



2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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qajuqturvik community food centre
centre communautaire d'alimentation qajuqturvik
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present Qajuqturvik Community Food Centre's 2024-25 Annual Report. This year Qajuqturvik embarked on new and exciting paths that energized the community and brought even more diverse groups into our centre.

The changes have been especially exciting for me, as I stepped into the President's role this year. Since I first joined Qajuqturvik as a volunteer for the Daily Meal Service in 2019, the changes to the organization have been remarkable: from a Soup Kitchen serving lunch to a Community Food Centre with a host of programs; from a little-known place in the community to a vibrant hub; and from a staff of mostly southern Canadians serving Inuit clients to a place led and significantly staffed by Inuit.

This year saw an explosion in program offerings that bolstered our food access, food skills, and cultural programming. The biggest and boldest of these was the grand opening of Qinnirvik Country Food and Bulk Store. This project is the culmination of a multi-year effort, thanks to funding from local, national, and international funders. The end result: Iqaluit now has regular access to traditional, nutrient-dense Country Food on a sliding scale pay model.

There also been a host of other new program offerings this year, including monthly chef nights that spotlight local chefs; collaborations with hunters across Nunavut, the Nunavut Black History Society, international academics, the City of Iqaluit, and Alianait Arts Festival; and one-off events like an art installation about country food and demonstrations of seal butchering.

Qajuqturvik has always welcomed every member of our community, including, of course, for our Daily Community Meal Service, which continues to climb to staggering numbers. And while nobody connected with Qajuqturvik ever forgets that our centre serves community members living with the worst food insecurity in the country, more often than not, when I'm in the food centre, I hear laughter and casual conversations.

The nourishing energy that Qajuqturvik injects into our community occurs under the dynamic leadership of our Co-Executive Directors, Joseph and Francine. Their respective passions and visions compliment each other, but they are united in their tireless work ethic and unwavering leadership.

With the rest of Iqaluit, I look forward to seeing what the next year brings for Qajuqturvik.



Jessie Hale, President, Board of Directors



CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Looking back over the last year, my first full fiscal year as Co-Executive Director, one small moment stands out as exceptionally instructional: the simple act of meditatively eating a scone. This happened at the Community Food Centre of Canada's Food Summit last fall, in a workshop where we were guided to attend to every aspect of this scone, to go deep into the details of the experience - the texture, the flavour, the mind-body connection. It sounds funny and obvious to say this, but that moment helped me realize that food is at the centre of running a food centre.

It can be easy to forget that. While managing the day-to-day operations, dealing with issues related to human resources, building maintenance, fundraising, governance, making big decisions, little decisions, daily, I have to remind myself that food is at the core of what we do - specifically, making the best possible food accessible to the whole community in the best possible way.

But what does that mean? I've learned that means attending to things both big and small, from changing the shape of the garbage cans in the kitchen to allow for better workflow of our kitchen staff, to launching new programs that bring in diverse segments of our community; it means finding inspiration in the creativity, professionalism, and pride of my staff, and lavishing praise on them for their influence on me and their service to the community; and most importantly it means looking around Nunavut at what's immediately available, because that's where food excellence begins - at the local level.

Everyone has an experience with food that has given them indescribable pleasure. Everyone has a right to that joy associated with food. It's a basic human experience that transcends

politics, geography, culture, and economics. And while that pleasure is a universal experience and basic right, every culture and place has their own version of that, based on their local food and resources. Here in Nunavut, our main food resource is Country Food - the birds, mammals, fish, and berries in and near the Arctic ocean - not what's found in the grocery stores.

Our food here is some of the best I've ever eaten - it's worldclass, just as our hunters are worldclass in their skills and knowledge in procuring the Country Food that we then make as accessible and enjoyable as possible to as many of our community members as possible. Yes, we have the highest food insecurity in the country. And yes, our daily community meal numbers climb year after year, driving home the message that poverty, above all else, is the culprit for food insecurity. Last year we served over 72,000 meals in a community of less than 8,000. And while we attend to those needs in our community, we also attend to other, coexistent needs: the right to experience the joys of food - savouring flavours, texture, and, above all else, community.

It gives me immense pride and joy to facilitate access to this joy and right; to invite and collaborate with all segments of our community in recognition that the rights and joys associated with food transcend politics, culture, and economics. This is the best job I've ever had and I can't wait to see what good food experiences the next year brings.



