

# Our Path Forward

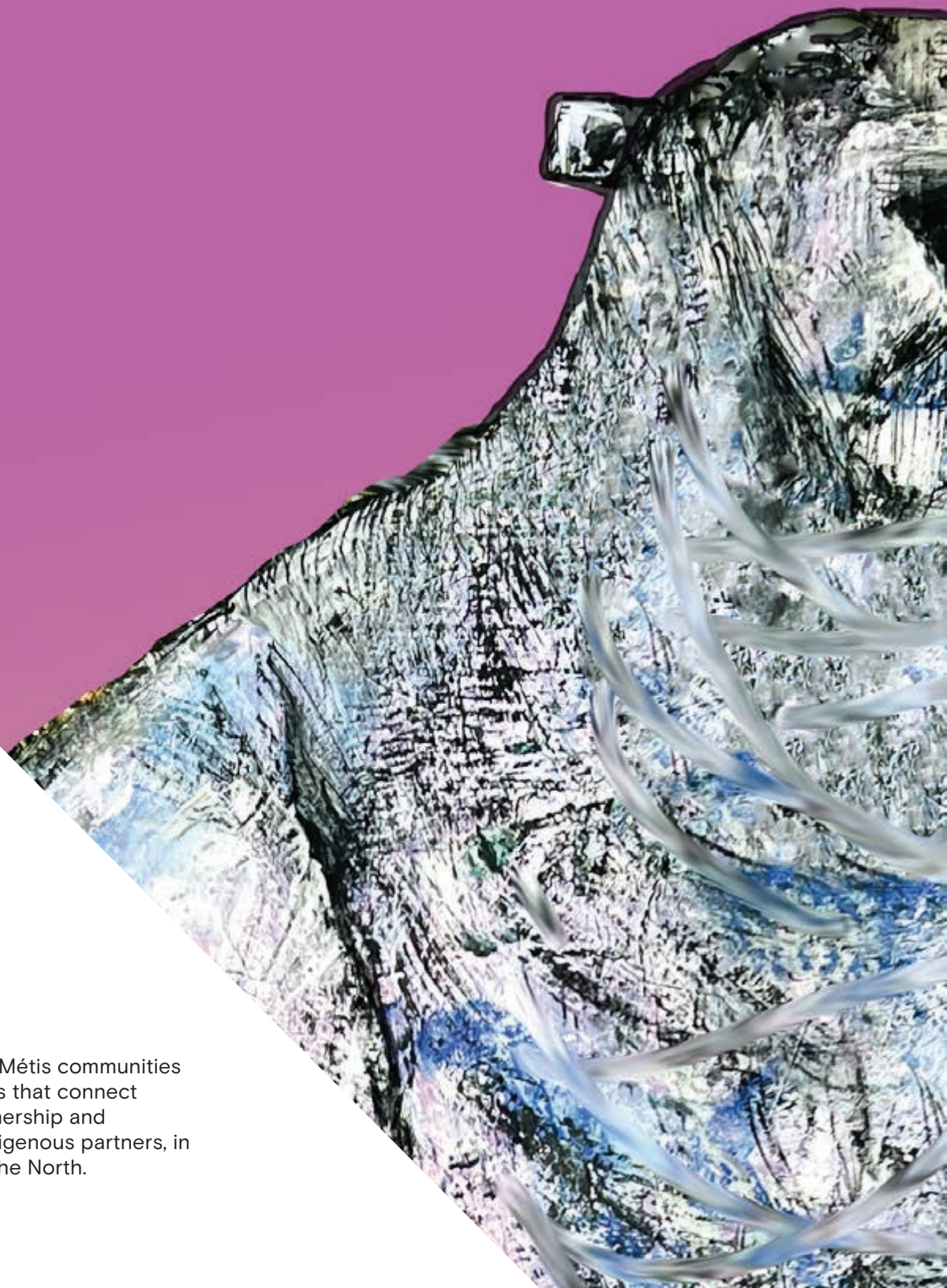
2025 Progress Report  
on Reconciliation

 Northwestel

# Our vision

Northwestel is proud to serve 97 northern communities, each with a rich and unique Indigenous history, culture, and identity

We exist to help ignite the power of these First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities through reliable, modern communications technology and services that connect people to opportunity. We are committed to doing so in true partnership and consultation with Indigenous governments and other northern Indigenous partners, in a way that creates lasting and shared benefits for people across the North.





