



First Nations Language Keepers Gathering
Keynote Address
Leroy Denny

Title: Our Language Journey: Commitment, Awakening & Revitalization

Biography: Chief Leroy Denny was first elected Chief of the Eskasoni First Nation in November 2010. He began his political career as councilor and credits his family, culture, language, and strong Christian faith for keeping him balanced and focused in life. Chief Denny graduated from Cape Breton University in 1999 with a Bachelor of Arts in Community Studies and received his Bachelor of Education at St. Francis Xavier University in 2002. He left teaching in 2004 to become a fulltime councilor. Chief Denny currently sits as Chair of the Native Alcohol and Drugs Abuse Counseling Association and the Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey, and on the Boards of the Kwi'mu'kw Maw - klusuaqn Negotiation Office, Atlantic Policy Congress, and Union of Nova Scotia Indians. Chief Denny has always been a strong promoter of healthy and active living for the youth. During his term as councilor, Chief Denny became a proud co-founder of the Eskasoni Culture Recreation and Youth a program dedicated in promoting active living through culture and recreation for their community's youth.

Abstract: As Chief of the largest Mi'kmaw community in Nova Scotia, Chief Denny feels a huge responsibility to do everything possible to keep our language alive for future generations. Chief Denny will share his story about his lifelong commitment to learning our beautiful Mi'kmaw language and culture and how the efforts of the community of Eskasoni First Nation are making positive changes, historically and presently. Chief Denny will also highlight the work that Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey and communities are doing in language revitalization along with successes and challenges.

Learning Outcomes: Participants will be:

- Inspired and challenged, especially leadership, to put language first with little resources; and,
- Inspired, especially community members and grassroots to continue to learn language.