Dr. Wanda Wuttunee is an internationally known professor and researcher in the field of Aboriginal Community Economic Development. Dr. Wuttunee is Professor in the Department of Native Studies where she has played a critical role in training future Aboriginal leaders about economic issues for the benefit of their home communities, Aboriginal business efforts, as well as, mainstream business community in working towards vibrant, sustainable and healthy communities. Her non-Aboriginal students have insight and tools to be allies in shaping the future role of Aboriginal communities in Canada.

In addition to the heavy administrative responsibilities that she carries, for the last 28 years Dr. Wuttunee has devoted her research agenda to understanding how Aboriginal values interact with capitalist values. She considers gender issues arising from economic development as well as the role of culture and tradition by working in mainstream business, through social enterprise and co-operatives. The term “community capitalism” reflects her emphasis on the need for economic development to be in sync with Aboriginal communities.

Her work brings to the forefront the many different ways in which Aboriginal Peoples are contributing to the economy. She has published two books on the topic, Living rhythms: Lessons in Aboriginal economic resilience and vision and in business for ourselves: Northern entrepreneurs; written numerous journal articles (both academic and popular); and has made countless conference and invited presentations on the topic of Aboriginal economic development. Her work with undergraduate and graduate students in faculties of Arts and Business schools across this country for 20 years has increased the exposure of future leaders to Aboriginal economy issues.

Dr. Wuttunee was awarded the Women of Distinction: Education and Training in 2009 and was a member of the 2003 Commonwealth Study Conference for leaders. She is a former board member of the Institute on Research and Public Policy and First Nations Statistical Institute. Women’s Executive Network has named her one of Canada’s Top 100 for 2011 as a trailblazer and trendsetter.