



NATIVE VILLAGE OF KOTZEBUE

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Tribal Government serving the Iñupiaq people of Qikiqtaġruk.

For Immediate Release:

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Native Village of Kotzebue

Nellie Ann “Iriqtaq” (Ward) Moore Honored

Kotzebue, Alaska – Dec. 23, 2024 – The Alaska Women’s Hall of Fame has recognized Nellie Ann “Iriqtaq” (Ward) Moore for her outstanding achievement in Journalism. Moore, who passed away Jan. 31, 2024, is one of 10 2024 inductees. She is being honored for decades of award-winning achievement in state and national journalism and for addressing the need to connect remote communities to news and information long before the term ‘news deserts’ became common.

Her early work managing the KOTZ newsroom elevated Alaska Native stories when little to no attention was paid to Native issues in the media. She was fearless about telling the truth, often correcting the record on Alaska Native people, their rights and culture. The reach and effectiveness of her work, both in Alaska and across the nation, as host and producer of National Native News and then Independent Native News made her a journalist of great prominence.

“Alaska, our community, and the nation lost a journalistic and cultural icon when Nellie Ann “Iriqtaq” left this world on Jan. 31, 2024,” says Christina Hensely, Executive Director, Native Village of Kotzebue.

“She was a humble servant to the Alaska Native community who shined a light on critical issues of the day and through her written words helped to open important conversations that continue to benefit people today.”

Her Iñupiaq name, Iriqtaq, means “something hidden,” which seems fitting to friends and loved ones who say Nellie was a modest person who rarely took credit for her many achievements and preferred to keep them hidden.

Throughout her career, Nellie was a passionate mentor to many. She worked at both the national and local level to help Indigenous broadcasters, as well the entire journalism

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community. She was one of the founders of the Alaska Native Media Group, another vehicle for helping Indigenous people find careers in the communications field. As part of the ANMG, Nellie hosted panels on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Some of those panels featured the role of women in ANCSA, with many colorful stories from Native women that might have otherwise been lost forever. Her efforts strengthened coverage of Alaska Native and Native American news and helped audiences far and wide gain a better understanding of Alaska. Nellie, with help from her husband, Greg Moore, also helped to develop infrastructure for Alaska radio stations to share programs via the Internet. Much of the technology she pioneered when she launched her Independent Native News service is still in use today.

In 1983, Nellie's influence expanded to television. She joined the Northwest Arctic TV Center and produced groundbreaking programs on Native culture and history, which preserved knowledge about traditional Iñupiat healing practices and documented subsistence hunting and fishing skills. She also profiled Native leaders. Beyond this huge body of work, she also co-produced six TV segments for *Sesame Street*, which accurately showcased Iñupiat life in the Kotzebue region. Today, her five-part series on the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is still used in schools, cementing her legacy as an educator and advocate for young people.

In addition to recognition by the AKWHOF, Nellie Ann was honored by the Alaska Press Club's Public Service Award in 1984 and 1986; Native American Journalist Association's Wassaja Award in 2001; and University of Oregon's Ancil Payne Award for Ethics in Journalism also in 2001. Posthumously, she was awarded the Alaska Press Club's First Amendment Award and the 2024 Indigenous Journalists Association-Medill Milestone Achievement Award. Additionally, her peers in journalism and members of the family started the Nellie Moore Alaska Native Journalism Scholarship Fund to continue Nellie's passion for supporting the next generation of Alaska Native journalists.

Born and raised in Kotzebue, Nellie Ann's parents were Ed and Ada Ward. She is survived by her brother Ed Ward Jr.; sister Lenora Ward; husband Greg Moore; son David Moore and daughter Elizabeth Cravalho; and grandchildren Dylan, Blair and Alika.

The AWHOF began in 2009 as a collaborative project of several non-profits and a collection of Alaskan women. Now in its sixteenth year, 235 female honorees have been inducted representing a broad swath of industries. A complete list of honorees, along with the class of 2024, can be found at www.alaskawomenshalloffame.org. The AKWHOF selection committee is composed of 15 individuals representing a diverse cross-sector of the state and includes leaders in education, healthcare and business. Nominations for 2025 opened Oct. 16, 2024.

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