



News Release

More than 100 Organizations to Receive Funding for Community Gatherings and Events

Vancouver, May 3, 2019-- The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls congratulates the more than 100 organizations that successfully applied for funding to host community gatherings and events. They will be an opportunity to further the healing of families and survivors of violence, and to mark the occasion of the end of the National Inquiry's mandate.

The National Inquiry received applications from coast to coast to coast, from large city centers to rural and remote communities. A list of all organizations that will receive funding will be available on the National Inquiry's web site as soon as all applicants are notified.

"We are pleased that so many First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities will be hosting events to mark the occasion of the Final Report's release," said **Chief Commissioner Marion Buller**. "It's important that families and their communities celebrate the conclusion of this journey with us, as they were the ones who guided our first steps, and walked with us. We have been so honoured."

"I could have easily been one of the murdered and missing women Labour Day weekend 1999. Today I am grateful that I am not a statistic", said **Gail Gus, Crisis and Wellness Coordinator, Tseshaht First Nation**. "The funding we will receive will give us the opportunity to bring closure and move our people forward, giving ceremony to offenders and victims and teaching one another how to live in peace with forgiveness. In the words of Tseshaht First Nation and the NuuchahNulth People, we say Klecko Klecko. Thank you so much."

"This funding is a way for the National Inquiry to acknowledge the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people who shared their truth with us," said **Commissioner Qajaq Robinson**. "We are pleased at the incredible response and that this funding will provide communities with an opportunity to honour their lost loved ones."

"For more than 25 years, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) has been working to address the issue of violence against Indigenous women through contributions to the development of the Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy, victim services programs, and an Indigenous women and an Honouring Métis women campaign," said **Tony Muscat, President of the Moon River Metis Council**. "The MNO is a partner in Ontario's Joint Working Group to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women and signatory to the Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women. We are honoured to have the capacity to build on these existing programs and campaigns to bring awareness and healing to those who have experienced violence in the traditional territory of Moon River."

The gatherings being planned by communities and organizations is truly inspiring. The tributes, commemorations and honouring that will take place to remember lost loved ones and support survivors



and families is a true testament to community strength and resiliency. Submissions include activities from commemoration walks, healing ceremonies and events to raise awareness, to theatre performances to beading, faceless dolls and embroidery to drum groups, fiddlers and dancers.

"We are thrilled to receive funding from the National Inquiry's Community Gathering Fund, to support healing of families involved in the MMIWG crisis", said **Arlene Blanchard-White, Chair Person, Bay St. George Mi'kmaq Cultural Revival Committee**. "Our project will focus on empowering each other, lifting one another up and displaying pride when a sister achieves success. We will encourage all community's members to talk about violence against women and girls while trying to build a better community for the next seven generations. This funding will allow us to facilitate a red shawl making workshop in hopes of eliminating violence against one another, healing, and gathering to promote community togetherness." Blanchard-White added "We look forward to providing a safe space for healing, while creating a beautiful shawl to honour families, with a hope that this red shawl project will be a gentle reminder to protect one another and to treat everyone as equals. Wela'liek, Thank you."

"We have heard heart-breaking testimony over the course of our two and half year mandate about the systematic violence targeting Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people," said **Commissioner Brian Eyolfson**. "This national crisis has affected both individuals and communities and healing needs to take place at both levels. This funding is our contribution to that healing process."

"We share a collective trauma as a community with regard to our missing and murdered women and girls", said **Tina Pisukie, Executive Director of the Southern Quebec Inuit Association**. "With the help of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the Southern Quebec Inuit Association's Grief Information and Healing Session will provide an opportunity for families of survivors to come together to grieve, learn and share."

"The Final Report and its recommendations will form the framework for the way forward to heal the void in communities and families formed by the absence of our missing and murdered loved ones, and the grief shared by survivors of violence," said **Commissioner Michèle Audette**. "It's time to restore our women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people to their rightful place within our communities and our society."

On June 3, 2019, the Commissioners will release the National Inquiry's Final Report. The report will deliver concrete recommendations that will enhance and ensure the safety of First Nations, Metis and Inuit women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA individuals.