



# Sayt-K'ílim-Goot

one heart, one path, one nation



Nisga'a Lisims Government

Special Assembly 2012

## President's Message /

**On behalf of Nisga'a Lisims Government, I would like to extend my thanks to those Nisga'a citizens who were in attendance at the 2012 Special Assembly in Gingolx, and to the Community of Gingolx for hosting a very successful gathering. I am happy to say that the people have spoken and we have heard you.**

At this Assembly, there were some significant highlights. For the first time, over 1,000 Nisga'a citizens were in attendance via internet on Day 2. Our role model panel provided wonderful examples of Nisga'a citizens who are showing the world what our people and youth can do. On the final day, we celebrated the 12th anniversary of our Treaty to the songs of our Nisga'a youth.

We also had an opportunity to share information about the progress of your Nisga'a government to improve your quality of life: how our trust continues to grow notwithstanding the ups and downs of global markets; that we have successfully negotiated tax room so that tax revenues received by Canada and BC are shared with Nisga'a Nation; that we have carried out the wishes of the people from the 2010 Special Assembly by implementing changes to the *Nisga'a Elections Act* to restrict elected members of WSN from holding specified positions.

We also heard your concerns and comments about areas for improvement. You made clear that when we assume responsibility for delivery of child protection services that

we ensure that authority is exercised carefully. You spoke about how our corporations need to promote and communicate clearly about the opportunities available to Nisga'a citizens under the Nass Area Strategy. You spoke of the need to improve the signage on our highways. You spoke about the need to continue to promote our language in our daily lives. You also made clear you wish to be kept informed on the implementation of personal income tax by federal government and property taxation.

Your comments, questions/answers, and concerns were documented and will now be compiled into a report on the 2012 Special Assembly. This report will highlight key issues and priorities identified by you for consideration and follow up by Nisga'a Lisims Government. We expect to make this report available by the end of July 2012. For those who were not able to attend, you can still obtain copies of the materials distributed at the 2012 Special Assembly on our website <http://www.nnkn.ca/content/special-assembly-nisgaa-nation-2012>.

We thank you for your participation in the governance of our Nation.

**Sim'oogit K'aw'een  
H. Mitchell Stevens  
President**

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# Celebrating Success

Loretta Stewart, Julia Adams, Brandon Haldane, Shane Doolan, Justin Barton and Keane Tait rounded up this year's Role Model Panel on Wednesday morning of the Special Assembly.

Each panelist provided a 10-minute presentation on their respective educational and professional backgrounds in the areas of psychology, health services, commerce, architecture, sports & recreation, and language & culture.

The Nisga'a "Role Models" received a standing ovation from the Assembly delegation and also entertained

questions and accepted words of encouragement. Nisga'a Lisims Government was proud to welcome the panelists home to share their success stories with all Nisga'a citizens.

At the conclusion of the panel, President Stevens provided his personal appreciation and gratitude to each role model and gifted each with silver-plated business card holder cases personalized with each person's name and crest beautifully designed by Nisga'a carver Warren Adams.

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# Nisga'a Day / Celebrating 12 years of the Nisga'a Treaty

Nisga'a Day was celebrated on Day 5 of the Assembly. At the conclusion of the Executive Officers and Senior Management presentation on Priorities for the Nisga'a Nation, assembly delegates welcomed the musical entertainment of the Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School band and the singing talents from the children of Gitwinksihlkw and Nathan Barton Elementary Schools. President Mitchell Stevens was then accompanied by Secretary-Treasurer Edmond Wright and Executive Chairperson Kevin McKay in a cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate the twelfth anniversary of the effective date of the Nisga'a Treaty.

Co-chairs then welcomed representatives from each Nisga'a Village and Nisga'a Urban Local to provide their closing remarks, followed by a standing ovation in appreciation of the "Golden Hospitality" received throughout the week from the Nisga'a Village of Gingolx!



# Images from the Special Assembly / May 7-11, 2012





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# WSN Approves Amendment Agreement To Social Services Tax Sharing Agreement

During the week of the 2012 Special Assembly, Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN) met one evening to consider a report from the NLG Finance Committee. That report described a May 2012 amending agreement to an earlier 2008 social services tax revenue agreement between Nisga'a Nation and BC. After considering the Finance Committee report, the WSN members approved the May 2012 amending agreement.

