



The Arctic Rose Foundation

“We have an extraordinary past, much of which has been kept from us, and removed from the history books. To give them, and ourselves, the opportunity to learn about our very own heroes, heroes our children and youth desperately need right now, to engage them in that story and that culture, will help them to aspire for more, to dream and to reframe who they are in today’s world.” – Susan Aglukark, Founder and Executive Director, Arctic Rose Foundation

The Need:

The Indigenous youth population in the north (both Inuit and Northern/First Nations Reserves) is the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada. They have the highest high school dropout rate, the highest suicide rates (the rate of suicide in Nunavut is 11 times higher than the rest of Canada), the worst housing conditions and are in a near constant state of food insecurity in the country. And yet, these communities where youth are the most vulnerable, have little to no access to programs, supports or safe spaces.

Some areas our youth have identified as areas they need help are:

1. Gaps in education
2. After school programs
3. Cultural disconnect
4. Access to safe spaces and healthy foods

The Opportunity:

Resolving this crisis requires long-term and consistent support being provided to Inuit and Indigenous youth. The Arctic Rose Foundation has developed programs and initiatives that will help address the identity crisis and take critical steps towards the Nunavut culture crisis while teaching and healing through the arts.

The Approach:

Youth participants in this program are guided to explore, discover and connect with their ancestral and cultural backgrounds. The program combines art, art-writing therapy, movement, music and drama to encourage creative cultural and historical exploration to fill in the identity gap that has contributed to the mental health and suicide crisis with Indigenous youth in the

North. Through the pilot project in Rankin Inlet, youth participants were guided to explore, discover and connect with their ancestral and cultural backgrounds to learn about the rich history of their communities, their families and themselves.

In addition, the program established opportunities to develop leadership skills and connections between Inuit societal values and western ideology. In the safe spaces with positive adult role models, the youth were supported and encouraged to express themselves using many different art forms. The program also provides healthy food and snacks to promote nutrition, health and self-respect.

Story of Transformation:

“Having youth do Creative Cultural Reflections (CCR) on their ancestry and using creative outlets as tools to express emotions. This will create avenues of teaching, healing, and introduces healthy ways to express emotion through art. Personal example – I had found research that had been done by the University of Manitoba where my grandfather (ataatasiaq) assisted in identifying animal and plant species, I had expressed my thoughts and emotions by writing “Even though many things were striped of us they could not take away the knowledge of survival, and love for our land”. In writing this I made a connection and realization. I knew that the knowledge came solely from Inuit, my people. I finally made a pre-colonization connection, for a brief moment I knew what it felt like to not be this product of negativity (colonization, as interpreted by Indigenous Canadians). What a powerful and uplifting feeling.”
– Trina, participant and ARF Intern

Overcoming Barriers

A reality in Inuit Nunangat is a lack of housing resulting in over-crowding in many homes and a shortage of safe spaces for programs. Providing supervised after school programs in safe spaces such as those developed by the Arctic Rose Foundation is essential.

There are many Inuit artists within Inuit Nunangat, and across Canada, who want to share their art forms through workshops and activities. However, the shortage of organized programs and space is an issue. Engaging Inuit and Indigenous artists in their respective communities to provide the programming not only benefits the youth but provides employment and mentorship opportunities for local artists within the local communities.

There are currently no Inuit-specific arts-based programs within Inuit Nunangat or outside Inuit Nunangat that are fully recognized or funded. The Arctic Rose Foundation has the experience and knowledge to not only continue the CCR program in Rankin Inlet, but to expand and implement the program in other Northern communities.

Funding Request:

The Arctic Rose Foundation requires funding to provide safe spaces and programs for Indigenous youth in Nunavut and other Northern regions. These programs provide guidance, mentorship and support to Inuit/Indigenous youth. We have received approximately \$166,000 in funding from the Federal government to run the Rankin Inlet program until March 2019. We still require \$250,000 to run the program through to June 2019 and expand to other northern communities that have requested the program.

Will you join us in supporting Indigenous youth in Canada's North?

About Us:

The Arctic Rose Foundation is a registered Canadian charity (CRA# 800801879R0001). Founded by Inuit singer/songwriter Susan Aglukark, the purpose of the ARF to nurture Northern Indigenous Children and Youth in their efforts to engage all aspects of their lives. Through program development or partnerships, the Foundation creates culturally, emotionally, spiritually and physically safe spaces and programs to engage Northern children and youth in healthy and meaningful ways. When a need is identified, and a program does not exist, the ARF will develop one with the assistance and participation of respective communities and local northern children and youth.

For more information, or to donate, please contact Susan Aglukark at info@arcticrose.org or visit www.arcticrose.org.

Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls		
Location/Phase: <u>Parts 213 Winnipeg</u>		
Witness: <u>Susan Aglukark</u>		
Submitted by: <u>Jennifer Cox</u>		
Add'l info: <u>P02-03 P03 P0301</u>		
Date: <u>OCT 03 2018</u>		
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