



My name is Kwakwatink and my English name is Shelbee Holtslag (nee Sam). I am a proud Nuuchah-nulth woman from Tseshaht First Nation. My parents are Charles Douglas Sam and Bessie Helena Sam (nee Dick). My maternal grandparents are the Late Howard Dick from Tseshaht and Doris James from Cowichan. My Paternal grandparents are the Late Chuck Sam aka Pushie from Tseshaht and Sylvia Broadfoot (nee Nelson). I also have family from Uchucklesaht and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ.

I am currently 31 years old and have lived within Tseshaht Territory my whole life. Growing up within our community has given me pride and feelings of gratitude knowing that we have a tight-knit community. We wanted our children to grow in a community where we all look after each other, this is why we chose to raise our children here. I have been with my supportive husband Chris Holtslag for 13 years and we have 2 beautiful children, Anthony and Nina. I have 2 sisters, Brandee and Harlee and have 4 nephews and 1 niece. Our family is very close and are the most important people in my life.

In my early years I attended the same school my son currently attends, Haa-huu-payak. It is imperative for my children to learn their language as it is in detrimental circumstances. I want to be proactively involved with passing our language and culture to our generations to come. After graduating from ADSS in 2008 I completed my Hairdressing Certificate at Del Rio Academy to work along side my mother, Bessie at Clip 21. During the 5 years I worked there, I was able to learn the economic aspects of a business and I inquired important communication skills.

In 2013 I decided to go back to school to pursue a new career in the Pharmaceutical field. In 2015 I received Pharmacy Technician certificate. For the past 6 years, I have been working in both retail and hospital pharmacy. During this time, I developed new skills that required absolute precision as it is critical to ensure what I work on is correct. This is a very valuable and rewarding job as it had provided me with the experience to be able to join the First Nation Health Authority in my new capacity as a TB Wellness Champion. I feel that with my education and work experiences I have the knowledge and tools to provide positive aspects/input to make informed decisions as a whole. I am also very eager and inquisitive to learn and grow. It would be an honour to sit on council and to complete work for our Nation.

My hopes and dreams for Tseshaht is to see a nation prosper culturally and economically. I firmly believe that when we proactively work together as one, we can accomplish a stronger and more vibrant community. One of my goals would be to seek opportunities to establish more economic development to provide more jobs and training. As a community member, I understand that everyone has a voice and need to be heard. I feel that it is important to hold more accountability and have open communication. I am dedicated and focused to be there to support one another and to hold each other up. We need to ensure that the future of Tseshaht can continue to thrive and be prosperous for our children, our grandchildren and our great grand children.