

## Message from Derek Thompson - *Thlaapkiituup*

Please accept this message from me in consideration of your vote for the by-election for the position of Council Member for the Ditidaht First Nation. I extend much gratitude to Dorothy Burn (nee Edgar) and my Uncle Jack Thompson for your nomination and support.



My name is Derek Thompson - *Thlaapkiituup* and my parents are Charlie - *Bookwilla* and Maude - *Ki ke inisaksa* (nee Shaw) Thompson. My paternal grandparents were Webster and Ida (nee Modeste) Thompson, and my maternal grandparents were Micha and Irene (nee Larsen) Shaw. I have immediate and extended family in Ditidaht, Cowichan Tribes, Kitimaat, and Bella Bella. My ancestral name, *Thlaapkiituup*, was put on me by my late Uncle Art Thompson - *Tsakwasap* in Port Alberni in ~1995, and this name was held in stewardship by him at the direction of my late Papa Webster.

I was raised in Ditidaht in my childhood and I was influenced and mentored by my late Gran Ida and Papa Webster, my Papa Mike Thompson, my Mom and Dad, my great grandmothers Mary Thompson - *Tee Tie Bo* (nee Chester) and Lena Johnson, my late Granny Flossy Edgar (nee Thompson), my late Uncles Stan Chester, Joe Edgar and Ernie Chester. I remember being struck by the inspiring lives of people like Amy Thompson, Fred Peters, Joe and Johnny Johnson, Carl Edgar Sr., Martin Edgar, Frank and Susan Knighton, Joshua Edgar, Martin Charles, and Richard Tate. I formed fond and meaningful friendships in my youth with all of the descendants that stem from these incredible people including the late Tommy Johnson and Gary Nookemus.

***I want your vote.*** In return I will commit to earning your confidence by working hard for your best interests. There's never been a more important time in this era of telling our truth and reconciling for the future to make things right in our homes and community. The time to make things happen is now. The time to seek out our individual and shared power is now. We may have been set on a journey that has led to nowhere, and we may have experienced many defeats and blinding pain. We're on a new journey now and the passage we are charting will ensure a collective victory for all of our people. There will be plenty of room in our canoe for healing, growth and the recognition of our language, identity and being. We all come from epic and eternal forebears anchored in the balance between the present and the past, and it is this genetic code that lives in every one of us both as proud human beings and as mighty warriors. Let us direct each other to all that is good and whole, strong and resilient, and determined and dignified. Let us once again reach the highest levels of self-respect and collective nobility with a resilience that meets every adversity with endurance and grace. Let us be the New

Ancestors that seek out and grant a new power in which we all succeed, we all know happiness, and we all know the true worth of our spirit.

By way of qualification, for 30+ years I have been working in either a First Nations community or organization, and that's taken my career all over this great province and country working in the areas of health and community development. I was recently employed as the Health Director for Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre for Cowichan Tribes from 2015 - 2021, and I also served in a dual role as their A/General Manager from 2019. I am currently employed as the *Indigenous Initiatives Advisor* with the Office of Respectful Environments, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion with the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine - <https://redi.med.ubc.ca/about/contact-us/our-team/>. In this role I provide senior level guidance on the overall implementation of the Faculty's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the In Plain Sight Report. I am also an active and conscientious member on the Ditidaht First Nation Lands Management Advisory Committee. I have a double honors degree in Native Studies and History from the University of Saskatchewan.

Our leaders of the past talked about the importance of dignity - that a leader should not only know his own worth but also to be worthy to the community. Our elders talked about the importance of language - that a leader should know the value of teaching our languages to our children in every aspect of today's education system. The great leaders of the past talked about the urgency for all of us as First Nations and Indigenous peoples to decolonize - that to be truly independent is to rid ourselves of the continuing legacy of oppression and to assimilate ourselves in our own culture, ceremonies and languages. There is a need for today's leaders to return back to the ways of our Ancestors - that in this era there was an absence of arrogance and a strong foundation of humility that put the wellness of the community first. The leaders in our communities must focus on working with the people - that this work must reflect the true worth of a sense of belonging, strength of culture and the values of independence. I pledge to uphold these values in an effort to anchor our work to all that our Ancestors aspired to, sacrificed themselves for, and that they hoped for in building a better future for all members of our great community.

I currently live in Cowichan Bay within the unceded and occupied territories of Cowichan Tribes. If you have any questions or require further information about my political platform please feel free to contact/text/FaceTime me on my iPhone at (613)330-9363 or email me at [derek\\_k\\_thompson@hotmail.com](mailto:derek_k_thompson@hotmail.com) or you can find me as *Derek Thompson* on Facebook and Facebook Messenger. In this ongoing global pandemic, I am adhering to the Provincial Health Officer's directives in an effort to do my part in keeping everyone safe, and so I am going to limit my direct contact with people during the campaign. If you would like to meet with me I can make the necessary arrangements for us to meet via ZOOM. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely Yours,



Derek Thompson - *Thlaapkiituup*