

## BACKGROUND – 2021-22 Education Hall of Fame Inductees

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The Northwest Territories (NWT) Department of Education, Culture and Employment launched the Education Hall of Fame in 2010 to recognize that we all play an important role in supporting the education of our children. It reflects the valuable contributions that people make as educators, Elders, custodians, administrators, volunteers, coaches, students, advocates, sponsors and businesses.

The 2020 awards were recognized in a virtual celebratory video, due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the 2021-22 inductees are also being honoured in a video, which will be a lasting memory for all.

### 2021 Inductees

**Frank Galway** is the 2021 Education Hall of Fame inductee that was selected by Minister R.J. Simpson as the **Minister's Choice**. Frank is known as a champion and a leader in northern education. Frank started his northern teaching career in Aklavik at Moose Kerr School. From there, he occupied a variety of roles, from administrator to superintendent to negotiator for the NWT Teachers' Association.

Frank's dedication to indigenizing education has been an inspiration to his peers. Frank would meet with Elders and foster strong relationships with community members to ensure traditional knowledge was weaved into education in a respectful and positive way.

Frank also advocated for Northern Distance Learning and was integral to the program's expansion to 19 schools across the NWT. His colleagues say he was much more than a teacher, calling him "special, a mentor, a true northerner and true leader," who always treated students and their success as the top priority.

Frank's work and efforts in northern education, particularly the 15 years he spent serving Beaufort Delta communities, have left an indelible impact.

**Pauline Tardiff (Gordon)** started her long career in northern education in her home community of Aklavik. She then taught and was an administrator in Inuvik, before becoming the Assistant Director of Education, and the first Indigenous Superintendent in the NWT for the Beaufort Delta Education Council.

Pauline was also the first Indigenous female Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Pauline has been instrumental in encouraging Inuvialuit and Gwich'in teachers to develop materials that would get students excited about learning their Indigenous language(s). Pauline would educate southern teachers on the NWT's rich local culture and history, and always promoted indigenizing education. Her peers say she modeled her traditional way of life, language and culture, and has created a legacy for her colleagues, schools and communities. *"Our Elders and Leaders would be so proud of her accomplishments,"* read one nomination letter.

Since her retirement, Pauline has remained involved in providing workshops and orientations for teaching personnel. For many years she provided culturally-appropriate programs for students at the schools and the college. Pauline has three children Janine, Chuck and Ryan.

**Ed Lippert** exemplifies leadership in education. He has devoted decades to learning, as a teacher, principal, department head, administrator, superintendent, and mentor to many in the NWT.

Ed inspired students and teachers alike in Yellowknife and Inuvik for many years. He helped develop the Leadership Academy and Leadership Group for Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1) teachers, as well as the 10-day Educational Leadership Program (ELP) for NWT administrators. Ed prioritized indigenizing education, particularly through Indigenous art.

Colleagues have called him legendary and gifted, especially when it came to his famed science classes and experiments, which "made science come alive." He was known to take learning out of the classroom to explore the outdoors, creating lifelong memories for students through his ecology and scuba clubs.

Ed is known for his humour and gentle, selfless, humble ways; leading by example, always praising others and offering a helping hand. Case in point: he delayed his retirement during the pandemic, and helped YK1 navigate uncharted territory. His support of northern educators and the NWT education system will have a lasting impact in the territory.

**Neil Penney** has made a remarkable impact on students and the community of Dettah for more than a decade. In its nomination letter, the Dettah District Education Authority said they are “blessed” to have such a dedicated teacher at Kaw Tay Whee School. Neil has a passion for teaching, and has introduced innovative ways to broaden students’ knowledge through robotics, technology and projects like MakerSpace. Through this program, he and his students have worked on nationally-recognized films – pieces of art that encouraged youth to learn their oral and cultural Dene traditions, taught them lifelong skills, and involved many community members. He weaves Dene Laws into his teaching and embodies these characteristics in all aspects of his life.

Neil is dedicated to his school and community, which has made a lasting impact on students, many of whom provided handwritten nomination letters. *“Neil Penney impacted my life because he taught me how to film, and helped me speak my Wiliideh language,”* wrote one student. Students also spoke of his kindness and humour, and how he makes them feel safe and welcomed. The influence his compassionate, caring and encouraging nature has had on the youth of Dettah makes Neil a deserving inductee to the 2021 NWT Education Hall of Fame.

