## RAVEN'S CIRCLE





## ALASKA NATIVE SETTLEMENT TRUST ELIGIBILITY ACT SIGNED INTO LAW

## PAYMENTS FROM ANC SETTLEMENT TRUSTS WILL NOW BE EXCLUDED FROM INCOME WHEN ASSESSING ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Alaska Native Elders (aged 65+), people with disabilities, and those who are blind will no longer have to make difficult decisions between receiving Alaska Native corporation (ANC) distributions and being eligible for programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or housing assistance.

House of Representatives (H.R.) 42, known as the Alaska Native Settlement Trust Eligibility Act, closes a longstanding gap in Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) provisions, ensuring that Settlement Trust payments from ANCs will not be counted as income when determining eligibility for certain federal assistance programs. H.R. 42 builds on a similar bill introduced by former Alaska Congresswoman Mary Peltola (Yup'ik) during her term in the U.S. House of Representatives (2023-2025).

Alaska Rep. Nick Begich introduced H.R. 42 on his first day of office in January. The House passed the bill in February, and in June, Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski led the final push in the Senate, securing unanimous bipartisan consent. H.R. 42 was signed into law by the president on July 7.

The bill was championed by the ANCSA Regional Association (ARA), which represents the 12 land-based Alaska Native regional corporations, including CIRI.

"Many Elders depend on existing federal programs for housing, supplemental income and nutritional assistance, as well as dividends from their Native corporations and Elder Settlement Trusts," ARA wrote in a letter to Alaska Sens.

Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, dated March 4. "Counting these dividends and distributions as income for the purpose of federal benefits eligibility is an inaccurate reflection of how these funds

are generated. ... No Elder should be forced to make the choice between accepting the distributions to which they are entitled and still retaining access to medical care. They are the hearts and memories of our communities, and it is incumbent upon all of us to make sure they receive the care and benefits they deserve."

CIRI President Tabetha Toloff (Athabascan) called the signing of the bill "a remarkable win for our Corporation and our Shareholders."

"H.R. 42 ensures payments from CIRI and other ANCs can be placed into Settlement Trusts without jeopardizing eligibility for federal assistance programs," she continued. "This provides Shareholders with greater financial security, protects important cultural and community investments, and strengthens our ability to support future generations."

"This is a victory for some of Alaska's most vulnerable: Elders, those living with disabilities and those who are blind," Rep. Begich said. "H.R. 42 protects the benefits they have rightfully earned, allowing them to maintain their independence and dignity while continuing to receive the support of their Alaska Native corporations."

H.R. 42 was signed into law at the same time as H.R. 43, the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2025, which eliminates the requirement under ANCSA that Alaska Native village corporations convey land to the state to be held in trust for future municipalities. Approximately 11,500 acres of undeveloped land will instead be returned to the original village corporations. Sen. Murkowski introduced a Senate version of H.R. 43 in July 2023; Rep. Peltola introduced a House version in Nov. 2023.

"When leaders set politics aside and work across the aisle, real progress happens," Tabetha said. "These bipartisan efforts restore what is rightfully owed to Alaska Native people."





CIRI Shareholders and confirmed Descendants (ages 18+) are invited to apply as mentees to CIRI's virtual mentoring program. The application deadline is Nov. 2.



## FALL FRIENDSHIP POTLATCHES

2025 fall Friendship Potlatches will be held Oct. 11 in Anchorage; Oct. 19 in Soldotna, Alaska; and Nov. 1 in Tacoma, Washington.



#### WHEN DOES H.R. 42 TAKE EFFECT?

The law took effect July 7, the same day it was signed into law. That means ANC Settlement Trust payments are already excluded from being counted as income for federal assistance programs such as Supplemental Security Income, SNAP and housing aid for those eligible.

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## DO I NEED TO BE AN ORIGINAL ELDER TO QUALIFY FOR THE EXCLUSIONS OUTLINED IN H.R. 42?

No. An Alaska Native individual qualifies if he/she belongs to any of the three categories specified: blind, disabled or an Elder (aged 65+). Alaska Natives and descendants of Alaska Natives (i.e., voting Shareholders) are eligible.

#### I'M AN ELDER WHO RECEIVES FEDERAL ASSISTANCE. DO I NEED TO DO ANYTHING NOW THAT H.R. 42 HAS PASSED?

No, you do not need to take any special action. Payments from ANC Settlement Trusts—including those from the CIRI Settlement Trust (CIRI Trust)—are now excluded from income when federal agencies determine eligibility for assistance programs.

## WILL THESE PAYMENTS AFFECT MY FEDERAL BENEFITS?

No. Settlement Trust payments, such as those from the CIRI Trust, will not reduce or disqualify you from programs such as Medicaid, SNAP or housing assistance.

#### SHOULD I KEEP ANY RECORDS?

Yes, it's a good idea to keep documentation that the payment came from a Settlement Trust, in case an agency staff member has questions.

## WHAT DOES THE "FIVE-YEAR WINDOW" OR "SUNSET" IN H.R. 42 MEAN?

The bill includes a clause that limits how long the law will be in effect unless further action is taken. This is called a "sunset provision." In this case, it means the law will automatically expire after five years unless Congress passes another law to extend it. It is currently scheduled to expire July 7, 2030. ANCs and supporters in Congress may advocate extending or making the law permanent as the expiration date draws closer.



Connection, progress and shared purpose as we move toward the end of the year, these objectives will continue to guide our work throughout the CIRI enterprise.

One way we put these objectives into action is through direct engagement, both with our employees and in our communities. Recent visits to project sites managed by subsidiary company North Wind Group allowed us to meet with the employees who work tirelessly—and in some cases, put their lives on the line—for our Corporation. These visits provided an opportunity to not only share more about CIRI, the unique history of Alaska Native corporations and the people we serve, but to listen, learn and answer questions from those directly contributing to our success.

This same spirit of listening and collaboration guided our recent travels within the region. This summer, we visited Kenaitze, Salamatof, Ninilchik and Tyonek, with plans to visit Chickaloon, Eklutna, Knik and Seldovia in the months ahead. Conversations centered on both challenges—such as the impacts of cuts to federal funding—and opportunities for economic development and partnership. Each visit reaffirmed our shared commitment

to strengthening the cultural and economic foundations of our villages and Tribes.

Just as we invest in the future of our Corporation, we are equally committed to investing in the people who will shape it.