Joseph Murdoch-Flowers, Co-Executive Director

OUR PROGRAMS



FOOD ACCESS



Daily Community Meal

This is our flagship program, where we serve a fresh, hot, and nutritious lunch Monday to Friday. This program sees the most participation, with demand increasing year-over-year since its inception.

This year we served a total of **72,900 meals**, with an additional **5,353 meals** taken from the fridge where that day's leftovers are kept. A new feature of our lunch service launched this year is '**Quaq Corner**', where we serve frozen Country Food, primarily to Elders, every second Wednesday.

Piruvtuviniiit Box Program

The Piruvtuviniiit Food Box is a weekly program designed to provide 3-4 people a week with fresh produce. It operates on a sliding pay scale to ensure regular and affordable access to an assortment of fruits and vegetables. The produce selection varies week-to-week, but generally includes 18-22 different fruits and vegetables.

This program gets busier year-over-year: this year we sold **4,800 boxes**. About 4 people on average share a Piruvtuviniiit Box, so our produce boxes served nearly 18,000 people – more than double the population of Iqaluit.





Kid's Cooking Club

Our Food Skills program creates opportunities to share knowledge, develop skills, and build confidence in kitchen skills and food preparation, including Country Food. This type of food access and literacy is crucial for making healthy choices and supporting long-term food security in the region. This program fosters self-reliance and positive social connections through hands-on workshops and shared learning experiences.



This year our Food Skills programming focused on teaching fundamentals of tools, techniques, and flavours to local elementary and high school students – all with a focus on local Country Food provided by Nunavut hunters. In total, over 400 students participated in weekly classes. One of the highlights was goose ravioli dish!

Inuit Women's Circle

This program provides an uplifting and collaborative environment where Inuit women build cultural skills in a safe environment. Women meet two or three times a week to share food and for activities that include sewing sealskin parkas and mitts, cooking, beading, and embroidery. When the weather permits, programming is held outdoors where participants do land-based activities like berry-picking and gathering heather to build a fire. This year, the program reached over 500 local women through 79 workshops and events. Each session began with Mary, the coordinator, and her assistant preparing a meal, which the women enjoyed along with casual conversation and Mary's choice of music.

FOOD SKILLS





Country Food access was delivered through two streams: the Inulitait Box Program, which was then replaced by Qinnirvik Country Food and Bulk Store when it launched in the fourth quarter. The Inulitait Box Program delivered over 1,000 boxes, which, if we again estimate that four people access each box, served over 4,000 people.

This year, we also reached a new milestone with the launch of Qinnirvik, which had its grand opening at the end of February. In its first month it generated over \$40,000 in sales. All items in the store are available through a sliding-scale pricing system, to ensure affordability for the whole community. Importantly, the store supports a network of hunters in the region and contributes to our vision of strengthening the Country Food economy.

COUNTRY FOOD

In addition to our sales, we have ensured Country Food access in other programming by including harvested food like char steaks, caribou stew, boiled seal, and quaq (frozen meat) in our community meals, Food Skills programming, and Inuit Women's Circle.



To diversify our community meal offerings, this year we launched two new dinner series. One series features community-based chefs. Another series was in collaboration with the Nunavut Black History Society; together we hosted four dinners during Black History Month.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Dinners like these are aligned with our aim to expand our weekly lunch meal to offer a meal on weekends as well. They are offered on a pay what you want basis, thus serving as a fundraising opportunity for our general operations. Spread out over nine events, 1,200 people attended these feasts that were as colourful and unique as the members of our community.





FOOD ADVOCACY

Our Executive Directors enjoy a strong, active relationship with news media: they provided interviews each month of the fiscal year, including with local, regional, and national outlets. This strengthened Qajuqturvik's position as a trusted advocate and source of information in Nunavut for issues concerning food sovereignty, food security, and poverty. However, interviews also emphasized Qajuqturvik's expanded focus beyond emergency measures to address food insecurity to include more community and joy-based approaches to food that transcend politics. Over the year, Qajuqturvik provided 14 interviews to media outlets on topics that ranged from food sovereignty, the postal strike, cargo rates for air shipment of food, and seal butchering to its collaboration with the Nunavut Black History Society, its popular chefs night, and the grand opening of Qinnirvik Country Food and Bulk Store.

