



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

For immediate release
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Honouring the Gifts: Contests for MKO Youth Ages 12 to 17

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is proud to announce contest details as part of its upcoming virtual festival for youth ages 12 to 17 called **Honouring the Gifts: MKO Youth Cultural Celebration**. A variety of contests open today and close on **June 20 at 11:59 pm Central Time**.

The contests are part of MKO's virtual youth arts festival running from June 21-25, 2021. The Honouring the Gifts festival will celebrate and empower youth as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. The focus of the festival is on showcasing the talents of youth ages 12 to 17 from MKO communities in various categories, including dancing, creative arts (drawing, painting, and poetry), music, photography or videography, and regalia and beadwork.

"The contests we are announcing today are an opportunity for MKO youth ages 12 to 17 to share their creative talents with the world," shared **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**. "Thanks to our many sponsors, we are able to award 50 Apple products, which includes **iPhone 12 Pros** as well as **iPad Airs**. We are also awarding other prizes, such as **gift cards** to Northern Store. It is our goal to bring some hope to youth as they continue to live with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Youth are asked to join our **MKO Youth Cultural Celebration** Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/924633718105730> to take part in the contest. If young people do not use Facebook, it is acceptable for parents, guardians, teachers, or other family members to assist the youth with entering the contest.

"On behalf of MKO, I encourage educators, parents, guardians, and families to share this information about our contests with the young people from MKO communities to help us make them aware of this opportunity," said Grand Chief Settee. "As we know, the pandemic has impacted youth in major ways, with an impact on their mental wellness. I am hopeful young people ages 12 to 17 from MKO communities will take part in our contests and share their gifts of creativity and talent with us."

MKO thanks all our business sponsors who have joined us by investing in our celebration to support our youth of the North. Current sponsors include: Vale, the Northwest Company, Manitoba Indigenous and Northern Relations, Unifor, Sysco Foods, Perimeter Aviation, Fast Air Ltd, Pukatawagan Community Enhancement and Recreation, Workplace Solutions, NCI FM, Thompson Inn, Burntwood Hotel, Thompson Ford, Mystery Lake Hotel, Nickel City, Royal Bank of Canada, Northland Ford, Kennedy Energy, the Winnipeg Foundation, Bell MTS, and Thompson's Walmart location.

Any businesses or organization interested in sponsoring the celebration can reach out to our event coordinator **Paywapan Colomb** by email at paycolomb@gmail.com.

Full contest details are now available on our event website:
<https://mkonation.com/honouringthegifts>

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For more information:

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