

# **OUR** **ESKASONI.**

**Where the Future Meets the Past**

## **ESKASONI CHIEF AND COUNCIL COMMUNITY REPORT 2020 - 2021**



## **COMING AUGUST 2022**

**KINU - ESKASONI'S LONG TERM CARE FACILITY**

**HIGHLIGHTS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

# ESKASONI CHIEF AND COUNCIL

## ADDRESS TO THE COMMUNITY

To our Community Members,

On behalf of Eskasoni Chief and Council, we would like to present this year's Eskasoni Chief and Council community report. Our report highlights all the activities and project each department has completed during the past year. We want to acknowledge all our Band Directors and our employees who work diligently all year and every year in providing vital public services for our community.



This past year has been a year that our generation has never witnessed; a world-wide pandemic because of Covid-19. In the past year our community faced a great challenge of not letting Covid come into our community. This time last year we locked down our community in fear of this virus and in hindsight we take great pride in how our community came together to support each other and how we took care of each other.

It was a very tough and stressful year and we must commend all our frontline workers. From our health center staff, our nurses, our security team, our market and emergency management team, we all stepped up to meet that challenge.

From our Chief and Council and our community you are all Champions in our eyes and we want to congratulate you all for keeping us safe. Of course we are still not over this pandemic and we must continue to stay safe but we know there is light at the end of this health crisis. The time is now to get your shot. We hope everyone in our community gets vaccinated.

**“We need carpenters, bus drivers, welders, plumbers or electricians. The trades are in high demand and we desperately need community members in trades.”**

Our last report was in spring of 2018 and since then much more has been done. Four major projects we are excited to see completion on are the strip mall expansion, our own fiber op, our new recreation center and of course our long term care facility which was showcased on the front of our community report.

The long term care facility is projected to be completed in August of 2022, our strip mall expansion is only months away from completion and our fiber op installation is moving very nicely. These projects are a great economic boost to our community and will create full-time, long term employment.

The long term care facility alone will create close to 70 full-time and part-time jobs. Community members are currently being trained in the long-term care profession.

We also want to stress the importance of our younger generation and those wanting to change professions to think about pursuing a career in the trades. We need carpenters, bus drivers, welders, plumbers or electricians. The trades are in high demand and we desperately need community members in trades.

We know the majority of our community members want to work at home. Creating opportunities like

these does not only boost our economy but also improves the well-being of our community.

To give you a quick over-view of how many people are employed in our community throughout the year, there are 85 seasonal fishers and 40 seasonal processors at Crane Cove Seafoods, roughly 40 to 50 security workers, 213 employed at the Eskasoni School Board where the staff is over 85% Mi'kmaq. These numbers don't include places like the band office, Health Center, market or gaming.

As we continue to strive forward as a community we are always searching for more business ventures. With our finances being healthy, we are becoming big players and other organizations are willing to partner with us.

We are looking to expand our tourism, our mental health services and sports and wellness. So we need more people trained and educated because more employment is on its way.

Our transportation service has started up and we hope to start Sydney transportation once Covid has passed. And if you drive towards the Castle Bay ball field you will notice solar panels. This project began last year in partnership with Natural Forces Solar for renewable and clean energy. We are looking at more renewable clean energy projects like these in the future.

Speaking of renewable, the Eskasoni solid waste community project is set to begin this May. You already received a flyer in the mail with regards to this project. We are currently working on a solid waste residential program for the community. These include things like green bins, recyclables and regular garbage sorting. An education campaign will be the major part of making this project work and our community has to buy into this solid waste program. We are purchasing 1.1 million in material and we have partnered with a Millbrook First Nation company called GMAN Inc. to deliver the education and project materials.

There are many great things happening in our community, with our primary goal as your leadership to create a self-sustaining community. Our education system and graduation rate is top notch and more of our people are graduation with degrees in Social Work, Nursing, Teaching and other degrees.

It is also great to see our younger generation keeping our love for music strong with ABMHS showcasing our talents. And after 6 years at Acadia University our very own musician, Shawnee Paul will make history next month when she becomes the first Mikmaq to receive a Music Teacher's Degree. WTG Shawnee.

Our Mi'kmaw language initiatives are making great strides, from our Immersion school, MK and our Mi'kmaq duo Tom and Carol Ann Johnson spearheading a new Mi'kmaq language project.

Our goal in Eskasoni is, if anyone wants to work, they will find work in Eskasoni. From our Works Program, our security, our partnership, Goat Island, new house construction, Eskasoni Communications and our highly praised and professional processing plant at Crane Cove Seafood, you will find work.

More employment is expected when our new Recreation Center/Multi-purpose building will begin construction this spring and is expected to be completed this year.

EFWC will also be hiring two Moderate Livelihood Coordinators this spring to work with Eskasoni fishermen and to voice their knowledge and concerns. Eskasoni Chief and Council understands how important moderate livelihood is to our community and we will always stand in solidarity with all Mi'kmaw communities.

And finally we cannot emphasize how big Fiber Op is to our community. We are not 100 percent certain but we think we are the first aboriginal own communications company in Canada. This is historic and we should all take great pride. Not only will Eskasoni Communications provide fiber op but they will also provide digital TV and telephone service. We have great plans in store and we hope you join us for the ride.

Respectfully Yours,  
Eskasoni Chief and Council

# HOUSING REPORT

**Director:** Darlene Marshall

**Housing Technicians:** Noel Doucette Jr., Fred Marshall, Wilfred (Joe) Paul, Zachary Denny

**Housing Clerk:** Ruben Peck, Kylie Young

**Tenant Relation:** Evan Francis

Our housing department is also part of the Eskasoni Emergency team and we would like to express our recognition and sincere gratitude to all our community members for the understanding, collaboration and assistance during our community time in emergencies. We are in full awareness for certain seasons and prepared for any upcoming event by all the volunteer posting of Covid, upcoming weather, announcements, preventative measure sharing and in helping a fellow member, friend or family.

Our working housing group continues to review, prioritize and strategize for the short and long term planning for our housing department to meet our community needs. This committee will be recommending to Chief and Council a diverse housing program to meet the needs of existing and proposed housing initiatives.

The housing department, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Department and Indian Northern Affairs Canada are working on various programs to improve and extend the life cycle of our housing stock and create a healthy and safer living environment.

## DEPARTMENTAL SETBACKS THIS FISCAL YEAR (IF ANY):

- 1) Approvals pending from Indian Affairs for Ministerial Guarantee to begin construction of new homes.
- 3) Shortage of housing allocations
- 4) CMHC inspections
- 5) Tenant responsibility of maintaining homes (neglect) –increases cost of renovations, increased health and safety concerns.
- 6) Covid Pandemic
- 7) Civic Addresses
- 8) MLG-processes

## DEPARTMENTAL ISSUE AND TRENDS:

The housing department is requesting tenants to continue informing the reception at the Band Office for repairs/maintenance to avoid additional cost due to neglect.

The housing department as of April 1, 2011 will no longer be excepting invoices submitted for members who run out of oil and require assistance bleeding the lines. If required, the invoices will be the responsibility of the tenant.

Tenants that neglect and have no electricity for an extended time, the housing department will not be responsible for damage incurred. External services will be notified immediately as it is legally required.

## DEPARTMENTAL GOALS ANNUALLY:

*Develop strategy for:*

With the participation of the working housing group collectively will be reviewing the housing program to educate and develop a proactive and productive program that continues to promote a viable housing program with innovative projects to enhance the existing units and in acquiring additional units.

### Construction:

2017-2018 11 Unit project - under construction (\$ 1,362,855.00 - 25 year mortgage)  
2018-19 11 unit project –pending MLG approval (\$ 1,437,700.00 - 25 year mortgage)  
2019-20 10 Unit Project- MLG pending approval (\$ 1,214,220.00 – 25 year mortgage)  
2020-21 10 Unit Project – MLG pending approval (\$1,421,500.00-25 year mortgage)  
2020-21 RHI 30 Unit Project – submitted waiting approval \$ 5,239,860.00

INAC vs CMHC processes and requirements due to changes have caused major delays in MLG approval.

Housing Development (repairs & renovations) as of Feb 23/2021

April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 \$ Budget 520,000.00

Heating cost	\$ 66,779.50
Plumbing	98,661.93
Electrical	51,976.92
Building materials	42,559.79
Labor	56,007.82
Estates	14,995.59

## LANDS REPORT

**Director:** Albert Marshall

- Castle Bay ATR – granted reserve status on June 22, 2019 (coordinated surveys, addressing third party interests, environmental assessments etc.)
- Negotiated Bell Mobility/Eastlink Co-location permit and fees – Lot 192 – finalized Aug 7, 2019
- Foodland/MFCS Designation – March 3, 2020 – coordinated the vote day - venue/address list/finalized the Information Document/delivery of the on-reserve packages/afterward – the signing of the documents (BCRs etc.) for the Minister
- Estates – responded to several inquiries, assisted in drafting documents for Transfer of Land by Administrators
- Worked with the department to assist individuals in land transfers
- Answered questions on land disputes
- Submitted new proposal for Dr Virick property ATR – currently working with surveyor to get new CLSR for property, working with environment people to get Environmental Assessment
- Worked with Province on identifying risk related to Abandoned Mine Openings close to reserve
- Also contacted Surveyor to have the Market Area Surveyed with a CLSR plan and a new Land description for the proposed 18(2) set aside of the Long-term care facility.
- Submitted a proposal for the MRP engagements in Eskasoni on Law development but unfortunately the pandemic hit and we couldn't continue with the last engagement of the general public.

