



Iwara
Travel

Connecting people, places and culture



FRONTIER CENTRE
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Profile Series

Profile of:

STEVEN SATOUR

" When it gets tough, remember why you do what you do. "

Steven Satour – a driven Indigenous Australian entrepreneur – is more than happy that he has achieved his childhood dream of working in the tourism sector and sharing his Indigenous culture with the outside world.

“Australia is home to the oldest living culture of the world. Its landscape is so vast and different it provides for so many rich and unique experiences.” said Satour, in an interview, with pride evident in his voice.

Satour is the founder, CEO and managing director of Iwara Travel, an Indigenous Australian-owned and operated business specializing in Indigenous tourism experiences. Satour, is a Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara from Central Australia. These Indigenous groups are from the desert region of Australia.



According to Satour, Iwara is an Indigenous Australian Anangu word from Uluru that describes the tracks of his ancestors.

He described the Indigenous cultural background of the term this way: “The Uluru-Kata Tjuta landscape was formed by the Tjukuritja ancestral beings as they travelled across the country. The trees, mountains and living creatures were all created by the Tjukuritja, and some of their spirit remains behind at each place where they left their essence. The landscape is integral to the Tjukurpa (Dreamtime) — the body of law, history, knowledge, religion and morality that binds people, landscape, plants and animals. One of the most im-

portant aspects of the Tjukurpa is the way that are lands are interconnected spiritually and socially by the Iwara, or tracks, of our ancestors. The significance of our sacred sites lies in the way they are interconnected by these ancestral tracks.”

Iwara Travel, he says, provides visitors and tourists with a unique cultural experience. He is also quite pleased that Indigenous-based tourism in Australia provides jobs for Indigenous people and revenue for the country and also works to protect natural and cultural resources for future generations.

“I think the best way to develop appreciation for our culture is through immersive experiences that have ‘edu-tainment’ value and with so many ways to express our culture we have more opportunities to connect with people’s individual likes etc.,” he said, in a past media interview.

Iwara Travel connects tourists and visitors to Australia with authentic Indigenous cultural providers and operators. They are then able to customize a cultural experience that works for them. For example, some operators have provided traditional dance performance, cleansing smoking ceremonies, traditional food experiences, cultural awareness events, and story telling sessions.

Satour describes his business this way: “Iwara Travel is a one stop shop for the ‘culture experience seeking’ traveller. We offer Aboriginal travel packages; to travellers looking to experience the essence of Australia from the First Australians.”

Satour says his business has been able to monetize these rich cultural experiences for each individual client.

“We are cultural connectors. Working with our clients to embed and deliver customized Indigenous experiences into the workplace through; major events, meetings, functions, host delegation or product launches. We take on the work of sourcing

the best Indigenous experience appropriate to your event," he said in a media interview.

"[They have been] consistently been amazed of the depth of our culture, realizing they can be involved through art, dancing etc. and then asking what we can do in our role to support and promote more."

Satur has been working in the tourism industry since his teenage years and he is stoked that he has been able to develop an entrepreneurial venture from his passion. A lover of the Australian landscape, he is also the founder of Story Maps Travel Australia. As well as running Iwara Travel, Satur also co-chairs the City of Sydney Aboriginal Advisory Committee and currently sits on the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Committee, a body that makes decisions regarding NAIDOC activities.

When asked by reporter Emily Nicol in a previous media interview with NITV (National Indigenous Television in Australia) why he loves what he does, Satur shared a few key reasons. "Getting to learn about other countries and cultures all across Australia, seeing how we are the same, different and connected both traditionally and in today's world. Also seeing visitors' perspectives and understanding of Indigenous Australia shift positively is really rewarding."

Satur brings over a decade of experience in communications, marketing, event and project management across various sectors including: education, Not-for-profits, tourism, employment and small business. In the way of education, Satur completed an Indigenous Master Business Course at the Melbourne School of Business at the University of Melbourne Business School. At the present time, he is working on a Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

He has achieved a track record in working with Indigenous artists and groups to

achieve results that impact First Australians social and economic welfare in a very positive way.

Like most Indigenous Australians – indeed all Indigenous peoples around the world studied thus far – he is group oriented and looks towards improving the entire Indigenous community collectively, not just himself personally. He also believes that learning about Indigenous Australian culture will bring all Australians closer together.



In the NITV interview mentioned above, Satur added that he has learned much personally and professionally in starting his own business.

"I've learnt that not everyone will be on board with my vision and that's ok. The journey and emotion of personal and professional life almost become one. Also, to be clear about your intention for whatever it might be - meetings, phone calls, emails etc., if you can't be clear and articulate it, you are wasting time." he said in the interview.

Satur said that mentality and attitude are critical for any entrepreneurial success. He also offered the following advice for any budding Indigenous entrepreneurs.

"When it gets tough, remember why you do what you do. For every setback and for every win, practice an attitude of gratitude because there is always a lesson to be learned. Even on the days when all you can be grateful for is that you woke up."



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Joseph Quesnel is a research fellow for the Frontier Centre for Public Policy who mainly focuses on Aboriginal matters and property rights. Presently based in eastern Nova Scotia, he is from northeastern Ontario and has Métis ancestry from Quebec.

He graduated from McGill University in 2001, where he majored in political science and history. He specialized in Canadian and U.S. politics, with an emphasis on constitutional law. He also has a Master of Journalism degree from Carleton University, where he specialized in political reporting. His master's research project focused on reformist Indigenous thinkers in Canada.

He is currently studying theology at the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax.

In the past while as a policy analyst, he was the lead researcher on the Frontier Centre's flagship Aboriginal Governance Index, which is measured perceptions of quality of governance and services on Prairie First Nations. For over two years, he covered House standing committees as well as Senate committees. Quesnel's career in journalism includes several stints at community newspapers in Northern Ontario, including in Sudbury and Espanola. He also completed a radio broadcasting internship at CFRA 580 AM, a talk radio station in Ottawa, and the well-known Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC).

He is a past editor of C2C Journal, an online Canadian publication devoted to political commentary. He wrote a weekly column for the Winnipeg Sun and contributes to The Taxpayer, the flagship publication of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

Quesnel's policy commentaries have appeared all over Canada, including the Globe and Mail, the National Post, the Financial Post, the Vancouver Sun, the Ottawa Citizen, the Montreal Gazette, the Calgary Herald, Winnipeg Free Press, among many other major papers. Over the years, he has been featured as a guest commentator on many radio and television news programs.