

FNLKC Conference Keynote

Workshop Title: Inspiring Indigenous Learning

Name of Presenters: Belinda Daniels

Belinda Daniels, B.Ed. M.Ed. is from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation. A current Ph.D. Student, she has been in pursuit of reclaiming and preserving the nēhiyaw (Cree) language for most of her adult life. As a major project for her Master's program, Belinda approached the concept of relearning her traditional nēhiyaw (Cree) language in an attempt to understand how this would benefit urban Aboriginal youth. She was in the lead for the St. Francis Cree Bilingual program now in its ninth year. She has also developed curriculum with the Ministry of Education. Every year Belinda hosts a Cree language acquisition summer camp that brings in local elders, knowledge keepers, and fluent Cree speakers to teach individuals the importance of preserving the language. Belinda was recently honoured by being nominated for a \$1 million Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize. Belinda was the only Canadian teacher to be nominated and she travelled to Dubai along with the top 50 teachers from around the world to receive this recognition.

Abstract: tānisi kitatamskatinawaw. nimiweyihtin ota e-pe-ta itohteyik. aya, e-pipeskwewina ninēhiyaw pipiskowin mistahi nemstetin. mihtahtat askiy e-kī-kiskinwahamasowiyān. Ka-pipiskweyan oma ninehiyawewin nitehtin iyinew piskwewina takwaki mistahi ka-kawicikowaw ota otinikanik. This is our inheritance. We can reclaim our language together." Belinda will share with delegates a story, your story is ultimately her story because our lives are interwoven with many Indigenous peoples, such as the Denesulene, Micmac, Anishnabec, Sioux peoples, Blackfoot, Mohawk, Tlingit (Kling-kit), and the nehiyawak people (just to name a few) right across this great nation, this vast continent. It is a story of resistance, survival, and renewal. We are all in search of respect, equality and emancipation. Belinda believes that we are all still here because we all stand on the shoulders of greatness, courage and spirit. The spirit within each and every one of us is that we still carry a connection to each other, our kinship, our relations and our ancestors. "kahkiyaw niwahkomakanak" is the truth and this is what it means. While we do not live in the past, the sentiments of our collective identity still exist in the long ago stories still told, songs still sung, ceremonies still practiced, natural laws still honored, sacred places and spaces still remembered and most importantly, our languages are still spoken.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, delegates will:

- Be inspired to continue learning our languages