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PAUKTUUTIT
INUIT WOMEN OF CANADA

May 2025

SULIQPITA

News from Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada



Martha Flaherty



Victoria Guillemette



Nikki Komaksiutiksak



Rosemary Cooper



Trudy Metcalfe-Coe



Martha



Looee Arreak



Mary Sillett



Liz Pijogge

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada Honoured 32 Inuit Women with King Charles III Coronation Medals



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Message from the Chair of the Board Nancy Etok

As the snow melts and the land begins to awaken, we find ourselves in a season of renewal and reflection. May is a time of change, when the long days return, and we prepare for summer gatherings, celebrations, and time spent with loved ones. I hope this changing season is bringing you moments of peace, strength, and connection.

At Pauktuutit, this season of transition is reflected in our work. Over the past few months, we have continued to build on our priorities, carry forward important conversations, and prepare for exciting changes ahead.

One of the highlights this spring was celebrating 32 extraordinary Inuit women as recipients of the King Charles III Coronation Medal. These women, carefully selected by Pauktuutit's Board of Directors, represent the heart of our communities: Elders, youth, advocates, artists, health professionals, cultural leaders, and educators. Each of them has made an outstanding contribution to the lives of Inuit women, families, and communities across Inuit Nunangat and beyond. Their strength and dedication inspire us all.



Paige Kimiksana-Kreps
Secretary-Treasurer

Nancy Etok
Board Chair

Lois (Looee) Mike
Vice Chair

In March, we marked the retirement of our CEO, Rosemary Cooper, as she stepped down from her role after years of dedicated service. Her leadership and deep commitment to Inuit women and communities has helped shape the heart of this organization. Her legacy will continue to guide us in

the months and years ahead, and we remain grateful for all she gave to Pauktuutit and to Inuit women across Inuit Nunangat and beyond.

This spring, we welcomed Nikki Komaksiutiksak as Pauktuutit's new President and CEO. Nikki is a proud Inuk woman, a passionate advocate, and a respected cultural leader with deep roots in her community and a clear vision for the future. Her experience, energy, and deep understanding of Inuit culture and realities make her the right person to lead us into this next chapter. We are honoured to welcome her to the role and excited for the journey ahead under her leadership.

We are also pleased to welcome Joseph Phillips as Vice President of Operations. Joseph joins Pauktuutit with over fifteen years of experience leading and enabling teams across Indigenous organizations, government, and non-profit sectors. Joseph brings valuable experience and leadership that will strengthen our operational capacity and support Pauktuutit's continued growth and impact.

No matter what lies ahead, we remain committed to our shared purpose: focusing on Inuit women, strengthening our communities, and walking forward together. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

Nakurmiik,

Nancy Etok

Chair of the Board of Directors
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada

Our strength lies in our culture, our stories, and our unity. As Inuit, we are resilient, and together, we will continue to shape the future with pride, courage, and the wisdom passed down through generations. //

— Nancy



Message from the President and CEO Nikki Komaksiutiksak

Dear Friends and Partners,

As the light returns and the land awakens, we welcome (upinngaaq) spring with hearts open to renewal. This season reminds us of the rhythms that guide us as Inuit: the strength that comes from reflection, preparation, and coming together in unity. It is a time when our communities gather, support one another, and set shared direction all rooted in our enduring values.

As I begin my journey as President and CEO of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, I want to extend sincere gratitude for the warm welcome I have received. I am humbled and honored to serve in this role, and I step forward with deep respect for those who have led before me and for the communities we serve.

Our work is guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit the knowledge and values passed down from our ancestors. In the face of continued systemic challenges affecting Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse people, these teachings remind us that true progress is grounded in cultural wisdom, lived experience, and working together with humility and care.

This spring, we not only welcome a new season but renew our collective commitment to the ones we serve. At Pauktuutit, we continue to amplify Inuit voices, strengthen families and communities, and advocate for lasting, meaningful change. We know that this work must be done in the spirit of (Piliriqatigiinniq) working together with trust, honesty, and a shared vision for a better future.

