

First Alaskans Institute

News Release

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ANNOUNCING THE 2016 AWARDEES OF THE HOWARD ROCK & TED STEVENS SMOKEHOUSE GALA

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – First Alaskans Institute (FAI), a statewide Alaska Native non-profit organization, is proud to announce the awardees of the fifth annual Howard Rock & Ted Stevens Smokehouse Gala, to be held at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage on Saturday, November 19th. Named in recognition of Howard Rock (Iñupiaq) and Senator Ted Stevens, the Gala celebrates the significant contributions of Alaska Native peoples and our friends in advancing our collective wellbeing.

The Smokehouse Gala Awards “remember those who have helped us, show our young people that we believe in them, and share the pride in our cultures,” said Willie Iggiagruk Hensley (Iñupiaq), FAI Board Chair. It is from a place of deep respect and gratitude on behalf of the First Alaskans Institute Board of Trustees and Staff that we are honored to award the following:

First Alaskans Institute Young Native Leader Awardee: Raina Thiele (Yup'ik/Dena'ina)

This person or organization has shown through dedication that they are working to help Native peoples and our community with significant and profound purpose, and is specifically given to a young leader 40 years old and younger.



Raina Thiele is an energetic and dedicated advocate for Alaska Native peoples, who was able to advance Native issues during her tenure in Washington, D.C. This award recognized her commitment, hard work, and continuing persistence to help serve our Native community.

She worked in President Obama's White House as Associate Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, where she focused on working with tribal governments and advising on climate change, arctic, and energy issues. She was a lead organizer of President Obama's trip to Alaska in the fall of 2015, ensuring he not only had access to some of our strongest Native advocates, but that he also spent time in our rural communities.

Prior to her role in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Raina served for nearly 5 years in the White House Office of Management and Budget, where she worked on a wide variety of issues, including tribal legislation, international affairs, and energy. She managed a multi-billion dollar federal portfolio and advised senior White House

staff on how best to leverage and allocate resources.

Raina earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Yale College and her Master's Degree in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Raina is also an alumna of the First Alaskans Institute Summer Internship Program.

Raina was born and raised in Alaska in the Mat-Su Valley, Kenai Peninsula, Bristol Bay, and Alexander Creek. Her upbringing involved commercial, subsistence and sports fishing with her parents, subsistence hunting, and berry picking. She is Dena'ina Athabascan, Yup'ik, and German.

She currently resides between Washington, D.C. and Alaska, as the principal in her own consulting firm. During her free time she enjoys making jewelry, reading, volunteering, and being politically active. Raina also agreed to be our 2016 HRTS Smokehouse Gala Co-Emcee before she knew about the award.

Friends of First Alaskans Ted Stevens Awardee: Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

This award is given to a person(s) or organization that has shown through their support of Native issues and partnership with our common cause that they are friends of the Alaska Native community.



The relationship stewarded by First Alaskans Institute and the owners of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline is facilitated by and through the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. It is a unique and sensitive relationship given the history of Alaska Native land claims, and the political, economic and socio-cultural pressures of the time; that continue through today. This award recognizes that Alyeska, under recent and current leadership, has taken this responsibility seriously to ensure that strong partnerships and

relationships exist between itself, First Alaskans, and the Native community.

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company recognizes and upholds their company's special relationship with and obligation to Alaska Native peoples. Alyeska has worked with Alaska Native organizations to hire and prepare Alaska Native people for meaningful job opportunities within the TAPS system, as well as enter into contractual relationships with Alaska Native corporations who provide various services to the industry. This relationship ensures that Alaska Native people and companies benefit from economic development opportunities created by the presence and utilization of TAPS throughout Native lands.

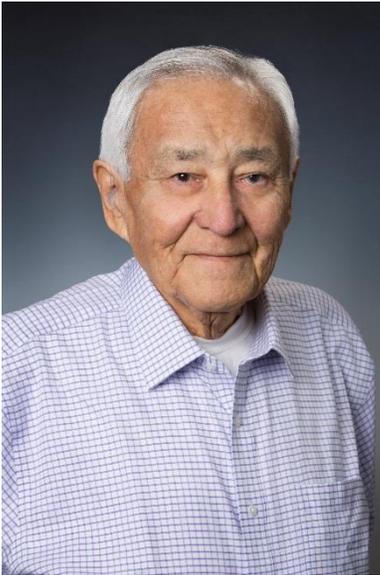
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company formed in 1970 to design, build, maintain and operate TAPS. Alyeska's Alaska Native Program, including its advisory board and scholarship program, ensures that Alyeska is a welcome place for Alaska Native people to work and provide their talents and perspectives. Each year the TAPS owners, Alyeska, and the FAI Trustees meet to continue this responsibility and commitment.



Tom Barrett
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's President

Alaska Native Leader Howard Rock Awardee: Roy S. Ewan (Ahtna Athabascan)

This person or organization has shown through their quality of character and effort to be a leader of distinct caliber because they put their community and people before themselves.



There are leaders who define generations by their dedicated, loyal, and enduring service, and Roy S. Ewan exemplifies these traits. His humble and quiet leadership has served his community of Gulkana, his region, and this state for decades. It is an incredible honor to recognize him for all his has done in standing up for our Native peoples, our rights and our aspirations.

His role as an Elder, culture bearer, and advocate continues to this day. Recently, he spent time with Governor Walker in his community of Gulkana visiting the gravesites of his family and people, advocating for the return of these sacred grounds to the village.

Roy served on the Ahtna, Inc. (AI) Board for over 20 years. He is a former President/CEO of AI, Chair and Vice Chair of the AI Board and has also served on many Ahtna subsidiary boards and committees. Roy was involved in the passage of ANCSA, and continues to advocate for the Ahtna region. He was instrumental in advocating for co-management of Ahtna lands, and the protection of our ways of life.

He is a past board member of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce, the Alaska Native Heritage Park, the Alaska Federation of Natives, and the Resource Development Council. He is past Co-Chair of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), SNOW PAC, and the Southcentral Subsistence Advisory Council.

Roy is from the Ahtna village of Gulkana. He and his wife Glenda have one daughter, Jackie Johnny. He has always strived to make Ahtna, Inc. a company that its shareholders can be proud of and has spent his life generously serving the Ahtna people through engagement, advocacy, legislation, and business.

First Alaskans Institute is proud to congratulate each of these inspiring leaders! We thank their families and communities 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* 10,000 years...' serves as a catalyst for conversation, convener of minds and cross-sector collaborator on issues impacting Alaska Native peoples and our communities. Our mission is: True to identity, heritage, and values, Alaska Natives are informed and engaged in leading the decisions that shape the future.

Sponsorship, volunteer, and other opportunities to support the Gala and FAI are still available! Please visit thesmokehousegala.org for more information.

Photographs belong to the awardees, the photographers and/or public domain. FAI makes no claim of ownership to the photos and used photos provided by the awardees or from the public domain.