

## Leo Hurtubise Bio

### **Leo Hurtubise: A Visionary Leader and Champion for Indigenous Entrepreneurship**

Leo "Couchie" Hurtubise, a proud member of the Nipissing First Nation, is not just a business leader—he is a trailblazer who is reshaping the landscape of Indigenous entrepreneurship in Canada. As a survivor of the Sixties Scoop, Leo's journey is one marked by resilience, determination, and a deep commitment to reclaiming his heritage, while creating opportunities for future generations of Indigenous leaders. With over 35 years of experience in the machining and plastic molding industries, Leo's story is one of overcoming adversity and using that strength to build a brighter, more inclusive future for Indigenous communities.

Leo's entrepreneurial journey began with the founding of his first plastic injection mold making business in 1998, where he laid the foundation for what would become a remarkable career dedicated to pushing the boundaries of excellence. Throughout the years, he has built and nurtured multiple businesses, each one underscored by his passion for advanced engineering and sustainable solutions. But it was the creation of LaFlesche that truly marked Leo as a visionary.

As the Co-founder and Vice President of Business Development at LaFlesche, Leo has turned an Indigenous-owned manufacturing company into a powerful symbol of success and possibility. Located in Kahnawà:ke, LaFlesche has become a leader in advanced manufacturing, producing high-quality CNC machined and molded plastic products for industries like aerospace, defense, medical devices, and security. With Leo's education in mechanical engineering and business administration, LaFlesche's growth has been nothing short of extraordinary—setting new benchmarks in custom manufacturing, prototyping, and product development.

But what truly sets Leo apart is his unshakable belief in the power of people. He has made it his mission to create opportunities for Indigenous individuals within industries that have historically been underrepresented. Through his leadership, Leo has pioneered pathways for Indigenous participation in government procurement and defense contracting, making LaFlesche one of the inaugural members of Canada's Indigenous Business Defense Sector Contractor Accelerator—standing out among 150 other Indigenous businesses.

Leo's influence goes far beyond business. He has dedicated much of his time and resources to uplifting his community, hosting charity events for INDSPIRE, because he believes that "education is the key to community development." His passion for education, inclusion, and sustainable growth drives his ongoing efforts to create a future where Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs thrive.

Leo's story is not just one of success—it is a testament to the power of visionary leadership and the strength of the human spirit. and has shown through his work that true leadership is about raising others to succeed. As an Indigenous leader, Leo continues to inspire, motivate, and lead by example, proving that with resilience, dedication, and vision, we can all make an enduring impact on our communities and our industries.