

For Immediate Release

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Alutiiq Museum and KANA partner on Welcome Center in Kodiak Marketplace

KODIAK—The Alutiiq Museum and the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) are collaborating on a retail and visitor services center. The Native Welcome Center, located in Kodiak’s downtown Marketplace, will open this week. It is designed to connect residents and tourists with Kodiak’s Native community. At the Welcome Center, visitors will find an orientation to the Alutiiq/Sugpiaq world and a selection of museum store merchandise. The center will sell both local artwork and museum products inspired by Kodiak’s Alutiiq heritage.

“The Marketplace was home to the Alutiiq Museum Store while we renovated our Mission Road building,” said Alutiiq Museum Executive Director April Counciller. “We rented a storefront to continue supporting artists and connect to our patrons. This centrally located cultural space became quite popular. More than 12,000 people visited last year. People loved having a place downtown to ask cultural questions, connect with our staff, and shop for local artwork. Many asked us to stay. With support from KANA and Koniag, we are able to do that.”

To advance the project, KANA is providing both space for the center and interns from its Workforce and Economic Development program. The interns are working beside museum staff members to learn about customer service, artist support, and retail management. The museum is providing its professional staff, furnishings, educational materials, and jewelry and artwork purchased from local artists. In the coming year, the museum is eager to develop plans for the welcome center with other stakeholders.

"This is the kind of partnership that really works. It brings people together, shares culture, and creates real opportunities for our interns to grow. The Welcome Center adds something special to our community, and we’re proud to support a space that celebrates who we are and helps shape what’s next,” said Mike Pfeffer, Chief Executive Officer of the Kodiak Area Native Association.

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The Alutiiq/Sugpiaq Welcome Center is located on the first floor of the Marketplace, just inside the eastern entrance. Opening day is Friday, October 17th from 5:00-9:00pm to align with Kodiak's Moonlight Madness and Community Block Party event at the Marketplace. For the remainder of October, the Welcome Center will be open on Fridays from 10:00am-5:00pm, and in November we will expand to add additional hours. There is no charge to visit the center. It is free to the public and all are welcome.

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 Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) is a Tribal nonprofit organization serving the Koniag region, including the city of Kodiak and the villages of Akhiok, Karluk, Larsen Bay, Old Harbor, Ouzinkie, and Port Lions. Guided by Alutiiq values and a mission to elevate quality of life across the region, KANA provides whole-person care through accredited healthcare services open to the entire community, as well as social services and community programs that strengthen wellness and celebrate culture.

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