Winner of 2017 Forest of Reading® Golden Oak Award™ announced
Book of a missing Indigenous mother and her daughter named winner
during National Aboriginal History Month

NEWS RELEASE

TORONTO, ON (June 1, 2017) – After weeks of voting, Ontarians have decided: Missing Nimâmâ by Melanie Florence, illustrated by François Thisdale, has won the 2017 Forest of Reading Golden Oak Award.

A young mother, one of the many missing Indigenous women, watches over her small daughter as she grows up without her nimâmâ. Together, but separated, they experience important milestones: the first day of school, first dance, first date, a wedding, and new life. A free-verse story of love, loss, and acceptance told in alternating voices, Missing Nimâmâ shows the human side of a national tragedy.

“The book is a beautiful book. Many of us who have lost our moms for many reasons can relate to this feeling,” chair of the Golden Oak Award program, Gail Kavelman said. “It is a beautiful tribute to Indigenous women.”

June is also National Aboriginal History Month in Canada, a time to acknowledge the role Indigenous peoples played in the development of Canada, to honour Indigenous heritage and to celebrate Indigenous cultures.

The Golden Oak Award reading program provides a unique opportunity for new readers in adult literacy programs to read books chosen specifically for them. They can read the books by themselves, with their tutors, or as part of a reading group. Golden Oak helps new adult readers to gain the skills to accomplish everyday tasks, as well as foster the love of reading.

A committee of library professionals chooses titles nominated for the Golden Oak Award and the nominated list is announced every October. Readers in the program chose the winning book, based on their votes. This year’s award winner was announced at The Learners’ Conference in Toronto on June 1, 2017.

Through book clubs and other forums, 80 Ontario libraries and literacy centres participated in this year's Golden Oak program. It is one of eight programs that form the Ontario Library Association’s (OLA) Forest of Reading, Canada’s largest recreational reading program of its kind.

The full list of nominees for this year’s Golden Oak Award can be viewed on the OLA website. Check out the Forest of Reading Facebook and Twitter pages.

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About the Forest of Reading®: The Forest of Reading® is the largest recreational reading program of its kind in Canada, with more than 250,000 participants each year. The OLA’s Forest of Reading
offers eight reading programs to encourage a love of reading in people of all ages. Committees of library practitioners select the nominated titles and readers vote for the winners.

**About the Ontario Library Association:** The [Ontario Library Association](#) (OLA) is a centre of excellence for the library and information sector, with 5,000 members who work in public, school, academic and special libraries. OLA enables members to advocate for the right of individuals to have free and equitable access to information. Our members research, develop and participate in educational programs designed to provide exemplary library services. Signature OLA events include the annual Super Conference and the Forest of Reading® program.

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