Tina Piulia DeCouto

Uncomfortable Inuk - Exploring Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit







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Tina Piulia DeCouto Iqaluit, Nunavut Canada (Photo credit Alistair Maitland)

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Tina is currently a Jane Glassco Northern Fellow and works for Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), a land claims organization representing the interests of Inuit in the implementation of the Nunavut Agreement since 2014. Most recently, she has taken on the role of Director for Social and Cultural Development. Prior to that, she worked in the division of Inuit Employment and Training with a focus on Article 23, where the objectives are toward a representative public service, but a majority of her time was committed to playing a pivotal role in the establishment and operation of Makigiaqta Inuit Training Corporation. Tina greatly contributed to the development and approval of Makigiaqta's Long-term Strategy and supported the Corporation in making its first investment in 16 Nunavut organizations.

Born to an Inuk mother and a Portuguese father in Iqaluit, Tina was the first in her family of five to graduate high school in 2004. Upon graduation, she embarked on a six-month international volunteer program with Canada World Youth and after returning home in summer of 2005, Tina was accepted into Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS), an Inuit-specific post-secondary program based in Ottawa where students learn about Inuit history, politics, and governance. Graduating NS with distinction and a new-found appreciation for her culture, education, and travel, Tina spent a year back-packing across Southern Africa and South-East Asia, and earned her Bachelor of Management at Athabasca University. A student with Pirurvik Centre's Inuktitut Revitalization program for Inuit, and a mother of two boys who attend the only Inuktitut immersion daycare in Nunavut, Tina is always looking for creative ways to further build on her cultural foundation as an Inuk.

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BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

s a product of colonization, I am an uncomfortable Inuk. Many people have questioned my ethnicity based on my appearance. Many have questioned my ethnicity based on the level of my Inuktitut language ability. I myself have questioned my inuuniq (Inuk-ness) based on my inability to meaningfully communicate with Inuit Elders, and thus, have found myself feeling as though I do not fully embody Inuit ways of being. I often wonder: am I really rooted in my experiences of Inuktut (language) and Inuit knowledge?

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ): often referred to as Inuit traditional knowledge. IQ is about a set of values and practices, the relevance and importance of these, and ways of being and looking at things that are timeless.

Inuit Societal Values (ISV): Eight guiding principles that are used to guide the Government of Nunavut in the delivery of government programs and services (see Figure 1).

This very personal question is what drove me to focus my policy research on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, in particular within the Government of Nunavut (GN). Inuit Qaujimajatugangit is referenced in many Government of Nunavut (GN) documents. There has been some significant work done to define Inuit Societal Values (ISV) within the Government of Nunavut, which some people may assume to be the epitome of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. However, Inuit Qaujimajatugangit goes far beyond ISV. I wanted to further explore the intent and, more practically, application of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit and ISV throughout the territorial government administration and delivery of territorial government services. Born and raised predominantly in Nunavut. I wanted to understand why I – like many of my peers –

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felt disconnected from my culture. In relation, I wanted to explore further the efforts of the Government of Nunavut¹ through the creation of their first mandate, *Pinasuagtavut: That Which* We've Set Out to Do: Our Hopes and Dreams for Nunavut, to ensure "Inuit Qaujimajatugangit will provide the context in which we develop an open, responsive and accountable government"; and that "Inuktut, in all its forms, is the working language of the government of Nunavut." More specifically, I wanted to explore how those efforts have influenced my experience and the strength of my roots to Inuktut and Inuit knowledge. Efforts in achieving the Nunavut dream for a territorial governance structure that is based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, inclusive of language and culture, have waned. It is reflected through analysis of the Government of Nunavut's first mandate in achieving the commitments mentioned above. This has led me to provide four recommendations on the basis of Inuit maligait.

"It is very important to have rules and laws to live by: live by a set plan, set of beliefs and values"—Joe Karetak ²

"Inunnguijausimajuq development is confused when there are opposing systems of belief and outside influences, such as peer pressure" -Atuat Akittirq ³

LANGUAGE AND WORLDVIEW

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ), for the purpose of this paper, represents Inuit worldview in its entirety: knowledge, values, language, perspective, and way of life. Therefore, it is more than the eight societal values as defined and utilized symbolically in government application.

