





















# NCN Citizens Legacy Honoured at University

Edith Linklater received her University of Manitoba degree posthumously just weeks after she passed away.

Edith was known throughout Nelson House as "Mama Eeeks" and "Auntie Eeeks." She worked as a speech and language paraprofessional at OK School for 18 years, and for the NNCEA for more than two decades.

After encouragement from family and colleagues, she enrolled in classes for a Post-Baccalaureate Degree in

Education, specializing in special inclusive education.

Through her studies, Edith was in treatment for cancer but refused to allow it to affect her education.

"She used to sit in class in extreme pain and not take her pain medication until class was over because she wanted to be alert during the lecture. We would beg her not to do this but she wouldn't listen. No one ever told Edith Linklater what to do," her niece Angela Levasseur told UM Today, the University of Manitoba's online news site.

This wasn't her first time as a university student. Edith completed a native studies degree in 2007 and a speech and language assistant certificate the following year.

"She was a hero in my eyes," U of M instructor Don Shackel told UM Today. He also worked with MFNERC, and had encouraged her to go after a degree. "It was almost surreal to see her ability to engage with kids that no one else could reach. She showed them unconditional love and taught me so much about caring for others. She had a way of working with kids with special needs that was truly amazing."

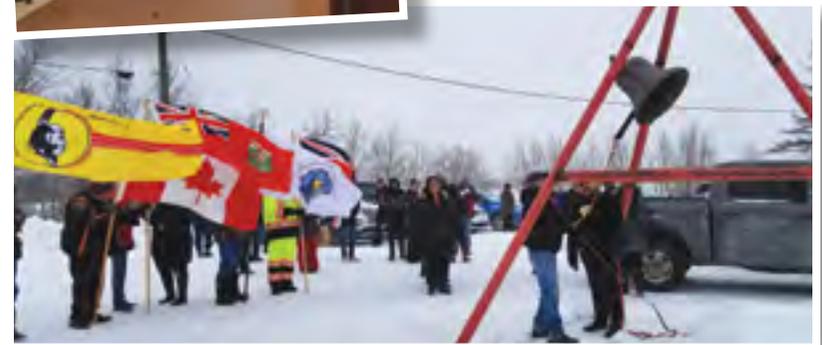
When it became clear that Edith's health was declining, family and friends



held a small graduation ceremony in her hospital room. She received her cap and mortarboard, and passed away shortly after on September 8th.

A few weeks later, at the ceremony on October 17th, her sisters Florence and Anna-May Linklater accepted her parchment. There was an empty chair among hundreds of graduates to represent Edith, and the university lowered its flag in her honour that day.

"It was an incredible honour for an NCN Citizen who embraced education her entire life," says Councillor Ron Spence. "She had a gift for learning, teaching and loving children. We were so blessed to have Edith in Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation."



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