

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE: KELLYANN MELOCHE

While all of our Indigenous Instructors are very dear to our hearts and participate in providing free St. John Ambulance First Aid courses to Indigenous peoples, we would like to showcase one of our Indigenous instructors who is presently working in the Province of Quebec; her name is Kellyann Meloche.

Kellyann graduated from the Kahnawà:ke Survival School in 1992 and went on to John Abbott College studying Health Science with a dream of becoming an emergency room doctor. After completing her first year, the reality of raising a daughter and the associated costs of tuition, forced her to withdraw from the program.

In the summer of 1993, Kellyann was successful in competing for a job with the Mohawk Council as an Emergency Preparedness Planning Research Assistant. That same year she joined the local Kahnawà:ke Volunteer Fire Department and was trained in fire suppression and as an Emergency Medical Technician. This enabled her to work as a firefighter and work shifts on the ambulance as an EMT.



For the next seven years she worked with the Mohawk Council and the Kahnawà:ke Fire Brigade. During this period she was certified as a Hazardous Materials Technician, through the New York State Office of the Environmental Protection Agency, certified in High Angle Rescue by the City of Westmount, and was certified as a "Fire Fighter 1" by the Justice Institute of British Columbia.

In 1998 Kellyann was given the Deputy Minister's Outstanding Achievement Award for her work during the Quebec Ice Storm. The citation was for working around the clock for 42 days. In 1999 she spent six months working in Hamilton, Ontario with the Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness.

In recognition of her professional qualifications, in 2000, the Mohawk Council appointed her as the Council's full-time Emergency Planning Manager. From 2004 to 2012, she worked shifts in Akwesasne, New York, with the ambulance service as an Emergency Medical Technician, enabling her to gain knowledge of the New York State EMT standards.

In 2010 she was recognized as one of Canada's Top Ten Fire Fighters. With this recognition, and her growing expertise in Emergency Management and Fire Fighting, she accepted a job in Albuquerque, New Mexico with AMERIND RISK, an Indigenous owned and operated insurance company. With this company, she worked with many of the First Nation territories in the seven West Coast States, teaching First Aid, CPR, US Occupational Safety and Health Administration Safety Standards for General Construction, and Fire Safety.

Bringing this knowledge back to Kahnawà:ke, and the Mohawk Council, she is now working with 9 northern Cree communities in Quebec, teaching and helping them with emergency planning. Her current projects involve developing ambulance and first responder services for these communities.

Kellyann is currently enrolled in the Justice Institute of B.C., and is completing her degree in Emergency Management. While being fully engaged in her various duties she has found time to become a St. John Ambulance First Aid Instructor. She is currently providing free First Aid courses in Kahnawà:ke and in the northern Cree communities she serves. In Kellyann's own words, "I haven't forgotten my dream of becoming an ER doctor, and the way I see it, when the Creator tells me my present work is in good hands, I can go back to school to realize that dream." Kellyann truly exemplifies the motto of the Order of St. John, "Pro Utilitate Hominum" "In the Service of Humanity."

Kellyann is a single parent with two daughters living on the Kahnawà:ke reserve. Her Mohawk name is Tekarihwenhawi, which means: "She is coming with a message."