

Nunatsiavut

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We Are Ready: LIA Promotes Land Claims Message in Ottawa

We are ready. That was the key message LIA communicated in a series of meetings held in Ottawa from October 25 to 29. LIA President William Andersen III, as well as representatives from LIA's Board, land claims negotiation team and communications team met with Honourable Andy Scott, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs as well as other Members of Parliament, Senators and key officials. The meetings were necessary in light of LIA's original intention to hold a signing ceremony for the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement in Nain on December 3. The meetings also

provided LIA with an opportunity to ensure that federal members of all political parties are adequately informed of the Agreement in order to ensure a smooth process when the Agreement is introduced in the House of Commons and Senate next spring. The provincial government has already committed to introducing a Bill to ratify the Agreement in the House of Assembly before Christmas.

President Andersen reported that the Ottawa meetings were a success in several ways. There appears to be solid support for the Land Claims

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Photo: Our youth – our future. Back row (L-R): Roxanne Morris, Sabrina O'Brien, Courtney Allen. Front (L-R): Zoe Michelin, Nakita Beals.

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Rigolet (at large)

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Sarah Townley
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Rigolet
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This magazine is a bi-monthly publication of the Labrador Inuit Association.

We value your input, so please let us know what you thought of this issue and any suggestions/ideas you may have for future issues. We welcome submissions of articles for publication. LIA reserves the right to edit all submissions.

You can contact us at any of the offices above or contact Perry & Butland Communications by telephone: 709-753-0794, by fax: 709-753-0795, or by e-mail: jdaly@jpperry.nf.ca

President's Message



William Andersen III, President, LIA

Since the historic May 26 vote by Labrador Inuit to ratify our Land Claims Agreement, LIA's leadership has been hard at work to ensure that the next steps occur smoothly and in a timely manner. These steps include ratification by the provincial and federal governments. I am pleased to report that all efforts are on track to have the Agreement come into effect in 2005. On the provincial side, both Premier Danny Williams and Minister for Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Tom Rideout have committed to ensuring that the Bill to ratify the Agreement is introduced in the House of Assembly this fall, with the goal of passing the Bill before Christmas. Given the support LIA has received from all political parties, no opposition is anticipated. Efforts are also underway to ensure that the federal Minister and the Cabinet approve the Agreement so that it can be introduced in the House of Commons and the Senate next spring.

As we move forward toward the day some time in the next year when a signing ceremony will be held in Nain to mark the Agreement's coming into effect, we are also making changes within LIA to ensure we are ready for transition. We are strengthening our communications to ensure effective liaison with both levels of government and with the public and to keep our members informed at every stage of the process. We are also working to build a transition team. Until a new government is elected, LIA will provide the transitional government for Nunatsiavut. To prepare for this, we are reviewing existing structures to ensure that planning and preparation are thorough. The transitional government has a crucial role to play; it will lay the groundwork for the first election in which our people will vote to create regional self-government. LIA is committed to a well-planned, truly democratic and inclusive process. It is an important part of our long road to self-determination.

The importance of self-determination and the need to take charge of our decisions was evident at our recent annual health conference held from October 18 to 22 in North West River. The theme of this year's conference was the linkages between health, language and culture. Labrador Inuit have long known that these are deeply intertwined. The wellness of our language and the strength of our culture and identity are important factors in our overall health, as individuals and as a society. Loss of language and cultural fragmentation have had detrimental effects on our people and our communities. We have seen the results in mental health, addictions, the erosion of a traditional, healthy lifestyle and in lack of access to the kinds of services we know we need to meet our health care needs. On the other hand, it was evident from the level of participation and awareness during the conference that we are now in a better position than ever before to turn things around. Labrador Inuit have the capacity to plan, develop and deliver our own health care programs. Self-government will allow us to strengthen that capacity and determine strategic directions. Labrador Inuit want access to the same level of health care as other Canadians. We also want health care that reflects our own priorities. The recent health conference provided an effective forum to set priorities and future directions. It serves as an excellent example of the kind of discussion and dialogue Labrador Inuit need to participate in as we prepare for self-government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Andersen III'.

William Andersen III
President, LIA



Photo (L-R): Stephen Hendrie, ITK, LIA Vice-President Tony Andersen and Hon. Carolyn Bennett, P.C., MP during meetings in Ottawa.

Report from LIA's Board

LIA's Board of Directors met in Makkovik from October 5-8. Issues for discussion included the progress of land claims ratification, Voisey's Bay, the SMART Labrador program, housing and the fuel situation in Rigolet.

