

The Edmonton Journal, written by Florence Loyie, Civic Affairs Writer, Edmonton

## **Native youth cited for achievements**

Michael Sound learned to survive as a street kid in Edmonton' inner city. Sound found a strength that is helping him to achieve his goals of finishing high school and becoming an electrician and professional boxer. Sound was one of four youth recognized Monday by the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee with an Aboriginal Youth Award. No family members were there to watch him. All his close relatives are dead, which is why he ended up on the streets.

Award recipients must attend school in Edmonton, and are chosen on the basis of their success and achievements in leadership, volunteerism, sports, academics, community work dance, art, theatre or technology.

Sound is a Grade 11 student at Boyle Street Education Centre and credits the support and encouragement he had encountered there with helping him find his way in life.

"Boyle Street had taught me so much. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for that school. Everyone was so positive and it made me want to be positive. They made me feel good about myself and to believe in myself to accomplish my goals."

Sound vowed not to forsake the honour of being help up as a role model for other aboriginal youth.

Angel Robin Chipaway, 15, entered junior high "an angry young woman," but with the support of her teachers and special mentors, she went on to receive the award for being the most outstanding native student for two consecutive years.

She is now a Grade 10 student at St. Joseph's high school. The angry young woman has grown into a caring, giving teenager who is an active junior leader for the Coyote Kids program of the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society. When Chipaway graduates from high school, she will be the first in her family to do so.

Mymie Stone House is a 17-year-old Grade 12 student at Amiskwacy Academy and a member of the Saddle Lake Cree Band, northeast of Edmonton. His family moved to the city so he could pursue his education and athletic goals.

House, a top-calibre long-distance runner, has set his sights on the 2004 Olympics. He has made himself a treasured member of the academy, known for his helpfulness to students and staff alike.

The youngest of the four recipients was Tannis Bolt, a 13-year-old Grade 9 student at Dan Knott junior high. Bolt, on Inuit descent, arrived in Edmonton from Nunavut last

September of finish her schooling. Bolt brought a wealth of information to her Grade 8 social studies class when Nunavut became a separate territory.

On hand to present the recipients with the awards was Willie Littlechild, the first treaty Indian in Alberta to graduate with a law degree and to be elected to the House of Commons.