

## PRESS RELEASE

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Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository  
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### Marnie Kilborn-Gates Named Alutiiq Museum Volunteer of the Year

KODIAK – Each year, there are many people who donate their time and talents to the Alutiiq Museum. We are grateful for all who support our mission through volunteerism and every year, for Valentine’s Day, we like to show our appreciation by selecting one supporter to highlight as Volunteer of the Year. For 2025, we have chosen to highlight Kodiak local Marnie Kilborn-Gates for her support of the museum’s grand reopening events. Marnie helped make beaded necklaces in traditional colors to be distributed at our Grand Reopening this past May.

Marnie grew up on the island and calls herself a lifelong Kodiakian. She loves the community here and has a giving spirit that leads her to volunteer frequently for a diversity of organizations. From the Alutiiq Museum to the Elks Lodge, Marnie has given her time and talents to the community. Through volunteering Marnie finds connection and an opportunity to serve that is fulfilling. Volunteering allows her to make a difference and give time to organizations that she supports. After many years working for KANA in social services, Marnie has spent the last year taking time to explore her creative side. Volunteering for the museum’s beading project was a perfect bridge for her to spend time getting back into artistic expression.

Over the course of several months, Marnie contributed more than 100 necklaces for the special celebration. Sometimes she gathered with a small group of friends, occasionally she worked on her own, and weekly she met with an Alutiiq neighbor and Elder so that they could bead together. Marnie’s neighbor has health challenges that prevent her from attending community events, but they don’t stop her from wanting to be involved. By making a weekly date to bead together, Marnie helped her neighbor be a part of celebrating the museum’s reopening. She said, “This gave me an opportunity to bring a community activity to her... She loved the chance to be creative and make something beautiful. We would work together supporting each other’s creativity.” The simple act of making art accessible for others builds community and connection, perfectly aligning with the museum mission to connect people to Alutiiq culture and we are grateful to Marnie for her work on this project.

To learn more about volunteering at the museum, please contact Djuna Davidson (844-425-8844; [djuna@alutiiqmuseum.org](mailto:djuna@alutiiqmuseum.org)). The Alutiiq Museum welcomes all volunteers, and no previous experience is necessary.

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