



**PRESS RELEASE
ARCTIC WINTER GAMES INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE**

January 6, 1999 – Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada:

The Arctic Winter Games International Committee (AWGIC) and the City of Yellowknife released the results of an analysis of the social impacts of the 1998 Arctic Winter Games today. Dr. Samuel V. Lankford and Dr. Larry L. Neal, both of the World Leisure and Recreation Association prepared the report at the request of the AWGIC.

“Drs. Lankford and Neal’s work highlights the significant social benefits that the Arctic Winter Games bring to all Games participants and communities involved in various aspect of hosting and team preparation,” said AWGIC President Gerry Thick. “The researchers found that not only are there significant social, personal and community benefits derived from the Games, but that individuals from across the north involved in preparations for the Games also receive many positive benefits as well”.

Mayor David Lovell said, “We have always believed that the Arctic Winter Games have a significant positive effect on community development. This report confirms this and gives us one more tool to support future similar events.”

Study data was gathered in the NWT during the regional and territorial team selection process and during the Arctic Winter Games. A total of 548 surveys were completed representing a cross-section of athletes, coaches, volunteers and other participants.

Findings in the report include data that suggests:

- There is a strong correlation between Games involvement and a sense of personal achievement, pride and a sense of importance to one's own community,
- An increased desire by participants to return to their home communities and get involved in other local community events and projects,
- The Games represent a significant opportunity to promote northern and aboriginal sports and customs,
- Participants appreciated the opportunity to meet new people and learned to appreciate other cultures and ways of life,
- Young people involved in all aspects of the Games learned to deal with family pressures and other issues in a positive way.

Dr. Lankford (University of Northern Iowa) and Dr. Neal (University of Oregon) have a long involvement with the arctic through their work with the international Winter Cities Forum. Both are recognized international researchers and have written extensively on a variety of research topics in the sport, recreation and leisure fields.

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