



News Release

For Immediate Release

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CINDY BLACKSTOCK TO BE HONOURED WITH KORCZAK MEDAL

VANCOUVER – Dr. Cindy Blackstock will be honoured for more than a quarter-century of dedicated work when she receives the 2017 Janusz Korczak Medal for Children’s Rights Advocacy this afternoon.

Blackstock will receive the medal, awarded by the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada, during a ceremony at the Pacific Gateway Hotel. The medal is awarded annually for outstanding contributions to the promotion of the rights of children in ways that encourage love for children, listening to children, fostering healthy children’s lives, and building capacities in children, in the spirit of Dr. Korczak, a Polish-Jewish author and physician who ultimately sacrificed his own life to protect orphans under his care during World War II. Making the presentation to Blackstock will be Representative for Children and Youth Bernard Richard and Janusz Korczak Association of Canada President Jerry Nussbaum.

Blackstock is the Executive Director of the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada and a professor in McGill University’s School of Social Work. She is the author of more than 50 publications and is probably best known for spearheading a human rights complaint on behalf of Indigenous children and families alleging that Ottawa has long provided inequitable child welfare services on-reserve. In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that federal funding and services are, in fact, discriminatory and that Ottawa should “*cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to redress and prevent it.*”

“Janusz Korczak knew what many Canadians are coming to understand – children only get one childhood and First Nations children should not have to spend it fighting the government to be treated fairly,” Blackstock said. “Ending the federal government’s inequitable and unjust provision of public services is not just good for First Nations children; it frees the conscience of the nation from the chains of racism as fiscal policy to create a country where every child matters.”

Representative Richard said he is delighted to take part in honouring Blackstock, whom he referred to as “a determined and fierce advocate for children in the spirit of Dr. Korczak.”

“Dr. Korczak was a humanitarian, an educator and a pediatrician,” Nussbaum said. “He was a children’s advocate, but more than anything else, he was a friend of the children. One of his most famous quotations states: ‘Children are not the people of tomorrow, but are people today.’ And I believe this year’s winner of the Korczak medal is doing great work to help the children of Canada today.”

Media Contact:

Jeff Rud

Executive Director, Strategy and Communications.

250-216-4725. Email: Jeff.Rud@rcybc.ca