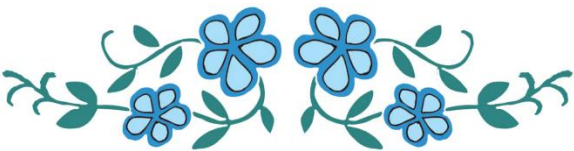




The Yukon Native Language Centre is excited to release our first YNLC Newsletter “Neek” – meaning *News* or *To Tell* in Tlingít.

Welcome to the first edition of Neek. The goal of *Neek* is to ensure Yukon First Nations, community partners, and the public stay connected and informed about the work YNLC is carrying out to uphold all Yukon First Nation languages. Within each issue, you will find updates on the language initiatives, programming, and projects that the YNLC is leading. Issues will include community spotlights, comics, audio links and more!



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YNLC Project Highlights

Youth Today: Language Leaders Tomorrow

The Youth Today, Language Leaders Tomorrow (YTLLT) program launched its second cohort of youth language trainees to learn Yukon First Nation language full-time in August 2024.

The goal of the YTLLT program is to foster future generations of leaders who will contribute to the strengthening of their languages, pursue careers in languages, and become language champions to carry their languages into the future.



Photo: Elders Edarume' Alyce Joe and Northern Tutchone trainees at hide camp.

This new cohort is made up of 14 language trainees and focusses on three Yukon First Nation Languages: Hän, Dän K'í (Northern Tutchone), and Tlingít. Each cohort consist of 4 – 5 language trainees, a language coordinator to support and connect the YTLLT's to fluent speakers, language classes, land-based learning, and immersion sessions. Since August 2024, the cohorts have taken part in hide-tanning camps, hunting trips, met with fluent speakers, taken part in weekly language classes and language revitalization courses, started genealogy and language research projects, and will be launching their first resource development project in the coming weeks.

Based on feedback from the previous YTLLT cohort, YNLC worked to secure a home-based learning environment for the Hän students in Dawson City, and the Dän K'í and Tlingít students in Whitehorse with the hope of normalizing learning spaces that reflect students' everyday lives. The program hopes to strengthen trainees skills in language advocacy and leadership training that they can bring into their future careers. While the language trainees are in the early stages of their journey, YNLC is beyond excited that many of the trainees wish to become language teachers, linguists, and Language Leaders!

The 2024 second cohort consists of: Abi Billy Freeman, Azraella Oliverio, Madison Silas-Gill, Lauren McGinty, Patricia Wallingham, Magy Toews, Zanya Gallant-McGinty, Cassie Johnston, Leigha Douville, Danielle Van Bibber, Teresa Procee, Jane Coulson, Jem Titus, Laurie Van Bibber

This program would not be possible without the financial contribution of the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, the Yukon Native Language Centre, and partnerships with Teslin Tlingit Council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and Carcross Tagish First Nation.

See the news releases related to the 2024 cohort:

See the CBC news release: <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6541988>

See the full press conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcGpnquvIPc>

From 2021- 2023, the Youth Today, Language Leaders Tomorrow pilot program *Kwàdgy Dän Tān Yíx Yaa Yana.at Aa*, meaning “We Walk the Path of Our Ancestors”, saw 11 graduates of the program and laid the foundation for the current three cohorts. All 11 graduates have gone on to gain language revitalization positions within their First Nation or within community organizations. Atléin Gunalchéesh, Ngha Shàwníthän to the first YTLT cohort who serve as today's language leaders and positive role models for other learners.



YTLT trainees at 2023 Graduation Celebration.

Tagàyàtày Dustin Hill, Gádzûsdà Tayī Van Bibber, Khusínûk' Leah Smarch, Dleit Héen Tláa Taneshia Jules, Ch'áak Yádi Abigail Turner, Khàgâne Zoë Grant-Wolfe, Shgùnàkh Cordell Jules, Áyínzhia Cory Holway, Shàn Tlaa Nicole Welin, Shàkwälità Nathan Easterson-Moore, Béebi Zhōh Stewart “Stewie” Tizya

YFN Languages Curriculum Initiative

The YNLC has embarked on a multi-year project to develop a progressive, sequenced language curriculum framework, guiding learners from beginner to fluent speaker. This initiative will create a Yukon First Nations curriculum framework adaptable to specific languages, cultures, and communities.

The framework will support various lifelong language learning programs, including pre-natal, traditional parenting, early learning, K-12 language programs, adult post-secondary education, land-based learning, immersion programs, Mentor Apprentice Programs, healing programs, and more. Additionally, this project will provide tools for language teachers and program planners across these diverse programs, such as:



Team members, Elders, and youth discussing how people learn language.