Internally, we are also strengthening our foundation. The guidance of our Board of Directors remains central, providing wise direction and helping us stay accountable to our communities. I am committed to honoring this leadership and fostering a workplace rooted in mutual respect, collaboration, and care.

To our partners, supporters, and communities across Inuit Nunangat and beyond thank you. Your continued dedication makes this work possible. I am truly grateful to walk this path alongside you, guided by our values and united in our purpose.

With heartfelt appreciation and in the spirit of service to our Inuit Women, Girls, families and gender diverse relatives.

With deep respect and in the spirit of working together,

Matna/Qujanaamiik/Thank you,

Nikki Komaksiutiksak

President and CEO

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada

Honouring Rosemary Cooper: A Legacy of Leadership and Advocacy

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada extended its heartfelt thanks to Rosemary Cooper as she retired at the end of March 2025, following nine years of dedicated service and groundbreaking leadership.

As Pauktuutit's first Inuk CEO, Rosemary championed transformational change rooted in her lived experiences and the voices of Inuit women. Her leadership led to significant advancements in shelter supports, strategic planning, and advocacy for Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

Rosemary's legacy included the development of Pauktuutit's first strategic plan, an expansion of Inuit governance within the organization, and a deepening of community partnerships. Her impact on the organization and on Inuit advocacy will be felt for generations to come.





WELCOMING NEW LEADERS



NIKKI KOMAKSIUTIKSAK
PRESIDENT AND CEO



JOSEPH PHILLIPS
VP, OPERATIONS

Welcoming Nikki Komaksiutiksak, President and CEO: A New Era of Inuit Leadership

Pauktuutit was proud to welcome Nikki Komaksiutiksak as its new President and CEO. A dynamic leader from Chesterfield Inlet, Nunavut, Nikki brought a deep understanding of Inuit culture, lived experience, and a powerful commitment to advocacy.

Nikki had long been an active supporter of Pauktuutit's mission. She was named Pauktuutit's Inuk Woman of the Year in 2023 and consistently demonstrated her dedication to uplifting Inuit women and communities. As an experienced throat singer, cultural educator, and performer, Nikki blended leadership and cultural pride to make lasting impacts across Canada and beyond.

Prior to joining Pauktuutit, Nikki served as the founding member and CEO of Tunngasugit Inc., Western Canada's first Inuit Resource Centre, based in Winnipeg. Her work created meaningful pathways for Inuit navigating life in urban settings, and her leadership empowered countless individuals and



families. She also shared her expertise as a teacher at the University of Manitoba and as a performer representing Inuit culture internationally.

Nikki's life journey reflected the possibilities available to Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse people. With over a decade of senior executive experience, she stepped into her role at Pauktuutit poised to lead the organization into its next chapter. Her vision aligned seamlessly with Pauktuutit's mission to create a future where Inuit women are empowered, rooted in their cultural identity, and thriving across all aspects of life.

"Nikki is a wonderful addition to a line of great Inuit women that Pauktuutit has been privileged to have leading for change," said Pauktuutit's Board Chair, Nancy Etok. She picks up the transformation journey that will empower Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse Inuit through leadership development and opportunities to advance self-determination.

Her expertise in strategic planning, governance, community development, and financial stewardship, and collaborating with Indigenous communities, governments, partners to lead initiatives that empower communities, foster strength, and secure a future where Inuit thrive, is of immediate value to Pauktuutit's future.

In her new role, Nikki is the face and voice of Pauktuutit, carrying forward the Policy and Advocacy journey, building partnerships and moving from strength to strength in delivering Pauktuutit's vision both externally and in developing Inuit capacity within the organization.

Welcoming Joseph Phillips, VP of Operations: Driving Excellence in Operations

Pauktuutit welcomed Joseph Phillips as Vice President of Operations. Joseph brought more than fifteen years of leadership experience across Indigenous organizations, governments, and non-profits. His passion for building strong teams and enabling people to do their best work made him a natural fit for Pauktuutit.

