



A Virtual Chat with Crystal Forrest



BA Anthropology
MA Biological Anthropology
PhD Biological Anthropology



University of Western
University of Toronto



Specialty/Research Focus:
Bioarchaeology

Crystal completed her Hons. BA in Anthropology at the University of Western Ontario and went on to complete her MA and PhD in Biological Anthropology at the University of Toronto. Her Masters research focused on mortuary patterns of the in-house burials at the Late Ontario Iroquoian Draper site in Pickering, Ontario, and her PhD thesis focused on infant and juvenile growth and development in the Late Ontario Iroquoian and Early Historic Period in the Lower Great Lakes region.

While completing these degrees, Crystal worked for museums, Cultural Resource Management firms, and universities (as research analyst/assistant, teaching assistant, course instructor, sessional lecturer). After completing these degrees, Crystal continued teaching sessionally at colleges and universities, and obtained her Professional Archaeological Licence in Ontario.

Crystal is currently Registrar under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, and is responsible for administering the provisions of that Act relating to burial sites, cemetery closures, cemetery abandonments, and war graves. In her role, Crystal works with diverse stakeholder groups to build relationships between the provincial government and Indigenous communities, religious organizations, private land owners, and corporations, ensuring that the regulatory and statutory requirements of the Act are met.

Crystal entered government simply by submitting an application for a job as a subject matter expert in Ontario Archaeology. She was not successful with that initial application, but was subsequently offered a similar job as a runner-up in that competition. Crystal has served an Archaeology Review Officer, Archaeology Review Coordinator, and project manager at the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries. Crystal has also worked at the Ministry of the Solicitor General's Centre of Forensic Sciences as a Policy and Program Analyst, providing strategic advice to senior managers and delivering key strategic programs and projects. This latter position was obtained through targeted networking within government.

Crystal uses the skills she learned through the study of Anthropology in her job every day: the power of listening to and respecting others' perspectives though they may differ from our own; the value of telling stories to convey key messages; and the importance of speaking truth to power in advocating for disenfranchised groups. These skills are critical to Crystal's success in her work with stakeholders. She highly values the opportunity to work with Indigenous communities, building trust and creating a respectful environment in which to determine a path forward when the resting places of their ancestors are disturbed.

Online
Office Hrs



See our list of
events to register
for Crystal's
upcoming office
hours.