



PANEL DISCUSSION REPORT:  
INDIGENOUS AND RESTORATIVE  
JUSTICE APPROACHES



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Panel Discussion: Indigenous and Restorative Justice Approaches

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## 1.0 Introduction

Justice Canada, in collaboration with the Indigenous and Restorative Justice Subcommittee of the Federal Provincial Territorial (FPT) Restorative Justice Working Group (RJWG), hosted a virtual panel discussion on February 15, 2022. This event was designed to support future discussions at the National Restorative Collaborative Learning Conference (NRCL Conference) to occur in October 2022. A theme of the conference will include the potential for justice transformation to address systemic racism, the legacies of colonialism and to work toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through an increased use of restorative justice (RJ)

Delegates to the NRCL Conference, members of the FPT RJWG, and Justice Canada officials were invited to attend the virtual panel discussion.

## 2.0 Panel Discussion Overview

The following were the speakers and presenters on the panel:

- Elder Rose Miller, Simpcw First Nations
- Larry Chartrand, Professor Emeritus of Law, University of Ottawa
- Bruce Manuel, South Okanagan Restorative Justice Program
- Nikkurai Folger, Pisiksik Justice Program
- Paula Marshall, Mi'kmaw Customary Law Program
- Moderator Jennifer David, NVision Insight Group Inc.

This report provides an overview of the panellist presentations and discussion. The panel agenda and panelist biographies are included in Annex A. Panel presentations and handouts are available upon request by contacting [rsd-drs@justice.gc.ca](mailto:rsd-drs@justice.gc.ca).

## 2.1 Larry Chartrand

### Restorative Justice and its Relationship to Indigenous Justice

Larry Chartrand began his presentation by explaining the differences and relationships between traditional justice, the Western justice system imposed by English and French settlers, RJ, and Indigenous Justice.

Prior to European contact, traditional justice was Indigenous justice. It was the laws, systems, punishments, and expectations of families and communities. Traditional justice employed punitive sanctions when appropriate, including banishment and various corporal sanctions. Traditional justice practices also had a strong emphasis on repairing relationships and restoring balance.

Today, Indigenous justice is characterized as “the system of justice for anyone caught within an Indigenous government’s jurisdiction whether the person is Indigenous or not” (Chartrand 2022). The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration), which Canada has adopted, recognizes the right to Indigenous justice through a number of provisions. For example, Article 18 provides that Indigenous peoples have the right to “*maintain and develop their own decision-making institutions*”, while Article 34 recognizes the right to “*maintain a justice system in accordance with their legal traditions.*”<sup>1</sup> Indigenous nations have the right to choose and to adopt the system it thinks is appropriate for its community today. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report’s Call to Action 50<sup>2</sup> resulted in the funding of projects that describe Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Indigenous peoples in Canada.<sup>3</sup>

The Western justice system is the current legal system and laws in effect throughout Canada, based on European legal traditions and perspectives. From an Indigenous perspective, the Western system “is far too quick to rely on ‘just’ punishment as the solution”, (Chartrand 2022) whereas traditional Indigenous legal systems were a source of proactive and reactive mechanisms that attempted to maintain a stable and predictable social world for Indigenous communities.

Most Indigenous legal traditions include principles and mechanisms that are also found in RJ processes, including promoting healing, reconciliation, reintegration of the offender, and providing opportunities for victims and communities to participate. However, this does not mean Indigenous legal orders and RJ are the same. Indigenous legal traditions often use proactive, preventative strategies mediated through kinship networks and place a high importance on spirituality.

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. 2007.

[https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/decl\\_doc.html](https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/decl_doc.html)

<sup>2</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission. 2015. [https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See list of projects funded under this Call: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-justice/news/2021/05/revitalization-of-indigenous-laws-across-canada.html>

RJ approaches could be used by Indigenous governments to acquire greater control over the justice process and they can be used as a framework for redesigning the Western Canadian justice system to make it more effective at reducing crime. However, even if the existing criminal justice system (CJS) fully embraces restorative approaches and practices for Indigenous peoples, it would still be a “colonially imposed justice system” (Chartrand 2022) that violates international Indigenous peoples’ minimum human right to self-determination. The solution to the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the Western Canadian justice system “can’t just be a Band-Aid solution of culturally sensitive restorative justice” (Chartrand 2022). It has to be the full implementation of the rights under the UN Declaration and the full implementation of the Calls to Action that the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* outlines. More attention needs to be directed to the establishment of Indigenous justice processes whether or not they are compatible with RJ principles.

