KATIVIK

RECREATION Department

ACTIVITY REPORT
FEBRUARY TO MAY 2026

The Recreation Department is responsible for delivering recreational programs within the region, with a special focus on the youth of Nunavik.

Community Visit, Puvirnituq

A community visit to Puvirnituq was undertaken from February 16-19 by Emma Cain (Director) and Emile Maheu (Recreation Advisor) to support Putugu Tukalak, Local Recreation Coordinator (LRC), through training and planning. Key actions included:

- Delivery of a training module on the foundations of the LRC role
- Development of a three-month action plan for community activities
- Facility visits (arena and gym) and submission of work orders to the municipality
- Meetings with municipal representatives to support coordination

The visit highlighted strengths in motivation and engagement, while identifying needs in administrative structure, planning processes, and animator coordination.

On-field support and snowshoe event

A follow-up visit from April 7-12 focused on implementing the three-month plan through a structured snowshoe race, using a field-based approach to support skill development.

Key elements

- Progressive approach: mobilization activities to structured event
- Hands-on support in planning, logistics, communication, and delivery
- Collaboration with the municipality and community partners

Event overview

- Four youth participants with two local helpers
- Safe and well-managed event
- Equipment included skidoos, qamutiik, tent, and water stations

Outcomes

- Successful delivery of a structured activity
- Strong collaboration at the community level
- Increased LRC capacity through practical experience

This approach proved effective in combining long-term planning with on-site support; creating a productive and practical learning environment.

Cultural Wellness Gathering, Quaqtaq

A cultural wellness gathering in Quaqtaq from April 20-23 was the first pilot project of Recreation Coordinator Elia Lauzon. The event involved local support and was managed by Angel Deer. Activities included creating a community space with access to massage therapy, crafting material, and traditional tattoos provided by Inuit tattoo artists. This was delivered in partnership with Qarjuit Youth Council who allowed their staff to travel and support the event.

Key values of event

- Accessible, free in-community massage and traditional tattoo services
- Traditional Inuit knowledge focused and transfer of knowledge prioritized
- First traditional tattoo gathering delivered in Nunavik, inspired by successful projects in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories

Event overview

- Many beads and materials were provided and used at the event by those accompanying or waiting for services.
- Four tattoo artists, a massage therapist and a photographer travelled to Quaqtaq to take part, including:
    - Mariam Imak (Nunavimmiut), tattoo artist
    - Dawn Forrest (Kuujjuamiut), tattoo artist
    - Rebecca Mearns (Pangirtumiut), tattoo artist
    - Siku Rojas (Iqalummiut), tattoo artist
    - Marieve Mc Gee, massage therapist
    - Cora Kavyaktok, Little Inuk Photography, originally from Cambridge Bay

Outcomes

- Over 30 women received traditional tattoos in Quaqtaq
    - 10 women, 18-25 years old
    - 11 women, 26-35 years old
    - 9 women, 36-45 years old
    - 2 women, 46-55 years old
    - Two Elders, over 55 years old
- Close to 36 half-hour massages were provided to anyone in the community who came to the Mirsuvik.

The gathering met its goals of accessibility, cultural focus, and community engagement. It also shows that there is strong interest in traditional tattooing and wellness services delivered locally in Nunavik. The range of participants shows that the event reached multiple age groups, including youth, adults, and elders.

Cultural Wellness Gathering, Kuujjuaraapik

Following the first gathering in Quaqtaq, a second event was held on the Hudson Coast in Kuujjuaraapik from April 26-28. Similar event value held true for this gathering with a survey form for those who received tattoos. The Health Board (NRBHSS) wellness team and Qarjuit Youth Council offered human resources to support this initiative.

Outcomes:

- 45 people received traditional tattoos
    - Four men received markings.
    - 41 women received markings.

Survey feedback

Survey responses showed great local desire for the project.

Participants rated the experience as positive, professional, and comfortable. Most Kuujjuaraapimmiut gave the project top satisfaction ratings and said it was important to cultural revitalization. All said KRG should continue and expand this type of event.

Popular suggestions for improvement included:

- More artists, equipment and supplies for artists
- Better scheduling and booking
- Better communication and public notice before the event
- More cultural activities

A few Kuujjuaraapimmiut also suggested making the event annual, offering it in more communities, and improving documentation and testimony collection.

