



# CULTURAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

“Bringing Communities Together Through Cultural Safety, Leadership and Governance ”

Victoria, British Columbia - October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> (2025)



Carolyn Roberts, M.Ed



Dr. Chas Desjarlais



Joanne Mitchell, MSW



Dr. Shelly Wilton



Kristy Mcleod, PhD (c)



Jace Poirier Lacerte, B.Ed



Hosted at The Esquimalt Gorge Pavillion on the  
Traditional Territories of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations

## Conference Keynotes

Register Here



[www.evoxegn.com](http://www.evoxegn.com)



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## The Importance of Cultural Safety Frameworks in Leadership and Governance Roles

Cultural Safety Frameworks assist those in Leadership and Governance roles in their continual movement towards improving the outcomes and services for the individuals, families and communities that they serve as a professional and as an organization. Cultural Safety concepts and frameworks apply to any sector that you may work within; Education, Health Care, Social Development, Justice and NGO's.

As a conference participant at this year's conference you will have the opportunity to hear from Leaders in Cultural Safety and Culturally Responsive Practice who work within; Education, Health Care, Social Development, Justice and NGO's. This year's Keynotes will offer their insights, research, resources and considerations on how you can in your current role continue the work and/or begin the work of Prioritizing Cultural Safety Frameworks and Concepts into your leadership and decision-making practices and within your organization.

## Who Should Attend this Conference

This year's Cultural Safety Conference focuses on 'Bringing Communities Together Through Cultural Safety, Leadership and Governance' and is ideal for all professionals, educators, administrators, policymakers and anyone interested in improving Cultural Safety Concepts and Outcomes within the organizations and environments that they practice within.

Participants will have the opportunity to hear from Authors, and Keynote Speakers who lead with Cultural Safety Concepts within their Leadership, Teaching, and Governance Practices. These speakers will share with you how they use Cultural Safety Frameworks within their practice and will provide conference participants with relevant and applicable resources that they can use for considerations as part of their practice.

Together we can continue to Move Ourselves Forward towards Cultural Safety Outcomes that create a future where every individual receives programs and services that reflect Cultural Safety. We welcome those that are able to join us at this year's Annual Cultural Safety Conference 'Bringing Communities Together Through Cultural Safety, Leadership and Governance'.

**You Can Register Here for the Conference**

**[www.evoxegn.com](http://www.evoxegn.com)**





# CULTURAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

“Bringing Communities Together Through Cultural Safety, Leadership and Governance”

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### OCTOBER 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2025 SCHEDULE OF CONFERENCE EVENTS

**Thursday**  
**3:00 pm - 7:00 pm**

2:15 pm – 2:45 pm

Conference Shuttles Leaves the Inner Harbor for Participants on the Shuttle

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Conference Registration Table Opens  
Vendors Market Opens  
Networking Social with Canapes and Light Refreshments

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Cultural Safety Panel Discussion with:  
Author: Carolyn Roberts , *Re-Storying Education: Decolonizing your practice with a critical lens and Tess's Red Dress: Honouring Love and Family*

Author: Kristy Mcleod; Decolonization and Me:

Moderators: Dr. Shelly Wilton and Dr. Chas Desjarlais

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Book Signing Event with Authors  
Carolyn Roberts (Re-Storying Education and Tess's Red Dress)  
Kristy Mcleod (Decolonization and Me)

7:45 pm – 8:15 pm

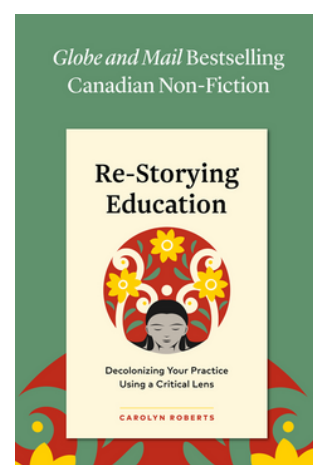
Conference Shuttles Leaves for the Inner Harbor

