

# Noel Argueta



Hello all,

First I would like to say thanks to both Verna Howard and Carmen Turner for nominating me for a seat on Council. I am very humbled to be nominated by two respected members of the community. I would also like to commend current and previous Chief and Council for their service to Gitsegukla, I know being in those positions making hard decisions for the better often comes under great scrutiny. My decision to run for council was not taken lightly.

I look forward to the possibility of bringing my experience as a Community Liaison to industry for Kitselas First Nation for the last three years. During my time with Kitselas I've been able to build relationships with First Nations along the Skeena and throughout the province. I was also tasked with coordinating a trip for Kitselas Administration to meet with First Nations local to Gladstone Australia last fall. Being apart of a progressive First Nations government has been a very valuable learning experience.

Since my early teens I have been groomed to be a leader within my family. I am active in our culture, a culture I am very proud of, so I take every opportunity to encourage others of my generation to take it as seriously as I do. I am committed to working toward having it fully preserved. One of my goals is working with our neighboring communities Gitwangax and Gitanyow on standardizing curriculum that has our Gyeets dialect taught the same in our respective elementary schools. Collaboration among the mentioned communities has proved to work in the past with the cultural dancers, and I believe we can build on this to preserve our Adawaak ganhls Ayook.

Being raised on a fixed income in Gitsegukla I understand the amount of hurdles in place for much of our membership. With the majority of minimum wage job postings requiring a high school diploma emphasizes the fact that now more than ever, we have to work together on getting our youth through high school, and setup nicely for post secondary education to pursue their dreams.

Over the years there have been many losses to mental health issues in our nation, I have lost a few very close friends to suicide. This is a very sensitive subject for myself, and of course for their families. One suicide is too many, there is a glaring need for mental health awareness in our area, and the capacity to help those get better, or cope with chronic issues. Work needs to be done to rid the stigma that exists with having a mental health problem, so that those who need the help aren't ashamed to seek it.

Thank you for taking the time to read about a few of the ideas I have for Gitsegukla. I realize that there is already a process in place to get feedback from community via the Comprehensive Community Plan. I hope that everyone will take advantage of the opportunity to provide input to a process that will guide leadership.

If I am not elected to council, I hope that those who are elected keep these ideas at the forefront of their minds. I know that there is a huge amount of work to be done, and I would be honored to be part of the elected leadership that helps this work be carried out.

Widis t'ooyisi'y nis'm!