



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Autism Ontario celebrates Ken Robertson upon receiving Canada's Meritorious Service Medal from Governor General**

As there remains so much that has been left undone, misunderstood and unreconciled when it comes to Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples, it is worth honouring those who are advocating for Indigenous rights; the Governor General, her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, on the recommendation of the Civil Advisory Committee, made an important announcement on Wednesday in granting Canada's Meritorious Service Medal\* (Civil Division) to Mr. Kenneth James Skwleqs Robertson.

Known by many as Kenny Robertson, he received the award "for creating Four Directions Autism, and for highlighting gaps in autism spectrum disorder advocacy and the need for culturally relevant services." Four Directions Autism is a parent support group that works one-on-one with off-reserve First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Non-Status children on the autism spectrum.

Kenny Robertson is the Chair of Four Directions Autism, a Board Member (Treasurer) of Autism Ontario and part of the Ontario Autism Program's Implementation Working Group. He is a father of four and is a member of the Neskonlith Indian Band (Secwepemc).

"As Board members we are keenly aware of the countless local, provincial and national events and gatherings where Kenny has been invited to speak and advocate for people on the autism spectrum and their families" says Susan Morris, Board President for Autism Ontario, "and we are thrilled to have supported Kenny's nomination and

remain grateful to him for opening doors with and for us at Autism Ontario as we strive to be part of removing any barriers for all to be fully participating citizens of this land.”

**About Autism Ontario:** Autism Ontario has a 47 year history of representing thousands of people on the autism spectrum and their families across Ontario. We are the only organization in Ontario that has elected volunteer parent representation in all areas of the province through our 25 Chapters. We advocate with and on behalf of all people on the autism spectrum and their families – at all ages and stages of life, reflecting a wide range of expression and abilities. To connect with us, visit [www.autismontario.com](http://www.autismontario.com)

#### **Additional Information**

\* The Meritorious Service Medal (Civil Division) celebrate Canadians who have performed an exceptional deed or activity that brings honour to Canada. They recognize remarkable contributions in many different fields of endeavour, from advocacy initiatives and health care services to research and humanitarian efforts. The contributions can be innovative, set an example for others to follow, or improve the quality of life of a community.

The Meritorious Service Medal is an important part of the Canadian Honours System and highlights remarkable achievements that are accomplished over a limited period of time.

Four Directions Autism: <http://fourdirectionsautism.ca/index.html>

Autism Ontario: <https://www.autismontario.com/who-we-are>

Ontario Autism Program: Implementation Working Group:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-autism-program-implementation-working-group#section-1>

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