Land Claims Ratification Update

LIA Land Claims Director Toby Andersen gave an update on the status of the Land Claims Ratification Process. He announced that negotiations are now complete. The Land Claims Agreement has been finalized (with the exception of technical amendments to clarify it) and has been sent to negotiators for their initials. Along with the final agreement document, negotiators will need to initial the first five-year fiscal financing agreement and the revenue resource agreement. Mr. Andersen said that efforts are being made to ensure that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador pass the agreement before Christmas. Efforts are also underway to ensure federal approval in the spring of 2005. A signing ceremony in Nain is being planned, the date to be determined.

President William Andersen reported that LIA has the full support of a number of key people. Tom Rideout, Minister for Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, indicated to LIA in September

that the provincial government will introduce legislation in the fall and that he anticipates no opposition to the Agreement. Torngat MHA Wally Andersen assured LIA that there would be support from Liberal party members in the House of Assembly, since they initialed the agreement in 2003. President Andersen also reported on his meeting with MHA Yvonne Jones who made it clear that she supports the Agreement. He also met with Senate House Leader Bill Rompkey in Ottawa who said it would be a privilege to sponsor the Bill. President Andersen reported that he and Toby Andersen would be meeting with a number of MHAs, MPs and others in Ottawa, including Labrador MP Lawrence O'Brien

Preparing for Transition

Discussion also centered around the process of transition. Until a Nunatsiavut government is elected, LIA will act as the transitional government. Toby Andersen presented recommendations for the structure of the new transition team. Municipal governments within Nunatsiavut were also discussed and it was decided that municipal governments will continue as they are currently until

the next municipal election. When transition into Nunatsiavut takes place, the communities will transition from town councils to community governments. There will be one seat for each council on the transition team.

LIA also appointed three of its directors to take on full-time responsibility as Vice Presidents of LIA: Suzanne Andersen, Ben Ponniuk and Gus Dicker.

Strengthening Communications and Planning

LIA President William Andersen III noted that as ratification proceeds, effective communications will be a vital part of the process. LIA has retained the services of Mary Simon and Ron Dearing, both of whom will work for LIA in Ottawa. Mary Simon, who will be working on ratification of the agreement by the Government of Canada, attended the meeting. Speaking in Inuttitut, she expressed her admiration for LIA's efforts and discussed her involvement in the Makkivik negotiations.

Marilyn Butland, of Perry & Butland Communications, provided an overview of communications



Photo (L-R): Zippie Nochasak, Sarah Townley and Suzanne Andersen at the 2004 LIHC Health Conference.

planned to ensure there is full support for the Agreement in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as throughout Canada.

President Andersen talked about the important work that remains to be done, including detailed transition planning, budget preparation and the drafting of Inuit laws.

Voisey's Bay Update

The Board also discussed progress at Voisey's Bay and its implications for LIA members. Voisey's Bay Nickel Company (VBNC) has accelerated the construction phase and hopes to start mining in May 2005, with the first shipment in November 2005 and construction completed by 2006. This change in timeline will have an effect on the implementation of LIA's Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA). LIA has developed a human resources strategy for the final stages of the mine. There will be approximately 400 jobs in the operation phase, compared to approximately 1300 during the construction phase. Every position has been identified along with the skills and training required for each. Unofficially, VBNC expects about half of the workforce to be aboriginal, and LIA is working hard to fulfill that goal by using IBA and JETA funds for training programs. Another aspect of the human resources strategy is breaking down every single position and



Photo (L-R): LIA President William Andersen III and Scott Hand, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Inco Limited meet in Ottawa October 27, 2004 to discuss Inuit opportunities with the operations phase of the Voisey's Bay project.

then identifying LIA and aboriginal candidates suitable for each. Where there are no LIA members or aboriginals qualified for a position, the position will have to be filled by a non-aboriginal applicant. Because the construction and operations phases are not compatible in terms of skills/trades required, LIA is attempting to train individuals in transferable skills.

Two training programs were delivered on site this year. The first was through TSI and dealt with the construction and installation of a permanent on-site accommodations complex. Once construction is completed, maintenance on the facility will lead to operational phase jobs. The second was through IKCB and trained 12 Inuit in construction

skills. LIA expects that aboriginals will fill all of the positions related to the mining of the ovoid. VBNC says that training never stops – members of the workforce are being trained on a daily basis. The project has given LIA members valuable experience (apprenticeship) that will put them on par with other Canadians.

There are also new business opportunities. VBNC has distributed 11 service contracts for the Business Development Committee. Six opportunities will be bid on exclusively by Inuit businesses. Procurement packages will be sent out in November.

SmartLabrador

LIA is encouraging governments to come up with the funds necessary

to re-establish SmartLabrador. SmartLabrador, whose line of business is Internet and video services, could offer the same level of services to smaller communities as Aliant will be providing to larger communities, such as Nain and Hopedale.

