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Shown here left to right, Karen Rehfeld, State Co-Chair, George Cannelos, Federal Co-Chair, Melanie Edwards of Kawerak, Inc. and Mike McKinnon, Transportation Program Manager of the Denali Commission.

The Denali Commission Awards Kawerak, Inc. with the 2007 Best Practice Award

Anchorage, AK - - December 3, 2007 – The Denali Commission (Commission) is pleased to announce the 2007 recipient of the Denali Commission Best Practice Award. The Commission's Best Practice Award is provided to an individual, community, village or organization for the creation, use or processing of practices or activities that are beneficial to a wide array of stakeholders.

Kawerak, Inc. developed the first ever tribal transportation agreement which serves as a template for other project agreements in other regions. This agreement provides financial and project development benefits to Kawerak's communities and has become a leadership model for other tribal governments in Alaska. The tribal compact agreement pools funds from the communities and prioritizes capital projects in the region. Through its Transportation Program, Kawerak has been able to:

- provide the 9% local match required under the State Transportation Improvement Program, thereby increasing the likelihood that state funded projects will be constructed in our villages.
- access new funding sources to meet village transportation needs. Kawerak applied for and received Denali Commission Access funds to undertake transportation related projects in four of their villages.
- successfully complete an aerial digital mapping project of all villages in the region; a tremendous help in community planning and future infrastructure development.
- plan, design and successfully manage the construction of: Elim Box Culvert Replacement, Shishmaref Seawall-450 feet, Solomon Road, and Koyuk Community Streets.

The Denali Commission recognizes Kawerak, Inc.'s best practices strategies and their successful efforts of leveraging funding to achieve their goals. The Commission is proud to recognize their efforts. The Denali Commission recognized Kawerak, Inc. at their quarterly meeting held in Anchorage on November 29, 2007. Melanie Edwards received the award on behalf of Kawerak.

For more information contact:

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