



NWAC

PRESIDENT'S *Report*



SEPT - OCT 2022

nwac.ca

Native Women's Association of Canada
L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT - SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

PTMAs and fellow female indigenous grassroots leaders, September and October were very busy months for me. With every passing day, I become more settled in my role as President of NWAC. I hope you feel supported and more connected to the work of NWAC. As you know, the Seven Grandfather Teachings of Humility, Bravery, Honesty, Wisdom, Truth, Respect, and Love guide my relationships. I take a positive approach to solving challenges and look to the future rather than the past for movement forward in our work.

SEPTEMBER

In September I was fortunate enough to meet with our Manitoba, Yukon, and Northwest Territories PTMAs. Each meeting was productive, and I was able to get to know my fellow leaders, and they had a chance to get to know me. I also had the pleasure of meeting almost all NWAC staff.







Furthermore, I had the opportunity to have several high-level overview meetings with our CEO, Lynne Groulx and her staff. We had overview meetings on operations, social development, finance, Economic Development, ISETs, MMIWG, Health, International Parliamentary Affairs, and the Environment. I left those meetings feeling so impressed by all the work NWAC is doing, and all the brilliant staff we have. It is truly inspiring. I look forward to delving deeper into these topics over the coming year.

We had the opening of Algonquin Acres in my community, an Equestrian Therapy, Equine Assisted Learning, and learning center. We provided them with a gift for their grand opening. Algonquin Acres was opened by a young, female Indigenous entrepreneur. Pictured below is her mother receiving the gift on her behalf.





LETTERS

1. Received a congratulatory letter on my recent election as President of the Native Women's Association of Canada from The Honourable Marci Ien, P.C., M.P. Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth.
 - a) Minister Ien said she looks forward to working with me and the Native Women's Association of Canada in advancing the current and future work on shared priorities.
 - b) Minister Ien said she wants to affirm her commitment to building a strong relationship with us.
2. Received congratulatory letter on my election as President of the Native Women's Association of Canada from Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations.
 - a) Minister Miller said he looks forward to working with me and the Native Women's Association of Canada in advancing the current and future work on shared priorities and looks forward to learning more about our vision of engaging grassroots Indigenous women and renewing the relationship with the federal government.
3. Our office sent a congratulatory letter to Minister Jaczek who was appointed Minister of Public Services and Procurement.
4. Our office sent a letter to Quebec Health Minister, Christian Dubé concerning the inadequate response of his government following the 2020 death of Joyce Echaquan in a Québec hospital. I have attached the letter for your information. In collaboration with the Indigenous Women's Advisory Committee (IWAC) we will follow-up on the progress the Quebec government is making to address this ongoing issue.





COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. Held the first By-law and Elections committee meeting on September 6, 2022. Discussed exploring decolonizing approaches to governance. Members didn't want the question of decolonizing approaches to delay the passage of current recommended changes to the bylaws. Regional meetings are to be held to review the bylaws so there will be follow-up with the PTMAS to move that agenda item along.
2. Held the NAP Committee Meeting on September 26th 2022. Reviewed the relevant documents and opened membership on the committee to board members.
3. The Elders met on September 22nd to elect the National Elder and the East Elder. A huge congratulations to Elder Debbie Sampson, our National Elder, and to Thirley Levi, our East Elder. Chii Meegwetch to all the Elders who took time out of their days to participate in this process.

INVITATIONS

- 1) On September 9th, 2022, I was invited to the Decorations of Bravery ceremony at the residence of the Governor General. The Decorations for Bravery was established in 1972 as part of the Canadian Honours System. Over the past five decades, more than 4 200 outstanding people have been recognized with a Bravery decoration for their selfless acts of courage. They risked injury, even death, to try to save the lives of others from fires, drownings, vehicle accidents, animal attacks and more. On this 50th anniversary of the Decorations for Bravery, we thank them for making a difference in the world and acknowledge their altruistic and courageous interventions that have earned them one of Canada's greatest honours. A total of 42 recipients from across Canada were honoured. This was truly a spectacular experience.





- 2) On September 19th, I was invited the National Commemorative Ceremony in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Queen of Canada in Ottawa. Doug Ford sat in front of me and introduced himself to me, and I was able to see Mr. Jagmeet Singh, and other leaders of political parties. There were many dignitaries there, and having the presence of NWAC among them, was something we could not afford to decline.
- 3) On September 28th, 2022, I was a part of the Indigenous Women's Advisory Committee (IWAC) meeting with Minister Patty Hajdu present.

- a) I introduced myself and let them know that I am a collaborator who seeks out reconciliation efforts that support Indigenous self-determination and ending the genocide documented by the National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls. The findings validated what we have known for generations -- Indigenous women continue to be the target of institutional betrayal and systemic barriers that aim to oppress us and assimilate us. As President of NWAC, my primary aim over the next three years is to ensure the 231 MMIWG Calls for Justice are enacted by decision-makers at all levels and in all sectors. Four pathways sustain colonial violence:

- a. historical, multigenerational, and intergenerational trauma;
- b. social and economic marginalization;
- c. maintaining the status quo and institutional lack of will; and
- d. ignoring the expertise of Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people. Reconciliation begins with equitable inclusion in policy decisions, including in environmental policy planning and national priorities related to climate change.





