

Indigenous Matriarchs receive top real estate award for renaming Edmonton's wards



Alberta, Edmonton, Jun 1, 2021 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The women who gifted Indigenous names to Edmonton's municipal wards were recently honoured as city builders by the capital region's commercial real estate industry. The inaugural Percy Woods City Building Award went to the Committee of Indigenous Matriarchs at the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Edmonton 36th Annual Awards Gala held virtually on May 12, 2021.

Iyiniw iskwewak wihtwawin (the Committee of Indigenous Matriarchs) is made up of 17 women from First Nations in Treaty No. 6, 7, 8, as well as Métis and Inuit representatives. Their groundbreaking reconciliation initiative acknowledges that Edmonton has been a gathering place for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years and aims to preserve that history for future generations. The City council adopted the proposed Indigenous names in lieu of the previous numbered ward system in December 2020.

The Percy Woods City Building Award honours an individual or group dedicated to influencing positive change to the cultural, social, environmental, physical and/or economic components of a city. It is named after the recently-retired president and CEO of BOMA Edmonton, Percy Woods, who was a relentless champion of community building for 23 years in that role.

"The awards presentation was very moving and I have no doubt that there would have been a standing ovation for these incredible women and for Percy had we been in person. BOMA Edmonton's annual gala recognizes excellence in the commercial real estate industry and in city building. We are also working hard on Indigenous inclusion in the industry. The BOMA Edmonton Board of Directors

agreed that these Indigenous Matriarchs set the bar high for what this prestigious award means now and in the future. The committee's history-making work stood out for its courage, its dramatic contribution to the city, and its transformative legacy that will be deeply important for generations to come."

-Lisa Baroldi, President and CEO, BOMA Edmonton

"The committee of Indigenous women, iyiniw iskwewak wihtwawin, came together with the intent of doing this work for our future generations. It was done with the utmost respect and love. These women were chosen because of their knowledge, gifts and connections to community and I'm thankful they were each honoured for their contribution that was revolutionary."

*-Terri Suntjens, Circle Keeper, iyiniw iskwewak wihtwawin
Director of Indigenous Initiatives, MacEwan University*

"I am very proud to have been a part of the work with the committee of Indigenous matriarchs who shared their wisdom, experience, and kindness with us. The City of Edmonton strives to work together with Indigenous communities in meaningful ways to continue our journey towards true reconciliation, and I believe this project helped us do that. I am grateful to BOMA for lifting up these women and acknowledging their important roles in our communities."

-Jaimy Miller, Director of Indigenous Relations, City of Edmonton

The following group of matriarchs, circle keepers, and key supports made this initiative possible: Daphne Alexis, Clarice Anderson, Carla Badger, Edna Elias, Lavern Firstrider, Lillian Gadwa, Christina Hardie, Marilyn Lizée, Leona Makokis, Lynda Minoose, Beatrice Morin, Kelsey Reed, Emily Riddle Noella Steinhauer, Jodi Stonehouse, Theresa Strawberry, Roxanne Too-too-sis, and Nicholle Weasel Traveller. Circle Keepers: Robert Houle and Terri Suntjens. The city of Edmonton committee supports Rejoice Apedoe and Jaimy Miller.

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