presentation of our audited financial statements, among other duties. I had also undertaken the role and responsibility of Chairing the LFMO-WMN By-Law Review Committee and assisting with a complete review and revision of our National By-Laws for LFMO-WMO, but due to the business schedule of the Committee Members, it was difficult to secure meeting dates. This item will be discussed at the upcoming AGA in Calgary. We continue to participate on all forms of communication as requested, including our relationship with Women of the Metis Nation to assist with moving the National women's agenda forward.

In Closing

Where has the year gone...the older I get, the faster time goes by...and its moving quickly. People say that 'time flies when one is having fun' so I must be having a blast!! Last year, I reported on the additional responsibilities that comes with being your Spokeswoman, which includes also being the CEO of IWS.

In addition, I am also the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the MMF, and through MMF's Constitution, I am also a Caucus & Cabinet Member of the MMF, with additional appointments to other Boards & Committees. Currently, I am the MMF - Minister of Finance and Human Resources, sit on the Boards of LRCC, MEDO, a Trustee to Metis N4, Chair the Finance & HR Committee, a member of the HRD Committee, the Early Learning & Child Care Committee, the Provincial Education Committee and Chair the Regional Administrator's Committee, just to a name a few. In total there are about 8 or 9 other areas of responsibilities. I've also taken the lead role in the review and revisions of the By-laws for the Metis Child & Family Services Authority, the Michif Child & Family Services Agency, the Metis Child, Family & Community Services Agency and the Louis Riel Institute... all of which I am happy to report have been approved and accepted.

I share this with you for a reason... That although at times the work and the demands seem overwhelming, I love what I am allowed to do because I really do love helping people. I try my best to meet the needs of accomplishing all of the work and the demands that are placed before me on a daily basis, putting my best efforts forward to achieve what is asked of me.

I would be remiss to not acknowledge my fellow Infinity Women Secretariat Board of Directors for their continued involvement and sharing of ideas, to the women who represent us on LAC's and our other appointments - thank you for giving us your time away from your family, and I especially want to thank each and every one of you that continue to participate at the Local level to ensure that the Metis women voice is heard. I want to thank President David Chartrand and my MMF colleagues for their ongoing support and caring throughout the years - I recognize that I am blessed to have so many wonderful people in my life and to be a part of the Manitoba Métis Family!

I am honored to be your Spokeswoman - thank you!

Anita Campbell

Spokeswoman



Infinity Women Secretariat doesn't belong to a few women - it belongs to all of us.

**Anita Campbell - Spokeswoman & CEO
Infinity Women Secretariat
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Anita is a Métis woman from the community of Duck Bay, spent her childhood and teenage years in the City of Winnipeg and after high school moved to the City of Thompson, where she spent 35 years living and working. Anita is married to Mike McIvor and has a blended family of 3 sons, 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. She enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends, reading, and travelling.

Anita received her education through the Red River College Business Management Program, along with numerous workshops/seminars, training sessions and mostly through life learning opportunities/experiences. Anita is currently with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) in the City of Winnipeg in the position of Chief Administrative Officer, as of September 1, 2016.

Previous to working with the MMF, Anita was employed with the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre for 35 years and held the position of Executive Director for 23 years. Anita played a major role in the development of programs and services that address the social, education, cultural, employment and training issues throughout the province, and strives to ensure that programs and services are offered to assist Indigenous Peoples with gaining a better quality of life. In addition to managing multiple programs and services, Anita also oversaw the operation of several properties and a staff complement of 65+ individuals.

Under the direction and leadership of Anita Campbell, the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre has taken on a number of projects which have become self-sustaining within the City of Thompson including Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy, Thompson Neighborhood Renewal Corporation, Futures and the Nanatowiho Homeless Shelter to name a few. Anita's leadership and encouragement has also given Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre the "push" it needed to realize its dream of a "One-Stop-Shop" where urban Indigenous peoples can access programs and services from one location. The dream of a new Friendship Centre came to fruition under Anita's leadership and held its official Grand Opening in May of 2011.

In addition to her work with the Friendship Centre, Anita has held a variety of positions on various Boards and committees relevant to Human Resources/Finance Management; Policy Development; Employment, Education and Training; Community Development; Economic Development; and Women's Issues including: Past Chair of the City of Thompson's Housing Task Force; Past Member of the National Urban Aboriginal Strategy; Past Chair of the Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy; Past Board of Director of the Spirit Way Inc. (Wolves Project); Past Chair of the MMF Provincial Management Board and Thompson Local Management Board to name a few, with many organizations and groups at the municipal, provincial and national levels, promoting the retention of the diverse Indigenous culture, languages, values and traditions.

