

## 2007 Buffett Award for Indigenous Leadership Finalist: Lillian Moyer

*“We are not against some development, but too much too fast  
will be the death of our land and culture.”*

Lillian Moyer

Lillian Moyer is an honored 2007 Buffett Award finalist for her work as a community leader and her ongoing efforts to protect the watersheds of the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Skeena and Nass wilderness river systems. Moyer is a Tahltan Nation member and currently resides in Dease Lake, British Columbia, Canada.

Moyer is President of the Tahltan Elders Society. The society expresses the views of the elders and she often serves as its spokesperson. Moyer is also dedicated to protecting the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Skeena and Nass rivers because of their sensitive ecosystems and importance to future generations of Tahltan families. Tahltan Nation traditional territory and rights are significant reasons for the elders' public protest against the industrial development of the Sacred Headwaters. The RCMP arrested Lillian Moyer along with nine elders and a number of youth during a blockade against the mining company, Fortune Minerals Ltd. in 2005. They are not opposed to development, only the massive scope of these projects that will detrimentally impact their territories productivity and integral Native food systems.

Since 1996, Moyer has worked as a Family Support Worker for the Tahltan Band Council. Her work has included transportation clerk, housing officer, social services assistant, counseling and home care. Moyer previously owned and operated Tiger Lil's Pilot Car Services (1986-1997) and Tiger's Take-Out (1984-1986). She also teaches her family about their traditional seasonal gathering and hunting practices and its proper traditional management.

Moyer served as a Tahltan Band Councilor for eight years. She has also served on numerous Tahltan Nation committees including the Stikine Health Board and the Child and Family Services Committee. Moyer donated her time to the Suicide Prevention Team and facilitated suicide prevention services in her community. She currently provides layman ministerial services through the local church that she attends in Dease Lake.

Moyer's own life story is the basis of her social service interests and deep understanding of human struggle and accomplishment. Her mother was a Healer and Midwife who gave birth to sixteen children. Moyer suffered with tuberculosis when she was fifteen. She has personally survived abuse and overcame alcoholism. As a single parent, Moyer raised four children. She is currently a grandmother and great-grandmother. Her traditional role is to share their unique history by passing along generation to generation their strengths, and their collective anecdotal databank of their homelands.

Moyer also organizes trips for the local elders. On one occasion, she organized and raised funds for a trip to the Anthropology Museum in Vancouver so that the elders could participate in the grand opening of a Tahltan art exhibit. Moyer's volunteer efforts supports elders sharing their wisdom and continue their life long learning about other First Nations.