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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Media Advisory: Duluth Indigenous Commission to host a healing round dance for Orange Shirt Remembrance Day

BY: Kate Van Daele, Public Information Officer

Media Advisory

Duluth Indigenous Commission to host a healing round dance for Orange Shirt Remembrance Day

September 30 | 4:00 p.m. | Duluth City Hall

[Duluth, MN] The Duluth Indigenous Commission will host a healing round dance at City Hall at 4:00 p.m. today, September 30, to recognize and commemorate the legacy of indigenous children who were sent to boarding schools and didn't return home.

Initially started in Canada, and the United States now recognizes Orange Shirt Day on September 30. Orange shirt day began in 2013, after a residential school survivor Phyllis Webstad of Stswecem'c Xgat'tem Dog Creek First Nation, shared her experience at the St. Joseph's Indian Residential School in British Columbia. She had been wearing an orange shirt that her grandmother gave her, which was taken by school officials, and she was given a uniform to wear.

Orange Shirt Day is a day to honor the many Indigenous children taken from their families and sent away to residential schools in Canada and raise awareness of the harmful residential school system. Students placed in Residential Schools were not allowed to speak their native languages, practice their spiritual beliefs, wear their cultural outfits, or even wear their hair as their ancestors did. Many children never returned home, and their fates have yet to be accounted for by the U.S. government. With the last residential school closing in the mid-1990s, the intergeneration trauma of the system lives on today.

The media event is open to the public. Orange shirts will be worn as a part of Orange Shirt Day.

The City of Duluth will be lighting Enger Tower in orange on October 2 to recognize and acknowledge the intergenerational healing of boarding school survivors and their families.

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