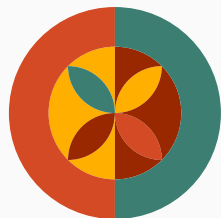


the
qajaq
program



Amber Aggark demonstrates how to properly enter a qajaq from shore.

2017 ARCTIC INSPIRATION PRIZE WINNER



The Arctic Inspiration Prize is the largest annual prize in Canada. It inspires, enables, and celebrates the achievements of the people of the North, recognizing diverse teams with innovative projects in the fields of education; health and wellbeing; culture, arts and language; science and traditional knowledge; climate change; and the economy.

Nominator: Douglas Aggark

MLA Candidate in the 2017 Nunavut Election, Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet

Team: Glen Brocklebank (Team Leader), Simon Aggark, Louis Autut, Ana Leishman, Jolene Ippiak, Kevin Issaluk, Leila Paugh

This report was compiled and created by **Qatalyst Research Group**, with the help of Gwen Healey Akearok, Lauren Nevin, the project team, and AIP.

the qajaq program journey

RECONNECTING INUIT YOUTH WITH A PART OF THEIR CULTURE OF BUILDING AND PADDLING TRADITIONAL INUIT QAJAQS

2004

9 qajaq frames built

2011

Inactive

2015 & 2016

Inactive

2017



2018

invested in equipment with AIP prize funds

2020

Inactive

2021

Received \$41,025 from RBC NorthStar Accelerator Funding to purchase equipment to create their own digital content and instructional videos

long-term impacts

"Somewhere in the future I hope to build my own qajaq and go hunting with it" – Youth Participant

EMPOWER PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

The program empowers high school students in Chesterfield Inlet to learn about and participate in Inuit culture and practices in a meaningful way, which they cherish. It gives them confidence in themselves, helps them develop resiliency, and has a positive protective effect for mental health when facing adversity.

CREATE A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP AND RESILIENCE

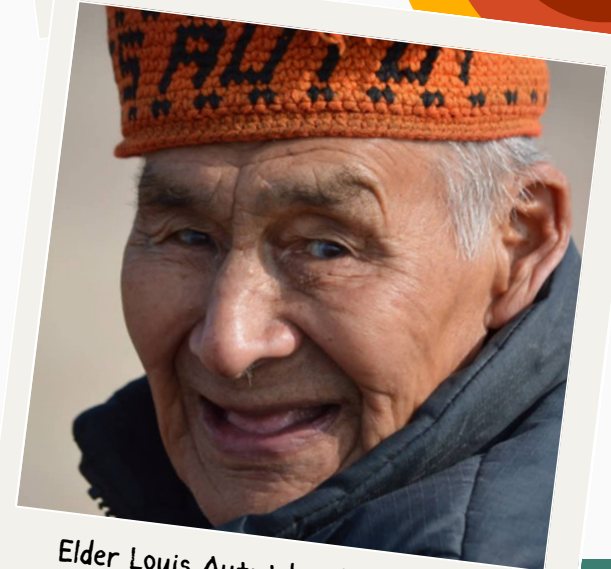
Inuit invented the qajaq, this program supports youth to reconnect with the qajaq and Inuit heritage, as well as local and regional knowledge and practices.

SUPPORT HOLISTIC INUIT PATHWAY TO WELLBEING

Being out on the land and water supports physical and psychological wellbeing. Graduates of the program, who are often headed to college or university are encouraged to come back and help as assistant instructors, they receive an honorarium for their time.



Youth paddling just off Igluligaarjuk
(Chesterfield Inlet)



Elder Louis Autut has been with the
qajaq program since 2004



"The Qajaq is true Inukgenuity"

- Glen Brocklebank, Program Director



Simon Aggark is a graduate who now volunteers with the qajaq program, sharing his skills with younger paddlers. He also sits on the board and was part of the team that won the AIP in 2017

"I learned how to build qajaqs and most people in Nunavut don't know how to do that anymore. And it's dying out. People don't use them as often anymore" - Youth Participant

"Teach more people how to build [qajaqs] so other communities will know how to do it and more kids know how, and so no one forgets how to build them" - Youth Participant



Youth paddling in Chesterfield Inlet



Click the image above to watch Qajaq's 2017 AIP Laureate video.

skill development

CARPENTRY

Woodworking skills when building qajaqs.

LOCAL INUIT KNOWLEDGE

Revitalizing local and regional Inuit Knowledge about the qajaq.

LAND-BASED LEARNING

Students learn how to stay safe on both land and water & they develop and nurture spiritual connections to the land - Avatitinnik Kamatsiarniq.

CONNECTIONS TO OTHERS

Social skills, volunteering, giving, sharing & leadership, team-building skills.

POSITIVE PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Stress relief & pride in identity.

ATTENDANCE

Higher levels of school attendance while the program is running.



Glen Brocklebank helps Naomi Simik complete a wet exit



ARCTIC INSPIRATION PRIZE

AIP provided crucial operational funding which allowed the project to continue operations by purchasing materials, wetsuits, and equipment. The team is hoping to be able to ship disassembled qajaq to other communities in the future.

All annotated photos are attributed to Glen Brocklebank, from ThePhilanthropist.ca
The unannotated photo is from The Qajaq Program - 2017 AIP Laureate - Final video [located here.](#)