# Art of the journey

This year's reconciliation report is accompanied by original artwork from Yellowknife-based Inuk and Sahtu-Dene artist Monogli Nasogaluak. The pieces created for this report visually interpret the four pillars that guide our reconciliation work. The images draw on familiar elements of northern life and Inuk and Sahtu-Dene culture, using symbols and storytelling to reflect the relationships between people, land, and community.

In one piece, the North itself becomes the focal point. Communities are represented within the landscape, connected through modern communications technology while still grounded in traditional ways of life. The artwork reflects the reality of the North today: a vast region where people remain deeply connected to culture and land while also embracing new tools that help communities stay connected to one another and to the world.

Another piece highlights the cultural knowledge and artistic traditions that continue to shape Inuk and Sahtu-Dene identity across the North. Symbols such as beadwork, mittens, and tunniit reference forms of cultural expression that carry history, skill, and meaning across generations. The artwork reminds us that cultural knowledge is not only preserved but actively shared and celebrated.

A third work draws on the idea of pathways and connection. Rivers appear as traditional travel routes linking communities across the land. Alongside these natural pathways, figures represent Dene people balancing traditional ways of life with participation in today's workforce.

The imagery reflects the reality that northern communities continue to adapt while remaining rooted in culture and place.

Together, these pieces help tell a broader story about reconciliation. They reflect a North where tradition and innovation exist side by side, where communities remain connected to culture while building new opportunities for the future.

As you move through this report, the artwork serves as a visual reminder that reconciliation is not only reflected in policies and programs, but also in the relationships, cultures, and stories that shape the North.

**Learn more about Monogli Nasogaluak on page 14.**



PHOTO TAKEN ON  
THE TRADITIONAL  
TERRITORIES OF THE  
TA'AN KWACH'AN  
COUNCIL AND KWANLIN  
DUN FIRST NATION

# A word from our President

Back in 2022, we took an important step by unveiling our first-ever Reconciliation Plan, Our Path Forward. As I now share our 2025 progress report, I'm proud to highlight how our work has evolved and the tangible impact we're seeing in our communities

This year's Reconciliation Progress Report highlights the meaningful steps Northwestel took over the past year to advance reconciliation alongside First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities across the North. Our focus is on action – demonstrating how partnership, accountability, and listening continue to shape our work and create real benefits in the communities we serve.

Over the past year, we made important progress across several areas of our business. From expanding fibre infrastructure and improving network performance, to strengthening Indigenous participation in procurement, employment, and training, our efforts are centred on building long-term opportunity and shared prosperity.

This includes delivering new fibre-to-the-home service in communities such as Atlin and Lower Post in British Columbia, investing in reliable connectivity that supports safety, education, health care, and economic growth, and continuing to build pathways into telecommunications careers for Indigenous youth and job seekers.

This work goes beyond infrastructure. In 2025, we continued to deepen cultural learning across our organization by creating space for Indigenous voices, creativity, and leadership. These efforts are essential to building trust and ensuring our operations reflect the people, cultures, and histories of the North.

This year's report is accompanied by original artwork by Yellowknife-based Inuk and Sahtu-Dene artist Monogli Nasogaluak. The artwork visually represents the four pillars that guide our reconciliation work and serves as a reminder that reconciliation is reflected not only in policies and programs, but in relationships, culture, and community.

I am grateful to our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit partners, Community Advisory Board members, and Northwestel teammates who continue to guide and challenge us to do better. Together, we will continue moving forward, building a more inclusive, connected, and resilient future for Northerners.

For those interested in learning more about our broader reconciliation commitments and progress, our full reconciliation plan report is available at [nwtel.ca/reconciliation](https://nwtel.ca/reconciliation).

Gunalchéesh. Masì cho.  
Shāw Nithän. Qujannamiik.  
Thank you.