We are in the process of selecting our 2025
Yah Program cohort, and we look forward to introducing these promising Shareholders and Descendants in our next Raven's Circle. The popularity of this program—and the number of Shareholders and Descendants eager to work for their Corporation—continues to inspire us!

We are excited to see current Yah executives Jacinda Mainord and Lexi Trainer stepping into high-level roles within the CIRI enterprise—a clear reflection of the program's success in developing future leaders.

On the business front, your Board and executive team are focused on positioning CIRI for long-term growth. This means selling older, low-performing assets and reinvesting those funds into better-performing opportunities, rebalancing our portfolio and transforming our Corporation into a true "cash generator." At the same time, we are actively exploring strategic acquisitions that align with our vision for a stronger, more sustainable future.

Lastly, when the leaves turn, we turn to tradition—and our fall Friendship Potlatches are just around the corner! This year's Potlatches will be held Oct. 11 in Anchorage, Alaska; Oct. 19 in Soldotna, Alaska; and Nov. 1 in Tacoma, Washington. We were pleased to host our Shareholders and Descendants Aug. 23 at CIRI's offices in Washington, D.C. Whether in Alaska or across the country, these gatherings remind us of the strength of our CIRI family and the importance of staying connected.

Together, we remain committed to honoring our heritage, supporting our people, and creating lasting value for generations to come.

With respect and gratitude,

Mom

Tabatha Talat

Swami lyer CIRI CEO (



Sabulha



## GLORIA O'NEILL RECEIVES EGAN AWARD

Congratulations to CIRI Shareholder Gloria O'Neill (Yup'ik), president and CEO of Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC)! In August, Commonwealth North announced Gloria as the 2025 recipient of the William A. Egan Award for Visionary Alaskan Leadership, which recognizes an individual who embodies the late governor's legacy of uniting Alaskans for a stronger future.

Gloria has served at the helm of CITC since 1998, shaping the organization's mission around holistic wellness and endless potential for individuals, families and communities, while reaffirming the vital importance of Indigenous values, tradition and identity.

Under Gloria's leadership, CITC has experienced exponential growth. The organization now serves more than 12,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people annually, with culturally guided programs in youth education, career development, family preservation and addiction recovery.

Additionally, Gloria has led the establishment of CITC Enterprises Inc., CITC's for-profit entity that holds a growing portfolio of investments in video gaming, venture capital, Tribal consulting services and direct government contracting. Through this, Gloria spearheaded the development of the groundbreaking Indigenous-created video game "Never Alone" (Kisima Ingitchuna). The BAFTA- and Peabody Award-winning game has been downloaded more than 16 million times.

Gloria recently served as chair of the national Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, which issued a comprehensive report designed to improve outcomes for Indigenous youth across the U.S. She also serves as executive chair of E-Line Ventures; oversees the Alaska Native Justice Center; previously served on the University of Alaska Anchorage Board of Regents (2013-2021) and the Alaska Federation of Natives board of directors (1998-2017); and has advised national bodies, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The 2025 Hickel & Egan Awards Gala will be held Oct. 23 in Anchorage.
Congratulations, Gloria!



## **BOARD CORNER**

## A MESSAGE FROM CIRI BOARD DIRECTOR CALE TOLBERT

My name is Cale Tolbert (Athabascan), and I was elected to serve my fellow Shareholders and Descendants at the 2025 Annual Meeting of CIRI Shareholders.

I was gifted CIRI shares from my father, original enrollee Withers Vance Tolbert Jr. Like many CIRI Shareholders and Descendants, I was fortunate to receive education funding through The CIRI Foundation (TCF) and Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC). In 2021, while working as an associate attorney, I began speaking with CITC President and CEO Gloria O'Neill about CITC Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), a forprofit company that develops innovative approaches to sustainability. My tenure on the CEI board started in 2021, marking my reintroduction to the CIRI family.

I was born and raised in King Salmon, a community in Alaska's Bristol Bay region. My paternal grandmother, Bertha (Thiele) Tolbert, was from Alexander Creek, a village in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

I spent 16 summers fishing commercially in Bristol Bay. Harvesting and processing my own food ties me to my heritage and

to the land that has influenced our family's traditions for many years. Now that my wife and I have two young sons, reconnecting with the wilderness that brought me such joy in my childhood is even more magical.

My family and I reside in the Seattle area. Professionally, I serve as senior legal counsel for SoundHound AI, a leading voice artificial intelligence company. Outside of work, I enjoy camping and hiking, subsistence hunting and fishing, skiing and snowboarding, playing music and chess, and studying the German language.

My educational background includes a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a Master of Business Administration, both from Northern Arizona University, and a juris doctor from Santa Clara University School of Law. My background as a commercial fisherman, experience as a technology attorney and work in corporate governance all provide a strong foundation for contributing to CIRI's continued success.

One of my favorite books is "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, a novel that not only has beautiful prose but serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of unrealistic expectations. Gatsby's relentless pursuit of an idealized vision of the past reminds us of the importance of balancing ambition with perspective and not chasing illusions at the expense of meaningful progress.

My leadership philosophy—and the leadership philosophy I've observed in my fellow Board members—is grounded in integrity, collaboration and long-term, sustainable growth. It is through this shared commitment that we strive to create meaningful value for our Shareholders, lasting impact in our communities and a legacy of success for our Corporation.



## CIRI IN THE COMMUNITY: STELLAR SPACE EXPERIENCE

Inspiring the next generation of explorers, outside-the-box thinkers and STEM professionals, CIRI's first-ever Stellar Space Experience gave students an unforgettable, hands-on journey into the world of space, science and teamwork.

Held July 25-27 in Anchorage and Kenai, Alaska, the event gave 15 high-schoolage Shareholders and Descendants with strong backgrounds or interests in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) a chance to dive deeper into their scientific interests, engage with like-minded peers, and meet and learn from experts in their fields, including retired NASA astronaut Don Thomas.

STEM careers are the backbone of our future economy, driving innovation and creating opportunities that didn't exist a generation ago. "By pairing these skills with traditional Alaska Native values—respect for the land, collaboration and resilience—

we can prepare young people to navigate a rapidly changing world while staying grounded in who they are," said Darla Graham, director, CIRI stakeholder engagement.