DECOLONIZATION  
AND ME



*Conversations about Healing  
a Nation and Ourselves*

KRISTY MCLEOD  
and  
PHYLLIS WEBSTAD  
*From the Orange Shirt Movement*





# CULTURAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

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## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### OCTOBER 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 SCHEDULE OF CONFERENCE EVENTS

#### Friday

#### 7:00 am - 4:30 pm

7:00 am – 8:00 am

Conference Shuttles Leaves the Inner Harbor for Participants on the Shuttle

7:30 am - 8:30 am

Nutritional Breakfast, Coffee and Tea

8:30 am - 9:00 am

Traditional Welcome and Conference Opening Remarks

9:00 am - 10:30 am

**KEYNOTE: Jace Poirier Lacerte, B.Ed.**

Social Impact Strategist, Educator and Founder of COYA Productions

10:30 am - 11:00 am

Nutrition Break

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

**KEYNOTE: Joanne Mitchell, MSW**

Indigenous Counselor, Cultural Safety Advisor, and Leader in Educational Transformation

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch

1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

**KEYNOTE: Dr. Chas Desjarlais, EdD**

Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education, Vancouver School Board

2:30 pm - 2:45 pm

Nutrition Break

2:45 pm - 4:00 pm

**KEYNOTE: Dr. Shelly Wilton, EdD**

Distinguished Indigenous Educator, Cultural Safety Scholar, Policy and Governance Advisor

4:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Conference Closing Remarks and Door Prizes

Vendors Market Closes

5:00 pm

Conference Shuttles leaves for the Inner Harbor for Participants on the Shuttle



# CULTURAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

“Bringing Communities Together Through Cultural Safety, Leadership and Governance ”

## Carolyn Roberts, M.Ed

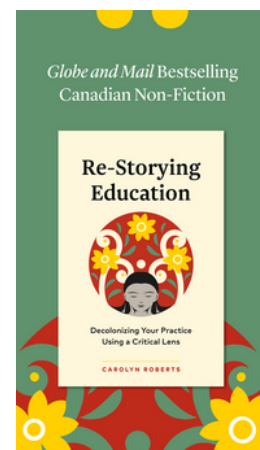
*Author, Weaver, Indigenous Education Consultant and Faculty Member, UBC*



Carolyn Roberts is a distinguished St'at'imc and Sto:lo woman, belonging to the Thevarge family from N'quatqua Nation and the Kelly Family from the Ch'iyáqtel Nation, and recognized under the Indian Act as a proud member of the Squamish Nation. As a passionate advocate for Indigenous resurgence through education, Carolyn has dedicated over 20 years to serving as both an educator and administrator in the K-12 system.

Currently, Carolyn is a valued faculty member at the University of British Columbia, teaching in the Teacher Education and NITEP programs. Drawing from her deep community roots and extensive professional experience, she mentors and empowers pre-service teachers to develop their understanding of Indigenous history, education, and ancestral ways of knowing. Her work focuses on decolonizing educational systems to ensure a brighter future for Indigenous peoples and the seven generations yet to come.

Carolyn is a highly accomplished speaker and author, renowned for illuminating transformative pathways within education and inspiring meaningful change. Her critically acclaimed book, ***Restorying Education: Decolonizing Your Practice with a Critical Lens***, provides essential insights and actionable strategies for embedding Indigenous perspectives throughout classrooms and shaping culturally responsive educational policies. Carolyn's commitment to fostering understanding extends to her forthcoming children's book, ***Tess's Red Dress: Honouring Love and Family***, which continues her powerful work of weaving Indigenous stories, values, and knowledge into learning environments. Through her writing and public speaking, Carolyn empowers educators and communities to create educational spaces grounded in respect, reconciliation, and Indigenous resurgence. Carolyn Roberts's leadership, scholarship, and voice are powerful catalysts for transformation in education—supporting Indigenous resurgence and fostering understanding, reconciliation, and hope.





# CULTURAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

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## **Dr. Chas Desjarlais, EdD**

*Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education, Vancouver School Board*



Dr. Chas Desjarlais is a Nehiyaw-Michif educator, scholar, and leader in Indigenous education. She serves as the Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education at the Vancouver School Board, where she works to advance transformative and culturally responsive learning experiences for Indigenous students and communities. Known by her traditional name, Helper of Thunderbirds, Dr. Desjarlais is a proud citizen of Cold Lake First Nations, identifies as a Treaty Six Iskwew, and is the devoted mother of two daughters, Paige and Kaylyn.

Dr. Desjarlais completed her Doctorate of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership & Policy at the University of British Columbia in 2024. Her doctoral research—titled "Iskotew: Fire-Keeping the Fire Lit Indigenous Iskotwew (Women) Leading in Decolonizing Education Systems"—explored the lived experiences of Indigenous women leading efforts to decolonize educational organizations. Her study highlights the ongoing struggle and resilience required to balance cultural identity with systemic leadership demands, shining light on both the unique perspectives and the challenges faced by Indigenous women in educational leadership roles.

Dr. Desjarlais' s academic and professional journey contributes significantly to the growing body of work on Indigenous women's leadership, while also drawing attention to the underrepresentation of Indigenous women in decision-making positions within education. Through her research, advocacy, and policy work, she continues to champion the integration of Indigenous knowledge, community engagement, and decolonizing approaches in educational practices and governance.

A respected leader and mentor, Dr. Desjarlais is deeply committed to building strong, culturally safe education systems that honor and uplift Indigenous voices, ways of knowing, and for the future of all learners.



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## **Jace Poirier Lacerte, B.Ed.**

*Social Impact Strategist, Educator and Founder of COYA Productions*



Jace Poirier Lacerte is a Distinguished Alumnus with a Bachelors of Education from the University of Victoria. Jace is a proud mixed heritage Métis Mama, Auntie, birth worker, and social impact strategist dedicated to fostering cultural safety in STEM, health, and education. As the founder of COYA Productions, Jace leads initiatives that intertwine Indigenous wisdom with contemporary practices, aiming to create multigenerational legacies rooted in love, accountability, and transformation.

With a career spanning the nonprofit, public, and private sectors, Jace has:

- Led national science outreach programs engaging 1.25 million youth across Turtle Island
- Directed onboarding for international tech companies reaching 6000 professionals
- Coached over 300 Indigenous entrepreneurs around the world to build businesses as acts of love

Jace's commitment to cultural safety is evident in her development of educational programs like "we are medicine," designed to equip individuals and organizations with tools to move from awareness to actionable steps in addressing violence and fostering healing.

Her presentations are known for being both hands-on and inspiring, encouraging professionals to critically assess and enhance their cultural competencies.

Jace resides in Lekwungen Territory, home of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, where she continues her work as a doula, educator, and community leader, always guided by the principle: "*What will be the consequences of your actions in seven generations?*"



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## **Joanne Mitchell, MSW**

*Indigenous Counselor, Cultural Safety Advisor, and Leader in Educational Transformation*



Joanne Mitchell is a proud member of the Kebaowek First Nation, carrying ancestral roots from the Nipissing First Nation. Based in British Columbia, Joanne is widely recognized for her commitment to creating equitable, culturally safe spaces within the K-12 Public Education System. With over a decade of distinguished service as an Indigenous Counselor, she is celebrated for her holistic approach to student support, drawing on both her academic background and her lived experience as an Indigenous woman.

Joanne holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from a leading Canadian university, where she completed influential research focused on the significance of Cultural Safety in Public Education. Her work has laid the foundation for more inclusive practices in schools, classrooms, and support systems, ensuring Indigenous voices and perspectives are heard and respected.

Joanne's impact extends beyond one-on-one counseling through her instrumental role in developing and implementing Cultural Safety Frameworks within the fields of counseling and social work. As a trusted Cultural Safety Advisor, she has consulted with numerous educational organizations, boards, and government bodies, helping to shape policy and governance that foster safer and more supportive environments for Indigenous students. Her advocacy and expertise have been vital in bridging cultural gaps and addressing systemic barriers within the education system.

