Dear Shareholders,

The Sitnasuak Native Corporation Board of Directors is pleased to announce that, with the 46th Annual Meeting and Election being held on November 9th, we will be back on track with our yearly elections.

We, the board and staff, must focus on our significance to Shareholders and our communities. We understand that our vision of strong Shareholders and Descendants grounded in identity and determined to preserve our life ways and wisdom will be supported through hard work and innovation.

We understand that our mission of earning profits and protecting our lands is achieved through partnership and the guidance of our Elders. We know that we must guide our younger Shareholders and Descendants into leadership so that they can use their voices and resources to continue to serve and further social good among our communities. We commit to working hard to fulfill these responsibilities.

Thank you to each for attending the 46th Annual Meeting held on November 9, 2019. I encourage you to attend Board Meetings to share with us your questions, suggestions and messages.

Barb (Qasułgana) Amarok,
Chair of the Board
In a packed room of Alaska’s top business leaders, Alaska Business Monthly revealed the 2019 Top 49ers. These companies are the largest Alaska-owned businesses based on annual revenues. This year, Sitnasuak Native Corporation (SNC) was ranked at number 28 on the list with $133,494,517 in revenue for fiscal year 2018.

Board of Directors Chair Barb (Qasuġlana) Amarok said, “Sitnasuak is honored to be recognized by Alaska Business in the 2019 Top 49ers ranking. Alaska Native Corporations have grown and continue to demonstrate their economic importance to the Alaskan economy with jobs, business services and community investments.”

The 2019 Top 49ers represent Alaskan-owned and Alaska-operated companies ranked as determined by the 2018 gross revenues. Alaska Business annually surveys companies for ranking in the Top 49ers that are at least 51 percent Alaskan-owned. While revealing SNC’s ranking in the Top 49ers the reviewers highlighted SNC’s diverse family of businesses, ranging from fuel storage and delivery services in Nome, to statewide title services through Fidelity Title Agency of

The SNC team at the Top 49ers luncheon.
Alaska, LLC, and on to nationwide impact through Mocean, LLC and SNC Technical Services, LLC (SNCT). Of notable mention, and to the delight of the crowd, the announcer shared SNCT’s recently expanded product line of waterproof parkas with hoods for the U.S. Army and Air Force.

Mr. Richard Strutz, interim CEO, shared, “Sitnasuak is solidly a successful and growing Village Corporation. I would like to recognize the hardworking employees that deliver quality every day to our Alaskan and national customers. Our overall performance as a Corporation demonstrates our team dedication to serving our clients with a focus on quality and value with many hours of hard work and commitment.”
Take advantage of two Sitnasuak Shareholder discounts with Bonanza Fuel and Nanuaq! Both offers benefit our Shareholders and help make the cost of living more affordable in Nome.

The Shareholder discount offered by Bonanza Fuel, LLC is $0.70 per gallon of heating fuel. “We are very proud to offer Sitnasuak Shareholders a heating fuel discount with Bonanza,” shared Scot Henderson, CEO of Bonanza Fuel, LLC. “We know the benefit is important to our Shareholders, Descendants and their families to help keep homes warm and affordable.” The total value of the Shareholder fuel discounts in 2018 amounted to $187,511.

Original, inherited or gifted Shareholders enrolled in Sitnasuak are eligible for the heating fuel discount. Direct Descendants of Shareholders, meaning children or grandchildren of parent(s) or grandparent(s) enrolled in Sitnasuak, are also eligible for the discount. All must be at least eighteen (18) years or older to apply. The discount application is available in the Sitnasuak/Bonanza Fuel Nome office and posted at snc.org.

The Shareholder discount offered by Nanuaq, LLC is for residential apartment rentals. Original, inherited or gifted Shareholders enrolled in Sitnasuak Native Corporation are eligible and must be at least eighteen (18) years or older to apply. The Shareholder discount provides $25 off per month for efficiency units, $50 off per month for one-bedroom units, $75 off per month for two-bedroom units and $100 off per month for 3-bedroom units. “The rental discounts are one way our business can help Shareholders to live in Nome with our apartments,” said Jim Abbott, manager of Nanuaq, LLC. The total value of the Shareholder rental discounts in 2018 amounted to $12,675. The apartment rental discount application is available in the Nome Sitnasuak/Nanuaq office and posted at snc.org.
Mr. Richard Strutz rejoined Sitnasuak as the interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) effective September 9, 2019.

