

Activity Report 2022





Ayalik expeditions burst back into action in 2022. With Covid restrictions eased, we were once again able to have youth from Nunavut travel to attend a wide variety of programs.

A new record high number of youth – 40 in total! – participated in these trips last summer:

- Sailing the Great Lakes, from Brockville on the St. Lawrence River all the way to the far western tip of Lake Superior, 3,500 nautical miles under the keel. 13 youth over three different legs of the voyage.
- Rocky Mountain hiking: 8 youth spent 10 days on a trek through Kananaskis country.
- Canoe trips outside Yellowknife, NWT: 12 youth, separate Boys' and Girls' trips, 12 days each of introductory paddling in the sub-Arctic wilderness.
- Employment Training: two older boys attended a six-week program in northern Alberta, designed to prepare youth for job opportunities in the resource sector.
- Temagami canoe trip: a more challenging trip in this spectacular wilderness area of northern Ontario, for five boys with past experience on one or more canoe trips.



The five boys above were returning youth, looking to build upon experience gained on earlier Yellowknife canoe trips with a more challenging trip.

Of the 40 youth in 2022, 28 were new participants, and 12 were returning.

Ayalik instituted a new and exciting innovation this year. All three canoe trips had a qualified mental health counsellor embedded in the trip-leading staff.

We believe this made a major difference to the trip's ability to enhance the emotional value, and the development of

resilience, for all youth on the canoe trips. We received a lot of positive feedback.

The funding for this initiative was provided by the Bell Let's Talk community fund. We hope to continue this component in as much of the programming as possible in future years.



One final piece of big news this year: Trent University has begun development of plans for a long-term research project. *Nuna Mamisaut: Land is healer* will explore the impacts of land-based experiential learning programs on Inuit youth mental health and resilience, chiefly by following the experiences of youth on Ayalik expeditions.



This year's total program costs for the 40 participants was over ¼ million dollars. This does not include the general operating costs of Ayalik at MakeWay Foundation itself. Almost half of the funds necessary to cover the program costs came from private donations. The balance was provided through a range of grants from Inuit organizations, the federal government, and foundations.

We are also excited to share that as of the end of this summer, Ayalik has provided 158 life-changing trips to Nunavut youth over the past eight years.

Thank you for supporting this legacy

www.ayalikfund.ca