# INDIAN REGISTRY

**Eskasoni Indian Registry:** Outstanding births approx. No is 30 (15 parents did not come in yet/ the rest we are waiting for more info ID or sent document back for amendments) Our office often assist clients daily doing their online heating rebates/licenses & utility bills for tax exemptions/FAC pics and guarantor. Past two yrs approx 350 status cards. Assisted Indian Day School Clients to obtain Administrator of the Estate for their family members/there is a backlog 3 to 6 months at Indigenous Affairs. Reopening of Estate files 2007 to present estimate 350.

<i>Ages</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>On Reserve 1</i>	<i>Other Band 2</i>	<i>Total 1+2</i>	<i>Off Reserve</i>
0-6	252	243	495	464	5	469	26
7-11	210	225	435	404	3	407	28
12-17	270	244	514	464	4	468	46
18-100	1569	1671	3240	2649	23	2672	568
65-100	138	204	342	234	0	234	108
0-100	2301	2383	4684	3981	34	4015	668
<i>Events</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Marriages</i>	<i>Divorces</i>	<i>Amendments</i>	<i>Transfers</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Event Totals</i>
2019-2020	89	9	2	212	0	29	341
2020-2021	52	8	1	29	14	29	133

**Secure Cards:** You may take you own photo on the photo app and you must have a guarantor (someone who has a secure card) to do up the form once you submit the same guarantor will have to assist with the application. The first two links are for New Secure Indian Status Card 3rd are for the application to register 15 and under and 16 and over for Indian Registry.

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1333474227679/1572461782133#chp5>

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1462806841047/1572461062751#frm-83-169>

[https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1462806841047/1572461062751#sec1\\_2](https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1462806841047/1572461062751#sec1_2)



# CRANE COVE SEAFOODS

## Fiscal Year 2019/20 and 2020/21 Reports



Your Crane Cove Seafoods is an ISO 9001-2015 certified seafood harvesting company that also operates a state of the art SQF certified processing plant, which provides full and part-time employment for over 136 community members of Eskasoni. We are a primary resource harvester of snow crab and shrimp in the Atlantic Ocean off Nova Scotia.

Our main office is located at the Crane Cove Seafoods fishery building in Eskasoni and our fishing ports are located in:

- Petit De Grat
- Canso

We employ 85 seasonal fishers and 40 seasonal processors at our processing plant of which 98.4% are Eskasoni band members.

Wages and benefits for our Mi'kmaq fishers were approximately \$5,500,000 for fiscal year 2019/20 and \$2,700,000 for fiscal year 20/21.

Wages and benefits for our Mi'kmaq processors were approximately \$450,000 for fiscal year 2019/20 and \$250,000 for fiscal year 2020/21. Crane Cove Seafoods made contributions to the Band Council of \$5,500,000 for fiscal year 2019/20 and \$2,800,000 for fiscal year 2020/21.

The reduction in Crane Cove Seafoods revenues was experienced in fiscal year 2020/21 due to the Covid 19 pandemic that created a reduced market demand in cold water shrimp and snow crab, and the carry forward of 18% snow crab quota from 2020 to 2021.

**“We employ 85 seasonal fishers and 40 seasonal processors at our processing plant of which 98.4% are Eskasoni band members.”**

# ESKASONI SCHOOL BOARD

**Director of Education:** Elizabeth Cremo

**Board Members:**

Chief Leroy Denny: Ex-Officio

**Chair:** John F Toney

**Members:**

Ann Denny	Tom Sylliboy	Allison Bernard	Nancy Sylliboy
Faye Googoo	Walter Denny	Connie Gould	Sheila Morris
Ernest Johnson	Lo'li Johnson	Patrick Jeddore	George Paul

**Staff:**

Our staff is comprised of over 213 team members, a growth of 21 team members since last report. The staff is made up of over 85% local Mi'kmaq personnel. Staff positions include: Teachers, Teacher Aides, Early Childhood Educators, Guidance, Social Counselors, Janitors, Bus Drivers, Maintenance, Principals, and Office Administrative Staff

**DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR:**

- June 2020 saw 44 high school graduates in our first ever outdoor graduation and prom to celebrate the achievements of our students while still observing Covid-19 restrictions. This June also saw drive up grading day exercises for our students throughout the board.
- 51 Post-Secondary graduates from 11 universities/colleges in 21 programs.
- The Eskasoni School Board and PSAC local 80510 (Eskasoni Teacher's Union) negotiate a new collective agreement in place until August 31, 2022.
- The Eskasoni School Board updated and rolled out the new staff policy handbook for non-unionized board staff in November 2020
- All schools reopened with blended hybrid model of education to provide students with safe social distancing while in school two days a week and supported learning from home opportunities three days a week.
- All schools within the Eskasoni School Board moved to supervised lunch in schools and shortened school days in response to the Covid-19 plan to maximize contact time in a safe manner.
- Students provided with access to technology in the form of chrome books, iPads or tablets to support Google Classroom, Seesaw and Squiggle park.
- Community access point for Wi-Fi created in parking lot at EEMS school for students to access google classroom if unable to access from home.
- Students participate in various virtual gatherings such as the MK Christmas concert.
- ABMHS students honored Gerald Robert and Mabel Sylliboy as their 2020 role models of the year
- All schools in the Eskasoni School Board equipped with emergency generators to maintain operation in cases of power outages.
- Unama'ki TEC relocated to new location at 76 Logan Drive.
- New playground constructed at EEMS school
- Teaching greenhouse constructed at ABMHS
- Partnership with Jordan's principle to provide better service to children with needs in daycare
- Implementation of BambooHR tool to record attendance and house electronic personnel information
- Chromebooks supplied to Eskasoni School Board members to access meetings remotely in observance of Covid-19 gathering restrictions.



### **DEPARTMENTAL SETBACKS TO REPORT:**

Children residing in the community of Eskasoni continue to be registered in off reserve provincial schools despite educational access in community available from Kindergarten to grade 12.

### **DEPARTMENTAL ISSUES AND TRENDS:**

The Eskasoni School Board has worked collaboratively with Eskasoni Band Council Departments other Mi'kmaq School Boards, as well as local non-native school boards and institutions to bring beneficial programming and services to our students and community. We have taken action to preserve our Mi'kmaq language and culture by expanding support of programs such as Mi'kmaq immersion, the TLE center and Mi'kmaq language and cultural programming through the creation of the position of Mi'kmaq language and culture consultant for the board. Our schools also participate in provincial assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics. We are also independently monitoring the results of the assessments to determine our personal training and in servicing needs to support better results for our students. By monitoring student performance in these assessments, we can tailor instruction to ensure our students are meeting outcomes set forth by the province of Nova Scotia.

### **DEPARTMENTAL GOALS FOR NEXT QUARTER:**

Implementation of 2021-22 Annual Strategic Plan

Plan for and deliver grading day and graduation exercises in June for 52 expected graduates

Provide bus driver training to increase the number of bus drivers and substitute bus drivers in community.

Participate in training programs to create trained employees in maintenance and janitorial.

Plan for and transition to full time in person attendance in schools for students to increase in person contact time for teachers and students.

Review and revise emergency plans and protocols throughout schools.



# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## **Staff:**

Dale Sylliboy- Director  
Elizabeth Johnson- SDA  
Alison Stevens- SDA  
Annette Bernard- SDA  
Kim Marshall SDA  
Sharon Johnson- Office Manager/Clerk  
Charlotte Young- Clerk  
Victoria Alex- Clerk  
John Isaac- Clerk  
John Jeddore- Appliance Repair Technician  
Arron Cabot- Appliance Repair Technician

Report on Social Assistance Self Governance Initiative February 24, 2021.

The Social Winter report includes a summary of the activities, progress, and outcomes of the Social Governance Initiative.

## **1. Common Mi'kmaq Social Policy:**

Significant work was completed on the development of a common Mi'kmaq social policy. The project team met the work plan timeline to complete draft #7 dated November 27, 2020. The SDA's met in September, October, and November for extended periods to finalize draft #7. Legal counsel attended the October 2020 SDA meeting to review and discuss the draft policy. The legal team reviewed draft #7. The project team and legal team have continued to meet virtually to review the draft policy. A review of the rate structure remains and will be completed in early March. The team has edited the policy during February with changes to be reviewed by the SDA's, the Chiefs, Council's, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Also, ISC provided the social team comments and observations on the policy. The ISC comments are being reviewed by the social team and legal counsel. The policy is a standing item at the TOR Working Committee and will be discussed in March 2021.

The draft Mi'kmaq policy is being used by Membertou Geomatics Solutions (MGS) to develop the Mi'kmaq Social Governance Application (MSGGA). The social team and a small technical committee comprised of SDA's are working closely with MGS software development team to build the application. The new Mi'kmaq common policy is considered a foundation to Mi'kmaq self-government. The final working draft is expected to be delivered to the SDA's, Chiefs and ISC by the end of March 2021 for discussions.

## **2. Mi'kmaq Social Governance Application (MSGGA)**

Membertou Geomatics Solutions (MGS) is engaged to design and develop the Mi'kmaq Social Governance Application. The work plan references the social database/case management information system which is now named MSGGA after being approved by the Chiefs on January 22, 2021. The application will be the first of its kind in Canada; it is designed by Mi'kmaq for use specific by Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia to exercise self-government over a Mi'kmaq based social policy framework. Additional time is required by the developers to build the application and case management features. MGS and MNP-LLP are collaborating on the MSGGA financial reporting system and case management functions. The SDA Technical Committee and the project team continued to meet with MGS to review progress on the application and to provide advice on changes. MGS provided the Ta'n Etlitpi'timk Association Chiefs (13) a high-level presentation on the application and how it will be used by SDA's. MGS is preparing the administrative manual to accompany the MSGGA system.

