



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fredericton couple, Beth and Graydon Nicholas make a major investment to an endowment fund through the creation of an Indigenous student scholarship in New Brunswick

ROTHESAY, NB (November 19, 2021): The New Brunswick Medical Education Foundation Inc. (NBMEFI) is pleased to announce the creation of the Hatchette and Nicholas Medical Education Endowment fund, in memory of Rick Hatchette and Michael Nicholas, to create an annual \$10,000 scholarship for Indigenous students to attend Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick starting in 2022. Through a truly generous \$250,000 commitment by the donors, Graydon and Beth Nicholas, future Indigenous students living in New Brunswick and those with New Brunswick Band Council status residing outside of the province, will have the opportunity to apply for the scholarship to complete their MD program. This endowment fund will ensure that Indigenous students accepted into the Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick program will have the opportunity to apply for this transformative scholarship.

Graydon Nicholas was raised by his Wolastoqey family on the Tobique First Nation and grew up with 9 siblings in a home where an emphasis on educational pursuits was strongly supported by his parents. Beth (Hachette) Nicholas grew up in the North End of Saint John where her father was employed as a cooper at the Port of Saint John and her mother worked at Woolworths. Graydon and Beth met at St. Francis Xavier University in 1967 and both went on to pursue careers in law. Graydon worked as a lawyer, President of the Union of New Brunswick Indians, a Provincial Court Judge, and was appointed as New Brunswick's first Indigenous Lieutenant Governor in 2009, serving until 2014. He is now the Chancellor of St. Thomas University and holds the Endowed Chair in Native Studies. Beth was employed as Regional Manager of Court Services for Fredericton, Woodstock and Burton with the New Brunswick Department of Justice and finished her career as Deputy Registrar of the Court of Queen's Bench and the Court of Appeal of New Brunswick. They are both active within the Roman Catholic Church and have served as Co-Presidents of Christian Life Community Canada, which is based on Ignatian Spirituality. They believe in giving back to society as part of their religious convictions. They are dedicating this endowment fund to Beth's brother, Rick Hatchette, who passed away from cancer in 2016, and to their son, Michael Nicholas, who died from a brain tumour in 2019, and also in memory of other deceased family members, especially their parents, Andrew and Pauline Nicholas and Dick and Rose Hatchette.

“We are blessed to be able to make this contribution to the New Brunswick Medical Education Foundation due to an inheritance from Rick and from Michael,” said Beth. She added: “My younger brother, Rick, also a lawyer, was a strong supporter of higher education and an advocate for Indigenous Rights. He served as Legal Adviser for the St. John River Tribal Council and was an Adjudicator for the Indian Residential Schools Adjudication Secretariat.” Graydon commented: “As a proud member of the Wolastoqiyik, our son, Michael, devoted his life’s work to his chosen field of archaeology and was employed as Senior Archaeologist with the Province of New Brunswick. Mike was passionate about the history of Turtle Island and its Peoples. He was a proponent of life-long learning and living in right relations with all of Creation. The Hatchette and Nicholas families are grateful for the professional and compassionate care that Rick, Mike, and other family members received through the medical system in New Brunswick. Beth and I are hopeful that New Brunswick Indigenous students will be encouraged by this scholarship and inspired by the dedication of Dr. Michael Perley, from Tobique First Nation, to apply to Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick with a goal of returning to their communities to practise medicine. Dr. Michael Perley was the first Indigenous Medical Doctor in New Brunswick. Doctor Mike, as he is affectionately known in the Indigenous community, received the Canadian Medical Association Honorary Membership for Distinction in Medicine Award in 2020.”

“We are truly grateful for the incredible investment the Nicholas’ have made through the Foundation to support future Indigenous doctors to practice in New Brunswick”, said Foundation Co-Chair Jason Downey. In keeping with their commitment to give back to the community and to provide support to Indigenous youth, the Nicholas’ established an endowed bursary fund at St. Thomas University in 2019 to provide financial support for Indigenous students. In 2020, they established a bursary endowment at their alma mater, St. Francis Xavier University, to provide emergency funding for Indigenous students, which was matched by the Jeannine Deveau Educational Equity Foundation.

“The Nicholas’ generosity is a testament to the spirit of giving and the positive impact it will have on a future generation of Indigenous students and for generations to come. We are very indebted to them for the creation of this very important scholarship that will help these students become the next generations of physicians here,” said Darren McLeod, Executive Director of the New Brunswick Medical Education Foundation.

NBMEFI is the only not-for-profit organization in Canada dedicated to providing scholarships for New Brunswick residents to attend medical school and practice in the province through the return to service pledges. Understanding the challenges our healthcare system faces, the Foundation is an important partner in addressing New Brunswick’s need for physicians.

If you would like to learn more about the New Brunswick Medical Education Foundation and how to support its role to attract and keep our best and brightest in New Brunswick, please contact the office at 506-848-0036, email Darren.McLeod@nbmeded.ca, or visit our website at <https://www.nbmeded.ca>. As well, follow us through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to meet some of the 143 recipients of our scholarships.



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