



Press Release

I am Inuit: Meet the people of the Arctic

November 9, 2015-- For the people who reside there, Alaska's Arctic isn't a curiosity, a wasteland or an untouched wilderness — it is home.

It is this human dimension of the Arctic that is the focus of "I Am Inuit," a project launched in July 2015 by the Inuit Circumpolar Council-Alaska (ICC-Alaska).

"Through I Am Inuit, we would like to connect the general public with the Arctic through our shared humanity," said ICC-Alaska President Jim Stotts. "Human stories — the stories of real people — are the most meaningful way we can begin to understand one another."

Beginning this summer, award-winning Inupiaq photographer Brian Adams has been traveling to Arctic communities on behalf of ICC-AK to meet and photograph the Inuit people of the Arctic. Adams' environmental portraiture has been showcased in galleries throughout the United States and in his 2013 book of photography, *I Am Alaskan*.

In each community he visits, Adams is collecting the portraits and stories of the indigenous people of Alaska's Arctic. The photos and stories will be shared on I Am Inuit's social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr) and on a website dedicated to the project, www.iaminuit.org. Publication of a book is also planned.

"Most often, when people think of the Arctic and Alaska, they think of polar bears and natural resources," Stotts said. "They don't realize that Inuit have thrived in the Arctic for thousands of years. I Am Inuit celebrates our culture and society, and we hope it will help our fellow Americans better understand the Arctic."

I Am Inuit have already visited Teller and Quinhagak, and travel will continue through the winter, with visits planned to Point Hope, Wainwright, Anaktuvuk Pass, Kaktovik, Buckland, Noorvik, Noatak, Shungnak, Shishmaref, Teller, Shaktoolik, White Mountain, Hooper Bay, Alakanuk, and Tuluksak. It is hoped that eventually the project may be expanded to other Arctic countries.

ICC-Alaska is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that works on behalf of the Inupiat of the North Slope, Northwest and Bering Straits; the St. Lawrence Island Yupik; the Central Yup'ik and Cup'ik of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region in Southwest Alaska. ICC-Alaska exists to be the unified voice and collective spirit of Alaskan Inuit, to promote, protect, and advance Inuit culture and society. ICC-Alaska is a national member of ICC International, an international non-governmental organization. ICC strives to strengthen unity among Inuit of the circumpolar north; promote Inuit rights and interests on an international level; develop and encourage long-term policies that safeguard the Arctic environment; and seek full and active partnership in the political, economic, and social development of the circumpolar North.

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