### 3. Mi'kmaq Governance

The Chiefs of Nova Scotia have met monthly since they approved the draft social governance constitution on September 25, 2020. On December 14, 2020, the Chiefs selected the name Ta'n Etli-tpi'tmk Association as the new Mi'kmaq government public body to support Mi'kmaq governance over enhanced social programming. The Chiefs gave instructions to the project team to arrange an incorporation under the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act S.C. 2009, c.23. Amendments to the Mi'kmaq Enhanced Social Governance Constitution were initiated by legal counsel and will be finalized in early February 2021.



### 4. SDA Meetings

Recognizing the importance of finalizing the draft common social policy and case management system (MSGA), the SDA's agreed to extend their monthly meetings by one day between September-November 2020. The extended meeting blocks assisted the project team to complete draft #7 to the policy before it was given to legal counsel and MGS. SDA's continue to meet virtually monthly via google meet.

### 5. Professional Development Plan

The project team and SDA's discussed future professional development and training priorities. Given the pending implementation of the new MSGA, training in case management, basic accounting was identified. MGS is developing a training schedule on the MSGA system for late March and early in 2021-2022. MNP-LLP has agreed to consider a basic accounting workshop based on MSGA functionality. Specific details are not finalized. SDA's are starting to hear that social clients who received CERB and other Federal sponsored emergency program funds are now being contacted to re-pay these funds. Service Canada has informed band staff that recoveries will start after clients submit their 2020 income tax returns. The project team and SDA's anticipate this will have serious negative financial impact on clients and their families.

### 6. Internal SDA Meetings

Three Mi'kmaq SDA's are part of the project team and continue to meet in-person or virtually. The SDA's (Group of 3) meet with the project consultants and legal counsel to provide guidance and advice.

### 7. Meetings with Chief and Council Round #2 and #3

Due to covid-19 planned meetings in community with Chief and Councils have been limited. The project team met with Wagmatcook and We'koqma'q band councils in community and virtually with Sipekne'katik Chief, several council members, Director of Operations, and legal counsel. The meetings were structured to provide updates on the social governance initiative and to seek advice from the participants. The project team is hoping to complete the meetings with Chiefs and Council's in March 2021 either in person or virtually.

### 8. Meeting with the Nova Scotia Chiefs

Monthly meetings have been held with all Nova Scotia Chiefs and Grand Council members since September 2020. A joint meeting of the Chiefs, Grand Council and SDA's was held in November 2020. Presentations were made by the project team, Membertou Geomatics and MNP-LLP. The Chiefs and Grand Council unanimously support the transition to self-government.

### **9. 2018 TOR Steering Committee Meeting**

In December 2020, an informal meeting was convened between Chief Leroy Denny and RDG Daniel Kumpf. A full Steering Committee has not been held due to changes with the new ISC RDG, scheduling and covid-19 conditions. The RDG will be meeting with the Chiefs in February to review the social governance initiative and the plan to advance to self government negotiations.

### **10. Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada TOR**

The anticipated work at the tripartite steering and working committee's respecting Mi'kmaq social governance has not progressed due to Nova Scotia's reluctance to be engaged for various reasons. Communication between the parties is continuing but without the participation of Nova Scotia, self-government agreements will be delayed. This item is significant to the Mi'kmaq and all 13 bands.

### **11. Conceptual Plan-2021-2022 Pilot Projects**

A detailed conceptual plan to pilot the new MSGA in four bands in 2021-2022 was submitted to ISC via the working committee. The working committee discussed the pilot plan. Subsequent working committee meetings will continue discussing this important system test and case study. The idea of the pilot projects was discussed with the SDA's during the October-January meetings. Chief Leroy Denny is the Lead Chief of the Social Portfolio. He has held the Portfolio since 2011.

# Delivering Impact on the Front Lines



## ACCESS Open Minds

Eskasoni First Nation,  
Nova Scotia

“

We have a lot of youth with mental health issues and for them to receive both mental health services and programming (traditional teachings, crafts, cooking, art, sports and recreation events, educational sessions) at the same place has been one of our means of being able to do everything possible to prevent suicides, crisis situations and to meet youth needs.

”

— Chief Leroy Denny  
Eskasoni First Nation



## Faster access, better care



Since 2016 **over 700** youth have received mental health services; achieving **490%** of the target estimated of youth with mental health needs in the community.

Youth were referred by:



We are the largest Mi'kmaq population in the country with **more than 50%** of the population being **under the age of 25**. It is crucial for this community to have youth-friendly mental health services that incorporate local knowledge traditions and values.

“

I have never been this happy sober in years. All the treatment I am receiving is working and it's not over yet.

”

— Youth Client



**89%** of youth reported being satisfied with services overall.

**100%** of youth would recommend our service to a friend.

“

"During our toughest times the ACCESS crew came together and helped us through. They have been wonderful stepping stones to our healing."

”

— Family Client

“

Having a Mi'kmaq speaking Behavior Interventionist/Family Support Worker has been invaluable when working with children and their parents/guardians both in the office and their homes. For many children, youth and adults, the ability to speak Mi'kmaq increases their comfort levels and grants them the ability to express themselves, and be understood fully and completely.

”

— Daphne Hutt-MacLeod, Site Lead, ACCESS Open Minds Eskasoni First Nation

We are a trusted, safe space for youth.



**30%**

of youth clients identify as gay, lesbian, queer, questioning or bisexual



**21%**

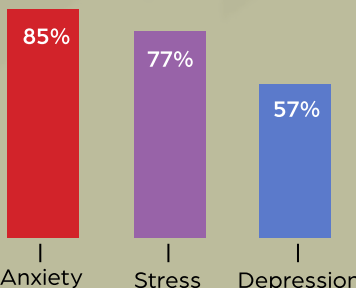
not in employed, in education or training



**15%**

of youth having reported living in or having lived in foster care

Top 3 reasons youth reported seeking services



Over **95%** of youth that needed a follow up service received it **within 30 days**



Youth show improvements in distress, symptom severity and functioning, especially for those with serious mental health problems.

# Delivering real benefits to youth: The ACCESS Open Minds Approach

## Innovative and transformative solution

ACCESS Open Minds (AOM) is helping Canadian youth get the care they need – when and where they need it. Our vision is pan-Canadian in scope but local in positive impact. The ACCESS Open Minds service framework is about flexibility, quality and results. Our evidence-based approach means more youth get help faster, **reducing wait times and improving access for more youth and families to get the help they need.**

From helping rural Canadians to partnering with Indigenous communities and making sure homeless youth in urban centres receive mental health support, ACCESS Open Minds is delivering real results on the front lines.

## ACCESS Open Minds is changing the game across Canada

- AOM has been transforming services and collecting data on youth mental health needs and service impacts (wait times, outcomes) in partnership with 16 sites across Canada for over three years
- For over one-third of urban and rural non-Indigenous youth, as well as for over **70%** of Indigenous youth, AOM was their first experience of help-seeking, rather than an emergency room
- Youth who are at risk of marginalization – whether by racialization, sexual orientation, or poverty – connected with AOM in significant numbers **35%** identifying as LGBTQ+2S and **38%** identifying as being part of a visible minority and **39%** reporting having difficulty meeting basic needs
- AOM sites are supporting youth with high mental health needs; with **69%** of youth rating their mental health as poor or fair and **30%** reporting having suicidal thoughts at intake
- AOM helps, most youth show significant improvement in distress, functioning and symptom severity at follow-up, these improvements are **greater for those with serious mental health problem**
- **83%** of youth contacting AOM site were offered an appointment within **72 hours**
- Early economic evaluation results in one site indicate that the AOM model could save up to **\$4,500** per patient per year and provide an ROI of **over \$10** in health care savings for **\$1** invested
- Youth endorsed: **96%** of youth said they would recommend AOM to a friend

## A modern model of care

- Partners seamlessly with existing service providers
- Cuts red tape and duplication
- Trusted, built for youth by youth
- Supports families and caregivers
- Cuts wait times improves access to care for more youth and families
- Strengths-based and culturally appropriate
- Evidence-based & high quality; integrating best practice & continuous evaluation into front-line care
- Nimble & adaptable to communities and changing needs (e.g. COVID-19)

## For more information



*Note: ACCESS Open Minds is an ongoing research study.  
Figures provided are unaudited and are subject to change.*

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## STAFF

**Megan Gillis** - Native Employment Officer

- Responsible for providing career and employment counselling. Facilitate and promote employment and training opportunities for aboriginal clients.

**Ben Marshall** - Projects Assistant

- Responsible for providing assistance on all programs and projects.

**Mary Marshall** - METS Finance

- Responsible for all METS related financing

- Other project financing

## MI'KMAQ EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SECRETARIAT (METS)

### TRADE SCHOOLS & SUPPORTS:

- 9 band members funded for the 2020-2021 school year.

Funding Process:

- 1) Client submits acceptance letter, completes funding application and name is put on waitlist.
- 2) Funding deadline is usually mid-May, was extended this year due to Covid.
- 3) Approval process completed
- 4) Sponsorship approval letters mailed out
- 5) Client assessment completed
- 6) Sponsorship Referral forms sent to NSCC or other college.
- 7) Monthly check-ins with clients
- 8) Monthly allowance cheque sent out

### A'paqt Oceans Award Program

- Bursaries available for women and indigenous people to explore marine training opportunities and pursue careers at sea. Will cover 90% of tuition.

- Partnering with NSCC to cover remaining 10% of tuition.

- METS also provides employment supports to community members. These supports includes wage subsidies, training courses, tools/equipment and travel expenses.

