

**NWAC President's Report**

This publication highlights various activities the President has undertaken throughout the month of April.

**LORRAINE WHITMAN**

Lorraine Whitman was elected as President of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) on September 14, 2019. Prior to her presidency at NWAC, Ms. Whitman served as President of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association and has been advocating for Indigenous women's rights over the past 45 years.



My Dear Friends,

Spring is flying by so quickly and along with the renewal of the land, this month held many poignant events that took place. Among some of the major events, we honoured International Mother Earth Day, Equal Pay Day in Canada, and other national days of recognition, each of importance, but I wanted to share with you about one subject in particular that stood out for me.

I was recently interviewed by APTN about feminism and equality. It was with regard to some of my statements from feminism and equality—relating specifically to Indigenous Peoples, which included:

In the case of basic feminism, it is the struggle of women to have equal rights and opportunities as those that are afforded to men.



In the case of indigenous women, we are fighting that same fight for gender equality, but we are also demanding social, economic, and political equality with other women in our society.

- We are battling colonial oppression—whether it be intergenerational traumas created by past injustices or the trauma of injustices that continue to this day.
- Colonization has had detrimental impacts on all Indigenous Peoples, but those impacts are amplified for women and gender-diverse persons.
- All Indigenous people battle racism in health care. However, we have racists who are especially emboldened when their victims are female.
- Women and gender-diverse people have more challenges when looking for housing. This is especially true for Indigenous single mothers.
- It is more difficult for Indigenous women and gender-diverse people to find jobs because those that are available in remote areas of this country tend to be those that are traditionally given to men, such as skilled trades.
- First Nations, Inuit and Métis women and gender-diverse people of this country are some of the poorest and most marginalized people in Canada. Many live in conditions similar to those of the globe's poorest countries, even though Canada is one of the richest nations in the world.
- While violence impacts all Indigenous Peoples—and Indigenous men and boys and are also murdered and go missing in disproportionate rates—we know Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people are especially vulnerable to predators.
- A national inquiry has found that there is a genocide being waged against us.

All of these issues can be related back to the oppression of colonization, and the oppression of gender inequality.

Other important dates to remember: World Health Day, World Day for Safety and Health at Work, National Pet Day, and of course the Easter long weekend where I hope you were able to celebrate with friends and family! Wishing you all the very best as we make our way into May!

Wela'lin,

  
President Lorraine Whitman  
 [@LWhitman\\_NWAC](https://twitter.com/LWhitman_NWAC)



Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2022-04-11 ...  
It's [#nationalpetday](#)! Enjoy your pet today  
and be sure to give them extra treats!!



## My April Agenda

### EVENTS:

#### **Gender-Based Violence in the Yukon and Norther British Columbia Panel:**

Led by Ann Maje Raider, Executive Director, and Lois Moorcroft, Kaska Advocates Program Coordinator, both from the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS). They shared key findings about work camps and gender-based violence in Kaska Dena Territory, with a particular emphasis on findings outlined in the report: [Never Until Now: Indigenous and Racialized Women's Experiences Working in Yukon and Northern British Columbia Mine Camps](#) (available in English only), as well as LAWS's work in preventing and ending GBV.



**Lorraine Whitman** @... · 2022-04-25 · ...

Today marks the first day of focus on the "Indigenous peoples, business, autonomy and the human rights principles of due diligence including free, prior and informed consent". The UN Event headquartered in NYC. I am looking forward to the talks livestreamed internationally!



#### **Canadian Research Institute for Advancement of Women "Deep Roots, New Threats: Confronting the Rising Right."**

This meeting convened researchers, activists, and organizations concerned in confronting threats to social justice, democracy, and decolonization posed by the rising right. The purpose is to share knowledge and critical perspectives among allies, and to identify interest and next steps in building networks for research and organizing on this question. The moderated panel featured: Barbara Perry, researcher of right-wing extremism in Canada, Ontario Tech University; Justin Ling, freelance investigative journalist; Elizabeth Simons, deputy director of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network; Nuzhat Jafri, Executive Director of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW); El Jones, researcher and activist of abolition and defunding police, Mount Saint Vincent University; and Janet Conway, researcher of anti-feminism and the global right, Brock University.



