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PRESS RELEASE

Cree Nation Government Celebrates the Legacy of Cree Entrepreneurship at First Regional Business Gala Awards

Mistissini, Eeyou Istchee (August 21, 2025) – Tonight, the Cree Nation Government will pay tribute to the rich history of Eeyou entrepreneurship at the inaugural Regional Business Awards Gala in Mistissini. Organized by the Cree Nation Government's Department of Commerce and Industry as part of the 2nd Cree Nation Business Summit, the awards celebrate entrepreneurial achievement ahead of the 50th Anniversary of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Regional Business Award Winners

The Department of Commerce and Industry will be presenting five foundational entrepreneurs with special awards during the Gala, in recognition of their historic achievement and ongoing contributions to the Eeyou business community:

- A.D.E.L.S. Restaurant, owned by Annie Brien, Denise Coon-Come, Elizabeth Gunner, Laurie Brien, and Sharron Brien - established in 1971
- Blackned Construction, owned by James Blackned, Bert Blackned, and Emily Hester – established in 1975
- Waswanipi Grocery Store, owned by Sandra Happyjack and Delores Gull established in 1978/79
- Meechum Reg'd, owned by Beverly Quinn established in 1982
- Natives Exploration Services, owned by Sam R. Bosum established in 1984

Regional Business Award Honourable Mentions

The Department of Commerce and Industry would also like to recognize the following enterprises and associations which have been in operation for over 40 years:

- Consumer Co-op of Chisasibi established in 1974
- 2. Mistissini Outfitting Camps established in 1975
- 3. Cree Construction and Development Company LTD. established in 1976
- 4. Cree Trappers Association established in 1978
- Kiggaluk Corporation (Fort George Land Corporation) established in 1979
- 6. Chisasibi Center Inc. established in 1980
- 7. James Bay Cree Communication Society established in 1981
- Chisasibi Telecommunications Association (CHFG 101.1FM) established in 1982
- 9. Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company (CreeCo) Inc. established in 1982
- 10. Air Creebec established in 1982
- 11. Waswanipi Mishtuk Corporation established in 1982
- 12. Waasheskun Airways LTD. established in 1984

- 13. Waskaganish Eeyou Telecommunications Association (Waskaganish Sib Ayimuweyabi CJRH 92.5 FM Radio) established in 1984
- 14. Waswanipi Communication Society (Waswanipi 93.9 FM Radio Station) established in 1984
- 15. Wemindji Telecommunication Association Wemindji Radio established in 1984
- 16. CINI Radio FM LTD. (CINI FM) established in 1985

The Cree Nation Government proudly celebrates all these remarkable businesses on their enduring success and the transformative role they have played in building our Eeyou economy. As we look ahead to the next 50 years of Eeyou entrepreneurship, tonight's Gala will honour the rich history, vision, and dedicated hard work that has laid the foundation for future generations of Cree entrepreneurs.

The Regional Awards Gala will be livestreamed by JBCCS starting at 7 PM on August 21, 2025. To watch the ceremony, please visit the Department of Commerce and Industry CNG Facebook Page.

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For further information:

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