



FIRST ALASKANS INSTITUTE
2020 ANNUAL ELDERS AND YOUTH CONFERENCE
RESOLUTION 20-02

TITLE: SUPPORTING THE WALTER HARPER PROJECT AND RECLAIMING THE FIRST SUMMIT OF DENALI

WHEREAS: The First Alaskans Institute Elders and Youth Conference is the largest statewide convening of Alaska Native Elders and youth representing our diverse Alaska Native cultures and language groups in order to enhance and perpetuate the unique spirits and identities of our peoples; and

WHEREAS: The purpose of the Conference is to connect Elders and youth for cultural knowledge transmission, strengthen statewide relationships, amplify the power of our participants as leaders today, and advance solutions to challenges faced by our Native peoples and our communities; and

WHEREAS: The first person ever to set foot on the summit of Denali, the highest point in North America, was a young 20 year old Koyukon Athabascan man named Walter Harper- as point man for the Pioneer Ascent led by Hudson Stuck and Harry Karstens in June 1913 and that included two students acting as dog mushers and base camp support named Esaias George 14-year-old Koyukon, and 15-year-old John Fredson, Gwitchin; and

WHEREAS: A group of Alaskans including family members of that first successful climb, known as The Walter Harper Project, wish to bring greater recognition of these three young Alaskan Natives' contribution to this truly historic event through the construction of a life-sized statue of Walter Harper and a series of interpretive panels seeking to educate the general public and most especially young Alaska Native children about this event.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the participants of the 2020 First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference supports the effort of The Walter Harper Project, partnering with the Fairbanks Native Association, to build this Memorial not only to honor this historic accomplishment of our Ancestors but to share their legacy with today's youth; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the 2020 Elders and Youth Conference strive to inform the schools throughout Alaska by furnishing copies of this resolution so that they may add this to their Alaska History curriculum; and to further inform the general public by wide distribution of this resolution

throughout the Native community through Tribal organizations, regional associations, and statewide organizations such as Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN).

SUBMITTED BY: MICHAEL HARPER (KOYUKON) FROM DGHEYEY KAQ (ANCHORAGE)
CONFERENCE ACTION: PASSED ON OCT. 14, 2020