Housing

Work has started on the two houses being built for Nain staff as per previous Board approval.

Fuel Situation in Rigolet

LIA continues to work with the provincial government to resolve the fuel situation in Rigolet and to ensure that there is adequate supply for the winter. Honourable Tom Rideout, Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, has advised LIA that the government is committed to working with the organization to find a new gas operator for the area.

Staff News

Michelle Kinney has been appointed as the new CEO for the Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC).

Marilyn White is the new receptionist/secretary in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay office.

LIA welcomes both employees and wishes them success in their new positions.

...Continued from page 1, **We Are Ready: LIA Promotes Land Claims Message...**

Agreement from members of all political parties. A meeting with Senators Willie Adams (Nunavut) and Nick Sibbeston (Northwest Territories) confirmed their support. Senator Bill Rompkey appreciated LIA's acceptance of his offer to sponsor the Bill to pass the Agreement in the Senate. Other meetings provided key opportunities for LIA to answer questions, address any concerns and distribute information about the Agreement. "We are doing everything we can to

anticipate and answer all information needs," President Andersen said. "We've complied with all requests for information, and we feel that federal government members have enough information to prepare to send the Agreement to Cabinet committee." LIA will continue with a vigorous information campaign throughout the final stages of the ratification process.

"Our priority now," President Andersen said, "is to avoid delaying the signing. Because of the way things work in the House of Assembly and

the House of Commons, such a delay could set things back by as much as another year. This is what we have to avoid." In this regard, President Andersen was pleased with the support from Minister Scott's Department, but somewhat disappointed that the Minister could not confirm a commitment to the December signing by the end of the meetings. LIA will continue to plan for the signing ceremony and is hopeful that a firm commitment from Ottawa is imminent. "We can't let administrative issues or signing delays interfere with the Agreement's implementation date," he said. "This Agreement is too good for Canada for any party to delay it now. Labrador Inuit are ready. And I believe the people of Canada are ready."



Photo (L-R): Hon. Susan Barnes, Parliamentary Secretary, LIA President William Andersen III, and Hon. Andy Scott, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development meet in Ottawa on October 25, 2004 to discuss Land Claims Agreement.

Torngâsok Cultural Centre

The Torngâsok Cultural Centre, LIA's cultural division, is at work on a range of initiatives that all serve to fulfill its broad mandate - to preserve, protect, promote and advance Labrador Inuit language and culture. The Centre is located in Nain, and its research and heritage resources are available to the public. The Centre is also the organization responsible for the Labrador Inuit Youth Division. Its objective is to assist Labrador Inuit youth in becoming more involved in their communities, to help them acquire leadership skills, to assist them in their efforts to improve their quality of life, and to ensure the future of youth in Labrador Inuit communities.

Torngâsok's core funding comes from the Cultural Education Centres Program of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Program funding comes from Canadian Heritage through the Languages Initiative. The Labrador Inuit Youth Division receives administrative funding from the Labrador Inuit Health Commission and program funds from Canadian Heritage through the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre Initiative and First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy. In addition, both

Torngâsok and the Youth Division have received funding through the Tasiujatsoak Trust Fund, established through the Voisey's Bay Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA).

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Centre and its programs should contact:

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Torngâsok Cultural Centre to Expand Language Nest Program

The Torngâsok Cultural Centre is planning to introduce its Inuagguait or Language Nest program to Nain. Language Nest is an idea borrowed from the Maori – New Zealand's aboriginal group. The program hopes



Photo: Catheryn Andersen facilitates a Culture-Language Focus Group Session at the LIHC Health Conference in North West River.

to spark language revival by teaching Inuttitut to infants as a first language, as opposed to a second language. The Language Nest program was introduced in Hopedale in April 2001. While very successful, the program is currently suspended and under review. Future plans include extending the program to other areas.

Nain's Language Nest program will be housed in the new childcare centre being built by the Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC). Two programs will be available: one for infants up to 24 months and a second for children aged two to three. Due to space restrictions, each program will be able to accommodate a maximum of six children. Consultations have already taken place in Nain and there has been considerable interest from parents. Now the challenge will be to find staff who are both fluent in Inuttitut and who have some early childhood training/experience.



Photo (L-R): Jason Edmunds and Abie Winters attend the 2004 LIHC Annual Health Conference.

Four Winds Aboriginal Youth Centre Opens

The goal of the Four Winds Aboriginal Youth Centre is to help meet the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional needs of aboriginal young people. And since the drop-in centre opened its doors in July, it has been doing just that.