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Although important, the eight values do not capture the complete epistemology of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit. In addition, when referencing Inuit Qaujimajatugangit in this article, it includes Inuktut (the Inuit language in all dialects) because language is intricately tied to the transmission of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Alexina Kublu, a former Language Commissioner for Nunavut, and her husband Mick Mallon, a linguist who has dedicated his life to learning and teaching Inuktitut, speak about the difference in literal translation from English to Inuktut and Inuktut to English in "Our Language, Our Selves." Literal translations from one language to another can be significantly misconstrued and do not always reflect the intent or meaning behind the use of each respective language.4 For Kublu, and many other Inuit, language and culture are inextricably entwined in the perception of who we are as Inuit.

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Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.

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Working together for a common cause.

Havagatitišmiškut.

Travailler ensemble dans un

ALMANDER LADSE

Being innovative and resourceful.

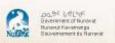
Nutaanik Illiuqniq uvalu kayuutighaniklu.

Faire preuve d'innovation et d'ingéniosité. ል•ሌሁናበዋው። አደጥኖውን ልልቦት, ውነብው፣ ቁቁበናበነውን ል

Respect and care for the land, animals and the environment.

Pittiariugu muharilugulu nuna, huraadjat unalu avatigiyauyullu.

Respecter la terre, la faune et l'environnement, et en prendre soin



Active and Heritage Pitpuril pythol Dubus at Patreona

007-475-6500 www.ch.gov.nu.co

Figure 1: Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, ላንት "ህላጐ 1: Δ应Δና 'ክኮኦኒ-১ንጐዮና, https://www.gov.nu.ca/culture-and-heritage/information/inuit-qaujimajatuqangit, Government of Nunavut

Many Inuit strive for biculturalism, which has been described by Seth J. Schwartz and Jennifer B. Unger as comfort and proficiency with both one's heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled;⁵ or more specifically for our case as Inuit, Indigenous and first people of Canada, through the process of colonization. Schwartz and Unger have further expanded the definition to include cultural practices, values, and identifications. Someone who is bicultural can function effectively in two cultural contexts, but may feel Inuk in comparison to qallunaat (non-Inuit) counterparts and feel qallunaat in comparison to Inuit peers.

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"Do Inuit see themselves as Inuit first or as Canadians first? I have always thought those two sentiments were one and the same. After all, during our many meetings with Inuit from countries such as Denmark, the United States or Russia, we have always been Canadian Inuit" – Jose Kusugak

In a territory where approximately 85% of the population is Inuit and 75% of those Inuit reported Inuktut as their mother tongue according to Statistics Canada⁷, it is personally concerning how much I continually struggle to grasp fluency in Inuktut. Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada that has a homogenous majority language spoken that is a language other than French and English. ⁸

Inuit who negotiated the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement that led to the creation of Nunavut wanted to ensure Inuit rights, including language and culture, were protected; that we could live with dignity in our homeland without feeling shame or inferiority existing in a worldview that is so fundamentally different from non-Inuit, and to feel unapologetic to function in Inuktut.

If Nunavut's institutions and the systems they create truly valued Inuit culture and language, I am not sure that I, a non-fluent Inuktut speaker, would be at the level of career that I am in now. The optimism remains that if anyone can achieve fluency in the Inuktut language and we have a territorial government which truly works from an Inuit world view that we also guide ourselves by, then *that* will be Nunavut.

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INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT IN GOVERNMENT

The Government of Nunavut, with the adoption of a centuries-old western style governance system, has successfully turned Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into a limited definition of a set of principles, minimizing the critical concepts of Inuit worldview.

With the creation of the Nunavut territory, many Inuit were hopeful that the systems of colonization that invaded our lives would no longer work to strip us of our language, culture, and autonomy to choose how we live. However, Nunavut adopted a government system that is essentially the same as the colonized system that worked to create it. Notably, Inuit have adapted to life in stationary community settlements from a once seasonal lifestyle, often travelling with small groups and camps, in a very short span of time. Inuit either chose to move or were forced to move into community settlements during the 1950s and 1960s. Whether it was a personal decision or a forced relocation, the impact of this rapid transition is still felt today.