The Stellar Space Experience kicked off at Cook Inlet Tribal Council's (CITC) Denełchin Lab, where participants competed in team challenges, heard from astronaut Thomas and other STEM professionals, and created stickers using fab lab technology. Days two and three were spent at the Challenger Learning Center in Kenai, with students working to design a science experiment to fly to the International Space Station, competing in a "packing for Mars" challenge and learning about astronaut traditions.

CIRI was pleased to host the Stellar Space Experience with our partner organizations CITC, the Challenger Learning Center of Alaska, Higher Orbits Go For Launch! and the International Space Station National Laboratory. Thank you to everyone, including our 15 incredible and innovative Shareholder and Descendant participants, who helped make this inaugural program a success!



For Delaney Arnaq Naruyaq' Thiele (Dena'ina Athabascan and Yup'ik), identity has always lived in the space in between. Self-described as "white passing," but deeply rooted in her family's Alaska Native history, culture and traditions, Delaney grew up navigating urban Anchorage schools while holding tight to stories of subsistence and survival. That duality now fuels her work with the ANCSA Regional Association (ARA), where she helps bridge divides among Alaska Native peoples, Lower 48 Tribes and policymakers shaping

SPOTLIGHT

The Raven's Circle sat down with Delaney to discuss her path, her passion for policy, and the lessons she carries with her from family and community.

the future of Tribal sovereignty and Native

self-determination.

## WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND, AND WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION WITH CIRI?

I was born and raised in Anchorage. My family is from Alexander Creek, just at the bottom of Sleeping Lady, and from the Bethel and Dillingham areas. I was gifted CIRI shares from my father, Georg Thiele, who is an original enrollee.

## DID YOU FEEL A STRONG SENSE OF NATIVE IDENTITY GROWING UP?

I always felt Native growing up, but it's different living in an urban setting versus a rural setting. My grandfather, Reinhold Thiele, was a hunting guide and had fishing boats in Bristol Bay, and because of his strong cultural ties, I have always known I was Alaska Native. The stories my grandfather told have helped guide me throughout my life; he taught all his children and grandchildren how to live our Native values.

I often felt suspended between two worlds, or that I was existing in spaces that weren't completely relevant to me. I attended Anchorage School District public schools, and I remember in elementary school being taken out of class for Indigenous education. But the program was so pan-Indigenous; I remember making dream catchers. Like, why were we making dream catchers? [laughs] I think there was limited Alaska Native educational content at the time, and it didn't seem like a priority for the school district.

## WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER FOCUSED ON ALASKA NATIVE ISSUES AND POLICY?

I participated in Model United Nations in high school, which made me want to continue studying human rights and policy. I graduated from high school in 2011 and began attending the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) as a political science major where I took a Tribes, Nations and Peoples class. The instructor was Dalee Dorough, the former international chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council. It was the most inspirational and moving class I had ever taken. I also had classes with Kimberly Pace, another professor who was incredibly influential to me, and who served as the faculty director of Model United Nations of Alaska at UAA. These two put me on the path of Native advocacy and inspired me to learn more about Native rights and sovereignty and self-determination.

I graduated from college in May 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The year before I graduated, thanks to Dalee Dorough and Kimberly Pace, I was invited to do a United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues internship in New York. Then, through a competitive selection process, I was invited to serve in the 14th cohort of Fellows in the First Alaskans Institute Public Policy Fellowship, which is based in Juneau.

I had never been to Southeast Alaska, and I was so anxious about it. But I ended up meeting some great young Alaska Natives in my cohort. I also connected with First Alaskans Institute's former Alaska Native policy director, Barbara Blake, who later became a mentor to me. I have been so fortunate to learn from strong Alaska Native leaders, especially Alaska Native women, who have become mentors to me.

## HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK FOR THE ANCSA REGIONAL ASSOCIATION?

In 2021 I met my partner, who is Navajo, and had the opportunity to move to New Mexico. I wanted to see what Tribal relations were like outside Alaska, so I applied for and began working for a New Mexico-based Tribal coalition, specializing in domestic and sexual violence advocacy. I was the organization's gender-based violence training coordinator for

two years. I learned a lot about Tribal relations in the Lower 48, and it solidified my desire to want to learn more about and dedicate my time to building Tribal relations in my own Alaska Native community.

My good friend Marya Halvorsen, who serves as the government and regional affairs manager for Koniag (the Alaska Native regional corporation for Kodiak Island), urged me to explore job opportunities in Alaska, where my policy skills are relevant. This led me to begin working as ARA's projects and policy specialist in September 2024.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR AREAS OF FOCUS AND POLICY WORK WITH ARA?

ARA represents the 12 land-based Alaska Native regional corporations. We have our board members, who are the presidents and/ or CEOs of each of the 12 corporations, and then we have committees that support ARA's policy work. A lot of the work ARA has been doing recently is building and strengthening Tribal relations with our Lower 48 relatives.

There's a lot of confusion around how Alaska's unique model of self-determination works. I feel there's a huge opportunity to showcase what Alaska has done over the 50 years since the passage of ANCSA, and how we can continue to best serve our Alaska Native people. Our leaders achieved a significant milestone by passing ANCSA, and ARA is dedicated to enhancing this legislation to best benefit our community now and in the future. Our board sets the path for ARA, and I'm honored to serve in this role of support.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR HOBBIES AND PURSUITS OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I have been beading since I was a kid; my aunties are all big crafters. When I was in college, I took an Alaska Native beading class, and it really strengthened that connection with my childhood.

I started my beading business, Cloudberry, in 2018. Cloudberry taught me so much as to why it's important to continue advocating for our traditional activities. I'm on a little bit of hiatus right now; I always joke that I'm semiretired. But when life gets less busy, I hope to start beading again.

# RAVEN'S CIRCLE • FALL 2025

#### WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ADVICE TO YOUNG ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE **LOOKING TO ESTABLISH OR** STRENGTHEN THEIR CONNECTION WITH CULTURE AND HERITAGE?

The first thing I would say to a young person is that you are valid in your Nativeness-no matter how you look, how you express yourself, where you grew up. I think it's important to uplift our young Native voices by listening to their perspectives and experiences.

My brother, Rutger, is a pilot for Alaska Airlines. Even though he is not involved in advocacy in the ways I am, he tells me he feels the most connected when he can do things for our family, like filling our freezers with fish. Everyone has their own way of connecting with their culture and communities; people shouldn't feel like they aren't enough if they don't fit into a particular box someone else created for them.

