



NEWS RELEASE

THOUSANDS OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACROSS MANITOBA WILL GROW-UP HEALTHIER WITH NEW SUPPORT FOR SPORT, RECREATION AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Together We're Training Young People with Skills that Help Them Give Back to Their Hometowns and Neighbourhoods: Lemieux

July 23, 2015, Winnipeg, Manitoba – Thousands of Aboriginal youth in Manitoba will have more opportunities for sport, recreation and leadership training in their communities over the summer and after school thanks to the promise of 15% of e-gaming revenues to support these programs, Minister Ron Lemieux announced today. The new initiative will focus on building leadership and mentorship skills for Aboriginal youth by training them to run sport and recreational programs for younger children, and will be funded from a dedicated portion of Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries annual online gaming revenue which amounts to a commitment of \$125,000, annually for three years.

"I am thrilled to see this kind of investment go towards programming that will really make a difference," said Minister Lemieux. "By working to create a new generation of leaders and mentors, we build stronger and healthier communities from the grass roots level."

The Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC) and the Manitoba Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Council (MASRC) will provide the programming starting this summer.

"The hundreds of young people we work with every day at WASAC are proud of where they are from, proud of who they are, and want to give back," said Trevor LaForte, executive director at WASAC. "This new support means more role models and leaders in our neighbourhoods and more activities where kids can find belonging, be healthy and have fun."

Under the new initiative programs and day camps will include transportation, sports equipment and snacks for children from more than 100 schools in Manitoba including in aboriginal communities. In addition to sport and recreation programming, participants will be given the chance to learn more about aboriginal culture.

"The Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council (MASRC) is honoured to partner with Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Corporation to provide new sport and recreation opportunities for Aboriginal children, youth, and leaders across the Province as athletes and coaches," said Mel Whitesell, Executive Director of the Manitoba Aboriginal Sports & Recreation Council. "This is the best kind of partnership, one where everybody wins. It is a win for the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Corporation who are committed to supporting positive Sport and Recreation programs for Aboriginal children and youth through e-gaming funds. It is a win for the MASRC as we will have the privilege of being able to provide more sport and recreation activities to help create healthy and active lifestyles for all, but most

importantly, this partnership is a win for all of the children, youth and families that will be touched by this generous contribution."

Since its inception in 1999 as a small non-profit organization with two coaches, four leaders and 40 children, WASAC has grown to help remove barriers for thousands of children annually and is Canada's largest employer for Aboriginal children and youth.

The Manitoba Aboriginal Sport & Recreation Council is a non-profit organization that has been operational for over twenty years, serving as a bridge between existing partners in the sport/recreational delivery system and Manitoba's Aboriginal community.

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FACT SHEET ATTACHED

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FACT SHEET

WASAC PROGRAMS

Adventure Summer Kids Camp

The Adventure Summer Kids Camp provides Aboriginal children ages 7 - 12 in Winnipeg the opportunity to attend a summer camp; registration, transportation, nutrition, and equipment are all provided at no cost. Partnering with the University of Winnipeg over 1800 children from over 70 schools within four school divisions participate in sports, recreation, cultural activities, crafts, educational games, daily swimming and a weekly field trip. The Kids Camp operates at the Old Exhibition Grounds.

WASAC North

WASAC North is a unique initiative that brings together youth leaders from Winnipeg and youth from communities across the north. WASAC works with Lac Brochet, Pauingassi, Shamattawa and the Duck Bay area. WASAC trains leaders from each northern community through leadership development workshops to allow teachers and youth the abilities and experience to provide recreational programming and summer camps in their home community. Each community now runs after school recreation programs up to three times a week throughout fall and winter and three out of the four communities provide summer programming. WASAC has also provided recreation equipment to each community – equipment includes mats, basketballs, inflating needles, dodgeballs, scoreboards, whistles, timers, floor hockey sticks, pucks, and parachutes.

STARS

The STARS program operates out of South East Collegiate in Winnipeg and is a sport, recreation and training initiative. The students from South East Collegiate come from various communities across Manitoba where there is no high school in their home community, as is the case for students from Pauingassi. These program participants face unique and challenging circumstances – most have not spent much time away from their home communities and away from family and friends. This program allows for students to get to know the City of Winnipeg while building skills and exposure to new experiences. WASAC recognizes the circumstances and is there to provide supports while offering weekly after school recreation programs so students can explore the city and build new skills with positive role models. WASAC has an average attendance of 40 youth per week.

