



# Living Lab Network

# FALL 25



*You belong here. This is ÁLEŃENEŃ (Our Homelands), and together we can carry on our ancestors' traditions and reclaim our lands and food systems.*

The message from WŚÁNEĆ Elder ZWIZUT Carl Olsen from Tsartlip Nation stands at WENÁNEĆ (Fulford Bay – Salt Spring Island) at the ancient Sea Garden wall, built over 2000 years ago. Carl led a summer restoration day with 28 youth from the WŚÁNEĆ and Lekwungen communities. Read on for more about the beautiful summer adventures and ongoing activities of our network.

Illustration by Jessica Joseph

**Living Lab is a community-school-campus partnership supporting land-based learning/healing, eco-cultural restoration and Indigenous resurgence.**

[livinglabproject@gmail.com](mailto:livinglabproject@gmail.com) | [livinglabproject.ca](http://livinglabproject.ca)

# YOUTH NEWS



## OUR YOUTH PROGRAM CONTINUES TO BLOOM

- (L to R) A stunning day out led by Elder Carl Olsen at WENÁNEĆ (Salt Spring) with W̱SÁNEĆ and Ləḵʷəŋən youth.
- Learning about the restoration work at MAUWEC (formerly Woodwyn Farm) with (Middle Left) Michael Desjarlais
- Harvesting and cooking local and traditional foods
- Annual Summer Feast and BBQ at Ʒwsep̱səm – Esquimalt Nation.
- Check out the Summer 2025 Youth Report available Dec 1<sup>st</sup> on the website



Living Lab 2025 Youth Interns and Staff.  
Back L to R: Mercedes, Gracie, Tracey, Maeve, Kyle  
Front L to R: Ava, Spencer, Jess, Eric, Louie and Riyah

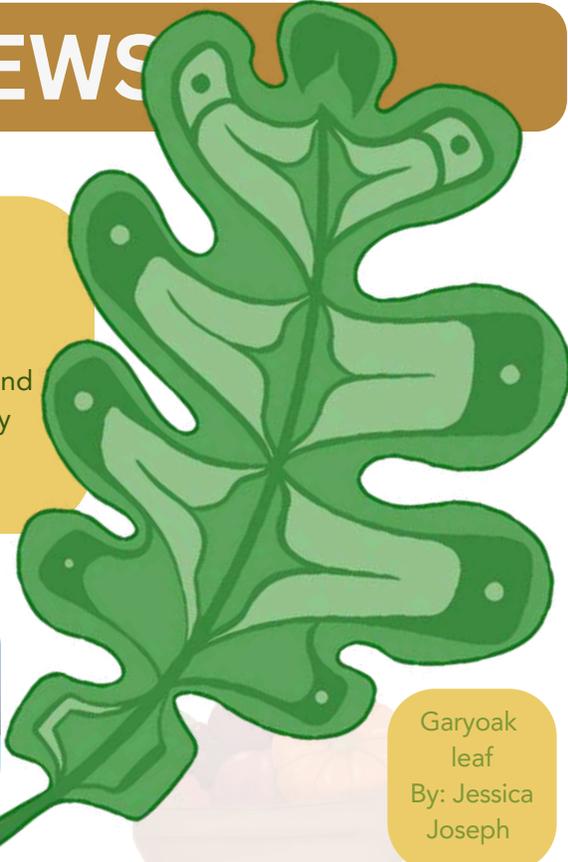
(Top to Bottom) Youth at X̱IEWEŁ Island View Beach and preparing/hosting the Summer Feast at Ʒwsep̱səm - Esquimalt Nation.



# LIVING LAB NEWS

## Elder-Advisory Gathering

On November 7th, Living Lab launched its 2026–2030 Strategic Planning Process with an Elder-Advisory Brunch Gathering. Living Lab partner staff and leaders from W̱SÁNEĆ–Ləḵʷəŋən, UVic–Camosun, and ƷEƷÁĆES (Gulf Islands) groups, along with Elders and Advisors, came together to explore guiding values, protocols, priorities, and vision–actions for 2030 and beyond. Living Lab will be reaching out to partners, youth, and community members in the coming months. More info to come at our Wed Nov 26th Network Webinar!



Garyoak leaf  
By: Jessica Joseph

[Learn more about Elder-Advisor Gathering](#)

# COMMUNITY and CAMPUS NEWS

## Update from PEPAKEN HÁUTW: Were around!

The PEPAKEN HÁUTW team has been busy caring for all our restoration sites this Fall, and we are thankful to the over 100 volunteers who have already dedicated their time to support our efforts to heal SNIDŪEL and QENENIW. From seed collection to plant salvaging and everything in between, we've been teaming up with great organizations focused on the same goal of healing WSÁNEĆ ÁLENENEĆ/(homelands). Keep an eye on our socials to see where we end up next -- we have lots of volunteer events and collaborations coming up for you to join the fun!



