

Certificate of Merit Citation for E.J. Fontaine

Elmer Joseph Fontaine is a member of the Sagkeeng First Nation and graduated from the Diploma in Agriculture program in 1987. Upon graduation he worked for the Manitoba Indian Agriculture Program as a Farm Advisor and later as a Loans Analyst. This unique experience provided him with an opportunity to share his knowledge gained in the Diploma in Agriculture program with many First Nations agricultural producers throughout Manitoba.

Throughout his professional career he has served the First Nation people in various capacities including Economic Development Officer with the Keewatin Tribal Council in Northern Manitoba, Economic Development Advisor to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Regional Coordinator with the Manitoba First Nations Regional Area Management Board.

In 2003, he pursued his entrepreneurial ambitions and created Anishinabek Consultants Inc. that has since developed into a reputable company offering a wide range of consulting services to governments, non-profit organizations, Aboriginal organizations and the private sector on Aboriginal issues. In 2008 he and Eva Wilson-Fontaine, his business partner and wife, created Anish Corporation to deliver emotional support services to former students of Indian Residential Schools seeking compensation through the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement for abuses suffered while attending residential schools. Anish Corporation also coordinated and managed the delivery of Early Childhood Education training to staff of 39 Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve projects in Manitoba. He is especially proud of the AMIK.ca website which has gained a reputation as Canada's premiere Aboriginal jobs referral website. AMIK.ca offers a practical solution for tapping into the Aboriginal labour force and is now a leader in the Aboriginal job advertising market in Canada with over 350 employers using the services to recruit quality Aboriginal employees.

E. J. has become a recognized leader in the Aboriginal community and the community at large through his professional experience, community involvement and business ventures. Companies, governments and communities seek out AMIK.ca's services and advice for tapping into the Aboriginal labour force and bridging the gap between employers and Aboriginal groups.

He currently serves as a voluntary Chairperson of the Sagkeeng Education Board, a governing body overseeing three community schools with over 800 students, 115 staff, and a post-secondary education program with close to 200 students. Other volunteer duties include serving as Committee member for the Keeping the Fires Burning annual Gala Dinner hosted by Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. that recognizes and celebrates the important contributions that First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Elder women have made in the protection, preservation and promotion of First Peoples' cultures.

E. J. and his wife Eva were the recipients of the 2011 Excellence in Aboriginal Business Leadership Award presented by the University of Manitoba Asper School of Business.

"This Certificate of Merit is presented to Elmer Joseph Fontaine by the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba, in recognition of leadership with agricultural organizations and outstanding service to the community at large."

April 27, 2012
Winnipeg, Manitoba