Mr. Strutz is very familiar with SNC as he had served as the Corporation CEO from April 2015 to May 2017. “We are glad to welcome Richard back to the Sitnasuak management team as we complete our search for the President and CEO positions in the coming months,” stated Board Chair Barb Amarok. “We appreciate the interim CEO leadership he can provide with our Corporation and our family of businesses.”

Mr. Strutz shared, “I am honored to help Sitnasuak as interim CEO and offer my experience and talents. Sitnasuak has great management teams in place which are very valuable to the success of the Corporation. I look forward to helping the Board and management in providing for Shareholders and continuing to support Sitnasuak as a leading Alaska Native Village Corporation.”

Mr. Strutz is a well-known business leader in Alaska. He had a 43-year career at Wells Fargo and its predecessor, National Bank of Alaska. He spent 20 of those years as the company’s chief executive in Alaska. In recognition of his business accomplishments, he was inducted to the Junior Achievement of Alaska’s Business Hall of Fame in 2017. He has also been involved in many civic and community organizations over the years such as Rotary and the Providence Ministry Board.
Each year, Sitnasuak Native Corporation and the Sitnasuak Elders Committee honors an Elder for their many contributions and dedication to our community. For 2019, the Elders Committee honors Bobby Bahnke, Sr.

Robert S. (Nigluq) Bahnke, Sr., or better known as Bobby, was born to Frances Cora Cook on August 21, 1938 at Fort Davis outside of Nome, Alaska. He is the second oldest of ten children. Bobby was adopted by one of his mother's best friends, Elsie Sophie (Nelson) Bahnke and her husband Perry Tucker Bahnke. Bobby was raised in Bluff and Nome, Alaska.

As a youth, along with his younger sisters Angeline Elsie (Bahnke) Green and Dorothy Ann (Ball) O’Connor, the family camped all along the coast at Nuuk, Topkox, Silverbow, Haycock and Kuzitrin, where they subsisted and were taught important lessons in how to hunt and live off the land. This was the start of a lifelong knowledge of the lands, rivers and coast, that included areas for hunting, fishing, berry and green picking, growing
vegetables, ice crabbing and hand lining. His father and grandpa both taught him how to mine gold and what to search for when mining for gold.

Bobby learned to fly at a young age. He loved flying around our region – making sure our people, lands, rivers and properties were not in harm’s way from wild animals or trespassers.

In the early 1970s, Bobby moved his family to Kotzebue. He brought the kids on the ice to fish for Sheefish and lingcod, and hunt for caribou, teaching them the Kotzebue way of subsistence living. He instilled this in his kids: “If you shoot it, you must prepare it and eat what you hunt.” Later, Bobby moved his family back home to Nome when he accepted a job with the State of Alaska’s Department of Transportation.

When Bobby’s children were young, he and his family would fly to Shishmaref for reindeer round-up, teaching his children about their mother’s ways of subsistence living in her village. He and MaryAnn taught their children how to hunt for izza, reindeer herd and berry pick. They also taught them how to go up the river to bring home fresh drinking water for their maternal grandparents.

At the young age of 81, Bobby still loves camping, boating, 4-wheeling in the summer and snowmachining in the winter. Bobby taught his family the subsistence way of life; the way he was taught that had been passed down for generations. Guiding values include to care for the land, hunt and prepare foods in a respectful manner, never take more than you can eat or use and to give your first catch to an Elder’s family.

Bobby’s children from his first marriage to MaryAnn (Allockeok) Bahnke are: Denise Michels with granddaughter Leighlou Michels; Reatha and husband Tony Cox with children Derek Bahnke, Alex Bahnke, Cody Mork, great-granddaughter Ava Bahnke; and Robert S. (Bee) Bahnke, Jr. and wife Dawn O’Connor-Bahnke with children Brandon Bahnke and Quinten Bahnke. In 1967, Bobby and Mary Ann lost their daughter Roberta Gail Bahnke.

Bobby is now married to Karen Dickson-Bahnke and together, Bobby and Karen enjoy raising their granddaughter Jayda Dickson-Tucker. Karen’s daughters are Courtney Tucker and Adrienne Dickson-Bahnke, who Bobby adopted when she was 16.

Bobby has served on Sitnasuak’s Land Committee since 1974. He also served on the SNC Board Directors in the 1980s. The love of the land and the protection of our resources are his top priorities. Bobby is honored with this recognition by Sitnasuak.
Janelle Otton joined the Sitnasuak Finance Department as an Accounting Technician at Nome headquarters on May 28, 2019.

