



Statement

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For Immediate Release

Representative congratulates Mary Teegee on receiving the Janusz Korczak Medal for Children's Rights Advocacy

Victoria – A fierce warrior for children, youth and their families was honoured last week by the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada and the Representative for Children and Youth of B.C. during a ceremony at Government House. Hereditary Chief Mary Teegee, who carries the name Maaxswxw Gibuu, received the Janusz Korczak Medal for Children's Rights Advocacy presented by B.C. Representative for Children and Youth Jennifer Charlesworth and Korczak Association President Jerry Nussbaum during a ceremony hosted by Lieutenant Governor Janet Austin.

"The work that Mary is doing is inspiring to all of us in this field, and well beyond, and I know she is deeply touching the hearts of many people in this province through her tireless work to make the lives of young people better," said Charlesworth. "Her approach of walking alongside children, youth and their families with compassion and love while actively calling out discrimination, bias and racism, and calling us all in to take action, is truly exemplary."

Mary is a member of the Luxgaboo Clan and belongs to the Takla and Gitk'san Nations. She holds many roles as she advocates for Indigenous children, youth and their families. She is Chair of the Our Children Our Way Society, Executive Director of Child and Family Services at Carrier Sekani Family Services in Prince George, is the President of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society, represents B.C. on the board of the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society, and is the B.C. Representative for the National Advisory Committee on Child and Family Service Reform. Mary also has a passion for film-making and has been involved in several films that bring to light and give voice to the issues that children and youth are facing today.

"Mary embraces so many of the things that Janusz Korczak was – courageous, a visionary, bold and above all, truly seeing a whole child and putting love at the centre of how we support young people," said Charlesworth. "She is a role model to me and to many just as was Janusz Korczak."

Janusz Korczak was a Polish-Jewish author and pediatrician, who is widely recognized as the father of the international child rights movement. He is best known for his selfless heroism in 1942 when, as an orphanage director in Warsaw, he refused offers of freedom and accompanied the children in his care to a Nazi extermination camp. The Korczak Medal honours individuals who are making outstanding contributions to the promotion of child rights with a focus on building love and fostering the full potential of young people.

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