



BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres
BCAAFC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2025

**The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres
Welcomes New Executive Director**

VICTORIA, B.C. — The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Celeste Hayward as the new Executive Director, effective September 8, 2025.

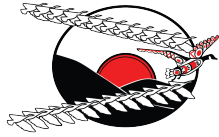
Hayward is a proud Wet'suwet'en mixed woman from the Bear Clan. Since beginning her career in 2003, she has worked with and alongside urban Indigenous communities across Canada, bringing over two decades of grassroots responsive leadership in service delivery, Indigenous policy, and community collaboration. Hayward has a long-standing relationship with Friendship Centres, having worked with Centres in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec.

"We are thrilled to welcome Celeste to BCAAFC," said Annette Morgan, President of BCAAFC. Her leadership experience, cultural grounding, and dedication to community well-being make her an excellent fit for this role."

As Executive Director, Hayward will lead BCAAFC's work to support 25 Friendship Centres across the province, advance reconciliation, and advocate for the self-determination of urban Indigenous peoples through culturally grounded programs and services.

"I'm honoured to join BCAAFC and stand alongside such a dedicated network of Indigenous leaders and organizations," said Hayward. "Together, we will continue to elevate the voices of Friendship Centres and strengthen the path forward for our communities."

BCAAFC extends its deep gratitude to former Executive Director, Leslie Varley for her years of leadership and service. Since taking on the role in 2016, Varley played a



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vital role in guiding the Association through the COVID-19 pandemic and was instrumental in the creation of the world's first MBA in Advancing Reconciliation, developed in partnership with the University of Victoria. We thank Leslie Varley for her many contributions and wish her continued success in her next chapter.

For more information about BCAAFC and its work, please visit <https://bcaafc.com/>.

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