

Aboriginal Access Services

# ELDERS-IN-RESIDENCE



UFV Elders help students set personal goals, achieve academic success, learn about traditional ways of wellness, and identify a sense of life purpose.

“ I met Eddie last semester when he became one of the Elders for UFV. Involved with a project on the history of Chilliwack, I asked Eddie about some of the Stó:lō creation stories and the sacred places in the area. He helped me to understand the rich history of the area and get in touch with my own spirituality by allowing me to be a part of a medicine wheel opening on UFV’s Abbotsford campus. This medicine wheel was opened at the prompting of another UFV student who was dealing with a few losses in his home community. Using the medicine wheel we prayed for the community and gave him some support in his time of grief. Eddie has become a valued resource and friend to me.

— Kukstam multh ka, Morris Prosser, 3rd-year English student



## Contact Information

By phone: call or leave a message for the Elders at 604-504-7441, local 2245 or 1-888-504-7441, local 2245

By email: write to an Elder at eddie.gardner@ufv.ca or theresa.neel@ufv.ca

## The Elders’ Schedule

The Elders’ schedule is available online at [ufv.ca/arc](http://ufv.ca/arc)

### Abbotsford and Chilliwack

The Elders’ schedule is posted at the Aboriginal Resource Centre:

Abbotsford: A219a  
Chilliwack: A1443

### Hope and Mission

The Elders will schedule appointments in Hope and Mission as needed.

Learn more. [ufv.ca/arc](http://ufv.ca/arc)



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# Our Elders

## Eddie Gardner “T’it’elem Spath”



Eddie graduated from the University of Prince Edward Island with a Bachelor of Arts in 1972. A member of the Skwah First Nation, he works with others in the community to identify and address environmental issues and the protection of wild salmon.

Over the years, Eddie has worked for a variety of federal, provincial, and First Nations governments and

private sector agencies across Canada, designing, coordinating, directing, and delivering a broad range of services and programs from an Aboriginal world view. He has also organized many conferences related to the Indian Residential Schools and has provided support to the schools’ survivors.

Committed to the revival of the Halq’eméylem language, he has gained intermediate fluency of the language and encourages others to do so, too. Through his monthly sweat lodge ceremonies and Medicine Wheel workshops, Eddie spreads his knowledge of Stó:lō culture and traditions to the UFV community and beyond.

Send an email to Eddie at [eddie.gardner@ufv.ca](mailto:eddie.gardner@ufv.ca)

## Theresa Neel “Kumiga”



Theresa is a member of the Kwakiutl First Nation from northern Vancouver Island. She graduated from Fraser Valley College in 1980 with a diploma in Social Services. For the next 30 years, Theresa worked for Stó:lō communities and UFV helping Aboriginal students access and succeed in post-secondary programs. In 1998, with the guidance of a community steering committee, she opened the

Aboriginal Resource Centre at UFV’s Chilliwack campus.

Theresa feels her strength is in providing direct services to students in the areas of post-secondary academic advising and Aboriginal financial aid. She has experience working with all levels of government, creating programs and services that benefit First Nations communities.

An avid volunteer, Theresa donates her time to many causes. Since 2000, she has worked with Snowchange, an international collective that documents snow pattern changes in Indigenous communities around the world.

Always focused on student success, Theresa also works in the SFU and NVIT Elders’ programs.

Send an email to Theresa at [theresa.neel@ufv.ca](mailto:theresa.neel@ufv.ca)

## The Elders’ Role

They share their knowledge, traditions, and culture through storytelling, drumming, sweat lodge ceremonies, and talking circles. Our Elders are happy to work with individual students and groups.

UFV’s Elders encourage and promote understanding and respect for Indigenous perspectives, culture, and values.

Eddie and Theresa are available to meet with students to discuss their programs, research, financial aid, or any other concerns they may have.

They are also available to students, their families, and UFV’s faculty and staff.\*

UFV Elders-in-Residence dedicate the majority of their time supporting and encouraging Aboriginal students.

\* Other individuals or groups requesting the Elders’ services may be required to pay an honorarium.

*Make your appointment to meet with one of UFV’s Elders today!*