New App Shares Alutiiq Language with Children

The Alutiiq Museum and Native Village of Afognak have released app versions of the Alutiiq language children’s books *Kiagumuuq!* and *Uksumuuq!*. Written by Candace Branson, *Kiagumuuq!* celebrates summer in the Alutiiq world while *Uksumuuq!*, written by Michael Bach, celebrates winter. Both books are illustrated by David Taineq Tucker. These are the first two of a series of six Alutiiq language children’s app books which will be released over the next two years. With financial support from the Afognak Native Corporation, the Administration for Native Americans, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Alutiiq Museum and Native Village of Afognak are partnering to develop the apps with the goal of providing fun, accessible books to Alutiiq language learners and speakers anywhere in the world.

“Creating Alutiiq language resources for youth is an important part of preserving our language,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Counceller. “Alutiiq has always been primarily a spoken language, and having electronic versions of these books with narration allows Alutiiq language learners of all ages to hear spoken words and practice pronunciation.”

Melissa Borton, Tribal Administrator at the Native Village of Afognak added, “It is exciting to provide Alutiiq books for children using the latest technology. Alutiiq is a living language being spoken and learned by people both on Kodiak and in other parts of the state and country. These apps give them more resources to continue speaking and practicing.”

*Kiagumuuq!* and *Uksumuuq!* are free interactive apps where readers can touch each word and letter to hear it spoken. Readers can also make their own recording of the book and color each page, if desired. The apps are compatible with iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch devices using iOS 8.0 or higher and can be downloaded from the iTunes store.

The Alutiiq Museum is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the history and culture of the Alutiiq, an Alaska Native tribal people. Representatives of Kodiak Alutiiq organizations govern the museum with funding from charitable contributions, memberships, grants, contracts, and sales.

The Native Village of Afognak is a federally recognized Tribe which not only serves their enrolled tribal members, but also has programs that benefit all Alaska Natives on Kodiak Island. NVA’s mission is to develop, and enhance Alutiiq culture, protect our traditional use areas and encourage unity among the Alutiiq of the Kodiak Archipelago.
Image: Cover of the digital book *Kiagumuq!* Illustration by David Taineq Tucker.