Even though many Inuit lived through an era that attempted to strip us of our language and culture, we saw some of our aspirations achieved when the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed. However, since signing, we have not been provided adequate opportunity to build our own distinct government that will serve the needs and interests of our society, with methods and practices that are familiar, amongst people we can identify with, and in our own language. I often question why Inuit organizations and Nunavut community-based societies must follow western guidelines of conduct such as Robert's Rules of Order, which are set out in a manual that provides a standard procedure for conducting meetings for a diverse range of organizations. These rules created by a foreign system do not reflect Inuit ways of being, but we must use them in order to maintain legitimacy

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ροδι Αφριορίτουρα, αιζι Φογι $\text{The proof of the proof of$ $\Delta\dot{\omega}$ / L / C · D · C · D · P/40c, 20% 40c%/L9% 6%LD/56% 4PC+7460 49PJN74P7LC9DJ. P9P7LD45P9. ۵۰۵٬ ۲۰۵۷ ۱۲۳۵ ۱۲۳۵ ۱۲۳۵ ۵۵۵٬ ۵٬۲۵۲ مهدر ۱۳۵۶ مهدر به در ب σ?4°)Γσρ%'¬Ь4° ρ<6; σεη%CΓσρε¬ης DQC°D° 1950-°C°σ 4LD 1960-°C°σ. ΔιΓσο ۵٬۵۲۲ ۵٬۵۷۲ عالم ۵٬۲۷۲ عالم ۵٬۲۷۲ عالم ۱۳۵۰ عالم $d^{3}V^{2}$

and sustainability within our territory because of existing territorial legislation and regulations.

Ethical space was never created to enable Inuit to truly build a system reflective of our culture. Ethical space, as defined by Willie Ermine, a Cree Researcher at the Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre (IPHRC) and an Assistant Professor with First Nations University of Canada,

... is formed when two societies, with disparate worldviews, are posed to engage with each other. It is the thought about diverse societies and the space in between them that contributes to the development of a framework for dialogue between human communities. The ethical space of engagement proposes a framework as a way of examining the diversity and positioning of Indigenous peoples and Western society in the pursuit of a relevant discussion ¹⁰

Through my research, I am fortunate to have gained an awareness of the critical work and efforts of Inuit to create the necessary components to move toward the development of a system that is based on the foundation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Many of these works I reference in this article.

Early efforts to implement Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit included the appointment of Inuit to the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) Task Force in November 2001. The taskforce's mandate was to make recommendations to the government for incorporating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit into its operations, to meet the Government of Nunavut's first government mandate, *Pinasuaqtavut* - the *Bathurst Mandate*. *Pinasuaqtavut*, which means "that which we've set out to do" committed that by 2020, Nunavut would be a place where Inuktut, in all of its forms, would be the working

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language of the Government of Nunavut; that the education system would be built within the context of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit; and educational programs would be offered based on community-by-community needs. ¹² So, what has caused the inability to meet the strategic objectives and targets set out early in Nunavut's life and the GN's following mandates: *Pinasuaqtavut 2004-2009, Tamapta*, ¹³ *Sivumut Abluqta*, ¹⁴ and *Turaaqtavut*? ¹⁵

The IQ Task Force reported that most government departments were failing to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in a significant way. This issue was assessed based on the underlying problem addressed in this question: "Should the Nunavut government try to incorporate the Inuit Culture into itself? Or [...] should the Nunavut government incorporate itself into the Inuit culture?" 16 The IQ Task Force recognized that the model of governance borrowed from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and other public government was an alien model with its own institutional culture that impedes the integration of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit into its service delivery system. They also recognized the challenge for government to integrate itself into the Inuit culture, and that there were no definitive answers about how to do this. However, they provided 12 recommendations, of which three specifically focussed on supporting communities through decentralization of authority and resources, simplifying the organizational structures at the community level, and encouraging and supporting the development of communitybased informal systems of programs and services.17

Another example of critical work includes a book called *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*: What Inuit Have Always Known to be True. ¹⁸ This book draws upon the knowledge of respected Inuit Elders from across Nunavut, many of whom have since passed away, for the purpose of ensuring

