NAFC Executive Committee Report to Membership

2017 Annual Meeting
Montreal, Quebec

In Friendship.
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Introduction

The National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) Executive Committee would like to welcome Elders, Senators, Members, Delegates and Observers to Montreal and to the Friendship Centre Movement’s 46th Annual General Meeting (AGM). We hope that you will find time to reconnect with others you may not have seen in some time and take some time to enjoy the planned activities.

This has been an extremely challenging period for not only the NAFC Executive Committee, but also the entire Friendship Centre Movement, with many changes, and with the loss of our President, friend, and mentor Nelson Mayer. The Executive would like to extend an honoured and special welcome to Ella Mayer, who is attending this year’s annual meeting and we thank her for being here. We would also like to extend a special welcome and acknowledgement to our Senators whose knowledge and guidance has been a source of strength for many of us as we try to move forward. We would like to acknowledge our Youth who ensure that this movement continues long after we are gone.

We would also like to take a moment of acknowledge all others who have taken a journey to the spirit world this year who have contributed to what we now call the Friendship Centre Movement. We share our condolences with those who were close to them and want to thank them for sharing them with us all.

We would like to end by taking the time to acknowledge the original people whose Territory on which we stand here today. We are humbled to be here and thank you for allowing us to meet and conduct business here. Our hope is that this brief report from the Executive will provide the membership with information regarding our work over the past year.
Activities: NAFC President Nelson Mayer and Christopher Sheppard

I would like to start by thanking all the people who have supported me since taking on the role of President since the passing of my friend and mentor Nelson. As you can imagine it has been a challenging time as I construct this report and return back to the months while he was with us. I would like to take a moment to thank Ella for all of her strength and support over this time as well.

Due to the circumstances this year, this report will consist of portions of Nelson’s work as President of the National Association of Friendship Centres prior to his journey to the Spirit World, as well as the work undertaken by me since that time, and will also include the work undertaken by me as the Vice President prior to Nelson’s passing.

Nelson Mayer – President

On August 20/21 following our AGM last year, myself and Treasurer Chester Langille conducted a thorough financial review of the NAFC from April 2014 to March 2016. We were assisted in this review by Acting ED Mel Maracle and Director of Finance Marcie Chase.

We examined both audits that have been submitted to INAC and also reviewed details of the work and payments to various consultants that NAFC had dealings with these past two years.

This review as well as the renegotiation of Friendship Centre funding has pushed much of the work that was undertaken over the last year, and more information will be provided during the AGM around this work.

Executive Director Position

We received 23 applications for the position of NAFC Executive Director, which were screened by the Executive Committee members utilizing a
screening tool that was developed by our Vice-President, 9 people were selected for interviews however 2 people cancelled their appointments so 7 people were interviewed in our national office.

Each candidate was asked to prepare a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation to begin their interview followed by 20 questions and then a final question to be completed in writing within a 30-minute timeline.

References were checked by our Youth Executive member and a conference call with the board was held to make the final decision. I contacted the successful candidate by phone and indicated that a formal letter of offer and employment agreement would be made to her.

The NAFC Vice-President and I worked on a formal letter of offer and an employment agreement which Erin Corston signed, accepting our offer with a start date of October 11.

I would like to thank Erin for accepting our offer and want to wish her success in her role with the NAFC.
Christopher Sheppard – President

Nelson Mayer Passing

On December 22, 2016, the Board of Directors held a conference call to discuss the passing of President Nelson Mayer, the appointment of a President and to discuss the press release that would be released publicly.

During the first week of January, I travelled to Edmonton, Alberta to attend the celebration of life for President Nelson Mayer. I was also provided the opportunity to speak on behalf of the NAFC and speak about Nelson’s commitment to the NAFC, Friendship Centres and the Youth of the Friendship Centre Movement.

Senate

During the transition of the new Vice President, I also attended the Senate meeting and supported the new Vice President as they learned their new role. It was a good opportunity to hear from the Senate who had not met since the annual meeting after having some scheduling challenges.

The Senate continues to its work around its strategic plan and workplan and to help support the movement in whatever way possible.