- b) As such, this Committee can mitigate the harms of institutional violence. We possess and have always possessed the agency and expertise to know what is right for our families and our communities. Indigenous women are matriarchs that bring communities together. We are life givers and knowledge holders. Indigenous women can change the world and I carry this message with me wherever I go."

I have reviewed the documents for this meeting and support the priorities identified by members of the Committee. In addition, NWAC would add the following:

- o Cultural safety in healthcare;
 - o Establishing a resiliency centre for Indigenous women in each province or territory;
 - o Intersectional gendered analysis in policy development led by Indigenous women.
 - o Initiatives to address gender-based violence
- 4) I was invited to the grand opening tour of our Ontario PTMA, Keepers of the Circle in Kirkland Lake on September 29th, 2022.



On September 30th we recognized National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. It was a day to reflect on what true reconciliation means, and the work ahead of us. I had some meaningful reflection on this day, and I hope all Canadians took the time to do so as well.





OCTOBER

If it was possible, October was busier than September. On the heels of Truth and Reconciliation, we began the month with our Sisters in Spirit Vigil. I had the opportunity to go to Ottawa for the Vigil.

It aims to quantify the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, identify trends, understand the root causes of violence and underlying factors contributing to racialized and sexualized violence, and influence policy, programs and services meant to eliminate violence.



President McBride with Elder Louise



In keeping with my commitment, we were able to finish the first round of our Coffee Chats with Carol in October! I met with the British Columbia, and the Nunavut PTMAs. I will be starting my second round of coffee chats. I truly look forward to these conversations, spending time with strong, Indigenous female leaders is always inspiring.

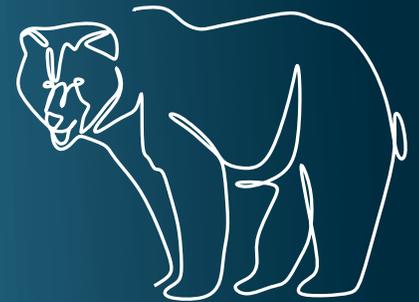
I had the opportunity to meet with our former Quebec PTMA – Quebec Native Women's Association to explore the possibility of them reapplying to join NWAC. They are holding their Annual General Assembly in December and hopefully will bring the question to the floor.





INVITATIONS

I met with Minister Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations at NWAC's head office. We had an in-person tour of NWAC's new Social and Economic Innovation Centre. This was a meet and greet, and we are starting anew, on a fresh path.



Furthermore, I had the absolute honour to meet with Senator Michele Audette. Senator Audette was also able to do an in-person tour of NWAC's new Social and Economic Innovation Centre. We were able to solidify Senator Audette as a co-sponsor to our Amber Alert Bill which we will be presenting to the senate in the near future.





On June 3, 2019, the Final Report of the National Inquiry of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, and Girls (MMIWG) stated that:

- The violence the National Inquiry heard amounts to a race-based genocide of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, which especially targets women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people
- This demonstrates the human rights abuses committed by the Canadian state. In addition, these abuses and violations have resulted in the denial of safety, security, and human dignity.

NWAC is calling for urgent concrete measures that will end this genocide such as establishing a Missing Indigenous Women and Persons Alert Designation by introducing a bill in this session of Parliament.

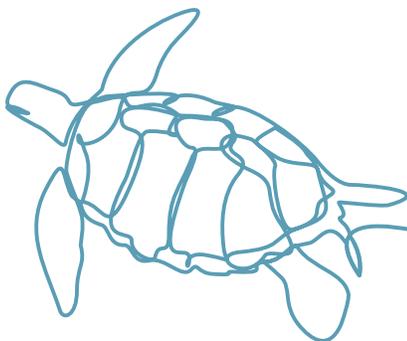




PATTY HAJDU

On October 14, 2022, I received correspondence from Minister Patty Hajdu which reads:

"I would like to invite the Native Women's Association of Canada to engage with Indigenous Services Canada on the proposed amendments to registration and membership under the Indian Act. We are pleased to work with the Native Women's Association of Canada and value your organization's expertise and advocacy. We can offer up to \$50, 000 to your organization to support the hosting of engagement sessions with your membership, for distribution of related information and materials among your affiliates, and other associated activities. Funds may also be used after the introduction of the Bill to support further engagement and outreach during its implementation."





HOUSE OF COMMONS

I presented at the House of Commons on October 17th 2022, on Bill C-29, and on October 20th, 2022 on Bill C-28.

