



HEU recognizes First Nations members on National Aboriginal Day – June 21

June 21 marks the 20th year Canadians have officially come together to celebrate the unique heritage, traditions and contributions First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples bring to our country's diverse culture.

The Hospital Employees' Union has proudly represented First Nations health care workers since the mid-1990s after winning significant legal challenges to do so.

Currently, HEU negotiates seven independent collective agreements, covering about 170 First Nations members working at seven work sites across the province. They include members of the Gitksan, Stz'uminus, Nisga'a, Gitanmaax, Skidegate, Gitanyow and Gitwangak nations.

HEU recognizes the damaging legacy of colonization in our province and in our country. And, as a social justice union, HEU works to support reconciliation and greater understanding of Aboriginal people and their history.

The union's First Nations Standing Committee encourages all HEU locals to show our solidarity and participate in one of B.C.'s National Aboriginal Day activities, particularly any community events that draw attention to missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, safe drinking water on reserves, and environmental concerns over proposed pipeline projects.

First proclaimed by Canada's Governor General in 1996, National Aboriginal Day provides an opportunity to celebrate First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

After consultation with Aboriginal organizations, the federal government chose June 21 for National Aboriginal Day because it is also the summer solstice – the longest day of the year – a day on which many generations of Aboriginal peoples have celebrated their culture and heritage.

June 21, 2016