

What's it Mean to You?

“I know what happens when we choose children, sacrifice for, and educate them.”

Larry Wilkins, Honorary Chair of the Bridge Campaign

Owner & CEO External
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St. Albert & Edmonton



It seems as though my involvement with Mamawi Atosketan was simply inevitable. When I was one-year old and my brother a little older, the court awarded us in a custody battle to my paternal grandmother. Nan was Mohawk, born on the Tyendanaga Reserve, living in Toronto and married to my Poppa, an Ojibway Indian. She sacrificed a full pension to stay home and mother us. Together, they taught me about love, family and sacrifice, but mostly about love. She chose us.

I spent my teenage years going to school and flying back and forth to the Arctic to work in construction. My father saw that I was lost and told me he would send me to any university in the world if I would go. Beach Boys were cool back then so I chose California, and he chose Pacific Union College, an Adventist university.

The Canadian dollar was at an all-time low. My dad had to move into a tiny little rental to keep up with tuition. Knowing his sacrifice so that I could be the first in my clan to attend a school of higher learning, I worked hard and graduated near the top of my class. I was so impressed with the Adventist School System that when my son was of age, I sent him to a Canadian Adventist university. He is at the moment flying across Canada, interviewing for a residency in emergency medicine.

My life has taught me a few rules that I have written in stone:

- Love the children – all children – even when doing so requires sacrifice.
- We give everything we can to our kids, but sometimes it's not all good; sometimes they need additional help. For me and my son, the Adventist School system was that help.
- From those to whom much is given, much is expected.

I have extremely high expectations for the children of MANS. I believe in them. I know them. I know what happens when we choose children, sacrifice for, and educate them. I know who they will become. They will lead the next generation and teach them their own life lessons. Gratitude will guide their lives.

Hear Larry's inspiring Alberta Camp Meeting 2016 talk at vimeo.com/albertaadventist



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