- Must keep client files up to date and input client information into PAL database.

### APPRENTICESHIP:

- Over 40 trade's people in the community are registered with Apprenticeship Nova Scotia.

- Total of 11 Red Seal Certified community members

- Will continue to work on increasing the number of Red Seal trades people.

- Level 1 Apprenticeship Carpentry Training program currently taking place. There are 15 participants. (Participants received supports (\$1700) from Employment NS)

- METS works closely with Frank Boone. He is an Industry Training Consultant from Apprenticeship NS.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

### Job placements created through METS funding, proposals and partnerships;

#### Employment Program

- Process; 1) counsellors submit names 2) participants register with METS 3) find placements 4) collect timesheets
- 65 were employed for 3 weeks (x4)

#### High School Summer Employment (Cancelled due to Covid)

- Usually hire around 80 HS students from grades 11 and 12
- Process; 1) find placements 2) posting is distributed 3) resumes collected 4) interviews conducted 5) orientation 6) collect timesheets

#### University/College Summer Employment

- Process; 1) find placements 2) posting is distributed 3) resumes collected 4) interviews conducted 5) orientation 6) collect timesheets
- 17 university/college students were hired this summer.

#### Mentored Work Placements (Skills Link)

- Process; 1) find placements 2) posting is distributed 3) resumes collected 4) interviews conducted 5) orientation 6) collect timesheets
- 10 participants will be hired.

#### Tourism – Cultural Journeys

- Around 8 seasonal workers hired

#### Partnerships; (wage subsidies)

- Island Employment
- Native Council
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre (15 were employed in 2020, 15 will be hired in 2021)

- All job opportunities are posted in the community through posters, social media and ETV.

- Employment Center located downstairs of the Band Office with computers available to use for community members to search for employment, create or update their resumes, etc. – Need to update computers and clean space.

## COMMITTEES/MEETINGS:

- Currently sit on MEBO's Training Committee
- Attend quarterly NEO meetings
- CANDO member. Attend annual conference

### PROPOSALS & PROGRAMS/PROJECTS

#### PROPOSALS:

- Submitted 2 proposals to First Nation & Inuit Youth Employment Strategy in 2020 and received approvals for both equaling \$227,253. Will be submitting proposals for 2021.

- Included in these proposals was the funding for University/College Summer Employment and Mentored Work positions.



- Will submit reports before deadline.

## **PROGRAMS/PROJECTS:**

### Youth Entrepreneurship Skills Program

- Partnering with CB Partnership to hold program. Youth receive training and work placement, all paid.
- Posted flyer for recruitment, provided space for Info. Sessions.
- Currently taking place in Employment Center.

### Science & Cultural Summer Camp (Cancelled due to Covid)

- Hold 3 camps throughout the summer for kids aged 7-11

### High School Career Fair (Cancelled due to Covid)

- For grades 8-12 from EEMS, ABMHS and Rankin
- Invite Universities, Colleges and Institutes from all over Atlantic Provinces.

### Life Skills Conference (Cancelled due to Covid)

- For ABMHS graduates to help better prepare them for life after High School. Students participate in workshops such as; Self Care/Healthy Eating, Mental Health Awareness, Vehicle Maintenance, Self Defense, Money Management, etc.

### Lunch & Learn (Cancelled due to Covid)

- Sponsored food and drinks for the monthly Lunch & Learn at the High School. Students get to listen to professionals talk about their career.

### High School Workshops (Cancelled due to Covid)

- Mandatory Money Management workshops for High School Summer Employees.
- Held Resume Building & Interview Skills workshops.

### First Aid & AED Training (Cancelled due to Covid)

- Provide First Aid Training to University/College Summer Employees and other staff.

# ESKASONI HEALTH



**Director/Manager:** Sharon Rudderham

**Current Staff:** Eskasoni Health Centre

## **Departmental Highlights/Accomplishments this Year:**

- COVID 19 in Nova scotia, regular meetings of EMO team, and chief and council
- Implementation and training of all teams including extension training and new procedures for janitorial staff employed under the band ( specific to covid 19) Umbrella.
- CHNS regularly update Emergency preparedness plan
- CHNS maintain supply inventory and tracking specific to COVID
- CHNS provided daily patient follow-up for patients self-isolating.
- COVID 19 hits Cape Breton, resulting in community LOCK down on March 16,2020
- Lock down implementation required the following:
  - Daily meetings with Emergency Management Operations team
  - Regular meetings with EMO and chief and council
  - Drafting community bylaws for the health and safety measures and state of emergency bylaws
  - Health care staff, Eskasoni Foodland and Eskasoni band administration select depts... Were deemed as essential services.
  - All departments transition to virtual/telephone based platforms to provide services
  - Implementation of virtual systems, telehealth, zoom and Microsoft teams
  - Development and distribution of educational materials, related to COVID 19
  - Distribution of masks and hand sanitizers to elders/ homecare clients
  - Staff training and Implementation of emergency preparedness plan and updates
  - Staff training and Implementation of Eskasoni COVID Hotline 379-5000
  - Staff training and Implementation of transportation and re-furbish community van to support transport
  - Of COVID patients for testing.
  - Staff training on effective use of PPE and disinfecting protocols.
  - Ongoing training related to new covid protocols,
  - Ongoing changes to symptoms and testing qualifications.
  - Daily meetings with staff, EMO team and leadership
  - Daily meetings with Health Canada,
  - Daily Meetings Ns Health authority and public health related to new covid regulations.
  - Weekly meetings with ISC-health Canada with health directors and leadership
  - Bi-weekly meetings with NS Medical officer of health and leadership
  - Community implementation of security and check points, controls over entry and exit of community
  - Implementation of transportation plans to support community members and patients travel to essential services

## **Eskasoni Health staff and community members participated in numerous training sessions**

- Eskasoni health staff held daily staff meetings by telephone or virtually.
- Staff developed and supported the mass distribution of signs and educational materials to community
- Health and homecare staff completed check-ins with all elders and patients of homecare
- Health staff provide Elders with Hand sanitizer and masks.
- Regular staff meetings planning and proposal development for the establishment of an Isolation centres in community.
- Regular meetings with Tribal organizations related to Covid response and supports needed.
- Ongoing meetings related to the development of Covid specific data sharing agreements between

## Mikmaw and NS Govt

- Regular participation at the NS Mikmaw Health and wellness meetings with health directors and leaders
- Mikmaw Health and wellness hiring of New Executive Director.
- Eskasoni Health hired Tanas Sylliboy, RN to assist with Covid response and planning and then as a Nurse Practitioner.
- Eskasoni health also hired a New full time Mikmaw Physician, Dr. Carl Marshall
- Eskasoni Health also hired several full time and part time janitors to meet demands of all buildings under the health centre umbrella.
- Eskasoni Health hired additional Janitorial staff to support expanded and ongoing sanitization needs.
- Health staff provided extensive training for Janitorial staff related to Infection control and sanitization
- Health staff provided training for Eskasoni Supermarket staff related to Covid sanitization and cleaning.
- All health staff and leadership participation in ongoing training related to Covid
- All health staff and EMO team completed a Pandemic Mock exercise to support training and planning.
- Health staff work schedules were revised and many were now working from home (if possible)
- Health centre nurses provided refresher training to all front line workers relation to infection control procedures
- Health centre nurses provided training to staff volunteers who were reassigned to the Eskasoni Covid line.
- Ongoing meeting with EMO and leadership, supporting daily community updates through FB live.
- Ongoing staff and community education session through Telehealth/fN helpdesk.
- Ongoing specialist physician consults through telehealth for community members.
- Community health nursing and maternal child health programs work collaboratively in supporting the Mothers helping Mothers program which provides education and teaching but also includes fun craft or learning activities for moms, which had to introduce smaller events and home based activities.
- Eskasoni health centre Nurses and staff planned and coordinate the roll out of the FLU Vaccine thru clinics
- At the Sarah Denny cultural centre and health centre locations.
- Eskasoni health nurses provided flu vaccine clinics to school staff and band staff
- Eskasoni Homecare team provided the flu vaccine for elders and patients of homecare
- Eskasoni health staff were re-assigned to new roles depending on the impact of Covid rules on their work
- Eskasoni health staff meet with school official related to Covid isolation facility planning
- Ongoing meeting with NS Health authority related to gaps in services during the Covid pandemic
- Ongoing meeting the NS Health authority to improve local access and support for ORP clients.
- Ongoing meetings with Dept.of Health, NSHA, IWK related to Gaps in Mental health services and funding
- Eskasoni health centre submit a proposal related to Food insecurity, and food hampers were provided to every household prior to the Christmas holiday.
- The Eskasoni Health advisory committee continues to review and approved Research requests
- Eskasoni health is involved with several Research projects, we are now collaborating with CRISMat McGill University
- To support research to review best treatment options related to addictions e.g. Opiod Replacement therapies and how
- The Covid Pandemic has impacted those community members with addictions in accessing services.
- Eskasoni Health centre is also working collaborative with the IWK around the establishment of an Ear Nose throat Pilot to improve access to services for our children.
- Eskasoni Health team continue to works collaboratively with Dalhousie/IWK continuing research into Pain affecting children (ACHH) in Eskasoni and other mikmaw communities.

