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Gunalcheesh!



**Geraldine C. James
Tudishclayde Maa**

Good day all:

Tudishclayde Maa (the edge of the blue of the water by the beach) was the keeper of the Tagish Khwaan Longhouse in Tagish. My other name is Geraldine Carol James, I am the daughter of Clara Schinkel and Arthur St. Germaine. Granddaughter of Agnes and Peter Johns and great granddaughter of Maria and Tagish Johns. My roots to Carcross and Tagish go a long way back. I am of the Dakhl'awedi as I follow my mother's lineage and wear the killerwhale/eagle crest with pride.

We need to strengthen our clans and support them. We need to ensure all are included and no one left behind. We need to implement job shadowing and assisting our citizens to move up the ladder from job entry level to management.



I am one of the Tagish Nation Dance group leaders since the early 80's. I have travelled a lot with the TND and participated in a ceremony in Mexico where the Eagle came and the Condor circled above us all. It was a spiritual moment never to be forgotten. As a dance group we brought back a lot of pride and knowledge to all who dance with us. We were originally started in 1973 by Clara Schinkel and great aunt Angela Sidney.

As we grow and heal as a nation, I see many of our citizens walking with pride and their heads held high. I honour us all as we grow and move forward together.

As I work through my inter-generational trauma's I feel that I have a lot of strength to offer others. I have been a part of leadership in the past as Deputy Chief, therefore I have the knowledge of political life and voted myself out of a job by voting for Self Government! I believed that as a nation we could be a strong again and lead our own destiny instead of being an Indian Act Band.

I have worked for the government for many years within many roles. The one that I see C/TFN needs to concentrate on is our children. I work presently as the supervisor for our Early Childhood Center Haa Yatx'i Hidi (our children's house). This is where we need to center our attention as they are our future. We need a secure building that is adequate for their needs and allows them to grow. The present building is too small for the amount children that we have attending.

Our children need a full-time language teacher to bring the language back. We need to work toward a Tlingit and Tagish immersion center, ideally in Tagish. Our center teaches from the Medicine Wheel perspective. Our culture needs to be taught to our children so they can survive off the land. Hopi Prophecy stated that when the third shaking comes those who live here would be safe because this valley is the heart of mother earth. The four mountains surrounding us are the chambers of mother earth's heart. We all need to work together now and support each other. Time to hold each other up.

I would like to see our children's needs taken care of first. Some other areas that we as a nation need to look at are how do we move forward supporting each other? Maybe building up family camps on the land to enable teaching our children to survive. We need to reteach our values and virtues as many are hurting inside and we need to implement more kindness into our lives.



