



speaker profile

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness Speakers Bureau is a group of individuals who have experienced homelessness and want to share their story. Through funding provided by the United Way, the Coalition has provided training for these individuals to speak publicly about their personal experiences – putting a face to homelessness. In addition to the problems surrounding homelessness in Greater Victoria, our speakers will also discuss the solutions and their personal successes.



Bernice Kamano

Bernice has lived and worked in the Victoria area for the past twenty years and is a member of the Kwakwaka'waka Nation. As a single mother on welfare, Bernice struggled to raise her daughter in Victoria. Food banks and second hand stores were often the only options she was able to access to keep food on the table and a roof over their heads.

An active community member, Bernice was one of the first Legal Advocates trained by Tim Richards at TAPS (Together Against Poverty Society) office; assisting people on income assistant to apply for disability level 1 or 2. She also works as a Native Employment Counselor for United Native Nations; working in the First Nations community assisting with job search, resume writing and doing employer visits to secure positions with different agencies in the Victoria area.

As a founding member of M'akola Housing Society, Bernice was instrumental in the creation of M'akola's first housing project on Caledonia Street. M'akola has since gone on to create housing from Victoria to Alert Bay.

Bernice has sat on the Native Friendship Centres Board of Directors and various First Nations agencies in Victoria.

Her outlook on life is that if she can change something in the system that would make life easier then she is going to figure out how to accomplish the change, or keeping asking or working with the right people till the change is complete. Life has given Bernice a gift of passion and conviction and that makes her who she is today.

For more information or to book a Speaker: www.victoriahomelessness.ca/Speakers-Bureau