For her commitment to working with community, Anita was presented the provincial award for Community Development from the Original Women's Network in 2001, and the Interprovincial Association on Native Employment (IANE) Bill Hanson Award in 2007, the Thompson Trail Breakers Award for Community Leadership in 2011 and she received the Governor General of Canada's Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers in recognition of outstanding Indigenous Leadership in June, 2017.

Adrienne Carriere - Vice Spokeswoman, Winnipeg Region

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Adrienne Carriere is a Métis woman from San Clara, Manitoba and has resided in Winnipeg since 1991. She has been a member of the Executive with the South Central Métis Council, and continues to be a member of the St. Norbert Parish La-Barrière Métis Council; Adrienne served on the LAC for the Winnipeg Region for four years and was a Board Member with the Louis Riel Institute. She looks forward to continuing her work with IWS as an advocate for Métis women and children.



Adrienne graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 1994 and worked at the Native Women's Transition Centre providing support to women and children experiencing domestic violence. She advocated on behalf of women dealing with CFS, Manitoba Justice, and EIA. An academic counsellor with the U of M ACCESS Programs since 1997, she provided support and advocacy to Indigenous students experiencing academic, social/personal and financial barriers to education. She completed a Master's Degree in Adult Education in 2006 and became the Associate Director of ACCESS and Aboriginal Focus Programs in 2012. Currently an Academic Specialist with Community-Based Programs, U of M, Adrienne is working on program development initiatives with inner-city youth.

Dee Chaboyer - Secretary, Thompson Region

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Dee Chaboyer is a Métis woman from the City of Thompson. Her family relocated to Lynn Lake for 11 years before returning to Thompson (1990), where she resides today. Dee believes in providing education, knowledge and skills necessary for the advancement and empowerment of Indigenous people.

In 1993 Dee graduated with a diploma in Business Administration, Accounting Major (Keewatin Community College). After grad she became a participant of the Single Parent Job Access Program and was placed with the Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre (6 months work experience, finance department) and 26 years later remains with the organization. Since 2006 she has held the positions of Assistant Director, Director of Operations and currently holds the position of Executive Director. Dee is involved with many municipal, provincial and federal groups/organizations. In addition to IWS, Dee is Secretary/Treasurer of the MMF - Thompson LAC; Vice-Chairperson of Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy; Member of the MB Association of Friendship Centre's Finance/Personnel Committee and Technical Advisory Committee; Chairperson of the Aboriginal Advisory Board-Service Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy; Northern representative and Chairperson for the MB Aboriginal Head Start; Vice-Chairperson for the UCN's Governing Council and Chairperson of UCN Finance Committee; Treasurer of Lions Manor 55 to name a few!



Brandi Vezina, Treasurer, Southeast Region

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Brandi Vezina (B. Env Sci, B. Ed) is an educator, author, singer/songwriter, blogger and YouTuber. Brandi is from Stony Point, Manitoba.

In 2013, Brandi received recognition as a Top 12 educator across Canada by Canadian Parent Magazine and she was awarded an INDSPiRE Role Model educator. She has written three books, *Raising Your Consciousness*, *Moonlit Path*, and *Going Inward*. Brandi had a column with Sun Media for many years and continues to write for her blog. She released her first ebook in 2019. She loves writing and enjoys sharing with people what she has learned throughout her lifetime. Her writing focuses on spirituality, recovery, self empowerment, honesty and environmentalism. She is also currently creating YouTube videos. She is a co-host on the radio talk show, #kwe, on NCI FM. Brandi blends her writing, singing and speaking into one and all three reach out to her audience and fans alike.

Brandi hopes her first single, *Walk Away*, encourages people to leave relationships, workplaces and situations that are toxic. Brandi has teamed up with internationally recognized Canadian producer, Murray Pulver. She has used her personal experience to write music that is meaningful and helpful to those who need that message of self-perseverance.



Lorna (Lori) Bulycz - The Pas Region

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I was born and raised in the Barrows & Mafeking area. I currently reside in Mafeking with my husband Danny of 38 years. We have 3 wonderful children and 5 grandchildren (with the 6th one due at the end of December).

