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L'neuy Announces 3rd Annual Reconciliation Recognition Awards on eve of Indigenous Awareness Week 2023

Indigenous Awareness Week, which takes place May 23-27 this year, offers an opportunity to celebrate the Mi'kmaq of Epekwitk (PEI) and acknowledge the Island's shared history. Epekwitk is the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

This year, the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils, through L'neuy, is continuing its Reconciliation Recognition Award initiative as part of Indigenous Awareness Week activities to show its appreciation for the work being done to advance reconciliation by individuals, businesses, governments, and organizations here on PEI.

The "Reconciliation Recognition Award" is granted to recipients based on a series of criteria that serves to recognize, respect, and include the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaq of PEI), stories, history, or land in such a way that it creates a positive and inclusive Island community with lasting impacts for future generations.

Today, the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils hosted its third annual Reconciliation Recognition Award ceremony. This year's recipients received their award at a small ceremony held in the Assembly Chamber of the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils building in Charlottetown.

The four award recipients for 2023 are the Summerside Western Capitals, the Charlottetown Islanders, Kings Playhouse, and The River Clyde Pageant. More information on the initiatives for which each of the four recipients were chosen is included in the backgrounder section.

"All Islanders should know that we welcome and respect their efforts toward reconciliation," said Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation, Epekwitk Assembly of Councils Co-Chair. "Epekwitk will continue to thrive if we work with one another, and these recipients have shown genuine outstanding examples of how we can do that together."

"It is encouraging to see more people each year here in Epekwitk taking their own initiative to support the Mi'kmaq and foster a more caring and inclusive Island community," said Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation, Epekwitk Assembly of Councils Co-Chair. "We are pleased to give special recognition to those who have made a true effort to promote reconciliation and look forward to recognizing more of our allies in the future."

Nuta'ykw Ila'matuti - "We all need Reconciliation"

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Epekwitk Assembly of Councils 2023 Reconciliation Recognition Award Recipients

Summerside Western Capitals

This recognition is a result of the Summerside Western Capitals initiative taken in 2021 to host an Every Child Matters game, with the goal of raising awareness about Residential School Survivors and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. In addition to wearing orange jerseys created in consultation with local First Nations they also visited Lennox Island to learn about Truth and Reconciliation, meet with the community's children, and hand out free tickets for the Every Child Matters game. "Every Child Matters" written in the Mi'kmaq language was also included on the orange jerseys, which featured a photo of Residential School Survivors, and were auctioned off after the game with a portion of the proceeds going to the Lennox Island community. Through these efforts, the Summerside Western Capitals have taken significant steps in establishing a path toward reconciliation.

Charlottetown Islanders

The Charlottetown Islanders are being recognized for their special initiative last fall to host the first-ever Orange Jersey Day in honor of Residential School Survivors and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The orange jerseys featured the traditional Mi'kmaq eight-pointed star along with the double curve motif. The team also worked closely with the Mi'kmaq communities of Epekwitk to include cultural performances, invite a Residential School Survivor to participate in the puck drop, and showcase videos about the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (Mi'kmaq of PEI), demonstrating their commitment to reconciliation.

Kings Playhouse

This recognition is a result of the Playhouse's outstanding efforts in establishing a path toward true reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Kings Playhouse has included Indigenous programming throughout its seasons and offered meaningful land acknowledgements before each show, demonstrating its commitment to the community. The Playhouse has also been mindful to include Elders and Mi'kmaq prayers, along with recognizing and promoting Indigenous observances. Kings Playhouse stands up against racism and has also supported the Indigenous community on Epekwitk through housing exhibits of art for MMIWG2S.

The River Clyde Pageant

The River Clyde Pageant has been diligent in being an inclusive group, offering diversity, equity, and inclusion training for its team and community. The Pageant has featured Mi'kmaq representation and voices and offered meaningful land acknowledgements, demonstrating their commitment to acknowledging Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. The Pageant has also walked in solidarity for Indigenous justice. This recognition is a result of The River Clyde Pageant's genuine efforts in being an ally to the Mi'kmaq and in working toward true reconciliation.