Curriculum Guides:
Detailed guides outlining the scope and sequence of language learning from beginner to advanced levels.

Teaching Resources:
Lesson plans, activity ideas, and multimedia resources tailored to different age groups and learning environments.

Assessment Tools:
Methods and instruments for evaluating language proficiency and progress.

Professional Development:
Training workshops and materials for language teachers to enhance their instructional skills.

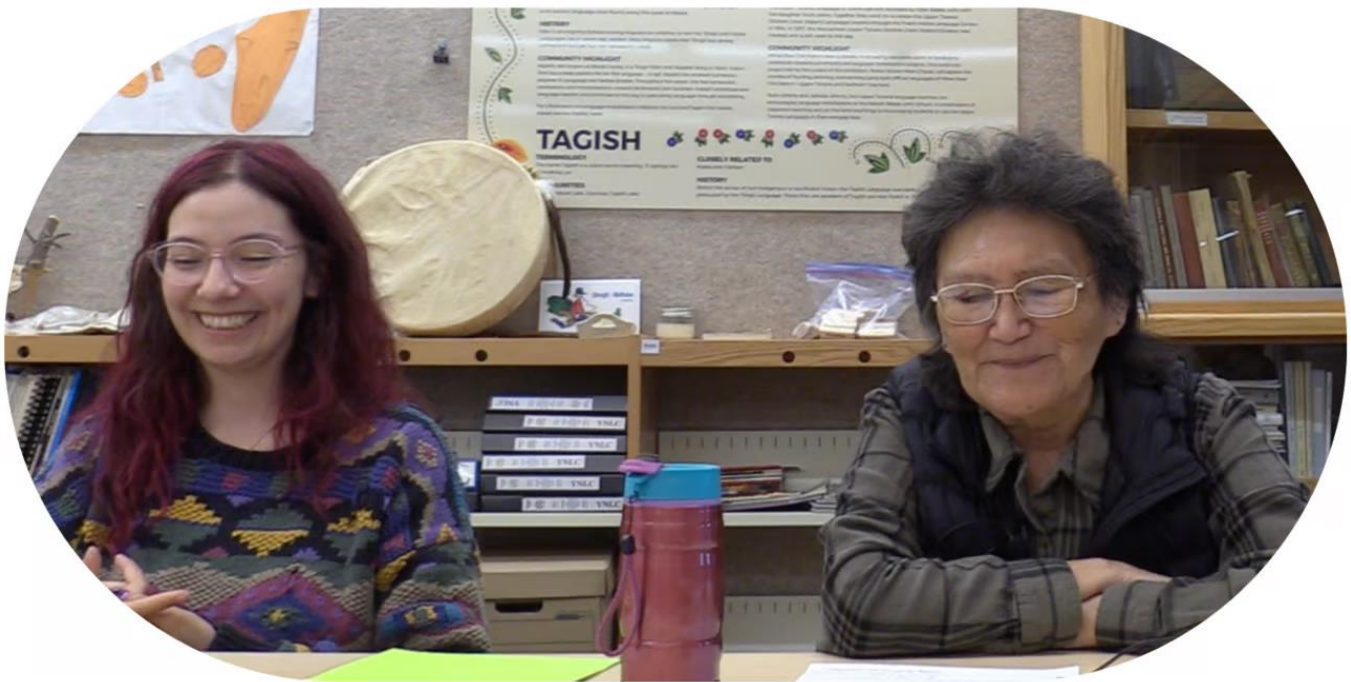
Community Engagement Resources:
Strategies and materials to involve families and communities in language learning initiatives.

The project is in partnership with and supported by the First Nations School Board, and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate. Language experts from the 8 language groups comprise a Language Technician Team that provides advice, guidance, and language expertise for the project. The project outcomes will be

community-driven, with local input shaping the development of tailored language curricula for Yukon First Nations. Guided by Elders, fluent speakers, language teachers, language coaches, the Language Technician Team, and youth representatives, the project is rooted in Yukon First Nation values, honoring past and current work in Yukon First Nations language curriculum. It incorporates research on related models and best practices to support the development of full fluency for language speakers with a strong cultural identity.

“The curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment approaches come from the creator, the land, and the ancestors.”

In the 2023/2024 fiscal year, YNLC hired a Curriculum Development Specialist, Tina Jules to lead the co-development of the curriculum framework and conduct language research. YNLC hosted three in-person and two online Language Technician Team meetings and developed a phased project plan, recorded numerous videos of Yukon First Nations that will inform the framework and established partnerships to support the program.



