

Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation

Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award

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Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation

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The Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation is honored to have an opportunity to be reviewed for the Lieutenant Governor's Community Spirit Award.

Community Name: Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation

Names of the Groups within the Community (minimum requirement of for supporting groups) who have joined together to put forward this nomination:

1. Paqtnkek Administration
2. Paqtnkek Health and Wellness
3. Paqtnkek Daycare and Head Start
4. Paqtnkek Elder's Group

Our Community

Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaw Nation is located in Antigonish County, Nova Scotia. A community of approximately 450 people, Paqtnkek is known for its young population with the vast majority of residents under the age of 44 years. The region's youth have a strong voice and contribute greatly to the sense of culture and pride that emanate from this mainland community that was established

March 3, 1820, and is located in Antigonish County, 24km east of Antigonish, Nova Scotia. The name Paqtnkek, meaning “by the bay”, is a distinction emphasizing the importance of the local bay and its resources to the Mi’kmaw people. The Community of Paqtnkek is governed by 1 Chief and 5 Council members.

Historically, the Mi’kmaw of Paqtnkek has lived by the bay in a harmonious, renewable manner, respecting the local environment while honoring their passion for their century’s old culture. The Paqtnkek Mi’kmaw Nation Branded their community to indentify the strength of Community Spirit. Paqtnkek community members strive to honor their culture through communication. Aboriginal language programs throughout the community are working to keep the language alive. Community members enjoy teaching one another the intricacies of the centuries old way of communication among Mi’kmaw people. Cherished elders pass on their wealth of knowledge to community youth who grow up honoring the experiences elders remember from days gone by.

Paqtnkek Mission Statement

The Paqtnkek Mi’kmaw Nation is committed to improving the physical, spiritual, emotional, cultural and mental well-being of the entire community. We are committed to the provision of equal opportunity and a safe and secure living to all band members. We nurture a self-reliant and healthy community in all aspects of our lives through co-operation; dedication; protecting and taking ownership of our language, culture and treaty rights and fostering self-reliance that embraces pride, respect and the spirit of our community.

Reviving and Practicing Our Mi’kmaw Ways

Our “old ways” are important to moving forward as a community. We are all Mi’kmaws; we are all l’nu. Unlike the roles and titles imposed on us by outside systems or cultures, we are all equals in our community and our culture. Leading by example; doing things to help each other; giving back when we receive something; being accountable for our actions; being responsible for the welfare of our whole community; listening to each other; and, treating each other with respect and professionalism are central values to us as Mi’kmaw and in our community. Our community and its members are our most important asset. Involving our whole community is important as we journey forward together.

By harnessing its strong cultural history and reliance on the land as key tools, Paqtnkek is forming and developing economic and social ventures that will embody its past, present and future.

Each year, the community participates in many social gatherings, showcasing their culture at the annual Pow-Wow. The public is invited to watch traditional dancers, listen to the rich sounds of ancient drums, considered the heartbeat of the Mi'kmaw Nation, and even purchase Mi'kmaw craft items created by community artists. Another significant date is Saint Anne's Day, when the entire community honors the Mi'kmaq Patron Saint, every July 26th, at religious celebrations at Summer side Mission, renewing their faith while ensuring future generations continue to come together to celebrate their heritage.

Explore how Paqtnkek celebrates its rich heritage as they welcome all people who wish to explore Paqtnkek's unique blend of tradition within today's futuristic society.

Paqtnkek Governance

The Paq'tnkek Mi'kmaw Nation is a leading Mi'kmaw community (wu'tun). We will maintain control over the community destiny. As a self-governed community we are eager to provide support, knowledge and encouragement to other First Nation communities.

PMN work hard to create an economically independent Mi'kmaw nation. All outstanding land claims are resolved everywhere, furthering our economic base, correcting past injustices and furthering our Aboriginal and treaty rights.

The highway development business is established and thriving. We have little reliance on government funding. Along with our highway development business, our community has in place Impact Benefit Agreements for natural resources, renewable energy, mining, etc. All of these actions provide our community with financial security and sustainability and as a result all of the people in the community are employed with minimal dependency on social assistance.

We take pride in our well-planned infrastructure and governance system that will permit us to provide new structures to our community.