“We are so glad to welcome Janelle back to Sitnasuak to work with our finance team as the accounting technician,” shared Sitnasuak Controller Lesli Smith. “She is familiar with our Corporation and we look forward to working with her as we implement strategies and systems for a stronger organization.”

Janelle worked with Bonanza Fuel, LLC as a receptionist from 2011 to 2014. She recently worked for Norton Sound Health Corporation as an accounts payable technician.

“I was born and raised in Koyuk, Alaska and went to Mount Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, then moved to Nome shortly thereafter,” stated Janelle. “I have been raising my family in Nome with my husband Fred, who is a Sitnasuak Shareholder. Most of my career background is finance-related and I look forward to bringing that experience into my job and continuing to grow my skills. I am currently taking online courses through the University of Alaska Southeast toward an accounting technician certificate that aligns with my current position at Sitnasuak.”

Janelle shared, “My husband and I have three sons: Dustin (13), Karver (8) and Jude (3). Our family is active in subsistence, from seal and beluga hunting to gathering greens and picking berries. We enjoy living in Nome and appreciate this opportunity to work with Sitnasuak.”

Welcome, Janelle!
MISSING SHAREHOLDERS

Anagick, Natalia
Angnabooguk, Percy
Attatayuk, John
Brower, Dale
Buck, Mary
Carter, Jeanette
Cauble, Jennifer
Chapman, Oliver
Childers, Allison
Coleman, Gretchen
Dixon, Scott
Douglas, Alie
Ernak II, Frederick
Floyd, Ruth
Giffin, Laura
Goff, Norman
Goldsberry, Samuel
Guiley, Jacqualyn
Haworth, Julia
Heidlebaugh, James
Herman, Sidney
Hickok, Elizabeth
Hutton, Albert
Iyatunguk, Frank
Jack, Hazel
James, Thomas
Johnson, John
Johnson, Melanie
Katexac, Romald
Katongan, Frances
Keeble, Judith
Kinney, Jennifer
Kowchee, Petula
Koweluk, Harley
Kulik, Melissa
Larsen, Darrell
Larsen, Elizabeth
Larsen, Jr., George
Littlefield, Scott
Luciano, Anthony
Lucier, Paul
Maldonado, Jaden
Malewotkuk, Jr., Woodrow
Mayer, Nellie
Mazonna, Anthony
McClary, Kelly
Milligrock, Charlene
Montana, Carla
Morgan, Kendra
Morse, Jr., Robert
Murphy, Daniel
Murphy, David
Murphy, James
Okitkon, Elsie
Oliver, Vicki
Olson, Alexandria
Olson, Jennifer
Omelak, Richard
Orr, Darlene
Ozenna, Dawn
Ozenna, Louie
Ozenna, Rachel
Ozenna, Sandra
Russell, Jennifer
Sanchez, Anno Kazooka
Schuldt, Deanna
Scott, Alonzo
Seeganna, Mark
Silook, Ivan
Smith, Starla
Solis, Destini
Soolook, Charlie
Soolook, Gene
Soolook, Marcia
Soolook, Otto
Walluk, William
Washington, Preston
Wittie, Frank
Wittie, Jamie
Yool, Theresa

If you know the whereabouts of a missing Shareholder, please contact our Shareholder Department at shareholder@snc.org or 907.929.7032.
There are few things more entertaining than live theater performed in a small, group setting that allows the audience to interact with actors just a few feet away. “The Winter Bear” is a play written by former Alaska Writer Laureate Anne Hanley that has been staged in the school gyms and community centers of many Alaska communities since 2008. Both surprisingly fun and powerful, the play tells the story of an Elder who teaches a Native youth contemplating suicide how to use traditional culture to overcome his problems and find his true voice in modern times.

Alaska has the highest rate of suicide in America, with Alaska Natives committing suicide at a rate more than three times the national average. Young Native males are at the highest risk. The play attempts to reach our youth with a positive message of hope before they enter that age of high risk by engaging them with an uplifting story of empowerment.

This past spring, a cast and crew from Juneau’s Perseverance Theater took “The Winter Bear” to seven communities in Alaska, including Nome. This journey covered 4,690 miles around Alaska. Perseverance Theater was founded in 1979 and has grown into Alaska’s largest professional theater, committed to artistic work that speaks directly to the Alaska experience. (Find more info at ptalaska.org.)