## 2.2 Bruce Manuel

### Enowkinwixw Model of Justice

Many Indigenous issues today need to be seen through a “justice” lens, not just the narrow focus on the CJS, so that we can move forward together. The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* outlines various Calls to Action to reform the CJS, to support Indigenous access to justice and Indigenous law initiatives. The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* report also points to the need for justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and reparations and compensation for the 60’s scoop. Additional injustices include racial profiling, broken Treaty promises, and the need to recognize intergenerational trauma caused by the Indian Residential School system. Of immediate importance is the support required for families of children who died at residential schools (including the identification and recovery of unmarked graves), and moving from a denial of Indigenous rights to recognition of rights. Other specific examples include the Wet’suwet’en protests, the Land Back movement, and the Mi’kmaw fishers assertion of rights.

When all of these things are considered, justice is not really happening for Indigenous peoples. All these issues must be addressed with justice in mind, so we can move forward together. As the Honourable Stephen Point, former Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and court judge at the province level, stated, “*Take off your suit coat, put down your pens and don’t write another report or create another commission or do any more research...it’s time to roll up your sleeves and get to work.*”

There are no “cookie cutter” approaches to Indigenous restorative practices. There are as many ways to approach justice-related issues as there are populations looking to do the work. However, there are similarities that cross racial divides that speak to inclusivity.

The Syilx (Okanagan) Nation uses a process called *Enowkinwixw*, a consensus-building model that is based on agreeing to support the decision best suited to the needs of the collective rather than the wants and needs of the individual. “*What’s good for one is good for all*” (Manuel

2022). The origin of this process is in Ceptikwl—traditional stories that involves four steps:

1. **Identification and clarification:** understanding the issue at hand and clarifying what is involved;
2. **Visioning:** looking at what the beneficial outcome would be for all of the parties involved;
3. **Analysis:** sitting down with all the participants to discuss the different impacts of the behaviour or activity; and,
4. **Consensus:** agreeing to act in the best way possible to support the wants and needs of everyone including the community.

This model of justice helps in the discovery of criminogenic factors, which can help understand past and present behaviours. It also allows for planning and programming that lead to changes for the individual, including preventing future involvement with crime.

Indigenous legal traditions have been practised and have been in force for thousands of years. The legality of the settler/colonial courts has been questioned and challenged for decades. Indigenous practices are being inserted into colonial courts through the education of judges and lawyers. The work being done by different agencies and educational institutions to provide Indigenous Studies courses is a good first step in advancing Indigenous knowledge and ways of dealing with wrongdoing, but is limited in scope.

Indigenous RJ approaches can be expanded within Canada’s justice system if more funding is provided by the government to Indigenous communities. The South Okanagan Restorative Justice Program is one of 23 community programs that are part of the Indigenous Justice Association of British Columbia, but there are 168 First Nations in the province. This leaves 145 communities without access to these programs and services. The way forward is to find a way back to accountability and responsibility and work together.

## 2.3 Nikkutai Folger

### Ikajuriallatiit Restorative Justice Program

The Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) an Inuit-specific, multi-sector hub for urban Inuit of all ages, is located in Ottawa, Ontario. TI offers social supports, cultural activities, counselling and crisis intervention to meet the needs of Inuit in Ontario. TI programs are built upon an Inuit worldview that recognizes that each person has many aspects to their lives and that they are interconnected to others.

The TI Pisiksik Justice Department runs a Men’s Healing Group, a Gladue Program, and the Ikajuriallatiit Restorative Justice Program (RJP), which was developed in collaboration with the Ikajuriallaktiit Restorative Justice Committee (“the Committee”).

**Pisiksik** meaning – Inuit word for a bow and arrow:

“An arrow can only be shot by pulling backward. When life is dragging you back with difficulties, it means it’s going to launch you into something great. So just focus, and keep aiming.”

-unknown

The Committee, composed of six members (including two Elders) who are trained facilitators, provides guidance and input on the program, and facilitates sessions using the Victim Offender Conferencing (VOC) model to divert adults away from the traditional court system. The RJP is the first Inuit-specific program outside of Nunavut that seeks to amend the harm to the victim through a set of culturally relevant and safe services. It is geared towards rehabilitation and reduction of recidivism.