Curtis Shaw  
President, Northwestel

# Introducing our Community Advisory Board

Established in 2020, Northwestel's Community Advisory Board (CAB) ensures Indigenous leadership and Northern perspectives are represented at the highest levels of our company

The Board advises our management teams on matters including service delivery, Indigenous community priorities, government relations, and community and public engagement. Operating across the traditional territories of many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, the CAB brings grounded, community-based insight to our strategic decision-making. By serving as a sounding board for new initiatives and providing feedback on emerging issues, the Board helps ensure our work reflects the needs, expectations, and lived realities of the communities we serve.



**Roberta Joseph**  
(Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation)

*"First Nations are key economic drivers in the Yukon and across the North. Already, we see examples of the Yukon and NWT partnering with Northwestel, and there needs to be more opportunities like these."*

Roberta Joseph brings more than three decades of experience in First Nation governance and administration. She served as Chief of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Council from 2014–2023 and previously held senior leadership roles in natural resources, finance, education, and economic development, guiding implementation and community priorities at both the local and territorial levels.



**Darrell Beaulieu**  
(Yellowknives Dene First Nation)

*"I am looking forward to being a part of a Northern and Indigenous team of community members because it's an opportunity for Northerners to participate in the further development of the communications industry, which has unlimited potential."*

Darrell Beaulieu brings extensive experience in Indigenous governance and economic development. A former Chief of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, he now serves as President and CEO of Denendeh Investments Incorporated, leading Indigenous-owned business initiatives across the Northwest Territories. He also serves on the board of the Northwest Territories–Nunavut Chamber of Mines, supporting economic growth and industry partnerships in the North.



**Randy Qamaniq**  
(Qikiqtaaluk region of Nunavut)

*"Embracing the essence of the North and the wisdom of Indigenous communities, I eagerly anticipate joining a team that reflects our diverse heritage. Together, we'll shape the future of the communications industry, tapping into its boundless possibilities and ensuring our voices resonate across vast landscapes."*

Born in Igloolik, Nunavut, Randy Qamaniq brings extensive experience in public health administration and Inuit workforce development. He has worked for more than 15 years with the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health and currently leads at Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation. His work has supported the advancement of Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement, including efforts to strengthen Inuit training and employment pathways across the territory.

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

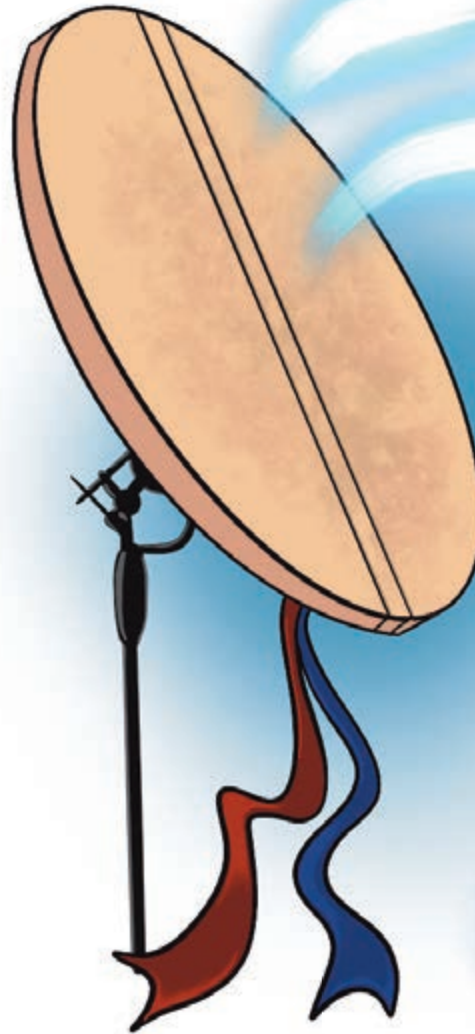
# We will seek a shared pathway to an even better North

## Supporting Indigenous economic participation across the North

We believe stronger connections build stronger communities. Just as we strive to have Indigenous communities benefit from quality broadband, we believe they should also share in the economic benefits of investments in the North.

### ARTIST STATEMENT

*We have a Satellite Network Portal with a rendition of the aqsarniit (northern lights) representing the outgoing signal transmitted by satellites for internet, television, and more. This connection is depicted as emanating from the top of the Satellite Network Portal, waving across the sky.*



# Our progress in 2025

## Highlights

In 2025, we continued strengthening procurement practices and tracking Indigenous participation across our operations. We:

- ✓ Implemented a new Indigenous spend tracking system to better understand and report on procurement with Indigenous businesses.
- ✓ Prioritized Indigenous participation in requests for proposals through weighted evaluation criteria.
- ✓ Strengthened procurement pathways for northern Indigenous-owned and partnered businesses across our operating area.



