# News Release

## Women in Elections Workshop encourages Political Participation

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (September 16, 2009) –** The Women in Municipal Elections Workshop was held Thursday September 10, 2009 in Iqaluit. The workshop focused on supporting and encouraging women contemplating running in Iqaluit's upcoming municipal election. The workshop consisted of keynote speakers, media training and mock election training.

The workshop was a joint endeavor by the Qulliit Nunavut Status of Women Council and the Government of Nunavut's Women's Secretariat, with support from the City of Iqaluit. The workshop is part of a joint multi-year initiative called "Women's Voices in Leadership", aiming to increase women's political participation on every level in Nunavut.

Premier Eva Aariak, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, spoke at the event. "Providing information, encouragement and support to women is an essential first step in ensuring that women become equally involved in governance and public policy in Nunavut," said Aariak.

Neevee Hanson, Acting President of the Qulliit Status of Women Council, co-hosted the event. "We hope that by bringing women together who have demonstrated an interest in municipal politics, we can learn valuable information about running for election," said Hanson. "We aim to provide an environment where we can learn, ask questions, and support each other as we work toward our goal of increasing women's participation in politics."

Mayor Elisapee Sheutiapik was one of the co-organizers of the event, and an active participant. "I was very pleased to be able to share my knowledge at this workshop," said Sheutiapik. "Since being elected I realize how many challenges women face. But women have always been strong. We as women have the skills needed to serve as an elected individual. We have to be encouraged to take the next step. I hope this workshop has encouraged some women to run in upcoming elections."

Through the Women's Voices in Leadership Initiative, toolkits will be developed for distribution to all Nunavut communities interested in hosting similar workshops for women. As well, a broader, territory-wide Women in Leadership Conference is planned for spring of 2010.

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