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that the knowledge of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit is documented and shared with the Inuit community. The Inuit Elders involved "... were concerned that Inuit Qaujimajatugangit was being presented in bits and pieces and that there was no single source that presented a complete version of holistic philosophy of life." 19 What struck me is the importance placed on this book by those involved in its development as a resource for Inuit who seek to decolonize and heal through the reclamation of this unique worldview and to use the knowledge to rebuild society grounded in cultural beliefs and systems.²⁰ I am forever grateful to the Inuit Elders: Atuat Akittig, Louis Angalik, Jose Angutinngurnig, Mariano Aupilaarjug, Norman Attangalaag, Alice Hitkoak Ayalik, Mark Kalluak, Rhoda Karetak, Donald Uluadluak; as well as authors and editor, Frank Tester, Shirley Tagalik and Joe Karetak, for undertaking this work and publishing the book in 2017,, as I seek to gain knowledge of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit and personally strengthen my roots.

TRANSMISSION OF INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT

My past and current lived experience demonstrates the lack of opportunity many young Inuit, especially those in the larger centres of Nunavut, such as Igaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay, have to live, learn, and work in Inuktut and learn directly from Inuit Elders and Inuit knowledge holders. In examining Nunavut's most prominent institutions, including schools and government, it is no wonder this is the case, given that they are led and implemented primarily by non-Inuit. For example, in 2018, a Government of Nunavut report commented that only 16 of 20 senior management positions within the Department of Education were filled; none of them were occupied by Inuit. 21 This statistic does not make sense in a territory that has a majority population of Inuit.

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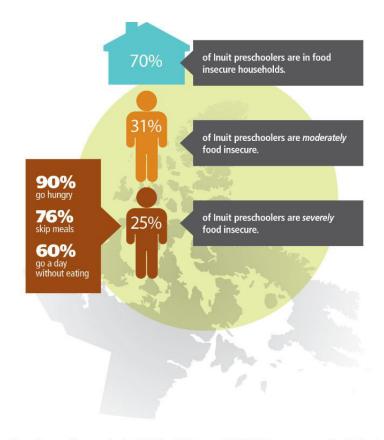
Because I have had very little opportunity to learn from Inuit in Nunavut institutions. I crave and value every opportunity to learn directly from Inuit about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Perhaps, given my ingrained learning approach and insecurity in my personal inuuniq, I realize my preference is for these opportunities to be presented formally, until such a point where I have increased my confidence and established relationships enough for these opportunities to occur more naturally. As Inuit, do we not have the right to receive and access learning and acquire Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Nunavut's institutions, where we are expected to spend a majority of our time, in order to live good lives and contribute to our society and economy?

Janet Tamalik McGrath demonstrates the important relationship of people interactions in the process of knowledge transmission and renewal in her thesis, Isumaksaqsiurutigijakka: Conversations with Aupilaarjuk: Towards a Theory of Inuktitut Knowledge Renewal.²² This relationship is one of many reasons why Inuit employment in government is so critical to ensuring Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is implemented within the Nunavut government. This belief also shows the critical need for Inuit to continue to challenge the status quo and dominant institutional culture that is entrenched in government.

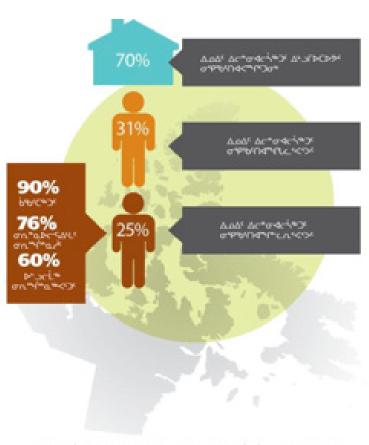
"Outside of individual personal initiatives, surprisingly very little is in place at this time to support the middle generation's immense contribution of skills and lived experiences and their capacity to access elders directly." As a result, one can safely assume that if a young lnuk does not have direct access to a familial or societal network that is grounded in Inuit culture and language, Inuit knowledge and value transmission is interrupted.