## FEATURE

### Building community through food and entrepreneurship at Quartz Café

**When Quartz Café and Bakery opened on Quartz Road in December 2025, it brought more than fresh coffee and baked goods to Whitehorse. For owner Kathleen Lundgaard, the café represents more than two decades of entrepreneurship rooted in community and family.**

Kathleen Lundgaard (née Peter) is a member of the Crow Clan of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. She has spent the past 24 years working in

the food service industry alongside her husband and longtime business partner, Bo Lundgaard.



Her entrepreneurial journey began in 2001 with Tony's Pizza in Horwood's Mall in Whitehorse. The business later expanded to Tony's Pizzeria on Copper Road, with a second location opening in Mayo between 2016 and 2017. After a short break from 2018 to 2021, Kathleen returned to the industry with Little Pizza Heaven on Industrial Road, which operated until October 2025.

Quartz Café and Bakery marks the next chapter. Today, Kathleen runs the café with her daughter and son-in-law, continuing the family-run approach that has shaped her businesses for more than two decades.

Located in Chu Niikwan Place on Quartz Road, the café has quickly become a gathering place for employees and visitors alike. Staff from the upstairs offices regularly stop in for coffee, lunch, or a break during the day, creating familiar routines and daily connections between the workplace and the community space the café provides.

The café sources coffee from Atlin Mountain Coffee Roasters, which curated a custom roast for them.

Kathleen also prioritizes sourcing locally and Canadian-produced ingredients whenever possible. A small retail section features locally made goods, with a focus on Indigenous creators, including candles by Twyla Risby of Ross River Dene Council.



The menu continues to grow as the business evolves. Fresh sourdough and focaccia are baked daily for sandwiches, and Kathleen plans to expand the bakery selection with bread loaves, pastries, and cinnamon rolls, which regularly sell out within hours. The café also offers catering for events of up to 50 people, with house-made food prepared on site.

With Whitehorse preparing to host the 2026 Arctic Winter Games, the café has also welcomed visitors from across the North and beyond. Team jackets and new faces have become a regular sight, bringing new energy to the neighbourhood and new customers through the door.

For Kathleen and her family, Quartz Café is about more than running a business. It is about creating a welcoming space where people gather, share food, and connect.

As the café continues to grow, Kathleen remains focused on the same goal that has guided her work for more than two decades: offering good service, good coffee, and good food to everyone who walks through the door.

## Looking ahead

**We will continue refining our procurement practices, strengthening partnerships, and increasing opportunities for Indigenous-owned and partnered businesses to participate in projects across the North.**

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

# We will connect communities to each other and the world through world-leading technology

Expanding reliable, high-speed connections across the North

We exist to ignite the power of community. Our focus is improving access to high-speed internet in the north, bringing real benefits to every community we serve. High speed broadband increases access to critical services like education and health care and leads to more economic opportunities.



## ARTIST STATEMENT

*In this concept, I wanted to incorporate the borders of the North, including the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut along with Northern BC and Northern Alberta. There are many communities across these regions where the people dwelling in each area share different backgrounds. Although the North is large, technology like fiber cables and satellite dishes allows us to connect people in urban areas to those who live off the grid. I wanted to represent with this piece that we can still live our traditional ways of living without having to sacrifice the luxuries of modern day technology.*

# Our progress in 2025

## Highlights

In 2025, we continued to expand fibre infrastructure and deliver faster internet across the North. We:

- ✓ Completed the fibre transport project to Atlin, B.C., launching fibre-to-the-home service and enabling unlimited symmetrical speeds of up to 1 Gbps, the first Northern community to reach this milestone.
- ✓ Fibre-to-the-home service was also introduced in Lower Post, B.C., in partnership with Kaska partners.
- ✓ In Whitehorse and Yellowknife, we launched 1-gigabit speeds, with more communities planned for future upgrades.
- ✓ The Atlin project was delivered in partnership with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, alongside federal, territorial, and industry partners.



