



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RED CROSS AND AMC RELEASE FIRST NATIONS COLOURING BOOK

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba - In partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), the Canadian Red Cross produced the *First Nations Health and Wellness Colouring Book* as part of a continuing conversation with First Nations to support health and wellness.

The colouring book is a collection of art produced by Manitoba First Nations artists invited to create pieces from a First Nation's perspective.

“At the invitation of First Nations, we work together to provide resources that nurture and inspire youth. In partnership with AMC, we are proud to provide the *First Nations Health and Wellness Colouring Book* to people across Manitoba. We envision the colouring book as a resource for creativity, hope and celebration of First Nation artists, youth and culture,” said Shawn Feely, Canadian Red Cross vice president, Manitoba and Nunavut.

In total, 19 First Nation artists contributed to this labour of love. Each image is accompanied by the name and community of the artist along with a brief description.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas stated, “The Assembly is pleased to partner with the Canadian Red Cross to establish this First Nations focused colouring book to provide beautiful First Nation representations. Images and teachings representative of First Nations citizens are incredibly important especially for our younger citizens. The adage of ‘see it to want to be it’ comes to mind as we work to ensure that all First Nation citizens are proud of who we are and what we stand for. Some may think of this as only a colouring book, but I see it as art, a time to relax and reflect while colouring and a beautiful representation of First Nations that we can all be proud of.”

Artist Kale Bonham, a citizen of Swan Lake First Nation, is featured in two pieces: the cover art, *Smudge Magic*, and *Dog Stars*. For Bonham, the appeal of the project was the focus on art specifically created with First Nation youth in Manitoba in mind. She explained that often when people think of Canadian Indigenous art, they think of West Coast Haida artists.

“I thought that this colouring book could show younger people that when you think of Indigenous art – this is what you can do with the stories and the pictures. We can create that memory for them as a young person.”

According to Maxine Schminke, community programs representative with the Canadian Red Cross, “Research shows that colouring contributes to decreased stress and increased mindfulness. These are primary goals for the work Red Cross does in violence risk reduction and psychological first aid. Producing a colouring book that focuses on First Nation perspectives of health and wellness supports the violence risk reduction work of the Canadian Red Cross in a culturally safe way.”

Free digital copies are available on the Canadian Red Cross website at redcross.ca/firstnationscolouringbook.

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For more information, or to request an interview, please contact:

Canadian Red Cross Manitoba

Communications advisor, Michelle Palansky

Email: Michelle.palansky@redcross.ca

Phone: 204-797-5330

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Stacia Franz

Email: sfranz@manitobachiefs.com

Phone: 204-292-1504

About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.

About The Canadian Red Cross

Here in Canada and overseas, the Red Cross stands ready to help people before, during and after a disaster. As a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – which is made up of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and 192 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies – the Canadian Red Cross is dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and throughout the world.