

2021 Coaches Symposium

Elk Ridge Resort – October 15th-17th, 2021

Speaker Bio - Dr. James Makokis



Dr. James Makokis leads one of North America's most progressive family medical clinics serving both LGBTQ2+ and First Nation peoples from all over Canada. He is a proud Cree, Two-Spirit doctor from Saddle Lake First Nation in Northern, AB. Known as one of Canada's most progressive doctors and experts on numerous topics, he is on a mission to serve marginalized populations and to change the outcomes for Indigenous and LGBTQ2+ peoples. Dr. James Makokis and his partner Anthony

Johnson were crowned winners of the Amazing Race Canada Season 7, where they received international recognition for their advocacy of marginalized individuals by making the world aware of the impact of discrimination and the mistreatment of anyone labelled as being "different". They both currently reside on Treaty 6 Territory outside of Edmonton.

Dr. Makokis has received international attention for his holistic approach to medicine. He is also one of the few doctors that combines traditional Cree and Western practices. Known for his compassion, numerous accomplishments and his unique insights, Dr. James Makokis has inspired all types of Canadians to challenge stereotypical and often discriminating views towards First Nation and LGBTQ2+ peoples. Dr. Makokis has won numerous awards, sat on many boards and councils, and continues to give back to his communities in any way he can. Through his work and his previous contributions, he continues to break down stigmas and identify the societal structures and forces of oppression that LGBTQ2+ and First Nation people face.

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Dr. James Makokis wanted to be a doctor since he was four, and it was during his education that he decided to focus on LGBTQ2+ and Indigenous health so that he could make a difference for those often left out of the healthcare system and society as a whole. Because of the attitudes and discrimination individuals he serves face it often leads to his patients being misguided by the healthcare system, which then leaves them to mistrust the advice they have received. Dr. Makokis is here to create real change by serving marginalized populations and rebuild relationships with those who are often left behind. Many of his patients travel from long distances to receive his advice and services.

Dr. Makokis earned his Master's in health science from the University of Toronto in 2006 and graduated from the University of Toronto's medical school in 2010 and the University of British Columbia's Aboriginal Family Medicine Residency Training Program in 2012. He is also trained in family medicine. Dr. Makokis has also worked as an instructor at the Yellowhead Tribal College, the University of Toronto, and the University of Alberta, teaching courses on Indigenous health, Indigenous cultural practices, and traditional medicine.

Dr. James Makokis faced many challenges earlier on in establishing his career as an Indigenous doctor. Being Two-Spirit, from a small segregated and poverty stricken community forced him to prove himself, try to ignore hurtful statements against him, and to develop coping strategies to manage systematic and social forms of discrimination. This is in large part a big part of his success as a doctor as he can relate to his patients and can emphasize with them before providing his medical advice. He has worked alongside former Governor General Michaëlle Jean on a diplomatic mission to Brazil and had the rare opportunity to work next to Dr. Patch Adams in the Amazon Jungle. He also received certification from the Aboriginal Family Medicine Training Program and served as the Spokesperson for the National Aboriginal Health Organization's Role Model Program for many years.

He brings his mix of expertise, knowledge, commitment, understanding, compassion and ultimately – love to every person he interacts with, and we are all blessed to hear his progressive approach and his unique insights. Dr. James Makokis has been called to serve individuals that struggle to make sense of themselves and to bring awareness to become an ally in improving the lives of those who struggle to find purpose and make sense of their world. He shares the stories he and his patients live with while celebrating each person's uniqueness and showing us all how to contribute to improve each other's lives and our world.