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University of Lethbridge Alumni Association names Jamie Ahksistowaki Medicine Crane as Alumna of the Year

An activist, advocate, educator and artist, Jamie Ahksistowaki Medicine Crane (BEd '05) has made an indelible impression on the way education is delivered to Indigenous communities, all the while promoting Indigenous rights, women's rights, human rights and justice. The University of Lethbridge Alumni Association is pleased to recognize Medicine Crane as the 2017 Alumna of the Year.



A Blackfoot woman from the Kainai and Piikani Nations, she was raised with traditional ways of knowing and spirituality, which have given her strength and understanding.

Her traditional name, Ahksistowaki, means “brave woman.” Bravery is evident in all she does.

After completing a Travel and Tourism diploma from Lethbridge College, Medicine Crane earned a Bachelor of Business Administration from Athabasca University, a Bachelor of Education from University of Lethbridge and a Master of Education from Gonzaga University. A specialist in Indigenous education, she builds the capacity of educators, develops curriculum and works to improve the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Currently, she is a curriculum consultant for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Division for Alberta Education.

Deeply engaged in her community, Medicine Crane has been involved with the YWCA for over 12 years, serving on the boards of YWCA Canada and YWCA Lethbridge. She represented Canada at the YWCA's World Council in Kenya (2007) and Thailand (2015), where she was elected to the World YWCA Board. She is the first Indigenous woman to hold this role.

A life-long activist, she is involved in advocating for Indigenous rights, women's rights, human rights and justice. Her work and leadership have enhanced several national advocacy initiatives including the Idle No More movement and Sisters in Spirit rallies that raise awareness of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

She spreads her message of healing and harmony as part of the performing arts duo Young Medicine, which has performed throughout the world promoting First Nations traditional and contemporary music, dance, teachings and arts. In 2017, she released a solo flute album entitled "Honouring Life."

Medicine Crane was the first Indigenous woman to compete in Miss Universe Canada in 2003 and was awarded the title of Miss Congeniality. She received the title Miss Blackfoot Canada, and founded Niitsitapi Dreams (Blackfoot, meaning, "the real people"), a holistic modeling school designed to build girls' self-esteem and leadership skills. She is also the creative force behind the clothing line Brave Woman Eco-Designs.

Medicine Crane has been recognized with numerous awards, including the YWCA Canada's Ann Mowatt Outstanding Young Woman Award; YWCA Lethbridge, Young Woman of Distinction; and the Alberta Colleges-Provincial Award for Creating Excellence, among others.

She leads by example and encourages others to live in harmony and respect one another.

Medicine Crane will be presented with the 2017 Alumna of the Year award at the Let There Be Light Night, an alumni celebration, in Fall 2017.

To view online: <http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/alumni-association-names-jamie-ahksistowaki-medicine-crane-alumna-year>

-- 30 --

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