



April 1, 2021

Re. Upinnagtug Award

Dear Nunavut Law Foundation,

I'd like to nominate:

Jovon-Jake Sanertanut

Last summer, my business was contracted by the Ayalik Fund to run a 2-week canoe program including a 12 day trip with a dozen youth from Kugaaruk and Cambridge Bay.

I guided the trip with several other Jackpine Paddle camp leaders. We got to know the youth very well and received positive feedback from them about the value of this experience.

Like any extended canoe trip in the backcountry (or life in general), there are positive and negative parts of the journey. Much of the negativity on the trip seemed to stem in large part from a particular youth from Kugaaruk. As you know, many youth in Nunavut are not provided with supportive family environments and it is natural for these trips to be very emotional at times.

On his own initiative, Jovon was a big help. The troubled youth was a good friend of Jovon, they were like brothers.

Jovon was very mature and intuitive in his caring support. There are many examples. During one evening in camp that was especially challenging, Jovon took it upon himself to set up the shared tent for his friend, unpacking both of their sleeping pads and sleeping bags. He set up a neat camp, taking extra care to bring his friend's personal items in the tent. His strategy for helping his friend in a moment of crisis was to surprise him with a gesture of love and support. During times like these – isn't that what we all want?

By showing care and compassion throughout the trip, Jovon helped to de-escalate many situations that could have become violent. He leveraged his relationship and knowledge to support a fellow youth in a way that only he could. In his unjudgmental, steadfast and tactful approach – Jovon showed wisdom and leadership well beyond his age.

I think this is something Justice Beverly Browne would have appreciated. Many years ago she billeted me as a high school student in her purple home in Iqaluit. She invited me to the courthouse, and I came to see her work. It was my first time in a courthouse, and it must have been a sentencing.





She was firm but compassionate in a way I imagine most good judges are (or should be). What struck me though was how deeply invested she seemed in genuinely wanting the best outcome for this individual. Bev made the most of her position because she cared for others, like Jovon does for his friend.

Thank-you for considering this nomination. Best of luck in your evaluation – I hope you get many good applications.

I should add that I also solicited feedback from the rest of the guide team, and they too support this nomination.

Yours in adventure,

Dan Wong, Owner

Jovon's contact info:

I usually reach him on Facebook messenger @Jovon Qavvik

Kugaaruk, PO Box 255. His guardian is Amand Qavvik (867 769 6446 or 867 445 7495/a_qavvik@hotmail.com)

I don't have a date of birth but he was 15 last summer.





Figure 1 Jovon jumping into the water during a layover day



Figure 2 The whole crew, Jovon is back row middle, on shoulders, blue rain jacket

