



BACKGROUNDER: About the Climate Youth Advisory Group Members

The Climate Youth Advisory Group is made up of 11 individuals under the age of 30 who care about climate change and want to make a difference.

Here's a little more about them.

Beaufort Delta Region



Jessi Pascal is from Aklavik - a multi-cultured (Inuvialuit/Gwich'in) community in the Mackenzie Delta. She is the youngest of Eugene and Olive Pascal. Her late grandparents are John and Rosie Pascal and Harry and Ella Gordon (who are originally from Barter Island, Alaska). After graduating from the Environment and Natural Resources Technology Diploma, she has had a plethora of job experiences related to the environment. She has worked at the Ehdiiat Renewable Resource Council (ERRC) in Aklavik, the Inuvialuit Joint Secretariat as their Traditional Knowledge Technician, as an

Environmental Coordinator at the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board (GRRB) in Inuvik and currently works as the Community Engagement Coordinator with the Wildlife Management Advisory Council North Slope (WMAC NS). The WMAC and Aklavik Hunters and Trappers (AHTC) work closely together.

Since a young age, Jessi has been an avid on-the-land person that cared for the environment, and she continues to spend a lot of time out there as an active hunter. Jessi is also an alternate for the Climate Change Adaptation Committee (CCAC) and previously sat on many youth councils regionally and nationally. Jessi has been to several conferences/meetings regarding the governance and protection of the Porcupine Caribou. She is excited to see what this council will be doing for the Territory and looks forward to jumping into conversations on Climate Action.



Grace Illasiak is a Youth who currently lives in Aklavik. She is a member of the ISR Regional Youth Advisory Group and has used her time on the Youth Group to advocate for the local needs and concerns of Aklavik and its Youth. Grace spends much of her time on the land to stay connected to her culture and traditions, and wants to create a future where this can continue despite climate change.

Dehcho Region



Mary Ann Minoza-Sylvester is a member of the West Point First Nation and BRDN. Mary Ann is a descendant of trappers, fishers and hunters from around the Great Slave Lake and Northern Saskatchewan. Mary Ann is the granddaughter of Jim & Maria Thomas and Clement Sylvester. Her great grandfather navigated RCMP by dog team, before the highway was built. This amplified her interest in learning about the NWT landscape and waters. Mary Ann is a member of the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) and is an advocate for water. She is concerned that the vast water of Great Slave Lake has not been fully documented with depths of up to 2014 ft. She notes that there have been recent record-breaking floods, forest fires and other impacts of climate change in the NWT, such as the invasive species moving into the territory. She believes it's time to take climate change seriously, especially for the little ones coming behind us.



Lauren Corneille-Lafferty is learning about traditional plants in her community of Fort Simpson. My parents are Teena & Mike Lafferty. Currently attending a Home Herbalist program with Pacific Rim College virtually. By joining the CYAG is an exciting chapter in my life to gain knowledge for future generations.

North Slave Region



Tanisha Beaverho is from Behchoko, NT and is part of the Tlicho First Nations. Tanisha previously worked with the Community government of Behchoko as a youth recreation leader. She currently works for the Tlicho government and has had the opportunity to be involved in some amazing workshops around climate change and traditional knowledge. Tanisha is passionate about climate change, especially in the NWT where it is affecting Indigenous ways of life. She looks forward to bringing awareness to youth across the Territory on the seriousness of climate change and to getting more youth engaged on the topic.



Jody Ann Zoe is a proud Tłıchǫ woman born in Sòǵmbak'è (Yellowknife) and raised in Behchokò, NT. Jody is the daughter of Joseph (Joe Clo) Zoe and Violet Erasmus-Zoe. Jody is a Tłıchǫ Youth Representative for the Dene Nation Youth Council and a member of the National Youth Council for the Native Women's Association of Canada. She is passionate about advocating for her community and the youth of the NWT. She believes it's only right to take care of the environment for the youth of today and tomorrow.



Sahtu Region



Andrew Speakman works to help the people, plants, and animals of the north! He is from the Sahtu region and now lives in Yellowknife. He studied math and physics in the University of Alberta, and has a background in statistics. Recently Andrew started work with Climate Change and Air Quality Division within ENR. Andrew enjoys encouraging youth to become more involved in science and technology. Andrew aims to draw upon his scientific background to contribute to informed decisions on climate issues and to make a real impact.

South Slave Region



Julia Gyapay (she/her) is a second-generation white settler of Hungarian ancestry, born and raised on Treaty 8 territory in Hay River. Julia recently completed a Master of Science in Public Health and Health Systems at the University of Waterloo. She currently lives on Chief Drygeese Territory in Somba K'e (Yellowknife) where she works as a Research Associate in Community Engagement and Climate Change Adaptation for Wilfrid Laurier University. In her free time, Julia can be found coaching the NWT cross-country ski team and exploring the outdoors.



Reegan Jungkind is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Political science and Sociology at the University of Alberta. She was raised in Hay River, and the community is the driving force behind what she wants with her life. She is dedicated to helping communities in the NWT thrive. Climate change mitigation and adaptation is important because the NWT is facing disproportionately higher risks related to climate change in many communities. She is looking forward to



helping create solutions to these issues. Reagan was also one of the recent youth delegates to attend COP27.

Yellowknife Region



James Thomas was born and raised in Yellowknife, NT. He has an Economics degree from Mount Allison University and is currently a Law Student at the University of New Brunswick. Between degrees he worked at the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories in an internship and as the Senior Research Analyst.



Ellen Gillies is a settler from Ontario who has gratefully called Denendeh home for six years. She is currently studying towards her MSW and Dechinta Certificate in Land and Community-Based Research. She has worn various hats in Yellowknife including bookseller, climate organizer, youth canoe trip leader, and federal public servant.