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Dene Nation launches On-the-Land Healing Camp with Community Partners

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The On-the-Land Healing Camp model to assist people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 surge. [Denendeh, Northwest Territories – December 2, 2021] – The Dene Nation has established an On-the-Land Healing Camp near Yellowknife at the Aurora Village site. This healing camp framework came from a collaboration with ʔehdzo got'ıę gots'ę́ nákedi (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), the Dene Nation's Rapid Response COVID-19 Team and partnerships with Aurora Village, Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation, and community partners like Crazy Indian Brotherhood, traditional councillors, and Elders from the regions.

The Dene Nation started this project at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when it first came to Canada and eventually to the North.

> "*The Elders said to go on the land. This is where our strength comes from.* Our Dene Nation team has been working hard to help with the "On the Land" project. It must be commended as they were able to navigate through overwhelming challenges to make the On-the-Land Healing Camp a reality." National Chief Norman Yakeleya

Our Dene's values and principles are very important. At the same time, we do the right thing for our people. We thank the Aurora Village for being there when we were stuck. Mr. Morin and his team certainly made it possible for us to establish this On-the-Land Healing Camp.

We thank so many people; however, we are grateful that our team kept the dream alive so others could live in a dignified manner as we deal with COVID-19 at this time.

The Dene have been able to make this transformational healing project a reality given our partners such as the Federal Government, GNWT and others stepping up to help the "homeless members of the Dene from all regions" during the COVID-19 times.

In addition, we continue to support those helping their own communities and pray for the day when we come together to share our experiences in a Dene model of wellness.

Quotes from our Partners

- *Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada*
- *Indigenous Services Canada*

Minister Vandal
"Over the last two challenging years, I've seen firsthand Northerners ready to help their neighbours and communities. The dedication to keeping them safe and taking collective action to support those who need it most. The Government of Canada will continue to be there to support community-led, innovative solutions that work to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. As Minister of Northern Affairs-I'm pleased that Canada can support Indigenous-owned, operated, and managed healing camp for Indigenous people. The camp not only responds to needs exacerbated by the pandemic but also supports the development of mutual-aid systems that will create lasting benefits into the future."

The Honourable Daniel Vandal, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Northern Affairs

MP McLeod
"I congratulate the Dene Nation on their hard work to create this Wellness Camp. This camp will provide much-needed services to some of the most vulnerable populations in Yellowknife, and I look forward to seeing their efforts lead to a healthier community."

Michael McLeod
Member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories

Minister Hajdu

“I want to congratulate the Dene Nation for their work in establishing the Wellness Camp at Aurora Village, which will assist those experiencing homelessness. We remain focused on Covid-19 investments that will support the health and well-being of Indigenous people and strengthen communities. Our government is proud to be a partner in supporting this initiative.”

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services

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