The project reached a diverse age range in Kuujjuaraapik. Many participants came as siblings, mother-daughter pairs, or Elders hoping to learn the meanings of their grandparents' markings. Youth under 35 made up almost half of those reached, which shows a strong desire among younger generations to carry their culture on them.

Arctic Winter Games 2026

The 2026 Arctic Winter Games were held in Whitehorse, Yukon, from March 8-15, bringing together close to 2,000 participants from across the circumpolar North. Team Nunavik Québec (TNQ) proudly participated as a permanent contingent, continuing to strengthen its presence on the Games stage while showcasing athletic talent, cultural pride, and community spirit.

The TNQ delegation included athletes, coaches, mission staff, and cultural representatives who demonstrated professionalism, resilience, and strong sportsmanship throughout the Games. Their participation highlighted the dedication and growth of Nunavik's athletes and the continued commitment to youth sport development across the region.

Prior to departure, TNQ successfully organized a pep rally and final preparation activities. Special thanks to everyone who contributed to the extensive logistics required for this major event. In particular, our deep appreciation is extended to Deseray Cumberbatch, who served both as a coach and as a key coordinator in Kuujjuaq, with valuable support from the Recreation and Communications Departments. Appreciation is also extended to many individuals, partners, and organizations whose support over the past year helped make participation possible and created meaningful opportunities for aspiring athletes and artists from Nunavik.

Performance Snapshot

Team Nunavik concluded the Games with a strong overall performance:

- 3 Gold Ulus
- 5 Silver Ulus
- 4 Bronze Ulus
- 12 Total Medals
- 14 Fourth-Place Finishes
- 12 Fifth-Place Finishes
- 8 Fair Play Pins

Notably, almost 70% of TNQ athletes were first-time Arctic Winter Games participants, making these results especially encouraging and a strong indicator of future potential.

Key benefits for Nunavik

Participation in the Games continues to generate benefits far beyond competition results:

- Inspires youth participation in sport, recreation, and healthy lifestyles
- Develops future TNQ coaches, leaders, and ambassadors
- Raises the profile of Nunavik regionally, nationally, and internationally
- Strengthens partnerships in sport, culture, and youth development
- Reinforces Nunavik's place as a permanent Arctic Winter Games contingent

Opportunities Moving Forward

- Expand athlete recruitment through community outreach and local coaching.
- Increase coaching certification opportunities and strengthen support staff capacity.
- Build stronger connections with northern regions to create more opportunities.
- Strengthen digital storytelling, social media presence, and TNQ branding.
- Develop a dedicated TNQ website to support communications and visibility.
- Explore year-round athlete preparation pathways in priority sports.

We also await official confirmation from the AWG International Committee on whether future Games will move to a three-year cycle, or remain at the current two-year interval. We expect to have confirmation of the Committee's plans in June.

Recreation Department – Ongoing and Upcoming

Sanikiluaq Summer Games

The Sanikiluaq Summer Games take place from July13-22, 2026, and will bring together Nunavik communities through a multi-sport event including badminton, baseball-softball, basketball, floor hockey, table tennis, volleyball, running events, and Inuit games.

In preparation for this event, logistical support is being provided to Kuujjuaq, Kuujjuaraapik, Puvirnituq, Kangirsuk, Quaqtaq, Ivujivik, Inukjuak, and Salluit. Support includes coordination of travel, team organization, general event preparation and, eventually, coordination of travel to ensure participation and representation from the region.

Indigenous Summer Games - Yellowknife

The Indigenous Summer Games take place in Yellowknife from June 19-21. This marks the third edition of this event, a growing celebration of strength, skill, and Indigenous culture from across the North and beyond.

Due to timelines and travel logistics, we are giving priority to 8-10 athletes in the Open and Junior Female and Male categories who participated in in Arctic Sports and Dene Games at the 2026 Arctic Winter Games.

We hope these Games provide an opportunity to build long-term continuity for our athletes by creating development opportunities toward future participation in Indigenous sporting events and cultural gatherings.

Avannaa Arctic Games – Greenland

The Avannaa Arctic Games in February 2027 is an international sports event where participants from Arctic regions come together to compete in traditional sports, make new friendships, and learn more about each other's cultures.

More details will be shared in the months ahead, so keep an eye on the Team Nunavik Facebook page.

DEPARTMENT STAFF

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