

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Awardees Announced of the 2014 Howard Rock & Ted Stevens Smokehouse Gala

Anchorage, Alaska, Nov.18, 2014 – First Alaskans Institute (FAI) is proud to announce the awardees of the third annual, signature event – The Howard Rock & Ted Stevens Smokehouse Gala – to be held at 7 p.m., November 22 at the Hotel Captain Cook.

The Gala celebrates and recognizes the contributions of Alaska Native peoples and our friends in advancing our collective wellbeing. It is named in honor of Howard Rock (Iñupiaq) and Senator Ted Stevens as lifetime champions of Alaska Native peoples. **As shared by Willie “Iḡḡiagruk” Hensley (Iñupiaq), FAI Board Chair, the awards are given to “remember those who have helped us, show our young people that we believe in them, and share the pride in our cultures.”** From a place of deep respect and gratitude on behalf of our Board and Staff, we award the following:



The First Alaskans Young Native Leader Award, which honors those who are working to help Native peoples and our communities with significant and profound purpose, is given to the **Tanana 4-H group** of Tanana, Alaska. These young people and their leader, Cynthia Erickson, have catalyzed our community with their courage and hard work in uplifting us with their message of

honesty, making positive change, and leading with hope centered on loving life, family, friends and community. By stepping up to make things better for all, they exemplify the spirit of this award.



The Friend of First Alaskans Ted Stevens Award, which recognizes a person who has shown through their support of Native issues and in partnership to our common cause that they are friends of the Alaska Native community, is given to **William J. “Bill” Van Ness, Jr** of Washington. Bill was instrumental in drafting and structuring what would become the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act during his work with U.S. Senator Henry “Scoop” Jackson. Throughout his distinguished career, he has

worked tirelessly to advance policy and legislation in support of Alaska Native peoples. We are honored to call Bill a true friend of First Alaskans and Alaska.



The Alaska Native Leader Howard Rock Award, which honors those who have shown through their quality of character and effort to be leaders of distinct caliber putting their community and people before themselves, is given to **Paul Kangrilnguq and Martina Anguyaluk John** (Yupitit) of Toksook Bay. Kangrilnguq and Anguyaluk are widely respected as passionate teachers and advocates of their culture, language and ways of life. Their efforts are evident in all they do, and their commitment to who we are as

Native peoples is personified in their living legacy; they have been married for more than 60 years, have 10 children, 35 grandchildren and close to 30 great-grandchildren, many of whom are recognized as amazing Native leaders in their own right, are young leaders, or are being groomed as cultural stewards and leaders as they grow.

We congratulate each of these inspiring leaders and thank their families for supporting them in all that they have done for our Native peoples and Alaska.

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Proceeds from the Gala benefit First Alaskans Institute, a statewide Native nonprofit whose vision is 'Progress for the next Ten Thousand Years...' and that serves as a catalyst for conversation, convener of minds and cross-sector collaborator on issues impacting Alaska Native peoples and our communities. True to identity, heritage, and values Alaska Natives are informed and engaged in leading the decisions that shape the future.

Learn about our work at firstalaskans.org. For more information about the Gala, visit thesmokehousegala.org.