



For immediate release

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YUKON TOURISM OPERATORS WIN NATIONAL TOURISM AWARDS

OTTAWA – It was a great night for the Yukon at the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's annual awards gala on December 2nd, as two tourism operators from the territory took home national tourism awards. Jesse Cooke, Owner of Husky Bus based in Dawson City was awarded the Parks Canada Youth Tourism Entrepreneur Award, while Takhini Hot Pools based in Whitehorse won the WestJet Social Media Initiative of the Year Award for its "International Hair Freezing Contest". The Adaka Cultural Festival also made the shortlist for a national tourism award – it was one of the top three organizations in the running for the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada's National Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Award.

All of the Yukon finalists were selected from nominees from across the country and stacked up against some of the best tourism businesses and organizations that Canada has to offer.

"It was an amazing feeling to see Dawson City recognized on the national stage", says TIA Yukon board member and Klondike Visitor's Association Chair Brian Stethem, who was in attendance at the gala. "Jesse is a top notch tourism operator and a great ambassador of the Yukon and the Klondike; Yukoners should be proud of his contributions and the recognition he's received."

TIA Yukon Past Chair Neil Hartling was also at the awards ceremony. Hartling believes that the Yukon's success at this year's national awards gala is indicative of more great things to come for the Yukon's tourism industry.

"In recent years, we've seen Yukon tourism organizations acknowledged more often nationally and this speaks to their ability to develop and market their product," says Hartling. "Takhini Hot Pools, the Adaka Cultural Festival and Jesse Cooke should all be commended for their hard work and vision, and act as a reminder to other Yukon tourism organizations that even though we are in a remote region, Canadians are paying attention. With the new Yukon television ad campaign targeting the Canadian market, even more people across the country will be paying attention to what's happening in the Yukon in the years to come."

Representatives from each of the three nominated Yukon organizations attended the Awards gala. The gala was also attended by Yukon MP Larry Bagnell.

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