



September 2019

STUDENT ENERGY SUMMIT 2019

INDIGENOUS DELEGATION

OVERVIEW

Student Energy hosted the 6th International Student Energy Summit in July 2019 in London, UK, bringing together 650 young people from 98 countries. As the largest and most diverse Summit to date, SES 2019 also had the first Indigenous Delegation, with 18 youth coming from communities across Canada.

The SES 2019 Indigenous Delegation was an initiative that emerged from the enthusiasm and connections forged at SevenGen, the first Indigenous Student Energy Summit, which was held in Calgary, AB in January 2019. SevenGen united 200 First Nations, Metis and Inuit young people from every province and territory in Canada, and many participants expressed an interest in continuing their leadership development by attending the International Student Energy Summit.

Attending SES was an opportunity for the youth in the Indigenous Delegation to share their knowledge, perspectives and ideas to address challenges in the energy system with young people from around the world. Likewise, SES creates space for delegates to share global perspectives and innovative solutions that further empowered the delegation to take on energy transition initiatives across Canada.

In this report, delegates from the SES 2019 Indigenous Delegation share their experiences at the Summit, their current and future goals in working to accelerate the energy transition in Canada, and recommendations for governments, industry, and other decision-making organizations to better engage Indigenous youth.

NEXT GENERATIONS: A CALL TO ACTION

Co-authored by Indigenous Youth

Recognizing our rapidly changing climate, of which our Elders and knowledge holders have been warning us about - supported by the world's leading scientific institutions, strong environmental leadership is desperately needed. As many nations continue to fail the Paris Agreement of keeping the Earth from warming 'well-below' 2-degrees, it is important that Indigenous nations lead by example.

As Indigenous Nations, we have a responsibility to be stewards of the land. It is our duty to co-exist with nature and share the Earth's resources with reciprocity and respect. Furthermore, all of our decisions must consider our children, their children, and so on - our future generations. Therefore, to secure the prosperity and well-being of our children to enjoy the gifts the land provides, we need to act now.

To worldwide governments, we have heard from youth from countries around the world, who are demanding even more climate action. We want to live in a world of political cooperation wherein leaders seriously commit to meeting the Paris Agreement. We want to live in a world where our most vulnerable and otherwise marginalized, are empowered with opportunities to build the world they want to live in. We want to live in a world where those with the money and the power to implement change are held accountable in doing so.

To the petroleum industry, we urge you to divest from carbon-intensive assets. We understand your role in the continual pollution of our atmosphere and waterways. We also understand that a strong business opportunity exists to invest in clean technologies and accelerate the energy transition even further. We understand that this transition will not be rapid or easy, but we also understand that it is necessary.

To our Indigenous communities, we must empower our youth. We must commit ourselves to healing and recognizing that we are strong and resilient nations that have the power to show the world how to truly coexist with the land and honour its gifts. We must continue to be true to our ancestors and the generations to come, by continuing to be stewards of the land, waters and skies.

Finally, to the youth of the world: We believe in you. Be courageous and continue to challenge the status-quo. Do not be afraid to demand a future that is yours. The Earth needs us and if our current leaders refuse to act now, we must take on that responsibility to enact change. Create a world that is yours and one in which our future generations can live their best lives.

Thank you
Kinanaskomitin
Tiniki/hay hay
Merci Beaucoup
Nakummek
Nakurmiik

Qujannamiik
Quana
Marsi
Hiy-Hiy
Isniyes/ Pina Mayach
Miigwech

Wopida
Nya:wəh
T'oyaxsut 'nüün
Meduh
Marsi cho

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MEET THE DELEGATION

Report co-authors:

Nathan Kaye

Zagime (Sakimay) First Nation in Treaty 4 Territory

Nathan Kaye represents the Saulteaux (Anishnaabe) heritage and is an entrepreneur from the Zagime First Nation in Saskatchewan. He is currently enrolled in the financial services program at SAIT and wants to obtain a Master's Degree in Finance. He has aspirations to work with Indigenous communities bringing green initiatives and projects to those communities while inspiring indigenous youth to play a role in being stewards of the land.

Jordyn Burnouf

Black Lake First Nation, Ile a la Crosse, Saskatchewan

Originally from the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse, Jordyn Burnouf is a proud Nêhiyaw woman and member of the Black Lake First Nation. Jordyn has committed over 10 years to creating opportunity and building capacity for Indigenous youth. With a strong passion and relationship with the land, Jordyn is currently working on clean energy initiatives with a focus on community engagement and cultural inclusion. Jordyn completed the 20/20 Catalysts Program in 2019.

