



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

UQAC HONOURS MARJOLAINE ÉTIENNE FOR HER EXCEPTIONAL COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT WOMEN

Wendake, June 12, 2026 — The Board of Directors of Quebec Native Women (QNW) proudly acknowledges the awarding of an honorary medal by the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC) to its President, Ms. Marjolaine Étienne. This prestigious distinction was presented during the 2026 National Forum on Truth and Reconciliation.

“This distinction reflects the lasting impact of Ms. Marjolaine Étienne within our communities and in society. It also highlights the sustained work of Quebec Native Women, which has been advocating for over 50 years for the rights, safety, and well-being of First Nations and Inuit women and girls. Through her unwavering commitment, vision, and leadership, Ms. Étienne advances this essential mission every day and helps pave the way for future generations,” said Jeannette Martin, Vice-President of QNW’s Board of Directors.

Awarded to individuals whose dedication and achievements significantly contribute to the advancement of society, this honorary medal recognizes inspiring paths that enhance both the academic community and society as a whole.

“By awarding the UQAC honorary medal to Ms. Marjolaine Étienne, we recognize her deeply human commitment to the dignity, well-being, and rights of First Nations girls, women, and communities. Through her inspiring leadership, she powerfully embodies the values of justice, respect, and solidarity that underpin our university,” said Ghislain Samson, Rector of the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi.

Presented during the banquet of the 2026 National Forum on Truth and Reconciliation, this distinction comes at a significant moment of dialogue and reflection on advancing justice, equity, and reconciliation, while fostering inclusive academic spaces that respect Indigenous knowledge.

A recognition that goes beyond the individual

his distinction carries a collective significance, as it highlights the importance of education and the need to create culturally safe, inclusive, and truly accessible environments for First Nations.

Ms. Étienne emphasizes that, for many Indigenous women, access to education goes far beyond the acquisition of knowledge: “Women who walk through these doors are seeking much more than expertise. They are looking for tools, support, and often a safe space where they can fully thrive.”

In a context where serious challenges persist, particularly violence against First Nations and Inuit women and girls, education remains a critical pathway to autonomy, safety, and empowerment.

About QNW

Quebec Native Women is a non-profit organization that has represented and advocated for the rights and interests of First Nations women and girls across Quebec for over 50 years.

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Official photo, from left to right :

Danielle Rousselot, Director of the Nikanite First Nations Centre and Relations with First Peoples at UQAC; Marjolaine Étienne, President of Quebec Native Women; and Ghislain Samson, Rector of UQAC.

Source: Quebec Native Women\ <https://faq-qnw.org/>

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