

**Citation for Navarana Ka'avigak' Sørensen**  
**Presented by Susan A. Kaplan, Professor of Anthropology and**  
**Director of the Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum and Arctic Studies Center**  
**May 2023**

Navarana Ka'avigak' Sørensen, cultural ambassador, curator, and translator; traditional drummer and distinguished elder of the Northwest Greenland Inughuit community; loving mother, grandmother, and friend –Bowdoin College honors you today for your capacity to navigate among cultures, and willingness to facilitate the work of Arctic researchers, engage with students, and educate people around the world about Inughuit traditions.

Born in Uummannaq, northwest Greenland, you were schooled in your home country and in Denmark, lived in Canada, and have traveled throughout the world. You are a descendent of the Baffin Island shaman Qidlarsuak, who, in the 1850s, gathered approximately fifty Inuit and spent ten years traveling from Canada to Northwest Greenland, having heard about a people living in this distant land. You have commented that your curiosity, interest in traveling throughout the world, and delight in meeting people from different cultures may be traced back to Qidlarsuak, your great, great, great uncle.

Your family connections to Bowdoin College run deep. Your great uncle Odaq was like a grandfather to you. A highly respected hunter, he was the most accomplished Inughuit who helped Robert E. Peary, Class of 1877, in his efforts to reach the North Pole. Your parents began working with Donald B. MacMillan, Class of 1898, on his 1923 expedition to Ellesmere Island and Northwest Greenland, and they maintained a lifelong friendship with him. You have worked with Genny LeMoine, curator of Bowdoin's Arctic Museum, and have shared your knowledge of Inughuit culture with Bowdoin's faculty, staff, and students.

Since your childhood, you have seen your world change dramatically. When you were a child, your life was disrupted when your family was forced to move from Uummannaq to make way for the US Thule military airbase. You have learned to live in a world in which you are equally at home travelling by dog-drawn sled and in an airplane. You navigate massive foreign cities while treasuring an Inughuit life based on living off the bountiful resources offered by Arctic ice, land, and sea.

As a result of global warming, your beloved northwest Greenland paradise is being transformed by melting permafrost, receding glaciers, and thinning sea ice. On this shifting ground, you have counseled us to question whether what is termed "progress" is always an improvement and have urged us to hold on to traditional ways that are effective, efficient, and sustainable as we navigate this changing world.

With grace, humor, generosity, and kindness you share your expertise and insights, and for all of this, and all that you have accomplished, we thank you and honor you. *Qujanaq!*

President Rose, I am honored to present Navarana Ka'avigak' Sørensen for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.