## FEATURE

### From limited service to gigabit speeds: Atlin's fibre connection

**For decades, the community of Atlin, BC lived with limited connectivity. There was no cellular service and only minimal internet access, creating daily challenges for residents, businesses, and local services. Community members spoke openly about the gap between Atlin and other northern communities, and the need for reliable, modern communications.**



NORTHWESTEL INFRASTRUCTURE BEING INSTALLED IN ATLIN IN AUGUST 2024

Atlin is on the traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN), whose citizens have long advocated for better connectivity. Their leadership and persistence helped bring partners together to close the digital divide and invest in new infrastructure for the community.

In December 2024, the fibre transport connection to Atlin was completed, enabling cellular service in the community for the first time. By June 2025, fibre-to-the-home internet was available, giving residents access to unlimited symmetrical speeds of up to 1 Gbps. This marked not only a transformational improvement for Atlin, but also the first time gigabit home internet had ever been available in Northern Canada, taking the community from virtually no connectivity to world-class service.

The project was delivered through partnerships between the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Northwestel, Indigenous Services Canada, the Government of British Columbia, the CRTC's Broadband Fund, and other partners. Community leaders, including TRTFN staff and local advocates, played a key role in moving the project forward.

To mark the launch, Northwestel supported the 2025 Atlin Arts & Music Festival as a premium sponsor. The festival brought more than 1,500 people together after a five-year hiatus. Northwestel staff hosted a community "recharge station," spoke with residents about new services, and celebrated the fibre connection alongside local artists, performers, and organizers.

For TRTFN spokesperson **Charmaine Thom**, the impact of the project goes beyond faster internet.

*"Connectivity goes beyond just access to entertainment; for us in Atlin, it is about safety and empowerment. High-speed internet is now a lifeline, ensuring that our community has access to essential services like healthcare and education."*



TRTFN SPOKESPERSON CHARMINE THOM  
FEATURED ON NORTHWESTEL'S 'VOICES ALONG THE LINE' VIDEO

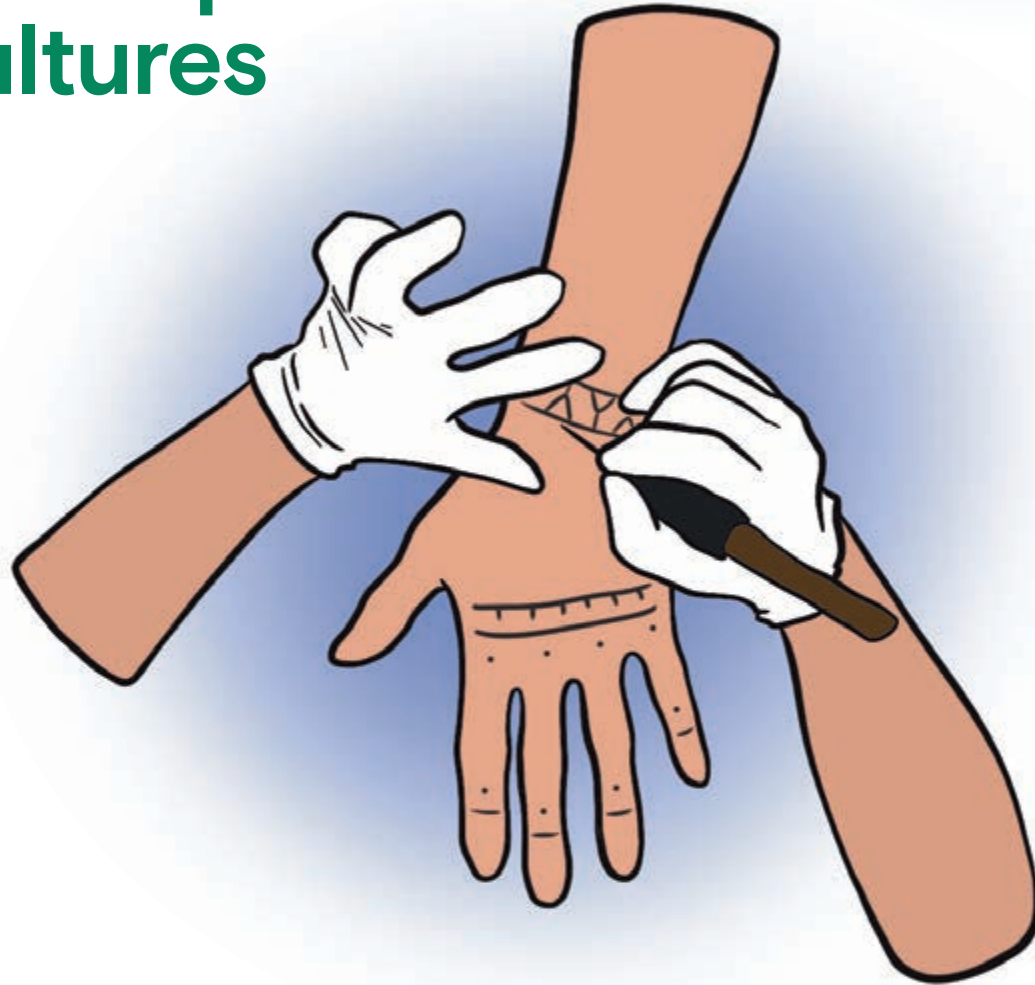
The fibre connection in Atlin reflects what can be achieved through partnership, local advocacy, and long-term investment. It is one step in an ongoing effort to ensure northern communities have the infrastructure they need to stay connected, build local economies, and access essential services.