Meeting with SSHRC

Recently I was provided with an opportunity to help set up a meeting between the NAFC and SSHRC. This meeting was to look at how SSHRC can support Friendship Centres in continuing their work with community driven research. As many are aware NAFC has submitted applications to receive institutional eligibility and we felt it was a great opportunity to discuss this at this time. Also, because the OFIFC has also been involved in this work and working towards eligibility, I reached out to them and the Director of Research attended this meeting with myself and the NAFC Executive Director.
Meeting with ESDC

Along with the Executive Director and another NAFC staff attended a meeting with the Deputy Minister of ESDC and the Director General of ESDC regarding employment and training opportunities for Friendship Centres, and looking at how the Government of Canada can truly support Friendship Centres who are unable to deliver programs and services in this area. The meeting was lengthy and I believe ended in a good way and we look forward to the direction that comes from that opportunity.

Indspire Awards

I received an invitation to attend the *Indspire* Awards celebration in Ottawa, Ontario and this was a great honour as the First Nations Youth Recipient was a former board member of the St. John’s Native Friendship Centre.

UPIP Agreements and Bridge Funding

The National Negotiating Committee (NNC) and the NAFC have been working with officials from the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) both before and since the release of the 2017 budget on March 22, 2017. They successfully negotiated for upstream investments by the Federal Government for the important work Friendship Centres do across Canada.

The Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP) includes organizational capacity funding for Friendship Centres at $23 Million per year for the next five years and Programs and Services funding for Friendship Centres at $7.8 Million per year for the next five years.

Bridge funding was also secured and distributed to PTAs, to ensure Friendship Centres are able to “keep doors open” and programs running during the first quarter of this fiscal year.
Christopher Sheppard – Vice President

Executive Director

After the AGM in Toronto, Ontario I was involved in a lot of work around the development of items for the hiring of the new Executive Director of the NAFC, this included working with the executive to create a scoring tool for both the received resumes as well as the interview process to ensure that the Executive were using the same metrics when evaluating the candidates.

I was also involved in the interviews for the Executive Director of the NAFC in Ottawa. I also worked with the President to follow up with the candidate after a meeting with the board and helped with the contract process.

I also finalized a version of the Executive Director Evaluation that will be shared with the board to review to bring comments prior to its utilization to ensure effective performance measurement moving forward.

Innovation Summit

During the second week of November 2016 I attended the Innovation Summit in Edmonton, Alberta. It provided me with an opportunity to speak during the opening of the Summit and to speak to delegates in attendance, it also provided me with an opportunity to have a direct conversation with some of the events funders.

CAAW

On December 1st, 2016, I attended the launch of Canadian AIDS Awareness Week, and brought greetings from the NAFC. I also took the opportunity to speak about how as national organizations we should take opportunities to partner and truly work together if we wish to create positive change in this area, and that regardless of which organizations we work for there are always opportunities for collaboration.
NAFC Pathways – PEKE

During the second week of November 2016 I attended the Innovation Summit in Edmonton, Alberta. It provided me with an opportunity to speak during the opening of the Summit and to speak to delegates in attendance; it also provided me with an opportunity to have a direct conversation with some of the events funders.

Research and Communications

The committee continues to work on its current items, and I scheduled a call with the two staff resource individuals to go over pressing items prior to the meeting in Winnipeg. This call looked at upcoming items that the committee will have to prepare for at the next board meeting.

In August as a follow up to the conference in Regina, I met with some staff of the University of Saskatchewan to discuss research and how to move in a positive direction around research with urban Indigenous people. I invited Bill Mintram as well, to bring a local perspective and from my understanding this has resulted in some follow up meetings between the individuals at the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre.

Board of Directors Meeting: October 2016

Recommendations:

1. That the NAFC Research and Communications Recommendations chart be accepted as presented.

2. That the NAFC conduct an environmental analysis in partnership with the AYC, senate, non-aligned Friendship Centres and PTAs of reporting templates with the intent of improving the board reporting template.

3. That the NAFC Board of Directors approve NAFC’s application for
institutional eligibility to the CIHR, including agreement of:

1.1 The NAFC has read and is prepared to sign the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions and comply with the requirements, policies and procedures for research grants or awards from CIHR.

1.2 NAFC recognizes the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2) as a minimum standard for ethical research. The NAFC will ensure compliance with TCPS 2 in all tri-council supported research and will implement and support the use of community-driven research protocols by communities and their research partners.