Located at 716 Water Street in St. John's, Four Winds offers many activities for youth (ages 10-29) both on and off the premises - ranging from a Kids' Craft Day to swimming, skating and trips to the Newfoundland Science Centre. On October 1, 2004, the Four Winds Aboriginal Youth Centre celebrated its Grand Opening with an open house. The event was a huge success with more than 40 people visiting throughout the day including Environment and Conservation Minister Tom Osbourne and City Councilor Frank Galgay. The dancing and drumming group provided entertainment and a traditional dinner of moose stew, stuffed salmon, and tarts filled with homemade jam was served. For more information or to sign up for the Centre's newsletter, *Youth Spirit*,



Photo (L-R): Lori LeDrew, Yvonne Osbourne, MHA Tom Osbourne, and LIA Member Nat Igloliorte celebrate the opening of the Four Winds Youth Centre.

contact Lori or Jason at youth@friendshipcentre.nf.net Or better yet - drop in! Hours of operation are from 9 am to 9 pm Monday through Friday and 12 to 5 pm on Saturdays.

Wild Crafting Workshop - Art from Your Own Backyard

The Torngāsok Cultural Centre's Youth Division was pleased to present a Wild Crafting Workshop in Nain, August 27 to 29, 2004. Wild crafting is a gift of nature, using materials that can be found right in your own backyard. The idea of wild crafting – creating works of art from nature – has been ongoing in Labrador for years, and the Youth Division was delighted to arrange for two wild crafting experts to conduct the sessions. Isobel Watts of North West River taught participants how to press flowers and leaves to create beautiful framed pieces as well as to enhance cards, bookmarks and gift tags.

Audrey Broomfield of Happy Valley-Goose Bay taught caribou tufting. By the end of her three-day session, everyone had completed a framed caribou tufting to take home. Participants included youth from Hopedale, Makkovik and Postville, as well as two seniors from Nain. The Youth Division would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to the instructors and all participants for making the workshop a huge success.

Ulinnaisigutet Inuktitut Dictionary

Over 20 years ago, August Andersen and William Kalleo, both since deceased, began work on a comprehensive Labrador Inuktitut Dictionary. Based on Schneider's Dictionary of Arctic Quebec dialect, it is the first dictionary ever compiled, edited and proofed entirely by Inuit. The dictionary is now in the final phase of production and the goal is to have it available in 2005.

Note: Articles on the Train the Trainer Workshop, Language Revitalization Strategist and Inuktitut Ukalaalutta Society coming in the next edition.



Photo: Caribou tufting instructor Audrey Broomfield with Susan Onalik of Makkovik.

Successful Season for Labrador Inuit Development Corporation (LIDC)

LIA's economic development and business affiliate, LIDC, invests in a variety of business ventures to develop material and human resources and expertise for the benefit of Labrador Inuit. LIDC contributes to both LIA's revenues and employment objectives through a number of successful and growing companies.

Positive Season for Torngat Ujaganniavingit Corporation (TUC)

The Torngat Ujaganniavingit Corporation (TUC) is involved in the production of dimension stone. TUC is 100% owned by LIDC, and over 80% of its employees are Labrador Inuit. TUC has revenues of approximately \$3.6 million, and assets valued in excess of \$13 million. TUC operations in Hopedale, Iggiak Bay and Ten Mile Bay were very successful this season. In the previous year, the company faced several challenges including discolourization of stone and a loss of its workforce to VBNC. These problems have since been overcome, with results of higher quality stone and a workforce gaining in skills and experience. Production in both Iggiak and Ten Mile Bay doubled since last season. Production at the Hopedale Stone Processing Plant has also increased significantly. The past season was very productive, with anticipated revenues of over \$6

million from over 2300 cubic metres of stone for sale at \$1500 US per unit.

The ongoing success of Ten Mile Bay has led to the development of several additional projects, employing a total of 110 people in quarrying, manufacturing, construction, marine services, catering and marketing.

- Tunnet Inc.–LIDC is the majority owner of Tunnet Inc., a marketing company based in Nain. Tunnet's mandate is to market TUC dimension stone worldwide.
- Hopedale Stone Processing Plant–LIDC constructed a 6200 square foot stone processing plant in Hopedale, which opened in September 2002. Employing 8-10 people on a full-time seasonal basis, the plant processes second-choice stone from the Ten Mile Bay and Iggiak quarries for the furniture and monument market. This past season the plant produced over 700 square metres of polished stone, a significant increase over the previous year.
- Ten Mile Bay North Stone Processing Plant–LIDC's 3200 square foot processing plant at Ten Mile Bay began production in September 2001. The plant processes second-choice stone strips for the tile and counter-top markets. Employing 8-10 workers seasonally, the plant produced over 4400 square metres this past season.