Statistics demonstrate that Inuit continue to suffer more from social determinants of health

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Data Source: Nunavut Inuit Child Health Survey, 2007–2008, as presented in Egeland et al., 2010



than any other group in Canada. For example, seven out of 10 Inuit children are reported to go to bed hungry²⁴ (see Figure 2) and the high school completion rate for Inuit is the lowest in the country at 40%.²⁵ If families are struggling to make ends meet, it interrupts their ability to foster our values or contribute to the betterment of our community.

This challenge is supported by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (see Figure 3), a wellknown theory that suggests people are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other more advanced needs. In Maslow's Hierarchy, the most basic needs are physiological, which include food, water, sleep, and warmth.²⁶ CBC recently reported that Nunavut has a waiting list of nearly 5,000 people for housing, and that with the current level of federal investment in the area, it will take 60 years to house all those in need.27 It is no wonder that young Inuit continue to have decreasing access to both Elders and our language, when the expectation remains for language and Inuit-specific learning (learning through, and application of, Inuit Qaujimajatugangit) to be through our "homes" and we don't even have enough homes to house all those in need.

INUKTUT IN GOVERNMENT

Given that language is intricately tied to culture and the transmission of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, it is important that we look at Inuktut in the workplace.²⁸ The Nunavut Labour Force Analysis is an obligation of the GN that undertakes an analysis of the labour force in Nunavut, including language in the workplace. Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, Robert Phillipson and Robert Dunbar highlight that the Nunavut Inuit Labour Force

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Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Physical Needs

- food and drink
- sleep
- health
- body needs
- exercise and rest
- Sex



Safety Needs

- security
- protection
- · comfort and peace
- no threats or danger
- orderly and neat surroundings



Attachment Needs

- acceptance
- belonging
- · membership
- affectiongroup
- participation



Self-Esteem Needs

- recognition
- confidence
 competence and
- success
- strength and intelligence



Self-Actualization Needs

- fulfillment of potential
- acting for challenge of accomplishment
- intellectual fulfillment
- aesthetic appreciation
- acceptance of reality

Figure 3 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.), Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Hierarchy of Needs. Government of Nunavut: Arviat, Nunavut. Reprinted with permission from the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre's Inunnguiniq Parenting Program Curriculum Manual (2018).



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...even if a reasonable number declare that after getting qualified, they use Inuktut in their work, and even if the Inuit identity of participants is strengthened in such programmes, the fact that the entire system functions in English strengthens competence in English massively, and not technical and professional operational competence in Inuktut. This is bound to mean that students internalise English as the language of skills, jobs, success, modernity, and increased opportunities nation-wide. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that current training represents assimilation to "white" norms. 29

From a human rights perspective, Dunbar, Phillipson and Skutnab-Kangas indicate that granting minority or minoritized languages some space in schools, but in a subordinate position to English and French, perpetuates discrimination. They further state that granting no space constitutes linguicide, which they describe as discrimination on the basis of language and its replacement by another. ³⁰

INUIT-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

I recently participated in the *Inunnguiniq* Parenting Program, which is delivered by Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre (based in Iqaluit) and Aqqiumavvik Centre (based in Arviat). *Inunnguiniq* is a parenting program based on Inuit childrearing philosophy from Inuit knowledge provided by Inuit Elders;³¹ most of these same Inuit Elders worked on the book referenced earlier, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*:

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What Inuit Have Always Known to be True. Oddly enough, the Elders Advisory Committee was established in order to re-design Nunavut's K-12 Education system so that teaching and student learning is founded on the perspective of Inuit culture, something that many Inuit feel the Government of Nunavut Department of Education has failed to do.

Through my participation with *Inunnguiniq*, I learned practical underlying concepts that would be applicable for policy development purposes. For example, "sharing" for Inuit has very intentional meaning in how it is applied; sharing is applied in the context of perceiving a need and not putting others in a position to have to request something. This fosters our values and ensures Inuit are able to keep our dignity intact. In addition, although Inuit who share do so without expectation, there is also the practice that the receiver finds a way to give back, by providing something that they are able, no matter how big or small. Territorial government policies, such as those for income assistance, could reflect the concept practically by training public servants and equipping them with this knowledge, so that needs are recognized and government procedures can be mitigated to ensure people are not put in positions to have to request the assistance.

