



Outreach and disseminations activities in North Slope of Alaska: how to build trust between local communities and arctic researchers

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The Alaskan Ukpēagvik Iñupiat Corporation (UIC) is promoting and financially supporting, with the contribution of the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and local organizations, outreach and dissemination events, in the form of science fair for the local communities in North Slope of Alaska. The science fair is part of a larger effort by UIC Science to bring coordination and collaboration to science outreach and engagement efforts across Arctic Alaska. The purpose is to provide a positive space for Arctic researchers and Arctic residents to meet, eat with each other, spend time, and to inspire the youth of the Arctic by providing fun and educational activities that are based in science and traditional knowledge. The Science Fair 2019 hosted by the Barrow Arctic Research Center (BARC) included three days of youth and family-friendly activities related to "Inupiat Knowledge about Plants" led by the College Inupiat Studies Department, "Eco-chains Activity" hosted by the North Slope Borough Office of Emergency Management, "Big Little World: Bugs Plants, and Microscopes" hosted by the National Ecological Observatory Network, "Microplastics in the Arctic" hosted by the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management, "BARC Scavenger Hunt" hosted by UIC Science, "Our Role in the Carbon and Methane Cycle" hosted by the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) and San Diego State University, and "How Permafrost Works" hosted by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Geophysical Institute. Each day hundreds of students, from both the local community and the science community came together to take part in mutually beneficial engagement: students from Utqiagvik were excited about science and now know of the realistic and fulfilling careers in research that takes place in their backyard. The Utqiagvik community members and elders now have a better idea of the breadth of research that takes place in and near their home. The locals, especially the elders, are very concerned about the drastic changes in our environment: scientists share these concerns, and the discussions during the fair was a chance to recognize this common ground. Breaking the ice between Arctic researchers and residents can lead to endless opportunities for collaboration, sharing ideas, and even lifelong friendships.