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

# We will deepen our understanding of the North's unique Indigenous cultures

Creating space for learning, reflection, and Indigenous voices

We learn from those who've called this land home for millennia. We will meet the future with a deeper understanding of the north's Indigenous cultures, governance, histories, and traditions. Our employees will understand the history of Indigenous people in the North, and the impacts colonialism and residential schools have had. We will celebrate Indigenous culture and amplify it to the North.



## ARTIST STATEMENT

*I incorporated symbols such as tunniit (Inuit tattooing) beadwork and mittens to represent the many forms of art in Inuk and Sahtu-Dene communities and the cultural impact they hold. Through our art, we can reach a platform accessible to everyone in the world and represent our culture and allow for understanding and respect to grow.*

# Our progress in 2025

## Highlights

In 2025, we continued investing in cultural learning and engagement across our organization. We:

- ✓ Delivered mandatory six-hour cultural competency training for managers.
- ✓ Continued the Indigenous Speaker Series for staff.
- ✓ Encouraged employee participation in Indigenous cultural events, including beading activities.



## FEATURE

### Crafting connections through reflection and creativity

**Throughout 2025, we created opportunities for employees to learn through participation and shared experience.**

Ahead of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Chipewyan Cree artist and registered nurse Deeg Roy-Delorme of InDEEGenous Creations developed 500 Orange Shirt beaded pin kits for Northwestel employees. Rather than distributing full-sized shirts, employees were invited to create their own small, beaded orange shirt pins to wear on September 30 in solidarity with survivors of residential schools and in honour of the children who never returned home.

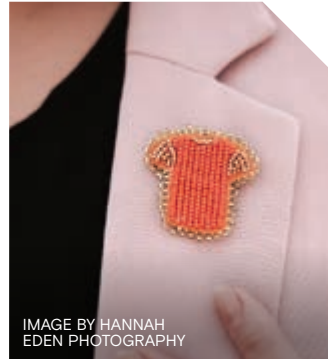


IMAGE BY HANNAH EDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Each kit included carefully prepared materials and instructions designed to make the activity accessible for both new and experienced beaders. For Deeg, the project became a form of reflection

through touch. As an intergenerational survivor, she described the experience as an opportunity to learn more, listen more, and share stories. The kits became conversation starters, encouraging employees to reflect on the meaning behind Orange Shirt Day and the ongoing impacts of the residential school system.

We also marked Nunavut Day by celebrating Inuit culture, creativity, and self-governance. Nunavut Day commemorates the passing of the Nunavut Act and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement,



DEEG ROY-DELORME  
IMAGE BY HANNAH EDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

which officially established Nunavut as a distinct territory. It is a time to honour Inuit self-governance, language, and cultural identity.

Through our annual Nunavut Day DIY contest, we invited community members to share traditional and modern creations, from carvings and jewelry to prints and handmade garments, reflecting personal expression, cultural pride, and northern identity. By spotlighting local artists and makers, we create space for cultural expression, shared learning, and deeper connection across our organization.