- Unamaki communities are working collective on a Dental Baby smiles project to support the development of resources for parents and families related to early dental care and prevention of Baby Bottle and baby tooth decay. In collaboration with Dalhousie school of dentistry.
- Men's Wellness: Eskasoni health nurses worked collaboratively with Chief Leroy in the planning of NOVEMBER education session and men's health screening
- Women's Wellness: The annual visit of the Mammogram Bus occurred in November, which was also supported by a Pap screening event focus on women over the age of 50.
- Ongoing monthly meetings of Eskasoni Health advisory committee (health board)
- Ongoing staff lunch and learning sessions
- Ongoing meetings with Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and Atlantic APC health directors and Ns Chiefs.
- Attended ongoing meeting related to Indian Day school and the need for additional resources to support trauma related to application process for compensation.
- Ongoing meetings with Ns health Directors and Ns Chiefs to discuss the planning and establishment of a NS Mi'kmaq Health and wellness authority infrastructure.
- CHNs organized Harm reduction DRUM making workshop specific to Hep C education.
- Health centre continues to support harm reduction, through providing community needle exchange program to prevent to spread of Hepatitis and other serious blood diseases, along with providing sites in community for the safe and proper disposal of needles. In addition, nurses offer one to one support and medical support for injection drug users in community.
- CHNs have also worked collaboratively in the development of education resources related to TB, those resources and were distributed to each household
- The Health centre as part of our ongoing evaluation process, developed a New Survey tool for community members to provide feedback on services provided. The Health centre community survey was available on line over the summer.
- In addition, in the fall the Eskasoni health survey was mailed out to all households in Eskasoni for feedback.
- CHNs continue to work toward increasing immunizations rates for the community, especially when other communities are dealing with outbreaks of Whooping cough (pertussis) among children and the importance of keeping your children up to date with immunizations, along with family members. Having family members immunized supports a cocoon around the baby which can reduce the chance that your child will be exposed to these serious and sometimes deadly diseases/illnesses.
- Eskasoni was approved funding to support the construction of a new LTC facility. Ongoing meetings with Shannex and Dept. of health. And a contractor has been selected through the Eskasoni Corporate division.
- Medical transportation- ongoing changes to better manage medical transportation program, by increasing number of medical drivers, improving verification of all claims and improving processing timelines within health centre.



- Ongoing meetings with Eastern Zone of NS Health authority addressing gaps in mental health services, improvements to cultural sensitivity training for Hospital staff to address racism and complaints faced daily by community members.
- On going meetings with Health Canada, related to all program areas including the program evaluation of many programs like FASD, maternal child health and diabetes programs and harm reduction and needle exchange efforts.
- Ongoing meeting with Early Years and early intervention services between health and school systems.
- Ongoing meeting with Public health

services and community health nurses, to support education and any ongoing issues or gaps in services.

- Ongoing meetings and first community stakeholder meeting to invite community service providers to share information about Eskasoni mental health involvement in national research project to improve access of mental health services for youth in our community.
- Ongoing meetings with NS Hearing and Speech services to expand services in Eskasoni.
- Ongoing meeting with Province to address gaps in discharge planning for community members being released from hospital without necessary care plans and coordination.
- Ongoing meetings with Dept. health and NSHA related to Crisis follow-up, clarification of mental health pathways and referrals.
- Eskasoni mental health has expanded 24/7 crisis services to all Atlantic first nation communities to support distress and mental health support related to Covid.
- Ongoing meeting and lobbying efforts to request ongoing sustainable supports for Eskasoni, to support ongoing programs like the crisis line and youth access space.
- Ongoing meetings related to Physician recruitment, to replace retiring physician Dr. Crosbie.
- Ongoing meetings with Province Dept. health and wellness, NS Health authority and IWK authority over the GAPS in health and mental health services available to Eskasoni and the development of proposal and plans to address health priorities and gaps.
- Ongoing training and practicum placements for CBU schools of nursing, Social workers Dalhousie and st.thomas university.
- Eskasoni health centre coordinated a COVID Rapid Testing event in December and plan to host additional events.

#### **COVID 19 Response:**

- Daily meeting with Chief and council and the Emergency Management Team related to planning and response to COVID 19
- State of Emergency declared on March 16,2020 and community lock down.
- Daily staff meeting and planning sessions
- Establishment of Eskasoni COVID hotline to address any questions or concerns.
- Ongoing meetings with departments, Implemented changes to the way we provide patient care in all departments and move to telephone based care unless urgent care needed.
- Development and implementation of new COVID policies and procedures.
- Re-assignment of staff and hiring of additional clean staff and Covid line supports.
- Ongoing review and changes of the Pandemic plan
- Ongoing review of Pandemic supplies and distribution
- Working collaboratively with nsha ORP to support Eskasoni clients locally and expand services
- Decision to support the suspension of various in person programs and services, e.g. Van transportation for Methadone, Access youth space programming, mothers helping mothers, and other related programs.
- All programs had to establish new ways of supporting patient care during COVID.
- Ongoing meetings with ISC, province, organizations related to COVID response
- Ongoing meetings related to Data and Covid modelling and research for Mikmaw communities.
- Ongoing distribution of Education materials and updates to community members.
- Chief Denny did daily Facebook Live Feed updates for community members related to COVID
- Ongoing coordination with CBRM Emergency Management and UNSM Emergency Management

#### **Departmental Setbacks this Quarter ( if Any):**

- Increase awareness in community of 811- nursing help line
- Increase awareness of 1-888-379-2099 –Eskasoni Crisis line and related Mental health supports.
- Space for Maternal child health programs
- Space for Mental health and youth programs and services.
- Cancel appointment notifications

### Departmental Issues and Trends:

- Cost overruns in Medical transportation and hiring new drivers.
- Cost overruns in Mental health –CRISIS
- Streamline Front reception for improved access to nurses and services.
- Improve Education on MISSED or NO show appointments
- Medical insurance reminders to community workers travelling to MAINE for work- apply at health. Centre.

### Departmental Goals for next Quarter:

### OTHER ITEMS:

For Help please call: 1-888-379-2099 –Eskasoni Crisis line.

\*\*Eskasoni Health centre is on Facebook, look for information and updates and request to be our friend on Facebook.



Family and your health are the most important thing. Eskasoni Chief and Council and the community of Eskasoni want to thank councillor Dion Denny for 8 years of his unending community service as a band councillor. We also want to thank Dion's wife Angela and their young family for supporting Dion's public service commitments. We know Dion will always be there for his community and we wish him only the best.

# ESKASONI MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES/CRISIS & REFERRAL CENTRE/ACCESS OPEN MINDS/ TUI'KN RSS TEAM/YOUTH TEAM



**Director/Manager:** Daphne Hutt-MacLeod

## Departmental Highlights/Accomplishments:

### Clients Seen:

The annual report for Eskasoni Mental Health Services (EMHS) will be inclusive of all five branches of services available in Eskasoni. This report is based on a compilation of self-reported staff statistics forms completed monthly by each staff member:

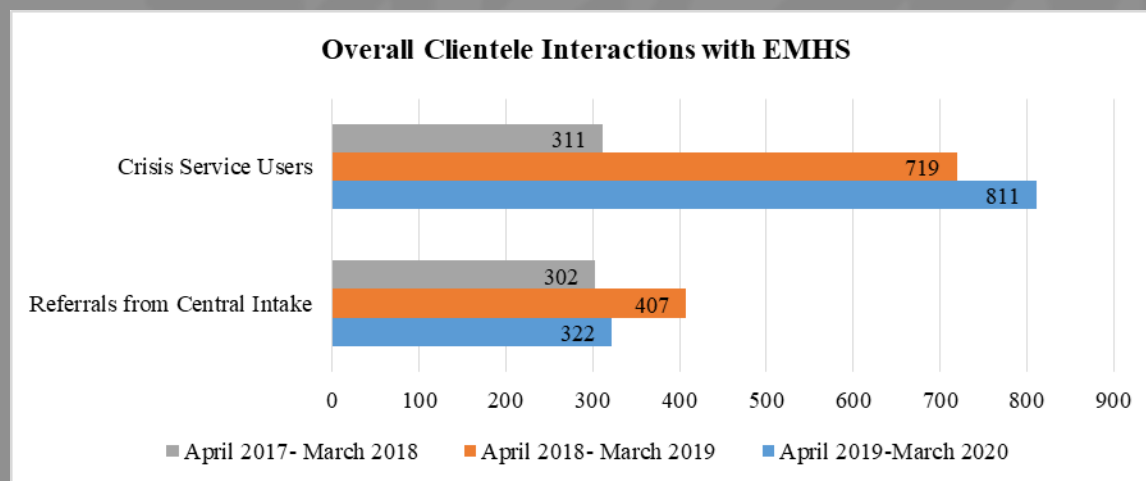
- Mental Health Services
- 24-Hour Crisis and Referral Services
- ACCESS Open Minds and Youth Space
- Youth Peer Support Workers (Youth Crew)
- Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program

During the fiscal year, April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020 our Eskasoni Crisis and Referral Team saw a significant increase in the number of community members accessing our services. As you can see from the graph below (Graph 1), Crisis saw 811 individual clients. This was an increase of 92 clients over the previous year (April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019). It is important to note that these statistics reflect pre-COVID numbers. April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 statistics will be available in June 2021 and will include the impact of COVID 19.

