



## EDMONTON, AB, July 14, 2021 – Gil Cardinal Legacy Award Announcement

Gil Cardinal was a beloved Edmonton Indigenous filmmaker. Every year, an emerging Alberta Indigenous filmmaker is chosen to receive an award. A jury selected the winner in January 2021. The grant is valued at \$1,500 plus in-kind services from the National Film Board of Canada Northwest Studio and is to help the recipient to create their first professional quality film, short film, documentary, web, mobile, VR experience or television project. Jury members have also agreed to provide mentorship in addition to the other in-kind services.

Damian Abrahams, the winner of this year's award, is a single dad originally from Haida Gwaii, BC. Damian has lived in Edmonton for the past 20 years where he picked up filmmaking as his team was forced to work remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He has worked on educational videos with his team ever since, having found a calling in this work.

In July of 2020, Damian established his own video and photography production company: Indigital Media. This work has inspired his daughter, who has now decided she wants to be a photographer so she and her father can go on as many photography walks as they can to hone her skills. Of the many aspects of filmmaking, Damian enjoys directing and editing the most.

The project that was submitted to the jury for review, *Indigenous Dads*, will be a full-length documentary that highlights the struggles and successes of Indigenous fathers. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was recently quoted stating "Indigenous peoples and communities continue to face unique challenges... We will continue to listen to them, and ensure that students, children, parents, and communities have the support they need...". This statement is echoed by the ESIO and its stakeholders.

Damian's work has a focus on highlighting not only the struggles of intergenerational violence but also shows the successes of Indigenous fathers which is a topic that is rarely explored in film. The jury was thrilled to see such a worthy project be submitted for consideration and was glad to help enable Damian on his journey to create this project.

The ESIO will update with news about Damian's project as it unfolds and share our excitement with the jury about bringing this project to life.

Congratulations to Damian for the reception of this award.

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