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ARCTIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE 2026 AVEOGAN LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER

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The Arctic Education Foundation (AEF) is proud to announce the 2026 Aveogan Leadership Award winner, **Juliana Dawn Camilleri Piesak Wilhelm** of Utqiaġvik, Alaska. This award supports college and training expenses, including tuition, fees, books, and room and board. Students may receive up to $28,000 per school year—covering fall, spring, spring quarter, and summer terms—based on financial need. The scholarship is renewable for up to four (4) consecutive school years and is available to students enrolled full- or part-time.

Juliana is the daughter of Ross & Justina Wilhelm. Her maternal grandparents are Morrie and Rosanna Lemen, and her paternal grandparents are Simeon and the late Loretta Kunaknana.

Juliana is a sophomore attending Gonzaga University. Passionate about providing resources for her hometown, Juliana is majoring in Public Health with a minor in Psychology along a Pre-Physician track. Once graduated, her goal is to return home to be a provider within her community and hopes to create new opportunities for younger generations to further their education.

She shared, "*We are the future of Utqiagvik and I would like to help encourage and remind the younger generations there is always something to learn. After the recent passing of my Aaka it has motivated me to keep going for her. I am very grateful for the people who have helped me get to where I am today.*"

Congratulations, Juliana! We wish her the very best as she continues her educational journey.
Aarigaa!

About the Aveogan Award

Established in 2023, the Aveogan Leadership Award honors the legacy of Dr. Oliver Aveogan Leavitt, a former Arctic Slope Regional Corporation board member and longtime executive leader with the corporation since 1972.

Dr. Leavitt was a whaling captain, a steadfast champion of North Slope Iñupiat rights, a devoted public servant, an avid Barrow Whalers fan, and a driving force behind the growth of ASRC. A lifelong advocate for the people of the North Slope, Aveogan spent his childhood moving between camps and villages along Alaska's Arctic coast before serving in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. His return home coincided with the Alaska Native land claims movement and the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)—a moment in history where his leadership and influence proved monumental.

About AEF

AEF was established in 1977 as a private non-profit foundation committed to supporting Iñupiat students pursuing a degree or certificate. The goal of the Foundation is to produce an educated, trained professional workforce, especially within the North Slope region. More information on AEF can be found on their website at www.arcticed.com