



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE KEEPERS GATHERING



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

November 6 & 7, 2019 | Prairieland Park - Hall A | Saskatoon, SK Canada

SIMON BIRD

Anyone can teach Cree... or should they?



Biography:

Simon Bird B.Ed., M.ED. M.N.G.D comes from the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and was raised in the community of Southend, Reindeer Lake: home to the Rock Cree. He was raised to continue the northern traditional pursuits including fishing, hunting, trapping including running sled dogs. As Simon says, his language nest was in a boat and on the land. He is the proud father of two children; Sabriya and Kiyanaw with wife Naomi Bird. Simon currently holds a Bachelor of Education, a Master of Educational Administration and a Master of Northern Governance and Development degree. Simon is a very proud fluent Cree speaker and wakes up Monday to Friday at 6am to get ready to teach anyone that joins his Facebook Live classes. #CreeSimonSays has over 12,500 members and continues to steadily grow as more people use technology to connect, learn or simply laugh at posts that celebrate the social culture of the Cree nation.

Simon's spare time he hosts a language initiative that is aimed at making learning fun through social media. He hopes that every user will not simply take what is being taught on the social media site, but will take the lessons learned and ask others to confirm; thus spreading the dialogue of one of our largest First Nations language groups in Canada.

Abstract:

Simon strongly believes anyone can speak Cree. And if anyone can speak Cree, then they can also teach Cree. It doesn't matter if a person knows five words or are fluent. What we must remember is that in learning and teaching Cree is from our Indigenous perspective, that English cannot truly capture the essence of our languages. We must remember that our languages are alive. If we don't truly believe this then we hinder the growth and ability of sustainability of our Indigenous languages.

Learning Outcomes: Participants will understand:

- That anyone can learn and teach Cree to sustain our languages.

For more information about the First Nations Language Keepers Gathering, please visit us online at:

www.sicc.sk.ca