

## The Alutiiq Language Program

Last Updated Thursday, 11 February 2010

The Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit (Alutiiq People of the Island) language program is dedicated to documenting and revitalizing the Alutiiq Language of the Kodiak Archipelago.

Fluent speakers work with Alutiiq language learners and other professionals to study the language, make recordings for the Museum's archives, and create learning materials for all ages. The Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit Regional Language Advisory Committee meets bimonthly to guide language program efforts. This committee includes Native corporation and tribal representatives, educational organizations, and interested individuals. Our current projects include -

Alutiiq Living Words - a three year initiative documenting Alutiiq speech, vocabulary and cultural traditions with the help of Alutiiq speakers, and create an Alutiiq Language Web Portal. With funding from the National Science Foundation.

Alutiiq Word of the Week - producing cultural lessons for weekly broadcast weekly on KMXT public radio, and publication in the Kodiak Daily Mirror each Friday. Also available by email and electronic subscription.

## The Alutiiq Living Words Project

With funding from the National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages program, the Alutiiq Museum is recording the Alutiiq language in an extensive project designed to increase knowledge of Alutiiq. The Alutiiq Living Words project involves fluent Kodiak Elders, semi-fluent second language speakers, and other interested community members. The project began in the summer of 2007 and will run through the summer of 2010. It has three central objectives,

### Field Research

Semi-fluent field researchers are working with Elders to document the Alutiiq language and cultural knowledge through digital audio and video recordings in Alutiiq. These recordings will be indexed and archived for long term preservation. Stored on archival-quality CDs and DVDs, invaluable cultural and linguistic knowledge will be preserved for future community members and language learners.

### Web Portal

Selected audio and video clips from our field research have been transcribed and translated, and made available on the internet through an Alutiiq Language Web Portal. Selections highlight community traditions, subsistence practices, and local histories in a format searchable by speaker, village, sub-dialect, and key word. The web portal also features an interactive place names map.

### New Words Council

To help the Alutiiq language grow with the times, Elders from around Kodiak meet monthly to develop new words. Terms like "computer" "elevator" and "linguist" are being created by fluent speakers with the assistance of semi-fluent associate members. Approved words will be published at the end of the project, and posted on the Alutiiq Language Web Portal. This process is being documented for the benefit of other threatened language groups around the world.

To find out more about the Alutiiq Living Words Project, to learn about the materials and opportunities available for studying Alutiiq, or to participate in saving our language, please contact April at the Alutiiq Museum at (907) 486-7003.