

Media Release

Cheakamus Centre Launches Reconciliation Carving Project

Squamish, April 27, 2017—Cheakamus Centre is a proud recipient of a Squamish Arts Council 2017 Arts & Culture Enhancement Grant. This generous grant supports the creation of a Reconciliation Pole that will serve as a focal point for discussion at this important time of reconciliation in Canada. This carving will also honour families from the area who have dedicated their skills, knowledge, and expertise, teaching thousands of students about indigenous cultural practices and reinforcing the values of respect and harmony.

The project is being led by [Xwalacktun](#) (Rick Harry), an internationally renowned Squamish Nation artist, whose works can be found in the region and throughout the world. His accomplishments have been acknowledged with a variety of awards and designations including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and the prestigious Order of British Columbia.

“We are grateful to Xwalacktun for spearheading this initiative. The creation of this pole is providing an important way for youth to participate in a place-based traditional carving project contributing to positive change in our society. It will serve as a source of inspiration for future generations”, says Conor McMullan, director of educational programs at Cheakamus Centre.

The general public is invited to meet Xwalacktun and view the carving during Cheakamus Centre’s 48th Annual Open House taking place on Sunday, May 7th 10:30am-3:30pm. Upon completion, the Reconciliation Pole will be installed outside the Centre’s south entrance and publicly viewable. This is one of many campus enhancements underway for 2017/2018.

Established in 1969, Cheakamus Centre is an overnight field school and outdoor learning facility located on the traditional territories of the Ch'iyákmesh people of Squamish Nation, in Paradise Valley, British Columbia. Owned by the North Vancouver School District, the Centre sits on 420 acres of ecological reserve and offers a range of environmental and cultural education programs for children, youth, and adults. Learn more at: www.cheakamuscentre.ca

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