

MEDIA RELEASE

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SASKFILM, NFB, CBC AND SCN JOIN FORCES TO PRESENT *FIRST STORIES: SASKATCHEWAN* A NEW ABORIGINAL FILMMAKER'S PROGRAM

March 13, 2006 (Regina, SK) – Following the tremendous success of *First Stories: Manitoba*, the NFB Prairie Centre, CBC, SCN and SaskFilm are proud to present ***First Stories: Saskatchewan***, a free initiative developed for emerging Aboriginal filmmakers interested in documentary filmmaking. The program announcement was made by Joe MacDonald, Producer, National Film Board – Prairie Centre, David Kyle, Regional Director for CBC Saskatchewan, Richard Gustin, Executive Director, Programming at SCN and Susanne Bell, SaskFilm's Acting CEO and Film Commissioner at the opening ceremonies of Mispon – Saskatchewan's first celebration of indigenous filmmaking yesterday.

"The partners of this initiative are all incredibly pleased to offer First Stories, it's a true community effort from the ground up," said **NFB producer Joe MacDonald** on behalf of the program's sponsors. "This is an opportunity for emerging Aboriginal filmmakers to tell the stories that are important to them personally, and to their communities – whether that's a large urban centre, a small northern community, or somewhere in between.

First Stories: Saskatchewan will select up to 15 emerging Aboriginal filmmakers from across Saskatchewan for a week of intense, hands-on documentary workshops preparing them to direct documentaries and advance their technical skills. During workshops, participants will receive training in research, proposal and narration writing, cinematography, directing, and all aspects of post-production. Mentoring and interaction will be offered from experienced and innovative Aboriginal filmmakers from across Canada.

Participants will be invited to submit a short original proposal for an Aboriginal social issue documentary. Up to four projects will be chosen to be produced into 5 to 6 minute documentaries under the guidance of the NFB, and the filmmakers will receive an honorarium. These films will be presented within the filmmaker's community, and may be broadcast on CBC Television and SCN.

"CBC is proud to partner in First Stories," said **Carl Karp, CBC Area Executive Producer**. "A diversity of perspectives and backgrounds improves the quality of CBC Television."

"SCN strives to be Saskatchewan's preeminent storyteller, building bridges between people," said **Ken Alecxe, president and CEO of SCN**. "This project is a natural fit for us - the short films that will be produced will be a valued addition to our line up of regional programming, SCN is proud to help."



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Applicants must be an Aboriginal (Status, Non-Status, Métis or Inuit) resident of Saskatchewan, 18-years of age or older, and express an interest in Aboriginal social issues. Prior experience in filmmaking is beneficial but not a prerequisite for selection.

Aboriginal filmmakers who are residents of northern communities are encouraged to apply. Flights, accommodations and meals will be provided at no cost for selected participants of the week-long workshops.

Further details can be obtained directly online at www.nfb.ca/firststories or at www.saskfilm.com and by selecting "Programs". **Applications must be received no later than Wednesday, April 26** at 5pm CT at SaskFilm 1831 College Avenue, Regina, SK, S4P 4V5. **First Stories: Saskatchewan** workshops will take place from Monday, May 22 to Friday, May 26, 2006.

Mispon will present key note speakers, screenings, free workshops and panel discussions regarding filmmaking in Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis communities from Sunday, March 12 to Wednesday, March 15. For more information on Mispon, please visit www.filmpool.ca.

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