Kyle Clarke and Restoration Volunteers at SNIDŪEL

[Learn more at PEPAKENHÁUTW.com](http://PEPAKENHÁUTW.com)

## National Day for Truth & Reconciliation

The fifth edition of the ReconciliACTION Oak Bay Network (ROBN) attracted 150 people and elected representatives from all three levels of government to the Sno'uyutth ("Spreading Good Energy") Welcome Pole in front of Oak Bay High School on Sept. 28.

Songhees Elder Florence Dick and artist Brianna Bear (pic below) provided a welcome and sharing, while Florence's son, Dakota, drummed and sang. 215 seconds of silence were held to honour Residential School survivors. The annual ceremony is held to reaffirm the commitment made when Sno'uyutth was raised 10 years ago by the Oak Bay community, Oak Bay was united towards building a strong, and just relationships with the Songhees and Xwsepsum Nations.



## Oak Bay moves on Reconciliation Plan

Oak Bay Mayor Kevin Murdoch has written to Songhees Chief Ron Sam and Xwsepsum Chief Jerome Thomas to indicate his support to develop a multi-year, shared Council-Community Reconciliation Action Plan for Oak Bay. Councilor Hazel Braithwaite will work with ROBN to get the conversation started.

[Learn more about ReconciliAction Oak Bay](#)

## ÁLENENEĆ/ Project Update

ÍY SÁĆEL HÁLE. My name is Desiree Jones, a WSÁNEĆ community member from Pauquachin First Nation, and a Master's student in Indigenous Governance at the University of Victoria. I am one of the Graduate students working with Living Lab and the WSÁNEĆ School Board on the ÁLENENEĆ/ Resurgence and Justice Project, grounded in supporting WSÁNEĆ and regional Indigenous knowledge systems and creating accessible ways for our communities to engage with land-based learning and restoration.

Supported by the Law Foundation of BC and with a new matching research grant (\$195k) from Mitacs, our project identifies existing resources, curricula, and community members involved in teaching local Indigenous knowledge systems and land-based learning within the WSÁNEĆ School Board and beyond via local Nations and schools, UVic and Camosun partners.



Desiree Jones, UVic Graduate student and WSÁNEĆ community member from Pauquachin First Nation

[Follow Desiree's experience on our Living Lab Blog](#)



# EVENTS and SWAG



## Recipes for Resurgence



Join us for our Fall Lunchtime Webinar. Wednesday November 26th 12:30- 1:30 PM.



John Harris



Eric Scholfield

Guest speakers are John Harris (SD #61), Indigenous Education Elder and Indigenous Knowledge Facilitator, and Eric Schofield, Stelly's School Culinary Arts Teacher and Salish Sea Environmental Education Provincial Specialists Association member. They will share their current work and vision for growing local and Indigenous food systems for youth and community, while supporting ecosystem wellbeing and zero waste. Living Lab Network will also give brief updates on the 2030 Strategic Planning Process and the ÁLENENEÇ Rights and Resurgence Project.

## Living Lab Hats and Aprons are now on sale!



### Living Lab Cards for Sale!



Register at [livinglabproject@gmail.com](mailto:livinglabproject@gmail.com) or click on the [Zoom link](#).

**More Info:** <https://thediscourse.ca/cowichan-valley/colonization-impacts-coast-salish-food>  
<https://healthyschoolsbc.ca/teach-food-first/lesson-plans/>  
<https://conservationnw.org/connecting-first-foods-and-conservation/>

Email us at [livinglabproject@gmail.com](mailto:livinglabproject@gmail.com) to purchase a card, hat or apron.

## OUR GOALS

### Educational Transformation

Develop land-based learning and school programs connecting sustainability and environmental/science education with student well-being and success.

### Restoration and Resurgence

Organize community-driven ecosystem and climate action projects which affirm Indigenous knowledge, rights, access to/use of traditional lands and waters.

### Community-Driven Research

Lead and support community-driven research projects based on Indigenous and community knowledge and priorities, healing and wellness, and restoring the connection to lands and waters.

### Capacity Building and Engagement

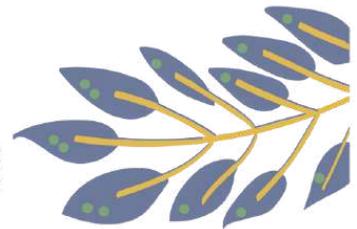
Create community skills, capacity-building activities, and a regional Indigenous eco-stewardship program focused on children and youth.

## OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS



**Songhees**

Aboriginal Service Plan  
Ministry of Advanced  
Education



Office of Indigenous Academic  
and Community Engagement  
(UVIC)



TETÁCES  
Restoration  
Initiative



Parks  
Canada



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