



Regroupement des centres  
d'amitié autochtones du Québec

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

### REGROUPEMENT DES CENTRES D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC HONOURED BY THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT FOR ITS YOUTH MISSION TO MEXICO TO PROMOTE THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

Quebec City, May 26, 2010 – In the second annual awards ceremony of *Les Offices jeunesse internationales du Québec* (LOJIQ) Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) received the Entrepreneurship Awareness Prize for its youth mission to visit social economy initiatives of Indigenous people in Chiapas. The award was given yesterday at the National Assembly by Bernard Voyer in the presence of Pierre Arcand, Minister for International Relations and Francophonie.

A partnership between the RCAAQ and the Office Québec-Amériques (OQAJ) allowed six (6) Aboriginal youths to visit Mexico in August 2009 on a mission to learn more about the added value made possible by the social economy and about the strengths of collective Aboriginal entrepreneurship. "*This experience in solidarity fully demonstrated the positive impacts of collective enterprises in different Indigenous communities at the economic, social and cultural levels,*" said Jorge Herrera, who headed the mission. Mr. Herrera also serves as the youth representative to the RCAAQ Board of Directors.

*"The social economy is providing the Native Friendship Centre Movement with effective means for combating poverty and social exclusion in many ways, including the creation of collective wealth for Aboriginal citizens,"* added RCAAQ President Édith Cloutier.

The RCAAQ promotes the rights and interests of urban Aboriginal citizens and supports the Quebec Native Friendship Centres in their work to accomplish their missions.

The mission of the Native Friendship Centres is to improve the quality of life of Aboriginal people, foster mutual understanding between peoples and promote Aboriginal culture. The Native Friendship Centres in Quebec are located in Chibougamau, Val-d'Or, La Tuque, Senneterre, Montreal, Quebec City, Joliette, Sept-Îles, Trois-Rivières and Saguenay.