

Citation

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Charles Paul

Most Reverend Chancellor

We are gathered here today to recognize excellence. Charley Paul - to all who know him - elected to achieve excellence in the social, cultural and political arenas of the native people of Canada. These arenas within native society are of a complexity that boggles the mind and dulls the spirit of less dedicated men. He brought to these arenas, intelligence, compassion, a sense of humor and a deep love of his people and culture. Charlie Paul has always been a participant and collaborator with other people. He has the personality and ability to function effectively in intercultural communication, especially between the two first peoples - the Micmac and Maliseet, and also that rare ability to function effectively in the intercultural area between native and non-native society. History will remember Charley Paul as a pioneer in the rapidly changing relationships between native and non-native society.

Let me tell you something about this person. Charley Paul is a Maliseet indian from the Tobique indian reserve. At 18 he left the Tobique to join the Canadian army and fight in the Second World War. On returning to the Tobique, he immediately entered band politics and he was elected a band councillor five consecutive times and then was elected chief of the reserve. As chief he spearheaded programs to improve housing, health and community

services. He also wrote briefs and petitioned government on behalf of his people to attain basic rights like the right to vote and other rights denied native people. Many rights he petitioned the crown for are rights that he himself had as a veteran. During these years, - like his father (before him), - he worked as a guide to salmon fishermen.

With the formation of the Union of New Brunswick Indians he redoubled his efforts on behalf of his people. Since its inception he has held various positions including the vice-presidency for eleven years. He has helped, encouraged and supported numerous people, both native and non-native, status and non-status, and Micmac and Maliseet. He is one of those rare individuals who has the respect and confidence of different cultural groups, they confide in him and look to him for solutions to their problems. He has used his ability as a communicator and spokesperson to promote intercultural understanding not only between the Micmac and Maliseet nations but also between other cultures and people. He has served in executive capacities in both native and non-native veteran organizations, he is a past president of the Multicultural Association of Fredericton and an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist at St. Theresa's Parish Church.

His accomplishments embrace all areas but of particular significance is his contribution to the promotion of education for native students. Throughout his life he has fought for native youth in their drive to attain a good education. He was the first native appointed to a school board in New Brunswick. He has

supported both the native studies programme here at St. Thomas and the Micmac Maliseet teacher training programme at UNB.

His commitment to education is reflected in his family. One is a student, another a lawyer, another is on the executive of the Metis non-status organization, and another is editor of the native periodical Agenutemagen and one of his sons is graduating today with a certificate of Social Work.

It is apparent that Charley Paul contributes in many ways either directly or indirectly to both native and non-native society. It is appropriate - on the 200th anniversary of this province, and on the occasion when native students will receive degrees in arts, education and certificates in social work that the University honor this pioneer from the first people of the province - Charley Paul.

Most Reverend Chancellor, in recognition of his contribution to his people and to society in general I ask you to confer upon Charles Paul, the degree of doctor of laws, honoris causa.