

News Release

Kivalliq Inuit Association Announces Guardians Program

November 14, 2025 – Rankin Inlet, Nunavut

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Arviat

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Baker Lake

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Chesterfield
Inlet

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Coral
Harbour

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Naujaat

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Rankin Inlet

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Whale Cove

The Kivalliq Inuit Association (KIA) is pleased to announce the launch of the *Guardians Program*, a strategic initiative designed to empower Inuit communities across the Kivalliq region to protect the environment and wildlife. This program reflects KIA's unwavering commitment to supporting Inuit stewardship, cultural preservation and community well-being.

"As the designated Inuit Organization for the Kivalliq region, KIA has a mandate to monitor and protect the environment. It is our responsibility to manage Inuit-Owned Lands in the region, as well as protect arctic wildlife and the environment" said Kono Tattuinee, President of KIA. *"We believe the Guardians Program will not only enable Inuit to protect and conserve the environment, but will also provide needed job opportunities in our communities. The Guardians Program Strategic Plan includes a detailed hiring plan to achieve the target number of hires in each community over the next six (6) years".*

KIA envisions a Guardians Program operating year-round in each of the Kivalliq region communities. The program will create meaningful opportunities for Inuit to lead activities that strengthen food sovereignty, support environmental research and monitoring, participate in search & rescue efforts, preserve and share traditional knowledge and engage with their communities in meaningful ways. Through these efforts, the Guardians will uphold the values and traditions of Inuit while fostering resilience and sustainability across the region.

For more information about the Guardians Program and KIA's commitment to supporting Inuit Stewardship, Cultural Preservation and Community Well-Being, please go to www.kivalliqinuit.ca

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Background

The development of the Guardians Program has been made possible through significant national funding and the support of various stakeholders. In 2022, Parks Canada secured up to \$1.6 million through the National Indigenous Guardian Program to explore the potential for a Guardian program associated with Ukkusiksaliq National Park. Additionally, KIA is negotiating a renewed Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement for Ukkusiksaliq National Park and a new one for the proposed Southampton Island Marine Conservation Area, which will provide long-term, sustainable funding for the program.

Community engagement has been a critical component of the program's development. In the winter of 2023, KIA, Parks Canada, and MakeWay held a series of community engagement sessions in each of the Kivalliq communities to discuss the potential for a Guardians program, answer questions, and gather feedback. These sessions revealed a clear desire from the communities to establish such a program, and they are eager for KIA to get started.

Key Highlights of the Guardians Program:

- **Inuit Stewardship:** The program empowers Inuit communities to manage and protect their lands and waters according to traditional knowledge and practices. This includes regular patrols to monitor wildlife health, ice conditions, and other environmental indicators.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Guardians will play a vital role in preserving and promoting Inuit culture through workshops, intergenerational mentorship, and the documentation of traditional knowledge. This ensures that cultural traditions are passed down to future generations.
- **Community Well-being:** The program supports community well-being by creating sustainable employment opportunities for Inuit, enhancing food sovereignty through traditional harvesting practices, and providing training and capacity-building initiatives tailored to Inuit needs.

Guiding Principals of the Guardians Program:

The Guardian program will be guided by Inuit Qaujimatuqangit. Below are a set of Inuit values and principles that must be respected in all aspects of Guardians' work and in program management.



Decision making through discussion and consensus.

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Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.
- Δ^uρ^uη^uσ^u - Ikajuqtigiinniq
Working together for a common cause.
- ሙ^uτ^uτ^uσ^u - Qanuqtuurniq
Being innovative and resourceful.
- ሙ^uτ^uτ^uσ^u - Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq
Respect and care for the land, animals and the environment.



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