Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday March 24, 2009 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN WOMEN AND YOUTH CONFERENCE STRENGTHENS RESILIENCY OF NAN FIRST NATIONS

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Ask Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief RoseAnne Archibald and the NAN Women's Council joined 100 women from NAN's 49 First Nation communities to launch the Moving Forward: NAN Women and Youth Resiliency Conference in Thunder Bay today.

"First Nation women are unique and magnificent in the way we have moved forward and carried on our traditional roles throughout the generations to care, nurture and raise the next generation of First Nation children and youth," said Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief RoseAnne Archibald. "First Nation women have traditionally played an important role in the healthy development of our families and communities. These roles are very sacred and are held in the highest regard within the First Nations across Nishnawbe Aski."

Workshops and presentations for the March 24-26 conference will focus on relevant issues in NAN territory including: self-esteem and empowerment; holistic, physical, mental and emotional health; spirituality and the importance of teachings and traditions; and historical traditional roles of First Nation women.

"To build on resiliency within the community, women and youth will be coming together in focus groups to learn the different perspectives in terms of age groups, different First Nations and life experiences," said NAN Women's Council spokesperson Jackie Fletcher. "It is important that this exchange happens so that all female participants can learn from each other and pass this knowledge on within their families, communities and across Nishnawbe Aski Nation."

NAN has partnered with Status of Women Canada, Health Canada's First Nation Inuit Health Branch, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to present the conference. A one-hour video documentary will be filmed during the conference and will be used in the major NAN Women's Project to highlight the individuality and strength of the women of Nishnawbe Aski.

The NAN Women's Council ensures the on-going involvement of women in the decision-making process of Nishnawbe Aski Nation – a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities within James Bay Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 territory, an area covering two-thirds of the province of Ontario.

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