

Camps Pass On Alutiiq Culture To Youth

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Mary Donaldson/KMXT

The last Dig Afognak camp for kids ended yesterday (Tuesday). Mary Donaldson had the opportunity to experience the camp for a day to speak with camp coordinators, elders and gain insight into what youth take away from these camps.

(Nat Sound Intro :07s "…fades down.")

That's the sound of a song shared with youth by Loren Anderson, from the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. Anderson spent his second summer teaching at the camps and his focus was to teach the boys traditional song and dance.

1 (Anderson :19s "…dancing up there.")

Music camp, or Cauyaq (CHO-YUK), is run by the Native Village of Afognak says Susan Malutin, the program coordinator for the camp. She says the camps focus on cultural education for the next generation of Native youth.

(Malutin 1 :28s "…that's what it is.")

She says the cultural camps began over 10 years ago.

Nick Alokli is a local elder in Kodiak. He's been attending the camps for many years and says he likes to pass on the Alutiiq ways to the youth in order to keep the culture alive.

(Alokli 1 :17s “…lose one or two.”)

Doug Inga grew up in the Kodiak area, and has been carving Alutiiq masks, making drums, and at camp, teaching kids traditional Alutiiq beading. He says he is proud of the kids at camp for recognizing their culture.

(Inga 1 :22s “…there grasping it.”)

Rebecca Pruitt says she has a great time learning about being Alutiiq.

(Pruitt 1 :15s “…really fun to learn too.”)

Madison Hill-McLaughlin says she attends camp because she wants to learn more about her heritage that she’s so proud of.

(McLaughlin 1 :13s “…allowed to dance.”)

Anastasia Skonberg says her favorite part of the camp is learning the music, and she shares some of the Alutiiq words she has learned this summer.

(Skonberg 1 :13s “…is a fish.”)

Malutin says the camps are a vital opportunity for kids to experience their culture and gain ancestral knowledge while building foundations of their history, as the elders and mentors support the kids in learning about what it means to be Alutiiq.

(Nat Sound Fade Up :07s "…fades out")

l'm Mary
Donaldson. ###