## Looking ahead

**We will continue strengthening cultural learning opportunities for employees and supporting initiatives that honour Indigenous histories, cultures, and contributions across the North.**



OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

# We strive to have our operations reflect the communities we serve

## Creating pathways to jobs, training, and careers in the North

Our North is largely Indigenous, and we strive for our operations to reflect the people we serve. We will prioritize providing access to jobs and training to Indigenous communities and people. Our hiring processes will be accessible and supportive. Our public messaging, including our recruitment and marketing, will be inclusive and representative of the north.



### ARTIST STATEMENT

*In our traditional ways of living, the rivers are seen as pathways for those who travel through the lands. They are also ways we can connect to other communities and support them. I incorporated this and the two Dene people who both live the traditional ways of life and embrace the shift to modern day jobs. I also included snow shoes to act as both a symbol of Indigenous people, to further represent the communities in the North.*

# Our progress in 2025

## Highlights

In 2025, we continued building education and employment pathways for Indigenous youth and job seekers. We:

- ✓ Codeveloped grades 8–12 learning modules with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Yukon Department of Education.
- ✓ Maintained the Pathfinder app to help job seekers explore careers at Northwestel and understand potential career pathways.
- ✓ Provided individual job matching support for candidates across our operating area.
- ✓ Worked with our union partners to explore junior roles, discretionary training funding, and on-the-job training pathways.
- ✓ Simplified the Indigenous hiring process to reduce barriers for applicants.
- ✓ Continued our support for the Yukon First Nations Wildfire Warrior Program.



## FEATURE

### The Warrior Program

**The Warrior Program, led by Yukon First Nations Wildfire is a workforce development initiative designed to help First Nations youth build skills and enter the local job market.**

**Since its launch in 2022, the program has combined technical training with personal development in a culturally grounded setting.**

Participants take part in workshops on financial literacy, résumé writing, and interview techniques. The program also helps remove common employment barriers by assisting youth in obtaining identification, providing professional clothing for interviews, and offering a daily stipend during the training period.

Northwestel has been involved with the Warrior Program since its inception. As part of this commitment, we are working to increase our Indigenous employee representation, with a target of 15% by 2027. Team members take part in career days, introduce participants to telecommunications roles, and conduct mock interviews. We have also worked with program partners to shape the Pathfinder career exploration app, helping youth see how entry-level roles can grow into long-term careers.

Some Warrior Program alumni have gone on to participate in the Northwestel Academy, building additional technical skills and

workforce readiness. The program continues to provide a practical bridge between training and employment, including site visits, career presentations, and hands-on learning opportunities.

Through partnerships like the Warrior Program, Northwestel is working to ensure northern youth have access to meaningful training, employment, and long-term career paths close to home.

## Looking ahead

**We will continue working with education partners, unions, and Indigenous organizations to expand training opportunities, strengthen hiring pathways, and support long-term careers in northern communities.**




## Monogli Nasogaluak, Illustration artist



Monogli Nasogaluak is an Inuk and Sahtu-Dene artist from Yellowknife, NT and has been creating for over 20 years.

They have lived in the South for a small part of their life, but home calls to them from the North. Monogli has been creating art for various companies for the past 5 years, and has recently started a business selling beadwork. Monogli likes to incorporate Indigenous ways of living and calls for justice in their artwork, and hopes to strive for change so that Indigenous communities can thrive in an ever-changing world.



The background of the slide is a photograph of a night sky featuring a bright green aurora borealis. The aurora is a large, glowing, ethereal shape in shades of green and teal, set against a dark blue sky filled with stars. In the foreground, the silhouettes of evergreen trees and a snow-covered ground are visible, suggesting a winter or high-altitude setting. A large white triangle is positioned on the left side of the slide, pointing towards the top right, and contains the main text.

# Thank you for coming on this journey with us

Reconciliation is ongoing work. We are committed to learning, listening, and strengthening our relationships with Indigenous communities across the North. We appreciate your engagement with this report and your continued partnership in this work. For questions or feedback, please contact: [communityrelations@nwtel.ca](mailto:communityrelations@nwtel.ca)