## BACKGROUND

In June 2008, British Columbia and the Nisga'a Nation entered into an agreement called the Nisga'a Nation Social Service Tax Revenue Agreement ("Tax Revenue Agreement"). Under the Tax Revenue Agreement, British Columbia agreed to share with the Nisga'a Nation a portion of the revenues raised from the tax paid by Nisga'a citizens under the provincial *Social Service Tax Act* (also known as provincial sales tax). Since 2008, the annual amount that British Columbia has paid to the Nisga'a Nation under the terms of the Tax Revenue Agreement has been as follows:

Fiscal year 2008–2009 – \$425,894 (partial year)

Fiscal year 2009–2010 – \$468,198

Fiscal year 2010–2011 – \$465,433

In July 2010, the harmonized sales tax (HST) and the designated purchase tax (DPT) were introduced in British Columbia. At the same time, the provincial sales

tax (PST) that had been levied under the *Social Service Tax Act* was effectively discontinued. As a result, the Tax Revenue Agreement ceased to be an effective agreement because it provided for the sharing of revenues that British Columbia was no longer receiving under the *Social Service Tax Act*. Accordingly, the last payment British Columbia was able to make to the Nisga'a Nation under the Tax Revenue Agreement was in March 2011.

British Columbia has committed to negotiating a new agreement with the Nisga'a Nation to provide for the sharing of HST and DPT revenues (as well as the revenues of whatever new tax is developed to replace the HST and/or the DPT) going back to July 2010. However, the details of that new agreement have not yet been settled.

In the interim, pending the finalization of the new agreement, British Columbia has proposed that the Tax Revenue Agreement be amended so as to allow certain funds to flow to the Nisga'a Nation immediately.

The May 2012 Nisga'a Nation Social Service Tax Revenue Agreement Amendment Agreement ("Amendment Agreement"):

(1) amends the Tax Revenue Agreement so as to provide that British Columbia will immediately pay \$988,000 to the Nisga'a Nation for the period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2013 (this payment would amount to \$494,000 for each the two fiscal years in question, a somewhat higher level than was received by the Nisga'a Nation under the Tax Revenue Agreement for either fiscal year 2009-2010 or fiscal year 2010–2011); and

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(2) acknowledges that the payment of the \$988,000 is an interim transition arrangement for the sharing of revenues from the taxes replacing the provincial sales tax that was previously levied under the *Social Service Tax Act*, that a new agreement will be settled between British Columbia and the Nisga'a Nation to provide for the sharing of revenues from those replacement taxes commencing as of July 2010, and that the amount payable to the Nisga'a Nation under that new agreement for fiscal years 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 will not be limited to the \$988,000.

Despite the lack of payments from British Columbia under the Tax Revenue Agreement in fiscal year 2011–2012 and so far in fiscal year 2012–2013, Nisga'a Lisims

Government has kept the Nisga'a Villages whole by continuing to make transfers to each Nisga'a Village as though British Columbia had all along continued to make Tax Revenue Agreement payments at prior-year levels. The payment of \$988,000 provided for in the May 2012 Amendment Agreement therefore mostly represents a reimbursement to Nisga'a Lisims Government of monies already paid to the Nisga'a Villages in fiscal year 2011–2012 and being paid to the Nisga'a Villages in the current fiscal year. A reconciliation of monies received from British Columbia and monies paid to each Nisga'a Village will be completed for the fiscal year 2012–2013 final budget, and adjustments to the current year's payments will be made as required.

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## Commonly Asked Questions

Every Nisga'a Special Assembly is unique in itself and the various Nisga'a Directors and Departments get asked a variety of very good questions covering off many subjects and concerns. Many of the questions pertain to a specific situation and/or query. We notice however that some questions are recurring and we thought it might be good to round some of them up so to speak and list them and answer these "commonly asked questions".

**Q: What can NLG do to make/ensure safety on Nisga'a roads? Clearing brush. How much influence do you have for road maintenance?**

A: The Nisga'a Highway is a provincial highway and owned by the Provincial Government. The extent of our influence is in a liaison capacity with the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI), Nechako North Coast Maintenance (NNC), and Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG). The specific areas of concern have been made aware with the MoTI and NNC. The extent of BC Hydro tree clearance is their RoW. We do our best to notify BC Hydro and MoTI in regards to danger trees to the power line and to the highway.

