



Cara Martin is Iroquois Mohawk and a member of the Bear clan.

Cara graduated with a three year diploma from the computer programmer analyst program at Fanshawe College. She has applied for advanced standing in information technology management with a major in application development and a minor in business at Ryerson University. After graduation she plans to work as a computer programmer and eventually work her way up to project manager.

Cara considers graduating from college her major accomplishment. In high school she graduated with honours, received a highest average award, business and computer award and a scholarship from the Foundation for the

Advancement of Aboriginal Youth

She is also proud to say that she has graduated from the Cayuga Immersion program and has **gained a strong understanding of her language and culture.** Cara feels this particular educational initiative provided her with **a strong sense of identity and pride in her First Nation heritage** which gives her the strength to succeed in post secondary education.

The most difficult challenge Cara had to face throughout her post secondary education was **being a female in a male dominated profession.** She was one of two women that graduated from the computer programmer analyst program last year.

Another challenge she had to deal with was **the high cost of living away from home.** Cara found it necessary to work part-time through out her education, which made her studies much more difficult.

Initially Cara had some difficulty **adjusting to re-locating** because she didn't know anyone, but she **quickly made new friends and that helped her through the transition**

Cara recognizes that technology will help facilitate progress in our community through research, statistical data, computer skills development and creating skills for our people. **As an Onkwehowe person she has always felt it was her responsibility to use her skills and education to help Onkwehowe people.**

As a result of her education and upbringing Cara would eventually like to open her own business in computer consulting and help to create employment for Onkwehowe people. In addition to this she would also like to educate Onkwehowe people in the field of technology and encourage more women to pursue a career in IT (Information Technology).

Cara thinks that economic development is a major issue

that needs to be addressed, for not only Six Nations, but all First Nations communities. She feels there are many ways that this issue can be addressed and improved. For example: improved access to capital, improving on-reserve living conditions, job creation and creating educational opportunities for First Nation people.

The advice Cara would like to give to young people as they make decision for their future is **“Stay in school, don't give up and don't be afraid to set goals”.** **“There were a lot of times I thought I would never get things done and a lot of times I wanted to give up, but I kept going and in the end it was worth it.”**

Cara would like to thank her family and friends for their encouragement and support throughout her education. She would especially like to thank her mother for pushing her when she needed to be pushed and for teaching her to **never give up.**