



MANITOBA MOON VOICES INC.

Member of the Native Women's Association of Canada

2020-21 Nominees Biographies

Manitoba Moon Voices Inc. (MMVI) is happy to announce that this year there are numerous candidates for the five board positions up this year.

MMVI looks for enthusiastic individuals who are committed to enhancing, promoting, and fostering the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women, girls, and gender diverse peoples within Manitoba.

The opportunity to be on MMVI's Board of Directors allows community members to define the direction of MMVI. This exciting opportunity allows our members to use their skills and experience to serve the community and improve the lives of women, girls, and gender diverse individuals across Manitoba.

The biographies for this year's nominees can be found below.

Ashleigh Bear



My name is Ashleigh Bear, I am from, and reside in, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. I am a mother to two little ones who always keep me motivated. I have taken board of directors training with Southeast Child and Family Services. I have been with the Membership Committee in Brokenhead for six years. I also sit with the Sothern Chief's Organization Child and Family Services Advisory Circle in Brokenhead, which is amalgamated with the Local Childcare Committee. I am now on the new Brokenhead Jordan's Principal Committee. I also sit on the Sothern Chief's Organization Health Transformation Advisory Circle in the gender-based violence section. All of which I have taken part in because community is important to

me. I enjoy learning and having input on issues that will affect not only myself and my children but also my community. I work directly with MMIWG2S+ families at Ka Ni Kanichihk. I like to bring my knowledge of living both on and off reserve with me to these committees, as well as the voices of the families I work with.

I was in school for business and took a break to have my children and deal with two major losses in my family. I have said before that everything happens for a reason, and I truly believe it because after my daughter was born, I was going to apply back to school and changed my mind last minute and have always thought of giving back somehow. When the opportunity to work with the MMIWG2S+ came up, I took the opportunity right away because the issue was something my partner and I wanted to get involved with.

So here I am today. I haven't finished my business degree, but I am happy with what I am currently doing and there will always be time to finish when I can.



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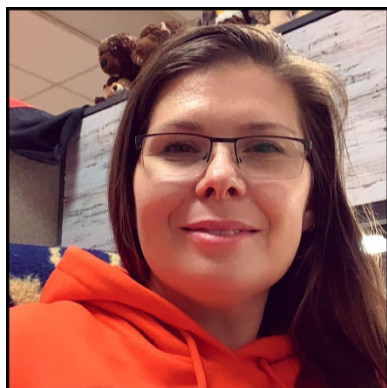
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Jacqueline Flett



Jacqueline Flett is a Métis woman from Winnipeg. She is a proud mother of two boys. Jacqueline is an agency consultant in Manitoba and Canada where she is involved with the HIV movement. She has worked and walked with different walks of life and is an advocate and spokesperson with those who live positive with HIV. Jacqueline is also the co-chair of Sister of Fire and is a member of the Collective Impact Network and sits on the wabiskian team as a person with lived experience and is a knowledge keeper of such attributes.

Melissa Critch



Boozhoo, ndinawemaaginadog. I am a Two-Spirit Mi'kmaw person of the beaver clan, born and raised in Winnipeg and the surrounding lands, with my roots and a piece of my heart in my home community of Miawpukek First Nation, Newfoundland.

I am seeking re-election as a board of director for Manitoba Moon Voices Inc. for my third term. I am a parent of three children and I am currently a student at the University of Winnipeg. From the inspiration, support, and work with MMVI, I am pursuing a degree in business and Indigenous studies. I am a treasurer with another Indigenous board of directors in the North End that supports families, as well as a board member for the International Parent Advocacy Network (IPAN). IPAN seeks to empower parents around the world that are impacted by child protective services, so their voices are heard and their rights are protected. I also volunteer with Fearless R2W to support parents in the North End in advocating for themselves within colonial systems.

I have spent much of my life deeply connected to the lands outside of Winnipeg, in the Interlake region as well as Eastern Manitoba into Ontario. I have lived respecting the teachings as a harvester, hunter, and medicine carrier as my parents, grandparents, and ancestors before me.

I am a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, and colonial violence. I came to MMVI about eight or nine years ago seeking to discover who I am and a connection to our culture in trying to heal from that trauma. MMVI has been an important part of my healing and empowerment journey. The relationships other Indigenous women and gender diverse people, the unconditional love, acceptance, kindness, and support have been the much-needed medicine my spirit has needed. I am very grateful for



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all the experiences I have had and the lessons that I have learned from them to be where I am now in my journey.

With humility and love, I wish to support Indigenous women and gender diverse people in finding and strengthening their voices. I wish to help other Indigenous women and gender diverse people recognize the courage they have within themselves; in the truth they carry and the wisdom they bring to the spaces they hold. I have and will always do this with the honesty and respect for all of Creation, that was gifted to me by my parents and the people who have come before me.