The VOC model allows all parties to participate in healing as they decide on the actions and steps that the offender needs to take to mend relationships with the victim and/or community. The process holds the diversion client accountable for their actions while reconciling with the victim(s) and community, which are also crucial for their rehabilitation. The RJP provides services in Inuktitut and English to accommodate the client's needs. It is also unique in that it reflects Inuit and northern cultural practices and belief systems, including the integration of the following eight guiding principles of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, the IQ principles, also known as Inuit societal values.

- **ᐃᓂᖃᑎᑦᑕᑦᐱᑦ - Inuuqatigiitsiarniq. Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.**
  - Establishing agreements on how to work together, exhibit positive behavior in hopes that everyone feels respected and cared for.
- **ᑕᐃᐃᐱᑦ - Tunnganarniq. Fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.**
  - Being open, inclusive when interacting with all parties—in the VOC and afterwards.
- **ᐱᐱᑦᑕᑦᐱᑦ - Pijitsirniq. Serving and providing for family and/or community.**
  - Understanding that each person is a valued contributor to their family, community and to organizations like TI.
- **ᐱᐱᑦᑕᑦᐱᑦ - Aajiqatigiinni. Decision making through discussion and consensus.**
  - Being able to think, work collaboratively and resolve conflict through consensus building.
- **ᐱᐱᑦᑕᑦᐱᑦ - Pilimmaksarniq. Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.**
  - Building capacity in clients by demonstrating how facilitators assist with the dialogue, show respect, and integrate IQ principles, so they can replicate this in their own lives.
- **ᐃᓂᖃᑎᑦᑕᑦᐱᑦ - Ikajuqtigiinni. Working together for a common cause.**
  - A core Inuit belief that stresses the importance of the group over the individual.

The group's goals and concerns, and are just as important as individual goals and concerns.

- **ᑭᓄᑦᑕᓄᑦ - Qanuqtuurniq. Being innovative and resourceful.**
  - The ability to be resourceful, seek solutions, use resources innovatively and creatively, to demonstrate adaptability and flexibility in response to a rapidly changing world. The program is innovative and adaptable in order to respond to the unique needs and challenges of urban, southern Inuit clients.
- **ᐱᓐᑕᓄᑦᑕᓄᑦ ᑲᓄᑦᑕᓄᑦ - Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq. Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.**
  - Even though urban Inuit are not on Inuit lands or in Inuit Nunangat, environment is still important, as are traditional values that are based on the land and waters of the North.

Cultural practices and belief systems ensure a healthy society, while rich customs create an environment of hope, loyalties, connectivity and social bonding. These are reflected in the eight IQ principles that inform the RJP.

## 2.4 Paula Marshall

### Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network Project

The history of Mi'kmaw people is very long and our homeland, called Mi'kma'ki, is very large. Mi'kma'ki, is made up of all of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and large areas of New Brunswick, Maine, Quebec (the Gaspé Peninsula) and Newfoundland.

Mi'kmaw people learned about their culture and history through stories and legends. These oral (spoken) histories are very important to understanding Mi'kmaw culture, traditions, and customary laws. Customary laws govern relationships and the way people interact with each other to keep harmony and peace.

Nova Scotia has a unique relationship with the Canadian justice system due to the case of Donald Marshall Jr., of Membertou First Nation, who was wrongfully convicted of a murder in 1971. A subsequent Inquiry set out recommendations to improve justice for Indigenous peoples.<sup>4</sup> The Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network built on the recommendations from the Marshall Inquiry to provide justice support services for Mi'kmaw individuals involved in theCJS. Supports include the use of Customary Law as a restorative approach, translators in the courtroom, court workers, victim support, sentencing circle protocols, reintegrating offenders into

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<sup>4</sup> The Marshall Inquiry was a Royal Commission called by the Government of Nova Scotia. It investigated the 1971 wrongful murder conviction of Mi'kmaq man Donald Marshall Jr. of Nova Scotia. This was the first inquiry of its kind in Canada. The commission released its report on 26 January 1990.

communities, and Gladue reports.

