



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Discover Kodiak celebrates area corporations stepping up to support Coast Guard families**

**Kodiak, AK** – Recognizing the significant impact of the government shutdown on Kodiak Island’s Coast Guard servicemembers, Alaska Native Corporations and a local Tribe with ties to the island collectively donated \$32,000 to help Coast Guard families in need. More than 1,000 enlisted Coast Guard servicemembers on Kodiak Island were working without pay due to the shutdown.

Seven corporations donated: Koniag, Afognak Native Corporation, Ouzinkie and Katmai Corporation, Old Harbor Native Corporation, Natives of Kodiak, Leisnoi and Akhiok-Kaguyak, Inc. The Tribe that donated is the Native Village of Port Lions. The donations were delivered to the Coast Guard Enlisted Association (CGEA) and help provide food, utility assistance, and other vital services and supplies to those in need.

“The generosity shown by these organizations is so encouraging,” said Aimee Williams, Director of Discover Kodiak and Coast Guard veteran. “The effects the shutdown has had on our community cannot be understated. Our Coast Guard families have been struggling, and these donations have gone a long way to help them.”

The drive began when Stacey Simmons, Senior Director of Shareholder Services at Koniag, recognized the drastic toll that the government shutdown caused to the community’s Coast Guard servicemembers and their families. She brought the issue to Koniag’s leadership, who pledged to donate \$2,500 to the CGEA and issued a challenge to the village corporations from

Kodiak. Simmons is also the Vice President of the Discover Kodiak Board of Directors and Past President of the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce.

“Our Alutiiq people have been on Kodiak Island for thousands of years and we take care of our guests. It is a cultural value to take care of people in times of need. Our Coast Guard families are no different from our own. They are our neighbors, friends and heroes. Our region understands the importance of the Coast Guard and the safety they bring to our island. We did what we could because it was the right thing to do,” said Simmons.

“While a temporary three-week government opening has been announced, it is unclear whether the government will remain open beyond that time. Regardless of when people are paid, it will likely take weeks or months for families to get back on their feet. We are pleased to help the CGEA continue to provide necessary support and we are proud that our corporations are able to be a part of this effort,” said Shauna Hegna, President of Koniag.