In addition, the *Inunnguiniq* program taught me about Inuit maligait (laws):

- 1. Working for the common good;
- 2. Maintaining harmony;
- 3. Continually planning for the future; and
- **4.** Respect for all living things.

Learning about the four *maligait* in a formal program, rather than hearing Inuit *maligait* (Inuit laws) referenced in passing or reading it from a government poster with no context,

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allowed me to meaningfully apply and reflect on the four *maligait* in my personal experiences. For example, maintaining harmony can be applied in many different ways, yet it can be quite challenging in practice. The *Inunnguiniq* program encouraged drawing on examples from my relationship with my son's father and how maintaining harmony is critical to raising a healthy, happy human being. *Inunnguiniq* participants referenced values such as communication, honesty, and understanding as it relates to Inuit *maligait* through the personal examples. This contributed greatly to providing context, heightened my learning, and further connected my mind and heart to my Inuit culture.

There is absolutely no reason that Inuit knowledge cannot be the foundation for, or embedded in, Nunavut's institutional learning. This can be done in both Inuktut and English and should be taught by Inuit. The Inunnquinia program was delivered in both English and Inuktut. This allowed me to comprehend the delivery of content but also build my lnuktut. A majority of the participants were fluent Inuktut speakers. I could not help but feel guilt that English was being used to accommodate my inability to speak fluent Inuktut. Yet, the content was derived predominantly from Inuit knowledge; this built my Inuit knowledge base significantly. By participating with Inuit and fluent Inuktut speakers, I was able to expand my connections and relationships with Inuit from other communities. That was more meaningful to me than receiving formal post-secondary education in southern institutions.

Indeed, Tamalik argues that "... it is critical to understand the importance of knowledge in context; without the story of relationships or without relationships to transmit the stories, knowledge becomes informational, fact and data-based." ³² Tamalik argues that knowledge in that context, void of relational value, does not support the ethical dimensions required

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in Inuktitut knowledge production. As a result, our institutions must support Inuit knowledge transmission through relationships.

VALUE FOR INUIT-SPECIFIC PROMISING PRACTICE

Our Life's Journey (OLJ), an Inuit-Counsellor training program run by Ilisaqsivik Society, a non-profit society in Kangiqturgaapik (Clyde River), continually struggles to secure long-term sustainable funding. Without core long-term funding, Ilisaqsivik patches together monies from an assortment of annual funding sources to deliver its programming. This programming includes not only OLJ, but a variety of other community-based programs valued by the community. Although accredited through the Indigenous Certification Board of Canada, graduates of the program are currently not recognized by the Government of Nunavut system.

Other Inuit-specific programs are delivered by Nunavut Arctic College (NAC), which is the main formal post-secondary education institution in Nunavut and has the ability to accredit its own programs. Piqqusilirivvik is a division of NAC dedicated to enabling the transfer of traditional culture and knowledge. Programs delivered by Piqqusilirivvik are taught in the Inuit language and based on the guiding principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

Requirements under the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, section 23.4.2 d (iii) of Article 23, state that appropriate search criteria, such as knowledge of Inuit culture, society, and economy, are required for inclusion in the recruitment of GN employees.³³ However, when observing GN job advertisements, knowledge of Inuit culture, society, and economy is predominantly listed as an "asset," while government and formal education credentials are listed as requirements and therefore given more value. This demonstrates how the GN places more value on western, English-based post-secondary programs, even though it invests in programs such as Pigqusilirivvik.

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Title: Health Promotion Specialist

Department: Health **Community:** Iqaluit

Reference Number: 10-505533

Type of Employment: Indeterminate

GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Salary: \$92,196.00 per annum for 37.5 hour/week Northern Allowance: \$15,016.00 per annum Union Status: Nunavut Employees Union

Housing: Subsidized Staff Housing is not Available Closing date: August 16th, 2019 @ 12:00AM EST

This employment opportunity is open to all applicants.

