

Team Ayalik

The Ayalik Fund was initially established in March of 2015. After five years of successful fundraising and program-delivery for Inuit youth, it became clear that the opportunity to make an even bigger difference was very real. As of April 2020, Ayalik was accepted as a project on the shared platform of MakeWay (formerly Tides Canada), which provides governance, human resources, financial and grant management services for leading environmental and social projects across Canada, allowing projects like ours to more effectively achieve greater impact.

As part of this growth for Ayalik, we gain the supports above from MakeWay, through an assigned Project Specialist, and we are fortunate to have now assembled a team of people to lead the project forward into a new and exciting phase.

Steering Committee

The Ayalik steering committee is composed of the Ayalik Fund's founders, Laurie & David Pelly, plus Maria Kayasarq and Alex Ittimangnaq of Kugaaruk, Nunavut.



Maria Kayasarq and Alex Ittimangnaq live in Kugaaruk (formerly Pelly Bay), one of the smallest and most traditional communities in Nunavut. They have been volunteers for the Ayalik Fund in the past, and have a longstanding history of supporting



the youth of their community. They are the parents of four girls, and graduates of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut post-secondary program in Ottawa which, they say, “changed the way they look at the world.” They bring a vital perspective to our discussions.



David & Laurie established the Ayalik Fund so that Inuit youth could benefit from the sort of challenging outdoor experiences they believe made a huge difference for their adopted Inuit son, Ayalik, shown here at the age of five on a three-week high Arctic canoe trip, his first of many. Both of our founders have spent most of their careers working, each in their own way, for the Inuit of Nunavut, and many summers canoeing in the barrenlands.

Project Director



With a passion for work with a social purpose, Meredith Pickering completed back-to-back degrees in Psychology and Education before starting her early career in various roles as a counsellor, tutor, and support worker. After moving to Toronto, she made a shift into the fast-paced world of tech start-ups where she spent the last seven years learning and honing her project and operations management skills and experiencing what it takes to grow an organization from the ground up. Now in the role of Project Director at Ayalik, Meredith is excited to be applying that knowledge and expertise to promote and grow the Ayalik Fund & Ayalik Project through daily management, program development, community outreach, and much more.

Senior Northern Advisor



Donna Olsen-Hakongak has been living in Cambridge Bay since 1987 when she arrived as a young teacher. She and her husband George Naikak Hakongak have raised two daughters, while contributing greatly to the community in a diversity of roles. Since 2009, Donna has been working for the Government of Nunavut's Department of Justice, with a particular focus on youth. She has been a strong supporter and a vital facilitator for Ayalik since its inception in 2015. We continue to benefit from her advice.

In addition, Ayalik has a small army of volunteers, across Nunavut and southern Canada, all of whom contribute particular elements to the program's operation. It could not happen without them. Nor without the legions of donors who believe in the mandate and provide the financial resources to make it happen.



www.AyalikFund.ca

The Ayalik Fund gives those Inuit youth who would otherwise not have such opportunities a chance to build self-esteem and confidence, through challenging outdoor adventure, meeting other young Canadians and social-cultural exploration.