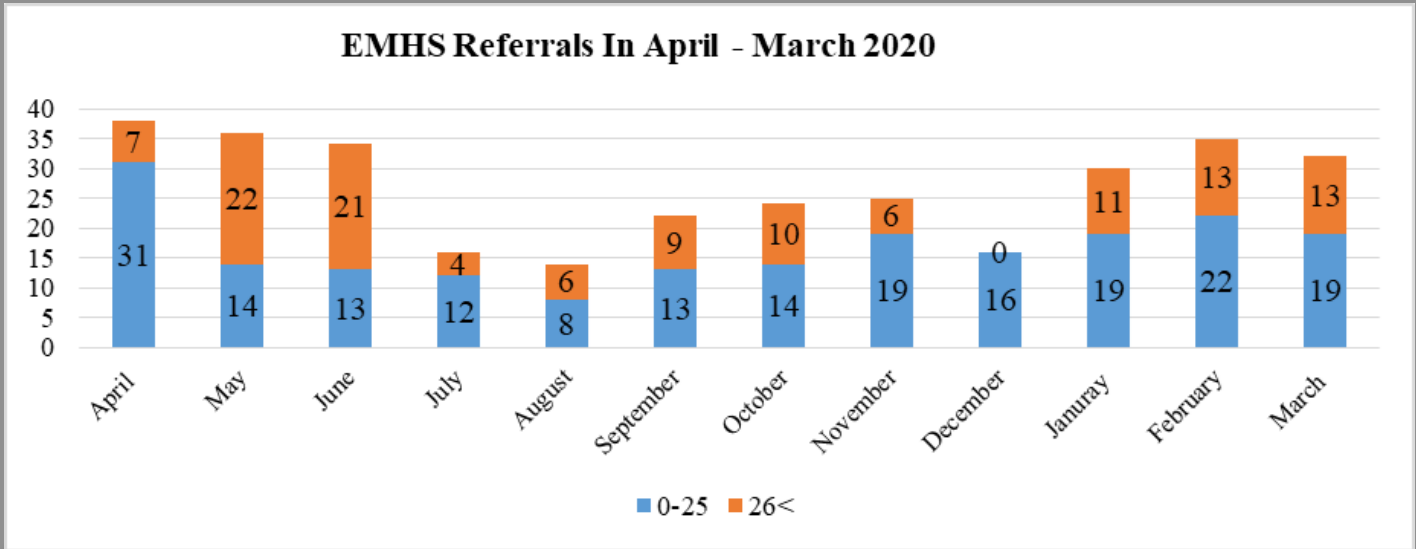
During the fiscal year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020, Eskasoni Mental Health Services staff saw 322 clients for direct therapeutic/counselling interventions. Of the 322 clients that were seen for direct therapeutic clinical interventions, 122 were under the age of 25, while 200 were over the age of 25 (Graph 2).

April 2019 (31) February 2020 (22), November 2019 (19) and January 2020 saw the highest number of youth (under 25) seeking and receiving in-depth Clinical interventions, while May (22) and June 2019 (21) saw the highest number of clients over the age of 25 seeking and receiving services. It is important to note that these statistics are for the period prior to COVID 19 Public Health measures, when client appointments and interactions were still being held in-person.

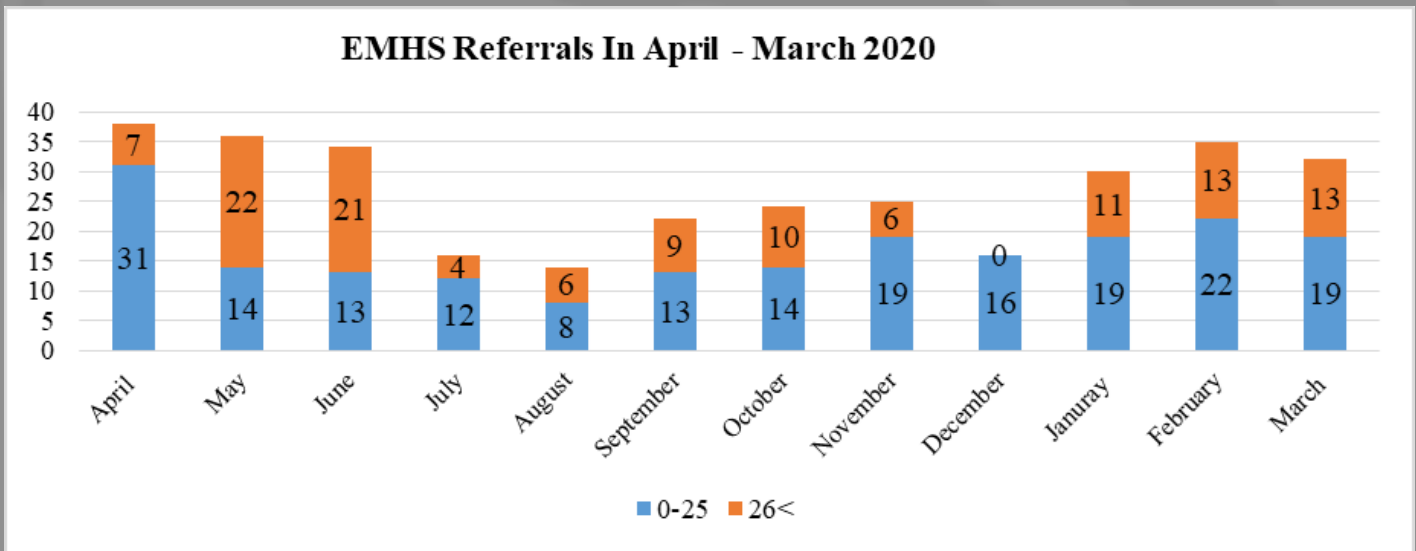
Graph 1: Overall Clientele Interactions Year -over -Year



Graph 2: EMHS Referrals In April-March 2020:

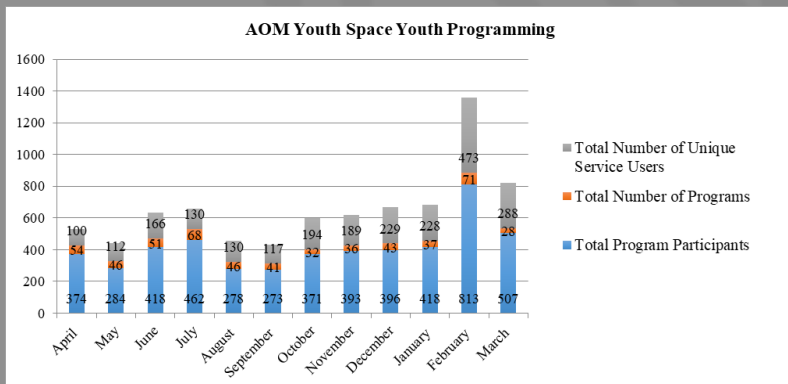


Graph 2: EMHS Referrals In April-March 2020:



From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 our ACCESS Open Minds Youth Peer Supports organized and completed 553 youth programs with 4,987 program participants. Total number of unique youth participants was 2,356!! February and March 2020 were our busiest months with the highest number of participants...and then COVID struck.

Graph 3: Access Youth Space Programming





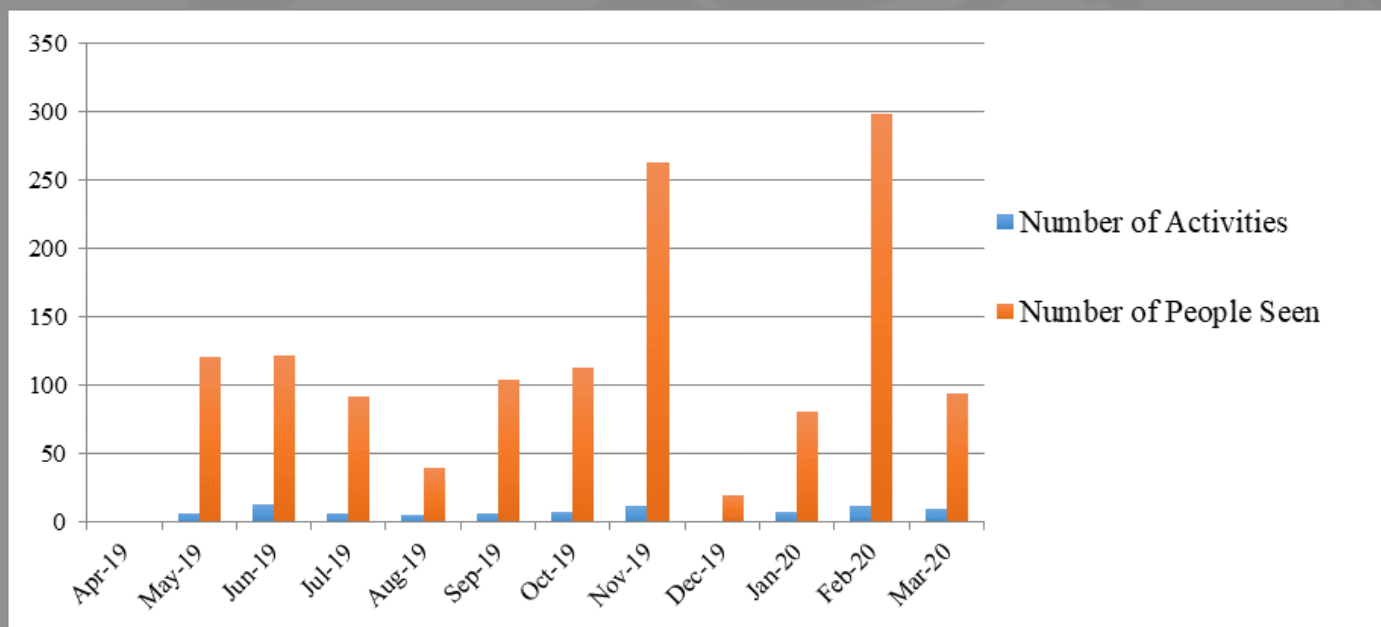
The total number of programming hours that Youth Peer Support workers engaged in during the April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 fiscal year was pretty impressive at a whopping 12,968.5 hours. (See Table 1) A quick economic impact comparing the programs they provided to similar programs offered elsewhere, demonstrates that their programming was worth approximately 1.9 million dollars!! What makes this even more impressive is that Eskasoni Youth did not have to pay anything to attend these invaluable programs.