1.3 The NAFC has a policy that follows the requirements of the Tri-Council Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research. The policy will serve as the basis for the investigation of allegations of breaches of responsible conduct of research only after all formal internal conflict resolution mechanisms have been exhausted.

4. That NAFC pull mission statement options together and present to AYC and Senate for feedback to be presented and shared at the Executive Directors Forum for consideration.

5. That the NAFC not accept Bay St. George Cultural Circle for membership at this time, and request follow up information.

6. That the policy committee develop a policy and procedures with respect to organizations using the name and brand of ‘Friendship Centres’ or ‘Centre d’amitié’.

7. That the NAFC Board of Directors discuss if and how they want to proceed with the Indigenous Innovation Summit in 2017.
Board of Directors Meeting: February 2017

Recommendations:

1. That the Regional Board Report not be an agenda item; that Regional Board Reports be submitted in advance of NAFC Board of Director meetings as per the NAFC Constitution and By-laws and that the NAFC review recommendation(s) in advance of Board of Directors meetings to be distributed to a relevant committee.

2. To accept the Bay St. George Cultural Circle Inc. as a member Friendship Centre further to Article III section 3 of the NAFC Constitution and By-laws, and ratify the new member at the 46th NAFC Annual General Meeting.

3. It is recommended that a privacy policy be developed by the policy committee.

Board of Directors Meeting: May 2017

Recommendations:

1. That the National Research & Communications Committee Terms of Reference be approved as presented on May 6, 2017;

2. That the NAFC mission statement options, including the Senate’s revised Mission Statement option be presented to the AYC at their next scheduled meeting for feedback and that the NAFC Mission Statement options be disseminated to the PTAs and independent Friendship Centres thereafter for presentation at the NAFC AGM in July, 2017;

3. That the Communications Guidelines be reviewed by the NAFC by September 5, 2017;

4. That the National Research & Communications Committee review the Ethical Guidelines at the next meeting;
5. That the NAFC re-initiate Bilateral Agreement dialogue with the Provincial/Territorial Associations (PTA's)

6. That there be a Standing Board of Directors agenda item on the NAFC Strategic Plan and that a Strategic Plan progress report be provided at each Board of Directors meeting

7. That 1 page Friendship Centre impact report be developed by July 10, 2017 for review by the National Research & Communications Committee in advance of the 2017 Annual Meeting.

Senate

The Senate was successful in having the constitution amended at the NAFC AGM in Toronto, and we have not had an opportunity to meet since that time. Once we have an opportunity to meet there will be a more significant update on the status of the Senate work plan and the implementation of different areas of the work plan moving forward.
Activities: Vice President Kelly Benning

Introduction

I was appointed Vice President at the February NAFC Board Meeting. Since then it has been a whirlwind of activity and a huge learning curve. I spent a considerable amount of time doing homework to ensure I understood all the many matters at hand and the challenges that we face. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ANFC for affording me this opportunity; I have learned so very much for the past 5 months. I would also like to thank the NAFC Staff, Board, Executive and Senate for their patience and kindness, you are an extremely skilled and hardworking group of people that take your roles seriously and always ensure that the betterment of the FCM is what guides you.

Through your commitment you have ensured for us a better tomorrow.

Senate

Attended the Senate meetings along with President Shepherd, March 27 & 28, 2017 in Ottawa where we updated the work plan and set goals. The main theme of the meeting was that the Senate would like to be more involved and offer greater support to the Friendship Centre Movement. The work plan is inclusive of concrete strategies to achieve the goals set out in the work plan. The main focus of the Senate was to update the NAFC Mission Statement in order to ensure it is reflective of who we are today. Sitting with the Senate through this process was awe inspiring. The wealth of knowledge, genuine care and concern and fore thought that our Senate carries within them is tremendous. It was an honour to share in their circle and watch them shine.

PEKE

I attended the Ethics Framework meetings April 3 & 4, 2017 in Ottawa along with President Shepherd and Senator Pawis Tabobondung. The intent of the
meetings was to create an Ethics Framework for research within an urban Indigenous context. Elders and Youth from throughout the Friendship Centre Movement were in attendance and offered their input. A report of the work done is scheduled to be completed by early fall for the group for review prior to submission.

**Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs**

On March 8, 2016, the Vice President appeared before the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs to provide a briefing to the Committee to discuss the vision of the NAFC moving forward and to build an ongoing relationship.

On June 2, 2016, the Vice President appeared before the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs on the issue of Suicide in Indigenous Communities as the President was unavailable due to prior commitments.

**Indigenous Innovation Summit Committee**

I attended the Indigenous Innovation Summit 2016 in Edmonton Alberta as a presenter. The Summit was a good opportunity to gather and network. The most useful presentations were the ones facilitated by Friendship Centres, with the highlight being the Skookum Jim Youth Program. The summit was not well attended as registration fees were very high and most Centres could not incur the costs.

In reviewing the previous summits, the NAFC Board decided that the Innovation Summit was not what was needed by the FCM. Rather, plans were put in place to offer workshops between the Youth Conference and NAFC AGM. The workshops would follow a similar format to the ones offered by the OFIFC last year. Hosting the workshops at this time, we felt; would best meet the needs of the membership as no extra costs for travel would be required.
Executive Committee Meeting

I attended the Executive Committee Meetings April 8 & 9, 2017 in Ottawa. Senator Pawis Tabobondung was in attendance to offer support & guidance. All other Executive Committee Meetings have been by teleconference.

NAFC Board Meeting

I attended the NAFC Board Meetings March 6 & 7, 2017 in Ottawa. Senator Fox was in attendance to offer support & guidance. All other NAFC Board Meetings have been by teleconference.

NNC

Attended conference call with the NNC and NAFC Executive

Events

March 2017

- Attended the 18th Annual Spirit Seekers Youth Conference hosted by the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre and brought greetings from the NAFC.

- Attended the ANFCA March quarterly meetings in Edmonton and brought greeting from the NAFC.

June:

- Participated in the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre’s Walk for Friendship.

- Attended the Grande Prairie Friendship Centre National Indigenous Day Celebrations and brought greetings from the NAFC.
Research and Communications Committee

The Vice President chairs the National Research and Communications Committee and the following includes a list of the recommendations made by the National Research and Communications Committee over the last year.

Board of Directors Meeting: May 2017

Recommendations:

1. Recommended that the National Research and Communications Committee Terms of Reference be approved as presented May 6, 2017.

2. Recommended that NAFC mission statement options, including the Senate–revised Mission statement option, be presented to the AYC at their next schedule meeting for feedback; and that the NAFC mission statement options be disseminated to PTAs and independent Friendship Centres thereafter for presentation at the NAFC AGM in July 2017.

3. Recommend that the communication guidelines be reviewed by the NAFC by September 5, 2017.

4. Recommend that the NRCC review the Ethical Guidelines at the next meeting.

5. Recommend that the NAFC re–initiate Bilateral Agreement dialogue with PTAs.

6. Recommend that there be a standing Board of Directors agenda item on the NAFC Strategic Plan and that a Strategic Plan progress report be provided at each Board of Directors meeting.

7. Recommend that 1 page Friendship Centre impact report be developed by July 10, 2017, for review by the NRCC in advance of the 2017 Annual General Meeting.
Activities: Treasurer Chester Langille

NAFC Finance Operations

After the AGM in July in Toronto, Ontario Chester and Nelson began looking into different areas of finances at the NAFC to start the process of looking at what had happened, and how to move forward in a better way. I am happy to report that significant work has been done around this area and more information will be provided during the AGM.

From the AGM in July to the Board Meeting in October the following took place:

- Setting up the NAFC banking and signing authority
- Attending Financial review Aug.20/21
- Reviewing recovery plan with NAFC staff
- Executive committee conference call Aug.22
- Conduct 7 interviews for ED position on Sept. 7/8
- Participate in meeting with INAC and NAFC staff via conference call on September 15.
- Provide input into financial policy amendments
- Attended CMHC National Housing Strategy on Rural and Remote Indigenous Housing Roundtable in Thunder Bay Sept 26
- Draft report on findings from financial review

After the fall meeting, I have been in regular communications with the NAFC Executive Director regarding the INAC Recovery Plan, financial contracts for the 2017 Summit and NAFC AGM, support with HR issues as a new Executive Director, financial approvals and financial oversight of the NAFC. I have participated in all NAFC Executive and Board teleconference calls.
There has been a lot of activity related to finance since the last Board meeting in February. The Recovery Plan for 2014–2015 and 2015–2016 has been provided to INAC and amounts and method of recovery for ineligible funds has been negotiated and confirmed. A report on this will be presented to the Board.

