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**NEWS RELEASE**

## **New investments advance goal of enriching Canada's education system with 10,000 Indigenous teachers**

*Grants address underrepresentation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis teachers across Canada*

**February 28, 2024 (Unceded Anishinaabe Algonquin Territory | Ottawa)** – Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF) has confirmed support for seven Indigenous-led and community-driven programs totalling \$13.2 million – made possible with support from the Mastercard Foundation. As part of the RHF Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative and journey, the program will support 10,000 Indigenous teachers.

“Imagine a future where every Indigenous child across the nation has the opportunity to learn from an Indigenous educator,” says Roberta Jamieson, RHF Board Director and National Advisory Committee on Indigenous Teacher Education (NACITE) co-chair. “This initiative honours and supports the transformative role Indigenous educators have on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students, their communities, and our country.”

The RHF is excited to be entering into partnerships with the University of Blue Quills (AB); Gabriel Dumont Institute (SK); Seven Generations Education Institute (ON); Mi'kmaq Wolastoqey Centre – University of New Brunswick (NB); University College of the North (MB); McGill University (QC), and Yukon University, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, and First Nation School Board (YU) to advance this shared vision.

This moment marks the first allocation of the RHF program granting associated with this initiative. In working towards a Canada with 10,000 more Indigenous teachers, the RHF will be engaging in partnerships, making space for connecting and convening, and lifting up stories of excellence and inspiration in Indigenous teacher education.

The RHF is grateful for the guidance of NACITE and the work of an independent Indigenous adjudication committee who evaluated submissions and selected the successful projects.

"It's our goal to empower and uplift Indigenous teachers by funding programs rooted in partnerships with Indigenous Peoples; learning from Indigenous educators and Knowledge Keepers is at the heart of all we do." says Mark Dockstator, RHF Board Director and NACITE co-chair.

"Indigenous Nations across the country are prioritizing education as a key to future success," says Jennifer Brennan, Director, Canada Programs at the Mastercard Foundation. "We've heard from youth that more Indigenous teachers are needed to ensure a safe, culturally grounded and positive learning environment. We are excited to see these first partnerships confirmed and appreciate NACITE's leadership in taking tangible steps towards the realization of 10,000 new Indigenous teachers."

The RHF initiative is anchored on the belief of the transformative role teachers play in the lives of students. "We know Canada is facing national teacher shortages and Indigenous communities are struggling enormously to recruit and retain teachers," says Rachel Mishenene, RHF Director of the Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative and Indigenous educator. "The grants support community-driven, committed education teams across Canada building robust, culturally responsive Indigenous teacher education programs, including language, land-based and remote-learning models. All of Canada will benefit from having significantly greater numbers of Indigenous teachers in classrooms."

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**About the Indigenous Teacher Education Initiative:**

The Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF) Indigenous Teacher Education initiative aims to support dramatically increasing the numbers of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis teachers by 10,000 and to promote the systemic changes necessary in leading to more sustainable Indigenous teacher employment opportunities in all areas of the country.

**About Rideau Hall Foundation:**

The Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF) is an independent and non-partisan charitable organization established in 2012 to mobilize ideas, people, and resources across the country to tap into our national spirit and help realize our shared aspirations. The RHF works closely with the Office of the Governor General and our many partners to connect, honour, and inspire Canadians. For more information, please visit [www.rhf-frh.ca](http://www.rhf-frh.ca).

**About the Mastercard Foundation:**

The Mastercard Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and one of the largest foundations in the world. It works with visionary organizations to advance education and financial inclusion to enable young people in Africa and Indigenous youth in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. Established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company, the Foundation is an independent organization separate from the company, with offices in Toronto, Kigali, Accra, Nairobi, Kampala, Lagos, Dakar, and Addis Ababa. Its policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by the Foundation's Board of Directors and leadership. For more information on the Foundation, please visit [www.mastercardfdn.org](http://www.mastercardfdn.org).