

October 21st, 2015

Attn : Lucy Alway
Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development
2nd Floor, West Block
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Attn : Jasen Penwa
811 Oceanview Drive
Cape St. George NL
A0N 1T1

RE : Official Grievance, Complaint - Benoit First Nation Heritage Journalism Project

Dear Mrs. Alway and Mr. Benoit:

On September 24th, 2015 I applied for a job Job Position: Journalist Student or Interim 5123 - Journalists advertised and sponsored by Benoit 1st Nation. It is my understanding that this job offer is contingent upon funding from the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program (Job description attached).

There were 3 applicants who were asked to participate in the job interview. I was one of two applicants who met the aboriginal status designation being targeted by the Benoit 1st Nation band, the employer.

In addition, I am the only one of 3 applicants who is an accredited journalist (Le Gaboteur). In spite of this, the applicant who was offered the position is not a journalist. The successful applicant, to my knowledge has never proclaimed himself as a member of the aboriginal community, nor had he had active or vocal involvement and participation the Benoit 1st nation and Qualipu Band of this Province. In fact he was only added to the Benoit 1st Nation page this past Sunday, the 18th.

When I questioned Jes'n Penwa, Chief, regarding his choice of successful applicant, stating that this person did not meet the advertised criteria for the job, specifically not being a journalist, I was informed by Mr. Penwa that the job description/criteria had changed. Neither I nor a second candidate were advised or informed of these changes prior to the interviews. Later, Mr. Penwa posted this post to justify the hiring of the successful candidate. Please

note, that Mr. Penwa is now looking for a journalism student or an experienced journalist. The successful candidate is neither.



Jes'n Penwa That was a tough one. The job was not a Student Position, it was Journalist and we were looking for the best person for the job either as a Journalism student or experienced Journalist. We are still awaiting confirmation from the funding agency on the choice. We choose 1 person out of 3 applicants with one of the extra two as an alternate. Sounds like there will be sour grapes over it.

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 12:04pm · Edited

I am deeply disturbed and disappointed by the process through which this person was hired. Changes to the job description and qualifications appear to have been tailored to accommodate the (successful) candidate.

I am aware that the application for this project is still pending. I am concerned that the sudden changes in the advertised job description is an indication of a pattern of poor management and shifting priorities which could undermine the value and worth of the initiative that would document and explore the experiences and realities of my aboriginal ancestors.

"This heritage is held collectively by members of a community, and is passed down through generations. Each new generation shapes the knowledge according to their times. This knowledge is rarely documented, and is often lost or diminished by cultural change and mass media. " - Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program



Jes'n Penwa Please dont flame the sour grapes...its unbecoming of anyone...The hiring committee choose...it was a hiring process where the decision was made based on the resume, interview and how best to fill the needs of the program. Only relevant information was used to make the decision..Lets move on and wait to see the excellent results we will get.....

Like · Reply · 22 hrs · Edited

I can easily trace my ancestry to Francois Benoit and Anne L'Official through my great grandfather Narcisse Chaisson, whose mother was Geneveive (Jane) Benoit – the common family line for through which the Benoit 1st Nation was founded. I am well aware that each new generation shapes knowledge and customs according to their time just as my past generations have informed me.

The process through which are ancestors histories' and experiences' are captured require the skill of an informed and skilled journalist who is capable of drawing out personal stories, experiences and memories. It is unfortunate that the Benoit 1st Nation has chosen to compromise the integrity of an initiative such as this by ignoring the specialized skill that a journalist with common ancestry to those interviewed can contribute.

I am asking that you consider my concerns when considering the application from the Benoit

1st nation to ensure that the intention and philosophy of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program are respected.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Holly Simon

Attachment
job_post_journalist.doc