Justice is understood differently by Indigenous peoples, who recognize the importance of an individual's role within community in maintaining peace and avoiding conflict. Justice is not a list of rules; rather, Indigenous concepts of justice are about restoring peace and equilibrium, and to "reconcile the accused with his or her own conscience and with the individual or family who has been wronged." Social controls (such as ridicule, avoidance, shame, and banishment) rest in kinship, and reconciliation is sought through reparation by the offender to the victim and community.

Customary laws are a legal custom that reflect an established pattern of behavior that can be objectively verified within a particular social setting. Social control rests in kinship relationships and the established pattern of behavior that can be objectively verified within a particular social setting. Customary law is about what has always been done and accepted by the community as obligatory. Customary laws give the community members responsibility for how to interact with each other.

As in many Indigenous cultures, the needs and goals of the group or community as a whole override the needs and desires of the individual. Relationships with other members of the community and the interconnectedness of those relationships are important to each person's identity.

The Mi'kmaw Customary Law Program reminds people of their history, ways of being and the responsibility each person has to the whole community. When an offence happens, where harm has been done to another community member, we call upon the community to inform us as what the harm was, and what we can do about it. Sentencing circles are not just about the offence; they are about responsibility to the community, the responsibility to repair the harm and the responsibility of the one that caused the harm as a member of the community. The process is focused on the present (what can you do now to repair the harm?) and future (how can you be a better community member?).

The Mi'kmaq Customary Law Program is based on Mi'kmaq concepts of justice, which are not the same as those of RJ. One of these concepts is Apiksiktatultimk, mutual forgiveness and the act of restoring community through cooperation. It was also the main part of an annual ceremony on New Year's Day, the Wi'kupaltimk, when each member of the community asks for forgiveness for past wrongs from every other member. Another concept is Nijkitekek, that which heals, as wrongs between people are not given the opportunity to fester. The dominant court process only serves to satisfy the law, not the community or individuals. Nijkitekek promotes healing by creating an awareness of the seriousness of the offence and an understanding between people in a setting deemed appropriate. The program does not focus on the punishment for the incident but rather the responsibility to repair harm, and rehabilitation. The community will forgive if it sees that the person has true intentions and is willing to work for the greater good.

Another important Mi'kmaw concept is a teaching from Elder Albert Marshall on Etuaptmumk – "Two-Eyed Seeing" by saying it refers to "learning to see from one eye with the strengths of

Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all.” That two-eyed seeing is possible in justice through the teachings of the Mi’kmaq Customary Law Program. This teaching demonstrates that Indigenous legal traditions can be part of the Canadian legal system.

It is important to support and implement customary law because the Western CJS is inadequate for Indigenous peoples.

### 3.0 Key Panel Discussion Themes

#### 3.1 Concepts and Terminology

There is a need for greater awareness and understanding of the following terms as there is often confusion.

- **Indigenous Justice** (also called traditional justice or Indigenous legal traditions): laws and systems in place prior to European contact and, in some communities, still practised and implemented today.
- **Customary Laws:** legal customs, established patterns of behaviour specific to a nation, community, and culture.
- **Western or Canadian Criminal Justice System:** the dominant legal system established by English and French settlers. Criminal law is governed by the *Criminal Code of Canada*. The administration of justice is a provincial responsibility.
- **Restorative Justice:** a principled approach to justice based on the understanding that crime causes harm to people, relationships, and the community.

#### 3.2 Understanding What is Meant by “Justice”

##### 3.2.1 Justice is much broader than the criminal justice system

Indigenous knowledge includes a holistic view of justice and of life, whereby justice is not separate from all other aspects of culture, traditions, and ways of being. Justice is not based on punitive measures or approaches, but on restoration, harmony, and the goal of achieving balance in all aspects of life.

The word “justice” needs to encompass the need to put right the many societal harms imposed on Indigenous peoples for centuries, including by the Indian Residential School system, the 60’s Scoop, and the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Indigenous justice processes exist outside of Canada’s justice systems.

Indigenous nations and communities continue to exercise sovereignty by implementing traditional and customary law practices that have been passed down for millennia. These

practices are rooted in the teachings of specific nations and communities. They are grounded in Indigenous principles that reflect distinctive values and traditions. Examples include:

- **Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit:** used by Tungasuvvingat Inuit, to consider and follow Inuit societal values when implementing law and justice processes.
- **Enowkinwíxw:** model used by the Syilx First Nation, a decision-making process that incorporates traditional stories as a way to incorporate balance between men and women, and find alternative ways to deal with issues before the courts;
- **Apiksiktatultimk** and **Nijkitekek:** Mi'kmaq concepts of forgiveness and healing. These concepts were part of a customary law process involving an annual feast and ceremony on New Year's Day called **Wi'kupaltimk**.