Miigwetch

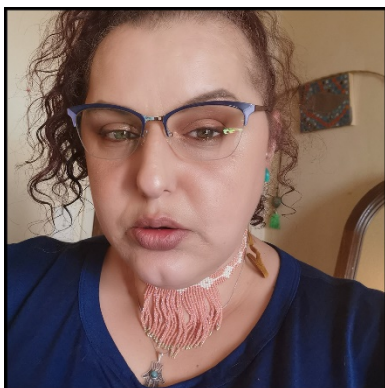
Mel

Albert McLeod



Albert McLeod is a Status Indian from Nisichway-asihk Cree Nation and the Métis Community of Norway House in Northern Manitoba. He has over 30 years of experience as a human rights activist and is one of the directors for the Two-Spirited People of Manitoba. Albert began his two-spirited advocacy in Winnipeg in 1986 and became an HIV/AIDS activist in 1987. He was the director of the Manitoba Aboriginal Aids Task Force in 1991-2001. Albert received an honorary Doctorate of Laws degree from the University of Winnipeg. Albert lives in Winnipeg where he works as a consultant.

Melissa Morris



My name is Melissa Morris. I am from Métis/Jewish heritage. For the last ten years I've been working on my personal healing and learning about my Métis heritage. I am a person with lived experience in HIV and a survivor of sexual exploitation and addiction, having lived in Vancouver's downtown eastside for 12 years. I now work for Ka Ni Kanichihk, as the Community Coordinator for the waniska center for sexually transmitted and blood-borne infection research, a PEER research associate at the University of Manitoba. As well, I work as an Indigenous youth care worker. I've learned that helping empower other Indigenous women gives me the drive to be a leader in my community. In my spare time I sit on the Board of Directors for Nine

Circles and support other Indigenous women, no matter where they are in life.

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Rose Marsden



I am a band member of the Pinaymootang First Nation, and I have a strong belief in my traditional values, customs and beliefs pertaining to Aboriginal culture and spirituality. Born and raised in the City of Winnipeg, I have committed half of my life to working with the Aboriginal community. Most of my employment history has been with Aboriginal organizations, agencies, and businesses. As a community development officer, I have worked in a variety of capacities to help individuals, families, and communities. As a community member I have represented our Anishinaabe people provincially and nationally as a Youth, Student, Women's Advocate, Education, Justice, Housing and Cultural Representative. I have worked in various capacities in

community development for over twelve years as a volunteer and in term positions. In meeting strict deadlines, my work in the community included coordinating several community events, ranging from conferences, dinners, to fundraisers. I have obtained a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Winnipeg, with a major in History. From this, I have gained sufficient knowledge of Aboriginal worldviews, and the understanding of the impact of colonization on Aboriginal peoples and the movement towards self-determination. Also, in working and volunteering with the Aboriginal community, I have gained valuable knowledge of diverse Aboriginal groups.

Jessie Harper-Langford



My name is Jessie Harper-Langford. I am an Oji-cree and Cree woman, currently settled in the centre of Turtle Island. During the week days, I take great pride in the work that I do within Ka Ni Kanichihk, from helping out where needed with any of the events for the organization, to giving the best support I can to the youth I get to work with personally. I take the work that I do very seriously, as I was once a youth who needed guidance and direction with my life. I see how valuable the outcomes are when youth have people to believe in them. It is very honourable for me to be able to complete my circle and provide youth with what I was once given.

Outside of work, I do my best to keep involved in the community, whether that be small talking with people I walk by on the streets, or physically doing the work and being a voice. I believe in making a space to help support our people grow and navigate the many barriers set in place for our people, women, and children/youth.

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I do my best to use my humor to get through the tough things and always try to think, “what is this teaching me?” when I'm starting to get overwhelmed. In the latest years, I have been guided to Indigenous cultural teachings when it comes to my healing. Through that, I'm continuously learning how to walk each day in a good way. I really want to share these teachings with my family and little siblings in efforts to take away the barriers I had as a child, in consideration to access to ceremony. Besides the work I do, I'm also a beader, a singer, a leader, and a teacher.

I'm also the granddaughter of a residential school survivor, I believe all my family carries her spirit well inside all of us today. I can only hope she's proud of the work I do, and I believe she guides me in the work I get to do – I want to help pave a future for our children, so they can know and live in their culture without as much barriers as we grew up with.

As someone who has been greatly affected by violence against women, I also want to help make a world where our women feel safe, loved, and cared about always. I was raised by many single women, and grew up watching them struggle in various ways, from drug abuse to domestic violence to homelessness, I think our women need to be supported always. It is not our way to have women looked down on the way our patriotic society has made people think. Our women have amazing gifts that need to be nurtured, they need to be put first again with the children, and we need to figure out how we can do that in a good way