Our leadership was also invited regularly to speak on these topics in a variety of contexts. This includes speaking engagements at universities, Inuit organizations, and at summits on food, poverty, and traditional food sources. Some of these speaking engagements occurred at gatherings that Qajuqturvik was already an attendee – organizers of these gatherings acknowledged the unique position, perspective, and voice that Qajuqturvik brought to these gatherings by asking our leadership to speak publicly. In total, our Executive Directors presented eight times over the year.



Qajuqturvik's advocacy work focuses on increasing access to country food, promoting and practicing the right to food, and addressing food insecurity by increasing peoples' incomes.

This advocacy is carried out through a variety of activities: public speaking engagements, both with news media and upon invitation at conferences; by attending and hosting events; and by opening its doors to prominent visitors.



Qajuqturvik's advocacy efforts are also furthered by the events we host and attend, and by the visitors we host.

This year's events included transforming our space into an art gallery for a collaboration with an international research program that brought together Inuit youth, Elders, and academics from Nunavut and the UK. The exhibit, titled "Inuksiutit: Food Sovereignty in Nunavut," included photos and videos and attracted local media attention.

EVENTS & VISITS



Qajuqturvik continued to be a beacon for high profile visitors to Iqaluit. Visitors this fiscal year included: The Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada; the Honourable Jagmeet Singh, former NDP leader; the Honourable Jenna Sudds, then-Minister of Families, Children, and Social Development; and the Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, then-Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.



The Grand Opening of Qinnirvik Country Food and Bulk Store was also a major event this fiscal. Local MP Lori Idlout, as well as other community members (Members of the Legislative Assembly and elected officials from Inuit organizations) attended, along with local media outlets who reported the opening in print, video, and radio stories.

Qajuqturvik also participated in a collaborative year-long project with other Indigenous Community Food Centres to connect, learn, and strategize around increasing access to culturally relevant food and reclaiming cultural food systems. This effort spanned three gatherings, the first of which was held in Iqaluit over three days, followed by gatherings in Toronto and Lil'wat, BC.

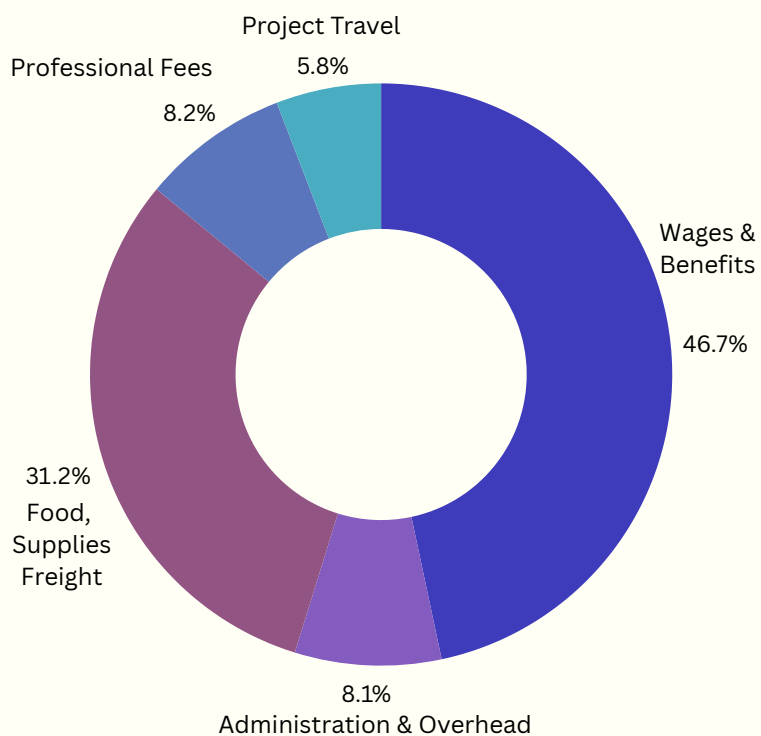
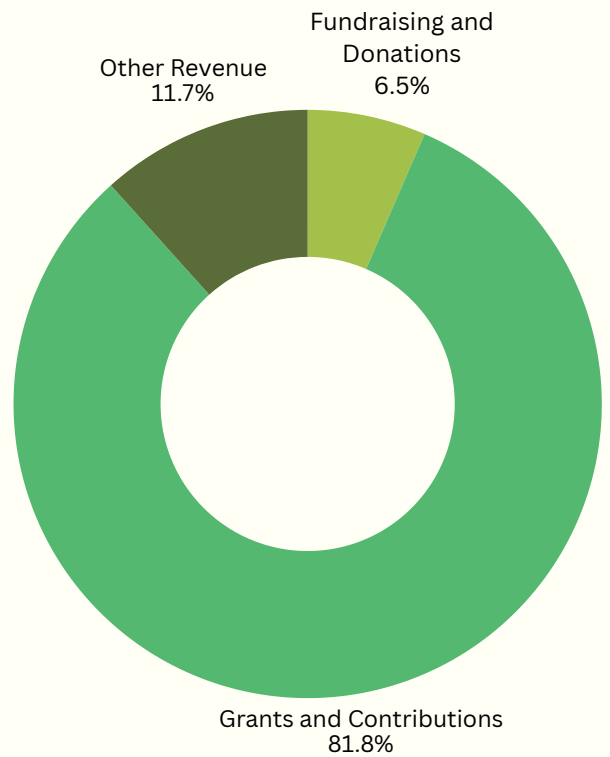
Qajuqturvik had a chance to participate in global conversations at the International Funders for Indigenous People's global conference in Naivasha, Kenya, where discussions included the transformative role of philanthropic partners in empowering Indigenous communities, and the critical importance of Indigenous sovereignty, knowledge, and self-determination to create solutions that address Indigenous realities.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Revenue:
\$3.7 million