Community and Cultural Development

Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation bases their decision making process, planning and development around the value system which was developed together with



leaders, community members and administrators of the Paqtnkek Band, these values are as indentified:

Spirituality

Connecting to our spirituality as a community and as individuals guides us in what is right and wrong, moving forward in balance and with the right attitude. We understand and respect that spirituality may be different for each of our members but agree that it teaches us to respect others, our relationships with the natural world and the responsibilities we have. Forgiveness (apiksiktuaqn) lets us put the past behind us so we can take the next steps in the right direction.

Making decisions for the benefit of Seven Generations

The decisions we make now affect not only ourselves, but also our children, our community and future generations. We are connected to our past and our future. The different parts of our community – our leaders, our band staff and our community members are interconnected and interdependent. In making decisions, we consider the overall best interest and wellness of our community and the Mi'kmaw Nation, for now and for the future.

Gratitude

We are grateful for the efforts of our ancestors and our past leaders. Their hard work has brought us to where we are now. We strive to express our appreciation and gratitude for the work of our current leaders, band staff and community members. We work at being diplomatic when we suggest improvements and changes and couple this with recognition of efforts being made. We celebrate each other's successes in taking our next steps forward.

Sharing

We believe in sharing what we have and helping each other. We do this without having to be asked and often without expectation of compensation as in the old days. We share our knowledge and skills knowing that by doing so, we empower each other so that each of us can improve our personal situations and community life overall. Listening, having empathy and compassion for ourselves and others allows us to see the potential in each of us and hope for a positive future.

Optimism

Having a positive attitude personally, when we work with each other and with community members is vital, as are the passion and pride we bring to our work of creating a better future for our community as a whole.

Self-reliance and self-sufficiency

Knowing and balancing our individual and collective rights, being informed of how our community works, being self-sufficient and a part of community initiatives enables us to create an abundant future.

Motivation

Because of the impacts of history on our people and our nation, many of our community members have lost their direction. Being motivated as individuals is important for making positive changes. As leaders and staff, being passionate about, loving our work and our community and sparking motivation in our community members will help to promote self-reliance, pride and a better future for us all.

Fairness

Treating everyone fairly and equitably is important, recognizing that each situation is unique and that the same solution in all cases might not result in fair or equitable outcomes.

Consistency

Being consistent, working together and being able to rely on each other fosters trust, openness and honesty, which are important in our personal and work relationships. Being consistent also means that we know what is expected of us and shared expectations amongst us.

Innovation

Meeting our values and needs as a community and as Mi'kmaw while working with another cultural system and context can be challenging as our different worldviews and value systems are not always aligned. Innovation in our thinking and our programming will ensure solutions that meet our needs as a Mi'kmaw community.

Cultural Diversity

Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation showcases every summer a beautiful showcase of cultural activities and the community events truly couldn't occur without the participation and the spirit of the Paqtnkek Community.

The community women and men and children demonstrate hospitality, spirit and we are rewarded with much great compliments of our great small community. It is a small community with Great Spirit.

The state of art infrastructure which is it's only kind in Nova Scotia and East of Ontario was built by community members with funded dollars, It was a vision that was shared with all community members. There are weddings, community functions and community feasts and annual powwow hosted under the beautiful arbor.



Community working together for Change

Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation comes full circle in the planning of events and important decision for community development and succession planning. It is done with the help of Elders and also remembering our ancestors. Paqtnkek is very unique as we are a s community that value our Mi'kmaq Treaty Rights, we are a non signing band of agreements that could jeopardize the livelihood of

our future. Youth listen to and learn from our Elders. Our community members speak Mi'kmaw widely. Our cultures and traditional practices, such as spearing eels and salmon and snaring salmon and rabbits are strong and protected in our community and we continue to grow our traditional



knowledge. We are community-focused in a way that permits us to share and to help each other. Non-natives have been educated and are culturally sensitive regarding Paq'tnkek and Mi'kmaw people. We are reconciling our history and our relationships with Canada and with Canadians.

Paqtnkek Moving Forward

Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation is a community in transition, great opportunities lie ahead that will have long term benefits.

Over the past few years, the leadership and community members of Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation have communicated a holistic vision for the Paqtnkek community which encompasses spiritual, emotional, mental and cultural well-being for community members. To that end, the Leadership and Directors came together in February to May 2012 to participate in several day-long sessions to create a Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation Strategic Plan that will assist in moving the community closer toward fulfilling their vision and preparing for the upcoming changes to the highway 104 development and economic development initiatives for the community.

