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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reconciliation and anti-racism programs this November at St. Albert Public Library

ST. ALBERT — St. Albert Public Library is offering two new opportunities in November for community members to continue their personal reconciliation journeys and to develop skills to speak up against racism.

From November 7 through December 5, the Library is pleased to partner with Rupertsland Institute to offer a weekly learning circle built around the Institute's Métis Foundational Knowledge Themes Course. In this five-week series, community members are invited to enrol in the Institute's free online course then gather at the Library each week to reflect on that week's learning. The Library learning circles will be facilitated by Métis community members and knowledge holders Krista Leddy and Christina Hardie, and Vernon Hagen, Métis Community Liaison for the Alberta RCMP.

Public Services Manager Stephanie Foremsky says, "At the Library, we see a deep commitment to reconciliation among many community members. I'm thrilled to invite St. Albertans to join me in learning from this course. The involvement from Krista, Christina and Vernon will bring the learning to life."

"I'm looking forward to connecting with folks through conversation as we collectively explore the complexities and beauty of Métis history and identity," Christina Hardie says. "This will be a unique opportunity to not only learn from the Rupertsland Institute course but from each other as well."

Krista Leddy adds, "The opportunity to share and discuss Métis culture and history is an incredible way to reconnect and rebuild relationships between Métis people and the larger community. Understanding perspectives is vital to building empathy and becoming good neighbours. We share this space, our histories are intertwined, and learning about each other is how we can walk together in a good way."

"For me it's about giving back, as I have been a resident of St. Albert since 2013 and have been involved in the St. Albert - Sturgeon County Metis local since 2018," Vernon Hagen says. "Also, Rupertsland was instrumental in starting my policing career which has led to my current role as the Metis Community Liaison for the Alberta RCMP."

The Library is also offering a two-part anti-racism workshop that runs Tuesdays, November 15 and 29. These sessions are offered in partnership with Maria Drucco of The Inclusion Journey. Drucco is a St. Albert-based anti-racism educator, intercultural trainer, and equity, diversity and inclusion strategist.

“Through these workshops, we invite St. Albertans to dig deeper into situations or words that we may not realize are creating unwelcoming and unsafe situations and conversations for marginalized members of the community,” Foremsky says. “Through honest conversations in these workshops, each of us can learn how to move to action and make a difference in our social circles, workplaces and communities.”

“The anti-racism foundational workshop will help members of our community understand and manage racial bias and stereotypes,” says Drucco. “A workshop like this provides people with foundational knowledge on how to act and not act in certain situations.”

Both programs are free and space is limited; details and registration information can be found at sapl.ca.

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