

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Footprints: A Walk Through Generations First Travelling Exhibit Opens at Aanischaaukamikw Prior to Regional and National Tour

Oujé-Bougoumou, Eeyou Istchee, Quebec. (March 30, 2017) -- Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute (ACCI) is pleased to announce the inauguration of its first travelling exhibit *Footprints: A Walk Through Generations* on Wednesday, April 12, 2017. The event will be hosted by Dr. Abel Bosum, President of Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute. The exhibit will open at ACCI in Ouje-Bougoumou after which it will travel through all communities of Eeyou Istchee. Following the tour of Eeyou Istchee, *Footprints* will travel the country, allowing people from coast to coast to experience and celebrate Eeyou culture and history.

Footprints: A Walk Through Generations

The Cree people of Northern Quebec, identify themselves as the Eeyou of Eeyou Istchee, The People of the Land. Through themes related to walking, this exhibit celebrates teachings, values and the rich cultural history passed down from Eeyou ancestors.

This exhibit follows the evolution of travel through the eyes of the Eeyou, allowing visitors to experience their stories, arts, and traditional technologies, sharing in the people's culture. Beginning with childhood rites of passage, the exhibit shares the importance of walking and an Eeyou child's first footprints on Mother Earth. Walking for ceremony and journeys demonstrates a respect of Elders' teachings that are passed from generation to generation.

An expression of *Miyupimaatisiiun* (living life well), this exhibition encourages healthy living and inter-connectedness with the land that sustains us all. In the words of Dr. Bosum: "the exhibit's importance lies in our ability as Cree people to draw strength from our past towards the creation of a positive future, building from all that our ancestors have given to us."

Exhibit Content

The exhibition contains approximately 150 artifacts that have been selected to demonstrate the many facets of walking in Cree culture, including everyday objects such as snowshoes, moccasins, parkas, tools for hunting and trapping, mittens as well as intricately decorated ceremonial outfits made for Eeyou children's rites of passage milestones.

The materials used to create these objects demonstrate the wealth of resources found in Eeyou Istchee, while the techniques illustrate the people's skill and artistry. Audio, video and photographs reveal the sights and sounds of Eeyou Istchee and its people. Compelling artwork by contemporary Cree artists is featured throughout the exhibit, illustrating another mode of creative expression of cultural identity.

"This exhibit celebrates who we are as Cree people and our connection to this land we have travelled across and lived with since time immemorial. It also invites our visitors to celebrate our culture and to share in knowledge about our history, our culture, our ceremony, and our stories. This sharing and celebration of Cree culture and history is of central importance to the Institute – a vision given to us by our Elders." - Dr. Sarah Pash, Executive Director for Aanischaaukamikw

About Aanischaaukamikw Cree Culturual Institute

Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute is a 30,000 square-foot museum and cultural centre, and is the James Bay Crees' primary location for preservation of documents, media, and physical objects, designed for preservation, conservation, and knowledge transfer.

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