

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL LANDS MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

LAND MANAGEMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

RECIPIENTS

- 1. A female Lands Manager/Officer who has excelled overall in land management within her community.**

Noella Jacko

Noella Patricia Jacko is 36 years old and is a member of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve in Ontario. She lives with her husband Dennis Piawanakwat and their six children. Since at the age of twelve Noella has been working with the public in her community. From this early age she grew up to become well aware of her fellow band member's concerns.

In 1995, Noella began her career working with the Wikwemikong Band in the Lands and Estates program. Her main role was to assist the Land and Estates program manager in updating old land descriptions to current legal land descriptions. Eventually, the demands of this job carried her into lands management and land surveys.

In 1999, Noella successfully completed the Lands Management Training Program through the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Noella has graduated from University of Saskatchewan in the newly established program, Indigenous Peoples Resource Management Program. Noella has now been given recognition as completing the Professional Certified Lands Management program.

Noella is now the Lands Director. Noella was appointed the Electoral Officer in November 2001. She is the Commissioner for Taking Affidavits Act in the District of Manitoulin and for the Wikwemikong Band. Noella is also the Treasurer for Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association.

Her skills and extensive knowledge in the Land Management field is well appreciated and acknowledged by co-workers and members of Wikwemikong.

Noella was nominated by the Quality Management Coordinator of Wikwemikong with support from Lachance Environmental, and the Wikwemikong Development Commission.

2. A male Lands Manager/Officer who has excelled overall in land management within his community.

James Snakeskin

James Snakeskin is 44 years old and is a member of the Thunderchild First Nation, Saskatchewan, and affiliate with the Treaty 6. James is the Lands Manager for the Thunderchild First Nation Lands and Resources Department.

James completed the Regional Land Administration Program 11 years ago and has been actively involved in the management of Thunderchild First Nation's lands since that date. During that time James has made many contributions to the good management of lands. James is involved in many developments of the Thunderchild land management including overseeing of agriculture, ranching, outfitting, and oil and gas development. His work includes the management of permits and leases. Under his direction Thunderchild has developed a Land Database and Land Use Policy. He administers the lands for both on reserve and Treaty Land Entitlement areas. He has been instrumental in bringing new initiatives to his community which allows the band members to learn and use existing skills in the areas of agriculture, farming, industry and outfitting.

James was previously on Band Council for eight years and served as past Education Director, also a committee member of numerous Departments on and off Reserve. He excels in facilitation, teambuilding, conflict resolution and administrative, computer skill. He speaks fluent Cree and has served as a translator to assist elders, band members in land issues. He is very respectful of Cree culture and traditions.

James is married and has two children, also has a Horse Ranch Operation. He is a positive role model for the Thunderchild First Nation community and we are please to recognize James Snakeskin for his endless contribution.

James was nominated by Norma Sunchild for the Thunderchild First Nation Band.

3. A First Nation Lands Department/Tribal Council who has pursued to excel in the field of land management.

Noella Jacko

As mentioned earlier Noella is Lands Director for the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. Noella and her Lands staff have taken on more projects geared towards improving economic development in Wikwemikong. One of these projects is a seed project to establish ecotourism, promotion of agricultural activity, and species at risk project employment/training three summer students.

Under Noella's direction, the Lands staff has begun the development of Wikwemikong's Cottage Lot Development Guide as well as their own Interim Lands Policy. These two documents will assist band members and the Lands staff in making better use and decisions over remaining band lands. The lands department oversees a lands management process for a community with over 7,000 inhabitants, with hundreds of land conflicts and a core annual budget of only \$28,000, shows commitment.

Noella was nominated by the Quality Management Coordinator of Wikwemikong with support from Lachance Environmental.

4. A Lands Manager/ Officer dedicated to the preservation of Aboriginal culture in land management.

Esther Osche – NOT PRESENT TO ACCEPT AWARD

Esther Osche is from the Whitefish River First Nation in Ontario. Esther is extremely knowledgeable in the Ojibway culture and knows that her culture is integral to lands management. Esther deals with many complex land issues and she is able to come up with solutions to these issues because she always makes the connection between her culture and how the culture ties to the land. Esther is a great Story Teller and tells native legends that she has learned during her life time. Esther continues to pass these legends unto will take the time to listen, learn and benefit.

Esther Osche was nominated by the Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association Executive Committee.

5. A Lands Manager/Officer who has excelled in the field of leasing/permitting over the past year.

Jennifer Copegog

Jennifer is from the Beausoleil First Nation. Jennifer manages 276 leases, both for the first nation and individual first nation members. Her first nation is currently under 53-60 Lands Management Delegation since 2000. Beausoleil First recently signed a BCR to enter the FNLWA process. The 53 – 60 delegation has provided Jennifer with vast land experiences that will aide in an easy and speedy transference into FNLMA. Jennifer loves the leasing part of her Land Manager's job. When she first started in lands management some 19 years ago, the Beausoleil First Nation only had approximately 144 leases. In 2005 she leased 20 new vacant lots and in 2006, leased 20 more. Her best year to lease vacant lots was in 1989 and that was 27 lots. The Beausoleil First Nation has only 34 vacant lots in the Big Sand Bay Subdivision and Jennifer's goal is to lease them all in two years.

Jennifer is currently overseeing a new Lands and Economic Development Project which involves construction of 4 cottages to be rented out rather than leased. This is a pilot project to see if renting generates more revenue than leasing.

Jennifer Copegog was nominated by the Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association Executive Committee.

6. A Lands Manager/Officer who has given a lifetime contribution to land management of ten (10) years or more to his/her community.

Ken Brant – NOT PRESENT TO ACCEPT AWARD

Ken Brant is from the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Ontario.

Ken has been in lands management for over 25 years. Ken has been talking about retiring for the past 10 years, but continues to work. This definitely says Ken has contributed and committed a life time to his first nation land management department. It is obvious that Ken has lands in his blood. This is good, strong, life long blood! Best wishes go to Ken to Keep good, be strong and live long!

Ken Brant was nominated by the Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association Executive Committee.

- 7. A Lands Manager who has excelled in lands management, and has contributed and influenced the field of land management beyond their community.**

Jennifer Copegog

As mentioned earlier Jennifer is from the Beausoleil First Nation. Jennifer has been involved in many lands related issues and events during the course of her career. She was on board when OALA first got started in 1995 and then with NALMA in 2000. She just recently achieved her accreditation as a Facilitator of Adult Learning – Teacher of Adults through NALMA – which means she can teach courses under RLEMP. Jennifer also was a facilitator – guest speaker at the Ontario First Nation Economic Development Annual Conference and theme she spoke to was “the importance of a relationship between Economic Development and Lands”.

Jennifer also sat on a focus group to develop a manual for first nation housing managers. Once again – focusing on the importance of these first nation departments working together on projects.

Jennifer Copegog was nominated by the Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association Executive Committee.