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**Award for former top native leader**



**Phil Fontaine received the first-ever Equitas Award for Human Rights Education.**

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Former Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Phil Fontaine was in Montreal on Thursday to receive a special award.

He was awarded the first-ever Equitas Award for Human Rights Education.

In accepting the award, Fontaine said it gives fair recognition to the indigenous people of Canada who have been in a struggle to right the wrongs against them.

But he also said it's not only an aboriginal fight.

"In order to right those wrongs, were going to have to walk together, we're going to have to stand as one community, and we're going to have dedicate ourselves to being better," he said.

Fontaine says first nations poverty is a black mark on the entire country.

He recently retired after an unprecedented third term as national chief of the national native umbrella group.

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