

Chelsea Lavallée

Chelsea Lavallée, the daughter of Wilf and Sheila Lavallée, was born and raised at St. Ambroise Manitoba. She received a National Aboriginal Achievement Award (Special Youth) in 2009. The Foundation's write-up stated:

A grade 12 student from St. Ambroise Manitoba, avid volunteer and master of the Red River Jig, Chelsea Lavallée is a young and accomplished promoter of all things Métis. Member of the St. Ambroise Youth Steppers Square Dance Team, she uses dance as a means of cultural promotion across the province of Manitoba, helping her to win Métis Miss Teen Manitoba in 2005. Asked to share her life story in 2006 at the 38th Annual MMF General Assembly, Lavallée's Métis upbringing has helped her earn a 2006 National Métis Youth Role Model Award, 2006/2007 National Aboriginal Role Model Award and a 2007 Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award



David Chartrand, president of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) noted in his support for Chelsea's nomination, "Chelsea is an exceptional role model, not only for Metis and Aboriginal youth, but to the whole Metis Nation. She has a passion and drive that is hard to find, and through her personal efforts she has been successful in sharing our Metis culture with her peers and with numerous people of all ages throughout the province of Manitoba. At the age of 15, she unselfishly volunteered more than 100 hours of her time to numerous causes such as the Christmas Cheer Board. The Southwest Region MMF Youth Network, and her school's Teens Against Drinking and Driving organization, while managing to consistently making the honour role at school in the neighbouring community of St. Laurent. Also, in 2005 she gained the title of Miss Teen Manitoba Metis.

Chelsea received the 2006 National Metis Youth Model Award in the "Metis Leaders" category, and was also honoured by the National Aboriginal Health Organization as a recipient of the 2006-2007 National Aboriginal Role Model Award. In 2006, Chelsea was one of four Manitoba Metis youth selected by MMF president Chartrand to present her life story to the 100-plus youth delegates in attendance at the 38th MMF Annual General Assembly.

In 2007, she received the "Manitoba Aboriginal Youth Achievement Award" in the "Cultural Female" category, the first Metis selected in that category for an award that had traditionally gone to First Nations youth in the 15-year history of the award. The foundation for Chelsea's dedication to the performance and preservation of Metis culture has been through her involvement and performances with the St. Ambroise Youth Steppers Dance Team, and her numerous solo performances. Youth Steppers is a Metis Dance program

facilitated by the St. Ambroise Community Centre and funded by the Southwest Region Manitoba Metis Federation. It has been performing for three years. Chelsea and the group have promoted Metis culture by performing at dozens of events across Manitoba, in competitions and on television. She also assisted two older dancers in teaching the Red River Jig and Heel Toe Polka to a group of four to seven-year-olds. Chelsea caps her impressive resume with a consistent academic achievement averaging in the high eighties.”

Lavallee, eighteen, was awarded the Congress of Aboriginal People's Annual Youth Achievement Award in the category of culture and heritage for 2009. The Lavallée family of St. Ambroise have another reason to be proud of sisters Channing, Chelsea and Christie, as they received the *Spirit Of The Earth* award from Manitoba Hydro during National Aboriginal Day June 21, 2009 at the Red River Exhibition park in Winnipeg. Chelsea and the St. Ambroise Youth Steppers Square Dance Team attended and performed at the Juno Beach (France) ceremony to honour Metis World War II Veterans with the opening of a Metis Memorial display.

Chelsea Lavallée, Evan Ducharme, Christie Lavallée, Justin Ducharme, Paige Ricard, Sheldon Ducharme, Katlyn Ducharme and Branden Lavallée perform at the Juno Beach Centre in Juno Beach, France on Nov. 11, 2009.



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