In addition to her advisory roles, Joanne is a sought-after speaker, workshop facilitator, and mentor, known for her compassionate leadership and her passion for community wellness. She approaches her work with a strong sense of cultural pride, responsibility, and a steadfast commitment to social justice, always striving to build stronger relationships between schools and Indigenous communities.

Through her visionary leadership, Joanne continues to inspire positive change, paving the way for a brighter, more inclusive future in Canadian public education.



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## Kristy McLeod, PhD (c)

*Author, PhD Candidate, Educator, Inclusive Education Specialist, Community Leader*



## DECOLONIZATION AND ME



*Conversations about Healing  
a Nation and Ourselves*

KRISTY MCLEOD  
and  
PHYLLIS WEBSTAD  
From the Orange Shirt Movement

Kristy is a registered Métis with family roots in the Lac St. Anne and Red River Settlements. Her Métis family names include L'Hirondelle, Nippissing, Pilon, and Courteorielle. Kristy co-authored a book with Phyllis Webstad, *Decolonization and Me: Conversations about Healing a Nation and Ourselves*, to help address questions and clarify why learning the truth about the injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada is important.

Kristy is a dedicated PhD Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, with her doctoral research centered on exploring Métis identity and enhancing understanding of Indigenous perspectives in education. She holds a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, where her graduate thesis focused on developing more inclusive school environments and addressing systemic barriers to equity in education.

With over 20 years of experience working in the education sector, Kristy has served as a dynamic K-12 teacher and as a sessional instructor at the University of Victoria. Her rich background as both an educator and an academic support leader has equipped her with a deep understanding of the complexities and opportunities within educational systems. Kristy's professional journey has been consistently informed by a commitment to inclusive education and a passion for integrating diverse Indigenous ways of knowing and learning into curriculum design and classroom practice.

Kristy is also the Co-owner of PathWise Solutions Inc., a company that provides innovative e-learning and web solutions for education and beyond. In this role, she leverages her expertise to support the creation of meaningful, accessible online learning experiences. In addition, Kristy contributes her skills and insight as a consultant for Medicine Wheel Publishing, collaborating with Indigenous authors to bring culturally relevant educational materials to a wider audience.

A strong advocate for Métis representation and collaboration, Kristy has served as Chair of the Education Committee for the Métis Nation of Victoria and has held a leadership role as Director at Large on its board since 2021. Across all her endeavors, Kristy is committed to championing the value of diverse perspectives, fostering meaningful dialogue, and promoting unity through consultation and community engagement. Her work reflects a deep respect for Indigenous traditions and an ongoing dedication to educational excellence and equity.



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## **Dr. Shelly Wilton, EdD**

*Distinguished Indigenous Educator, Cultural Safety Scholar, Policy and Governance Advisor*



Dr. Shelly Wilton is a proud Cree/Métis woman residing in Lekwungen Territory, the homeland of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. Renowned as a visionary educator and leader, Dr. Wilton has had a profound impact on Indigenous education, shaping teaching frameworks, research initiatives, and educational policies that uplift Indigenous students locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally.

With a career distinguished by dedication to excellence in teaching and learning, Dr. Wilton is celebrated for her ability to design transformative Indigenous education programs and culturally responsive learning environments. Her leadership includes the creation of impactful professional development opportunities for educators and administrators, always centering Indigenous voices, perspectives, and ways of knowing. At the heart of her approach is the nurturing of relational responsibility and a commitment to cultural safety—prioritizing community engagement in both educational practice and research.

The influence of Dr. Wilton’s work extends well beyond individual classrooms. She significantly impacts educational governance, advocating for and advancing equity-focused, culturally responsive, and evidence-based strategies. Through her work, Dr. Wilton fosters meaningful partnerships and collaborative engagement between educators, senior officials, school boards, and Indigenous communities.

A passionate advocate for Indigenous rights in education, Dr. Wilton works tirelessly to ensure that educational policies and governance frameworks meet the cultural safety needs of Indigenous learners and honor the unique strengths of Indigenous communities. Her lifelong commitment to systemic change and genuine engagement continues to drive innovative progress in Indigenous education at every level.