



## Media Release

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### **Jack Walsh BA'75, Tom Isaac BA'87 and Michelle Arévalo BA'04 to Receive Carolyn Layden-Stevenson Distinguished Alumni Awards at Gala Dinner on October 14**

Three St. Thomas University alumni whose accomplishments are national and international in scope are being recognized with the Carolyn Layden-Stevenson Distinguished Alumni Award.

Prominent lawyer and jurist Jack Walsh, nationally recognized Aboriginal law expert Tom Isaac and international human rights activist Michelle Arévalo will be honoured with the Carolyn Layden-Stevenson Distinguished Alumni Award at the university's Gala Dinner on October 14.

"These alumni are well established in their fields and each have earned professional and personal acclaim in Canada and around the world. By living values of integrity, fairness and service, they are very strong role models for our students. We are pleased to honour them as alumni of STU, where they got their start," said St. Thomas University president and vice-chancellor Dawn Russell.

The Carolyn Layden-Stevenson Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes the outstanding accomplishments of alumni who have earned prominence as a result of their professional achievements and/or service to society. The award is in memory of alumna Carolyn Layden-Stevenson, a much admired and accomplished educator, lawyer and judge.

The Gala Dinner is part of the university's Alumni Weekend and is being held Saturday, October 14 at the Fredericton Convention Centre. For tickets, please call (506) 452-0645 or e-mail [adejong@stu.ca](mailto:adejong@stu.ca).

**Mr. Justice John J. (Jack) Walsh, BA'75**, earned a bachelor of arts from St. Thomas University and a bachelor of laws from the University of New Brunswick. He was in private practice for a decade before becoming a Crown Prosecutor in New Brunswick. He is nationally known for being one of the first lawyers in Canada to introduce DNA evidence against an accused in the trial of serial killer Allan Legere and is considered one of Canada's leading legal experts on DNA evidence. He was seconded to the Government of Canada's Department of Justice in Ottawa to assist with the development of federal DNA legislation and to provide case consultation to police and prosecutors. He was later appointed Queen's Counsel and was named Regional Crown Counsel for the Miramichi Region. He practiced at both the trial and appellate levels throughout his career, including before the Supreme Court of Canada. He was appointed a Judge of the Provincial Court of N.B. in 2008 and a Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench of N.B. in 2009.

Walsh is the author of book chapters and articles in legal and scientific publications, and has presented papers nationally and internationally in the areas of criminal law, the criminal justice system and forensic DNA evidence. He was a faculty member of the Canadian Federation of Law Societies National Criminal Law Program and presented for many years at National Judicial Institute Programs. He was awarded the Canadian Bar Association's John Tait Award of Excellence in Public Sector Law, the N.B. Crown Prosecutor's Association's Robert Murray Q.C. Award and the Canadian Bar Association's (N.B. Branch) Distinguished Service Award.

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**Tom Isaac, BA'87**, is a nationally recognized authority on Aboriginal law and has advised across Canada on Aboriginal legal matters and related environmental, regulatory and constitutional issues. He regularly negotiates with Aboriginal groups on behalf of industry and governments on impact, benefit and access agreements. He also advises on consultation and accommodation processes and has mediated complex multi-jurisdictional disputes. He is presently serving as the Special Representative for the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs to conduct exploratory discussions on the class action lawsuit against the Government of Canada relating to residential school day students. He has appeared before every level of court in Canada and his published works on Aboriginal law have been cited with approval by Canadian courts, including the Supreme Court of Canada. He is a former chief treaty negotiator for British Columbia and assistant deputy minister responsible for establishing Nunavut.

Born in Saint John, Isaac received his bachelor of arts from St. Thomas University and went on to earn a master's of arts from Dalhousie, a bachelor of laws degree from the University of New Brunswick and a master's in law from the University of Saskatchewan. He is the author of 14 books and monographs, including *Aboriginal Law*, now in its fifth edition, and his books have been used in law schools and universities in Canada and the United States. Isaac has written two reports — *A Matter of National and Constitutional Import: Métis Section 35 Rights and the Manitoba Metis Federation Decision* and *A Path to Reconciliation* — which were lauded for their approaches to reconciliation. He has also taught Aboriginal, constitutional and business law at several Canadian universities.

**Michelle Arévalo, BA'04**, a social entrepreneur and human rights activist, earned a bachelor of arts from St. Thomas University and later completed a master's in international human rights law from Oxford and a master's in public policy from the University of California at Berkeley. After working as a refugee adjudicator, she founded the Ecuadorian offices of Asylum Access, a non-profit legal aid clinic focused on ensuring the rights of refugees from neighbouring Colombia. She later became the first global director of Asylum Access and managed its three international offices from Geneva as it provided services to refugees in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

As a consultant, she has focused on increasing the impact of grassroots organizations, including an association of families of disappeared children in El Salvador and communities at risk of development-induced displacement in Thailand, Cambodia and India. She was manager for TECHO Ecuador, Latin America's largest housing-focused NGO, and Latin America-lead for HURIDOCS, a human rights and technology non-governmental organization. Arévalo was selected by the World Economic Forum as a Global Shaper, an initiative designed to bring young global change agents together with world leaders. She was later invited to join a WEF Global Agenda Council, a group of academics, politicians, non-governmental organization leaders and business executives exploring the world's most pressing issues. She is a regular contributor to the *Huffington Post* and has spoken on human rights, entrepreneurship and the role of the private sector in creating a better world. She is currently the CEO of IMPAQTO, a co-working space and business incubator with a mission to create a vibrant impact entrepreneurship ecosystem in Ecuador.

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