

From Darkness to Light:

The Story of Clayton Williams and Molded Fortitude Consulting

A testament to resilience, purpose, and what becomes possible when the right people believe in you.

Some stories don't need embellishment. They arrive fully formed, carved from lived truth, and all they need is space. Clayton Williams is that kind of story.

On February 10, 2026, Empowerment Pathways announced that its latest cohort of entrepreneurs, including Clayton and his company Molded Fortitude Consulting, had completed the program and received their Certificates of Completion. The room that day held something rare: the energy of people who had turned the hardest chapters of their lives into the first pages of something lasting.

This newsletter is our account of that moment, who built it, why it matters, and why we believe Clayton Williams represents exactly the kind of future this work was designed to create.

THE ENTREPRENEUR

Clayton Williams, Molded Fortitude Consulting

Clayton is a Ktunaxa man, a transformation coach, a relief carver, a certified personal trainer, and the founder of Molded Fortitude Consulting, a First Nations-owned business operating on Coast Salish Territory, established in 2025. He is currently completing the I-CEDAR Indigenous Entrepreneurship Program at the Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria, and previously studied literature and composition at Thompson Rivers University. He has presented for the Dr. Peters Centre and the CAAN Alliance. His art includes works like Nà Duiehi, The Voice From the Spirit World, which reflect the central philosophy behind everything he builds.

His transformation was shaped, in part, by time spent at Kwikwèxwelhp Healing Village in Harrison Mills, BC, where he immersed himself in the laws of nature, ancestral cultural practices, and traditional healing. He came out of that experience different. Not fixed; transformed. And deeply aware of a gap in his community that he was uniquely positioned to close.

“When I think back, I might have met someone who could have offered space or guided me to something better in life. Maybe I wouldn't have gone down as far as I did.”

That reflection is not self-pity. It is precision. Clayton identified the exact wound he intends to heal: young people without positive male role models, without a space to discover their gifts before the world convinces them they have none. Molded Fortitude was built to be that space.

His methodology blends fitness and physical discipline, philosophy and ancestral wisdom, the Seven Sacred Teachings, and creative healing through carving and storytelling. His workshops are not lectures. They are, in his words, spaces where vulnerability is honored and where a sacred lens allows people to expand their minds. He is also building a digital platform and a training system designed to create the next generation of facilitators, people who can carry this work into communities he cannot physically reach.

“I don't want to inspire them. I want them to inspire. I want them to be the best they could be. But if they need to know how low I started, that's where I've been.”

1997

SEF Canada founded

22+

countries served by SEF

2018

Three Sisters founded

2025

Molded Fortitude founded

THE COALITION

Sustainable Economic Futures Canada, Three Sisters Consulting, and Corrections Canada

What made this program possible was not one organization acting in isolation. It was a coalition, each partner bringing what the others could not, and together creating the conditions in which a man like Clayton Williams could build something real.

Sustainable Economic Futures Canada

Founded in 1997, SEF Canada, led by Founder and Managing Director Suzette McFaul, is an award-winning entrepreneurial development organization with experience across more than 22 countries. SEF's model is built on a clear belief: that sustainable economies are grown from within communities, by their own people, using their own knowledge, with tools that remain in place long after the program ends. Their Entrepreneurial Development Program has supported entrepreneurs in First Nations communities, mining-affected regions, and remote communities across Canada, the Americas, Africa, and beyond. SEF was recently recognized with a Bronze Award at the Global Good Awards as Community Partnership of the Year.

The program Clayton completed was delivered under SEF Canada's leadership, in full partnership with Three Sisters Consulting.

Three Sisters Consulting

Founded in 2018 by Sarah Hopkins-Herr, Matriarch and Turtle Clan of the Lenni Lenape, Three Sisters Consulting is an Indigenous woman-owned firm dedicated to amplifying Indigenous voices and supporting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis entrepreneurs, communities, and organizations. Sarah is a Day School survivor, raised by her mother, her grandmother who was a residential school survivor, and her great-grandmother who spoke only Lenape. She has served as an Elected Councillor and Language Facilitator within the Delaware Nation. Three Sisters has worked with the Government of Canada across agencies including Justice Canada, Public Safety Canada, Health Canada, and the RCMP. Their formal partnership with SEF Canada brings together community economic development expertise and Indigenous relational practice in a way that few organizations can match. The two organizations' work together is, as SEF Canada stated publicly, built to support communities in creating sustainable economic futures.

Corrections Canada

The inclusion of Corrections Canada in this initiative reflects an important institutional truth: reintegration is not charity work, it is public investment. Indigenous people are significantly overrepresented in Canada's federal corrections system. Correctional Service Canada has long recognized, through its Indigenous Continuum of Care model, that culturally responsive programs delivered with Elder guidance are among the most effective tools for supporting healing and successful reintegration. Their presence in this coalition signals a commitment to meeting people where they are, not where systems have placed them.

"I think our youth out there should be able to meet an elder before they go to prison. We need more investment into mental health and wellbeing. We need to invest in people."

THE COMPLETION

A Certificate. A Starting Line.

On February 10, 2026, Clayton Williams received his Certificate of Completion from Empowerment Pathways, alongside a cohort of fellow Indigenous entrepreneurs each building something rooted in culture, in healing, and in the communities they love. In presenting it, we said plainly: we understand your business, we get your vision, and we see this as a very viable enterprise. We continue to walk with you.

That certificate is not a finish line. It is formal acknowledgment of something that was already true: that this man had done the inner work, built the framework, and was ready. Clayton put it this way:

“When one chooses not to curse the darkness but to light a candle instead, there's a greater chance of finding something beautiful in the dark. And sometimes, the most beautiful thing you can find is yourself.”

That is Molded Fortitude. That is the spirit of this work. And that is what this coalition, Empowerment Pathways, Sustainable Economic Futures Canada, Three Sisters Consulting, and Corrections Canada, exists to make possible.

FROM EMPOWERMENT PATHWAYS

Gratitude, and a Call Forward

To Clayton: what you carry, the pain, the wisdom, the fire, is exactly what your community has been waiting for. We are honoured to have walked any part of this road with you.

To Suzette McFaul and SEF Canada: thank you for nearly three decades of proof that communities can build their own futures when given the right tools and the right belief.

To Sarah Hopkins-Herr and Three Sisters Consulting: your presence in this work is a reminder that the most powerful thing one survivor can offer another is the truth of what is possible.

To anyone reading this who knows a young person still searching: now you know where to send them.

Molded Fortitude Consulting moldedfortitude.com | Coast Salish Territory, BC

Sustainable Economic Futures Canada sefcanada.com | **Three Sisters Consulting** threesistersconsulting.com

Empowerment Pathways | Supporting entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey.