

Kaitlyn Walsh, Anishinaabe, a direct descendant of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Ojibwe), was born in St. Paul and lives in Duluth, Minnesota. She grows seeds at Nagaajiwanaang. Her grandma gave her the name Michzhwakqwe or Big Woman, after Kaitlyn's great-great grandmother.

Kaitlyn spent the last growing season at Native-led nonprofit Dream of Wild Health in Hugo, Minnesota, focusing on seed farming and repatriation work. Before that, she ran Fond du Lac's Gitigaan (garden) Program and helped develop Gitigaaning farm and the tribe's Agricultural Division, including a seed library, seed garden, and Native seed giveaway. She also has more than a decade of marketing, communications, and project management experience. Kaitlyn has completed the online Seed Seva Mentorship Program and four years in the Bimaaji'idiwin Producer Training Program. She participated in Vital Village's Community Food Systems Leaders Fellowship '22 and served on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Emerging Farmers Working Group for two years. This year, Kaitlyn was selected for the inaugural cohort of the Ira Wallace Seed School on ethical seed farming.

Kaitlyn is grateful to Indigenous Seed Keepers Network for helping her find her path in seeds. She looks forward to giving back to this community and the seedkeepers before her, investing in seed sovereignty efforts and intertribal trade routes throughout the region as Upper Midwest Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Coordinator. Kaitlyn wants to also thank her teachers, especially her grandma Tempe and late great uncle Awsawdumiban, who passed down a passion for gardening and our Ojibwe foodways. She loves mandaamin (corn) and strives to be a good home for the seeds.