

VOTE ERRALYN THOMAS AS BCAFN FEMALE YOUTH REP



‘Uy’skweyul si’em una si’yeyu si’em nu s-ts-lh’hwulmuhw. Een’thu Hunqwiithia’ shtun’ni utl Snuneymuxw. Good day my respected friends and relatives. My name is Erralyn Thomas, I am from Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) First Nation.

Vote June 24 @ BCAFN General Assembly, by proxy or personally, held at the Westin Wall Center, Richmond, B.C. You can contact me at erralyn@snuneymuxw.ca or at 778-840-4431.

Who is Erralyn Thomas?

- ❖ My Coast Salish name is Hunqwiithia’ from my maternal grandmother’s side. I am entering 2nd year of law school at UBC with the goal of aiding our First Nations’ governments. I am culturally involved in our Coast Salish way of life (winter and spring ceremonies) and activities (harvesting). Groomed by my grandparents who instilled our teachings within me and encouraged to achieve my dreams, are the values I carry.
- ❖ From Niagara University (NU), New York, I received a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Political Science. I received a 4-year athletic and academic scholarship to attend NU for Women’s Field Lacrosse and went on to compete internationally in the 2009 Women’s World Cup where we, Haudenosaunne (Iroquois) Nation, are the first all-native team recognized as a country.
- My father is John Thomas (Snuneymuxw) and my mother is Maureen Thomas (Quw’utsun). My paternal grandparents were Oscar Thomas and Phyliss Wyse (Snuneymuxw) and my maternal grandparents are Catherine (Sylvester) and Tony Williams (Quw’utsun). Isaac Thomas is my older brother and I have 2 nieces and a nephew (Snuneymuxw).

Why Vote for Erralyn Thomas? – “With a vision to help our People”

- I have strong communication, analytical writing and business skills. I am interpersonal, intellectual, approachable and respectful. I have practical experience (Internship with the First Nations Summit and the Government of B.C.) in governance and the common issues First Nations face while affirming jurisdiction over our land and resources. I have knowledge of legal and political frameworks, such as how federal/provincial legislation affects various issues. As your female youth representative, I will utilize these skills and abilities to advocate for youth recognition at the community, regional, provincial and federal levels of government.
- Specifically, I will address the educational issues our youth face in the secondary and post-secondary institutions, advocating for respectful and culturally appropriate policies. Overall, First Nations people make up 20% of the jail and prison population where most lack access to justice; these are some legal issues I intend to address. I will also illuminate the societal issues, including rights and title, we endure daily. As a role model for 2 First Nations organizations traveling to communities speaking to our youth, I will continue as a source of inspiration, support and encouragement. As your female youth representative, we can further these efforts facilitating prosperity for future generations.

A message from Erralyn Thomas:

We, the youth, are 60% of the indigenous population and a wealthy resource for our leaders therefore it is imperative we contribute to our collective prosperity in the political and social forums! A mentor once told me that when “I find myself on the other side of the table with our non-First Nations friends that I be discreet yet strong on our traditional principles”. As your female youth representative, not only will I be a political advocate for our youth, I will also support our youth in pursuing their dreams. It is with the greatest humility that I invite you, our Chiefs, to aid in my effort to help our youth rise! It is with the fair winds at my back, I say Hy’tseep qa’ o’ stets alu’ tthey tthuna sqwul siem.