Ikaarvik: Inuit youth bridging research and their communities in a changing Arctic

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PAME Cambridge Bay
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60% of Nunavut is under 30 (50% under 15)

A bit about the changing Arctic

Ocean Wise and Arctic research

Ikaarvik: a hybrid research & engagement program in the North
Two groups searching for solutions

ETP students in Pond Inlet looking to find ways for Inuit communities to be more meaningfully engaged in research.

Ocean Wise (then Vanaqua) looking to define its role in the Arctic.
Ikaarvik: Barriers to Bridges

• Works with northern Indigenous youth to be the bridge between research and their communities

• Empowers youth and their communities to identify and act on their own research priorities

• While building skills, confidence and experience that allows youth to take leadership roles in addressing issues of local concern for their communities
The 2013 Arctic Inspiration Prize
Ikaarvik community workshops

Youth identify and explore the strengths of IQ and science

Identify environmental issues of local importance

Present it to their community for feedback, consensus
# A list of issues

## Pond Inlet – youth priority items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garbage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shipping</td>
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<td>Icebreaking</td>
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<td>Caribou</td>
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<td>Water quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Invasive species</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dust</td>
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<tr>
<td>IQ + climate change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dump – contaminants, burning garbage, runoff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sewage lagoon</td>
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<td>Cigarette butts – impact on the environment</td>
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<td>Increase in vehicles / lack of disposal</td>
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<td>Fuel spills in the community / local waters</td>
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<td>Airport in the community – plane exhaust and de-icing fluids</td>
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## Pond Inlet – additions from the community

| Permafrost changes within the community |
| Are researchers telling us the truth? |
| Soil sampling within the community |
| Glaciers melting – what is being exposed? |
Connect community with researchers to address one or more research priorities

Youth are trained to be co-researchers

Youth participate in all aspects of the study
Pond Inlet – invasive species monitoring

Using environmental DNA analysis to create a baseline of marine species off Pond Inlet and determine potential impacts of shipping / ballast water from the Baffinland mine ships

Research Mentor: Kimberly Howland, DFO
To inform the development of shipping corridors in the Canadian Arctic.

Youth facilitated community identification of important areas for wildlife and people that could be impacted by ship traffic.

Research Mentors: Natalie Carter, Jennifer Provencher and Jackie Dawson, University of Ottawa
Development and implementation of a monitoring program on the Coppermine River based on community concerns for river health

Research Mentors: Rosie Smith and Heidi Swanson, University of Waterloo
Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay—SmartICE

Combining Inuit Knowledge and technology: Mapping, measuring and monitoring local sea ice conditions for safer travel and hunting on the ice. (Stay tuned for more about this program tomorrow!)

Research Mentor: Trevor Bell, Memorial University
The ScIQ Summit

Ikaarvik ScIQ Summit
Inuit Youth Bridging Traditions and Arctic Research

- Youth have been exploring the intersection between Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and science, research and communities
- Youth created an plan outlining w41 specific actions, behaviors, protocols for researchers (before, during and after the research) demonstrating how IQ principles can be used to create better relationships, meaningful engagement and ultimately better science!
Challenges

- Money—difficult to fund time in communities to identify relevant research questions
- Capacity—in communities (for proposal writing, etc.) and within Ikaarvik
- Finding new projects to keep youth engaged
- Changing leadership in communities
Impacts

- Youth personal and professional development & meaningful employment
- Decolonialization of research
- Enhanced capacity in communities to represent their own interests regarding research and science
- Better incorporation of IQ into research
- “Zipping up” two worlds
Conclusions

• Didn’t set out to address the issue of reconciliation but have since come to realize the importance of decolonializing research as a form of reconciliation.

• Research is an amazing place that give youth the TIME and SPACE necessary to drive Arctic research forward

• So who cares? Let me tell you!