



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joan Hamilton to be Honored with Scholarship
ACLU to Award Students Focused on Alaska Native & Rural Communities

ANCHORAGE, AK, October 14, 2010 — The American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska Foundation (“ACLU”) announces the creation of a scholarship to honor the life and work of Joan Hamilton.

Hamilton, a Cup’ik Eskimo from Qissunaq, and an impassioned proponent of Native culture and civil rights, served on the Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska for close to ten years just prior to her death in 2008.

Joan’s life took her many places, from hospitals as a child due to tuberculosis, boarding school at St. Mary’s Mission and Copper Valley School, to the University of California Los Angeles, where she earned a degree in Anthropology. Joan worked as a licensed practical nurse at hospitals in Alaska and the Lower 48, and supervised a free clinic in Salt Lake City. She became program director for the Alcohol/Drug Abuse Prevention office of Rural CAP in Anchorage, and administrated the Tundra Women’s Coalition. In addition, she was chairman of the board of KYUK, and was the museum curator for the Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center in Bethel.

During all her work and travels, Joan consistently advocated for rural and Alaska Native rights, and was deeply committed to equality for all. While not a lawyer, Joan recognized the role the law could play in bettering the lives of rural and Alaska Native peoples. She mentored lawyers in Bethel and opened her home and fish camp to people who were interested in learning Alaska Native ways and sharing in the wisdom she gained over her lifetime.

The purpose of the Joan Hamilton Memorial Scholarship is to assist and encourage people who are following a law related educational/vocational program with a specific determination to address the needs of Alaska Native and/or rural communities.

Scholarship applications are now available for the 2011-2012 academic year. The first recipient will be formally announced in January of 2011 at the ACLU of Alaska’s annual Liberty Awards Dinner.

For applications and more information about the ACLU of Alaska and Joan Hamilton, visit the ALCU of Alaska website at www.akclu.org or call 907-258-0044.

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