



For Immediate Release

Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository
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New Film Explores Alutiiq/Sugpiaq Identity

KODIAK, Alaska—On Friday, November 3, the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository will release *Who Are We*, a short film on Alutiiq/Sugpiaq identity. The nine-minute production explores what it means to be an Alutiiq person in the twenty-first century, with interviews of community members, historic photos, and songs in the Alutiiq language. The film was directed by Anchorage filmmaker Joshua Branstetter and produced by the Alutiiq Museum. It was developed with support from the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council, through the CORaL Network.

“Visitors to the museum—tourists and community members alike—are often confused by the variety of names we use for ourselves—Alutiiq, Aleut, and Sugpiaq,” said Executive Director April Laktonen Counciller. “Others wonder who the Alutiiq are and how Native people maintain their identity in the modern world.”

“The film allows our people to answer those questions in their own words. It is filled with voices that illustrate our ties to the land, our love of traditions, and the endurance of our language and culture. There is no correct way to be Alutiiq,” said Counciller. “There are many pathways into the culture. Josh’s film captures that nicely. It builds understanding and leaves you smiling.”

The Alutiiq Museum plans to use the film as an introductory element in a new set of gallery exhibits currently in development. “The film will help us orient museum visitors to the Alutiiq world,” said Counciller. “It will be paired with a map of Native Alaska so that people can understand our cultural geography. It will provide a foundation for all our other displays.”

The museum will debut *Who Are We* during Kodiak’s November First Friday celebration. As the museum gallery is currently closed for renovations, the public is invited to the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center to watch the film and enjoy refreshments. The short film will be shown several times during the event, which is scheduled to last from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. This is a free screening and open to the public. Following the event, the film will be available for viewing on the museum’s website.

“Ultimately, we hope the film will be useful for those seeking to learn more about our people, whether they are long-time community members or new to Kodiak. *Who Are We* provides a valuable introduction.”

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.