The CIRI Foundation and Cook Inlet Tribal Council helped pay for my education, and that support is the reason I don't have debt post-university. I think in this era, many Alaska Natives, especially those outside our villages, identify first with their Native corporation. Even when I wasn't as involved as I am now, I always knew I was a CIRI Descendant. I'd like to think Alaska Native corporations are on the path of balancing corporate and culture and how to weave the two together. I wouldn't be where I am without CIRI.



## CIRI VIRTUAL **MENTORING** PROGRAM, **MENTEE** RECRUITMENT

#### **APPLY BY NOVEMBER 2**

CIRI's virtual mentoring program provides mentorship in several areas—careers, culture and more—and cultivates a reciprocal relationship between mentor and mentee where participants develop their skills through a two-way transfer of experience and perspective.

Mentees receive customized education and career coaching, develop professionally and personally, engage in Alaska Native cultural activities, identify goals and achieve success! Mentees may choose among CIRI-selected mentors for their preferred pairings. The opportunity is open to CIRI Shareholders and confirmed Descendants ages 18+. As the program is held virtually, participants may live anywhere in the U.S.

The upcoming program will run approximately January-June 2026. The mentee application deadline is Sunday, Nov. 2. View potential mentor matches and apply at ciri.com/mentorship.



## BACK-TO-SCHOOL AND EDUCATIONAL INCENTIVES

We extend our best wishes to our Shareholders and Descendants in the new school year! Education imparts self-esteem, confidence and pride; it provides a path to long-term career opportunities and keeps our nation competitive. Having more education has long been linked to higher incomes, better health and a longer life expectancy. Whether this year's students are starting kindergarten or pursuing post-secondary education, we celebrate them as they realize their potential and achieve their educational goals!

In August, CIRI was pleased to support Cook Inlet Tribal Council's back-to-school drive, which provides school supplies and backpacks to Alaska Native/American Indian students enrolled in the Anchorage School District. CIRI has also been a long-time supporter of the Clothesline Project, a program of Anchorage Cops for Community that provides new and gently used free clothing and other back-to-school items for students in grades K-12.

"CIRI's goal is to support our youth and encourage them to stay committed to their early education while celebrating them along the way," CIRI President Tabetha Toloff said.

CIRI's youth educational incentives award \$100 cash prizes to students who maintain a GPA of 3.5 or above and/or have excellent attendance (defined as missing no more than four classes in the reporting period). Twice per year, nine winners are randomly selected to receive the \$100 cash cards, including three youth who reside in Anchorage, three who reside in Alaska (outside Anchorage), and three who reside outside Alaska. To enter, eligible youth are invited to submit a copy of the report card for the immediately preceding semester to CIRI Shareholder Relations by the end of January, or the end of June, as applicable. For more information, visit the CIRI website or scan the QR code below.





## **VILLAGE VIBES**

This is the inaugural installment of a new series highlighting the events, achievements, and milestones of our Cook Inlet region villages and Tribes.

Congratulations to the Kenaitze Indian Tribe (KIT)! In August, KIT's Tułen Charter School opened its doors to welcome students and families for the first time.

The school has been decades in the making, with Tribal Council Chair Bernadine Atchison noting it has been a priority "for over 30 years."

During a special meeting held November 2024, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District's (KPBSD) Board of Education approved KIT's application for a five-year period. Before gaining approval from KPBSD, Tułen's Academic Policy Committee (APC) met several times with the district's Charter School Oversight Committee, comprised of school board members, district leadership and principals at area charter schools. The committee provided feedback throughout the application process—essential to crafting a quality application. Following approval from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the final hurdle was authorization by the State Board of Education. On March 10, the board voted unanimously to allow KIT to open for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Kyle McFall, KIT's education director, said the APC worked diligently to select the school's academic programs, emphasizing innovative curricula that integrates Indigenous practices with Western pedagogies. One such program is Raven Writes, a program of Sealaska that aims to improve language and literacy skills through engaging activities that connect Alaska Native students with their cultural heritage. The APC also sought to incorporate behavioral programs that promote the inclusion of trauma-informed practices to support all students' wellbeing and success. Finally, Tulen is partnering with Kenaitze Education staff to offer Dena'ina dance, drum, language and Native Youth Olympics to all students.

Tułen means "the current is flowing/the river will flow" in Dena'ina. The K-3 school is housed in the Tribe's Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus in Kenai, Alaska. McFall said the plan is to add a grade each year, up until sixth grade. "We also plan on expanding our language program as we develop Dena'ina language speakers throughout the school," he added. "We also are in talks with Sealaska to continue to work with them to modify Raven Writes curriculum so that it better represents Dena'ina culture and values."

## 2025 CIRI ART & PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

THANK YOU TO OUR SHAREHOLDERS AND DESCENDANTS WHO ENTERED CIRI'S 2025 ART (MAY 30-JUNE 30) AND PHOTO (JULY 18-AUG. 17) CONTESTS!

This year's theme was "Building the Future, Guided by Tradition." Winning artists and photographers received cash prizes and will have their entries displayed at our fall Friendship Potlatches. Certain artwork will also be chosen for the 2026 CIRI calendar. Congratulations to all our winners!

#### **ART CONTEST**



ADULTS (18+)
FIRST PLACE
HALEY HAKALA
Iñupiaq
Anchorage, Alaska
Medium: Digital



SECOND PLACE
MADISON VU
Aleut
Olympia, Washington
Medium: Drawing



GRADES 6-8
FIRST PLACE
KAITLYNN COX
Athabascan
Rolla, Missouri
Medium: Drawing



SECOND PLACE
NOAH BULLIS
Aleut
Apex, North Carolina
Medium: Drawing



GRADES 9-12
FIRST PLACE
SERENITY FRANKE
Athabascan
Kasilof, Alaska
Medium: Digital



SECOND PLACE
SINCERE FIELDS
Aleut
Las Vegas, Nevada
Medium: Drawing

**GRADES K-5** 



FIRST PLACE
ELIAS BOWDON
Athabascan/Tlingit
Spokane Valley, Washington
Medium: Drawing



SECOND PLACE SIBYLLE SETHI Alutiiq Homer, Alaska Medium: Drawing

## **PHOTO CONTEST**



ADULTS (18+)
FIRST PLACE
BRITTANEE JOHNSON
Tlingit
Wasilla, Alaska



AGES 14-17 FIRST PLACE SEDNA PROSSER Aleut/Athabascan Palmer, Alaska



SECOND PLACE
TERESA THIELE
Yup'ik/Athabascan/Aleut
Anchorage, Alaska



SECOND PLACE MASON MILLER Athasbascan Eagle River, Alaska



AGES 10-14
FIRST PLACE
KELLAN BOHANNON
Iñupiaq
Chugiak, Alaska



SECOND PLACE UMA SETHI Alutiiq Homer, Alaska

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: SARAH & PATRICK JOHNSON



Sarah and Patrick Johnson stand in front of the North Wind Group sign. Mother and son are both employees with the Idaho-based CIRI subsidiary. Photo courtesy of the Johnsons.

