

Aaniin,

My name is Christopher Laverne Lewis. I was born in Wawa and spent my childhood in and around Michipicoten First Nation. My parents are Margaret and Christopher Lewis who resided in Michipicoten throughout their lives. I am running for Chief of Michipicoten First Nation.

EXPERIENCE

Following my educational years, I worked in various industries including: Algoma Ore Division, mining, forestry, guiding, MNR firefighter, long haul truck driver, highway maintenance, mechanics apprentice. These valuable experiences allowed me to acquire many different skills sets and knowledge necessary to lead our community.

In 1985 I relocated to Winnipeg Manitoba. While in Winnipeg, I had the opportunity to become a counsellor working with youth, first nations peoples, addiction, family support, and facilitated anger management courses.

I have vast experience working with people struggling with trauma and the effects of residential school, addiction, mental health, abuse and homelessness. Presently, I am co-facilitating a mental health and addiction recovery group, assisting people of MFN with transportation to and from medical appointments and partnering with others to promote wellness and empowerment for all our members. I commit to exploring partnerships and healthcare services to increase access to effective and appropriate support for our members.

ECONOMICS

My work experience has given me the skills to understand the importance of working with our community and organizations and companies seeking to enter business partnerships with our community. As a firefighter I had the privilege of working on the land and caring for Mother Earth. I learned the importance of environmental protection and why it is imperative we ensure mining industry have double walled tailing ponds and other critical protections to ensure our traditional lands are safeguarded.

I will focus on opportunities for our own growth in the areas of a gas station, food security and sustainable food options as well as opportunities for our youth to develop industry and opportunity.



CULTURE

I attend Sweat Lodges, Pow Wow, Traditional Healing Lodges, and have shared my teachings with others. Through my work in Winnipeg, I was able to travel and provide teachings and assistance to many remote communities including; Pikangikum, Big Trout Lake, Shematewa, Norway House, York Landing, Cross Lake, and The Pas.

I received teachings and training to become a certified healer with the Flying on Your Own approach to healing which targets abuse, trauma, addiction, and suicide. I participated as a Board Member with Urban Circle. Urban Circle promotes and provides aboriginal teaching and cultural enlightenment to other professionals and students. I was also a board member for Knowles Center which is a youth treatment center. My experiences have given me the knowledge and understanding to work collaboratively with people, political parties, mental health and addiction systems, and youth. I have experience negotiating and participating with different Bands and First Nations in different capacities.

COMMITMENT

I will work with you to create a new leadership. We must enhance our First Nation with a new purpose and a new vision that will promote and enhance the lives of our members in the areas of sustainable economic development, land claims, health and wellbeing, cultural values and utilizing the seven grandfather teachings to bring respect to all members. I commit to bring unity, trust, transparency, purpose and hope for all our members. EVERY MEMBER should be involved in the decision-making process of Chief and Council.

I will be a visible and approachable Chief. I commit to being a strong and positive voice for the people of Michipicoten. I commit to working with other area Chiefs and Sister First Nations to make informed and collaborative decisions regarding land claims, resource benefit agreements and further economic development for our people with our resources and lands.

I also commit to reviewing election options for our members and our community. I will seek to establish our own custom election code and ensure the composition of our council can include a youth, elder, and a representative from those who do not reside on-reserve. A custom election code will also look at extending our elected council to a three-year term.

As a result of my life experience and cultural teachings as well as my passion for empowering people, I will be a strong and positive voice for and with the people of Michipicoten. I believe the shared voice of all our members is critical to the challenges and accomplishments we face as a united people.

Chi-Miigwetch,

Laverne

TO BE CONTINUED...