### **3.2.2 Restorative Justice programs operate within a colonial justice system**

RJ programs that are funded by governments and administered by many Indigenous groups across Canada exist within the context of “a colonial imposed justice system” (Chartrand 2022), within the parameters of Canada’s Constitution, laws, and government structures. They incorporate Indigenous or traditional justice concepts but are implemented within a Western CJS.

### **3.2.3 Compatibility of restorative Indigenous justice principles**

Although RJ and Indigenous justice are not the same, restorative and Indigenous justice principles share many common goals. The Mi'kmaw teaching from Elder Albert Marshall on Etuaptmumk or “Two-Eyed Seeing” is illustrative of such compatibility. It refers to “learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledge and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all.” That two-eyed seeing is possible in justice through the teachings of the Customary Law program.

### **3.3 Need for further education and awareness**

It is important for lawyers, legal professionals, and others working in Canada’s CJS to increase their knowledge, awareness and education about Indigenous peoples. This includes:

- Understanding how to be an ally to Indigenous peoples;
- Understanding the differences among and within First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities and cultures;
- Understanding why First Nations individuals leave their reserves and move to urban settings, and the implications of this;
- Understanding Indigenous value systems and customary law processes in order to comprehend the differences between restorative processes, compared to the retributive

criminal justice process; and,

- Recognizing the impacts of intergenerational trauma on Indigenous peoples, and applying a trauma-informed lens on RJ processes and Indigenous peoples that are involved in Canada's criminal justice system.

## 4.0 Conclusion

The virtual panel explored how Indigenous justice, RJ or customary law approaches are used in two First Nations and one Inuit context. The panel helped to highlight that while RJ principles may have strong parallels to Indigenous legal principles and traditions, they are not the same thing. Several panellists highlighted the fundamental importance of community relationships in Indigenous justice approaches and the goal of meeting the needs of the collective rather than focusing primarily on the reparation of harm for an individual.

Canada's adoption of the UN Declaration and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* report provide support to Indigenous nations and groups that are asserting their rights to maintain and reclaim their own justice systems and legal traditions as an expression of the larger right of self-determination.

The revitalization of Indigenous legal traditions creates opportunities to expand the use of Indigenous, RJ or customary law approaches within the existing Canadian legal system. However, it is also important to be aware that RJ processes that address criminal offending in Canada exist within the Canadian CJS, an adversarial punitive system that has been used to control Indigenous peoples for centuries.

There is an urgent need to restore harmony back to individuals and communities using culturally specific, community-driven initiatives and programs, and customary law approaches. Indigenous justice principles exist to restore peace and equilibrium within a community, with the goal of community harmony and good order. The collective culture of Indigenous peoples and the use of consensus-based approaches when addressing harm are fundamental to Indigenous justice.

The development of Indigenous justice systems and legal traditions goes beyond the expansion of the use of Indigenous RJ principles and programs within the Canadian CJS. It is essential that RJ approaches be implemented with an understanding of underlying social issues, the impact of trauma, colonization and systemic racism. They need to be flexible in order to adapt to specific cultural and community-based processes.

It is incumbent on legal professionals working in Canada's criminal justice system, to better understand Indigenous perspectives, Canada's colonial history, Indigenous ways of being, and the racism and discrimination embedded in Canada's laws and systems, in order to move forward together.

## Annex A: Agenda and Elder and Panelist Biographies

### Indigenous and Restorative Justice Approaches Panel Discussion

Tuesday February 15, 2022 (1:00pm to 3:30pm EST)

