

April 20, 2013 – Indian Country Today Media Network (online) - [Alaska Makes Tourism in Rural Native Areas a Priority](#)



*Chickaloon Village Traditional Council*

*The scenery is spectacular in Chickaloon.*

“Alaska is making waves in the tourism industry, especially Alaska Native tourism,” said American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) Executive Director Camille Ferguson during her recent keynote presentation at the Chickaloon Native Village Traditional Cultural Tourism Summit. “Creating educational tourism summits, like the Chickaloon Native Village and Chickaloon Native Village Council have done here, demonstrates a commitment to growth and sustenance of American Indian and Alaska Native tourism.”

Ferguson, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, gave a keynote presentation on growing cultural tourism in Indian country at the Chickaloon summit, held in her home state of Alaska on April 17 to 19.

The summit, “The Power of Place – Strength, Survival and Culture,” was held at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage and presented by the Tene’ Ninicezet project under the Chickaloon Native Village Traditional Council’s Environmental Stewardship Department.



*Chickaloon Native Village Ya Ne Dah Ah School students with teachers Tina Farley and Daniel Harrison following a dance performance at the Cultural Tourism Summit. (Courtesy AIANTA)*

Ferguson was invited to present at the event, where she explained how AIANTA is working to grow cultural tourism across the six regions of Indian Country. Ferguson also educated attendees on how the international tourism market is bringing new opportunities for tourism growth to the U.S. and Indian country.

Summit sessions also addressed cultural program development, ways to offer culturally sensitive authentic experiences, how to develop cultural tourism businesses, cultural tourism training options and statewide cultural tourism opportunities.

To learn more about the Chickaloon Native Village and the Chickaloon Native Village Council visit [chickaloon.org](http://chickaloon.org).

#### About AIANTA

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors and preserves tribal traditions and values.

The purpose of AIANTA is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison between Indian Country, governmental and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of

Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and providing economic development opportunities, AIANTA helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

To learn more, visit [aianta.org](http://aianta.org). They are also on Facebook, [here](#).