The play is only one part of The Winter Bear Project, which expands lessons of the play into performing arts school workshops and behavioral health support through nonprofit partners. Its mission is “…to change the climate of fear and hopelessness that breeds suicide by broadening awareness, stimulating dialogue and promoting healing through the performing arts.”
‘The Winter Bear’ (continued)

As one of the play’s lead actors, Brian Wescott, said in an interview, “The Winter Bear Project differs from other kinds of suicide-prevention efforts in that it comes from a completely unexpected way. It’s not a lecture. It’s not reading material. There’s something irreplaceable about going to a community and performing with live people in their place. They change the show. Every audience we have is so different. It’s just amazing what that does.”

A total of 635 people attended the play in 2019, and 338 of them attended the school workshops. Sitnasuak is proud to have joined many organizations, including several Alaska Native Corporations, in funding the play because it provides an important message to our community by incorporating culture, character and contribution.

In Nome, the cast was met at the airport with a big “Welcome” sign, followed by a potluck of salmon and halibut at the Nome Elementary School. The event was hosted by Norton Sound Health Corporation and featured fry bread and blueberry desserts made by youth-focused community groups. At the Anchorage performance, the audience was silent throughout the play but eager to ask questions afterward.

More than 150 people came to see the play in Buckland, where the cast was swarmed after the final curtain by the joyous community, many of whom asked for autographs. In Shungnak, the Manillaq Wellness Team facilitated a meeting on how to prevent suicide and a potluck, during which many people spoke up with great ideas.

“The mission of the play and its life-affirming message told in an approachable way are so important to support our youth with life lessons from our Elders. Sitnasuak was proudly a supporter of the project to engage our Shareholders and our community at large to support efforts to address suicide and promote cultural solutions,” explained Sitnasuak Vice President of Natural Resources, Shareholder and Corporate Relations Ukallaysaaq Tom Okleasik. “We believe the good the play does for Native people throughout Alaska is well worth our support and aligns with our core values of culture, character and contribution.”

You can learn more about the “The Winter Bear” and stay updated as play organizers plan a schedule of dates and locations for next year at winterbearproject.com.

If you or anyone you know is struggling with depression or thoughts of suicide, please call 1.800.273.TALK (8255).
Our 2019 Sitmasuak Shareholder Survey results are in! Quyaana to each Shareholder who participated to help improve our services. This year’s survey had the highest participation ever, with 391 Shareholders providing valuable input to our Corporation. Overall, the survey showed increases in usefulness of Shareholder communications, better knowledge of Shareholder benefits and services and more positive association with the Corporation. The survey was completely confidential and anonymous.
Survey Results (continued)

We are glad to share the summary results with our Shareholders.

On a scale of one to five, with five being great, survey participants rated the usefulness of Shareholder communications at 3.5. The Sitnasuak Elders Calendar was rated the highest at 4.25. The least useful rating was Twitter at 2.63. The usefulness rating for all types of communication increased in 2019.
Survey Results (continued)

Survey participants rated their knowledge and information about benefits and services with the highest knowledge/information about Shareholder records at 3.68 (with five as the highest rating). The least knowledge/information was the Shareholder home site program rated at 2.48.

Survey participants had an average rating of 66 when asked if they had a positive association with Sitnasuak as my Village Corporation (with 0 as the low and 100 as the high). This increased from an average rating of 62 in 2018. 170 of the survey participants shared comments – 75 (or 44.1%) were positive, 45 (or 26.5%) were negative and 50 (or 29.4%) were general or neutral comments.

Sitnasuak values your participation in the survey for input, feedback and sharing of ideas. The Corporation is continually improving Shareholder services and we are working to make positive changes based upon the survey data.
Paglağipsil Uvana İñuraaq Kaylene Evans. Sitnasuanmiuruña. İñupiaqguruña. Kigitagmiutlu Katyaağmiutlu ilatkaa. My name is İñuraaq Kaylene Evans. I was born and raised in Nome. My parents are Kathleen Aagayuk Jaycox of Kiana and Bobby Keok Evans of Nome. My maternal grandparents are Myrtle İñuraaq Wells of Kiana and Dwight Jaycox of California. My paternal grandparents are Laura Muktoya Sockpick Evans of Shishmaref and Bob Evans of Minnesota. I am humbled to have been crowned Miss World Eskimo Indian Olympics (WEIO) for the 2018-2019 year.