Table 1: ACCESS Youth Space Programming Economic Impact

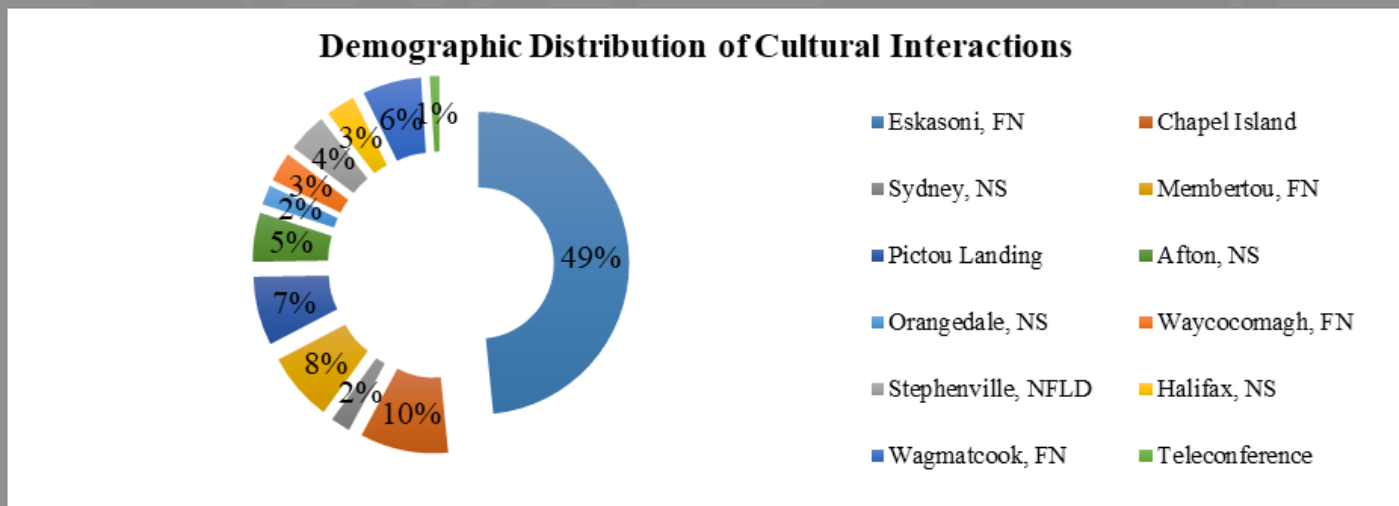
Total Hours of Service Provided by Youth Crew	Total Dollar Amount of Services Provided by Youth Crew	(60min*\$150)
12,968.5	\$1,945,275	

Our Residential School Survivor Team, who provide services to all 5 Unama'ki communities, were also busy this past fiscal year.

Graph 4: Cultural Interactions for RSS Team



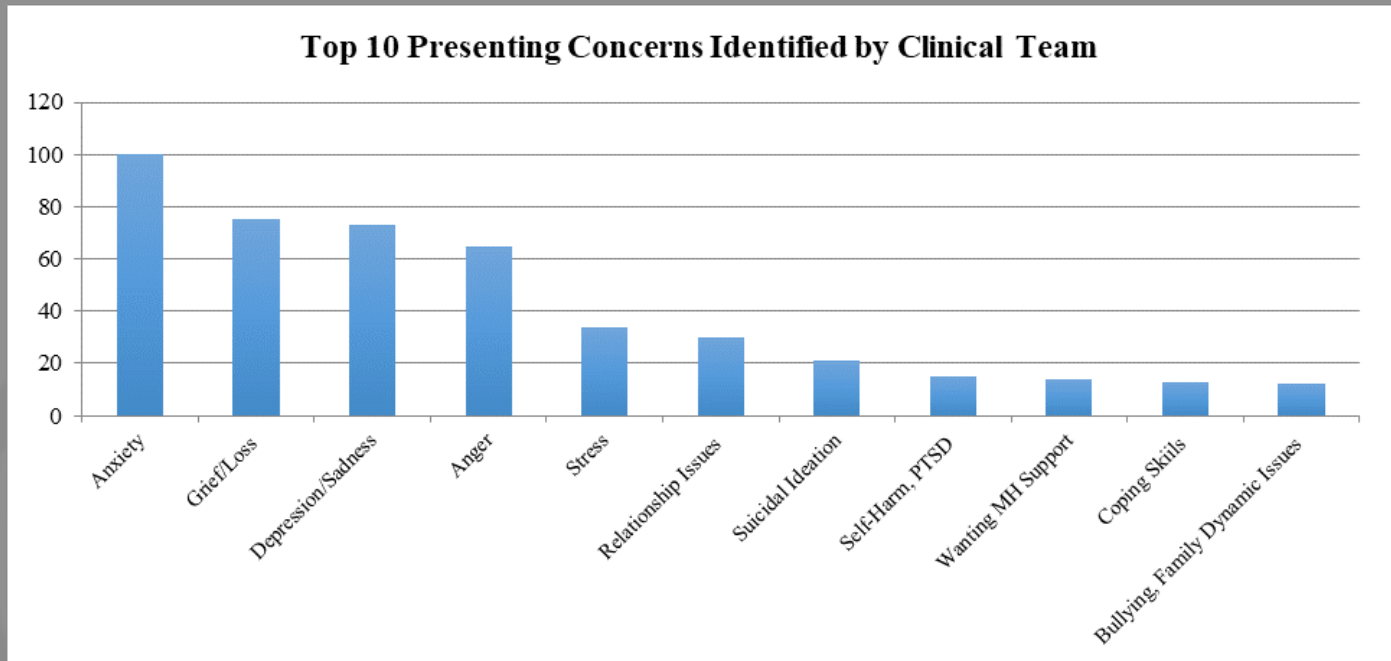
Graph 5: Demographic Distribution of Cultural Interactions for IRS Team



## Why were clients coming to EMHS?

From April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020, the top presenting issues for clients seeking services at Eskasoni Mental Health Services are as follows:

Graph 6: Top 10 Presenting Concerns Identified by Clinician



## Wait Times for Clinical Appointments:

- The average wait time between intake and first contact is 5.15 days,
- The average wait time between intake and first appointment is 9.76 days

## April 1, 2018-March 31, 2019 Job Creation:

Team	Number of New Staff
ACCESS Open Minds	4
Youth Peer Support Workers	21
Residential School Survivor Team	2
Crisis	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>

## April 1, 2019-March 31, 2020 Job Creation:

	EMHS	Crisis Team	ACCESS Team	Youth Crew	RSS Team
Number of New Hires	0	8	1	21	0

## Current Initiatives and Research:

- ACCESS- Open Minds: A national research (CIHR) and evaluation network that marks a major Canadian innovation in youth mental health services design, delivery, evaluation and research.
- ACCESS-Open Minds Economic Impact Report: Examines the effect of ACCESS Open Minds Service Implementation on the community of Eskasoni and Mental Health Services.
- Networks for Change- Sexual Violence PAR: More than Words –Federal NS Status of Women
- Nova Scotia Status of Women SHIFT grant: Healthy Masculinity Men's and Boy's program
- Listening to One Another to Grow Strong (LTOA): is a community-driven and culturally adapted program for Indigenous youth and their families and each session includes activities designed for the family unit. (NS CMHA)
- Aboriginal Children's Hurt & Healing Initiative (ACHH) is working with communities and clinicians to bridge the gap in our understanding of Indigenous children's pain and hurt with Margot Latimer,

Dalhousie University

- Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (NEIHR): Linkage Tool will establish a national network of centers focused on capacity development, research and knowledge translation centered on Indigenous Peoples.
- Collaboration and Knowledge exchange with the following projects/initiatives:
  - International Youth Association for Mental Health
  - Ontario Youth Hub Initiative
  - World Economic Forum
  - Aboriginal Children's Health and Wellbeing Measure (ACHWM) is a culturally relevant measure of health and well-being for indigenous children administered through a tablet used for population health, or for mental health screening.
  - Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Commemorative Garden (MMIWG)
  - Catalyst Grant
  - Individual Placement and Support Grant
  - Peer Support Network collaboration with ACCESS Open Minds and University of Calgary
  - Photo Voice Project in collaboration with ACCESS Open Minds

### **Additional Highlights from March 2020 to January 2021**

1) Interview on January 28, 2021 on The Social CTV:

[https://www.ctv.ca/shows/the-social/community-initiative-providing-mental-health-support-to-eskasoni-first-nation-s8e84?fbclid=IwAR2kfWFm\\_LrlyE5GLa15zT9dH-Fpt3rT\\_FJE3I0TXIr4Gn08DNXeG9qjRGs](https://www.ctv.ca/shows/the-social/community-initiative-providing-mental-health-support-to-eskasoni-first-nation-s8e84?fbclid=IwAR2kfWFm_LrlyE5GLa15zT9dH-Fpt3rT_FJE3I0TXIr4Gn08DNXeG9qjRGs)

YouTube:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_\\_J2ejdsYNpY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__J2ejdsYNpY)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/173452459494476/posts/1705300956309611/?d=n>

Daphne's clip about funding on Twitter :

<https://twitter.com/thesocialctv/status/1354924716121722881?s=21>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CKm2X-1D4-w/?igshid=1w5ek2b0ss97z>

2) Bell Aliant Video and Launch [Eskasoni Access Youth Space | Facebook](#)

3) Creating some of our own Youth Peer Support Worker impact videos; [Eskasoni Access Youth Space | Facebook](#)

4) Creating our own on-line/virtual Mental Health series during COVID-19 and our community lock down; [Eskasoni Access Youth Space | Facebook](#)

5) Our ability to pivot our clinical services and youth programming to virtual and telephone platforms during the COVID 19 restrictions.

