

# NEWS RELEASE

## FROM COOK INLET TRIBAL COUNCIL, INC.



### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards \$513,000 Matching Grant to Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. for Innovative Residential Education and Training Initiative**

**Anchorage, Alaska – October 5, 2006:** Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC) is proud to announce that after a year-long competitive process it has been awarded a \$513,000 matching grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), through the Foundation's Local Initiative Funding Partners (LIFP) program. This grant will support Chanlyut, an innovative two-year residential, vocational, and educational initiative in Anchorage that will offer a new beginning for men who are facing the serious challenges of addictions, homelessness, and/or reentering society after incarceration.

The Rasmuson Foundation nominated Chanlyut for the RWJF grant. "Chanlyut has great promise for those Anchorage residents who have made a choice to turn their lives around. The Rasmuson Foundation is proud to support CITC and these individuals as they become contributing members of Alaska society," said Diane Kaplan, President and CEO of the Rasmuson Foundation.

Numerous local businesses, organizations, and individuals have joined Rasmuson to provide matching funds to support Chanlyut, including (but not limited to): The CIRI Foundation; Cook Inlet Housing Authority; ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc; Southcentral Foundation; Wells Fargo (Alaska and National); Providence Health Systems; Alaska Native Heritage Center; Alaska Native Justice Center; Ashley Reed and Associates; Carpenters Local 1281; ENSTAR Natural Gas Company; RIM Architects and RIM Design; Koahnic Broadcast Corporation; Alaska Airlines; ANCSA Regional Corporations Presidents and CEOs; Chugach Electric Association; and Standing Together Against Rape.

Pronounced "shawn-loot," the name means "*new beginning*" in Dena'ina Athabascan. Chanlyut will be a transitional initiative that holds Alaska Native values at its core. For example, Alaska Natives have a strong kinship system and Chanlyut residents will be considered to be extended family members rather than patients or clients. At Chanlyut, all resident activities will be dynamic and self-directed, based on the principle of "*each one teach one*" in which each resident is responsible for both teaching and learning from others—analogueous to life in Alaska Native villages where each resident contributes to the welfare of the entire community.

As Clare Swan, Chair of the CITC Board of Directors says, “This is not a program. It is a living process.” Chanlyut’s vision of self-determination and empowerment for its residents directly contributes to furthering the mission of CITC: *to work in partnership with Our People to develop opportunities that fulfill Our endless potential.* “Through this grant and the support of our community partners, Chanlyut will empower those who have hit rock bottom in their lives to become contributing members of our community, equipped with an education, marketable job skills, accountability, integrity, self-respect, and a purpose to live” said Gloria O’Neill, President and CEO for Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc and Chair of the Chanlyut Board of Directors.

CITC is collaborating closely with the community leaders of Anchorage and the Mountain View neighborhood to develop Chanlyut. “We at Noble's Diner are very happy to hear that Chanlyut received this RWJF grant. Chanlyut has done a remarkable job educating the community about its initiative and the positive impact it can have in Mountain View. We especially look forward to partnering with our neighbors to build better business and community opportunities in Mountain View,” said Carolyn and Rob Kinneen, owners of Noble’s Diner, the restaurant adjoining Chanlyut.

The LIFP program is one of the RWJF’s most highly competitive annual grantmaking programs. The LIFP office received 219 very strong applications for the 2006 awards and only 12 projects (5 percent) were selected. Using rigorous criteria, the LIFP program supports community-based projects that develop new approaches and collaborations to improve health and health care for society’s most vulnerable people. Chanlyut is considered to be a promising national model.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health care issues facing our country. As the nation’s largest philanthropist devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful, and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).

Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc is the primary social service provider for Alaska Natives and Native Americans residing in the Anchorage area and the Cook Inlet region. CITC provides comprehensive social, educational, employment, and recovery opportunities to approximately 14,000 participants annually.

CITC would like to sincerely thank all of its community partners and collaborators who have devoted their time, energy, and resources to making Chanlyut a new beginning for our neediest community members. The attached fact sheet details the list of Chanlyut’s valued funders and collaborators. For further information on Chanlyut, please contact Donna Sallee at (907) 793-3409.

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