



VICE CHIEF JOSEPH TSANNIE



As Vice Chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council, I am always happy to see the footprints of self-determination and professionalism demonstrated by the work of our staff members in each of the departments. Annual reports such as this give us opportunities to celebrate and give thanks to the giver of life for all the hard work and collective wisdom. PAGC continues to grow, evolve, and change. I have had the privilege of working with many Chiefs and Councillors that give me the strength and direction I need to achieve our overall mission.

Prince Albert Grand Council Executive and our 12 First Nation leaders are linked to a long line of northern Land-based Peoples. Our Chiefs have years of experience in the protection of Treaties and engaging in the building 'Treaty Relationships'. We have our own stories and our own ways of governing our nations that cannot be dictated from other regions. We have our own laws that are strongly rooted within our territories. It is encouraging to see the mindset of Canadians slowly changing to the way we think about 'relationships' and our connection to the natural world against the backdrop of climate change.

April 2019 to March 2020 has been an inspiring year for me despite major disappointments such as the stalling of negotiations regarding the North of 60 agreement by the federal government. The Denesuline Peoples have always been kind, giving, and humble. We have made tremendous sacrifices and contributions toward the wealth of the province and country. We have the richest uranium and metal mining deposits in the world. Billions of dollars have left our region that could help us achieve our efforts toward self-determination. Our families remain in perpetual poverty-ridden conditions with the highest power bills. I will continue to fight for renewable and clean energy projects for all of the Prince Albert Grand Council communities.

The federal government is heavily focused on combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Western Science to solve some of our most complex and challenging

issues across Canada. These are two powerful and equal knowledge systems that must be taught in schools and places of higher learning so that all people regardless of culture and race can benefit from the solutions derived from meaningful consultations and culturally sensitive knowledge exchange activities within our nations. A sample of this knowledge base is contained and braided throughout the projects highlighted within this annual report.

The new First Nations Child Welfare legislation is a milestone achievement in this country. Our women and children have been under attack since contact times because they are the foundation of our nations. PAGC has worked for many years to build capacity in the First Nations Child and Family Services system. We are poised to strengthen our social work knowledge and skill sets in making sure children are safe, protected, and allowed to flourish within their families, cultures and languages. It is legally imperative the federal government provide adequate, predictable, sustainable needs based funding in order to implement both the new First Nations Child Welfare Legislation and Indigenous Languages Act.

As Vice Chief of the Prince Albert Grand Council, I remain committed in working closely with our 12 First Nations leaders and their Councillors in collaboration with provincial and federal governments in fulfilling the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action; the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice; and the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We face complex challenges that require partnership and innovative thinking. I live with these colonial and neo-colonial experiences on a daily basis along with my extended relatives throughout the north. Many thanks to our PAGC Directors and Staff for their continued hard work in improving quality of life.

Marsi Cho!