



# Tsilhqot'in INTERNATIONAL YOUTH AMBASSADORS PROGRAM EMPOWERS YOUTH ON INTERNATIONAL STAGE

The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) has launched a first of its kind International Youth Ambassador Program, providing the opportunity for Tsilhqot'in youth to develop proficiency in international Indigenous human rights standards and how to participate effectively in advocacy at the United Nations and other multilateral bodies such as the Organization of American States (OAS).

This week, 6 Tsilhqot'in youth are in New York City beginning their two-week journey of participation at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). The theme for the UNPFII 2024 is "Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: emphasizing the voices of Indigenous youth." With funding for this program from Fulbright and University Canada West, the youth will be empowered to understand and apply the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, and also to use their Tsilhqot'in teachings and traditions to benefit their communities, Canada and other Indigenous Peoples at an international level.

"Our youth are our future. The connections and work that we do internationally has a huge impact on the direction of Indigenous rights in Canada and around the world. This landscape can be extremely difficult to navigate. Having a program like this one allows us to teach and mentor the next generation of Tsilhqot'in leaders. The youth we have on this trip have all been selected for their strengths. It's going to be a powerful few weeks in New York for these 6 youth."

**—Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, LL.D. (hon.). Tribal Chair  
Tsilhqot'in National Government**

"Fulbright Canada, alongside its Honouring Nations Program, is privileged to collaborate with the Tsilhqot'in National Government to advance the International Youth Ambassador Program. This partnership stands as a significant achievement, poised to

empower Indigenous youth globally, fostering their involvement in issues pertinent to Indigenous communities worldwide. We extend heartfelt congratulations to the TNG for their induction into the esteemed Honouring Nations Canada list of awardees within the Honouring Nations Good Governance Awards Program. This program, in alignment with the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development's Honoring Nation initiative, acknowledges the pivotal role governance plays in nurturing Indigenous-led economic and social advancements, ensuring sustainability and inclusivity.”

— **Robin McLay, Regional Director, Fulbright Canada West and Program Director, Honouring Nations Canada**

“I want to see how all leaders, including ours, lead and work together. One day I plan to be a leader in my community and Nation. Gaining the knowledge and experience through this program will allow me to do this in a good way. I want to also show our youth that they are heard and important – that they can do anything that they put their minds to.”

—**Xeni Lulua, T̓silhqot̓in Youth Ambassador**

“This is a great opportunity to be a voice for our people, sharing our culture and making connections with other nations.”

—**Micole Myers, T̓silhqot̓in Youth Ambassador**

“We are honored to collaborate with the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and Fulbright Canada’s Honouring Nations Program to support the International Youth Ambassadors Program. University Canada West is dedicated to partnering with Indigenous nations, including the T̓silhqot̓in National Government, to design educational initiatives to help the youth develop a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which various UN bodies and other multilateral institutions strive to incorporate the rights of Indigenous Peoples into their broader developmental and human rights agendas.”

—**Dr. Bashir Makhoul, President & Vice-Chancellor, University Canada West**

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