Elder Chughala Lorraine Allen telling her story at a curriculum meeting with Shānch'ea.

Simon Fraser University Courses Update

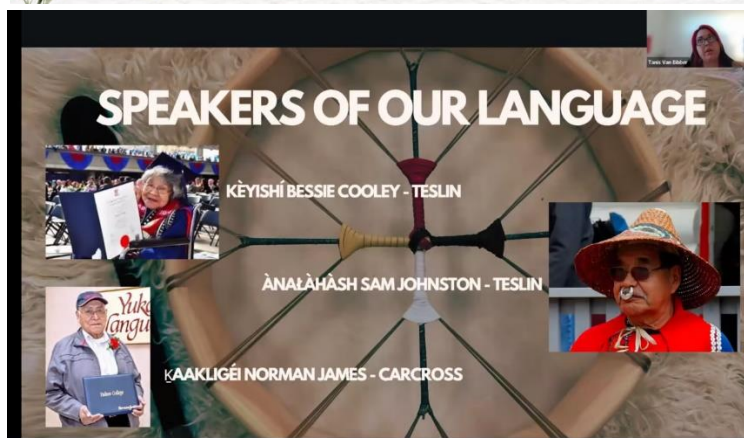
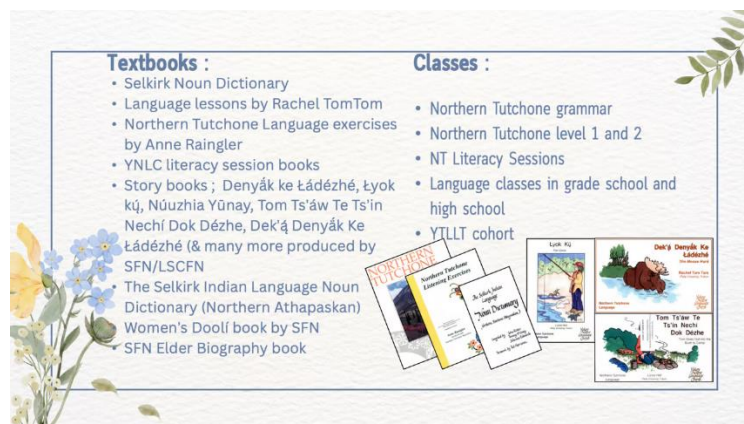
Fall 2024 Courses

Students in the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Language Revitalization class created language maps based on environmental scans of their languages. Students were responsible for researching speakers of the language, orthographies, dialects, resources, courses, and stories, histories, and traditional laws to help guide them in their journey.

Some of the courses offered this Fall semester included:

- Introduction to Phonetics
- Advanced Tlingit Grammar II
- Hän Level 1

Here are some examples of resources made by students:



We are excited to announce the Winter 2025 SFU course schedule!

Language Classes Winter 2025



Dän K'è Southern Tutchone Level 1 (INLG 133)

Schedule: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 12:00-1:00 p.m.,
Thursdays 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Delivery: Online

Course Start Date: January 14, 2025

Hän Level 2 (INLG 134)

Schedule: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 3:30-5:00 p.m.,
Thursdays 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Delivery: Online

Course Start Date: January 14, 2025

Intro to Upper Tanana Grammar (INLG 200)

Schedule: Thursdays from 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Delivery: Online

Course Start Date: January 10, 2025

Intro to Dän K'í Northern Tutchone Grammar (INLG 200)

Schedule: Monday - Friday from 9:00-4:00 p.m. daily.

Delivery: In-Person in Whitehorse, YT

Course Dates: January 6 - 10, 2025

Register online by December 19th at

<https://ynlc.ca/language-classes/>

For more information, please contact YNLC at
info@ynlc.ca, (867) 668-8820, toll-free at (877)
414-9652, or visit the website www.ynlc.ca.



Council of Yukon
First Nations



Meet our Staff



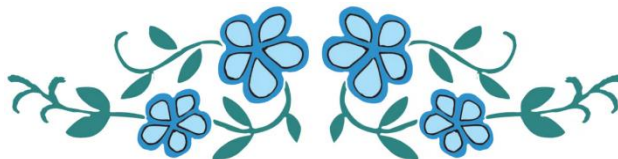
Kelsey Jaggard
YNLC Interim Director

I can't say enough about the amazing YNLC staff I am humbled to work alongside every day at the Centre. Their commitment to the growth and revitalization of Yukon First Nation languages is what continues to inspire me. From digitizing recordings of speakers, children's book translations, Mentor Apprentice Programs, full-time language programs, to curriculum framework development, the staff at YNLC are consistently going above and beyond to increase access to language materials, capacity, and training. Join me in holding up their accomplishments as they share about their work.

