



Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

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May 7, 2022

NTC responds to charges in death of a young Nuu-chah-nulth child in Port Alberni

(Nuu-chah-nulth territories, Port Alberni, B.C.)

Over 4 years ago, on March 13, 2018, NTC learned that one of its own precious children Dontay Lucas passed away under suspicious circumstances. Finally, after 4 long years of waiting, the NTC has been informed by the RCMP that Ms. Rykel Frank (mother nee Charleson) and Mitchell Frank (step-father), have been charged with First Degree Murder of Dontay Lucas.

It is a huge relief that charges have finally been brought in this matter and the NTC is not happy that it took over 4 years to bring charges against the accused and the young child and his family still have not found any justice.

Judith Sayers, President of the NTC says "The death of any person is very sad, but it is even sadder when it is a young child with their whole life ahead of them. When the death is due to family violence, we know there is still healing to be done in our communities from residential schools, racism, and colonization. At long last, charges have been brought against two people who caused the death. The justice system has to do better. Now the family have another long wait for the trial to begin."

Mariah Charleson, Vice President of NTC states "4 years is too long a time for family and loved ones of a 6 year old victim of murder to wait for justice. We must push the justice system to work in a way that proves to us all that our lives are valued and cherished. 4 years is simply too long."

We would like to thank the RCMP for their thorough investigation and their efforts to consistently communicate with us during this process. We believe this is one step forward in finding justice for this child.

Our hearts and prayers go out to the communities of Ahousaht and Hesquiaht where this child holds family ties and hopes this announcement brings you some closure. We hold you close to our hearts during this devastating time.

We ask the public and media to respect the family's privacy as they grieve the loss of their loved one.

On behalf of the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council,

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About the NTC

The Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council (NTC) provides programs and services to over 10,000 registered members. The role of the NTC is to represent 14 First Nations in three regions stretching 300 kilometers of the Pacific Coast of Vancouver Island from Brooks Peninsula in the north to Point-no-Point in the south. The NTC represents Ahousaht, Ditidaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ayaht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshaht, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit www.nuuchahnulth.org.

See RCMP statement: <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2136&languageId=1&contentId=74539&attachmentDataId=43843>

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