Working for North Wind Group is more than a job for CIRI Shareholders and mother-and-son duo Sarah and Patrick Johnson (Athabascan)—it's an opportunity to broaden their perspectives, uphold their values and contribute to their Corporation. Sarah works as a technical writer in Phoenix, while Patrick is a cloud engineer for North Wind Solutions, a subsidiary of North Wind Group based in Richland, Wash.

Sarah's connection with CIRI runs deep. Her grandfather, Larry Michael Oskolkoff Sr., was instrumental in the passage of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). He was an original incorporator of CIRI, managed the Land and Resources department, and served on the CIRI Board of Directors from 1971 to 1981. "As a young girl, I will never forget my grandfather pulling out these newspaper articles and showing me pictures of the senators around him—all these people working on ANCSA," Sarah said. "It always intrigued me."

While serving on the CIRI Participation Committee (CPC), Sarah learned about North Wind Group. "It really interested me," she recalled. "(North Wind Group President and CEO) Rich Driggs attended the CPC meeting, and I had an opportunity to speak with him about Shareholder hire. I'm a technical writer, and there weren't any jobs for me at the time, but I saw they had opportunities that fit Patrick's background."

Patrick was the first in his family to join North Wind Group. As a cloud engineer, he helps design, develop and manage cloud-based infrastructure, applications and services. Like his mother, he serves on the CPC.

"I remember that first CPC meeting with Swami," Patrick recalled. "He told us that he was there to listen to us, to learn from us, and to make CIRI a more profitable company for its Shareholders. It really gave me confidence, not only in my Corporation but in myself, to pursue the job I want."

Patrick began at North Wind Group at the beginning of the year and had been keeping an eye on the job postings. When he found a technical writer position that matched his mother's skill set, Sarah applied and began working at the company this spring.

"I absolutely love working here," Sarah said. "The team is amazing; the people are incredibly smart—just an outstanding group of engineers and project managers."

Patrick shares that enthusiasm. "I want to be an example of a young Shareholder who has taken advantage of programs like the CPC and educational funding through The CIRI Foundation (TCF) and is now giving back to CIRI by providing them equity through my work," he said. "The division of North Wind Group I work for, North Wind Solutions, has grown by 43 positions just this year. If you take advantage of TCF's Career Technical Education Fast Track program, you can earn a certificate in information technology in just a few months. The opportunities are there; you just have to look for them."

Federal law permits Alaska Native corporations to practice Shareholder hiring preference, allowing companies like CIRI to prioritize employment opportunities for Shareholders and confirmed Descendants. For current CIRI and CIRI subsidiary job openings, visit ciri.com/jobs.



## GREEK-STYLE MOOSE MEATBALLS

Adapted from the recipe from the University of Alaska Anchorage's Alaska Traditional Kitchen project.

This meatball recipe combines traditional Alaska ingredients with a Greek-style preparation. If you do not have access to moose meat, feel free to substitute ground beef or bison. Serve meatballs on their own or over rice or couscous. This recipe is naturally high-protein and gluten-free, with a dairy-free option.

## FOR THE MEATBALLS INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds ground moose, beef or bison meat

- 1 large egg, beater
- 1/2 onion, finely diced
- 4 tablespoons diced kalamata olives
- 3 cloves garlic, finely diced
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 11/4 teaspoon dried oregand
- 11/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1¼ teaspoon dried parsley
- 3/4 teaspoon dried dill

## FOR THE YOGURT SAUCE INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt (substitute coconut yogurt if making dairy-free)
- 1/8 to 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons grated and chopped fresh cucumber (water must be squeezed out). I you use an English cucumber, you do not need to peel the cucumber.
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped, optiona
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped

Pinch of fine sea salt and black pepper

#### **DIRECTIONS:**

- 1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
- 2. Add all ingredients for meatballs into a large bowl. Mix with hands until well combined.
- 3. Shape meat mixture into 1-inch balls. Place meatballs on baking sheet and bake for 25-30 minutes until fully cooked through.
- Alternatively, meatballs may be cooked in a frying pan with a cover over low to medium heat. Turn meatballs carefully after 10-15 minutes.
- 5. For the yogurt sauce, whisk the ingredients together and set aside until ready to serve.



JOIN THE **ADVENTURES OF TWO BEST FRIENDS AND THEIR** GRANDMA IN A MAGICAL WORLD WITHOUT A SUN!

DIMI MACHERAS



CASEY SILVER



LOVABLE LOUDMOUTH, ASPIRING STORYTELLER AND BEST FRIEND OF SASQUATCH E. MOJI.



CHICKALOON VILLAGE ELDER, STORYTELLER AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPER.