We look forward to seeing you in the Centre soon!

More about Kelsey

Kelsey was born and raised in Mokinstis, Calgary, Alberta, within Treaty 7, and the traditional territory of the Iyarhe Nakoda - Chiniki First Nation, Bearspaw First Nation, Wesley First Nation, Piikani, Kainia, Siksika, and Tsuut'ina Nations. Her ancestry is from Scotland within the Buchanan and Baird clans. She moved to the Yukon in 2021 where she worked to complete her Masters in Indigenous Education while working at YNLC as a Language Training Coordinator. Since then, she has had the opportunity to work alongside Yukon First Nations with the aim of strengthening the 8 languages within the territory through various programs and initiatives. She holds her hands up to the fluent speakers, Elders, language leaders, and community members who paved the way for this current generation of language learners to walk upon.



Upcoming Dates to Note:

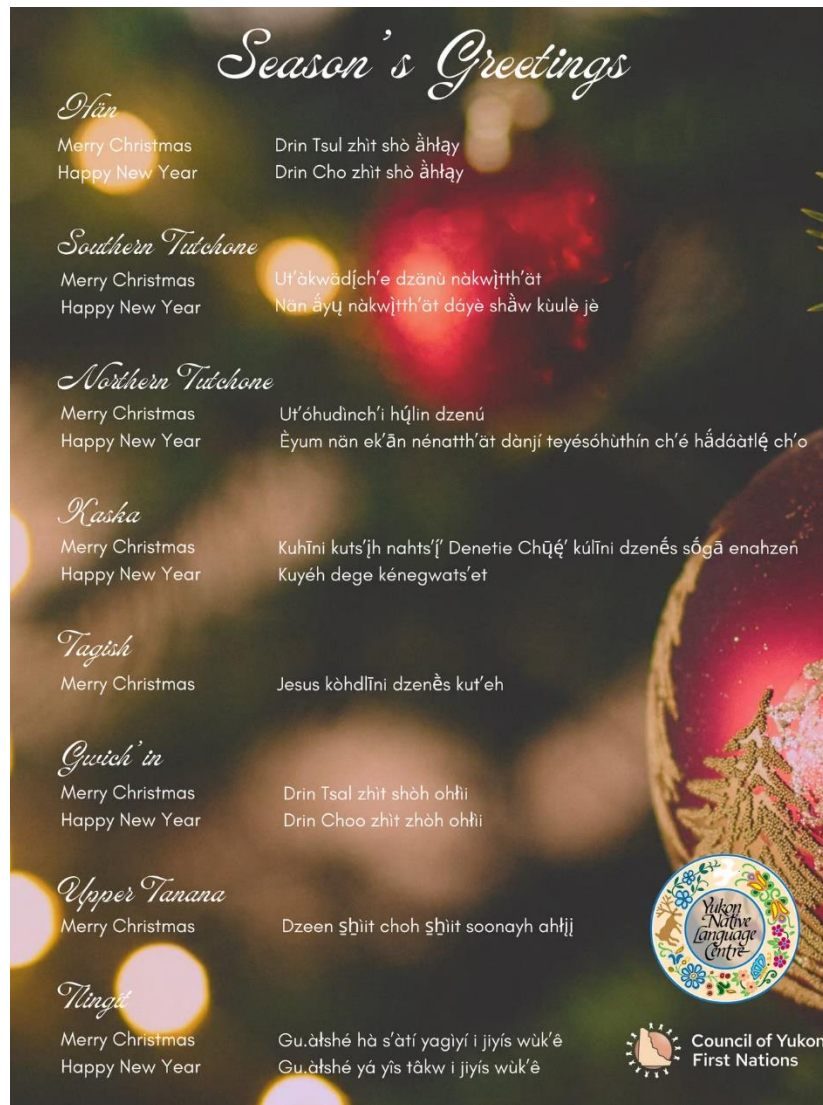
December 2, 2024: Winter 2025 course schedule and registration opens

December 23-January 3, 2025: YNLC closed for holidays

January 2025: 100-Hour Intermediate MAP starts

January 6, 2025: Winter 2025 term starts

January 21-23, 2025: MAP Train-the-Trainer



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First Nations**