

WKTS TREATY UPDATE

WWW.WKTS.CA

JULY 16, 2020

WWW.ENGAGETREATY.CA

The Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah Treaty Society (WKTS) is focused on exploring different mechanisms to exert our Nations' interests. Treaty negotiations and participation in various Technical Working Groups enable Wei Wai Kum to maximize self-jurisdiction in areas like Land Code and Taxation. Capitalizing on Land Code and Taxation authority means that through treaty work we are advancing our interests both now and for the future. The Language Revitalization Program, as noted below, is one example of many to grow our Nations interest and culture. With Treaty Loan Forgiveness (no longer required to repay Canada), there is a benefit to explore Treaty and in doing so contemplate different paths – parallel to and in conjunction with Treaty- to assert self-governance and rights jurisdiction.

CHECK OUT THE NEW WKTS WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE
WWW.WKTS.CA



Congratulations to our **Engage Treaty participant, Priscilla Bruce** who won a new Apple iPad– sign up at www.engagetreaty.ca to learn more and to be involved.

LIQ'WALA REVITALIZATION AND RECLAMATION SUPPORT UPDATE

One of the “spin-off” benefits of treaty is our ability to support language revitalization and as a result, since 2015, WKTS, in collaboration with LTS (We Wai Kai), has been actively supporting language revitalization and reclamation. Our goal was to support the already robust language programs that were being offered in the communities and at the schools as well as to build the language program overall. Currently, the entire language program is supported by grant money that is actively sought by our treaty team.

The largest language program we support is the Mentor-Apprentice Program. This program pairs a dedicated language learner with a language speaker for 300 hours/year for 3 years. To improve upon this program, we have been able to provide a 4th year for many of the apprentices, who then support a new apprentice in their first year. To date we have had five apprentices complete their hours with another six apprentices in their 1st to 3rd years. Some apprentices have also transitioned to Jr. Mentors, language teachers in the preschools, and language teachers in the school district bilingual program. Funding for this program has come from First Peoples and FNEESC.

Beginning in August 2019, we had funding through the United Church Healing Fund to offer an Advanced Apprentice Program. This is a class of 3rd and 4th year apprentices, along with other advanced language learners. They meet weekly with Emily Aitken and focus on conversational language skills. This group also benefitted from a workshop with Dr. Urbanczyk, a linguist from UVic. This class will continue in September 2020 with the support of First Peoples.

Our language program also supports Elders who once spoke or understand our language. This group meets weekly and through trust, respect and working together, they are reclaiming their language. This program was first funded by the Community Resilience Fund and is now funded through First Peoples.

We also support the production of language-learning materials. In 2017-19 we developed the language tablets that are used in the preschools and by many families in the community (funding through Jordan's Principle). We support language curriculum material development in the preschools and have worked to translate 40 books to ensure learners have books to read in the language. We are also recording these books and posting them to the internet so people can read along to improve their pronunciation. We are also writing books in collaboration with Elders who want to share their stories, both in English and Liq'wala, and we are recording activities, such as salmon cutting, in the language and will be sharing it widely for people to learn.

Finally, we continue to work with the school district to ensure the success of the bilingual primary program at Ripplerock School. The first year, in spite of Covid-19, was a great success and we look forward to a second year of the program for grades K and 1.

While there is still much to do, WKTS would like to thank those language champions who are working hard to reclaim their language and become the teachers for the next generations. Their hard work and dedication is appreciated and we are grateful that they continue this work for our future generations and us today.

We are also grateful to our funders: First Peoples, FNEESC, Jordan's Principle, United Church, Community Resilience Fund, British Columbia negotiation team, New Relationship Trust, and Kleanza Archaeological Consulting.