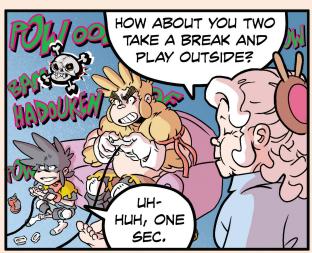
LEGENDS

LANGUAGE

MAGIC

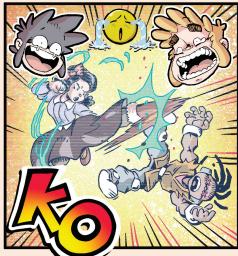










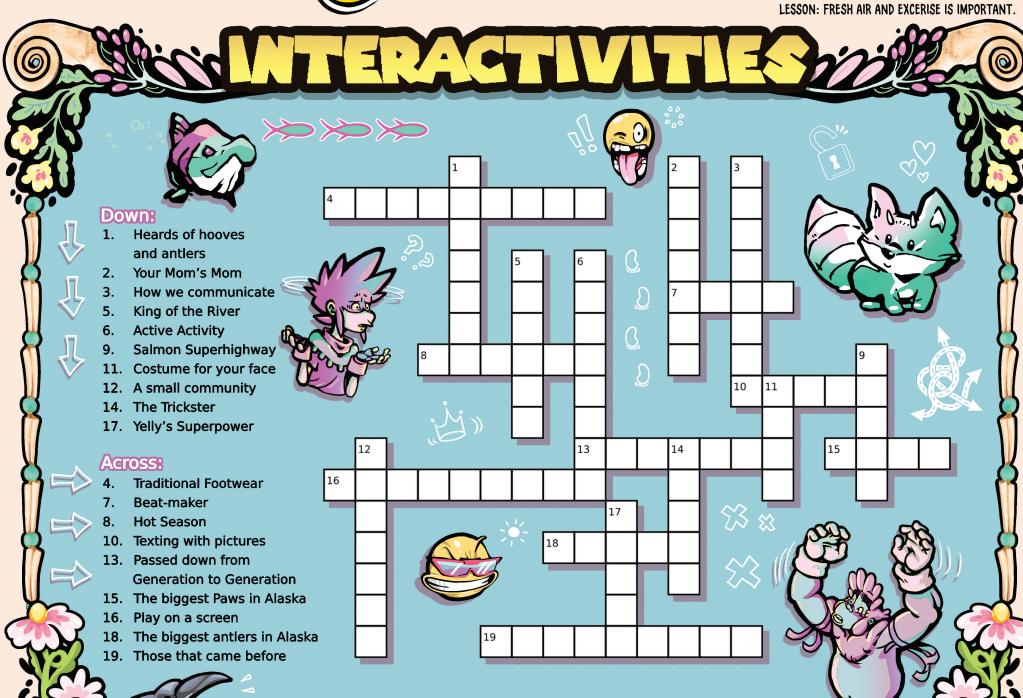


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SUPPORT THE NEXT GENERATION OF STORYTELLERS BY JOINING OUR PATREON!

Sept. 30, 2025

Quarterly CST distribution; quarterly participation prize drawing deadline

Oct. 11, 2025

CIRI Friendship Potlatch: Anchorage, Alaska

Oct. 13, 2025

Indigenous Peoples' Day: CIRI offices closed

Oct. 16-18, 2025

Annual AFN Convention: Anchorage, Alaska

Oct. 19, 2025

CIRI Friendship Potlatch: Soldotna, Alaska

Nov. 1, 2025

CIRI Friendship Potlatch: Tacoma, Washington

Nov. 2, 2025

Daylight Saving Time ends; CIRI Virtual Mentoring Program: mentee application deadline

Nov. 25, 2025

Change of address deadlines: CST Elders Distribution and quarterly Shareholders' distribution

Nov. 27, 2025

Thanksgiving: CIRI offices closed

Nov. 28, 2025

Native American Heritage Day:

CIRI offices closed

Dec. 1, 2025

2026 CIRI Board recruitment: Application window opens

## IN TOUCH

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Congratulations to Alexander Copley, who graduated June 2 from Marysville Getchell High School in Marysville, Washington.





Congratulations to CIRI Shareholder Patrick Johnson and **CIRI** Descendant Naasha Tallman on their recent engagement! The couple met through the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program and attended Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. The proposal took place in Norway.



## **AS SEEN IN OUR REGION**

On Aug. 4, CIRI summer interns visited the Kellogg Farm in Palmer, Alaska. A program of Alaska Pacific University, the 800-acre farm aims to inspire a new generation of leaders through environmental education, sustainable agriculture and community-based initiatives. Chef Amy Foote (third from right) led the group in foraging native plants.

Photo by Melissa Allen.

## SAVE THE DATE: 2025 FALL FRIENDSHIP POTLATCHES

CIRI's fall Friendship Potlatches offer CIRI Shareholders and Descendants an opportunity to socialize and celebrate important cultural traditions with family and friends. The program includes cultural entertainment, children's activities, Alaska Native arts and crafts booths, door prizes and a meal that includes traditional Alaska Native foods. Potlatches are open to CIRI Shareholders, confirmed Descendants and their immediate family members (spouse, children and parents). The wearing of traditional regalia is encouraged! For information and to RSVP, visit ciri.com/rsvp.

Anchorage, Alaska Saturday, Oct. 11

ChangePoint Church 6689 Changepoint Drive, Anchorage

Kenai Peninsula, Alaska Sunday, Oct. 19

Soldotna Field House 526 Arena Avenue, Soldotna

Pacific Northwest Saturday, Nov. 1

Greater Tacoma Convention Center 1500 Commerce Street, Tacoma, Washington

CIRI Shareholders and confirmed Descendants who are interested in displaying or selling arts and crafts should email artist@ciri.com or call (907) 263-5502 for information and to reserve space.



# FOURTH QUARTER DISTRIBUTIONS

Payment Type	Direct Deposit Sign-Up Deadline: 3 p.m. AKST	Address Change and Cancel Direct Deposit Deadline: 3 p.m. AKST	Distribution Date
Fourth Quarter CST Distribution	November 25, 2025	November 25, 2025	December 9, 2025
Fourth Quarter CST Elders Distribution	November 25, 2025	November 25, 2025	December 12, 2025

#### **CIRI TRUST DISTRIBUTION FUND**

Fourth quarter payments from the CIRI Settlement Trust (CIRI Trust) Distribution Fund, in the amount of \$12.84 per share (or \$1,284 per 100 shares), will be mailed or directly deposited by 6 p.m. AKST on Tuesday, Dec. 9 to all CIRI Trust beneficiaries who own CIRI stock and have a valid mailing address on file with CIRI as of 3 p.m. AKST on Tuesday, Nov. 25.

#### **CIRI TRUST ELDERS DISTRIBUTION**

Funds will be mailed or directly deposited by 6 p.m. AKST on Friday, Dec. 12 to eligible Elders with a valid mailing address on file as of 3 p.m. AKST on Tuesday, Nov. 25. CIRI Trust beneficiaries who are original CIRI Shareholders and 65 years of age or older on the record date of Dec. 10, 2025, are eligible to receive the \$450 payment, providing they either own at least one share of CIRI stock or gifted all their CIRI stock to family members prior to July 31, 2003.

#### **DIRECT/REMOTE DEPOSIT**

CIRI urges Shareholders who receive their distributions in check form to consider signing up for direct deposit or taking advantage of remote deposit. Both options are fast, easy and environmentally friendly. (Note: When remotely depositing a check, it's a good idea to make a note on the check so you don't attempt to cash it again. If a check is cashed twice, you are legally liable to repay the amount of the overpayment.)

