

Harley A. Wylie – TFN Election Nominee Profile #2 - 2020

My mom Eva Thomas and grandfather Alex Thomas were Tseshaht. Mom moved us to Tseshaht in 1963, shortly before she died. We were raised by my uncle Bob Thomas and aunt Rose Thomas. Tseshaht was heaven compared to living in a racist USA. I was fortunate to become friends with people like the late Larry ("Bugsy") Gus, Barry Gus, JP Jones (in AIRS at the time) and others. I have great memories of playing basketball for Tseshaht against AIRS in the old barn, other sports at "The Backfield" (Haahuupayak), of being in Port Alberni Boxing Club, chosen to box publicly along with the late Pete Tatoosh, Dixie Watts; many good memories in sports and our rez'.

In the 70's I left for Camosun College, to finish grade 10; then grade 12 and 1st year university. During 1st year I became a single parent, and was chosen to work as a Project Officer at Employment Development Branch (now called HRDC) so didn't return to get a degree. I don't regret my decision to be a single parent.

For over 40 years I have: 1) worked in government program funding administration; 2) Aboriginal non-profit societies delivering program services; and 3) in governance as a board/council member for different societies. I've worked with people of different cultures in social justice initiatives, accredited education curriculum, Asian/First Nation book and video and other Indigenous and inter-cultural initiatives. Good people from other cultures will work with us. My mix of education, experience on/off-reserve, in government/non-profit/private sector, with/for different cultures will benefit representing Tseshaht to deal with City Hall, ACRD, PAPA etc. and local major employers and the general public in this fair (?) city. There are many stakeholders to maneuver our way through. Tseshaht is a major stakeholder and it is time for TFN council to make that clear and act like it. I believe my experience and comfort with this process is an asset – Tseshaht is a major stakeholder and it is time to make that clear and act like it.

When working as TFN administrator it was clear we have staff with ability, experience and important knowledge of our culture and history - and history with local stakeholder issues. They greatly assisted me in important meetings with the City, ACRD etc., and worked well as a TFN team when given the opportunity. Competent staff deserves credit and opportunities to move Tseshaht forward - with a team approach we can do this.

Our community wants and deserves information on activities, finances, opportunities, and regular reports. I have provided reports and as much I was able to in the past. I will continue to do that and more in the future. TFN community members are the shareholders of our businesses, and of our governance activities. Tseshaht community must have more say in community agenda items, more information and input on important opportunities and decisions and more direct support for youth.

In my first government job my supervisor's belief was being a civil servant to mean the public paid the taxes for him to have a job serving them, and that he was to be civil when providing service. And interestingly enough, the word "Samurai" root meaning is "to serve". So, I see my role on council to serve our community, provide information community wants and needs, make sure our community has more input, questions, and give direction on important decisions. That is how it is supposed to be. That is what I offer, experience, fairness, reporting, community getting its voice back and giving direction given to leadership. I will serve Tseshaht and offer good representation with local stakeholders to raise our profile and increase our opportunities.