

A MESSAGE FROM NWAC'S CEO

LYNNE GROULX LL.L., J.D. | CEO

NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
L'ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

WELCOME TO THE 17TH EDITION OF **KCI-NIWESQ**, THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (NWAC).

In these pages we invite you to join us in celebrating the huge economic potential of Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse+ (WG2STGD+) Peoples in learning necessary skills needed for jobs of tomorrow and, quite frankly, for jobs of today.

For too long, Indigenous WG2STGD+ people have been left on the sidelines of the Canadian economy. Inadequate education in home communities, followed by lack of opportunities at the post-

secondary level, means many are unprepared to join the workforce at levels above minimum wage. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls told us this economic marginalization is one pathway for maintaining violence, which the Inquiry has declared to be a genocide.

It is, therefore, essential that Indigenous WG2STGD+ people gain knowledge needed for jobs that put roofs over heads and food on tables—whether they aspire to be plumbers, electricians, teachers, or physicians.

In this issue, Kelly Lendsay, a long-time head of Indigenous Works—an agency created 25 years ago to improve the engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian economy—tells us that the employment prospects for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have improved significantly over the past three decades. However, there is still much more to do, especially when it comes to opening doors at management levels.

We hear from Madeleine Redfern, Chief Operating Officer of CanArctic Inuit Networks and President of the Nunavut Inuit Women's Association, who tells us about the difficulties Northern people face in accessing the Internet—an essential service in remote communities.

Dawn Madahbee Leach, chair of the National Indigenous Economic Development Board, explains how investing in Indigenous Peoples, and their communities, is how barriers to Indigenous economic development are lifted.



You will meet Rebecca Kragne, the first Indigenous woman—and, in fact, the first woman—to chair the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. Ms. Kragne, who is Cree and Métis, is a certified electrician who says it is life-changing to have the necessary skills to obtain high-paying jobs.

We will tell you about a program run by the Trust for the Americas, which teaches high-demand, digital skills to vulnerable and underserved people. The Trust has operated in countries throughout this hemisphere for several years, and NWAC is serving as its Canadian partner in bringing the learning to this country.

We will introduce you to Bonnie Rogers, a Dene language teacher, who drew inspiration from her matriarchal relations and Traditional guidance to direct her teaching path.

So, thank you once again for opening the pages that follow and reading the 17th edition of *Kci-Niwesq*. Please drop us a line and let us know what you think at reception@nwac.ca.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Groulx'.