Reporting to the Territorial Director, Population Health, the Health Promotion Specialist provides leadership in health and wellness promotion and supports community development. The position has a focus of health education throughout the life span of Nunavummiut, from early childhood education, school-aged children to adult education. The Specialist is responsible for ensuring that developed strategies are consistent with Inuit traditional knowledge within national frameworks developed by key Inuit organizations. The Specialist will also work with Department of Health community staff and others who are active in the area of community development and health promotion.

The Specialist is vital to the vision of Nunavut - developing healthy communities, and the vision of Department of Health and shifting from treatment to prevention of wellness. The incumbent is accountable for ensuring that the main determinants of health and wellbeing are strengthened, and that opportunities for partnership both within and outside government are maintained and enhanced to reflect the complexities of the environment. The incumbent will liaise with non-governmental agencies, government departments and other key stakeholders to ensure the ongoing work proceeds systematically, by producing updates of activities and ongoing work.

The knowledge, skills, and abilities required for this job are usually obtained through an undergraduate degree from a recognized university in health science, education or a related field along with two (2) years related experience. A Master's Degree in Public Health or health related field is considered an asset.

The Official Languages of Nunavut are Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English and French. Fluency in more than o of Nunavut's official language would be considered an asset. Knowledge of Inuit language, communities, culture, land and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit would also be considered an asset.

Equivalencies that consist of an acceptable combination of education and experience may be considered.

An eligibility list may be created to fill future vacancies.



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RECOMMENDATIONS AND NECESSARY NEXT STEPS

All Government of Nunavut programs and services must work to address the gap and strengthen the bridge between young Inuit and Inuit Elders in order to support Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit knowledge transmission. This must be done so that Inuit efforts towards a Government of Nunavut based on a foundation of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is achieved. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit knowledge transmission includes the need to maintain and revitalize the Inuktut language. In order to strengthen that bridge, Inuit families must first be able to meet our most basic needs.

Using the four Inuit maligait, I include four critical recommendations for the Government of Nunavut,

- 1. Supporting Inuit to Work for the Common Good: by addressing the social and infrastructure gap between Inuit and other Canadians, in order to ensure Inuit have appropriate and adequate access to resources to fulfill our basic needs. This includes identifying additional financial resources to address the housing crisis by a pre-identified foreseeable date, keeping in mind the future growth of Nunavut and the cost of maintenance for existing houses. If Inuit are not able to physically meet our basic needs, we cannot progress towards self-actualization and self-determination.
- 2. Restoring Harmony and Balance: by fostering opportunities for Inuit youth and Elders to learn from each other; elevating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to the highest possible position in our governance structures, rather than as an add-on in decision documents; and restoring the balance of power in knowledge and epistemology. Knowledgeable and experienced Inuit and Inuit Elders must be provided with the opportunities to develop

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new Inuit programs and services, including formal and educational ones, that are based on a foundation of Inuit Qaujimajatugangit.

- 3. Planning and preparing for the future: by investing in professional development and post-secondary education opportunities for Inuit to develop competencies that will help them excel in the work force and in community leadership, while strengthening language, now and into the future, and by investing resources to increase Inuit employment in government now, which should include an Inuit-specific public administration undergraduate program that meets the following criteria:
 - is developed by Inuit for Inuit with a goal to change the Government of Nunavut so that the system is truly reflective of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit;
 - contributes to Inuit having a sense of ownership over our Government; and
 - ► prepares Nunavut Inuit for employment within the Government of Nunavut.
- 4. Demonstrating respect for Inuit, the land, and animals: by providing adequate long-term, core funding for delivery of the Inuit-specific and Inuit-led programs such as Inunnquiniq, Our Life's Journey, and Piggusilirivvik. These programs should be valued through full recognition by the territorial government and, where needed, accredited by Nunavut, Canadian, and international institutions. Recognition by government includes changes to existing legislation, regulations, and other policies. Meaningful structural changes to governance systems must also be made by reducing reliance on ad hoc Inuit committees and instead focusing on adequately supporting Inuit with human and financial resources. For example, the Government of Nunavut could build teams

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with appropriate expertise and ensure control of these teams is maintained by Inuit. The appropriate "western" expertise would then act in an advisory capacity. This type of system would foster an ethical space of engagement and ensure the dominant culture does not impede Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

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FOOTNOTES

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Uncomfortable Inuk - Exploring Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

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