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PRESS RELEASE

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THE QALIPU MI'KMAQ FIRST NATION LAUNCHES CULTURAL FOUNDATION

February 11th, 2015 – St. George's, NL – The Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation officially announced the launch of the Qalipu Cultural Foundation today during an event hosted at the K'taqmkuk Mi'kmaq Cultural Historic Museum. Through unique programs and services, the Qalipu Cultural Foundation will connect Qalipu members and the public with information and experiences aimed at preserving and promoting Mi'kmaq culture and history.

“Our people have a long and rich history of cultural, social, political and spiritual traditions. However, after centuries of European contact and through the assimilation of European policies and culture, many of our Mi'kmaq traditions have been eroded, if not completely lost,” said Chief Brendan Sheppard, “The launch of the Qalipu Cultural Foundation marks a significant milestone for Qalipu and it demonstrates our investment in our culture and heritage. We believe we must understand where we have come from in order to create a vision for the future.”

The event was attended by Qalipu members and community supporters and included performances and demonstrations of Qalipu Mi'kmaq culture. Sherry Dean, Vice Chair of the Foundation, spoke to the need for the organization and identified some of the services the Foundation will provide. “Many of our new members have grown up in a vacuum of information and knowledge of their heritage. The Qalipu Cultural Foundation is dedicated to reaching out to these individuals and providing programs and services that include culture, history and heritage workshops, elder community engagement sessions, Mi'kmaq language classes and genealogy programs.”

During the launch Qalipu member Dana Squire reinforced the need for Foundation and its services. “The Foundation will be an excellent resource for us to educate ourselves and learn about things that we have lost or have not been exposed to, such as our language, Mi'kmaq craft, traditional hunting and fishing, and spiritual practices.”

Qalipu has incorporated several of its existing programs into the Cultural Foundation's mandate and will continue these services through the newly formed organization. The Foundation encourages members to connect with the Qalipu Cultural Foundation to gain a better understanding of their culture, to learn about their heritage and to volunteer with the organization.

The Qalipu Cultural Foundation is committed to preserving and promoting the culture, language, and traditions of the Mi'kmaq people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Through our services and programs the Foundation is dedicated to the communication and continued development of the Qalipu story.

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