Feldspar Project Shows Promise

LIDC has conducted an exploratory drilling project at its feldspar deposit east of Churchill Falls. Early indications are that the deposit is deep enough to support yields of up to two million tonnes. Core sampling of 120 metres is scheduled for November 2004. If results are positive, LIDC will look toward a feasibility study and in-depth discussions with the Innu Nation. TUC has received an offer of \$75,000 from ACOA to conduct a drill and test program, the total cost of which is estimated to be \$100,000.

The feldspar project presents LIA with the potential to build on its mining expertise, create employment and business opportunities for members in the Upper Lake Melville Area, generate new revenues and forge new business partnerships.

LIDC/Sea Voyager Expands Ground Fishery

For the past 10-15 years, LIA has strived to become more involved in the ground fishery, with a focus on turbot. Recently, LIA signed an agreement with Nunavut through the Baffin Fisheries Coalition that allows LIA to access a portion of the Coalition's turbot quota in area OA in the Davies Strait. One of the

conditions of the agreement was that the LIA obtain a suitable vessel that uses fixed - as opposed to mobile - gear. Unable to locate such a vessel in Canada, LIA expanded its search. On behalf of LIDC, Sea Voyager was successful in locating *The MV Eldfisk* through Argos Oceanic Ltd. of the UK. The 140-foot hook and line freezer ship—now Canadianized and renamed the *Appak* (great auk)—is being chartered on a lease-to-buy basis.

After delays due to licensing and inspection requirements, the *Appak* left for Nunavut on October 8 to fish the short arctic season. To date, the catch has been greater than hoped for. By the end of October, the *Appak* had caught 70 tonnes out of a 500-tonne quota.

The arrangement with Nunavut is expected to benefit Inuit in several ways. It provides employment both on the fishing vessel and in fish plants in Makkovik and Pangnirtung. The fishery will provide LIA with a historical attachment to the area and a working relationship with Nunavut that will benefit residents of both Nunavut and Labrador. As a long-term benefit, using fixed gear helps protect the resource for future

generations and contributes to LIA's goal of creating a sustainable fishery.

Sea Voyager also had a successful season in the crab and turbot fishery using its 64' 11" vessel, the *Newfoundland Mariner*.

PiKalujak Fisheries Limited (PIK): a Profitable Joint Venture

PiKalujak Fisheries Limited (PIK), 50% owned by LIDC, is involved in the harvesting of a quota of approximately 2500 tonnes of offshore northern shrimp, half of which belongs to LIDC. Other fishery resources to be harvested by LIDC and its partners and which are on schedule to be landed are 875 tonnes of Northern Coalition shrimp and 1250 tonnes of inshore shrimp in Area 5 and 109 tonnes in Area 4. PIK usually employs 11 LIA members full-time, though there were fewer the past season due to employment opportunities at Voisey's Bay.

Torngait Services Inc. Looking Ahead

Torngait Services Inc. (TSI), a Labrador based and Newfoundland registered company, is the operating arm of a limited partnership between LIDC and ATCO Frontec Services Limited. TSI's mandate is to provide logistics and support services to the



Photo: LIA President William Andersen alongside the *Appak* in St. John's Harbour prior to her departure for Nunavut.

mining and exploration companies operating in the Voisey's Bay area. TSI's work has consisted mainly of site services, construction through Borealis, set-up of temporary construction camps and the clean-up project at Saglek. TSI had 102 full-time and three temporary employees on VBNC projects this past season, about 50% of whom were Labrador Inuit. An additional 26 workers were hired for the Saglek project, which is now completed.

While TSI has been busy and employment at a high level as the VBNC project moved into its peak construction phase, overall employment will drop as the project moves into its production phase in 2005. TSI is now in the process of reviewing projections and potential opportunities for the operational phase of the project.

Note: Updates on the Postville Lumber Operation and Torngait Fisheries coming in the next edition!



Photo: LIA crew members aboard the *Appak*.

Labrador Inuit Reach Agreement with Nunavik Inuit and Labrador Innu

LIA's land claim negotiators have achieved two significant agreements.

On October 26, negotiators presented their initialed overlap Makivik Agreement to LIA President William Andersen and Makivik Corporation President Pita Aatami. Makivik Corporation is owned by the Inuit of Nunavik (northern Québec) and is the recognized Inuit party to the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA). On October 27, both Presidents took time out from Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) meetings in Ottawa to shake hands and express their commitment to present the initialed agreement to their respective boards for approval.

On November 4, negotiators for Labrador Inuit and the Innu Nation reached consensus on an overlap agreement. When the legal drafts are prepared and initialed, LIA President William Andersen and Innu Nation President Ben Michel will bring the agreement to their respective boards for approval.

