

# Lifetime experience #13

*'Being in the North  
is a powerful experience.'*



*I work with* Ikaarvik, a program that works with Arctic youth to be the bridge between research and their communities, and with Ocean Bridge, an organization that focuses on ocean conservation. But during the summer, when ships come to Inuit communities, I'm also a tour guide, which is how I came to work with One Ocean Expeditions. I joined them last summer as an onboard culture guide, teaching passengers some basic Inuktitut and running some sewing classes. When I wasn't doing those things, I was talking with passengers and answering questions they had about the North, its people and their culture.

On land, there are only a few guides for the more than 100 visitors from each ship, so meaningful interactions are limited. But being onboard gives me more time to talk with passengers, and for them to get to know me as a person, not just a token Inuk. I went to Nunavut Sivuniksavut, an Inuit school in Ottawa, so I have some understanding of the southern perspective, and I used that to help passengers see things from the Inuit point of view in a way they could understand.

Being in the North is a powerful experience for visitors, especially if it's their first time. But this journey was special for me, too, because it was the first time I visited Dundas Harbour, where my grandfather was born, and the first time since I was three that I'd been to Arctic Bay, where my grandmother was born. I lost both of them to cancer in the last few years, so being in these places wasn't just amazing — it was healing.

—Alexandra Anaviapik  
Culture guide with One  
Ocean Expeditions since 2018



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