

President's Everyday Hero Award
Language Warrior

Skil Jáadei

LINDA SCHRACK



Linda was born and raised in Southeast Alaska. Her Haida name is *Skil Jáadei* which means “Woman of Good Fortune.” She is Raven, *Yahkw ‘Janáas* from the Shark House; her family crests are Brown Bear, Two-Fin Killer Whale, and Lady in the Moon. Her mother is Verna Skillie-Edwardson and grandparents are the late Dr. Robert Cogo and Nora Edenshaw-Cogo who were actively involved with language preservation.

Skil Jáadei is a Haida language learner, instructor, and activist. Her passion and life mission is to continue the work of her grandparents and others that have passed on. It is important to her that the Haida language and culture continue for generations to come. While Haida is her main focus, she also advocates for the Tsimshian and Tlingit languages and cultures. In her lifetime, she would like to see children speak all three languages as our people once did. She encourages everyone to learn their ancestral language; no one is ever too old or too young to learn.

Skil Jáadei currently works for Ketchikan Indian Community's Language program and as an adjunct Haida language instructor for the University of Alaska Southeast–Ketchikan. She teaches all ages and always encourages family participation in the classes she offers. She has also developed a home-based language program called Adopt-a-Family. Her philosophy is that if families learn together they will practice and speak *Xaad kil* together. When our children speak our languages, they will survive.