

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2021

Message from University College of the North Council of Elders Regarding Kamloops Residential School Discovery

(The Pas & Thompson, MB)

Message from UCN Council of Elders:

The discovery of the remains of 215 children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School is a painful reminder of the systemic historical harm done to Indigenous people in Canada.

Over the last few days, Canadians have honoured these children and remembered their families. We have seen our communities come together to mourn the tragic loss. We have seen flags flown at half-mast and the placement of children's shoes at locations across Manitoba.

We must also recognize that the influences of Indian Residential School System continue to impact negatively our communities. 140 Indian Residential Schools operated in Canada including 14 in Manitoba. UCN Elder Stella Neff, who counselled residential school survivors, heard many women and grandmothers talk about children who died. Sadly, we can expect the bodies of more children to be discovered on the sites of schools.

The complete truth of the Indian Residential School system has not been told and the profound impacts of the system continue to impact our communities. We encourage members of the UCN community to continue to seek the truth and to understand legacy of the Indian Residential School system. We must also use this knowledge to inform our work at UCN. Before reconciliation can be possible, the truth needs to be spoken and accepted.

University College of the North provides learning opportunities to northern communities while respecting diverse Indigenous and northern values.

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