Cory Beaver

Stoney Nakoda (Morley) First Nation, Treaty 7 Territory

Cory was the co-chair of SevenGen 2019, the first Indigenous Student Energy Summit, which was led by the Student Energy Chapter at Mount Royal University. Cory has a strong passion to advocate for youth and Indigenous people, and seeks to inspire, empower and engage more First Nations people to pursue education to achieve goals and dreams.

Disa Crow Chief

Siksika Nation, Treaty 7 Territory

Disa Crow Chief is 20 years old, from Siksika Nation, one of four Blackfoot tribes that make up the Blackfoot Confederacy. Disa is passionate about traveling, learning, and advocating for environmental rights to benefit her people and Canada as a whole. As well as expressing her cultural identity, Disa strives to get involved and educated on both sides of the argument around renewable energy in order to move forward and get projects started in her community.

Braden Etzerza

Metlakatla and Dease Lake, Prince Rupert

Braden is of Ts'msyen, Tahltan, Metis, and European descent, he graduated with his Bachelor's of Science in Environmental Science at Mount Royal University in June of 2019. Braden is passionate about traditional food plants and food security and is currently working in environmental planning for the Metlakatla nation.

Mark Hill

Six Nations, Ontario

Mark has served his Nation for 10 years since becoming the youngest elected member for Six Nations at the age of 19.

Devon Blind

Pasqua First Nation, Saskatchewan in Treaty 4 Territory

Devon is Saulteaux (Anishnaabe)/ Plains Cree in her 3rd year of Bachelor of Health and Physical Education majoring in Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership (minoring in Business of Sport and Recreation) at Mount Royal University. Currently, Devon is in Peru until Dec/19 for Canada World Youth, International Aboriginal Youth Internship.

Sydney Kuppenbender

Metis Nation of Saskatchewan

Tansi, Sydney Kuppenbender nitisithikason, I am a Metis woman from Northern Saskatchewan living in Saskatoon attending the University of Saskatchewan. I am currently pursuing my Undergraduate degree in Renewable Resource Management, as a Resource Science major. I hope to eventually use the skills I gain from this degree and bring them back to my people, in order to assist them to lead the way towards a clean, accessible, and equitable energy future.

Tabitha Dieter

Peepeekisis First Nation, Saskatchewan in Treaty 4 Territory

Tabitha is currently enrolled in the Business program at First Nations University in Regina. Over the summer of 2019 Tabitha worked for the Government of Saskatchewan in the Strategic Management branch and still works for them part-time while going to school.

Lindsey Redcrow

Kainai, Alberta Treaty 7 Territory

Lindsey Redcrow represents Blackfoot heritage and is currently completing her final year of a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Indigenous Studies.

MEET THE DELEGATION

Mihskakwan James Harper

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, Alberta

Mihskakwan James Harper is a Nehiyaw/Cree Indigenous engineering student, an older brother to two sisters, and has recently become an uncle to his nephew, Isaiah. James completed his bachelors in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Manitoba and is now pursuing a Masters in Renewable Energy in Stockholm, Sweden. James has completed internships in the Alberta oil sands and aerospace manufacturing industries. He founded a 30-person team to design, build, and compete an ultra-efficient battery-electric vehicle. He has completed the Catalyst 2018 program, and has dreams to become a leader in the clean energy sector with his education and professional experience, and to inspire more Indigenous youth to be a part of this important movement for the betterment of future generations.

Serena Mendizabal

Six Nations, Ontario

Serena is completing a double major in Media, Information and Technoculture and First Nations Studies at Western University in Ontario. She also leads the Student Energy chapter at Western University.

Farrah Stevens

Pictou Landing First Nation, Nova Scotia

Farrah is completing her Masters in Resource and Environmental Management program at Dalhousie University. She is currently taking a break in her studies to work as a technician for the Department of Fisheries Organization (DFO) for the Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program.

Ashley Daniels

Swan Lake First Nation, Manitoba

Ashley is a Dakota Ojibway woman from Swan Lake First Nation and Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. She is the Youth Chief of Southern Chiefs' Organization and Rep for National Youth Council for Assembly of First Nations. Ashley also works for the Government of Canada in Agriculture and Agri-Food, as an assistant in the Indigenous Office and Indigenous Student Recruitment. She studies Indigenous Studies at the University of Manitoba.

