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### **Civic Committee Recognizes Four Aboriginal High School Students**

Four Aboriginal youth in Edmonton were recently honoured with Aboriginal Youth Awards for education from the Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee. This is the second year for the awards, which are worth \$500 each and take into consideration not just one's academic achievements, but also their cultural awareness, community contributions, athletic abilities, perseverance and determination.

The October 30 occasion at city hall saw Mayor Bill Smith, four city Councillors and former Member of Parliament and athlete, Willie Littlechild, recognized the success of Tannis Bolt, Angel Robin Chipaway, Myrnie Stone House and Michael Sound.

Committee chairperson, Val Kaufman, informed visitors and guests that the youth are a very important component in recognizing the contribution of Edmonton's Aboriginal population and that the awards are one way of acknowledging the fact. Tannis Bolt is a Grade 9 student at Dan Knott High School where she excels both academically and athletically. The youth Inuit girl moved to the city in the fall of 1999 from Nunavut. She also possesses a positive and outgoing attitude, which will likely see her achieve most any goal she sets.

Robin Chipaway is in Grade 10 at St. Joseph's High. This Cree girl has had to overcome some major obstacles and contributes to both the school and community through her unselfish volunteerism.

Another student who's faced numerous obstacles is Grade 11 student Michael Sound. A fine amateur boxer who helps other youth in the same sport and encourages them to walk the Red Road. Sound is an exemplary model of dedication and determination despite his not having much in terms of support systems.

The fourth recipient, Myrnie Stone House, is a Grade 12 student at the new Aboriginal high school, Amiskwaciy Academy. The athletic prowess of this young man is apparent in his running, badminton, hockey, triathlon and volleyball. He also happens to have concerns about social and political matters that affect Aboriginal society.

The awards ceremony began with a prayer by Elder Robert Cardinal and a speech from Mayor Smith who said that the awards not only honour those who excel, but "show the rest of us what can be achieved".

Smith prompted the students to believe in their abilities and suggested "if reaching goals were easy the rewards would be as sweet."

Guest speaker Willie Littlechild a lawyer and a Cree from the Ermineskin Band at Hobbema told listeners that "whenever you face challenges in future, all you have to do is recall that feeling that you're feeling today."

He capped his afternoon talk by relating a message he once received from Cree Elders who told him "go where there is no path and leave a trail for someone else." Littlechild is a former Member of Parliament, a delegate to the United Nations on human rights issues and a recipient of the Order of Canada.

The awards ceremony included entertainment by the singing duo, Creative Harmony, as well as a light brunch.