When I was in the third grade, I was gifted a beautiful parky from my aana’s cousin, Elsie. It was made with black velveteen and adorned with beaver cuffs and a wolverine ruff. It was perfect, yet I lied to my mom that the fit was off. I claimed the cuffs were too tight and it inhibited my sledding ability. Truthfully, I wanted to fit in with the naluaǥmiut (non-Natives) that had Northface or Columbia jackets.

I share this story often and I shared it at the Miss WEIO pageant. This is my oldest memory of when I was willing to give up the beauty, hard work and literal gift of our Alaska Native cultures to assimilate (fit) into naluağmiut society. I participated in the Miss WEIO pageant to heal the parts of myself that were still willing to hide, ignore or “take off” what it means to be Native. The Miss WEIO pageant provided the opportunity to reclaim space and model how and why I am proud of my Native identity and heritage. It gave me multiple opportunities to stand proudly in an intricately made muskrat, wolf and wolverine parky that was generously lent out to me for the pageant.
Yet it is simply not about wearing our culture – it is about learning, knowing and practicing it. Miss WEIO pageant prompts us to know what it means to be Native. Of course, this varies for each individual. Nevertheless, it is vital to know. Specifically, they ask: “Who made your regalia? What skills and sacrifices went into making such garments? How is it valuable to you?” And, broadly, they ask: “Where are you from? Who is your family? What traditions do you know? What customs are you learning? Which values do you live by?”

Miss WEIO provides the time to focus on how you are strong in your Native identity and how you got there. Who has helped you? Who are you now helping? I believe these are important questions for all Alaska Natives.

A major realization I had at WEIO and within the pageant is how we are all the same people. Despite the various identities, families or villages, Alaska Natives have core values and beliefs that unite us. We respect our Elders, we cherish our children and we love to subsist. We practice humor! We feel the responsibility to take care of our lands, our communities and each other. Any time we meet someone, we try to make a connection. Whether it is by blood or bond, we find people in common. This seeking of unity is one of our most profound strengths. It has allowed us to thrive in harsh climates and through devastations.

Yet, what happens when we forget these things? What happens when we were never taught them?

I was living in Nome when I gave up my parky in third grade. I had an Iñupiaq teacher at the time. She was only one of two Native teachers that I have had out of my 13 years in the public education system, the other one taught an elective at Nome-Beltz. In school, I did not learn of missionaries coming to Alaska. I did not learn how they demonized our dances, songs and cultural beliefs that all things had spirits. I did not learn of the diseases that caused near-population collapse. I did not learn that when schools were established, we had to give up our languages and Native identities to survive abuse. I did not learn that Alaska Natives did not and still do not have all of the same rights that naluaqmiiut have in our homelands. I did not learn of the trauma that Alaska Natives experienced and continue to live through.

These things are not publicly or outwardly named, yet they are viscerally felt and internalized. At eight years old, I felt these things and stopped wearing my parky. Last year, my Iñupiaq cousin in second grade was teased for wearing his atikluk (kaspak) on picture day by a naluaqmiiut classmate. Unfortunately, his shame motivated him to take off his atikluk for the school photo.

It had taken me 15 years to intentionally seek out the Miss WEIO pageant as a form of healing my younger self. During that time, I was still practicing my culture.
I would pick sura with my gram, berry pick with my mom and aunts, fish with my dad and siblings. I wore atikluks, maklaks and a new parky gifted from my Gram Laura. Yet, I had not intentionally sought out our cultures as a form of healing until the pageant.

What happens when our youth do not have the same opportunities to reclaim their pride? What if they do not live long enough to heal?

As Miss WEIO, I have learned that having pride in our Native identity is a form of healing that will be an important life-long journey. It is an everyday action and honor to be proud of who we are. It requires us to learn as much as we can about our histories, languages and traditions. It requires us to practice and share all that we know. It requires us to pass down every lesson, word and custom. It requires us to count on each other as teachers and leaders and friends on this journey. It requires compassion for ourselves and others who are still learning what it means to be Native.

It requires choosing pride and gratitude that we are still here while healing from the trauma we as a people have endured. It requires good role modeling for this pride, because there are younger eyes needing to know how to stand up when others make us feel like we are less for being Native. It requires us to celebrate who we are, together. It requires us to love ourselves and to love each other, because we are the same people from this amazing land with heritages and languages to proudly share.

Quyaana,

Iñuraaq Kaylene Evans,
2018 Miss WEIO
Key values that define our corporate and business culture are:

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