



**November 21, 2006**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**The Honorable Mayor Mark Begich** joined Eklutna Incorporated's Board of Directors and Shareholders for lunch on November 18, 2006, at the Corporation's Annual Shareholders Meeting. He welcomed the Shareholders and spoke about the efforts Anchorage has made towards improving communication and recognition of the Alaska Native Community. The Mayor discussed the economic impact that Eklutna Inc., as the Village Corporation, and CIRI, as the Regional Corporation, has on the Anchorage economy.

The Board of Directors and Shareholders of Eklutna Inc. caught the Mayor off guard and bestowed upon him a special honor; it was announced that Eklutna Inc. was adopting Mayor Begich into our family and the culture by making him an Honorary Dena'ina Member. He was so surprised, he was speechless. "This never happens", said two of his key staff members present. John Rodda of the Parks Department and Roy Agloinga, the Mayor's Rural Affairs Coordinator, both acknowledged that by the Mayor's expression, this honor meant a lot to him.

By Dena'ina tradition and protocol, a Shareholder and respected artist, Eleanor Wilde, made a beaded tapestry, which was presented to the Mayor during the ceremony. Assembly woman Debbie Ossiander, a guest at the event, said she was going to announce this significant honor at this weeks Assembly meeting. Board member A. Debbie Fullenwider commented that with the success of the naming of the new convention center, the success of the 2006 Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, and the continuous support of the native community, it was an honor that Eklutna Inc. was pleased to extend.

Contact: Curtis J. McQueen, Eklutna Inc. Corporate Affairs at 907-696-2828

A. Debbie Fullenwider, Eklutna, Inc. Board Member at 907-337-2881