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New Exhibition Shares the Inuit Residential Schools Experience

YELLOWKNIFE (November 25, 2009) - The stories of eight courageous Inuit are now part of a new exhibition, *'We Were So Far Away..': The Inuit Experience of Residential Schools*, at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC) in Yellowknife.

"We Were So Far Away..." tells the Inuit experience through the words of former residential school students. Illustrated with historical pictures from Canadian residential schools as well as personal objects and photographs from students, the exhibition presents a poignant reminder of what life was like in the schools for so many Aboriginal people.

"Documenting the experiences of Aboriginal Peoples during this dark period in our history is extremely important. I hope this helps former residential school students across the North on their healing journeys," said Minister of Education, Culture and Employment Jackson Lafferty.

The exhibition officially opens Thursday, November 26, 2009. The public is invited to join the exhibition partners at a special opening ceremony from 7pm to 9pm at the Heritage Cafe.

While the stories represent Inuit experiences, the goal of the exhibition is to help all Aboriginal people affected by residential schools. Another important goal is to educate the public about Canadian residential schools. The eight who shared their stories represent a diverse group from across Canada, including two Northwest Territories residents from the Inuvialuit Settlement Region: Lillian Elias of Inuvik and Abraham Ruben, formerly of Paulatuk.

"I hope that, through educational initiatives such as the *'We Were So Far Away..': The Inuit Experience of Residential Schools* exhibition, all Canadians will become aware of their past and of the need to work together to renew the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples," said president of the Legacy of Hope Foundation Richard Kistabish. "The Legacy of Hope Foundation remains committed to all Residential School Survivors, their healing journeys and the hope of reconciliation in the future."

"We Were So Far Away..." was developed by the Legacy of Hope Foundation in partnership with Library and Archives Canada and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. The exhibition is on display at the PWNHC until January 31, 2010. It will then travel to the Northern Life Museum and Cultural Centre in Fort Smith during the month of February 2010.

A private viewing is planned for former residential school students on Wednesday, November 25, 2009 from 7pm to 9pm. Due to the sensitive nature of the exhibition, support services will be available at both events.

For more information about the exhibition, please contact:

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