



NOGDAWINDAMIN
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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CHILD WELFARE COMMUNIQUE

September 14, 2020

Nogdawindamin Hosts Former National Chief for Orange Shirt Day

Batchewana First Nation | Garden River First Nation | Thessalon First Nation | Mississauga First Nation | Serpent River First Nation | Sagamok Anishnawbek | Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Ontario, September 14, 2020:

Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services (the child welfare authority for North Shore First Nations) is pleased to announce that **Former National Chief Phil Fontaine will be the Guest Speaker on September 30th** for “Every Child Matters” – an event commemorating Orange Shirt Day.

A natural born leader, Fontaine has been fighting for the rights of Canada’s indigenous people since he was 28 years old. Described by many as a dominant force, he is lauded for his negotiation and leadership skills. Fontaine served three terms as National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and successfully negotiated a \$5.6 billion Residential School Settlement Agreement. (see attached Speaker Biography)

The event will be hosted live online via Microsoft Teams from 2:30 to 4:30 pm on September 30th. You can attend by clicking [here](#) or by typing this URL into a browser: <https://bit.ly/2DWYPQ4>. This date has been declared Orange Shirt Day annually, in recognition of the harm the residential school system did to children's sense of self-esteem and well being, and as an affirmation of our commitment to ensure that everyone around us matters. It began in Williams Lake, BC in 2013 at the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event at which survivor Phyllis (Jack) Webstad told the story of her shiny new orange shirt taken away from her on her first day of school at the Mission.

“It is stories such as hers that remind us that we are all impacted by these experiences” says Fern Assinewe, the Board President for Nogdawindamin. She adds: “These memories remain fresh in the hearts and minds of many of our people and it is our honourable duty to them to continue to build hope, find forgiveness, and seek genuine reconciliation as we work to recapture our natural jurisdiction over child welfare”.

Kerry Francis, Executive Director for Nogdawindamin, says he is “...utterly thrilled to be able to host the Former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. Without Phil Fontaine there would not be the incredible support we have today for Orange Shirt Day. We will always remember that was his unswerving commitment that brought about the residential school settlement and the acknowledgement of the historic violation of Human Rights that residential schools have come to symbolize.”

For further information please contact Kerry Francis, Executive Director at **1-800-465-0999** or email at kfrancis@nog.ca.

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Speaker Biography



Bold, tenacious, solution-oriented and forward-looking, Phil Fontaine is an articulate advocate for the future of Canada and for our indigenous peoples. As the former three-term National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, he is a shining example of how strong leadership can work. Known for his calm and confident demeanor, he has a proven track record of opening the lines of communication and bringing people together in a common cause for a better future and to resolve issues of the past. Fontaine's proven ability to inform, inspire, demonstrate leadership, and build consensus makes him a highly sought-after expert.

Fontaine, the youngest son in an Ojibway family of 12 children, has been instrumental in facilitating change and advancement for First Nations people from the time he was first elected to public office as chief, when he was only 28 years old. Today, First Nations people are now the fastest growing demographic segment in Canada. An advocate for human rights, and a survivor of residential school abuse, Fontaine's crowning achievement to date is the residential schools settlement. At \$5.6 billion in individual compensation, Fontaine negotiated the largest settlement in Canadian history – for the largest human rights violation in Canadian history – arising out of the 150-year Indian residential school tragedy.

Phil Fontaine is a charismatic speaker who has dedicated most of his life to the advancement of First Nations people. Respected at home and abroad, Fontaine attended President Obama's inauguration, met with Pope Benedict XVI to gain an apology for his people, and raised the Corporate Challenge to Canadian organizations. Corporations, governments and associations seeking leadership advice will benefit from Fontaine's extraordinary ability to speak from the heart and teach others how to achieve results.