## 2022 Inductees

**Deborah Reid** is known as a “tireless” advocate for the schools she leads and for her students, promoting positivity and pride. She began her long career in northern education in Taloyoak, Nunavut, in the 1990s, where she taught English and Music for more than a decade. She later worked for the Tłıchǝ Community Services Agency as curriculum coordinator, in both Yellowknife and Inuvik as the first school principal of its new East Three Secondary School, and then moved to the Kátł’odeeche First Nation, where she remains today as principal of Chief Sunrise Education Centre (CSEC).

Deborah goes above and beyond to support students’ attendance, including coordinating rides and securing funding for an additional school bus for Indigenous students in Hay River to get to the school. *“Her efforts have also led to the first CSEC graduates in over 10 years – absolutely fantastic!”* reads one nomination letter.

She holds the title of Doctor of Education 2015, which she attained while working full time. Deborah has prioritized Indigenous education, and cultivated meaningful relationships to the land, community and its people: local Elders, Chief and families. She promotes Dene culture through various initiatives, including storytelling and

drumming workshops, and Family Camp days on the land with local Elders. From cooking challenges, to gardening groups, getting a skating rink built locally, and involving every family in their children's schooling, Deborah exemplifies generosity and leadership. Staff and students feel heard and seen by Deborah, which is evident every day when she greets each of them at the front door with a smile.

**Josée Clermont** has dedicated her career to improving education in French. Josée arrived in the territory in 2010, working for Yellowknife Catholic Schools. In 2015 she became the executive director of Collège nordique francophone (CNF). She led a transformation of the college's operations to better meet the needs and aspirations of the community, and to support newcomers to the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Her efforts have paid off. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada mandated the CNF to offer the only regular Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program in the NWT, and it was awarded the Employer Recognition Award for Newcomer Employment in 2019. Working to provide better settlement services and facilitate the economic and social integration of newcomers is very close to Josée's heart.

Promoting and supporting Indigenous cultures and languages in the NWT, as well as bridging the gap between Aboriginal peoples and newcomers, have been a high priority for Josée. She has collaborated with Dene Elders and spearheaded initiatives to protect, preserve and promote Indigenous languages and cultures. Under her leadership, the CNF created a one-of-a-kind French Second Language workbook that emphasizes the history and cultures of Indigenous peoples in the NWT; CNF also offers a course curriculum for instruction in Tłıchǫ, and a mentorship program pairing Tłıchǫ language learners with Dene Elders. For its work in these areas, the CNF received the Minister's Circle Award from Culture and Heritage.

In 2021, Josée completed a five-year business plan to set the CNF up for expansion, stepping out on a promising path for the future of post-secondary education in French in the NWT.

Josée is on a number of local committees and working groups, which underline her dedication to being constructive, solution-oriented and reflective of the needs and potential of NWT communities. In her spare time, Josée is happiest on cross-country skis or a bicycle in the great outdoors of the NWT.

**Eugène Roach** goes the extra mile to make a difference for students and their families in the NWT. “Mr. Roach” has been a physical education teacher at École St. Joseph School for the past 17 years, both in French Immersion and English. He’s been a leader and coach in practically every sport, including countless volunteer hours put in after school and on weekends.

Eugène expanded his repertoire to archery in 2016-17, coaching the NWT team in the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG), completing various levels of training himself, and fundraising for the proper equipment. This is just one example of how he supports indigenizing education, culture and sport in and outside of school. He also supports his Francophone and Acadian culture through playing guitar on Radio Taiga and releasing two CDs of French songs.

Eugène’s energy and quiet leadership have created opportunities for many students to participate in sports and other activities. He’s made a positive impact on the thousands of students who have been coached or taught by him over nearly two decades in the NWT.

**Adrien Amirault** is the 2022 Education Hall of Fame inductee that was selected by Minister R.J. Simpson as the **Minister’s Choice**. Adrien was an educator and administrator in Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories for 27 years before taking on several roles with the NWT Teachers’ Association, including executive director.

A music teacher by trade, Adrien came to the NWT in 2001, during a two-year leave of absence from Nova Scotia, working at Yellowknife Education District No. 1 (YK1). Safe to say he was hooked. Colleagues say he’s had an “immeasurable” impact on the NWT education system through his various roles. *“He has been referred to as ‘The Wizard’ for his ability to address concerns and bring a fair resolution to even the most difficult situations,”* reads one nomination.

Adrien is highly respected and known for his compassionate, supportive and collaborative approach to problem-solving, always aiming for a ‘win-win.’ He is a worthy inductee in the 2022 Education Hall of Fame and recipient of the Minister’s Choice award.

