

Muriel Stanley Venne.

By Amanda Rozyk.

In 1973, Muriel was appointed as one of the first seven commissioners to the Alberta Human Rights Commission. Since that time, she has worked extensively to advance the fair and equal treatment of Aboriginal people within all levels of society. Muriel is a champion of human rights in the Province of Alberta. In honour of her commitment and work in this area, she was presented with the Alberta Human Rights Award on the 25th anniversary of the Alberta Human Rights Commission.

Muriel has also worked extensively on behalf of women. While president of the Alberta Human Rights Commission, she hosted the *Aboriginal Women's Human Rights Symposium* and the *Gathering Our Strength –Violence Against Aboriginal Women Conference* in Edmonton. Her booklet, *The Rights Path –Alberta*, has been endorsed by the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 1996, she spearheaded the production of a publication on Aboriginal human rights and a booklet aimed at Aboriginal youth. She recently established the Social Justice Award to honour individuals who have done outstanding work for Aboriginal women. Muriel Stanley-Venne has held a number of positions including Executive Director of Native Outreach, Community Relations Officer at Bechtel Canada, and Marketing Officer at the National Film Board of Canada. She is the President and founder of the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women.

For her exceptional record of excellence as a human rights advocate, Stanley Venne has received numerous awards, including the Bowden Native Brotherhood Award, the Canadian Merit Award and, the 1998 Alberta Human Rights Award. She has been the recipient of the Appreciation Award from the Native Counselling Services of Alberta, the Metis Woman of the Year Award from the Women of the Metis Nation, the 2002 Queen's Jubilee Commemoration Medal, the Aboriginal Role Model Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2004, the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Justice and Human Rights.

In 2005 Stanley Venne received the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. In June of the same year she was named a Member of the Order of Canada. In February 2007 she was recognized as a Woman of Vision by Global Television. In November 2007 Canadian Ambassador McNee recognized her work at the United Nations citing her as a "Human Rights Defender" of the human rights issues pertaining to Aboriginal women, children and families. On September 2008 she was elected Vice President of the Métis Nation of Alberta.



Compiled by Lawrence Barkwell
Coordinator of Metis Heritage & History Research
Louis Riel Institute