

July 09, 2024

Human Resources
Nishnawbe- Aski Legal Services Corporation
101 Syndicate Ave N. Suite 101
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 3V4

Delivered by email only: hr@nanlegal.on.ca

Re: Staff lawyer (Timmins ON)

Wachiya and meegwetch for posting the job for staff lawyer. I am happy to say that I meet the qualifications you need, and I am excited to apply for this position in your agency.

I am a lawyer in good standing with the Bar in Ontario, with relevant experience in criminal law, family law, and administrative matters. I have experience working within the Canadian legal system and have knowledge and understanding of Indigenous justice issues including restorative justice.

My experience as a lawyer and a chief has given me excellent case and file management skills, administrative and coordination skills, stress management and time management skills, and ability to meet deadlines, this makes it easier to better serve the client. As well, I have great network of collateral agencies and knowledge of the legal resources.

As part of effective advocacy, I can also engage with people to build trust and rapport as this is critical given time is of the essence. As well, I have effective verbal and listening communication skills specifically in conflict resolution and nonviolent crisis intervention as per negotiations and mediation training. As a lawyer with 20 plus years, I have excellent interviewing and counselling skills. Admittedly, with respect to counselling, clients are better served with counsellors on my referral lists.

I can work proficiently with MS Office Software, Internet, and general office equipment and I have a willingness to learn other related programs used in the office.

I also speak Cree language with the N dialect not as proficient as some but well enough to provide advocacy in the language. I admire my late father who was a NAN court translator for years, it was a great learning experience for me.

In conclusion, I trust I met your requirements for this amazing job. I am a lawyer in good standing with the experience in criminal law, family law and administrative matters. I am a well-respected Cree speaking lawyer with a strong network of agencies, who will represent your agency in the utmost respectful, professional and honorable manner. I hope to speak with you further of this prospect, please call me at 705-221-7052.

Chi- meegwetch



Ramona Sutherland B.A. Hons., LL.B.

Ramona Sutherland (B.A. hons) LL.B.

705-221-7052

PROFILE

Cree speaking innovative lawyer with passion and dedication. Highly organized, skilled in public speaking. Expertise in working with Native communities, court personnel and collateral agencies. Lead negotiator and educator.

ACADEMIC & TRAINING

Bar Admission Course	Osgoode Hall Law School	Toronto ON	2005
Bachelor of laws	Osgoode Hall Law School	Toronto ON	2001-2004
Bachelor of Arts (Hons)	Trent University	Peterborough ON	1998-2001
General Arts & Science	Sir Sandford Fleming College	Peterborough ON	1997-1998

Law Society of Upper Canada Annual Professional Development

- Topics related to professional responsibility, ethics, and practice management.
- Continuing professional development to enhance my professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professionalism to meet high standards.

Criminal Intensive Program Osgoode Hall Law School January-April 2004
Placement with Adler Bytensky Law Office

- Set dates, adjourn matters.
- Filed applications, and designations, research/ memoranda writing.
- Attended Appeal Hearing for murder trial from jury selection to verdict.
- Attended Police ride-along, Autopsy, Forensic Science Centre
- Highway Traffic court- as the city prosecutor

Mediation and Conflict Resolution Trent University November 2000

- Qualified Mediator- to act as neutral third party to assist resolve conflict

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief

Constance Lake First Nation

June 2021 to June 2023

Elected Chief/ First nation governance oversee over 70 employees, delegate projects, negotiate terms/ conditions of land lease, mining claims, contracts with all levels of governments including junior mining exploration companies, advocate for social programs and funding, oversee programming and social issues including collaboration with methadone and treatment centre, declared and worked under three state of emergencies (Blastomycosis, Drug, and water), affect a school wide assessment, advocate successfully for 20 housing programs, 17 tiny homes, and a two bay paramedic building with 8 2 bedroom apartments, and other related programs including monthly general meetings and business meetings as well as many other affiliate meetings also at National level.

Presented at a climate change conference regarding blastomycosis. As well, made submissions to federal court regarding the residential school settlement re: language and culture.

Teaching

Fleming College Indigenous Perspectives
Virtual teaching on a partial load contract basis.