I work at home as the secretary/bookkeeper for our family businesses. I have also worked as an Educational Assistant for numerous years in Mafeking for the Swan Valley School Division. I was an active member of the Mafeking Legion Ladies Auxiliary for numerous years. I also coached Minor Hockey for a few years, a position that I thoroughly enjoyed. In the last 30 plus years I have volunteered many hours for various organizations such as the Mafeking & Swan River Minor Sport, the Mafeking Community Centre, the MMF, the various schools that my children attended and I was also instrumental in organizing and running Jammin' in the Jackpine Aboriginal Music Festival.

My favourite pastime is spending time with my grandchildren, in which I'm very fortunate to have them all living close by. I also enjoy quadding, reading, doing puzzles and all our big family gatherings that we have quite often.

"HAPPINESS is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family!"

Beverly Webb - Interlake Region

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Beverly (Bev) is a Métis woman born in Fisher Branch, MB, where she was raised by her paternal grandparents in the Marble Ridge District. She married Bill in 1977. They raised their family and still live where she grew up. Bev is Mom to 3 children and their spouses, and is Nan to 8 grandchildren: Tristan, Cassidy, Brody, Trenton, Kirstyn, Owen, Wyatt, MacKenzie, and her Great grandson Morgan. Bev also has 5 fur babies.



Bev is a retired Health Care Aide of over 20 years. She is a member of the Interlake LAC Board for 25+ years, and newly appointed to the Interlake PAC. She has been a member of the Métis Child, Family, and Community Services agency board for 8 years. Bev still enjoys working part time guarding at the Ashern, Arborg, and Fisher Branch RCMP detachments. She takes pleasure in volunteering for various organizations; her favourite is the Samaritans Purse – Operations Christmas Child Shoe Box Gifts.

Her hobbies include knitting, crocheting, cross-stitch, rock painting and other crafts. In addition, she has a beautiful yard, flowers and garden that she takes pride in. In all of the things that Bev has done, she feels the greatest adventure that she has been able to take on was to be a stay at home mom; she cherished that time with her children. Bev is very fond of babysitting, grandparenting, and spoiling the grandkids. She loves sugaring up the kids before returning them to their parents!!

Kimberly (Kim) Thompson - Northwest Region

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Kim Thompson is a proud Métis Woman born in Thunder Bay, ON, but her family roots come from the community of Duck Bay. She moved to Dauphin as a young child and has lived there the majority of her life. Kim obtained her Business Administrative Diploma (Assiniboine Community College) in 2007. Kim currently works for the Provincial Government as a Medical Transportation Coordinator and currently sits on a few boards with the Department of Families. Kim formerly worked as the Community

Liaison Worker out of the Northwest Métis council advocating and supporting the Métis people in the Northwest Region.



Kim was elected in a position on the Infinity Women's Representative board in September 2018 and has attended multiple meetings and workshops over the year to gain knowledge on programs and services available for Métis Women.

Kim is a single mother of two beautiful daughters, one handsome son and one free spirited grandson. She loves spending time with family and friends, traveling, camping and hiking. Kim is always on the look out for new adventures and new opportunity to help our Métis Woman strive.

Joan Church - Southwest Region

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As a Mother and Grandmother, I am blessed with five beautiful daughters, 17 adorable grandchildren, and my awesome great-grandson. I was born in Swan Valley and am the second of 12 children (my parents raised 16). My early years were spent at Bowsman Ridge, a Métis settlement at the foot of the Porcupine Mountains where Dad trapped and Mom raised us kids.

Before retiring in 2013, I worked in the field of education for 30 years. I was given a life time opportunity to become a teacher through the BUNTEP Program, graduating with a Bachelor of Education (Brandon University) in 1981. I taught in literacy and the Swan Valley School Division. I later moved to Swan River and spent over 30 years volunteering for the Friendship Centre. I spent time as the MAC's National Board Representative on the NAFC, the President of MAC, as well as the Friendship Centre representative on the Northwest LMB.

In 2014, post-retirement, I began working in the field of addictions. My current work has me very interested in addictions, mental health, and family violence. These issues are being faced by Métis peoples everywhere in Manitoba. I feel we should be focusing on what we can do to promote understanding, awareness, and prevention.

May the Creator in his strength and infinite wisdom grant Métis women across Canada progress and prosperity.