6) ACCESS Youth Peer Support Workers engaging in essential services to community members (pharmacy delivery, delivery of 100-200 supplemental food hampers to food insecure families every week for 6 weeks, operating a COVID-19 community Hot-Line, etc. during the March through June Public Health restrictions.

7) Forging new alliances with the Department of Health and Wellness and the Izaak Walton Killam Children's hospital for mapping youth mental health pathways to care and for mutual educational and professional development initiatives

### **Departmental Setbacks this Quarter ( if Any):**

- Continued funding challenges (continue to be addressed)
- Continued staffing shortages (continue to be addressed)
- Pay equity (continue to address)

**Departmental Issues and Trends:**

- Exploring opportunities to create more youth and community programming opportunities and events
- Special focus will be directed toward men and boy's programming this upcoming fiscal year
- Engaging in a community educational campaigns and outreach services
- Continuing our attempts to attract partners

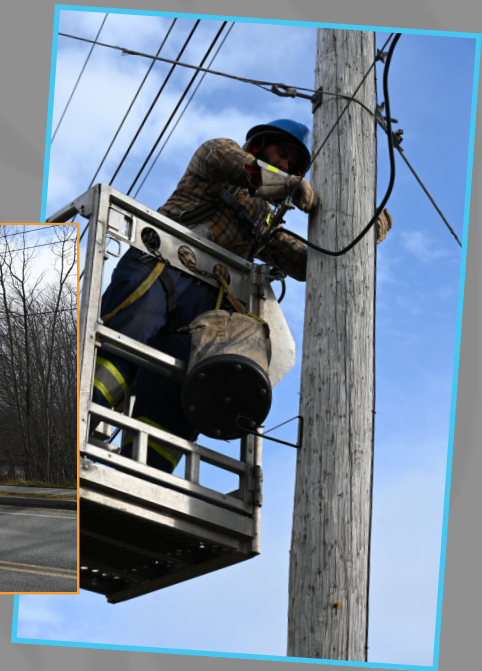
**Departmental Goals for next Fiscal:**

- Continue to explore additional funding partnerships



**ESKASONI**  
COMMUNICATIONS

# Fiber Op Installation!



# ESKASONI FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION



**Director/Manager:** Thomas Johnson

**Current Staff:** Peter Marshall, Rodney Alex, Allison Mclsaac, John T. Johnson, Dean Denny, Kieran Johnson and Lenita Denny

## **Departmental Highlights/Accomplishments this Quarter:**

Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) - Implemented the AFS agreement. Some activities included distributed FSC (food, social and ceremonial) lobster tags, help cook and distribute lobster from the FSC fishery, collaborated with UINR and KMKNO to distribute salmon tags for Margaree, patrolled in and around the community for environmental concerns, e.g., illegal dumping, habitat issues, e.g., erosion, monitor development activities within Eskasoni and work with those involved to prevent disruption of fish or fish habitat, etc. Participated in meetings with various organizations and applied for additional funding to provide year round funding for the Guardians as well as seasonal staff.

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) – EFWC received funding to help protect the Eskasoni watershed and a buffer area for future generations. EFWC has been meeting with other project partners as well as the Wapita'yk Committee (Eskasoni's community committee to help guide the project) and other Mi'kmaq organizations.

Environmental Monitoring – EFWC is contracted to conduct environmental monitoring for Waycobah's trout farm to ensure that monitoring levels are in compliance with the limits outlined in the NS Environmental Monitoring Framework. Results are submitted to Waycobah and NS Fisheries and Aquaculture staff.

Committees and workshops – Staff have attended meetings and provided support to committees such as the Bras d'Or Lakes Collaborative Planning Initiative, the Bras d'Or Lakes Biosphere Association, and Eskasoni's Wapita'yk Committee along with meetings with DFO (relating to FSC fisheries and the Guardian Program) and other organizations.

Species at Risk – EFWC received funding from the Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk to monitor restoration efforts in Qamsipuk. Guardians and students measured parts of the river to document how the restoration is improving fish passage in the river. EFWC also received funding from the Indigenous Partnerships Initiative to map Species at Risk in and around the community. The maps will be provided to the Band for land use planning purposes.

Rock Reef- EFWC was contracted to monitor a lobster reef structure placed near Louisbourg to document the growth of algae as well the species that use the reef.

Stream Restoration – EFWC received funding from Adopt-a-Stream to install wing deflectors in the river. They are made of logs and local rock. They narrow the river and create pools making it easier and safer for salmon, trout, smelt and other fish to pass up and down river. EFWC has a dedicated river crew that has been working on installing wing deflectors since 2014. It is hard manual work and EFWC appreciates their time and dedication. Monitoring has shown that these efforts are starting to work and pools are starting to build in the shallowest sections of the river. Our plan is to keep going and keep improving Qamsipuk and other rivers in Eskasoni.

EFWC has brought oysters into the hatchery and hope to have some oyster seed by May and early June.

### **Departmental Setbacks this Quarter ( if Any):**

COVID-19 has postponed meetings and we hope that we can get together very soon.  
Departmental Goals for next Quarter:

To follow the work plan developed for the 2021- 2022 AFS agreement and follow the workplan for all other projects as well. Employ 2 – 3 students this summer to work on the river.

### **Departmental Finances:**

The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) program has been funding EFWC activities since 1991. The goal of the AFS is to ensure there is a Food, Social and Ceremonial Fishery for the community. The AFS program is currently the core funding for the activities of EFWC, which include distribution of tags, science, habitat restoration, environmental monitoring, working in collaboration with other Mi'kmaq organizations and government departments.



Eskasoni Chief and Council would like to acknowledge former Member of Parliament Mark Eyking for his many years of loyalty to Eskasoni during his time as a MP for our district. His last official MP duty was in Eskasoni was when he was there to officially announce the Federal government funding of the new Long Term Care Facility for Eskasoni. Chief and Council presented Eyking with an eagle feather for his years of service and wished him well on his retirement.

Jaime Battiste now holds the position of Victoria MP.

# ESKASONI CORPORATE DIVISION



During the past year of 2020-21 Eskasoni Corporate has been busy with several very important projects that are presently being built out in the community. These projects included Kiknu (long term care Facility), Eskasoni Communications Ltd, Foodland Strip Mall Expansion, CCA Student Training, Solar Panel projects along with many other projects off reserve including additions to Eskasoni Cold Logistics and Live Stor Sydney.

Kiknu Long term care facility located in Castle Bay is a 53,000 sq/ft facility that will be equipped with 48 individual household for our elders to be cared for. This facility will also provide for 70 full jobs which include nursing care, administration, laundry, kitchen and maintenance staff. Work has started on the project with site preparation and the foundation will be starting in May of 2021. Community members have been working on the project's site preparation and others will be hired during the build out of the facility. The project will take up to 24 months to complete and is scheduled to open in September of 2022.

To help create training opportunities that will provide for Kinku long term care jobs Eskasoni Corporate has worked with NSCC and the provincial government on a second class of Continuing Care Assistants that are currently in training. The class of 18 students are working together and completing their training through a virtual class and practical placements at Shannex nursing home in Sydney.

Eskasoni Communications Ltd is another 100% owned company of Eskasoni and over the past several months has been working hard to install the necessary equipment to provide a high speed internet service to the residents. This new internet service provider will be offering cable, phone and internet services to households in Eskasoni for a package price. So far over 800 homes have signed up for this new service which will provide for faster internet starting after April 15th ,2021.

Eskasoni Foodland and strip mall is currently undergoing a three suite expansion that will be occupied by national brand companies. Eskasoni Corporate is currently negotiating on behalf of the band to have long term leases and will be releasing more details in the coming weeks. All suites will be occupied and opened by September and will provide for additional services to band members. Canada Post that is currently housed in the band office will also be relocating to the strip mall center to add to its services.

Over the past year Eskasoni Corporate has worked with the two levels of government to continue creating renewable energy projects both on and off reserve. In the fall of 2020 a ground mount solar panel system was built in Castle Bay next to the Immersion elementary school. The 65 kilowatt system creates electricity which in turn is sold back to Nova Scotia Power for the next twenty years through a purchase power agreement. Currently Eskasoni Corporate is in negotiations with several government departments for the creation of a second solar panel ground mount system that will generate power for the band owned Eskasoni Cold Logistics. A more formal announcement in the coming weeks.

Eskasoni Corporate Division is currently working on providing for a new bus service for the community that will enable band members to both travel around community and to Sydney twice per day. In 2020 the community participated in a survey to see if the service was needed and if band members would support this type of service. The results were overwhelming that not only was the bus service needed, but that band members would support and use the service. Eskasoni Chief and council along with the province of Nova Scotia have made a financial contribution to this project and so two buses have been ordered ( one 8 passenger and a second a 20 passenger with both being equipped with wheel chair accessibility). Over the coming months there will be a company established with a manager and bus drivers so band members are encouraged to apply for these jobs once they are advertised. Further information will be available over the coming weeks along with the price of bus fares and schedules.

# Working for a Better Tomorrow.



Snap shots of progress with ongoing construction of new homes and subdivisions, our long term care facility, our mental health garden, our new solar panels and opening this fall, our strip mall expansion will be open for business.





# OUR. **ESKASONI.**

Where the Future Meets the Past

## **ESKASONI RECREATION CENTER**



## **CONCEPTUAL DRAWING OF OUR FUTURE RECREATION CENTER**