Shareholders who participate in direct deposit and have a mailing address current with CIRI are also eligible to participate in quarterly prize drawings. Direct deposit forms are available from Shareholder Relations and at ciri.com. To cancel direct deposit, contact Shareholder Relations and submit a signed, written request prior to 3 p.m. Alaska Time on the specified deadline. If you have a **Qenek** account, you may cancel your existing direct deposit instruction online via the portal.

#### **ADDRESS CHANGES**

Checks are mailed to the address CIRI has on record as of the specified deadline. If your address has changed, be sure to update your address with both CIRI and the U.S. Postal Service. These addresses must match, or your CIRI mail may not reach you. When CIRI mail is undeliverable, distributions are held, and the Shareholder does not qualify to participate in any prize drawings until the address is updated. This is true even if a Shareholder is signed up for direct deposit.

CIRI address changes may be submitted online via the **Qenek** portal. Alternatively, you may submit a completed CIRI address change form—available at ciri.com—or a signed, written request that includes a current telephone number. You may scan or take a photo of your completed form or request and email it to shareholderrecords@ciri.com; mail it to CIRI at P.O. Box 93330, Anchorage, AK 99509; or fax it to (907) 263-5186. If faxed, please call Shareholder Relations as soon as possible to confirm receipt. Forms and information on changing your address or submitting a mail-forwarding request with the U.S. Postal Service are available at **usps.com** or your local post office.

Please be aware that if you fail to notify CIRI of a new address before a specified deadline and your check is sent to your previous address, CIRI cannot reissue that check to you unless it is either returned to us or a minimum of 90 days has elapsed. A list of Shareholders who do not have a current mailing address on record is continually updated and may be found on the CIRI website.

#### **TAX REMINDER**

Neither CIRI nor the CIRI Trust withhold taxes from distributions; however, Shareholders or beneficiaries who anticipate owing tax on their distributions have the option of making quarterly estimated tax payments directly to the IRS. To find out more about applicable federal and state tax requirements or making quarterly estimated tax payments, please consult with a tax advisor or contact the IRS directly. As a reminder, distributions made by the CIRI Trust are expected to be tax-free to beneficiaries in most cases.

#### **CONTACTING US**

The Fireweed Business Center is open to Shareholders, Descendants and visitors from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Alaska Time) Monday through Friday. The Shareholder Relations department may also be reached by phone at (907) 263-5191 / (800) 764-2474 and via email at **shareholderrecords@ciri.com** during normal business hours. Additionally, the **Qenek** portal provides access to a wealth of news and information and allows many tasks and record changes to be completed online, including generating payment confirmations and reprinting tax forms.

## IN MEMORY



#### **DEBRA GRUBER, 62**

Debra Gruber passed away July 9, 2025, in Pataskala, Ohio. Ms. Gruber was born July 17, 1962, in Anchorage. She is survived by her daughter, Crysta Gruber; and grandchildren, Hailey and John Burchett.



## **ROBERT EMMETT "NAWGYEE"** MILLER, 67

Robert Emmett Miller passed away Feb. 3, 2025, in Kona, Hawaii. Mr. Miller was born March 12, 1957, in Nome, Alaska. He was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth Soloman. Mr. Miller is survived by his sisters, Antoinette (Toni) LoMonaco and Lucille (Lulu) Wesley; nieces, Paula Bourdon, Michelle Partlow, Kayla Johnson, Amanda Pallones and Waverly Miller; and nephews, Zeth Kernan, Jordan Kernan, Emily Kernan, Lincoln Kernan, Devin Van Zandt and Jedidiah Blayney.

## CONDOLENCES

William Mitchell Agloinga, 70 Katherine Walunga Anderson, 88 Leah Mae Blue, 69 Sarah Bongfeldt, 77 Mary Louise Bottorff, 85 Melissa Ann Bowlby, 50 Rose Marie Brady, 70 Charles Raymond Burke Jr., 86 Roger James Chingman Jr., 60 Jim Chudocken, 47 Mary Chuitt, 80 Kenneth Lee Clark, 57 Jean Marie Clyde, 84 Deborah G. Cooper, 74 Russell I. Cooper, 84 Lucy Demantle, 92 Janet Cheryl Daniels, 77 Willie Joe Eben, 61 D'Brianne Panigeo Friemering, 67 Grant L. Fritz Jr., 92

Leona Marie Gallant, 54 Lyle Vance Garner Jr., 53 Robert Lynn Graham Jr., 66 Stacy Michelle Graves, 57 Starlet Ann Griffis, 61 Reece William Grohall, 28 Carla A. Grubbs. 85 Maureen Kay Harp, 68 Diane Marlene Harrison, 67 Lucy May Heckman, 65 Craig Henderson, 70 Larae Ann Hildonen, 82 Rodney Wayne Hoeldt, 72 Fredrick M. Josefsen, 66 Brianna Elizabeth Knabe, 20 Marina K. Lopez, 73 Judy Moonin, 67 Amber Marie Nauman, 54 Carol Christine Neal, 85 Gwenn Rae O'Brien, 73

Linda Kay Paxton, 69
Ronald Lee Peck, 72
Janet Lynn-Savoy Peterman, 62
Charles Bruce Peterson, 68
Nicholas Shane Phillips, 45
Brenda Lee Powell, 59
Sandra Lee Roesing, 58
Justin Rod Smith, 42
Hilma Soxie, 57
Margie C. Standifer, 75
Evon Ray Tocktoo, 35
Roger Ivar Wallin Sr., 83
Alice Walsh, 78



## CIRI HOLIDAY CRAFT BAZAAR

Join us for CIRI's 11th annual holiday craft bazaar! Shop traditional and contemporary Alaska Native arts and crafts, including ornaments, paintings and wall art, ivory carvings, kuspuks/atikluks, kids' toys and more. Thirty-five Alaska Native vendors will be featured. Upstream Café and coffee shop will be open and an ATM available. Get your free holiday photos from Photo Emporium!

Date/time: Saturday, Dec. 6 I 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Location: Fireweed Business Center, 725 East Fireweed Lane, Anchorage Questions? Call (907) 274-8638 or email artist@ciri.com

To round out your holiday shopping, check out the offerings from some of our partner organizations.