The NAFC has submitted payment in full for the recoverable amounts for the 2014–2015 fiscal year to INAC, to the tune of $516,000. For 2015–2016, INAC has identified $1.1 million as recoverable, which includes expenditures of ineligible funds provided to PTOs. We recently received confirmation in writing that the NAFC would be able to utilize a portion of our slippage from this past fiscal year to offset the recoverable funds. However, I am happy to report that INAC has since agreed to allow us to utilize our total slippage for this past year to offset the 2015–2016 recoverable funds, amounting to $1.1 million. As a result, we will be able to have the total amount of recoverable funds submitted to INAC prior to our AGM. Additionally, we are no longer in default and have moved from high risk to medium, and are requesting a review of our status in September to move us to low risk.

I participated in a phone call with the Executive Director and Finance Director to discuss bridge funding from INAC. The NAFC has secured bridge funding for this fiscal year but has to make a decision regarding allocations. The total allocation matches last year’s CCS funding of $23,000,000. The bridge funding will support the Friendship Centre Movement while the 5-year funding agreement is under negotiation. Several options for distribution will be discussed with the Finance Committee to bring a recommendation to the Board.
Finance Committee

Board of Directors Meeting: October 2016

Recommendations:

1. That the Finance Director’s Report be accepted as presented

2. That the September 2016 financial statements be accepted as presented by Finance Director

3. That the employee cost of living allowance (COLA) increase for fiscal year 2016–17 be suspended and reviewed again in 2017–18, due to NAFC’s current financial status

4. That NAFC immediately return funds to INAC as identified in the recovery plan for the 2014–15 fiscal year, and confirmation be requested that there is no further debt owed by NAFC related to the 2014–15 fiscal year

5. That the Finance Policy be expanded to include a tendering process, Requests for Proposal (RFP) procedures, and Executive Director expenditure and contract authorities and limits, for review and approval by the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting

6. That the Executive Director’s spending authority be limited to a maximum of $25,000 for both day-to-day expenditures and service contracts

7. That the employee salary scale be updated to include existing positions within the NAFC

8. That the Staff Policy and Procedures Manual include a process for how salary and/or merit increases are determined, and what measures must be undertaken to adopt changes to the org-chart

9. That the Finance Policy be updated regularly to reflect changes to Treasury Board Guidelines
10. That future board meetings be two (2) days in duration, and Board members commit to attending the full two days.

11. That the 2017 Innovation Summit be cancelled, and the Executive Director negotiate alternate arrangements with the Westin Hotel, as well as seek out other organizations who may be interested in taking over the contract.

12. That the Treasurer’s Report on the financial review be amended to include contractual obligations to the Westin Hotel and re-presented to the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting, prior to it being shared with membership.

**Board of Directors Meeting: February 2017**

Recommendations:

N/A

**Board of Directors Meeting: May 2017**

Recommendations:

1. Recommend that Treasurer and the President sign the audit letter on behalf of the NAFC following a correction to the date in the Fees Section.

2. Recommend that the NAFC seek out three additional estimates for the forensic audit and hold a conference call with the Finance Committee to make a recommendation to the Board of Directors.

3. Recommend that the allocation for emergency funding (bridge) for FC, PTAs, and the NAFC be based on 2016–17 allocations. FC, PTAs, and NAFC will receive 30% of 2016–17 allocation for Q1 and the funding authority will remain in established regional processes.

4. Recommend that the Board approve COLA for NAFC staff for fiscal
2017–18

5. Recommend that Director and Officer liability insurance be increased to $5M per year.

6. Recommend that the ED create and fill the Program Director position utilizing the attached job description.

7. Recommend deferring finalizing the draft Finance Policies until the Board of Directors meeting in July 2017.
Activities: Secretary Bill Mintram

As Secretary, I would like to begin my report by acknowledging the many who have paved the way for our Friendship Centres to be flourishing places that are connecting and engaging communities and notably our Past President Nelson Mayer. Nelson was a mentor for me and many others, I will miss him, but I also acknowledge that he had brought greatness within our movement where laughter was present and grassroots always remembered.

