

## **IRC Chair Duane Smith announces priorities for third term**

*Focus on expanding self-determination, Inuvialuit services, culture and infrastructure*

January 26, 2022 (INUVIK) - Duane Ningaqsiq Smith began his third term as Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Chair and CEO today, having been acclaimed for a four-year mandate that will focus on expanding Inuvialuit self-determination and further increasing community support and infrastructure.

"I'm proud to provide Inuvialuit with principled, trustworthy leadership that consistently delivers for our communities," said Chair Smith. "I want to thank the IRC Board and all our 42 Community Corporation directors for their continued support as we work on behalf of Inuvialuit."

Smith said his priorities for the coming years include implementing the IRC's new child wellbeing law, which will include negotiating funding and support with the Government of Canada, building an Inuvialuit Legal Aid service, developing \$50M in new infrastructure across all communities, significantly increasing funding support for post-secondary education, launching the Uummarmiutun Dictionary in 2022, and the continued development of the M-18 well through the Inuvialuit Energy Security Project.

First elected as Chair in 2016, Smith has led the IRC through a busy period of expansion and strong financial performance which includes growing Federal contribution agreements to \$60M, a strong COVID-19 response, increased beneficiary enrolment and registration, more Inuvialuit employed by IRC and in senior management roles, increased transparency and significant funding increase for the six Community Corporations to run their own affairs.

IRC has also helped lead the first ever Inuit Health Survey, the new Health Systems Navigator, On the Land programming and the Project Jewel wellness program, and introduced the Elders Support Workers and gathering program as well as the implementation of the Brighter Futures and breakfast programs in ISR schools.

Housing has also been a priority, with the Elders Home Renovation and Housing upgrade programs, the construction of 34 new housing units in three years, a new transition home for women and children and local employment on all projects.

The IRC will continue its focus on cultural support and economic growth which has seen the introduction of the Kangiryuarmiutun (Inuinnaqtun) Inuvialuktun Dictionary, the Inuvialuit place name project, Language Act advocacy, the acquisition of the reindeer herd, Reindeer Herders Program, new Country Food Processing Plant, and the modernization of the Inuvialuit Harvesters Assistance Program.

Under Smith's leadership, Inuvialuit beneficiaries now represent four out of five IRC employees.

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For more information, please contact Communications Advisor Elizabeth Kolb at 867 678 0540.

### **About the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation**

Established in 1984 to manage the settlement outlined in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA), Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) represents the collective interests of Inuvialuit in and beyond the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The IRC works to continually improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of the Inuvialuit through implementation of the IFA and by all other available means.