

2023 Arctic Winter Games - LORNA and AMANDA

This year's Arctic Winters Games in Wood Buffalo, Alberta, have a special meaning for Baffinland employee Amanda Ageeagok. Her little sister, Lorna Kalluk, is competing in the Dene Games category and Amanda couldn't be more proud.



"She's inspirational to anyone who sees her bright light and hidden talents," Amanda says.

Lorna is 16 years old, but as the youngest child, her family still calls her "Baby". Lorna has always been active in the Arctic Bay community, from organizing dances and art donations and fund raisers at school, to volunteering at the community centre.

As a child, Lorna was quiet, soft spoken and wasn't particularly drawn to sports, that is until she joined the Air Force Cadet's program in Arctic Bay, and learned all about the Dene Games. For her, the Games are as much a cultural experience as an athletic competition.

"My favorite part about being here is to meet people from other places, and also travelling is a thrill to me," Lorna says. "Participating in the Arctic Winter Games makes me realize that there are other events, activities and opportunities that are just an application away."

What makes the Arctic Winter Games unique is the highly popular Traditional Games, also known as the Inuit, Arctic and Dene Games, which Lorna is competing in. Designed to test an athlete's endurance and strength, they include the One-Foot High Kick, Two-Foot High Kick, Alaskan High Kick, Kneel Jump, Sledge Jump, Triple Jump, Finger Pull, Arm Pull, Airplane, One Hand Reach, Head Pull and Knuckle Hop.

One remarkable part of the Traditional Games is how coaches and give advice and encouragement to their rivals during competition. comradery and sportsmanship is an integral part of the Indigenous sharing, and helping others achieve their best possible results.

It's a spirit that Lorna embraces. "Sports to me means working a team, motivating each other and staying positive," she says.

Lorna's first event at the Games was the Stick Pull, where two hold the ends of a greased stick, and the first one to pull it back for seconds, wins. Lorna won her first match, but lost the next two.

Her mother, Lena Kalluk, was there to support her every step of the way. She cheered her on from the sidelines. Lena says, "My baby, 'Inuk Lovey'... didn't get any medal, but in my heart she got Gold."

Lorna isn't the only family member who loves to take on new challenges, her older sister Amanda, who's 26, shares that sense of adventure. Amanda remembers growing up in Grise Fiord, and learning the traditional ways from her father, a hunter.



Lorna (right) at Stick Pull

athletes
This kind of
tradition of

together as

athletes
two

“My father took us hunting, camping, and boating. Travelling 6-12 hours to reach camp, staying in camp 2 weeks.”

After moving to Arctic Bay, Amanda took on odd jobs around the community and she also signed up for courses to improve her office skills, before eventually joining Baffinland last year. Originally hired as a janitor, Amanda was quickly promoted to work in the office of the Environment Department.



Sisters Lorna & Amanda

“I fly into site for 3x3,” she says. “It was always my dream job to be an administrative assistant for the Company.”

Amanda says one reason she loves her job at Mary River is because she not only performs administrative tasks, but she also gets to go out onto the land, to help to collect soil samples for analysis.

Two sisters, both pursuing their dreams, and motivating each other. Amanda says with pride, “Lorna is so special to our family, and inspirational to anyone that sees her. She carries her talent with elegance.”

Baffinland staff share that pride, and will be rooting for Lorna and all of the athletes in the days to come. Stay tuned for updates.



Lorna & Amanda



Lorna Competing in Hand Games



Posing with AWG Mascot, Titotem the Lynx



Lorna & Mom Lena Kalluk



Lorna in her Team Nunavut gear



Arctic Bay's Team Nunavut (Lorna is top row, third from right)



Amanda at Mary River