DIIYEGHAN NAII TAII TR’EEDAA
(We Will Walk the Trail of Our Ancestors)
By Princess Daazhraii Johnson and Alisha Carlson (Neets’ài Gwich’in)

Produced by: Taylor Hensel, Adam Mazo, Kavita Pillay, and Tracy Rector

PRESS CONTACT
press@reciprocity.org
PRESS KIT UPDATE:
09/16/22

TECH SPECS
Documentary Short
TRT: 06:15
Aspect Ratio: 16:9
Color, HD
Languages: Gwich’in & English

POSTER & STILL PHOTOS

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA
Website: reciprocity.org
IG: Daazhraii
IG: ReciprocityProj/
TW: ArcticDaazhraii
TW: ReciprocityProj
FB: Reciprocity Project
DETAILED SYNOPSIS
A grandfather teaches his granddaughter, a young Gwich’in mother named Alisha, how the Gwich’in people take care of caribou and vice versa. The northern lights warm the caribou; the caribou helps feed and sustain the community; the community honors the connections. Each element in nature is purposeful and related. In turn, these connections bring new meaning to Alisha and her wishes for her children and for all living beings.

LOGLINE
A Gwich’in grandfather teaches his granddaughter how the Gwich’in people take care of caribou and vice versa.

TITLE STYLE GUIDE
Pronunciation: Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr’eedaa [Dee-ya-hun nai Tai Tray-da]
When writing the title, please include the English translation after: Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr’eedaa (We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors)
If possible, please list Associate Producer Alisha Carlson (Neets’Aii Gwich’in) along with the Director. It is ok to list titles and names, or just names.
ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

ABOUT PRINCESS DAAZHRAII JOHNSON (DIRECTOR)
Princess Daazhraii Johnson is Neets’aii Gwich’in and lives with her three sons and partner on the traditional territory of lower Tanana Dene lands in Alaska. She is humbled to serve on the board of Native Movement and NDN Collective. Princess received a B.A. in International Relations from George Washington University and a M.Ed. at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She serves on the SAG-AFTRA Native American Committee. In 2015 she was appointed to a seat on the Board of Trustees for the Institute of American Indian Arts. She is a Sundance Film Alum, a Nia Tero Storytelling Fellow, and a Creative Producer and screenwriter for the Peabody award-winning PBS Kids series "Molly of Denali."

ABOUT ALISHA CARLSON (ASSOCIATE PRODUCER)
Alisha Carlson (Neets’aii Gwich’in) follows in the footsteps of her Ancestors’ creativity and imagination. In addition to her filmmaking endeavors, she works for the Arctic Village Tribal Council and is a mother to her two children. She has her AAS degrees in Accounting and Business. She has always been active in ensuring that Gwich’in dance and songs continue for generations to come. She looks forward to making more films in the Gwich’in language that uplift her beautiful culture.

ARTISTS’ STATEMENT from Princess and Alisha
We are honored to explore the theme of ‘Reciprocity’ and what it means to be a Gwich’in person with our community in this film. Our collective connection to the vadzaizh (caribou) is spiritual, which is why it was so important to bring in the Gwich’in language to express this relationship, guided by the teachings of our Ancestors and our Elders. Every story we tell and everything we do is dedicated to keeping the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou Herd safe from oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. May we all be guided to restore balance with ourselves, one another, and our beautiful Mother Earth.
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(We Will Walk the Trail of Our Ancestors)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr’eedaa (We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors) was filmed on Lower Tanana Dene Lands.

The film was produced as part of Season 1 of the Reciprocity Project - a collaborative multimedia platform and short film series made in partnership with Indigenous storytellers and their communities worldwide produced by Nia Tero and Upstander Project in association with REI Co-op Studios. Produced by Taylor Hensel, Adam Mazo, Kavita Pillay, and Tracy Rector.

ABOUT RECIPROCITY PROJECT

Facing a climate crisis, the Reciprocity Project embraces Indigenous value systems that have bolstered the Earth, which was in balance until the modern industrial age. This short film series and multimedia platform, made in partnership with Indigenous storytellers and their communities worldwide, invites learning from time-honored and current Indigenous ways of being. https://www.reciprocity.org/

ABOUT NIA TERO

Nia Tero is a US-based non-profit working in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and movements worldwide with a mission of securing Indigenous guardianship of vital ecosystems. Nia Tero is committed to an antiracist and inclusive culture centering Indigenous rights, wisdom, practices, worldviews, and protocols. https://www.niatero.org/

ABOUT UPSTANDER PROJECT

Upstander Project encourages decolonization and upstander behavior through compelling documentary films and learning resources. Their goals are to overcome indifference to social injustice, develop the skills of upstanders, and contribute to action-oriented campaigns in response to vital social issues. https://upstanderproject.org/

ABOUT REI

REI Co-op Studios develops and produces stories that entertain, enrich and explore the power of time spent outside, while complementing the co-op’s broader climate and racial equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments. https://www.rei.com/newsroom/article/rei-co-op-studios
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PRESS & ACCLAIM

“This film is a prime example of Indigenous narrative power. Its message connects the dots between the struggle to protect the land and the fight to preserve Gwich’in heritage and culture. It’s so good!”

