



## **TORONTO 2017 NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS GAMES WRAPS UP SUCCESSFUL ONTARIO COMMUNITY TOUR**

*Hundreds of Indigenous youth engaged through province-wide sport and cultural initiative.*

**Toronto, ON – July 14, 2017** – The Toronto 2017 North American Games (Toronto 2017 NAIG) Host Society, in partnership with the Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario (ASWCO), embarked on a twelve-stop Community Tour, engaging hundreds of youth in Indigenous communities across Ontario.

Beginning on February 10, and concluding on July 1, the tour made stops in Fort Albany, Pikangikum, Wikwemikong, Rama, Kenora, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the New Credit, Oshawa, and Toronto to name a few, bringing the unifying spirit of the North American Indigenous Games to communities from the northern tip to the southern shores.

The tour provided local youth with opportunities to engage in sport activations, cultural workshops, and created possibilities for athletic development. ASWCO lead interactive sports stations throughout the tour, while Toronto 2017 NAIG community partners including Challenge Canada and official weather partner The Weather Network, contributed to the far-reaching scope of programming provided.

The Great Lakes Cultural Camps offered youth hands-on teaching and instruction in Indigenous sporting traditions such as baggataway (lacrosse), atalatel (precursor to archery), and canoeing. Athletics Canada brought its fun and dynamic Run Jump Throw initiative to stops throughout the tour providing young people with instruction in the various facets of track and field and basic physical literacy.

Lead by traditional local artisans, youth were able to contribute to the Toronto 2017 NAIG Birch Bark Canoe project. Traditional birch bark methods such as etching and quilling were used as a medium for learning through Indigenous teachings and traditions, in an effort to celebrate the unique history and culture of the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

The Toronto 2017 NAIG Community Tour, under the umbrella of the legacy campaign #Team88, was an important vehicle to promote Indigenous sport development and recreation in across the province. Through the inspirational power of sport, youth were engaged in physical literacy, wellness, and cultural awareness initiatives in the celebration of Indigenous cultural distinctiveness.

### **Quotes**

“The Toronto 2017 NAIG Community Tour was an important initiative in ensuring that all 133 First Nations across the province, in addition to Metis, Inuit and urban communities, were engaged through the power of sport and the celebration of Indigenous culture. These Games were bid on by the Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario for all Indigenous youth and communities

across Ontario. The Community Tour was a platform for engagement, community building and inspiration.”

-Marcia Trudeau-Bomberry, CEO, Toronto 2017 North American Indigenous Games Host Society

### **Toronto 2017 NAIG Quick Facts**

- From July 16-23, 2017, the Toronto 2017 North American Indigenous Games (Toronto 2017 NAIG) are expected to be the largest sporting and cultural gathering of Indigenous Peoples in North America. The Toronto 2017 NAIG will host more than 5,000 participants, and thousands of spectators for 14 sport competitions being held within world-class venues located across the Greater Toronto Area, including the Region of Hamilton and Six Nations of the Grand River.
  - The 14 core sports of the Toronto 2017 NAIG include: 3-D Archery; Athletics; Badminton; Baseball; Basketball; Canoe/Kayak; Golf; Lacrosse; Rifle Shooting; Soccer; Softball; Swimming; Wrestling; Volleyball.
- Equally important, Toronto 2017 NAIG will host two week-long cultural festivals open to the public, showcasing a variety of Indigenous artists, traditional learning, vendors, food, cultural performances and nightly entertainment.
- Participating teams represent all 13 provinces and territories of Canada, as well as up to 13 regions from the United States; more than 5,000 athletes are expected to participate.
- More than 2,100 volunteers have already signed up to be involved with 2017 NAIG through [www.naig2017.to/en/getinvolved](http://www.naig2017.to/en/getinvolved).
- The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario, have each committed \$3.5 million dollars to help fund the 2017 Games, in recognition of the NAIG as an important agent in promoting Indigenous sport development and recreation in Canada.
- The Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario (ASWCO), in collaboration with the City of Toronto and Government of Ontario, won the bid to host 2017 NAIG. As the sole rights holder, ASWCO created Toronto 2017 NAIG Host Society, a separate corporation to manage and operate the Games.
- Net proceeds from 2017 NAIG will be directed to a Legacy Fund, aimed at providing increased sport, health and wellness programming, services and equipment to Indigenous youth across the Province of Ontario.

### **Acknowledgement**

*Toronto 2017 NAIG Host Society honours the traditional lands and homelands on which the 2017 North American Indigenous Games will take place. We honour and thank the Huron-Wendat Nation, Metis Nation of Ontario, Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and Six Nations of the Grand River as our community partners and traditional inhabitants of the lands of the City of Toronto, Region of Hamilton, Durham Region and surrounding areas.*

### **Contact Information:**

Abidah Shirazi  
Director, Marketing and Communications  
Toronto 2017 NAIG Host Society  
[abidah.shirazi@naig2017.to](mailto:abidah.shirazi@naig2017.to)  
416-825-3348