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#### AGENDA

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Welcome remarks and Opening</b><br><br>Marilou Reeve, Justice Canada<br><br>Elder Rose Miller   | 1:00 - 1:15 pm<br><b>(15 minutes)</b> |
| <b>2. Panelist Presentations</b><br><br>Moderator Jennifer David, NVision Insight Group<br>Larry Chartrand, Professor Emeritus of Law<br>Bruce Manuel, South Okanagan Restorative Justice Program<br>Nikkutai Folger, Pisiksik Justice Program<br>Paula Marshall, Mi'kmaw Customary Law Program | 1:15 - 2:45 pm<br><b>(90 minutes)</b> |
| <b>3. Discussion and Question Period</b><br><br>Moderator Jennifer David, NVision Insight Group   | 2:45 - 3:15 pm<br><b>(30 minutes)</b> |
| <b>4. Closing</b><br><br>Elder Rose Miller  | 3:15 - 3:30 pm<br><b>(15 minutes)</b> |

## Speaker Biographies

**Elder Rose Grace Miller** is a member of Simpcw First Nations north of Kamloops, British Columbia. Born at Canim Lake reserve where my mother was from. My Grandfather was the last Hereditary Chief from there. Survivor of Kamloops Indian Residential School 1949 - 1953 and returned for part of year in 1956. In 1971 - 1976, I was a nurse prior to closing of KIRS. Remain a Union Member in Alberta for Construction Worker for 44 years. Trained & Employed: 1998 Life Skills Facilitator & Trainer of Trainers. Justice Programs since 2005- Facilitator/TOT to 2022. First Nations Court - 2013 to 2022. Nechi Training for Addictions Counsellor. Remain on Board of Directors for Thompson Rivers University for Indigenous Health Nursing Research.

**Larry Chartrand** is a Professor Emeritus of Law at the University of Ottawa. He is Michif Métis from the prairies. His area of scholarship is in the field of Indigenous rights and in particular, Métis rights. He obtained his B.Ed. from the University of Alberta in 1986, his LL.B from York University in 1989, and his LL.M. from Queen's University in 2001. He was Director of the Aboriginal Governance Program and Professor of Politics at the University of Winnipeg from 2004-2007, and more recently the Director of the Native Law Centre at the University of Saskatchewan 2017-2019.

**Jennifer David** has worked in the field of Indigenous communications and consulting for 25 years. Prior to consulting, Jennifer was the Director of Communications for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. A member of Chapleau Cree First Nation, Jennifer is of mixed ancestry and was born and raised in Omushkego/Treaty 9 territory (Northeastern Ontario). Jennifer has degrees in Journalism and English literature from Carleton University. In 2003, Jennifer became a partner and is currently a Senior Consultant with NVision Insight Group, a majority Indigenous-owned consulting company. She manages the development and offerings of NVision's suite of cultural awareness and cultural competency courses.

**Nikkutai Folger** is Inuk, originally from Iqaluit, Nunavut. Nikkutai has a diploma in Community and Justice Services from Algonquin College and is currently finishing her fourth year in the Social Work program at Carleton University. Nikkutai is the Chairperson of the Ikajuriallatiit Restorative Justice Committee at Tunngasuvvingat Inuit (TI) in Ottawa, an agency that provides services to Inuit in Ontario. While much of Nikkuta's work experience is working in the Ottawa Inuit community with Inuit children, youth and families, she is now taking on a role in the Policy Advancement Department of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) as a practicum student.

**Bruce Manuel** is an Okanagan man from the Upper Nicola Band, which is a member of the Okanagan Nation. He is the Corrections Liaison Worker with the South Okanagan Restorative Justice Program located at the Enowkin Centre on the Penticton Indian Band Reservation. He is a Traditional Knowledge Keeper and a singer of our songs. He is the father of Brent, Alexa and Eden Rose. He is a believer in the *cepitkwl*, the stories of his people.

**Paula Marshall** is the Executive Director of the Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network Project. Paula has a long record of being a strong and committed advocate for restorative justice, victim services, court worker programming, regulatory offences and reintegration services operating under the Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network. The Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network was built on the recommendations from the Marshall Inquiry to provide justice support services for Indigenous peoples involved in the criminal justice system, such as customary law as a restorative approach, translators in the courtroom, court workers, victim support, development of sentencing circle protocols, reintegration of offenders into communities, and Gladue reports. Paula is also a recent recipient of the Order of Nova Scotia.

**Marilou Reeve** has worked with the Department of Justice Canada since 2001. Prior to joining the Department, Marilou practiced law privately, acting primarily for legally aided clients in criminal and family law proceedings. Marilou is also one of the first restorative justice facilitators of the Collaborative Justice Project, a project that uses a restorative process to respond to matters of serious crime.