Since the last AGM in Toronto I have had the opportunity to serve the Movement in many capacities. The following is a timeline of my engagements:

Hiring of NAFC Executive Director

We conducted a thorough hiring process, created a short list and conducted interviews. After deliberations and a Board Conference Call, I am thankful we have a wonderful new Executive Director to welcome into our Movement.

Department of National Defence (DND) – Policy Roundtable

I had the opportunity to attend this roundtable along with representatives from Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Metis National Council, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce (Aboriginal Entrepreneur), and University of Saskatchewan Indigenous Studies Department, A York University professor focused on Northern Issues, Indspire, and the Aboriginal Association of Businesses. We were told that this gathering is one that typically only happens every 10 to 15 years. The purpose was to engage in discussion around policy development for the Department of National Defence and look at development from a diverse range of Aboriginal perspectives.

The roundtable was a closed meeting, so there were no other members of the public in attendance. There were a number of Department Staff and a number of military personnel representing the Canadian Armed Forces chain of command (Army, Navy, and Airforce)
The discussions focused around the DND’s future potential in relation to threats, the North, current initiatives such as the Rangers and Bold Eagle, vision of the future, capacities, and how they can build better relationships with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal engagement through personnel, skills training, and procurement. I had the opportunity to speak to many of the areas discussed and brought to the table the need to utilize the Calls to Action of the TRC in policy development on all levels, and opportunities for procurement opportunities including Friendship Centres and entrepreneurs. Overall it was a great experience. Many people in the room noted that they were happy the Friendship Centre Movement was involved in the discussions. A number of our colleagues around the room noted in side conversations that they had involvement with Friendship Centres at some point in their lives and value our role in our urban communities.

Meetings

- Presidents and Executive Directors Meeting October 18 – 19, 2016
- National Board Meeting October 20 – 22, 2016
- Executive E-vote in November
- Executive Conference Call on Sunday December 18, 2016
- Full Board Conference Call on December 22, 2017
- In Person Executive Meeting in Edmonton on January 6, 2017
- Executive Conference Call on January 29, 2017
- National Board Meeting February 18 – 19, 2017
- Executive Meeting – April 8, 2017
- NAFC Support – May 3, 2017 I took part in interviews for the Director of Programs position.
- National Board Meeting May 6 – 7, 2017
- National Board Meeting June 6, 2017 (Conference Call, I joined from
the NAFC office)

- Executive Meeting Sunday June 19, 2017 (Conference Call)
- Executive/NNC Meeting June 22, 2017 (Conference Call)
- National Board Meeting June 27, 2017 (Conference Call)
- Communications with the Executive Director.

Communications with Executive Director

Over the last year Erin has done a great job of keeping the executive apprised of what is happening within the movement and the national office. We have received regular communications and have given regular advice to help guide her in managing national matters.

Communications with National Office

Prior to moving to Ottawa, I had regular points of phone and email contact with the National office around matters relating to governance and my duties as secretary in ensuring the proper documents and protocols are in place along with my portfolio with the policy committee. Since moving to Ottawa in April, I have had the opportunity to stop in every week or two to do what I used to do over the phone, except in person.

As the NAFC has undergone significant changes and challenges, it has been a very involved year for the national board and executive. In these transitions and times of change I would like to thank the Elders, Senators, AYC members, NNC members, our Board Members and the NAFC staff for their contributions on a national level to serving our local grassroots and advocating for the best service delivery models possible.
Activities: Youth Executive Andrea Andersen

Aboriginal Youth Council (AYC)

Welcome everyone to beautiful Montreal! I want to thank you for taking the time out of your summer to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM). A lot has happened over the past year, especially within the funding aspect of the Friendship Centre movement. It is a lot of new information to take in so if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to ask any of the NAFC board members, National Negotiating Committee (NCC) members, Aboriginal Youth Council (AYC), Senate or NAFC staff.

This will be my last AGM as the youth executive as I age out this year. I have held this position for the last three years and there is no way to comprehend how much I have learnt, grown, and developed a new love for this movement. Each member that I have had the chance to meet during these years has taught one thing or another about what this movement is about and how to better the lives for the urban Indigenous people of Canada. One person who has taught me the most is no longer with us today.

