

**Backgrounder**  
**News Release – Millie’s Dream**  
**Statement by Millie Kuliktana**

After many years of teaching in English, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut it became a challenge to continue teaching in the first language situations as families grew and English became the dominating first language. My dream is to see, hear and feel Inuinnaqtun used as a cultural identifier of Inuinnait in Nunavut.

Realizing that Inuinnaqtun required revitalization taught me that an easy way to learn a language is to be immersed in the language with Elders and strong language users in an actively living language situation. Meaning making language learning hands-on and real. Our ancestors created the Inuit languages through their work with their hands in active living conditions, creating terminology as they experienced living socially, physically and mentally.

If we keep teaching language without experiencing the life or action of the words we will not memorize it and it will continue to get lost, but using the words in action helps to make a mental and physical memory helping to internalize the language.

Connecting with the Elders and language users as masters and apprentices would help keep intergenerational relationships, language and cultural teachings alive. Master Apprentice Programs can be done for absolutely free, or can be operated through a manageable program where learners and teachers are assisted in the costs of hands on learning tools. Either way Elders who often say they are lonely have a friend to share their life with, and learners can be engaged in meaningful learning situations to pass on to their families.

For a minimum of 10 hours a week, 4-6 months a year for 3 years has been proven to teach an aboriginal language to another willing learner, thus resulting in helping to keep a language and culture alive. My dream is to see, hear and feel Inuinnaqtun used as a cultural identifier of Inuinnait in Nunavut. All you do as a team is Leave English Behind, listen, imitate and confirm your thoughts and actions with hands-on living.