Expenses:
\$2.8 million

2024–2025 FUNDERS & DONORS

Canada 



Iqaluit



Foundations

Canadian Race Relations Foundation
Canadian Women's Foundation
Community Food Centres Canada
Food Banks Canada
Steelworkers Humanity Fund
Annauma Foundation
Chawkers Foundation
RBC Foundation
Makeway
Citi Foundation
The Gordon Foundation
United Way

Organizations

Lichen Consulting Inc.
NuBrew Trivia Crew
Northwestel
Royal Purple Ladies of Iqaluit
Environment and Climate Change Canada
CIRNAC - Nunavut Regional Office
Black Heart Cafe Inc.
Seventh Day Adventist Iqaluit
Abundance Canada
Centreaide du Grand Montreal
Iqaluit Fire Department
Law Society of Nunavut
Edie Consulting
Delta T Design Inc.
SIJJA Consulting

Individual Donors

To our donors, friends, and partners over this past year. Your generosity is more than a donation — it's a shared commitment to care and connection with our community. Together, we are serving meals, sharing skills, and building a future where food sovereignty is a reality for Nunavut. Every gift is a gesture of solidarity, rooted in trust and respect, and one that we truly appreciate. Qujannamiik for standing with us and for helping to keep the joy of food at the heart of everything we do.

COMMUNITY APPRECIATION

Sponsors



Community Organizations

Nunavut Movers
Nunavut Black History Society
Narwhal Plumbing
Aqsarniit Hotel and Conference Centre

Boltz Electric
Atiigo
NCC

Volunteers

Devora Neumark
John Neely
Emma Basch
Jayne Murdoch-Flowers
Charmaine Williams
Sindhu Govindapillai
Danielle Gibbie
Lynda Gunn
Curtis Mesher
Najee Anderson
Rebecca Jackson
Aira Villanueva
Connor Goddard
Callum Goddard
Taqialuk Peter
Leigh Ann Phillips
Meral Jamal
Niivi Rosing

Joseph McHattie
Madeleine Cole
Kaitlyn Goddard
Paul Obidike
Jane Tagak
Madeleine Cole
Thadchayan Balasubramaniam
Nicole Giles
Walter Gadinga
Mathieu Goodman
Cheik Cisse
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Justin Clark
Natalie Maerzluf
Valeria Contreras
Sindu Govindapillai
Tracey Partridge
Rachel Perreira
Shaanzéha Atallahjan
Iqaluit Fire Department
Kaya and Oonark
Lynda Gunn

Special thanks to Stephanie Bernard and our Black History Month chef partners: Mama P, Maeza Desta, Ernestine Ngelah, and Carlos Foyn.



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Get involved!**

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info@qajuqturvik.ca

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