



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2014

**TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION AND  
EGALE CANADA HUMAN RIGHTS TRUST TEAM UP TO HEAR FROM TWO-SPIRIT  
AND LGBTQ ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IMPACTED BY RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS.**

**TORONTO** - The residential school system has had a profound and prolonged impact on Aboriginal people within Canada, the consequences of which have been grave. The experiences of LGBTQ-identified and/or Two Spirit people in these schools have been particularly distinct and have, until now, often went unexamined. Recently, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada teamed up with Egale Canada Human Rights Trust to change this, and on November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 the two will bring together fifteen direct and intergenerational survivors, from all corners of the country, for a forum to discuss how the schools impact the current social landscape for Two Spirit people.

"It's time we start addressing the intersections of identities that are experienced in our community. When we look at the rates of victimization and bullying of LGBTQ people in Aboriginal communities, we need look no further than the degradation of cultural acceptance that this system has brought," said Helen Kennedy, Executive Director of Egale Canada Human Rights Trust. "I am thrilled about this collaboration between the TRC and Egale as I believe it will create meaningful awareness and positive change on this issue," added Kennedy.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, an independent body that oversees the process of providing former students, and anyone who has been affected by the Residential Schools legacy, with an opportunity to share their individual experiences, has brought together thousands of survivors from coast to coast beginning in 2008.

"Aboriginal peoples have a tradition of respect and appreciation for the unique identifies of Two Spirited individuals," said Chief Commissioner, Justice Murray Sinclair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). "As we investigate the legacy of residential schools, the TRC is eager to learn about the specific impacts of the schools on Two Spirited Aboriginal survivors and intergenerational survivors. We also look forward to engaging other members of the LGBTQ community in conversation about reconciliation at this event."

The media are invited to a private welcome reception from 7-9pm on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the Native Canadian Centre located at 16 Spadina Road in Toronto. This historic event will feature compelling words from various community leaders and performances from Two Spirit artists, serving as an opportunity to engage the public and start a meaningful dialogue around the unique experiences of Two Spirit people in the Residential School System. For accreditation, contact Bryn Hendricks at [media@egale.ca](mailto:media@egale.ca).

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