



## For Immediate Release

### **Arctic Inspiration Prize Announces 2015 Finalists** *\$1 Million Prize will be awarded at Northern Lights Conference January 27, 2016*

Ottawa, November 25, 2015 -- Three finalists have been selected for the fourth annual [Arctic Inspiration Prize](#) (AIP) that supports projects that translate knowledge into action for the benefit of Canada's Arctic and its Peoples.

The three shortlisted projects chosen by the [Selection Committee](#) for 2015 are:

#### **Better Hearing in Education for Northern Youth (BHENV)**

**Team Leader:** Lynne McCurdy, Audiologist, Wellington Hearing Care, Guelph, Ontario

**Nominator:** Mary Ellen Thomas, Senior Research Officer, Nunavut Research Institute, Nunavut Arctic College, Iqaluit, Nunavut

Children in Arctic regions have a very high prevalence of hearing loss, an underlying cause of poor literacy, academic success, school attendance and graduation rates. BHENV, a team of hearing health care professionals, educators, advocacy and community groups, seeks to improve the lives of youth with hearing loss through a multi-pronged approach that includes the implementation of classroom based sound amplification technology; provision of professional development, training and support for educators through a Virtual Resource Centre; improvement of audiology services in the North; and enabling parents and the community to support the needs of children with hearing loss.

#### **Qaggiq: Nurturing the Arctic Performing Arts**

**Team Leader:** Ellen Hamilton, Qaggiavuut Society, Iqaluit, Nunavut

**Nominator:** Susan Chatwood, Executive and Scientific Director, Institute for Circumpolar Health Research

There is no more powerful way of engaging creative thinking, communications and critical thought than the performing arts. Northern people have always celebrated life through artistry, however, without training and support, Arctic performing arts are at risk of being lost or never realized. With a diverse team of northern artists, administrators and arts educators, in partnership with national and circumpolar performing arts institutions, Qaggiq aims to strengthen Arctic culture and subsequently improve resiliency, self-worth, belonging and pride, through a coordinated strategy that includes artist mapping, artist and teacher training, collaborative performance, mentorship and youth programming.

### **Tri-Territorial Recreation Training (TRT) Project**

**Team Leader:** Anne Morgan, Executive Director, Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon (RPAY), Whitehorse, Yukon

**Nominator:** Zach Bell, Olympic Cyclist, Yukon

Recreation has the power to foster happiness and quality of life and contribute to greater balance in northern communities. The Tri-Territorial Recreation Training (TRT) project aims to empower people and communities to enhance individual, community and environmental wellbeing by strengthening the capacity of recreation leaders in northern communities through the delivery of a sustainable, relevant training program. With a skilled and diverse group of non-profit, government and private sector organizations from the field of recreation, the TRT project would focus on the development and delivery of a specialized community recreation leadership training program in rural and remote communities across Canada's three territories.

One to three of these finalists will be awarded the Arctic Inspiration Prize and a share of the associated \$1 million at a ceremony to be held in conjunction with [Northern Lights 2016](#), a business and cultural conference and tradeshow jointly produced by the Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce (BRCC) and the Labrador North Chamber of Commerce (LNCC). Northern Lights will be held in Ottawa, January 27 – 30, 2016.

Since its founding in 2012 the Arctic Inspiration Prize has awarded \$3 million to eight multidisciplinary teams. In addition to this year's three finalists, nominations were received that addressed many other critical issues in the North such as food security, environmental change, housing, and education.

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### **About the Arctic Inspiration Prize**

Founded in 2012 by Arnold Witzig and Sima Sharifi, the \$1 million AIP recognizes and promotes the extraordinary contribution made by diverse teams in the gathering of Arctic knowledge, and their plans to implement this knowledge to real world applications for the benefit of the Canadian Arctic, Arctic Peoples, and therefore Canada as a whole. To-date, eight teams have been awarded prizes totalling \$3 million to support innovative, sustainable, multi-disciplinary projects that will have long-term positive impacts in Arctic communities. In addition to the financial prize, recipients are presented with original artwork created by northern artists.

The Arctic Inspiration Prize [Selection Committee](#) is composed of distinguished individuals known for their commitment to the Canadian Arctic and its Peoples. Committee members from north and south, represent aboriginal and non-aboriginal organizations, governments, NGOs, the private sector, as well as the artistic, cultural and scientific communities.

The Arctic Inspiration Prize is managed by the [ArcticNet Network of Centres of Excellence](#) and made possible with contributions and support from dozens of partners from north and south.

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