

Association of Village Council Presidents Press Release

Contact:
Gage Hoffman
907-543-7308
ghoffman@avcp.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 5, 2023

AVCP Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Awareness March/Run for Justice

Good afternoon,

My name is Vivian Korthuis. I serve as the Chief Executive Officer for the Association of Village Council Presidents.

First, I want to acknowledge the planning committee who put time and effort to make all the activities to honor our relatives who are either Missing or Murdered not only in our region, but all across Alaska. Today is the National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People and there are awareness events happening across the nation today and across our region.

The strength I see in our region is that all our entities are working together in many ways to bring Public Safety, including MMIP to the forefront.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the AVCP Staff and MMIP Task Force for laying the groundwork for addressing the many issues we face in this area. The AVCP MMIP Task Force is coordinating work that has benefited our whole region. One great example of the powerful work they have accomplished is the new AVCP MMIP Guide Book. There is nothing like it across the Nation. The AVCP MMIP Guide Book is what other tribes and both federal and state agencies are using to create their own guidebooks. I just wanted to acknowledge the great work being done in our region that not only benefits families that are experiencing trauma, but how we are helping others far beyond our region.

For too long, the national crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples has been overlooked and underfunded. My hope is that the recent site visit to the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta by the Not Invisible Act Commission will include in the report to Congress, what they have witnessed first-hand about all the issues in our region regarding Public Safety, Prevention Services, Shelters, Search and Rescue and MMIP.

Thank you to AVCP, ONC and TWC for hosting the Commission in Bethel. Thank you to the Chuloonawick Tribe, Emmonak Tribe and the Emmonak Women's Shelter for hosting the Commission in Emmonak. Emmonak is the only rural site the Commission had an opportunity to visit. The Commission will be visiting 8 locations across Indian Country, and I am grateful they were able to visit our region to learn and take testimony from our people.

Ultimately, the Commission's purpose is to develop recommendations for the Departments of the Interior and Justice focused on improving intergovernmental coordination and establishing best practices for state, Tribal and federal law enforcement to bolster resources for survivors and victim's families, and combatting the epidemic of missing persons, murder and trafficking of American Indian and Alaska Native peoples.

As we remember our relatives who have been murdered or have gone missing, I want to acknowledge and thank the partners, agencies, tribes, cities, fire station, state troopers, city police officers, health care workers, shelters, elders, friends, children, students, parents, sisters, cousins, grandparents, families, survivors, and general community members for coming out and showing our support for all of our loved ones in today's activities.

Quyana.

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For additional information, please contact AVCP Communications Director, Gage Hoffman at 907-543-7308 or email at ghoffman@avcp.org

AVCP is a regional nonprofit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the YK Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River Village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Western Alaska.