



Tungasuvvingat Inuit

MEDIA RELEASE

# TI ALLURIARNIQ PROGRAM RECEIVES \$3.3 MILLION TO SUPPORT ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING

OTTAWA, ON - JULY 29, 2021

OTTAWA, ON - In a funding announcement ceremony held at the head office of Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), 1071 Richmond Road in Ottawa, TI received \$3.3 million from the Ontario Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy over 5 years. Ontario is investing \$46 million dollars to support young victims and survivors of human trafficking through the Community Supports Fund and Indigenous-led Initiatives Fund. The investment is being provided to 27 new projects throughout the province and TI is one of only two Ottawa based recipients. In addition, TI also received funds as a recipient of the Youth Violence and Human Trafficking Prevention Program. The ceremony was the follow-up to the two announcements made in December of 2020 and May of 2021.

Tuesday's ceremony in Ottawa was attended by Amanda Kilabuk, Executive Director of Tungasuvvingat Inuit, The Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister for Children, Community, The Honourable Jane McKenna, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development and Jeremy Roberts, MPP for Ottawa West - Nepean.

Early intervention and prevention efforts are crucial to effectively combat human trafficking. Ontario's anti-human trafficking strategy prioritizes initiatives targeted to child and youth prevention and intervention, as well as supports for child victims. Executive Director, Amanda Kilabuk stated, "Tungasuvvingat Inuit is grateful for these funds to support our Alluriarniq Programming. Our programming is urban Inuit specific, and it is vital to access potential life saving supports such as access to culture, traditional foods, and discreet services that make a huge difference for those caught in a web of exploitation".

The investment is significant and will provide much needed supports for the TI Alluriarniq Program. Alluriarniq means, "Stepping Forward" and the program provides support for Inuit aged 16 and older living in Canada that are currently, or have in the past, engaged in sex work or are looking to exit the sex trade and victims/survivors of human trafficking. The program also provides support to victims of sexual violence and abuse.

The Alluriarniq program team has worked diligently over the last 4-years to carve out safe, trauma-informed, low-barrier services and partnerships for Inuit at risk of being targeted for human trafficking and survivors of sexual exploitation. Kilabuk added, "We are pleased to see this level of commitment as we work to end youth violence and human trafficking. We have seen the benefits and impact our programming has had on urban Inuit youth and we will continue to advocate until we see an end to child sexual exploitation".

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing crimes worldwide. In Ontario, most reported cases involve sexual exploitation, which may also be referred to as sex trafficking. Young Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQ+ are particularly at high risk. Ontario has some of the highest rates of human trafficking incidents in Canada. This new funding will afford the Alluriarniq program an additional 5-years to focus on supporting Inuit exiting human trafficking situations. In 2019, the Alluriarniq Program launched its graduated-phase program, which focused on teaching transferable-life skills to Inuit survivors interested in taking on more leadership capacity. The new funds will also allow us to support more Inuit survivors and meaningfully contribute to anti-human trafficking work.

TI and the Alluriarniq program will continue to provide on-the-ground immediate support to Inuit being recruited and groomed for sexual exploitation. This work is essential and timely; human trafficking continues to disproportionately impact Indigenous communities. TI, as an organization provides supports to urban Inuit, it should be noted that urban environments add a level of complexity to this issue as some Inuit are dealing with racism, discrimination, and socioeconomic disparities.



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Tungasuvvingat Inuit is the only Inuit-specific service organization of its kind in Canada offering 20+ highly integrated, front-line programs and services to urban Inuit in Ontario. Tungasuvvingat Inuit is a one-stop resource centre to meet the rapidly growing, complex and evolving needs of Inuit in Ontario and is recognized as a leading advocate for urban Inuit and is prominent within the framework of national Inuit organizations