Both overlap agreements settle the issues of land use and rights for each party. Labrador Inuit will have rights to harvest within certain areas of Labrador Inuit Lands and the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area in accordance with Nunatsiavut Government regulations. Labrador Inuit will have similar harvesting



Photo: LIA President William Andersen III and Makivik Corporation President Pita Aatami shake hands on October 27, 2004 on their agreement to seek their respective boards' approval of the Inuit Makivik Overlap Agreement.

rights on Innu land. As well as protecting subsistence harvesting rights for both parties, the agreement has provisions covering language, culture and development. LIA Chief Negotiator Toby Andersen said, "We have waited a long time to achieve this agreement. I am pleased with the work of Innu Nation Chief Negotiator Daniel Ashini, and with the support of President Michel and the Innu negotiation team."

The Makivik overlap agreement provides similar clarity for the Inuit of Labrador and Nunavik in terms of mutual access to land claims areas and in relation to land rights and land use in the area designated for Torngat Mountains National Park. Makivik President Pita Aatami

commented that the negotiations took a long time, and while Inuit felt they should not have to negotiate among themselves, this was a requirement of the Government of Canada. He said that he was impressed with the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement, especially the implementation plan included. He congratulated President Andersen and indicated that he would like to attend the signing ceremony.

ITK President Jose Kusugak also congratulated LIA. "This is important for all Canadians," he said. "It is the last Inuit land claim in Canada, and it closes the circle for Inuit." All of ITK's board expressed interest in attending the signing ceremony for the Agreement.

Health Care

Government of Canada Announces Investment in Aboriginal Health Care

The Government of Canada recently announced that it has committed an additional \$700 million over five years to meet the health needs of aboriginal people, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, which brings the total investment to over \$10 billion. This additional money will be used to: improve health services to better meet the needs of aboriginal peoples; increase the number of aboriginal doctors, nurses and other health professionals in aboriginal communities; and support health promotion and disease prevention programs that focus on suicide prevention, diabetes, maternal and child health, and early childhood development. In addition, the Prime Minister, premiers and aboriginal leaders have agreed on the need to develop a blueprint to improve health services and improve the overall health of aboriginal peoples.

Both Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and LIA believe that the blueprint is a significant recognition of Inuit health realities and look forward to specific details on how the new federal funding will directly reach northern communities. "I feel that this blueprint is a good starting point," said Jose Kusugak, President of ITK, in his address to the First Ministers.

"For the first time, the country's leaders have recognized that Inuit have specific and different needs from other Canadians... We are seeking the same standard of living as other Canadians, no more and no less." LIA President William Andersen commented: "This commitment is very important to the Inuit of Labrador. The LIA and LIHC look forward to being involved with the discussions over how exactly the funds will be allocated."

To obtain a copy of the *2004 Health Care 10-year Action Plan at a Glance*, call 1-800- O-Canada (1-800-622-6232), or visit www.canada.gc.ca/healthplan

Labrador Inuit Health Commission (LIHC) Conference

LIHC's annual health conference was held this year in North West River from October 18 to 22. The objective of the four-day event was to provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss health, language and cultural issues in relation to the new Nunatsiavut government and to plan for the future. Labrador Inuit have long held the view that language, culture and health are closely related, a point that was made repeatedly at last year's conference. As a health care organization, LIHC believes in a holistic approach, which recognizes that good health care is sensitive to



Photo (L-R): Conference delegates Silpa Edmunds and Mary Adams in their amauteks - Inuit coats.

the culture and unique characteristics of the population it serves.

The Conference provided an overview of the Nunatsiavut government, the LIHC, the Torngâsok Cultural Centre and Health Labrador Corporation. Over the course of the conference, discussions were held on key health, language and cultural issues and recommendations and actions plans were developed. Specific discussion topics included mental health, addictions, community health, children's programming, non-insured health benefits (NIHB) and health administration. Delegates broke into small discussion groups to identify priorities and to bring these back to the full conference. Further break-out and large discussion groups were used to develop strategies to meet priorities and to identify who should be responsible for carrying them out. Delegates also examined the initial steps needed to translate strategies into action.

LIHC CEO Michelle Kinney noted that the timing of the conference couldn't be better: "With ratification and a new government just around the corner, the time for setting priorities and making real plans is now...not later on down the road, but right now." In addressing delegates, LIA President William Andersen III said that the conference would be valuable in providing direction for LIA and "in shaping our relationships with the Governments of Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador." He also stressed the importance of focusing on the specific needs of individuals and groups, "our children, our elders and those who need care."

A report on the conference is being prepared and will be available to all delegates and others interested in the development of the Labrador Inuit health care agenda.

Anti-Smoking Poster Campaign and Diabetes Video Launched at LIHC Conference

Day two of LIHC's annual conference featured a Showcase of Health and Cultural Exhibits and focused on two health care issues relevant to Labrador Inuit: smoking and diabetes.

