For Immediate Release
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Rasmuson Foundation Supports Alutiiq Ancestors’ Memorial

The Alutiiq Museum has received a $25,000 grant from Alaska’s Rasmuson Foundation to support the development of the Alutiiq Ancestors’ Memorial, a new public park in downtown Kodiak. The project is a collaboration between the City of Kodiak and the museum designed to honor Kodiak’s first people and promote awareness of local history.

“We are thrilled with the foundation’s generous gift and the tremendous support of the memorial it represents,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Laktonen Counceller. “Rasmuson’s contribution adds statewide support to the impressive outpouring of local contributions and moves us very close to our fundraising goal.”

Rasmuson Foundation joins a growing list of sponsors of the park project that include Alutiiq corporations, local businesses, and agencies. Akhiok-Kaguyak, Afognak Native Corporation, Koniag, Inc., Kodiak Lawn Care, Matson, and Golden Alaska Excavating are among the project’s major contributors. In total, the Alutiiq Museum has now raised $147,400 in gifts, sales, and in-kind donations, 82% of the project’s construction costs of nearly $180,000.

In addition to gifts and grants, community members have been showing their support by purchasing engraved bricks for the park walkway. People of all heritages are memorializing loved ones or adding their family names to a brick to contribute to park development. Others are choosing to share a positive message with their brick. One brick reads, “In a world where you can be anything, be KIND”. Counceller likens their messages to petroglyphs, the designs her ancestors carved into Kodiak’s bedrock hundreds of years ago.

“Each engraved brick is a lasting message carved into stone. By buying an engraved brick for the memorial, people can preserve the name of a loved one, family, community, boat or a business far into the future. They will remind the next generation of the people and history that connects all of us.”

Engraved bricks can be purchased through June 1 by visiting the museum, contacting project coordinator Kate Schaberg, or logging on to the memorial’s website: http://ancestorsmemorial.org. Ground breaking for the Alutiiq Ancestors’ Memorial is scheduled for June 1 at 4:00 pm at the park site. The event will be followed by a First Friday reception at the Alutiiq Museum. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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.