BILL C-29

I appeared as a witness to address the exclusion of NWAC on the proposed new Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Not including Indigenous women in this instance will set a devastating precedent for this country and globally among the current backdrop of a proven genocide against Indigenous women and girls. We requested that the bill amend clause 10 to include one Director from NWAC on the Board of the National Council for Reconciliation. If the bill remains as is, the government of Canada will have continued to entrench the marginalization of Indigenous women, girls, 2-Spirit, transgender and gender-diverse people in legislation.



PRESIDENT MCBRIDE AND ALLISON
MACINTOSH, NWAC LEGAL COUNSEL

BILL C-28

I appeared as witness for NWAC on the Subject Matter of Bill C-28, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (self-induced extreme intoxication).

Parliament must address the systemic factors contributing to Indigenous women's substance misuse and Indigenous women's overincarceration rates.

Indigenous violence victims must easily access healing frameworks in alignment





with their Indigenous approach to healing. Parliament must address the remaining legal gap wherein Indigenous violence victims are left with no culpable offender when the self-induced extreme intoxication defence applies.



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

This National Apprenticeship program will see 5,000 Indigenous women, 2-spirit, transgender, and gender diverse people acquire the skills they need to become Red Seal certified tradespeople across multiple industry sectors.

This federal investment in Indigenous women's economic security is a turning point for thousands of lives, / for those who will become apprentices, their families, and their communities.

Ultimately, this program will improve the prosperity of all Canadians. / When large numbers of us are given the chance to prosper, the Gross Domestic Product goes up / and we all prosper.

NWAC's National Apprenticeship Program will offset what is anticipated to be a huge gap in the trades workforce with an estimated 332,000 workers retiring from the construction industry over the next 10 years.

Elder Louise and Samantha De Coteau from Summit Sisters Roofing shared their perspectives and work to promote women in the trades, Minister Miller, and Parliamentary Secretary, Greg Fergus attended the announcement which took place at the NWAC Social and Cultural Innovation Centre.





The Justice department shut NWAC out of FPT meeting with Indigenous leaders; ignoring the expertise we bring to the table on critical gender-based issues. Though Canada recognizes five National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs), including NWAC, only AFN, ITK and the MNC have a seat at major decision-making tables. Excluding NWAC from national discussions on justice issues is a significant rebuff to NWAC, an organization that is the recognized expert on matters related to Indigenous women, girls, gender-diverse, two-spirit, and transgender people in Canada and globally. Minister Lametti's has reached out to us, and a meeting is in the works.



DAVID LAMETTI, MINISTER OF JUSTICE





MEDIA RELATIONS

2022	INTERVIEWS WITH:
SEPT 14	Windspeaker on the Statistics Canada report on the collection of race-based crime data McBride will call Shari at 780 433 9730
SEPT 16	CBC's Unreserved on Radio One on NWAC's plans for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation
SEPT 23	OMNI TV on TRC Day and Sisters in Spirit Vigil
SEPT 26	CFRA 680 on Truth and Reconciliation Day
SEPT 28	CBC on our letter to Quebec's Health Minister (Christian Dube) regarding provinces anti-racism training for health care workers
SEPT 28	CBC Ottawa News at 6 on our letter to Quebec's Health Minister regarding provinces anti-racism training for health care workers
SEPT 29	CTV Ottawa on Truth and Reconciliation Day
SEPT 30	CP24 on Truth and Reconciliation Day
OCT 3	CBC on the Sisters in Spirit Vigil and what more needs to be done to protect Indigenous women from violence
OCT 4	CBC Radio on Sisters in Spirit Vigils, what they are, why they are held, their meaning
OCT 4	City News Sisters in Spirit Vigils, what they are, why they are held, their meaning
OCT 4	City News (separate from above) on Sisters in Spirit Vigils, what they are, why they are held, their meaning
OCT 4	in-person interview with CTV News Channel on Sisters in Spirit Vigils, and MMIWG
OCT 7	National Observer on the Justice department shutting NWAC out of FPT meetings
OCT 12	APTN on The Sisters in Spirit Vigil, the decision by the Justice Department to exclude NWAC from the FPT meeting, and a more general question about Indigenous representation in Canadian history. For example, the government's women's history website has a timeline of notable events, and an Indigenous woman is not mentioned on it until 1954.





On October 31st, we were able to close out the month with a staff Halloween contest for best costume and best team costumes.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our Chief Executive Officer, Lynne Groulx, named as one of Canada's Top 100 Powerful CEOs for 2022 by the Women's Executive Network's (WXN) Diversity Council of Canada. Lynne is a fearless, tenacious, committed, and brilliant Indigenous woman and business leader. She is very deserving of this prestigious award.

Combined, I had 4 trips to Ottawa in September and October. I am averaging a trip almost bi-weekly. None of what we are doing can be accomplished without our PTMAs. You are the soul of NWAC, and I would like to extend my gratitude to the unsung heroes behind the scenes. Our accomplishments would not be achieved without our grassroots leaders. I honour the work we are all doing.

Meegwetch, Thank, Merci,

Carol McBride

President