2021 and 2023

Introduction to Indigenous Studies GNED 49

This is an introductory and mandatory course for first year students at Fleming College. It is a study of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Students explore the historical and contemporary relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The students will begin to learn the diversity and depth of Indigenous societies, worldviews, and knowledge. One learning outcome is that the student will be able to have an understanding and appreciation of Canada's history and its colonial impacts.

Introduction to Indigenous Knowledges GNED 128

This course is an introduction to Indigenous ways of knowing through engagement with Indigenous philosophies and worldviews as well as indigenous intellectual and cultural traditions.

LEGAL

Staff Lawyer

Kapuskasing Grand Nord Legal Clinic
Aboriginal Justice Initiative Program

Nov. 2017 to March 2019
Kapuskasing Ontario

- Provide legal counsel to Aboriginal clients in the following areas of administrative law: Ontario Works, Canada Pension, Criminal Injuries, Ontario Disability, and Consumer Issues
- Provide summary advice on legal issues for walk in clients.
- Provide legal services in the Cree language to some clients.
- Attend First Nation communities (TTN and CLFN) and Kapuskasing and Cochrane Friendship Centers to provide walk in summary advice legal clinics.
- Provided workshops on requested issues i.e. consent, and child protection.

Lawyer	Niska Law Office Sole owner and operator	2012- 2016 Peterborough Ontario
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided child protection legal defense for parents who have had their children apprehended by child protection services. • Provided defense legal counsel for criminal matters. • Work professionally with all parties including Crown's office and the C.A.S. • Ensured smooth operation of business aspects of law office. • Hired/ fired staff personnel. • Networked with local collateral agencies. 	
Lawyer	Niska Law Office Sole owner and operator	2009- 2012 Timmins Ontario
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide child protection legal defense for parents. • Provide defense legal counsel for criminal matters. • Provided legal service to Indian Residential School claimants with their applications and hearings for those applicants (at times in the Cree language) • Networked professionally with all parties including Crown's office and the Children's Aid Society agencies. • Ensured smooth operation of business aspects of law office. • Hired/ fired staff personnel. • Networked with local collateral agencies. 	
In-house legal counsel	Constance Lake First Nation (CLFN)	August 2005 to 2009
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead negotiator for renewal of federal land lease, ▪ review and/or amend service contracts, policies and bylaws. ▪ Dealt with a variety of laws i.e. employment, contract, construction. ▪ Conferenced with Chief and council regarding upcoming projects and legalities. 	
Student at Law (aboriginal law)	Olthuis Kleer & Townsend	February 2005- July 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review contracts, address jurisdictional legal issues as they relate to First Nation i.e. housing, draft memos. • Legal research relating to a pending land lease negotiations. 	
Student at Law (criminal law)	Fiona Jarvis Criminal lawyer	September 2005- February 2005
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal research and interviewed clients, provide summary reports to principal. • Appeared before criminal court for set dates. 	
Family and Adult Criminal Court Worker	Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto (ALST)	October 1990- November 1996
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explained criminal charges, legal rights and responsibilities, court proceedings to the accused and their family. • Diverted clients to native community council program from criminal courts. • Liaise between families/ accused and the court personnel. • Networked with Native agencies in Toronto and First Nation communities. • Assisted with pre-sentence reports, probation including lawyer referral. • Visited local jails and institutions upon request. 	

SOCIAL SERVICES

- Youth Child Worker Nimkee Nupigawan Treatment Centre November 1996- July 1997
- Assisted youth with solvent abuse problems in their treatment programs.
 - Addressed general requirements including counselling.
- Drug and Alcohol
Counsellor Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto September 1995- September 1996
- Training consists of a variety of components related to drug and alcohol addictions. Including suicide awareness and prevention

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Ontario Bar Association- Aboriginal Law Section Member at large
- Aboriginal Law Students Association
- Board Member- Aboriginal Peoples Council of Toronto
- Board Member- Nijkiwendidaa Anishnaabe Kwewag Services Circle
- Soup kitchens.
- Living Space: free summary advice services,
- Constance Lake FN: help with simple wills and witness signatures.
- Play goalie for street hockey.
- Act as Advisor for student council for CLFN
- Research land and resources in the Cree traditional territory re: treaty/aboriginal rights and benefits with the Matawa Regional Jurisdiction Group