Anti-smoking Poster Campaign

LIHC's Anti-Smoking Poster Campaign is made possible through a partnership with the First Nations and Inuit Tobacco Control Strategy (FNITCS), which provided funding for the project. The overall goal is to reduce the number of smokers among the Labrador Inuit population through the development and launch of a three-part poster series and a

traveling road show.

The three posters, which will be distributed through community organizations and schools, feature messages targeted to three audiences:

- Youth (*Live Life Smoke Free*);
- Elders/Children (*Smoking Hurts You and Those Around You*); and
- Expectant Mothers (*I Had My Reasons for Not Smoking*).

The traveling road show will involve LIHC and Rising Youth Council representatives visiting schools and speaking to students about the dangers of smoking, secondhand smoke, and alternatives to smoking. Parents will be invited to attend.

Diabetes Informational Video

Diabetes and the Labrador Inuit: Sharing the Knowledge explores the

high incidence of diabetes among aboriginal people and offers insight into positive lifestyle choices that can lessen the disease's occurrence and impact. Presented in both English and Inuktitut, the video features Labrador Inuit sharing their personal stories about how diabetes has affected their lives.

Funded by LIHC and produced by the OkalaKatiget Society, the video was scheduled to air on APTN October 22, 29 and November 12. It is also available on loan from LIHC's community offices.

Note: the Conference Report will be available by Christmas 2004



Photo (L-R): Holding the 3 Anti-Smoking posters are the actual poster models: Shelia Angnatok, Allan Angnatok, Ron Lyall and granddaughter Stephanie Lyall, and Niolo Dicker.



Photos: Faces and places of 2004 LIHC Annual Health Conference.

Education

PSSSP - Supporting Inuit Post-Secondary Education

The mandate of LIA's Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) is to assist members to gain access to post-secondary education. It encourages LIA members to graduate with the qualifications and skills required to pursue successful careers and contribute to the achievement of Inuit self-government and economic self-reliance. Currently, through the support of the PSSSP, 127 LIA members are enrolled in full-time post-secondary studies and 37 are enrolled on a part-time basis.

Integrated Nursing Access Program

One of the new and exciting initiatives PSSSP has been working on is the Integrated Nursing Access Program. Starting in January 2005, this newly developed program will be offered to 18 LIA members and will lead to a Collaborative Bachelor of Nursing (BN) degree. This program is unique in its style of delivery, which will involve educating students on a case-by-case basis. Having been in development for two years, the program is the first of its kind in Canada to offer a BN using this style of teaching.

The initial two-and-a-half years of the program will be offered at the College of the North Atlantic campus in Goose Bay and will consist of upgrading and the first year of the nursing degree program. The second year of the nursing program will also be offered at the CONA campus in Goose Bay. The final two years of the BN will be taught at the Western Memorial Hospital School of Nursing in Corner Brook.

Funding for the delivery of the program is through PSSSP. The hope is that additional sources of funding will be located. If this does not happen, the number of seats available in coming years will be greatly reduced.

The PSSSP is very excited about the Integrated Nursing Access Program, as it will help alleviate the serious shortage of nurses in the north coast communities of Labrador.

LIA Health and Education Sub-committee Meeting

In other PSSSP news, the Health and Education Sub-committee of the LIA Board of Directors met in St. John's on September 15, 2004. There was much discussion about the value and relevance of the post-secondary programs being offered - not only to



Photo: LIA President William Andersen speaks at Career Learning Game launch event at MUN.

the career success of the individuals involved, but towards the goal of self-governance and fiscal responsibility. A number of important decisions were made to address these issues.

Office Administration Program.

A freeze has been placed on the Office Administration Program. This decision was made based on a review, which found that there are in excess of 80 individuals trained in this field, and currently over 50% are unemployed. The freeze will be reviewed in three years.

LIA Specific Programs.

Effective immediately, the LIA Board of Directors will be identifying areas in which they most need people trained. Individuals enrolling in these identified priority programs will be given preference in terms of funding allocation. During the meeting, the Bachelor of Education program was identified as a priority. This decision was made in an attempt to address the teacher shortage in north coast communities.



Photo (L-R): Dr. Axel Meisen, President of MUN; Jodie Strangemore, LIA Education Counselor; Lucy Brennan, LIA Education Administrator; Dr. Lily Walker, MUN Dean of Student Affairs and Services; Tom Heddersen, then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education and currently Minister of Education.

Providing Options: The Career Learning Board Game

Jodie Strangemore is an education counselor with LIA and the creator of The Career Learning Board Game. The goal of the game is to teach Inuit youth in northern Labrador about the wealth of career options they may not be regularly

exposed to and the means of attaining such careers. What started as a rough, handmade version over four years ago has evolved into a sleek, refined game thanks to support from MUN, the PSSSP and the Canadian Counseling Foundation.