Reporting directly to the CEO, Joseph took on oversight of Pauktuutit's internal operations, guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit values. His appointment marked the culmination of efforts started two years earlier, when Pauktuutit established the VP of Operations role to strengthen internal governance and enhance efficiency.

"Our team was passionate about the work they did," Joseph shared. "My job was to ensure that they felt supported and empowered every day. When people feel seen and valued, the possibilities are endless."

A respected problem-solver and strategist, Joseph brought with him deep experience working with Indigenous communities and organizations across politics, governance, education, business development, and consulting. He also carried a Master's degree in higher education and a Certificate in Strategic Leadership and Innovation from Schulich ExecEd at York University.





Government and Community Relations

Pauktuutit maintains strong relationships with government entities and Inuit communities, advocating for the rights and empowerment of Inuit women, children, and gender-diverse individuals. Through proactive government engagement, we shape policies that reflect our communities' needs and preserve our Inuit worldview. Our advocacy is informed by our values and principles and our lived experiences, aiming to create equitable representation at all tables.

69th UN Commission on the Status of Women

Pauktuutit's former CEO Rosemary Cooper participated in the Canadian delegation at the opening session of the 69th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69). This high-level event brought together global leaders and key stakeholders, with Canada's Ambassador to the UN, Bob Rae, among the featured speakers.



Canadian Delegation at UN



Left to right: Marissa Moar, Partnerships and Communications Coordinator, 2SiMS; Josie Nepinak, NWAC National President; Rosemary Cooper, CEO, Pauktuutit.

At the session, 'Indigenous Women's Leadership: 30 Years On', Indigenous women from around the world gathered to reflect on the progress made since the 1995 adoption of the Indigenous Women's Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action.

Former CEO Rosemary Cooper addressed the ongoing impacts of colonialism on Inuit women and gender-diverse people, highlighting the critical

role of grassroots initiatives in fostering leadership within communities. She emphasized that by acknowledging historical injustices, amplifying voices, and challenging systemic biases, we can create a path for equitable political participation.



During Canada's official side event at UNHQ, Driving Actionable Change and Strengthening Global Solidarity Among Indigenous Women, Rosemary Cooper, as Pauktuutit's CEO at the time, addressed the limitations of mainstream frameworks and highlighted Pauktuutit's leadership in Inuit-Specific Gender-Based Analysis.

She mentioned that the organization remains committed to holding governments accountable, elevating Inuit perspectives and advancing gender equality and Inuit-led solutions that challenge colonial systems and promote true self-determination.

Bob Rae, Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, was in attendance to champion these vital discussions.





Pauktuutit extended sincere thanks to The Honourable Minister Marci Ien and Ambassador Bob Rae for their support of the Canadian delegation and for their continued advocacy for the rights of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Their partnership during CSW69 helped spotlight national strategies for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. Pauktuutit reaffirmed its dedication to championing Inuit women and gender-diverse Inuit on the international stage.



Left to right: Jose Nepinak, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada; Melanie Allard, Vice-President of Métis Nation British Columbia; The Honourable Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Canada; and Rosemary Cooper, CEO of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada.



Group photo of the Canadian Delegation.



Left to right: Marissa Moir, Partnerships and Communications, 2SiMS; The Honourable Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Canada; Rosemary Cooper, CEO of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada; and Jose Nepinak, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada.



Pauktuutit's Initiatives

Health

National Inuit Midwifery Framework

Pauktuutit has successfully finalized components of the National Inuit Midwifery Framework and is close to finalizing the entire project which is key in our efforts to support Inuit-led maternal health.



Progress in Education, Training, and Legislation

Significant strides have been made in developing midwifery-related education and training content. In parallel, research into midwifery legislation continues to move forward, supporting advocacy for culturally safe and accessible care for Inuit communities.

