



## News Release

### 21 Inuit graduate from Nunavut Master of Education program

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (July 1, 2009)** – At a special convocation in Iqaluit, 21 Inuit educational leaders from across Nunavut graduated today with a Master of Education Leadership degree from the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI).

“This is a truly momentous day for education in Nunavut,” said Minister of Education Louis Tapardjuk. “Having Inuit educators in leadership roles is crucial to successfully implementing the new *Education Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act*. As our government moves forward in reaching the goals set out in *Tamapta*, we must all work towards offering more Nunavut-relevant programs and opportunities right here in our territory. I offer my most sincere congratulations to these inspiring graduates.”

The Master of Education in Leadership in Learning is the first graduate degree program to be offered in Nunavut. This program allowed teachers to stay in the territory to complete their degrees, by studying on a part-time basis over three years through face-to-face courses in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, as well as through distance learning.

This is a specially-tailored curriculum with a balanced western and Inuit knowledge of education and educational leadership. It was developed and delivered through a unique partnership between UPEI, the Nunavut Department of Education, Nunavut Arctic College and St. Francis Xavier University. The program is founded by the principles of *Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit* and Inuit Societal Values, with input from Nunavut Elders and has been delivered in both Inuit language and English.

"This is a great achievement for UPEI and our Faculty of Education, in combination with the community in Nunavut, to offer this remarkable program," said UPEI President Wade MacLauchlan. "The greatest credit goes to the 21 graduates and to the faculty who have pioneered the program and made a success of it."

During the ceremony, Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak and Minister Tapardjuk presented honorary UPEI degrees to two respected Elders, Mariano Aupilardjuk and Meeka Arnakak. Mariano Aupilardjuk is a philosopher, artist, drum dancer, song writer, cultural worker and activist who lives in Rankin Inlet. Meeka Arnakak is a respected adult educator, facilitator of spiritual healing workshops and circles and advisor on Inuktitut language from Pangnirtung.

The UPEI Master of Education in Leadership in Learning will be offered again in 2010.

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