



For Immediate Release

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ANNOUNCING THE 2020 CENSUS APPRECIATION DRAWING

Anchorage, Alaska – The stakes are critically high for Alaska and Alaska Native peoples for the 2020 Decennial Census. An undercount can impact our state and communities for 10 years, severely undercutting our ability to access necessary funding to provide services, education, healthcare, transportation, energy and the list goes on, to say nothing of the potential impacts to elections. Each Alaskan counted brings in approximately \$3,500 per year to the state. This is \$35,000 over the next 10 years for Alaska per person. The loss of this critical federal revenue impacts Alaska Native peoples and communities disproportionately. September 30 is currently the last day to be counted throughout the nation and it is fast approaching.

Chalyee Éesh Richard J. Peterson (Tlingit), President of Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska said, “It is critical that we make sure that every household in Alaska is counted. Alaska currently has one of the lowest Census response rates in the country and there are millions of dollars at stake for our communities that fund schools, public safety, hospitals and housing. The early end of the 2020 Census could disproportionately hurt Alaska Native Tribes that are already historically undercounted and hard to reach. Our villages, communities, region and state are counting on you!”

In an effort to mobilize efforts to Get Out The Alaska Native Census, First Alaskans Institute (FAI), a statewide Alaska Native nonprofit focused on advancing Alaska Natives for the *next* 10,000 years, in partnership with the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), the oldest and largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, a tribal government serving over 30,000 Tribal Citizens across the world, have partnered up, and welcome other organizations to join with us, in amplifying the need for all of our Alaska Native peoples to be counted. In order to do this, besides the usual PSA’s, forums, and mailings to promote completing the Census, given the pandemic and the racial reckoning happening nationwide, our organizations have joined together to create a statewide 2020 Census Appreciation Drawing to help ensure our peoples are accurately and completely counted in the 2020 Census.

“AFN hopes you will sign up for this drawing right now. By filling out the Census you help our whole state be counted. Join in the Appreciation drawing today. Don’t wait,” said Julie Kitka, AFN President.

There are opportunities to win prizes (cash, artwork, and other goods) each week through September 30 culminating in a grand prize drawing following the September 30th closing of the Census (to be extended if current bipartisan efforts are able to shift the deadline to the end of October). Grand prizes include but are not limited to two opportunities to win \$3,500 cash, a four-wheeler, a skiff or a snow machine. That's right, two winners will be selected for each of the grand prizes! Those who have already completed the Census or commit to completing it can enter to be included in the drawings. The link to submit an entry is located below.

Across our Alaska Native communities, we know the importance of the Census is not just about our population count, it is also about the unique political relationship the United States has with Native peoples and the Census is one way to hold the government accountable to this trust responsibility. When our peoples are not counted, they are invisible in the data, and that is not acceptable. We need every one of our Native peoples counted and that is why this appreciation drawing was created.

“When Alaska Natives complete the Census, it is a political act because of our unique status in this country which predates the US Constitution and is enshrined within it. When we take the Census, it means we are helping to provide for our families, communities, and this entire state benefits from it,” said Liz La quen náay Medicine Crow (Haida/Tlingit), President/CEO of First Alaskans Institute.

To enter and see the full list of rules go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FAICensusDrawing>. Winners will be responsible for any tax implications. If the 2020 Census deadline gets extended, this opportunity will also be extended to that deadline.

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About Tlingit & Haida: *The Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a tribal government representing over 30,000 Tlingit and Haida Indians worldwide. Tlingit & Haida's mission is to preserve our sovereignty, enhance our economic and cultural resources, and promote self-sufficiency and self-governance for our citizens through collaboration, service, and advocacy. To learn more visit Tlingit & Haida's website at www.cchita-nsn.gov, contact us at 907.463.7368 or email communications@cchita-nsn.gov.*

About First Alaskans Institute (FAI): *At FAI we know we are responsible for carrying more than 10,000 years of ancestral knowledge into the future with rigor, humor, resilience, vigilance, and love. To learn more visit our website at www.firstalaskans.org, contact us at 907-677-1700 or email info@firstalaskans.org.*

About Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN): *AFN is Alaska's largest and oldest statewide Native organization. Formed in 1966 to settle land claims, AFN continues to be the principal forum and voice of Alaska Natives in addressing critical issues of public policy and government. AFN's mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community. Learn more at www.nativefederation.org.*