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Press Release

For Immediate Release

## **Qalipu Cultural Foundation receives great support, surpasses fundraising goal**

Saturday evening marked the Qalipu Cultural Foundation's inaugural fundraising gala, the Ke'tipnemk Dinner and Silent Auction. Jennifer's Restaurant was aglow with candlelight and traditional Mi'kmaq colours, adorned with artwork donated for silent auction by aboriginal artists of the province, and bubbling with the chatter and good spirits of the 120 attendees.

Sherry Dean, Vice-Chair of the Qalipu Cultural Foundation was emcee for the evening. She spoke to the importance of the Foundation's mandate, and gave personal reflections on growing up as a 'jackatar' in western Newfoundland, a term that was often used in reference to French-Mi'kmaq in the region.

She said, "I want to give my children, all our children, back the culture that our generation never got to know. When being called *jackatar* was shameful. Today I can proudly say we are Mi'kmaq. The funds raised here tonight will help us share this pride." Dean's comments were met with applause and nods of acknowledgement from the room.

Mitch Blanchard, Resource Coordinator for the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band, works closely with the Foundation announced today that the final fundraising amount totals \$15, 867.00, which surpassed their \$10,000 goal. Blanchard said, "I'm humbled by the support and generosity of the community, the businesses and the families and individuals who donated and attended our event." Proceeds from the gala will be put toward programs including cultural teachings for youth, elder symposiums and outdoor education.

*The Qalipu Cultural Foundation is a non-profit charitable organization that was formed in 2014 to support Mi'kmaq culture in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Foundation exists to ensure cultural documentation, and promote the involvement of youth and elders in cultural activities within the Band. We strive inspire our people to proudly embrace their heritage, to empower them to continue the traditions of our ancestors and restore the spirit of Mi'kmaq culture in Newfoundland and Labrador.*

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