SMART

WASAC SMART has been providing programming to Aboriginal youth in the inner city for ten years. Every year 40 participants ages 14 – 18 take part in a weekly after school program that runs from April – June and October – March. Much like the summer youth programs there is a focus on sport, recreation, leadership development, building life, and employability skills to create a bright future.

SPORT

WASAC runs a variety of different sport programs throughout the year based on consultations with the community and assistance from partner organizations. Funding from Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries will allow WASAC to enhance and develop programming and allow for the flexibility of adding new programming that was not available. A number of programs that were delivered in the past would start up once again, as follows:

- Dolphins Swim Program

Thirty (30) children aged 10 from King Edward School take part in a weekly swim program during their Tuesday lunch hour from November through March.

- Israel Idonije Football Camp

WASAC teams up with Israel Idonije Foundation to provide free skills training to youth ages 8 – 14. Promoting football and cheer leading as well as social and emotional skills such as teamwork, positive peer social interactions, and goal setting, youth are provided with lunch, healthy snacks and IIF shirts.

- Morning Workouts

In partnership with St John's High School, students meet before school from 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. to take part in an instructor-led workout. Twenty (20) youth will attend each session Tuesday morning to increase their heart rate and get energized first thing in the morning.

Sporting Events

- Through WASAC's numerous community partners (see below), they were able to send twenty (20) youth to watch the Battle of the Badges Hockey Tournament; Eighty (80) youth to attend the Canada vs USA Women's National Soccer game at Investors Group Field in 2014; Twenty (20) youth to a Goldeyes Game; Fifty (50) youth to three Winnipeg Blue Bombers games; Forty (40) youth to Stars on Ice, and Thirty (30) youth to two Winnipeg Jets Practices.

MASRC PROGRAMS

Train to Gain

Basic fitness training to get youth ready for fall sports. New initiative for youth ages 10-18 will be held in Cross Lake and Norway House by two MASRC staff. Youth will be trained on nutrition and safe workout techniques. Follow up sessions will be planned. Funding will be used for vehicle rental/gas, staff meals, accommodation, training bands, drinking water, fruit and snacks for participants.

Manitoba Indigenous Games (MIG) Canoe Championships – Cross Lake

Open paddling races for youth ages 13-17. Youth from all across Manitoba have been encouraged to come to Cross Lake and try paddling. Instruction is available and canoes are provided by Cross Lake. Between 50 and 100 youth are expected to attend. Canoeing is a traditional sport where mass participation is encouraged. This is a development event for youth and for community volunteers. Follow up will be provided by the MASRC in conjunction with the Manitoba Paddling Association. Funding will be used for vehicle rental/gas, staff meals, accommodation, 10 paddles, drinking water, fruit and healthy snacks.

Hockey Skills Camp

For Aboriginal youth, ages 5-15. Youth from the inner city and lower income areas don't have the same opportunities as other youth to be prepared for the hockey season. For three (3) age groups, on and off ice skill sessions will be provided daily. Works in partnership with the MMF Road to Gold program. Funding will pay for ice and qualified instructors and one snack per day for participants. Equipment will be made available through the MASRC/KidSport equipment warehouse.

MASRC Coaching Coordinator

For all sport and recreation to be successful, trained coaches and leaders are essential. Funding will enable the hiring of a part time position whose role will be to recruit, mentor and get coaches and recreation leaders better prepared to work with youth. This is a position MASRC has been in need for many years. This position will be responsible to plan an Aboriginal Coaching Seminar. The last such seminars for Aboriginal Coaches were held in 2010.

Aboriginal Coach Seminar

This is an event to promote ongoing coach training and to promote the 2017 North American Indigenous Games. It is opportunity to create capacity in recreation leaders and coaches so that they can return home and be better qualified to work with youth within their communities. Funding will assist with facilities, programming, trainers and a healthy snack.

Coach and Recreation Leader Training and Certification

This seminar will result in a number of coaches and recreation leaders wanting to progress from basic training to certification in their specific sport. The cost for these courses has always been a barrier to furthering their physical literacy.

Lacrosse Clinic and Training, Thompson

MASRC will partner with Thompson Minor Lacrosse to assist with clinics for youth ages 6-17. Will work with the Lacrosse MB instructor to provide a clinic and ongoing support. Funding will be used for travel (vehicle, meals, accommodations), clinician and to purchase 10 lacrosse sticks and balls.