The board game was officially released on September 14, 2004 at a ceremony

held on Memorial University campus. On hand was Aboriginal Affairs Minister Tom Rideout, who praised the game as being part of an initiative that would help prepare aboriginal students for a brighter future. William Andersen III and members of LIA and PSSSP were also in attendance and spoke of the value of the game to Inuit youth in Labrador.

ITK National Speaking Tour: "First Canadians, Canadians First"

Inuit in Canada are major players in the Canadian economy. That was the key message Jose A. Kusugak, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), delivered at two engagements in St. John's on October 14 and 15.

Mr. Kusugak is touring the country and providing an up-to-date snapshot of where the Inuit of Canada are in the new millennium and presenting a framework for their future. The presentation is entitled *The Inuit of Canada: Charting the Future in the New Millennium*. Mr. Kusugak was present for the recent Throne Speech in Ottawa, where he continued to reinforce the need for Inuit-specific programs and Inuit leadership in northern development.

Thirty years ago, Canada's Inuit leaders embarked on a similar tour of

the country. Since then, the Inuit of Canada have accomplished four modern land claims agreements and associated corporations and self-government regimes. Inuit want progress within Canada, with all Canadians benefitting from development throughout the arctic regions. Mr. Kusugak commented, "In accepting Canada, we shouldn't have to worry about losing our identity or believing in ourselves any less. Inuit are more than First Canadians, Inuit are Canadians first."

Introducing Mr. Kusugak at Memorial University was LIA President William Andersen III. Mr. Andersen told the assembly that the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement is now in the ratification process with a signing ceremony anticipated for December 3 in Nain. Mr. Andersen said, "As we move through the ratification process, we

look forward to the day our Land Claims Agreement comes into effect, and we can begin to implement change. We look forward to a better future for our people, our communities, our children. And, as self-government approaches, we look forward to building on the relationships we have established to participate as full partners and equals in Canada, and in Newfoundland and Labrador."



Photo (L-R): Steve Wedgewood, President of Rotary Club of St. John's with ITK president Jose Kusugak.

Meet Our Members – Heather Campbell

Visual artist Heather Campbell credits her experience of growing up in a northern Labrador community with providing the imagery and influences that emerge as the main theme in her work—the connection between humanity and nature. Heather is of mixed Inuit and Scottish ancestry and grew up in Rigolet. “These combinations of cultures and the influence of the environment have shaped my art making,” she says in her artist’s statement. “My work is inspired by the Inuit culture and its symbolism. Traditional mythology has had an impact on the subjects I choose and how I portray them. Growing up in an Inuit community, and spending time on the land, has given me an inexhaustible source of resource materials. Not only does nature provide visual stimuli but emotional and spiritual nourishment. The land has its own life force that has sustained its inhabitants for thousands of years.”

Graduating from high school with a strong academic record, including a Governor General’s Medal and other awards, Heather went on to study Fine

Arts at Memorial University’s Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook and Harlow Campus in England. She graduated in 1996 with a BFA in Fine Arts and a Minor in Art History. Since then she has completed the Cultural Industries Training Program at the Inuit Art Foundation in Ottawa. Her training has led to positions at the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilization. She is currently a Curatorial Assistant at the Inuit Art Centre of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

While acquiring the skills and experience to work in arts administration, Heather has also been steadily building her profile as an artist. Her work has been featured in eight group and solo exhibitions. She has also freelanced as an illustrator, taken courses in graphic design, and is a contributor to *Inuktitut Magazine*. Her work for the magazine involves not only illustrating stories and legends but also writing articles on Labrador Inuit issues. Readers can sample the diversity of Heather Campbell’s work—



her art, work-in-progress, writings and memories—on her website, <http://pages.ivilage.com/kikiak/>

Heather also believes that those who have pursued their dreams have the responsibility to encourage others to do so. “I hope that my story will inspire other Labrador Inuit to enroll in post-secondary education,” she says. “There are so many opportunities out there for Inuit, if people will just take the chance.”

Ceremony Marks Conclusion of Saglek Clean-up

On September 16, two plane-loads of people left Nain and headed north to Saglek for a special ceremony. Attending the ceremony were officials from the Department of National Defense, members of the LIA Board, community elders from Nain and the church choir. The ceremony was held to mark the end of the environmental clean-up of the former radar station site.

This particular clean up effort had been a long one - spanning eight years with the actual removal of the PCB-contaminated soil starting in June 2003.

The ceremony was a way to honour and show respect for Inuit who had lived in the area and to celebrate the soil returning to its pristine state for future generations.