

January 14, 2022

For Immediate Release: NEW CO-CHAIR, DIRECTOR AT GWICH'IN COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL

[YELLOWKNIFE, CANADA] Gwich'in Council International (GCI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Sharla Greenland as the Canadian Co-Chair. We offer sincere thanks to Erin Linklater, who served as the previous Co-Chair and will remain on the Board. We also welcome new Board member David Smith Junior.

Sharla Greenland is the youngest daughter of Freddie and Bella Greenland. She is Ehditaat Gwich'in on her father's side and Vuntut Gwich'in on her mother's. Sharla was raised in Aklavik NT, and enjoyed most of her childhood summers in Old Crow YT. She spent many of her early years on her family trap-line in the Mackenzie Delta, as well as on family hunting trips up the Porcupine River, learning the Gwich'in lifestyle from her parents, grandparents and the Elders in her communities.

Sharla is passionate about youth wellness and is an advocate for reconnecting and strengthening cultural practices as the foundation of community health and identity. She completed a Masters of Education from Acadia University and served in the education field for 12 years. Currently, she is the Chief Operating Officer of Gwich'in Tribal Council and lives in Inuvik NT with her husband Pat and their dog Jake.

Joining the Gwich'in Council International Board in April 2019, Sharla believes, "Gwich'in Council International can build connections across Alaska, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, to learn from each other and strengthen us as people and a Nation."

David Smith Junior joins the Board in January 2022 from Arctic Village, Alaska. He graduated at the top of his class from Alaska's Military Youth Academy at age 16, and went on to complete his G.E.D. He returned to his village, and was nominated to the Village Council at age 18. He served his village and people for five years as Chief, and is now in his second term on Council serving as a Council member. He cares deeply about caribou and the land, and credits Elders and the land for many of his teachings.

Gwich'in Council International's membership consists of two representative bodies in Canada and one in the United States: Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC); the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN); and the Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments. GCI is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, composed of four members from Canada and four from Alaska. Canada and Alaska each appoint a co-chair from its members, with GTC and VGFN rotating the co-chair role biennially.

Gwich'in Council International represents 9,000 Gwich'in in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Yukon, and Alaska as a Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council, the only international organization where there is a seat for Indigenous Peoples at the decision-making table alongside national governments. GCI supports Gwich'in by amplifying our voice on sustainable development and the environment at the international level to support resilient and healthy communities. Bios for all Board members can be found here: <https://gwichincouncil.com/board-directors>

Gwich'in Council
INTERNATIONAL



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