**Q: Why do I need a license to hunt or fish?**

A: First and foremost, fishing and hunting licenses are required by Nisga'a law before any fish or wildlife can be harvested or hunted. Licenses and Permits are an important part of modern resource management. To effectively manage the level of harvest of certain species to ensure their long-term survival, Nisga'a Nation must have a system for regulating that harvest. Otherwise, enforcement to prevent unauthorized harvest becomes very difficult.



# Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute Celebrates our Graduates of 2012

Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI) annual convocation for the granting of university degrees, certificates and college level certificates was held on Tuesday, May 29, 2012 at Ts'oohl Ts'ap Memorial Hall in Gitwinksihlkw, BC.

The opening prayer was delivered by the Reverend Harry Moore, of Gingolx Christ Church. The welcoming address was given by Charles Morven, Councillor from the Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw. This was followed by a performance by the Gitwinksihlkw Elementary School Choir led by Mrs. Radawiec.

Master of Ceremonies Deanna L.E. Nyce, CEO of Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute, formally started the graduation proceedings and introduced the guest speaker Sim'oogit Sagaw'een, Mr. Harry Nyce Sr.

Mr. Nyce, Chair, Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, was followed by a performance of the Nisga'a Elementary Secondary Senior Band led by Mr. Johnson.

The dignitaries included:

The University of Northern British Columbia; Dr. John MacDonald, Chancellor and Dr. George Iwama, President. Northwest Community College was represented by Beverly Moore-Garcia, Vice President, Education & Student Services. Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute was represented by Arthur Azak, Chair, Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute.

Other dignitary presentations were given by:

**Calvin Albright, Director of Programs & Services**  
Nisga'a Lisims Government

**Charles Morven, Councillor**  
Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw

**Gerald Robinson, Councillor**  
Gitlax't'aamiks Village Government

**Willard Martin**  
Laxgalts'ap Village Government

**Claude Barton Sr., Councillor**  
Gingolx Village Government

**Phillipe Brulot, Superintendent**  
School District 92 (Nisga'a)

The presentation of Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute – University of Northern British Columbia graduates and conferring of degrees and certificates was made by Deanna Nyce, Dr. George Iwama and Dr. John MacDonald. The Presentation of Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute – Northwest Community College graduates was made by Deanna Nyce and Beverly Moore-Garcia. The closing and Blessing of Tea was by Reverend Harry Moore.

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## Wilp Wilxo'oskwahl Nisga'a Institute – University of Northern British Columbia

### DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES CONFERRED

The Degree of Master of Education,  
Multi-Disiplinary Leadership

**Carey Stewart**

Gingolx, G̃anada Tribe, Wilps Ksim X̃saan

The Degree of Bachelor of Education

**Cecilia Azak**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, Lax̃sgiiik Tribe, Wilps Hleek̃

The Degree of Bachelor of Commerce

**Desmond F. Barton**

Gingolx, Gisk̃'aast Tribe, Wilps Daax̃an

### UNIVERSITY CERTIFICATES

Nisga'a Studies

**Kathleen Clayton**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, Lax̃gibuu Tribe, Wilps Duuk̃

First Nations Language – Nisga'a

**Christina Percival**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, G̃anada Tribe, Wilps Luux̃hoon

General First Nations Studies

**Christina Percival**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, G̃anada Tribe, Wilps Luux̃hoon

Mental Health and Addictions

**Lorna Azak**

Gitwinksihlkw, G̃anada Tribe, Wilps Ksim X̃saan

Mental Health and Addictions

**Lydia Stephens**

Lax̃galts'ap, Gisk̃'aast Tribe, Wilps Ni'is'yuus

## Wilp Wilxo'oskwahl Nisga'a Institute – Northwest Community College

### UNIVERSITY CERTIFICATES

Employment Skills Access Program

**Edward Benson**

Gingolx, Gisk̃'aast Tribe, Wilps Daax̃an

**Francis Morven**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, Lax̃sgiiik Tribe, Wilps Hleek̃

**Richard Nelson**

Gitlax̃t'aamiks, Lax̃sgiiik Tribe, Wilps Hleek̃

**Leslie Thompson**

Calgary, Alberta



WWNI Grads (L-R): Christina Percival, Kathleen Clayton, Cecilia Azak and Carey Stewart



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