

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

15th Campaign for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Takes a Healthy Turn!

Val-d'Or, February 27, 2015— The 15th edition of the *Week for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination* in Val-d'Or, to be held from next March 16 to 20, takes the healthy route! This year our spokespersons **D^r Stanley Vollant**, surgeon and initiator of the Innu Meshkenu Walk (www.innu-meshkenu.com), and **Jacques Boissonneault**, president and director general of the Abitibi-Témiscamingue Health and Social Services Agency, invite their colleagues from the health network to this grand gathering to celebrate solidarity between peoples.

After travelling 600 km across the Anishnabe traditional territory as part of his Innu Compostelle in Abitibi-Témiscamingue in fall 2013, **D^r Vollant** will be back to meet with the region's people as part of the awareness campaign to counter racism and discrimination organised by the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre. As **Dr Vollant** says, *"healthy lifestyles make people healthy. Now, for people's wellness to be complete, it is important for each one to feel respected and treated with dignity and empathy in all areas of their life."* Happy to share the podium with Dr Stanley Vollant, Mr. **Jacques Boissonneault** stated for his part that *"the health and social services network is an important public institution serving the Abitibi-Témiscamingue populations. Our responsibility towards the people requires that we take up the challenge of acting, not only by considering these populations' specific needs, but more importantly by being exemplary in our relationships with others."*

For the president of the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, Oscar Kistabish, *"this 15th campaign for the elimination of racial discrimination brings together two well-known, influential and distinguished spokespersons who give us the opportunity to extend our message of peace and solidarity between peoples."*

UQAT and the **Commission scolaire de l'Or-et-des-Bois** remain choice partners in this 15th edition under the theme of *"Val-d'Or, Show your Colours!"* Furthermore, cooperation between the Centre and teachers has allowed developing a teaching kit proposing awareness and activity workshops for primary and secondary level students. This turn-key formula will be tested by the CSOB this year and will be eventually proposed to other school boards in the coming years. As part of the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**, the **Gabriel-Commanda Walk** will take place on Friday, March 20 at 1:00 pm.

Lieu privilégié de rassemblement et de prise de parole, le Centre d'amitié autochtone de Val-d'Or milite en faveur des droits, des intérêts et du mieux-être individuels et collectifs des Autochtones composant avec la réalité urbaine.

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