Our former president Nelson Mayor was the first person I met outside of the Atlantic region at my first AGM in Brandon, MB. His fire, wit, and humor made me want to learn more about what Friendship Centres are all about on a national level. To learn and see what other people are doing for their people in different parts of this country. He will be missed during our annual gathering, but to remember that he is here with us in spirit either cracking a joke, trying to make phone calls so people would have to owe the AYC money, or getting down to business.

I want to thank you again for letting me be in this position, I hope I represented the youth of this movement well and I give the best of luck to whoever will fill this role next.

As the Youth Executive, I am to liaison with the national office and the AYC, to advocate for youth issues on the executive level, and to provide a voice for
youth within this movement. The 2016–2017 year has been as always, a very busy year. Please see the following items that were addressed and if you have any question I am here to answer.

AYC

I attended regular teleconferences, face-to-face meetings, and any email communication that was required. Please see the AYC report for full details of the work we have been doing.

I would like to note that at the end of the AGM last year Nelson approached the AYC and asked for re-consideration with the awards name change. It was brought to our face-to-face meeting for consideration. However, after his passing the AYC decided to keep the award in his name. You can find the application process on the NAFC website.

Students On Ice (SOI) – SOI is a charitable organization that leads educational expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic for international high school and university students. They provide youth the opportunity to receive an educational experience from the Polar Regions.

This year the SOI program is seeking more participation from urban Indigenous youth – especially from the FC movement. To date a partnership agreement has taken place between the NAFC and SOI. It was also attempted to have a FC youth attend this year’s expedition – however, with timing it did not happen as there was not enough time given the AYC to provide adequate outreach within the movement.

This will hopefully be something that a FC youth will be able to participate with in the following years.

Gathering Our Voices (GOV) – The biggest youth gathering every year hosted in the BC region provides a huge opportunity for FC youth to participate in various workshops that are educational, cultural and skill driven. The AYC attempts to attend or host a workshop each year during this gathering. However, this year we were unsuccessful in attending due to funding
restrictions.

NCC – The AYC holds one youth seat on the National Negotiating Committee (NCC). Their role is to advocate for youth issues in the negotiating process of NAFC. The previous youth member stepped down and over the past few months we have a vacancy on this committee. It will hopefully be filled with a youth member after the AYC forum as the committee will have new members.

I would also like to note that from the assembly during the last AGM it was noted that the membership wanted input how to get more youth engaged. It was a question that was brought to the floor. This topic was addressed at our face-to-face and has also been brought to the youth forum. The AYC will share their recommendations once the consultations are finished.

NAFC Board
Throughout the year I attended all scheduled board meetings and face-to-face meetings. Internal committees that I sit on within the board:

- Chair the Annual General Meeting (AGM) Planning Committee
- Current member of the finance committee
- Previous member of the Policy and Procedures committee
- Previous member of the Indigenous Innovation Summit committee

NAFC Executive
Over my three years being on this committee I think this year has been the busiest; with the new federal budget, staffing changes at the national office, and losing one of our executive members. It was a very difficult year being on the executive committee as we have recently lost our president. His absence is sure to be missed and I encourage anyone to run for this position during election time.

I took part in all teleconferences and face-to-face meetings as necessary. Below is an overview of the items that I have taken part in as being a member
of the executive committee:

*Hiring of a new Executive Director (ED)* – I took part in the interview process and scoring for our new ED, Erin Corston. The executive committee have also completed our 6-month review and have had overall position reviews from her work to date.

*United Nations (UN) Habitat Summit* – Consultation was provided before the summit took place.

*Global Affairs Canada* – I was asked to provide some information to their International Aboriginal Youth Internship Initiative and International Youth Internship Program. It was around the type of youth programming local Friendship Centres typically run, as well as best practices for youth outreach.

*National Youth Serving Alliance (NYSA)* – The NAFC is one of many youths serving organizations that provide recommendations to the government on youth programming. Throughout the year I have been providing feedback and recommendations that were brought forward to the government from this alliance organization.

*Governor General Innovation Awards Program* – agreed for NAFC to be a nominating partner.

