

A Message from the CEO

July was a month focused on growth—growing the voices of Indigenous women politically, growing programs and partnerships that seek to support and empower Indigenous women, and preparing NWAC for future growth.

ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY

July was an historic month for Indigenous women in politics with the appointment of the first Indigenous Governor General in Canada. Mary Simon, a strong Inuk woman and life-long advocate for the rights of Indigenous Peoples, will undoubtedly excel in this prestigious role and we look forward to having more positions in government held by Indigenous women. However, while we were celebrating this historic appointment, others were filing complaints over Simon's inability to speak French.



This was not an issue of whether or not Simon was qualified to hold this position; it was an issue that is rooted in the government's colonial definition of official languages. Over the course of July, I advocated for Indigenous languages to be recognized as official languages, removing barriers for Indigenous people entering politics and protecting Indigenous languages. I spoke in support of Mary Simon in interviews with a number of media outlets, including iPolitics and Radio Canada.

I also made a statement when Jody Wilson-Raybould announced she would not seek re-election, speaking out about supporting Indigenous women in politics. Indigenous women are under-represented politically, and if strong Indigenous women politicians, like Wilson-Raybould, are not supported in their roles, then reaching reconciliation will be much more difficult. Political parties need to support Indigenous politicians, and I hope we see more Indigenous women candidates in the upcoming federal election.

With these recent events, it is more important than ever for Indigenous women and gender-diverse people to make their voices heard at the voting polls—and thus effect change at the government level. NWAC will be launching a significant voting campaign