## Our Communities, Our Voices:

I attended a Zoom event celebrating a program aiming to engage young Indigenous leaders to share stories, Knowledge, and perspectives from their communities using the Government of Canada's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for discussion. This team of Indigenous women, gender-diverse, transgender, and Two-Spirit folks have gained skills, Knowledge, and support-systems for advocacy for their communities, and issues that matter to them. Using Two-Eyed Seeing, these nine young leaders worked as a team understand their role in Agenda 2030, including how to engage their communities in the SDGs and amplify Indigenous voices in global SDG work. The **Our Communities, Our Voices** program is implemented by the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, in partnership with the Government of Canada's SDG Funding Program.



Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2022-04-12 ...

Rates of depression & loneliness have increased among older adults & interventions to reduce social isolation are needed. So what can we do? Reach out to your elders & support those that may need a visit, even if it's by phone or virtually. Acts of kindness go a long way!

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Lorraine Whitman @L... · 2022-04-11 ...

April 12 is Equal Pay Day in Canada. According to Canadian Women's Foundation, "Pay inequality between women and men continues to be a persistent phenomenon across the world, including here in Canada."

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Lorraine Whitman @... · 2022-04-22 ...

Today is [#InternationalMotherEarthDay](#), we need to reflect, respect and take care of what has been given to us. Our waterways and the earth need our care. Remember she doesn't need us, but we do need her.

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### Interview with APTN regarding Feminism and Equality:

In the case of indigenous women, we are fighting that same fight for gender equality, but we are also demanding social, economic, and political equality with other women in our society.

### The 21st Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum—April 25 to May 6:

The United Nations' (UN) Forum on Indigenous Issues began on April 25, 2022, and goes until May 6, 2022, through Canada's Delegation (CANDEL).

In 2021, the permanent forum committed to facilitating informal, online, regional dialogues on autonomy and self-governance to support development of guiding principles for Indigenous Peoples to realize and embrace autonomy and self-government. The permanent forum

invited the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues to participate in the organization of regional dialogues. This also included the preparation of a discussion paper on this matter to be presented at the 21st session of the forum. The forum invited the cooperation of the Group of Friends of Indigenous Peoples to encourage the active participation of Member States in this endeavor.

This initiative builds upon work and concepts explored at an international expert meeting organized by UNDESA in January 2018. This meeting held a theme of sustainable development in the territories of Indigenous Peoples, as it relates to Article 4 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In preparation for the 2022 session, the permanent forum will organize a series of regional dialogues on this matter in each of the seven socio-cultural regions of the world. The overarching goal is to advance the development of guiding principles for implementation of Indigenous Peoples' rights to autonomy and self-government.

**Canada-Hosted Welcome Reception:**

- Organizer: Government of Canada.

**External Side Event: Indigenous Peoples and the Social Economy:**

- Organizers: National Association of Friendship Centres, and Hawaii Investment Ready.

**Canada-Hosted Side Event: Economic Reconciliation and the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:**

- Organizers: Government of Canada, and the National Indigenous Economic Development Board.

**Canada-Hosted Side Event: Indigenous Lands: Free, Prior, and Informed Consent in the Climate Transition:**



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- Organizers: Government of Canada, and the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise.



**Lorraine Whitman** @L... · 2022-04-01 ...

In the midst of historically difficult times a group of Anishinaabe Elders offered messages of love & hope to support younger generations of Indigenous people. Online, they spoke about personal empowerment, historic lessons & ancestral strength.



[aptnnews.ca](https://aptnnews.ca)

Anishinaabe grandmothers remind of ancestral strength in hard times

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**Lorraine Whitman** @... · 2022-04-08 ...

I am looking forward to Jody Wilson-Raybould's new book True Reconciliation: How to be a Force for Change, to be released in November '22 it is a guide that seeks to improve relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples at all levels of society.



[cbc.ca](https://cbc.ca)

Jody Wilson-Raybould publishing new book, True Reconciliation, to b...

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**Lorraine Whitman** @... · 2022-04-14 ...

Mi'kmaw sisters with type one diabetes camp in a teepee to raise donations. I am always inspired to see such initiatives by our youth!



[aptnnews.ca](https://aptnnews.ca)

Mi'kmaw sisters with diabetes camp in a teepee to raise donations

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Native Women's  
Association of Canada



L'Association des  
femmes autochtones  
du Canada

[nwac.ca](http://nwac.ca)