Brian Brown

Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland

Brian has recently completed his second year of studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Brian's goals are centered on helping his local community and greater region of Nunatsiavut in multiple areas ranging from the provision of mental health services to organizing sustainable energy practices.

Jukipa Anrango Kotierk

Iqaluit, Nunavut

Jukipa holds a Bachelor's of Arts Honors from Trent University and is the Wellness Program Specialist for the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health. She has volunteered in her community

Larissa Crawford

Indigenous and Anti-Racism Researcher, SES 2019 Speaker, Calgary, AB

Larissa's work applies anti-racism and Indigenous research to renewable energy policy and program development in Canada. As a government contract researcher and independent business owner, she works internationally as a policy and program advisor, trainer, and professional public speaker. She is an Action Canada 2019/20 Fellow and a Corporate Knights' 2019 Top 30 Under 30 in Sustainability. Larissa is an award-winning ribbon skirt artist and proudly passes on Métis and Jamaican ancestry to her daughter, Zyra.

Andre Couillonneur-Bear

Canoe Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan

Andre has roots as a community activist and support worker in Saskatoon. He studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and was elected the co-Chair of the Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council. Appointed an advisor to the report on the implementation of the TRC Call to Action 66, Andre is one of the youngest advisors to ever be appointed by the Government of Canada. Andre co-founded the Indigenous Youth Voices Network, a national non-profit organization connecting First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth from coast to coast. Andre has also completed a Bachelor of Education degree and has been accepted to join the University of Alberta Faculty of Law.

Bryanna Brown

Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland

Bryanna is of Inuk heritage, and is completing a Bachelor of Business Administration at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. She is an advocate for environmental justice, climate change action, and for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and Two-Spirited peoples (MMIWG2S).

REFLECTIONS ON SES 2019

"I went to SES to meet, network and learn of the strides being taken globally in the renewable energy industry. It was also a great opportunity to represent diverse Indigenous heritage at an International event. We got to share the diversity of Canada's Indigenous population with delegates from other countries. " - **Nathan Kaye**

"The community and network Student Energy has created space for Indigenous youth to generate for ourselves in the energy sector is the most shining example of best practice, allyship, and reconciliation.

SES 2019, for me, was not an isolated event but an extension of an experience that continues to shape my cultural and professional identity. The mentorship, friendship, and kinship that comes from engaging so closely with young Indigenous energy leaders is a frankly life-changing experience for an Indigenous delegate.

As a speaker, I became much more aware of the need for voices like mine to be heard in international energy spaces. In my speaking time I asked the audience, "Who has ever been educated on the concept of 'colonialism?'" and one third of the room raised their hands. When I asked for those who have been taught the concept of colonialism from those who have been colonized, less than one fifth kept their hands raised. With many participants at this event actively disregarding the social implications of their "neutral" technology, or Indigenous issues for those working in countries without a prominent Indigenous population, I proceeded to say, "I do not want you to come to Canada, the US, Australia- I don't want you to go to anywhere in the world without an

understanding of how governments and corporations are enacting violence, genocide, and state control on Indigenous Peoples through the energy sector. Without this understanding, you run the risk of perpetuating centuries of colonialism and genocide." This, being something I truly believed no one in the audience was seeking to do, resonated deeply. I am grateful for the opportunity Student Energy gave me, and for many others from the Indigenous delegation, to share our truths.

Of all the non-Indigenous organizations and governments I've worked with, Student Energy does one of the most impressive jobs at genuinely and actively centring Indigenous voices in energy spaces."

- Larissa Crawford, Speaker on the "Driving Change: How can youth continue to impact our changing energy climate?" Panel



"My experience at SES was very helpful for myself to look forward to furthering my education at other universities internationally after I finish my degree in Alberta. During the summit I was capable of connecting and making new acquaintances and I was given great feedback on my community program plans from other delegates." - **Devon Blind**

JUSTICE, CLIMATE ACTION AND CLEAN ENERGY

Perspectives on Canada's energy future

“Indigenous youth are often left out of the conversation. Any conversation, really, but in this specific case we are often left out of the clean energy conversation. This is why NRCAN sponsoring an Indigenous delegation to SES2019 was so valuable, showing their commitment to Indigenous youth in Canada and proving that they believe in our potential is something that needs to be known and heard as we move forward.

