

2021 Warrior Program Update

Introduction

This last year was filled with a variety of opportunities to learn and apply new skills. Please follow this link to our 2021 video report: [Warriors Program Model 2021 on Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/598631517) (<https://vimeo.com/598631517>)



Together, the youth planned training weekends in their community and to remote parts of their territory. Here they spent time learning on the land but also creating better campsites, building safer trails, or learning how to construct a cabin or a sheltered firepit. Learning these skills created opportunities for the youth to see what they enjoyed and figure out what they might be good at. The youth also travelled to support the efforts of other Warriors in other Nations. It has been healthy to see how willing they are to support each other's visions for their communities.

We have uncovered and embedded more important practices into the program model. One of the most important practices is that the voice of the youngest person carries the most weight when deciding what to do within a program. Another important practice is that a person should only be the Community Coordinator for two or three years at the most. This ensures that up and coming leaders will have a turn to coordinate the program and to create leadership depth within the community.

Throughout this year, the groups especially loved coming together to create Nation-to-Nation connections between the youth. Each Nation is starting to take on specializations, meaning that communities can go to each other for support. Ucluelet has been hosting Advanced Snorkeling and Harvesting, Tla-o-qui-aht has offered driver training, and Huu-ay-aht has sharing carpentry skills with others. We have learned that this is how it was; the Nuuchah-nulth would help each other. The youth are naturally modeling it for us.

Multi-Nation Initiatives

Collective Funding Applications

Over the last year we have applied to several grant applications and have found a good amount of success in multi-Nation applications. This year we were able to secure funding to support driver training and to develop new courses like the Advanced Snorkeling and Harvesting course that we created with Bottom Dwellers Free Diving. Three Nations (Huu-ay-aht, Tla-o-qui-aht and Kyuquot) were successful in their application to build sheltered fire pits at traditional village locations in remote parts of their territories. We were able to secure funding to support



trail building work to create new access and revitalize old overgrown routes. We were also able to secure a substantial grant with Transport Canada to pay for an 8-day 'Boat Camp' Course that gives them time on the water to apply what they will learn in their Small Vessel Operator courses (SVOP, MED-A3 and ROC-M).

Driver Training

During this year, we partnered with ICBC, PHSA and the BCCDC to host a driver training pilot program with the youth in the Central region. We offered online classes to prepare them for the L-knowledge test, which was hosted locally in our community. We also offered two weeks of in-car driver training for any youth that wanting to get some more time behind the wheel. We are currently working on the second phase of this pilot program that addresses some of the gaps we found in the first offering of this support.

Sheltered Fire Pit/Gazebo Building

Both the Huu-ay-aht and the Tla-o-qui-aht teams were able to raise the capital costs to build shelters over the summer. Huu-ay-aht built a sheltered gazebo on Diana Island in Barkley Sound, which is used every year for their culture camp. Tla-o-qui-aht built a sheltered fire pit with the grant that they received in an area that their community uses every year for youth summer camps. Both communities hired a North Island College Instructor to ensure the youth could learn these skills.



Off-Grid Cabin Building

The Tla-o-qui-aht team was able to raise the capital funding to build a 20x24 off-grid cabin. This



Community Healing Cabin was built in a traditional garden of the Tla-o-qui-aht people where they cultivated plants they brought from across BC. In this project, the youth leaders learned firsthand how much coordination is required for a cabin building project in a remote location. It was great to see the high number of youth that came together from various Nuuchah-nulth Nations to complete the cabin project under the leadership of the Tla-o-qui-aht leadership team.

Planning Aids

During the year we developed a training aid to help youth plan a weeknight training event or a weekend training gathering. We found that using the same planning process enabled everyone to be on the same page when planning at the multi-Nation level. The planning aids help youth to visualize the plan and to not miss any important factors or considerations. This has increased their comfortable level with taking on the planning of a weeknight or weekend.



Advanced Snorkeling & Harvesting Course

During the pandemic, it became obvious that we needed to find other solutions to feed the people should things ever get worse. With that in mind, the Ucluelet First Nation team co-created a course that would teach the youth how to harvest seafood from the inter-tidal zones. This would typically include traditional foods such as sea urchin, scallops, chitons, and crab. We were also able to secure a grant that would allow us to offer this course twice to each of the Nations as well as buy gear for four youth to be able to provide for their community members.

Four-Phase Launch Cycle

Over this last training year, we have been able to better refine the approach that Nations should use if they want to shape one of these models. The training to create and launch a Warrior model now takes place in four phases over 12 months. We are now teaching this launch approach to our youth mentors so we will have more trainers that understand how to shape these programs with other Nations.

Building Partnerships

We continue to build partnerships with allies in this work. This year, we have been able to increase our work with a number of organizations:

PHSA: Indigenous Youth Wellness Team

Ask Auntie Outdoors is being offered as the women's version to this model. This is a program that has been offered online and provides some important resources for wellness conversations with young women.

WildSafeBC

WildSafeBC has been a supporter of the program for several years and were able to come out with us on a few more weekends this year because we were able to support some of their costs for the first time. It will be valuable to build this relationship so we can continue to learn the western knowledge to accompany the traditional teachings.

Indigenous Youth Mountain Bike Association

This year IYMBA supported the Huu-ay-aht, Kyuquot and Ucluelet teams to build trails in and around their villages. In partnership, we were able to raise funding for 7 weeks of trail building training that came at no cost to the Nations.

AdventureSmart BC

We have been able to get free safety supplies from AdventureSmart BC. These include whistles, signalling cards and emergency blankets that we distribute to the youth during training weekends and gatherings.

BCCDC: Chee Mamuk

We have formed a strong partnership with Chee Mamuk out of the BCCDC. This connection allows us to access health and wellness information that is delivered with an Indigenous lens. Specifically, we are now a part of their Skookum TumTum work looking at ways to keep young men away from substance abuse and addiction challenges.

Warrior Games (Spring) & Warrior Cup (Fall)

We have seen huge momentum build from bringing Nations together to compete against one another. These are two more ideas that the youth put forward that have become a consistent part of the program model. Warrior Games takes place in the spring and brings the youth together to compete in traditional Nuuchahnulth games. Warrior Cup takes place in the fall and brings the youth together to compete in more modern games. These two collective training events create opportunities for our youth to reconnect with old friends and create new ones across the entire Nuuchahnulth family.



Next Steps

In November, we started the co-creation of a program with Ditidaht First Nation and in March 2022, we will be supporting Hupačasath First Nation to shape their own version of this model bringing us to 8 actively running Warrior programs in Nuuchahnulth territory. In 2022, we will continue to seek funding to cover the capital costs of useful structures that we would like to build such as sheltered fire pits and tent platforms out on the land and sweat lodges and smoke houses in the villages of each Nation.

The youth that have previously been involved in Warriors are now taking on roles within community to serve and perpetuate the program. We also see a need emerging for more mentorship time to enhance the classroom learning that they have acquired. This will be an important goal for this year. Another important goal will be to continue to grow the mentorship team that can teach others how to create this models in their Nations.