

I submit the following as a biography for the position of Director for the BC AFN; please advise if there is further information required or a shorter article is in order. Thank you.

I am a mother, grandmother, daughter, sister and First Nations woman who was born in Clearwater, BC, in my maternal grandmother's home. I was raised in Clearwater until I was six years old, when our family moved to my mother's home community of Katzie. I attended Catholic day school in Maple Ridge for a number of years while living in Katzie, and then moved to the United States with my family. Before this move, I was in foster care for a few years and was fortunate enough to be placed in a caring and supportive environment.

I have eight brothers and originally five sisters (one diseased), and though we struggled as many of our families have, most of us have been able to move on to post-secondary education, personal business ventures, and fulfilling careers. I am the hereditary Chief of Skawahlook First Nation, situated at Ruby Creek between Agassiz and Hope, and belong to the Sto:lo Nation Chiefs Council (SNCC) of 11 communities. I am the proud mother of one son and three grandsons, who are a continuous reminder of the importance of the advocacy and decision-making processes I am involved in.

Educational background includes Social Work – diploma program at the University of the Fraser Valley; Aboriginal Adult Learners - teaching degree from Vancouver Community College; Communication and Technical Writing diploma program – Washington State Community College, Pasco, Wa.; and a number of personal and career development courses/seminars/conferences.

Political background: on Skawahlook Council since 1991; installed as the Hereditary Chief in 1999, and have developed a succession plan for the next Hereditary Chief from the young women in the Skawahlook community; inaugural chair for the Assembly of First Nations Women's Council.

Related activities: member of the Sto:lo Nation Chiefs Council; Sto:lo Xwexwilmexw Treaty Society; Health Chair – Sto:lo Nation Board of Directors; Political Chair – Aboriginal Children and Families Chiefs Coalition; SNCC representative – First Nations Interim Health Governance Committee; SNCC representative – Interim First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council; member – newly developed political Task Force – BC Chiefs Assembly; member – National Indian Child Welfare Association (USA); former co-chair – National Aboriginal Health Organization (Ottawa).

Volunteer work: Sto:lo Development Corporation; Chilliwack Healthier Communities initiative; Coast Salish Gathering Steering Committee; First Nations home groups – bi-weekly.

Chief Maureen J. Chapman
Skawahlook First Nation