Before we talk about clean energy, we need to talk about accessible and equitable infrastructure in communities.

There are over 100 First Nations communities across Canada that are still under constant boil water advisories, and countless more with unsafe housing. Retrofits, improved housing and public infrastructure are VITAL before we begin considering installation of any kind of clean energy source.” - **Sydney Kuppenbender**



“ I would like if there were more resources for communities to conduct community energy plans. From those plans the community can start to build capacity in their members to be more conscious of their energy usage as a way for the nation and its members to reduce their carbon footprint and ultimately their expenses. After conducting a CEP my nation can make a better educated decision on renewable energy options for the community to consider.”

“ I would like to advocate for jobs in renewable energy to schools in Indigenous communities, raising awareness about the rate the industry is growing. Highlighting the number of jobs and the range of professions in the industry, to assist in the foresight of education and training.”



RECOMMENDATIONS

What can governments and organizations do better to work with Indigenous youth in a meaningful way?

“Governments, industry and other organizations can create opportunities for Indigenous youth to gather with officials to allow for dialogue to promote sustainability, meaningful reconciliation, perhaps by a dedicated Indigenous youth council (though not chosen by the government).

Organizations can also help to increase energy and sustainability literacy among Indigenous youth: building into curriculum on reserves, grant funding for initiatives for youth to undertake community projects, hosting youth in industry and academic tours, etc.” - **Mihskakwan James Harper**

“Financial barriers are often the most significant barrier for Indigenous Peoples, especially those from remote communities, to access opportunities to participate in energy-sector conferences, roundtables, etc. Fully financed invitations, including airfare, accommodation, per diems, and transportation, should be a priority.

However, these youth need to feel safe and heard when they arrive at the engagement opportunity. This means having other, visibly represented groups of Indigenous Peoples; space for ceremony; and championship from others in the room to ensure their voices are heard and incorporated meaningfully into the outcomes of the engagement. One way to do so is to approach Indigenous youth in the spirit of partnership, which may mean signing contracts or paid youth committees, rather than one-time consultation. The work should be sustainable, and centre the relationship between the youth and the organization or government.” - **Larissa Crawford**

“Many Indigenous youth face social issues including low self-esteem and confidence, they have a hard time trusting and believing government and industry genuinely have their best interests at heart without trying to get the upper hand to take advantage of their situation.

It has to be an on-going relationship.

The following are suggestions and important considerations for meaningfully engaging with Indigenous youth:

- Consistently go to where the youth are comfortable -- for example, hold a weekly or monthly activity at their schools or community programs.
- Create incentivized competitions that promote participation between communities or schools, including in high schools and Indigenous centers in post-secondary institutions.
- When creating long term plans, make it a clear objective to reach out and engage with as many Indigenous youth as possible through regional governments or the industry they operate in, and evaluate the progress on this objective.
- Youth in the foster-care and youth correction systems should not be overlooked. There should be a strategy developed to reach out to these youth especially, because they may not always be participating regularly in schools and other social settings.
- Governments should be actively making the transition to find Indigenous people that have the capacity and understanding to run “Indigenous departments” from the bottom up, rather than spending resources for non-Indigenous management and coordinators to try deliver Indigenous programs, initiatives and solutions to Indigenous people. “ - **Jordyn Burnouf and Nathan Kaye**

CONCLUSION

“One of the organizers of SES2019 said something interesting at closing ceremonies, that the Indigenous delegation brought a sense of community to the conference.

I think that is something we brought to the SES 2019 space, the sense of community and moving forward together as one.

I hope to eventually use the skills I gain from my Undergraduate degree and bring them back to my people, in order to assist them to lead the way towards a clean, accessible, and equitable energy future.”

- Sydney Kuppenbender

“Opportunities like attending SES are important because it opens the doors to believing you can go to school or have a job internationally and gets you thinking of the possibilities on a global scale rather than just on a national scale. You meet and network with people from different countries and learn something new every time, you learn about different educational and career paths some of which you’ve had no knowledge of because you’ve never been exposed to them. You can also learn about what other countries are doing for their energy transition, on utility and micro-generation scales, and bring these ideas to your home community or region. We learned of the rapid growth of the industry and are inspired to encourage more Indigenous people to get involved and build capacity in the renewable energy industry.” - **Jordyn Burnouf and Nathan Kaye**

