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## Alaska Travel Industry Association announces designated tribal seat on board of directors

**Anchorage, Alaska** — The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) board of directors recently voted to create a dedicated seat for a member of a federally recognized tribe in Alaska or a shareholder of an Alaska Native Corporation. Alaska is and has always been an Indigenous place and ATIA is proud to collaborate on cultural tourism marketing initiatives for the state.

“There has been an amazing transformation of tribal inclusion and involvement marketing Alaska Native people thanks to the development of the Cultural Enrichment Committee and the members who supported the designated tribal seat on the Alaska Travel Industry Association board of directors,” said Camille Ferguson (Tlingit), ATIA board member, chair of ATIA’s cultural enrichment committee and economic development director of Sitka Tribe of Alaska. “This designated position on the board is a true sign that ATIA is serious about its efforts to add diversity and inclusion when informing and promoting Alaska. We look forward to more interest from our tribal travel and tourism leaders to be involved.”

“There are a lot of voices who have contributed to this addition, though special thanks go to board members Camille Ferguson and Emily Edenshaw for their efforts,” said Craig Jennison, ATIA’s board chair. “I am proud to say the board was unanimous in our voice to make this change.”

“We’ve had conversations for some time about creating a tribally designated seat,” said Jillian Simpson, ATIA’s president and CEO. “The idea gained critical mass in the past year as our cultural marketing efforts increased and we collaborated with Indigenous content producers for recent campaigns. I am thrilled to lead the organization into this new era of partnership with the Alaska Native community.”

“Alaska is home to the largest number of tribes, Alaska Native corporations and Indigenous population in the nation,” shared Emily Edenshaw (Yup’ik/Iñupiaq), ATIA board member and president and CEO of the Alaska Native Heritage Center. “Today’s tribal seat designation not only represents the right thing to do, but it also showcases tremendous business acumen, as national research shows when people experience cultural tourism, they stay longer and spend more money. By merging our tourism and cultural efforts, we fortify our collective strength, and I am genuinely thrilled to witness the endless possibilities that lie ahead for Alaska’s tourism industry.”

ATIA is managed by a 24-member annually elected board of directors for three-year terms. Elections take place each September, and candidates and voters must be ATIA members. Meetings are held several times a year in locations around the state.

### About Alaska Travel Industry Association

The Alaska Travel Industry Association, Alaska’s leading statewide nonprofit membership association for the travel industry, promotes Alaska’s tourism industry as an economic contributor while providing statewide marketing resources, education opportunities and advocacy to members. ATIA has long managed Alaska’s destination marketing program: Travel Alaska. For more information, visit [www.alaskatia.org](http://www.alaskatia.org).

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*Alaska’s leading statewide nonprofit membership organization for the Alaska travel industry.*

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