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**2017 Indspire Awards Honours Indigenous Achievers in Ottawa Ceremony
on March 24, 2017
Ceremony Features Special Guest Buffy Sainte-Marie**

(Toronto ON - January 27, 2017) Thirteen First Nation, Inuit, and Métis individuals from across the country will be honoured on March 24, 2017 at the *Indspire Awards* ceremony at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. The ceremony, hosted by multi-award nominated actress and singer/songwriter, **Cheri Maracle** and well-known TV personality, **Kyle Nobess**, will feature Indigenous talent from across the country, including special guest performer, Cree singer **Buffy Sainte-Marie**, who is a well-known songwriter, activist, educator, visual artist and winner of countless awards!

Other guests include:

Drezus - well-known MC and a fixture of the Indigenous hip hop scene in Canada.

Mariame Hasni - powerhouse vocalist with an electric stage presence.

Elisapie - singer, songwriter, and filmmaker.

Classic Roots - producer and DJ who combines techno/house music with the beat of traditional Anishinaabe sounds.

Ashley Callingbull - *Mrs. Universe 2015*, activist, actor, and a contestant on the *Amazing Race Canada*.

The 13 *Indspire Awards* recipients, including three youth recipients and one lifetime achievement honoree, will be celebrated by over 1,700 ceremony attendees, including 500 Indigenous youth from across Canada.

The 2017 *Indspire Awards* recipients are:

Lifetime Achievement: **The Honourable Senator Murray Sinclair** - Peguis First Nation, Manitoba

Business and Commerce: **P. Jerry Asp** - Tahltan Nation, British Columbia

Culture, Heritage, & Spirituality:

Jan Kahehti:io Longboat- Six Nations of the Grand River, Ontario

Culture, Heritage, & Spirituality: **B. Doreen Spence** - Saddle Lake Cree Nation, Alberta

Education: **Nathan Matthew** - Simpcw First Nation, British Columbia

Health: **Tekatsi:tsia'kwa Katsi Cook** - Akwesasne First Nation, Québec

Law and Justice: **Kimberly R. Murray** - Kanehsàtà:ke Mohawk Nation

Politics: **Cece Hodgson McCauley** - Sahtu Dene, Northwest Territories
Public Service: **Duncan McCue** - Georgina Island First Nation, Ontario
Sports: **Heather Kashman** - Métis Red River Settlement, Manitoba
Youth - First Nation: **Thomas Dymond** - Bear River First Nation
Youth - Inuit: **Maatalii Okalik** - Nunavut, Inuit Nunangat
Youth - Métis: **Josh Butcher** - Métis Nation, Alberta

"The Awards ceremony will be a magnificent evening of celebration of the Indigenous peoples of Canada," said Roberta Jamieson, President and CEO of Indspire and Executive Producer of the *Indspire Awards*. "In 2017 Canadians will mark 150 years of confederation. It is fitting that we honour the contributions and role of Indigenous peoples and look forward to the future we will build together by recognizing the life journey and accomplishments of thirteen First Nations, Inuit, and Métis visionaries, activists, and role models, who have - with passion, courage and tenacity - converted their gifts, energies and determination into achievement."

The *Indspire Awards* is made possible by the generous support of a number of individual, government, and corporate supporters, including presenting corporate sponsor CIBC.

"CIBC has been a proud sponsor of the *Indspire Awards* since their beginning, and we are honoured to be part of this national celebration of the accomplishments, talents, and dedication of these role models," said Victor Dodig, President and Chief Executive Officer of CIBC.

"On behalf of the Government of Canada, a proud partner of Indspire, it is my great pleasure to congratulate the outstanding First Nations, Inuit and Métis honoured this evening," said the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs. "I'm proud to be part of this evening's event, which pays tribute to some of the exemplary achievements of Indigenous peoples. You are an inspiration to all Canadians - especially youth -from coast to coast to coast."

2017 Indspire Awards Supporters

Presenting Corporate Sponsor: CIBC

Lead Partner: Government of Canada

Indigenous Youth Sponsor: Shell Canada Limited

Regional Partner: Province of Ontario

Major Sponsors: Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), Corus Entertainment, Suncor Energy Inc., Syncrude Canada Ltd.

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Cocktail Reception Sponsor: Teck Resources Limited

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Professionals

The Canadian Screen Award-nominated show will be broadcast nationally by media partners Global Television and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) at a later date.

About the Indspire Awards

The *Indspire Awards* have celebrated the significant contributions of Indigenous people in Canada for 24 years. The *Awards* are aligned with Indspire's mandate to provide educational support and programs for future generations to succeed. They promote self-esteem and pride for the Indigenous community and provide outstanding role models for Indigenous youth. They recognize the success of individuals who have the discipline, drive and determination to set high standards and accomplish their goals.

The national jury for the *Indspire Awards* is comprised of previous recipients, who represent a range of economic sectors, fields of endeavor, and regions across the country. From hundreds of nominations, the jury selects career achievement award recipients, three youth award recipients (First Nation, Inuit, and Métis), and one lifetime achievement award. Recipients are selected through a process that is based on the highest merits of fairness and respect to all of the highly-deserving nominees.

About Indspire

Indspire is an Indigenous-led registered charity that invests in the education of Indigenous people for the long term benefit of these individuals, their families and communities, and Canada. With the support of its funding partners, Indspire disburses financial awards, delivers programs, and shares resources with the goal of closing the gap in Indigenous education. Through the *K-12 Institute*, it provides resources to educators, communities, and other stakeholders who are committed to improving kindergarten to grade 12 success for Indigenous youth. In 2015-16, Indspire has provided \$12.2 million through 3,792 bursaries and scholarships to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students. Each year, the organization presents the *Indspire Awards*, a celebration of the successes achieved by Indigenous people that is broadcast nationally.

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