

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

AGM 2019-20

2019 and 2020 have been a time of rebirth for the CPF Northwest Territories Branch. After bringing some new faces onto the Branch Board, we have endeavored to have the Board focus more on Governance and membership engagement, rather than day-to-day operations. Our new board has been working hard this past year to meet our obligations to the CPF network and to our main funding partner Canadian Heritage. As part of this process, we have taken several steps to ensure that we are building a solid foundation for this next phase of the CPF NWT journey.

The CPF NWT Branch worked tirelessly with our partners at Canadian Heritage to get our organization back on track and was able to sign a new three-year funding agreement for the 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 fiscal years.

In consultation with our main funder and our larger CPF network, we recently decided to pursue a partnership with CPF Alberta, whereby the Alberta Branch staff provide administrative support to our Branch Board so that our local staff person can focus on the activities, engagement, advocacy and outreach that we have prioritized in our vision for growth in the Northwest Territories. We are excited to welcome Michael Tryon as Executive Director for the Northwest Territories! Michael is a former Northwest Territories resident and a long-time CPF member. He has been the Executive Director of the Alberta Branch for over ten years and his knowledge and expertise has already proven extremely valuable to the Board. This arrangement with CPF Alberta allowed us to use the majority of our funding allotted for salary to run a competition for a Program Coordinator.

Although technically this competition falls under the next fiscal year, it seems appropriate to let you know that the Board was successful in recruiting a Northern candidate to the position as of June of this year. Please let me introduce our new program coordinator Kieron Testart. Many of you will know Kieron from his time as a Board member for CPF NWT and from his work in our community as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Kieron has been a great support to our organization and has continues to work closely with our board and CPF Alberta staff to develop opportunities for French Language learning in the NWT and promote both CPF and our mission to various levels of government and the general public.

Our new Branch Board has faced many challenges over the last two years, with a significant decline in our overall membership and volunteer engagement. However, we see this challenge as a great opportunity to breathe new life into CPF NWT. As we move forward into the coming years, our vision for CPF NWT is on membership development, volunteer outreach and stronger advocacy so that we

can rebuild the CPF NWT brand. We had planned a series of outreach events, including focus groups to understand our volunteers' and members' needs. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to cancel these events as well as several youth activities we had planned for March 2020.

It goes without saying that this global pandemic has been a curveball, as we redefine what an activity looks like and adapt to the new normal of providing programs and activities in the NWT. We were able to pivot many of our activities to a virtual experience, such as the *Concours d'art oratoire*, and we have used this new virtual approach to partner with other Branches and local organization to develop some new activities. As we move forward, we will be looking for inspiration from our membership as to how we can plan safe activities. To this end, we will be creating an Activities Planning Committee - which is open to all members - so that we can brainstorm new ideas for activities tailor-made to the realities of social distancing and small groups.

As my first year as President of CPF NWT comes to an end, I am proud of what we have accomplished so far and I look forward to continuing to take steps to build a strong foundation for CPF NWT to grow and thrive. CPF is a grassroots organization that depends on local parents' involvement in supporting FSL programs – together we can ensure support for strengthening bilingualism across Canada in the coming years.

Maggie Hawkes
November 2020