The ultimate goal of this plan is to advance and prepare the Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation to determine their own direction in shaping and improving the social and economic quality of their lives using a coordinated approach between departments working towards goals that focus on the Paqtnkek community.

The strategic plan will assist in organizing Paqtnkek to:

- Develop and maintain a sound governance and management structure;
- Reclaim and promote Mi'kmaw values, culture and traditions;
- Nurture the spiritual, physical and emotional well being of the community;
- Manage assets and strengthen resources;
- Promote entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.
- Position the leadership and directors for the change shift

A. Governance and Management

- To increase Paqtnkek land base
- To create band management transparency and foster community input
- To establish effective and efficient financial accountability
- To ensure Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation has the required policies, processes and management/advisory committees for effective operations
- To develop policies, bylaws and procedures to protect the assets of the community and to improve the socio-economics of Paqtnkek community. (e.g. : Taxation , Lands, Tenant agreements)
- Nation Building with the Mi'kmaw Communities (KMK in the IBA and Resource Revenue Sharing)
- Citizenship Act/codes for the community

B. Communication

- To establish good working relationships between Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and all levels of government. This will be done through cooperation, friendship and partnerships.
- To establish effective band administration communications to reflect transparency and accountability to the people and internal directors and leaders.

C. Values/Language/Culture

- To reclaim the traditional values, language and culture in our community.

D. Infrastructure

- To ensure quality new development through high standards of land use planning, community layout, building design, supporting infrastructure and services and Capital and Infrastructure Planning to South Side.

E. Enterprises

- To encourage the development of community commercial enterprises that will generate employment, revenues and investment opportunities for Paqtnkek First Nation and its members
- Development of a Economic Development Corporation
- Encourage Entrepreneurship
- Develop an Investment Strategy for Business Development



F. Programs

- To distribute post-secondary education (PSE) funding fairly and equitably
 - To improve access to transportation for community members
 - To improve Paqtnekek community members' understanding of responsible home ownership to offset higher maintenance costs and a lack of funding for home repairs
 - To assist people who have been in institutions to transition back into daily life in the community
 - To increase sustainable employment and/or entrepreneurship for community members
- To prepare the community for upcoming changes in social assistance programs, to remove social assistance dependency and regain power of them.
 - To enable skills and employability skills through innovation and partnerships.
 - To promote the physical, spiritual, emotional, cultural, and mental well being of the entire community
 - Promote leadership development

G. Human Resources

- To have a trained and professional workforce
- To secure enough health professionals to meet the needs of the community
- Mentor Program for youth to enter fields

Paqtnekek Branding

It was very important for the Paqtnekek Nation that the cultural Identity of FN communities is vital to pride of place, and to future economic development initiatives. Building pride within its community and connecting to the past through traditional language is a top-level initiative for the government of Paqtnekek.

The process of branding the community was extensive that included community surveys and sessions and indentifying what Paqtnkek was. First of all it was important that we regained our traditional name rather than Pomquet- Heatherton #23, as assigned by the Federal Indian Agents we Renamed our community Back to Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation, As of June 5, 2012 this name is now our legal name.

Secondly, the community felt it was important for our community to be showcased on the Highway 104, 46 years of breech by the Provincial Government has prevented us to have full access to the highway and watching many years of opportunity drive by us. The Paqtnkek Economic Development Department and the Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Chief and Council members negotiated the Interchange 104 and constructing the Highway Commercial Showcase to support jobs and improving the quality of lives in the community. It was community drive and remembering the fight of our ancestors that led us all. So that led to community signage and the Highway 104 Signage, the Community selected the Logo design and the Slogan which is "KEPMITE' TMU'KW TA'N WENI'KW, Which defines "Honoring Culture "

Elder and Youth

The "old ways" are important to moving forward as a community. We are all Mi'kmaq; we are all l'nu. Unlike the roles and titles imposed on us by outside systems or cultures, we are all equals in our community and our culture. Leading by example; doing things to help each other; giving back when we receive something; being accountable for our actions; being responsible for the welfare of our whole community; listening to each other; and, treating each other with respect and professionalism are central values to us as Mi'kmaq and in our community. Our community and its members are our most important asset. Involving our whole community is important as we journey forward together. "Quoted from Elder in talking circle"

We hope that you enjoyed the experience of our Beautiful Mi'kmaq Community and watch a community unfold with success with the cooperation of Community Spirit.