

## Haakanson Accepts Postion at University of Washington

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

Next week the Alutiiq Museum will say goodbye to its long time director, Sven Haakanson. He made the decision to leave back in April, after more than 12 years with the organization. At the time he wasn't sure what he would do, or if his family would stay in Kodiak. However, just last week his plans became clear when he accepted a position with the University of Washington.

"...As an associate professor, without tenure, in the department of anthropology, and a curator of Native American anthropology at the Burke, it's a split position."

The Burke is a museum of natural history and culture located on the university's campus in Seattle. Haakanson said he will start his new job in September and is most excited about the opportunity to teach.

"And then also having access to and working with the Burke Museum collection as a curator. So that will be fun. But I'm also looking forward to be able to do research. You know right now they've given me a great start up and I'll be able to do some of the things I've been able to do here on the island with our traveling traditions and then also the research I've been doing overseas, continuing that. The doors pretty wide open so I'm pretty excited about all the new things, and also sad about, actually really sad, about leaving here."

Haakanson said majority of his work will shift to projects in Washington and the surrounding Pacific Northwest, but he hopes to continue a lot of the work he started here in Kodiak.

"We have the kayak project with the Peabody Museum that I hope to stay involved with and ensure that happens. We've got our work that we've been doing in Russia with our basket collection and then we also are finishing up the work with the skin sewing project. So I've got a lot of projects I'm still working on with the museum, so I'll continue to stay involved with that. So I'm excited about that and I hope that they're still willing to do this. But on another side is I'm hoping to go do research in Russia, the work I originally started with my PhD."

Haakanson and his family will leave the island sometime in August. He said he is grateful for the community support they have received over the years, and hopes people will continue to support the museum in its

next chapter of leadership.

The museum's interim director, Katie St. John, said there will be a goodbye celebration for Haakanson at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday at the KANA Building on Near Island. She said the museum is still in the process of hiring a new executive director.