

As a sessional instructor at the Faculty of Education for over 10 years, Darlene Nuqingaq has been a pillar of the Certificate of Educational Leadership in Nunavut since its inception. During this time, she has been a constant advocate for students within this important program, reaching out to support students well beyond what would be expected of a sessional instructor. As one nominator put it, “Darlene, in both actions and words, is a strong student advocate, and puts the needs of students first”.

This is perhaps not surprising, as Darlene’s teaching philosophy is grounded in the Inuit Societal Values of

Inuuqatigiitsiarniq – the concept of respecting others

Pilimmaksarniq – the concept of skills and knowledge acquisition

Pijitsirarniq – the concept of serving others

As a long-time northerner and an ally to Inuit culture and language, Darlene has come to deeply understand the meaning of culturally relevant leadership, and has played a crucial role in the redevelopment of educational and governmental leadership that mirrors Inuit culture. As one former student put it: “Her passion is for aspiring Principal/Vice Principals to better meet the needs of the Nunavut community so that leadership resembles The Inuit Way.”

Over the years, Darlene has also done the challenging work of shifting thinking of hundreds of new-to-the-north educators in Nunavut. Darlene has played a critical role in cultural education and social justice in Nunavut because of her dedication to teaching, knowledge, and the ability to connect courses to community

members and Elders. Her teaching within the CELN program has been transformative and has gone well beyond the goals of learning about Inuit Qaumatuqangit which are the fundamental curricula, teaching and learning in Nunavut.

After 10 years of supporting leadership development in the north, the CELN program, which is a partnership between the UPEI Faculty of Education and the Government of Nunavut, will come to an end this year. This is not because of a breakdown; it is indeed because the CELN program has been successful in achieving its goals by nurturing and supporting the development of Inuit educational leaders, who can now, in turn, continue on their own path of developing the educational leaders of tomorrow. Darlene Nuqingaq has been a constant, positive force within this program, and it is only right that she receive this recognition this year.

Please join me in congratulating Darlene Nuqingaq as a recipient of the Hessian Merit Award for sessional instructors.

*A special thank you goes out to Jenine Bodner at the UPEI Faculty of Education for helping me learn the pronunciations of the words in Inuktitut.*