



*Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k*

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Montreal Alouettes touch down in Kahnawà:ke

### For Immediate Release

**(Kahnawake – 26, Seskehkó:wa/September 2023)** The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) is pleased to announce an exciting collaboration with the Canadian Football League's (CFL) Montréal Alouettes ("the Alouettes") that will see the opportunity for both professional athletes and Kahnawà:kehró:non to meet and interact, through football. The initiative aims to showcase reconciliatory efforts that the national sports franchise is undertaking with indigenous communities across Canada.

The CFL and its nine-member organizations are launching activities across the country to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. For the Montréal Alouettes, there was an intention to further develop efforts focused on engaging and building a relationship with its closest Indigenous neighbor, Kahnawà:ke.

"The Alouettes organization reached out to the MCK, as they wanted to do more on-the-ground relationship building by meeting with our young people in a fun and competitive environment," said Ietsenhahienhs Jessica Lazare, who holds the Heritage Portfolio. "They are proving that reconciliation is about action, with the added incentive that they inspire hope for our youth to dream big in terms of athletics – namely, the sport of football."

"The Alouettes are extremely proud to participate in the Canadian Football League initiative during the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation in Canada and show their commitment to fighting all forms of discrimination against Indigenous Peoples," said Mark Weightman, President and Chief Executive Officer – Montreal Alouettes. "It's time to help raise awareness among Canadians about the treatment of Aboriginal populations in the past and today. Football is a unifying sport, and our players look forward to meeting the young people of Kahnawà:ke on this occasion."

On Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Kahnawà:ke Sports Complex field, the Alouettes will meet and participate in an evening football tournament with youth. Across the country, CFL teams will wear orange and white warm-up jerseys for games scheduled on September 30<sup>th</sup>, aimed at building awareness of the tragedies of the residential school system and showing support for survivors and their families.

The jerseys worn by the Alouettes will be sold in a silent auction, with half of the proceeds donated towards helping offset costs for Kahnawà:ke youth who want to pursue the sport of football and the other half to a group of local volunteers who coordinate Orange Shirt Day activities for the community.

Lastly, those who attend the meet and greet and participate in the football tournament will be invited to an Alouettes home game on Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, where they will be part of the entourage that will receive proceeds from the silent auction fundraiser.

To register for the Meet and Greet, please contact the Sports and Recreation Unit at **(450) 638-3311**.

- 30 -