*Royal Commission Report on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) 20th Anniversary Event* – This report was created in 1992 from the Canadian Royal Commission to address issues of Aboriginal status. The report was published in 1996 and it created a 20-year agenda for change. I was asked to help lead a dialogue session and be a key-note speaker for one of the sessions during their 20th Anniversary in Winnipeg, MB. However, due to an already busy schedule I had to decline this offer to attend.

*Assembly of First Nations (AFN) resolution* – The AFN brought forward a resolution at their 2016 AGM titled, “Working towards a New Urban First Nations Strategy.” [#55/2016] It went against the MOU between the NAFC and AFN. It was discussed within the executive to keep an eye out for this
resolution and to review our MOU between AFN and the NAFC.

*Passing of our President* – All executive members attended the celebration of life for Nelson in Edmonton. It was great to be introduced to his family, the other aspects of his life such as his wrestling and also to re-connect with his friendship centre family.

After discussions, the executive would like to start the process of creating a scholarship for youth within the Friendship Centre movement in his memory. Details will be discussed and provided as they arise.

**External Committees**

*4Rs Youth Movement* [www.4rsyouth.ca](http://www.4rsyouth.ca): The 4Rs Youth Movement is a youth-driven initiative that was launched to change the country by changing relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people. The NAFC are one of 14 founding national organizations that support this movement.

4Rs stands for Respect, Reciprocity, Relevance, and Reconciliation.

Please see attached the new framework and Canada 150 initiative.

*Aboriginal Peoples Standing Committee* of the Federal Senate: The NAFC was asked to nominate a youth member from the Friendship Centre movement for Indigenous Youth Day. My name was nominated and I got chosen to attend.

This Senate committee is currently working on a study titled, “How to improve the relationship between Canada and its Indigenous people”. I got to share light to how FC do not receive any infrastructure funding from the government, how natural resource projects should not be allowed on Indigenous lands unless there is an agreement put in place, and how Indigenous portfolios in the government should be held by Indigenous people.

*6Degrees Junior Fellowship*– Through my work with the 4Rs youth movement and Inspirit foundation my name was nominated and chosen to be a junior
fellow for the 6Degrees Junior Fellowship opportunity. This fellowship is with youth from all across the world to provide inclusion and citizenship opportunities in your home country.

My project was to help share the Inuktitut language for youth in urban settings. I am working with other Inuit youth in Labrador to create a series of children Inuktitut books to be shared publically. The project is still underway with hopes of it being completed in the fall of 2017.

_Inspirit Foundation_ – The Inspirit foundation is an organization that focuses on youth. They support individuals by contributing funds to youth-led initiatives, lowering barriers to capacity-building opportunities and decision-making tables, connecting change leaders across the country, collaborating with change leaders on initiatives, and negotiating with institutions to create space for these leaders.

One of their main priority areas is ‘Truth and Reconciliation’. I have had the opportunity to be a guest blogger on their site in regard to the Moose Hide Campaign.

**Conclusion**

We wish to thank you for taking the time to review the NAFC Executive Report of the past years activities. Although it has been a challenging year for us all, we want the membership to know that we have worked with the best of our ability to do what we can to support member centres. We also wish to thank Kelly Benning for stepping into the role of Vice President from her previous role of the Alberta Representative when it was indeed a challenging time.

As we look forward we know although there is a new program and new agreement being completed, there will always be challenges and we want to ensure we look at the past as we move towards the future and that we remember to always treat each other as family; this family that we all belong to is stronger together and we need to find ways to always be there for one
another.

Finally, it has been a great challenge, but also a great privilege to have served the membership over the last year, and for those of us who will not be returning, we want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to commit ourselves once again to this work.

Thank you to past, current and upcoming Board members for everything that you do to move us forward and thank you to the Senate and AYC for your dedication to this movement. Thank you to the NAFC employees who have supported us in our work and will continue to do so moving forward.

Finally, we want to thank Nelson who always reminded us that humour, hard work, and supporting young people are important aspects to the work that we do every day, and that the work that Friendship Centres do on an hourly basis can truly change someone’s life forever.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Sheppard, President
Kelly Benning, Vice-President
Chester Langille, Treasurer
Bill Mintram, Secretary
Andrea Anderson, Youth Executive