



Jeremy Bouchard is Mohawk of the Wolf Clan, Six Nations.

Jeremy's post secondary education consists of two separate degrees.

The first was a Bachelor of Arts, Honours Degree in which he majored in Political Science, with a Minor in Law at Carleton University. In addition, he obtained a concentration in International Relations.

Influenced by Eljia Harper, and with his keen interest in politics which had expanded to law, he decided to attend law school in Ottawa. Three years later, he graduated from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law with a Baccalaureate of Laws, commonly referred to as a LL.B. In the end, his education got him right where he wanted to be, practicing governmental law regarding Aboriginal matters. Now he is able to deal with pressing Aboriginal matters as the representative of Canada.

One of Jeremy's major accomplishments (*besides his wife Jennifer and daughter Vanessa*) was being accepted to article at the second largest law firm in Canada.

He not only had to compete against some of the brightest law students from across Canada, he also had to demonstrate that he was **capable of taking on the challenges** of working in a large and fast paced environment.

He proved to himself that "**a kid from Six Nations could actually make it** in a profession that is traditionally known for its exclusion of Aboriginal people".

One of the greatest gifts his parents gave him while he still lived at home was the **opportunity to travel**. In doing so, he embraced the ideal that one day he would be able to leave Six Nations and live and travel in many other places. Therefore, when he actually left home to attend university in Ottawa, he had no problems with adjusting to his new way of life. In fact, he really enjoyed life in the city and the fact that at all times of the day there was always something going on.

One of the major challenges that he did encounter during his post secondary education was having to deal with **new concepts** that life on Six Nations did not quite expose him to. He often found himself in classes which deal with subject matter that he was **encountering for the first time of his life**, whereas it seemed that was not the case for many other students.

Another challenge that he encountered was being in a classroom with hundreds of students and the subject of the class

concerned Aboriginal people. Besides **feeling a little out numbered**, Jeremy often found it hard to listen to others speak about issues impacting his people, when in fact they had never stepped foot on a reserve, and were speaking entirely from the perspective of a textbook.

The values or principles that have guided Jeremy throughout his education and career have always been that he is a **Mohawk from Six Nations first**. To him, this means that he has a **responsibility to advocate for Aboriginal issues at all times**. He has always tried to forcefully **advocate the Aboriginal perspective** and this especially the case when the subject matter concerned his home community of Six Nations.

As a lawyer within the Government of Canada, Jeremy is able to provide advice to the people who are in direct relationships with First Nation governments. Therefore, while he is a representative of the Government, he is also able to influence how the Government will take a position with respect to an Aboriginal issue. In this sense, he feels that he is able to contribute to his community by always bringing a **Six Nation's Mohawk perspective** to the table.

One key challenge that needs to be addressed by Six Nations is "**how we make ourselves self sufficient without the financial assistance of any other sources**". In short, if we want to be self governing people, then we need to look at ways in

which we can financially support that effort, without having to rely on funds from Ottawa or any other source.

Jeremy thinks we also need to **provide more support to our children** within the community and those who attend schools off reserve. "I certainly think that more resources should be directed at establishing more **community friendly** things such as parks and play areas for children and youth to access after school."

"We should also **ensure** that when our students are sent to high school in Hagersville or Brantford, that we always have a Six Nations support person there for them **at all times** and a representative of Six Nations on each Educational Board."

The advice Jeremy offers is that whether you like it or not, **do your homework and work hard** to achieve your best at school while you have the chance. His biggest regret is that during high school, he didn't work as hard as he was capable of. He wishes he had **asked the teacher for more help** and attended **extra classes** when they were available instead of hanging out with friends. "While it is important to maintain a healthy social life, it is **equally important to maintain a good academic life**. It just ensures that you will have **more opportunities** in the future when it comes to career planning."

Jeremy would like to suggest to the community to "**Take the time to get to know your neighbors**".