



April 14th, 2023

MEDIA RELEASE

INUIT COMMUNITY SUPPORT WORKER PROGRAM CELEBRATES ITS SECOND GRADUATING CLASS

OTTAWA, ON - On Friday, April 14th, a celebration of success took place as Tungasuvvingat Inuit was invited to honour the second graduating class of the Inuit Community Support Worker Program. The two-year program is a competency-based, nationally accredited diploma program designed and delivered through funding support by the Government of Canada's Strategic Partnership Fund. The project was developed by ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre with financial support from Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), as partners.

TI Director, Employment and Education, Jennifer Lafreniere stated about this collaboration that, "I am extremely proud of the graduates of the Inuit Community Support Worker's program. Not only did these five students persevere with their studies through the realities of everyday life, they did so while also facing the challenges of the pandemic. They have shown remarkable resilience and dedication. Their completion of the 2-year course is a huge accomplishment and a testament to their strength and determination. We are proud of their achievement and confident that they will serve the Inuit community with compassion and excellence."

Students of the program included Inuit from Ottawa and across Inuit Nunangat who were living or working in Ottawa, with roots from communities including Iqaluit, Sanirajak, Kimmirut, Taloyoak, Cambridge Bay and Yellowknife, NWT. One student has accepted a full-time position at TI as a CSW in the Mamisarvik Addiction Treatment Program. The second cohort (2021-23) supported 13 students, earning 335 course certificates, with five diploma graduates.

Helen Roos with ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre added, "This year's graduates were deeply committed to their studies, placements and their goals for the future. The Inuit Community Support Worker program brings those who are committed to developing the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities needed to work safely and competently with Inuit individuals and families across a range of jobs including crisis response, housing, mental health and addictions, healthy programming and cultural development. These students showed exceptional resiliency and perseverance personally and professionally, and have taken a huge step forward toward their future and goals. Our team at ilinniapaa is so proud of them, and those who participated in the program since 2018 to present."

The ceremony was held on April 14th, 2023, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm at Richelieu-Vanier Community Centre in Ottawa, ON. The keynote speech was provided by Peter Irniq, Inuk Elder and Advisor to the Inuit CSW program. A catered feast was provided, by Inuk Chef Trudy Metcalfe-Coe, for all graduates, family members and program guests.