Ongoing Work on STBBI Prevention and Care

We continue to advance our project on Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBI), with a focus on reducing stigma, trauma, and mental

health-related barriers to care. These efforts aim to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services, foster knowledge-sharing across Inuit public health networks, and promote safer healthcare practices—ultimately supporting healthier outcomes for Inuit.

Violence, Abuse Prevention & Justice (VAP&J)

MMIWG Data

Pauktuutit continues to collaborate with Les Femmes Michifs Otipemisiwak, the Ontario Native Women's Association, and 2 Spirits in Motion to address critical data gaps for Métis, Inuit, and 2SLGBTQ+ communities. This ongoing collaboration ensures that these communities are accurately represented and that their unique needs are addressed in research, policy development, and advocacy efforts.

Inuit Justice Gathering

On February 27 and 28, Elders, youth, and legal professionals came together for an in-person gathering. The important discussions held during the event will help shape a key report for the Department of Justice.

Together with the community, we are strengthening Inuit-led justice solutions.





Empowering Youth: Engaging Young Men and Boys Workshop in Kuujjuaq

Pauktuutit's Violence and Abuse Prevention team had the privilege of delivering the Engaging Young Men and Boys workshop to community organizations in Kuujjuaq and the surrounding regions. We were deeply grateful to all who attended and shared their insights—it was an inspiring exchange of ideas and experiences that helped support healthy relationships and safer communities.

A special highlight of the visit was witnessing the Ivakkak dog sled race as teams set off on their next leg. We wished all the mushers and their dogs a safe and successful journey!

Addressing Intimate Partner Violence: Saimaniik Workshop in Kuujjuaq

On March 6, we held workshops in Kuujjuaq, where we delivered the Saimaniik Workshop on Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and the Family Justice System Response alongside local partners.

We expressed our gratitude to Saqijjuq for providing the space and facilitating connections with key organizations and attendees from Isuarsivik Regional Recovery Centre and Centre de Santé Tulattavik de l'Ungava for their commitment to supporting Inuit families.

These important discussions contributed to shaping culturally appropriate, community-driven pathways toward safety, healing, and justice.





Pauktuutit has made great strides over the past few months, successfully completing several key projects, including Engaging Young Men & Boys, Policing, and the Indigenous Justice Strategy. Final reports for these initiatives will be shared in the coming months. Through this work, we have strengthened valuable partnerships and look forward to continuing our support through local and regional advocacy.

Our ongoing efforts focus on critical areas such as Intimate Partner Violence, the implementation of UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), and the revitalization of Inuit Justice systems.

We are also excited to announce an upcoming series of gender equality podcasts, which we plan to release by the end of the year.

These initiatives highlight Pauktuutit's enduring commitment to uplifting Inuit women, families, and communities by ensuring their voices are heard and fostering positive change.

Social and Economic Development

Housing and Shelter Research

Pauktuutit's housing and shelter research project is well underway. In partnership with 21FSP Advisory, we are currently working toward securing ethics approvals across all regions in Inuit Nunangat to begin engagement with shelter operators and wraparound service providers. Respecting regional protocols and data sovereignty is central to our approach. This initiative, made up of three distinct research projects, will inform a robust advocacy strategy aimed at improving housing and shelter services for Inuit women, their families, and gender-diverse Inuit.

Economic Empowerment: Basic Income Feasibility Study

In January, Pauktuutit issued a Request for Proposals

(RFP) for a Basic Income Feasibility Study focused on Inuit women and gender-diverse Inuit. The study will map the cost of living and analyze the potential impact of social benefits and wellness improvements. Interviews with potential researchers took place in March, and a successful bidder was selected shortly after. The project officially launches in May, with more updates to come as the work progresses.

Food Security: Pathways to Food Sovereignty

In late January, Pauktuutit released another RFP titled Pathways to Food Sovereignty. This project explores innovative ways to deliver food subsidies and programs in rural and remote communities. Its goal is to develop or improve policies that support Inuit families while demonstrating the broader social and economic impacts. Interviews were conducted in February, and contract negotiations are now underway with the selected research team. The project is also scheduled to begin in May.

