

Tbaytel Promotes Diverse Community Leaders

Meet Leadership Graduate
Alarice Petawanikweb



By Janine Chiasson

As Community Wellness Director for Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Alarice Petawanikweb has her hands full delivering demanding programs over a vast territory that includes forty-nine communities. But just a few years ago, Alarice reveals, “I was very comfortable in my routine and not ready to step outside my bubble.” But with the encouragement and belief of her supervisor who “inspired me to challenge myself and go for it,” Alarice signed up for Leadership Thunder Bay.

She hit the ground running at the jam-packed opening retreat, becoming part of a “whole brain” team tasked with tackling a locally submitted Community Action Project. Working with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind to promote *Dining in the Dark*, Alarice recounts, “it was a really neat experience to help bring awareness of the unique challenges that people who are blind or partially sighted experience.” In addition to developing empathy and teamwork, fledgling leaders gain a broader understanding of the critical issues affecting our community.

Supporting Leadership Thunder Bay to shape leaders through authentic community-based projects is a perfect partnership for Tbaytel who believes in investing in people, events, and initiatives that build strong, healthy, more vibrant communities. Tbaytel’s backing helps Leadership Thunder Bay prepare individuals to meet future challenges through skill building at innovative monthly learning days, where participants are challenged with hands-on scenarios that inspire self-reflection. “Maybe we weren’t even aware of our strengths,” Alarice says. “Leadership Thunder Bay gave us room to ask ourselves, ‘What am I good at? What areas do I need to grow or explore a little bit more?’”

Alarice had her eyes opened when she visited the local organizations and businesses that host Leadership Thunder Bay learning days. “I gained a new awareness of diverse community services available in Thunder Bay, especially for the First Nation people we serve,” Alarice says. “I definitely encourage First Nation participants like myself to join Leadership Thunder Bay. It’s a

positive place for us to share our story while we grow personally and professionally.”

Leadership can often mean stepping out of your comfort zone. Alarice is fortunate to have built in motivation from her daughters – two little girls who look up to her. “I am a strong believer in promoting the good life and setting a good example for my girls so they will become positive influences in our community.” With the help of partners like Tbaytel, Leadership Thunder Bay expects to be going strong when these little girls are ready to step up and become the next generation of leaders in our community.

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Leadership Thunder Bay – Apply Now

This innovative 10-month leadership program helps participants gain a broader understanding of critical community issues and acquire the leadership skills necessary to resolve them. Diverse people and viewpoints welcome. Applications accepted year-round. The deadline to apply to the Class of 2019 is May 25, 2018. www.leadershipthb.com