-Dallas Goldtooth, Actor *(Reservation Dogs)* and Founder of the Indigenous Environmental Network

*Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr’eedaa* (We Will Walk the Trail of Our Ancestors) has screened at film festival around the globe, including Anchorage International Film Festival, Skåbmagovat Indigenous Peoples’ Film Festival, Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, Durango Independent Film Festival, Cartagena International Film Festival, Environmental Film Festival in The Nation’s Capital, Dawson City International Short Film Festival, Independent Film Festival Boston, Dreamspeakers International Indigenous Film Festival, Atlanta Docufest, Durban International Film Festival The Roxbury International Film Festival, Māoriland Film Festival, Montreal First Peoples’ Festival, and imagineNATIVE Film and Media Festival.

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CREDITS

Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr’eedaa
(We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors)
A film by Princess Daazhraii Johnson
Filmed on Lower Tanana Dene Lands
A Nia Tero and Upstander Project Production
In association with REI Co-op Studios

FEATURING:
Alisha ‘Diinashii’ Carlson
Gracie Carlson
Ryler Carlson
Mary Fields
Dr. Rev. Trimble Gilbert
Aldzak Johnson
K’edzaaye’ Johnson
Princess Daazhraii Johnson
Kias Peter

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS:
Alisha ‘Diinashii’ Carlson
Maya Salganek

SOUND RECORDIST:
Maya Salganek

EDITORS:
James C. Johnson III
Beyza Boyacioglu

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Maya Salganek

FINISHING EDITOR:
Taylor Hensel

ADDITIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHY
Princess Daazhraii Johnson

COVID-19 SUPERVISOR
Eleni Ledesma

ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE
IMAX Footage Courtesy of
Campion Advocacy Fund
and Florian Shultz

ON SET COVID-19 COORDINATOR:
Maya Salganek

COMPOSER:
Jennifer Kreisberg

WRITERS:
James C. Johnson III
Princess Daazhraii Johnson

PHOTOGRAPHER:
Keri Oberly

GWICH’IN TRANSLATION:
Hilda Johnson
Adeline Raboff

ADDITIONAL MUSIC:
“GASLIT” by Lightning Bug

CULTURAL ADVISOR:
Dr. Rev. Trimble Gilbert

FEATURING:
Alisha ‘Diinashii’ Carlson

CONTINUED
DIIYEGHAN NAII TAI T’REEDAA
(We Will Walk the Trail of Our Ancestors)

CREDITS CONTINUED

SPECIAL THANKS:
Allan Hayton
Gideon James
Evan Peter
Hishinlai' Peter
Tanan Ch'atoh
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Inspired by The Man Who Became a Caribou by Craig Mishler and Kenneth Frank

RECIROCITY PROJECT PRODUCERS:
Taylor Hensel
Adam Mazo
Kavita Pillay
Tracy Rector

SERIES CO-DIRECTORS:
Taylor Hensel
Adam Mazo

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:
Tracy Rector

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS FOR REI CO-OP STUDIOS:
Hanna Boyd
Joe Crosby
Paolo Mottola

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS:
Hindou Ibrahim
Yo-Yo Ma
Cristina Mittermeier

LEARNING CO-DIRECTORS:
Dina Gilio-Whitaker
Mishy Lesser

FIELD PRODUCTION COORDINATOR:
Kavita Pillay

PRODUCTION MANAGER:
Sauli Pillay

LEAD ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Jacob Bearchum

TECHNOLOGIST / SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT:
Ben Pender-Cudlip

ADMINISTRATION / PROGRAM SUPPORT SPECIALIST:
Chelsea Strelser

COLOR CORRECTION:
Heather Cassano

POST SOUND SERVICES:
Bad Animals

SOUND ENGINEER:
Dave Howe
David Gallander

POSTER DESIGN:
Yen Tan

PROMOTIONAL DESIGN & GRAPHICS:
Cindy Chischilly
Joel Schomberg

SPANISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION:
Neyda Quiñones-Ortiz
Maria Angelica Ramirez

PRINT TRAFFIC MANAGER:
Jonah Kozlowski

ACCOUNTING:
Melissa Billows
Jonathan Saceda
Susi Walsh

LEGAL:
Jeffrey Cadwell
Justine Jacob
Sarah Robertson

WEBSITE:
TurnStyle Studio

Production and Clearance Counsel by DORSEY & WHITNEY, LLP

Insurance Provided by Interstate Fire & Casualty

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PRESS PHOTOS

Caribou parent and child
Photo by Maya Salganek

Alisha Carlson (Gwich’in) carrying her baby, Gracie, during a shoot.
Photo by Keri Oberly

Prince Daazhraii Johnson (Director.)
Photo by Keri Oberly

Alisha Carlson (Associate Director).
Photo by Keri Oberly

Ryler Carlson, Aldzak Johnson and Gracie Carlson
(Gwich’in) enjoying time on the land. Photo by Keri Oberly

Photo by Keri Oberly

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