



## Government of Yukon

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**NEWS**release

FOR RELEASE #10-125  
June 30, 2010

### Leadership, education and wellness opportunities for Yukon Aboriginal women

WHITEHORSE – The Women's Directorate supports the implementation of the recommendations arising from the 2007 Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits (YAWS) held in Whitehorse and Watson Lake.

At the Yukon Forum held last September, a total of \$450,000 of Northern Strategy Trust funding was approved for the Women's Directorate to work with Aboriginal women's organizations to deliver programs and services to further equality.

The summits provided an opportunity for Yukon First Nation women to determine educational, leadership and wellness priorities for their communities," Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate Marian C. Horne said. "These new programs and services designed and programmed by Aboriginal women will improve their quality of life."

In November 2007, the Women's Directorate and the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues co-hosted the two regional summits to communicate the outcomes from the National Aboriginal Women's Summits and give Yukon First Nation women the chance to bring forward recommendations.

Over the next three years, Yukon Aboriginal women's groups will deliver six projects that will address topics such as education, leadership development and wellness in the communities.

These Yukon-based projects involve developing and delivering an Aboriginal women's professional mentorship program; developing a by youth for youth violence prevention and healthy relationships awareness campaign; creating a land-based camp for opportunities to exchange traditional and modern life-skills and educational practices; developing a culturally-relevant, gender-balanced analysis course for delivery to First Nations and other community agencies; organizing Aboriginal women's groups in communities; and profiling missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Yukon as part of the Native Women's Association of Canada's Sisters in Spirit Project.

"The Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society have worked in partnership with the directorate over the last three years toward the priorities that were identified by Yukon Aboriginal Women at the 2007 Summits. Our collective efforts were instrumental in securing leadership support towards the Northern Strategy proposal," Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council president Victoria Fred said. "We look forward to implementing the priorities envisioned by Yukon Aboriginal women."

The Women's Directorate is also partnering with the First Nations Training Corps to develop an Aboriginal women's project implementation officer position to support this work. This officer will work with Aboriginal women's groups to support implementation projects and the development of an Aboriginal women's role model pilot project in 2010-11.

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See backgrounder below.

## Contact:

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**Backgrounder: Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits (YAWS) Implementation**

The **Liard Aboriginal Women's Society** will receive:

- \$68,940 to launch their Youth Violence Prevention and Healthy Relationships project. This initiative includes talking with youth about healthy relationships and families, and the impacts of violence. Youth will be encouraged to participate in creative alternative media projects (e.g., theatre, film, music) to transmit their own messages about healthy relationships and families, violence in communities and the effects of residential schools. Workshops will focus on youth talking honestly about healthy relationships, life-skills, anger management, self-esteem and traditional roles.
- \$72,700 to create a Land-based Elder Youth Camp where women exchange traditional and modern life-skills and educational practices. Traditional knowledge teachings will include examining women's roles in First Nation communities, traditional cultural rites of passage, and respect for Elders' wisdom and values. The society will also develop a guide to help other organizations deliver similar land-based camps and curricula.

For more information about these two projects contact the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society at 867-536-2097 or [lawsadmin@northwestel.net](mailto:lawsadmin@northwestel.net).

The **Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle** will receive:

- \$59,800 to develop a Culturally-Relevant Gender-Balanced Analysis course. The organization will deliver the curriculum to First Nation communities and governments, not-for-profit organizations and other organizations in Yukon communities.
- \$82,800 to develop an Aboriginal Women's Mentorship Training program. This project includes developing support networks for professional Aboriginal women, particularly youth, and encouraging an Elder/grandparent mentorship for youth.

For more information about these two projects contact Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle president Adeline Webber at 867-668-7532 or [wawc@northwestel.net](mailto:wawc@northwestel.net).

The **Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council** will receive:

- \$63,680 for their Yukon Sisters in Spirit Project, which is a part of the Native Women's Association of Canada's Sisters in Spirit Project. The Council will research information about missing and murdered Yukon Aboriginal women and raise awareness about related violence against Aboriginal women.
- \$102,080 to deliver an Aboriginal Women's Groups Expansion project. This project includes helping women to participate in community-level women's groups and the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council; formalizing community groups into societies; researching funding opportunities and assisting community-based groups to apply for

funding; encouraging Elders, youth and women to participate in community dialogues; and working towards providing substance-free spaces that may include youth drop-ins, mom and tot play spaces or open microphone nights.

For more information about these two projects contact Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council president Victoria Fred at 867-667-6162 or [yawc@northwestel.net](mailto:yawc@northwestel.net).

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