



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **GRAND CHIEF ACCEPTS CANADIAN SCREEN AWARD ON BEHALF OF SECRET PATH PROJECT**

**TORONTO, ON:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler accepted the 'Donald Brittain Award for Best Social/Political Documentary Program' for Gord Downie's Secret Path on behalf of producers Mike Downie and Stuart Coxe during the Canadian Screen Awards gala this evening.

"I am honoured to accept this award on behalf of the producers who's vision and creativity helped my dear friend Gord shine much-needed light on this dark chapter of our shared history. Secret Path is a milestone on the path to reconciliation, and I thank the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for recognizing the significance of this project," said Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler who accepted the award with Patrick Downie, Harriet Visitor and Justin Stephenson. "Gord's artistry was matched by his determination to tell the story of Charlie Wenjack and all the youth who never made it home. Gord and Chanie's lives are forever entwined, and we must honour their legacies by completing the journey they so bravely began."

The Secret Path multi-media project was launched by Gord Downie in 2016 around the 50th anniversary of the death of 12-year-old Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack, who died on October 22, 1966 after fleeing Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School in northwestern Ontario.

Secret Path includes an album, graphic novel and animated film depicting Chanie's short life. Proceeds will be donated to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba. The Wenjack family also helped launch the Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund supporting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

The Secret Path album also won for 'Best Original Music, Non-Fiction' earlier this week.

NAN's education institute was renamed 'Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute' this winter to honour Chanie Wenjack and all those who were lost during the Indian Residential School era.

For more information: [www.downiewenjack.ca](http://www.downiewenjack.ca), [www.secretpath.ca](http://www.secretpath.ca)

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