Together, these research initiatives will strengthen Pauktuutit's advocacy efforts by providing solid, culturally grounded evidence to support policies that meet the unique needs of Inuit women and gender-diverse Inuit.



Femme Inuite avec des enfants, Nain, Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador = Inuit Women with Children, Nain, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1921-1922. Photographer: Waugh, F.W., 1872-1924



Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada Honours 32 Inuit Women with King Charles III Coronation Medals



Honouring the recipients of the King Charles III Coronation Medal at the virtual ceremony.

On March 20, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada proudly announced that 32 Inuit women were awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal. This prestigious national honour recognized individuals who made outstanding contributions to their communities. All 32 recipients were thoughtfully selected by Pauktuutit's Board of Directors for their exceptional leadership, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to advancing the rights and well-being of Inuit women, girls, and families.

The King Charles III Coronation Medal was awarded to individuals across Canada in recognition of exceptional service. Pauktuutit's Board of Directors selected Inuit women from across Inuit Nunangat and urban centres who played key roles in preserving Inuit language and culture, advancing justice and health, advocating for Inuit rights, and strengthening Inuit communities.

// These women are leaders, mentors, and changemakers. Each recipient has played an important role in uplifting Inuit women and girls, strengthening our communities, and preserving our culture. We are incredibly proud to recognize them with this national honour. //

— Nancy Etok, Board Chair
of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada



"It is important to recognize the contributions of Inuit women who work tirelessly to uplift our people," said Lois (Looe) Mike, Vice Chair of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada. "These award recipients are knowledge keepers, language advocates, healthcare workers, artists, and community leaders. They inspire us every day, and it is an honour to celebrate them."

The 32 recipients of the King Charles III Coronation Medal, as chosen by Pauktuutit's Board of Directors, are:

- **Rebecca Kudloo** – A past president of Pauktuutit and a leader in supporting victims of family violence.
- **Sheila Flaherty** – An award-winning chef who shares Inuit culture through food.
- **Dr. Donna May Kimmaliardjuk** – The first Inuk heart surgeon, inspiring Inuit in medicine.
- **Victoria Kakuktinniq** – An internationally known fashion designer sharing Inuit styles.
- **Mayoreak Ashoona** – A renowned printmaker whose art is known around the world.
- **Looe Arreak** – A leader in Inuit performing arts, working for a Nunavut performance space.
- **Lois Mike** – The first female Inuk ordained minister, bringing spiritual leadership to her community.
- **Dr. Elaine Kilabuk** – An Internal medicine doctor, the first Inuk to graduate from McGill University.
- **Rosemary Cooper** – The first Inuk woman to lead Pauktuutit as Executive Director.
- **Lizzie Ittinuar** – One of the founders of Pauktuutit, helping Inuit women's voices be heard.
- **Martha Flaherty** – A cultural ambassador and advocate, sharing Inuit stories and history.
- **Trudy Metcalfe-Coe** – A chef and community food educator, teaching Inuit cuisine.
- **Martha Kyak** – A designer and educator, bringing Inuit art and fashion to the world.
- **Justice Stacy Ryan** – The first Inuit woman in Newfoundland and Labrador named to the Supreme Court.
- **Nikki Komaksiutiksak** – A leader in Winnipeg, supporting Inuit who move to the city.
- **Maxine Anguk** – A strong advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ Inuit and suicide prevention.
- **Monica Ittusardjuat** – A respected Elder, editor, and advocate for Inuktitut language.
- **Naulaq LeDrew** – A dedicated Elder sharing Inuit culture through dance and song.
- **Liz Pijogge** – A researcher protecting Arctic waters from plastic pollution.
- **Sharon Edmunds** – A scientist studying food safety and trichinella in Nunavut.
- **Mary Sillett** – A past Pauktuutit president who helped build the organization.
- **Lena Onalik** – An archaeologist protecting Inuit history and culture.
- **Melissa Haney** – The first Inuk woman pilot to reach captain with Air Inuit.
- **Brenda Epoo** – A midwife ensuring Inuit women have access to traditional birthing care.
- **Mina Beaulne** – A leader helping Inuit families and children thrive.
- **Annie Alaku** – A dedicated advocate for children, recognized posthumously.
- **Mary Arngak** – A cultural educator who connects Elders and youth in Nunavik.
- **Minnie Etidloie** – An Elder and knowledge keeper who teaches traditional skills.
- **Selima Lucy Annanack** – A leader in on-the-land programs and community building.
- **Shirley Elias** – A seamstress, drummer, and dancer who made a Red Amautiit for Pauktuutit.
- **Debbie Gordon-Ruben** – A health and wellness advocate, singer, and dancer.
- **Elisapee Birmingham** – An Elder and skilled seamstress, dedicated to strengthening her community.

