



NWAC

# PRESIDENT'S report



FEBRUARY 2024

[nwac.ca](http://nwac.ca)



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### **Governance Meetings:**

Please note that schedules, agendas, and minutes are available to you on Airtable. You can use this link: <https://bit.ly/3TlfeGR>

### Board of Directors

Board of Directors meeting held February 20, 2024, at 4:00 PM. We welcomed Cheryl Dale from Manitoba and Jennifer Martin from Nova Scotia as our newest Board Members.

An additional thank you is owed to Amy Sock for accepting the role of Treasurer by acclamation.

### Ad Hoc AGA Committee

The 50-year anniversary of NWAC's inception is at the top of our lists as planning continues through Operations and the CEO's office, as well as on the sidelines.

**I have made mention of this milestone at various gatherings this month in my speeches and comments.** These mentions serve to reinforce to our partners the historical impact NWAC has made and continues to make in advancing the rights of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse people.



## Executive Council

Outstanding items related to Provincial/Territorial Membership Associations (PTMAs) and resolution matters were addressed and resolved. We welcomed Cheryl from MMVI as the newest leader for Manitoba's PTMA.

## Finance Committee

The upcoming meeting will be postponed until further notice pending logistical items.

## **Media Engagements:**

On February 1, 2024, I did an interview with CBC Manitoba's Özten Shebahkeget. The reporter wrote a story about the RCMP's national DNA databank in light of the arrest in Crystal Saunderson's 2007 murder.

You can find the story here: [Familial DNA searches come with risks, rewards in solving MMIWG cold cases | CBC News](#)

On February 16, I did an online interview with CBC Producer Aloysius Wong. He is part of the CBC News investigative unit.

Part of his story addresses how gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders have grown in recent years. According to [Correctional Services of Canada offender profile data](#), this gap is particularly pronounced among Indigenous women, who are now almost 50% more likely to remain incarcerated than non-Indigenous women with respect to being granted parole. Mr. Wong was aware that NWAC had previously released a [statement on this issue](#) and that NWAC also filed a [complaint as an interested party to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal](#).



I discussed how over-representation of our women, girls, and Two-Spirit people has increased relentlessly in the decade since Spirit Matters was released. I repeated Dr. Ivan Zinger's message, the Correctional Investigator of Canada, from his 2023 report Ten Years Since Spirit Matters: A Roadmap for Reform of Indigenous Corrections in Canada and called it what it is – a human rights travesty.

I also stressed that the prison system is based on colonial principles and not Indigenous ways. We've been overpoliced through the years. I told him that our women and children continue to feel colonial harms perpetuated under the Indian Act and the child welfare system.

### **Social Media Networking:**

I activated a new account on LinkedIn on February 17. To date, I have over 70 connections and have received requests to connect.

New connection, author and City Councillor for Williams Lake, Michael Moses, included a big "shout-out" to me in an article from February 17, 2024, on Indigenous Matriarchs. He reposted [the article](#) and brought additional awareness to grow my network by "tagging" NWAC and CEO Lynne Groulx. You can read the article by clicking the link above.

Please add me to your own social media networking platforms (X formerly known as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn). This will boost NWAC's profile and enhance our connections within our PTMAs. This is important as we approach the 50th anniversary.



## Meetings and Engagements Attended by President McBride:

- **February 1** – Meeting with senior staff of the Leader of the Opposition, Pierre Poilievre, with CEO and NWAC staff (131 Queen St., Ottawa).
- **February 7-8** – CIRNAC IFTP Roundtable Meetings on Alert System for MMIWG2SQQI+ (Shaw Centre, Ottawa).
- **February 12** – Speaking engagement by invitation from ESQUAO BOD President Josie Nepinak for the “Hear Our Voices, Action Our Solutions” gathering (Westin Hotel, Gatineau).
- **February 26** – Meeting (virtual) with Ambassador Bob Rae in preparation for UNCSW68.



President McBride as a speaker in February 2024 at the IFTP Roundtable for MMIWG2SQQIA+ Alert System discussions. Also pictured is the Honourable Minister of Families, Nahanni Fontaine (at left).

Photo credit: Tiffany Stow



President McBride with MP Leah Gazan at ESQUAO's Hear Our Voices, Action Our Solutions event in February 2024.

Photo credit: Tiffany Stow



## Pending Meetings with Acknowledgement of Requests:

- Meeting with the Honourable Minister Patty Hadju, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, with NWAC delegation at UNCSW68
- Meeting with the Honourable Minister Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
- Meeting with the Honourable Minister Soraya Martinez Ferrada, Minister of Tourism

## Pending Meetings Awaiting Response:

- Request sent to the Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, P.C., M.P., Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

## Official Invitations Correspondence:

- Engagement at Rideau Hall by invitation from Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada – confidential details pending public release
- Request received from the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, for participation in pre-engagement in support of modernization of the Canada Clean Water Act

My Advisor, Lisa Smith, and I will be attending UNCSW with our NWAC delegation from **March 10 to March 14, 2024**. We look forward to relationship-building with all of you who will be attending. We will share updates and photos from the events and sessions in next month's report.



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Native Women's Association of Canada  
L'Association des femmes autochtones du Canada