Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday February 1, 2012 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN SUPPORTS STUDENT EDUCATION RALLY PROTESTING CHRONIC UNDERFUNDING

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose provided encouraging words today to the hundreds of students gathered at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay protesting chronic underfunding of post-secondary education by both the federal and provincial governments.

"Post-secondary education is the key to the future success and self-sufficiency of First Nations individuals and communities in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory," said Waboose. "Ensuring accessibility to post-secondary education for First Nations students will be a positive benefit for all of Canada. To invest in a student is an investment in Canada. With opportunities for employment continuing to grow in the NAN territory, I see the need for a skilled and educated labour force."

Aboriginal students are calling on the federal government to honour the Treaty rights guaranteed to Aboriginal students to access post-secondary education. Despite rising tuition fees in many provinces, the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) has been capped at 2 percent growth since 1996. This has prevented tens of thousands of Aboriginal students from attending college or university.

The Lakehead University Student Union represents more than 8,100 people studying at Lakehead's two campuses in Thunder Bay and Orillia, Ont.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario.

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