"Each of these women represents the strength, vibrancy, and leadership of Inuit women across the country," said Paige Kimiksana-Kreps, Secretary-Treasurer of Pauktuutit. "We thank them for their hard work, their advocacy, and their commitment to making a difference for Inuit women and families."

Pauktuutit honoured all recipients during a virtual ceremony that celebrated both their individual achievements and their collective impact on Inuit communities across Canada.



Our New Website Is Now Live!



Pauktuutit Launches New Website

We are excited to announce the launch of Pauktuutit's new website!

This refreshed online platform reflects our growing role as a strong national voice for Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse people. It highlights our work in advocacy, research, and policy leadership, and aligns with the goals of our 2025–2029 Strategic Plan.

The new site offers easier access to resources and updates on our work promoting safety, health, and well-being for Inuit communities, while supporting self-determination and healing across Inuit Nunangat and beyond.

Visit the new website — now available in both English and Inuktitut: pauktuutit.ca

Priscilla Kukshuk Honoured as a Leading Woman of Ottawa–Vanier

We are proud to celebrate our board member, Priscilla Kukshuk, who was recently recognized as a Leading Woman of Ottawa–Vanier by The Honourable Mona Fortier, MP.

Priscilla's tireless dedication to breaking down barriers and uplifting Inuit communities continues to inspire us all. Her leadership plays a vital role in advancing the rights, voices, and wellbeing of Inuit women across the country.

Our former CEO, Rosemary Cooper, attended the celebration, joining remarkable women to honour leadership, strength, and progress on International Women's Day.

Congratulations, Priscilla - your work truly embodies the spirit of resilience and change!





Looking Forward

As we move further into 2025, Pauktuutit remains deeply committed to advancing the rights, well-being, and priorities of Inuit women, girls, and gender-diverse people. With Parliament now back in session, we will continue to amplify Inuit voices locally, nationally, and globally while strengthening our work in key areas such as health, safety, justice, and cultural revitalization.

No matter the shifts in the political landscape, our focus remains steady: to ensure that Inuit women's voices shape the policies and programs that affect our communities. Change may take time, but through persistence, partnership, and the strength of Inuit leadership, we know meaningful progress is possible.

We welcome your feedback and look forward to continuing this important journey together.





Join our Team!

Choose Pauktuutit to take an active role in changing the lives of Inuit that we represent.

Grounded in Inuit societal values, we partner with Inuit women, communities and organizations to advocate and provide guidance for improvement of health, economy, safety, justice, and ultimately empower Inuit women to have greater opportunities to thrive.

We offer:

- An inclusive, and respectful work environment
- Flexible work arrangements including remote work
- Paid personal well-being days, vacation and sick leave
- Health and dental benefits
- Cell phone and Internet allowance
- Language allowance (Inuktut)

and more.



Who We Are

Pauktuutit is the national representative organization of Inuit women in Canada. We foster greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, advocate for equality and social improvements, and encourage Inuit women's participation in the community, regional and national life of Canada.

What Is Suliqpita?

Suliqpita means 'what we are doing'. Suliqpita is our seasonal newsletter where we provide updates on what we've been working on and what's coming up.

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