Alyssa Thomas - IWS Provincial Youth Representative

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Alyssa Thomas is a 21-year-old woman from the Southeast Region and has been actively involved in the Métis community for most of her life.

Currently, Alyssa holds an appointed position as the youth representative on both the IWS Board of Directors and the MMF's Provincial Youth Advisory Committee. Through these positions, Alyssa provides a female youth perspective and encourages youth involvement at the provincial level. She also holds a position on the MMF's Southeast Regional Youth Advisory Committee. Alyssa has volunteered for many years at various events serving Elders facilitating children's games. She is also a contributing author to the History of the MMF by Lawrence Barkwell.

Alyssa is a student at the University of Winnipeg currently taking a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Political Science. Alyssa has held an above 4.0 GPA and has been recognized for her academic achievements through many prestigious awards. This year she received the Dieter Hoehne Memorial Scholarship as the high standing Indigenous student in Political Science at the U of W. Alyssa plans to attend law school once she has graduated with her B.A.



Jenna Vandal - IWS Program Coordinator **Jenna@mmf.mb.ca**

Jenna Vandal is Métis woman born and raised in St. Boniface. A recent graduate of University of Manitoba with a major in Native Studies, Jenna now works full time as Program Coordinator of the IWS and takes part-time schooling to work her way towards a Master's degree in Native Studies. Jenna is bilingual (French & English), speaks Anishinaabemowin (beginner), and is excited to learn Michif.

Jenna was very involved in Indigenous leadership on campus with groups such as University of Manitoba Indigenous Students Association and Indigenous Circle of Empowerment, which led to herself and two friends to start the MMF Bison Local: a Local centered around, but not exclusive to student life. Jenna is the Co-chair of the Bison Local.

She has a keen interest in reclaiming Indigenous plant knowledge, and spends a lot of her time visiting prairies in and around Winnipeg to identify and re-learn the medicinal and edible properties of our Native plants. Knowing that Indigenous women are the true stewards of the land, Jenna strives to protect it and educate people on our Métis rights in relation to our land.



Karrie Burzuik - IWS Program Coordinator **Karrie.burzuik@mmf.mb.ca**

As the newest member of the IWS Team, Karrie Burzuik (B.Sc., Indigenous Language Specialist), is honoured to use her skills to educate Métis women in Métis traditions, culture, belief systems, and Indigenous languages. Karrie has come full circle, working for the MMF who awarded her the Métis and ACCESS bursary while in University.

She received a Medal of Recognition and certificate with Promoting Aboriginal Student Success, Business Council of Manitoba Education Award, NAAF award, and multiple scholarships over her education.

A proud member of the MMF Selkirk Local with ancestry connected to the Métis Peoples in the Red River Settlement, Karrie has always been proud of her roots. An Indigenous Educator, Karrie spent a number of years teaching about protecting, preserving, and conserving our natural and cultural heritage with Parks Canada as an Interpretation Coordinator and Public Outreach Education Officer. An avid Storyteller, Karrie enjoys sharing with people of all ages in Anishinaabemowin, French, & Spanish!

Karrie is avid crafter. She knits, creates dreamcatchers and gifts them to those most precious to her - the children, who are our future. Karrie is a Sundancer. She loves swimming and kayaking. As a girl she danced Pow-wow and the Red River Jig. Recently she discovered latin dancing on her travels in Cuba!



Creation and Meaning of the IWS Sash

Infinity Women Secretariat created and designed their own Sash, utilizing the meaning behind their Logo which has a variety of elements reflected as follows:

- ✦ The yellow color represents the sweeping lines of the Red River Cart tracks used in our ancestral travels;
- ✦ The red color represents our distinct Metis culture as portrayed in many Metis Nation Sashes;
- ✦ The black color represents the road and path that Métis women have travelled throughout history;
- ✦ The blue color represents the profile of all Métis women, as a reflection of a calm yet proud and strong Métis woman that is looking towards the future;
- ✦ And the pink color represents all of our loved ones that we have lost in our lives and that they are still close to our hearts.

The Sash has become a widely recognized symbol of IWS and very sought after. We have received numerous requests from women who would like to purchase them, but the Sash is considered a symbol of IWS and cannot be bought or duplicated; it must be earned. These Sashes are only given out to honor or thank individuals, who have given back to their community – with no expectation of recognition or appreciation. We ask those that are honored with our sash to wear it proudly, as you become part of our family.



