Spotlight on
Leonard Dzeylion

Hatchet Lake First Nation Member
Resides in Wollaston Lake

Position
ABS Security Officer/Lead Hand
McClean Lake operation

Years of Service at McClean Lake
+ 4 years

Key to success on the Job
Plan ahead and keep the lines of communications open

Best Part of the Job
The good environment and the people I work with and for

Goals for the future
Continue working as long as I can and continue learning and improving

Connecting with
Athabasca Residents

The last official meeting of the Ya’thi Nene JIC was in Stony Rapids in May.
The last official meeting of the Ya’thi Nene JIC was in Stony Rapids in May. Our Manager, Northern Affairs, Glenn Lafleur was in attendance. The next meeting will most likely take place in October and Glenn plans to be there again, so you’ll be able to catch him then if you want to connect directly with Orano while he is there.

In the meantime, our Community Liaisons, Ricky Robillard for Black Lake and Stony Rapids and Margaret Noey for Fond du Lac and Uranium City will be touring the communities on behalf of Orano and Cameco to celebrate the Athabasca School Awards 2018 throughout October. Ricky and Margaret will also be in the communities of Hatchet Lake and Wollaston Lake while we are in the process of recruiting a new community liaison for these two communities. If you are interested in applying for this role or know someone who might be, please contact Glenn Lafleur in our La Ronge office.

Finally, Orano and Cameco will meet with Athabasca communities senior leadership, including Chiefs and Mayors, in November. Our representatives look forward to being in the Athabasca on these occasions this fall.

Thanks to Our Athabasca Summer Students

This summer we were happy to welcome four Athabasca residents out of our five summer student positions at the McClean Lake site to help with some of the activities during our mill summer shutdown. These students had the opportunity to share with our employees some of the knowledge they gained through their studies and learn some new skills while working at our site. Some of the activities they did while on site included helping with the pond clean-up, painting, providing support to the mill operators in their daily tasks, working in the warehouse issuing and receiving parts, assisting the carpenter and site services team. Elden Sayazie from Black Lake and Alyx Mercredi from Fond du Lac worked with our services group, while Richie Robillard worked in our warehouse. And, Jennifer Noey, from Camsell Portage, who had been our Environmental Trainee for a year, finished that program and stayed with us through the summer. We wish Elden, Alyx, Richie and Jennifer all the best for the continuation of their studies. We were also pleased to have on site six other Athabasca residents - Andy Powder, Tristen Tsannie, Jody Tsannie, Brianda Robillard, Garret Robillard and Freddy McDonald Jr. - among the seven Mill Utility Persons who had been through our Mill Operations Training Program last year. Thank you all for your help with summer.

Congratulations to School Awards Recipients!

Orano and Cameco’s Community Liaisons look forward to attending the upcoming School Awards in the Athabasca communities in the coming weeks. While we await to announce this year’s recipients, here are a few photos from last year’s awards.
The Power of Partnership

The continuing success of Athabasca Basin Security (ABS) demonstrates the value of Orano Canada’s northern contracting strategy. Orano’s McClean Lake mill was among the first customers of ABS when the company was formed in 2002. Since then, ABS has grown and diversified to become a leading company with 300 employees providing a full range of industrial security services to top tier of global mining companies including Orano, BHP Billiton, K+S and Cameco.

ABS is owned by Athabasca Basin Development, which is owned by the communities of the Athabasca Basin region. ABS creates economic development and employment opportunities for people of the Basin and is now expanding across Western Canada. In September, Canadian Business and Macleans ranked ABS on the Growth500 list that recognizes Canada’s fastest growing companies.

Orano’s Veronique Loewen recently discussed the company’s success with ABS CEO Ron Hyggen (Photo).

On behalf of Orano, I congratulate you and everyone at ABS on being named to the Growth 500 ranking. National recognition is quite an achievement for a company from northern Saskatchewan. How did you achieve that?

Thank you Veronique. To be one of only eight companies from Saskatchewan to make the Growth500 list this year is something our team is truly proud of. This recognition reflects the strength of our company and the dedication of our team. Continued growth and diversification means economic development and employment opportunities for our shareholder communities and that’s the real win.

When did Athabasca Basin Security start working with Orano (and its predecessor companies)? And, how did the contracting relationship come about?

ABS began working with Orano in 2002. Prior to this time Orano and the leadership in the seven Athabasca Basin communities met and discussed how the northern communities could get involved with providing services for McClean Lake. The result was the creation of Athabasca Basin Development (ABD) led by Geoff Gay. Athabasca Basin Security was formed and the McClean Lake security contract was purchased from the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC).

What are some of the things that have made it a lasting relationship?

The unique characteristic with the relationship between ABS and Orano is that it is more like a partnership rather than a traditional vendor-client relationship. This does not mean that we do not have to deliver high-quality service that is safe, competitively priced and efficient. This simply means that we have an open relationship where both parties are constantly in contact and exploring ways to enhance the service.

How has working with Orano benefited ABS? And, what are some of the changes/improvements that you have seen in the relationship?

The largest benefit is one of economic self-sustainability in the north. Besides the obvious value from generating profits, the major impact on our northern communities is from providing meaningful employment to a large number of our Indigenous people from the surrounding area. Our average length of service amongst our employees at McClean Lake is approximately five years and this has a major positive impact on the lives of our employees and their families.

Adding in janitorial services to our contract several years ago has been of significant benefit. This addition allowed ABS to better build succession plans for our employees and we have seen many of our staff begin in janitorial and later advance into security positions. With our latest service addition of medical services we are optimistic that this trend will continue and will result in employees seeking further certification in the medical field and advance their careers.

What are some of the improvements Athabasca Basin Security has made over the years to better serve Orano?

Nearly everything has changed at ABS since we began working with Orano. We made a significant investment in our safety program and this resulted in being a finalist for large employers in the 2017 Mission Zero awards. At McClean Lake there is specific safety training completed for all ABS employees. Upon completion of the training a competency exam is written by each employee and they must reach an 80% pass rate. There is an additional competency exam for all supervisors and managers that must be passed with a 100% pass rate.

ABS enhanced some of its services to Orano at no extra cost such as we added GPS tracking to all vehicles in order to track excessive speed, hard braking and excessive idling. We also added a second vehicle to provide a higher level of service 365 days a year.

What does the relationship between Athabasca Basin Security and Orano look like in the future? (I hear we’ve just renewed our contract. Awesome news!) What are some of the things that are planned to make sure it remains a good partnership for both parties?

I believe the relationship between ABS and Orano is stronger than ever. Both parties understand the value of having a strong and positive relationship. Through the downturn, ABS and Orano continued to work closely and recently successfully renewed the services contract.

What is your vision for the future of Athabasca Basin Security and the relationship with the Saskatchewan mining industry and beyond?

This could be a multi-page answer but I’ll keep it fairly brief. I strongly believe that we have found a model that fits the current business climate where social responsibility is so vital and important to all Canadians. In every speaking engagement I do I always mention where we started, working with Orano at McClean Lake. From that point we have grown across western Canada and employ over 300 people of which 74% are of Indigenous ancestry. My vision for ABS is to be a major employer of First Nations people across Canada while providing first class services to industrial, commercial and federal clients.

Is there anything you’d like to add?

I love what I do and believe very strongly in my team. This includes all of our employees as it is our frontline employees that are the face of our company and through the support of our management team provide the high level of service we are now known for.