## ALASKA NATIVE CUSTOMARY ART FAIR AT AFN

Oct. 16-18

Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center 600 West 7th Avenue, Anchorage

#### ANHC HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Dec. 5-7

Alaska Native Heritage Center 8800 Heritage Center Drive, Anchorage

#### THE NAVE HOLIDAY MARKET

**Dec. 13**The Nave

3502 Spenard Road, Anchorage

## SHAREHOLDERS WITH **RETURNED MAIL**

The following CIRI Shareholders do not have a current mailing address on record. When CIRI mail is returned as undeliverable, the distributions are held, and the Shareholder does not qualify to participate in any prize drawings until the address is updated. Shareholders with Qenek accounts may update their addresses via the portal. Alternatively, Shareholders may visit CIRI's website or call Shareholder Relations at (907) 263-5191 or (800) 764-2474 for address change forms and information.

(As of 9/22/2025)

Edgar Ailak Marnie Anderson Shauna Awalin Sadie Baktuit Dakota Baktuit-Palmer Raymond Batt Shannon Bell Daniel Berry Brad Boone Daniel Bowen Robert Brown Friedrich Busk Jeremy Butrick Daniel Call Lorraine Campbell Sophia Chuitt Lariisa Conaway Audrey Craig Shelby David Anita Davis Miloh Deamusategui Angel Dean Kylie Decker Clifford Dolchok Marlita Elgamal Gabriel Eognuk Shannon Fisk Leonty Fratis Ryder Freeman William Fuller Leta Gannon Marisa Garrett Matthew Garvey Tylor Graves Dennis Griffin Vincen Grohall Shirley Grow Dennis Harper Christian Harrison Pauline Harvey Jacqueline Henley Marissa Heyward Dallas Houghton Jennifer Howard Sheila James Andrue Jamison Joseph Jenkins Paul Johnson Alfred Jones Hannah Jones Ernest Jones Alison Jones Chelsea Jones Rebecca Katchatag Melinda Kelly Carla Kinder Caleb King Ricky Kinsworthy Gina Koktelash Clinton Lageson

William Lamont Derald Lee Karla Lee Ross Leininger Patricia Lillie Heather Lincoln Alexander Macheras Thomas Manuel Debra Marth Michael Martin Michael Mason Steven McKinnev Kane Meek Ariana Melo Brenda Mulford Nickolas Newby Kaitlyn Nichols Harry Okpik Olivia Olson Shyne O'Neill-Sanders Quentin Oskolkoff Donald Outwater Rodger Painter John Peterson Isaac Porter George Ramirez Alana Ray-Fowler Evelyn Reisch Seth Reynolds Lorinda Richards Michelle Rickteroff Mark Scrape Leira Sherman Steven Shuravloff Nell Sloan Samaad Smith Geraldine Sparks Hopeful Standifer Carl Steve Isabella Stevens Jupiter Stevens Gage Swanson Alfred Sweeney David Swenson Edward Swift Delbert Tinsley Martha Toon Shirley Townsend Mathew Tucker **Brandon Turner** Jalene Voyles James Voyles Harry Watson Joan Wheelon Yolanda White Paul White Ronald Williamson Thor Williamson Sassa Wilson Janice Wilson

### CIRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Thomas P. Huhndorf, Yup'ik **Chair Emeritus\*** 

Samuel G. Spangler, Aleut Vice Chair'

Cynthia L. Muller, Haida Secretary\*

Cheryl L. Mulcahey, Iñupiaq Treasurer'

Carol A. Gore, Aleut **Assistant Secretary\*** 

John J. Estabrook Jr., Athabascan **Assistant Treasurer\*** 

Margaret L. Brown, Yup'ik Gregory L. Craig, Iñupiaq Jeffrey A. Gonnason, Haida Charles M. Lee Jr., Tlingit Lisa K. Huffman, Athabascan Louis "Lou" Nagy Jr., Yup'ik Cale V. Tolbert, Athabascan

Kaarlo K. Wik, Aleut

\* Denotes a member of the Board of Trustees of the CIRI Settlement Trust



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#### **CIRI CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **CIRI Headquarters**

725 E. Fireweed Lane, Suite 800 Anchorage, Alaska 99503 Tel. (907) 274-8638 www.ciri.com

#### **Shareholder Relations**

Tel. (907) 263-5191 or (800) 764-2474 Fax (907) 263-5186 Email shareholderrecords@ciri.com

#### For estates/wills, contact Probate at:

Tel. (907) 263-5540 or (833) 263-5136

Fax (907) 263-5186

Submit ideas, stories & recipes to info@ciri.com



#### FALL 2025 // CIRI RAVEN'S CIRCLE NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: CARLY STUART // LAYOUT AND DESIGN: YUIT COMMUNICATIONS // © CIRI, 2025

## INNERS' CIRCLE

To increase participation in certain programs, CIRI holds periodic prize drawings from the names of those enrolled who meet certain criteria and have a current mailing address with CIRI. If CIRI has returned mail, a different winner will be selected. Call Shareholder Relations at (907) 263-5191 or (800) 764-2474 to learn more. The following Shareholders and Descendants have been selected as winners for the most recent CIRI drawings.

#### **DIRECT DEPOSIT DRAWING**

First and second quarter drawings for \$250:

- -KATIE M. SLEDGE
- -TIFFANY A. STANLEY

t instruction must be current with CIRI to win

#### CONFIRMED, REGISTERED DESCENDANT DRAWINGS

First and second quarter drawing for a \$100 gift card:

- -RICHARD C. BIGGS (ADULT)
- -MALAKAI M. BEDUNNAH (YOUTH)
- -KARLA N. MERVIN (ADULT)
- -ANNALYNN S. TOSI (YOUTH)

Direct lineal Descendants of CIRI Shareholders who are not themselves Shareholders, who have submitted legal documents substantiating descent and who have a valid email address on file.

#### **QENEK ACCOUNT DRAWING**

First and second quarter drawing for a \$250 gift card:

- -TERESA M. CHARNIAK
- -PAMELA R. CHRISTENSON

Shareholders and confirmed Descendants who have created a Qenek account or accessed an existing account during the preceding quarter.

#### GREENLINK DRAWING

First and second quarter drawings for \$100:

- -ALICE DENESHA
- -CASSANDRA A. KROTO

Shareholders who have a valid direct deposit instruction and email address on file and who have opted into electronic delivery of certain materials.

