

Nick Names

Inuit do not speak to or reference Elders by using their first name. It was considered to be disrespectful to speak the names of people older than you. This tradition is still followed today. In addition, Inuit tend to apply this etiquette to all people. Again, this was done to show respect to the older people. Inuit, in keeping with this tradition, did not pronounce the names of the newcomers. Instead, they would give them a name consistent with their characteristics, occupation, or the way the name sounded. Very often, names of the newcomers were too foreign and difficult to pronounce. Local names were easier to remember. Outsiders were known only by their nick-names. Most of the time, their given names were never really known! Today, many outsider's nick names are still given and used (even though the names are now recognizable and easy to pronounce). This shows a great deal of respect for that person from the Inuit perspective. Inuit only seem to give nick names for those they really respect.

"If you are given a nickname by the Inuit, wear it like the badge of honor it very likely is." John Ningark

"You will be badged with an Inuktitut nickname, based on a physical characteristics or habit, which identifies you in their sight. Getting assigned a nickname is not scientific, so yours will likely come in an odd way. Ones assigned in the past include Qiuniujaq (One Who Is Forever cold), and Patinnaaki (Small Buttocked One, or, in today's lingo, Weeny Bun)." Zebedee Nungak

First, I wish to thank these incredible people for allowing me to use their good name in this article. Qujannamiiraaluk!

Let's start off with **Patikuluk**. Pa-ti-ku-luk is a small or a good looking bone marrow. This name was given to Trudy Pettigrew because it sounds like her surname. The stem of the word is Patiq (Bone marrow). This nick name originated from Igloolik. This is not done out of disrespect rather, a huge respect for Trudy! Most people in Igloolik will call Trudy by her nick name and may not use her first name. Patikuluk is well respected name/person by Iglulingmiut...and others-personally and professionally.

Paqulluk. Pa-qul-luk. (This name was given to a researcher who asked many questions). This person may be referred to as someone who is nosy. I never found out his real name. (I never asked because he already had a name-Paqulluk). Just from the name, you can tell what type of person this may be. I guess this would be great for someone under the Witness Protection Program to keep their name out of the picture! I have no idea how to contact 'Pa-qul-luk', nor do I know his real name, so I'm writing this without his consent. If you should read this...I apologize for not getting permission to use your nick name, and what is your real name?

Umilik. U-mi-lik. **Umiligjuaq**. U-mi-lig-juaq. David Parks (Nick named in Pond Inlet – **Umilik -With a beard**). Noel McDermott (Nick named in Arviat-**Umiligjuaq - Big bearded**). Both of these men arrived in Pond Inlet with a beard and the name has remained. Both individuals are very well respected past educators. Both men's

descendants now work in Pond Inlet or have. The children got their good name through the positive action of these two great individuals! I was fortunate enough to have worked with both of them!

Qimmilik. Qim-mi-lik. Diane Dennison. (Has dogs). Diane had dogs when she was in Pond Inlet and will always be remembered as “Qimmilik”. Diane now teaches in Iqaluit. Another well respected super educator! I was very lucky to have taught with Diane in the same school!

Ningauraaluk, Ni-ngau-raa-luk. Glen Williams. (The big brother in-law). This name originated in Arctic Bay. He speaks good Inuktitut. He is a Wildlife Officer/Environmentalist and a well respected individual!

Juajjiruluk. Juaj-ji-ru-luk. George Wenzel. (Good old George. Or ordinary George who blends in). He ate country food, tried speaking Inuktitut and mingled with ordinary people. This nickname originated in Clyde River, and, - ruluk does not indicate a negative in Clyde River dialect. However, it may in other different dialects. George Wenzel is a University professor at McGill University in Montreal. George came to Clyde River as a university student and stayed with the Piungittuq (Piu-ngit-tuq) family at their outpost camp. University students now go to Clyde River and Pond Inlet to study under the direction of George. The students are known as Juajjiruluk’s students, not necessarily by their actual names. Since George has respect from the community, his students are treated the same.

Ilisajikutaak. i-li-sai-ji-ku-taak. Kenn Harper. (Tall teacher). Kenn is well over six feet. That’s very tall if you live in the North! A great educator, historian, business man, and well respected individual. He speaks fluent Inuktitut in different dialects, and some Kalaallimiutitut and (Greenlandic). He is like a walking encyclopedia and he also writes!

Most southerners were first known by their occupation before their name. For example:

Niuviqti, Store manager

Niuviqtiralaaq, small\short store manager

Niuviqtiviniq, past store manager/deceased

Niuviqtikutaak, tall store manager

Niuviqtikallak, short store manager

Niuviqtiruluk, terrible store manager

Niuviqtikuluk, short or a lovable manager

Niuviqtittiavak, good manager

Niuviqtiksaq, the manager to be

The same is done with other occupations; ilisaiji (Teacher), ajuriqsuiji (Priest), kigusiriji (Dentist), aanniasiuqti (Nurse), paliisi (Policeman), uumajurniaqti (Wildlife Officer), niqiliuqti (Cook), tuktuliriji (Caribou Biologist), uajaliriji (Electrician), qijuliriji (Carpenter), uqsuliriji (Fuel Person), sulluliriji (Plumber), and the list goes on.

Some however are named by the way they look, the way the name is announced or how they are seen. It may be a unique scar to a big nose. It may simply be the “Store Manager’s wife” or the “teacher’s son.” Here are some more.

Characteristics, interpretations and features that stand out...mikiniqsaq, mi-ki-niq-saq (Smaller one) , anginiqsaq, a-ngi-niq-saq (Bigger one), qupanuaq, qu-pa-nuaq (bird), qaulluqtaaq, qaul-luq-taaq, qakuqtaaq, qa-kuq-taaq (Snow bunting), uisakallak, ui-sa-kal-lak (Wide eyes), qauraaluk, qau-raa-luk (big forehead), irngninga, irng-ni-nga (son of...), paninga, pa-ni-nga (daughter of...), nulianga, nu-lia-nga (wife of...), uinga, ui-nga (The husband of...), angujjuaq, a-nguj-juaq (Big bull), makkungniqsaq, makkung-niq-saq (The younger one), ijituaq, i-ji-tuaq (One eyed), iqisulik, i-qi-su-lik (Curly), tulugaq, tu-lu-gaq (Raven, smart), tarralikisaaq, tar-ra-li-ki-saaq (Butterfly, beautiful), arnaralaaq, ar-na-ra-laaq (Little lady), arnakutaak, ar-na-ku-taak (Tall lady), kapitaikallak, ka-pi-tai-kal-lak (Captain Bernier), sakirmiaq, sa-kir-miaq (Second Mate Robert Janes), kaparu, ka-pa-ru (Corporal), sipaikta, si-paik-ta (Inspector), uujukuluk, uu-ju-ku-luk (Earl), quinijuq, qui-ni-juq (Arch Deacon Whitbread), aupaqtuq, au-paq-tuq (Red) and the list goes on.

I hope that I do not offend anyone by using the above names. My intent is not to offend anyone but rather prove that nick names can be quite colorful!

I have been called different nicknames in the past but nothing sticks out. I have been called “tu-lu-gaq”, “i-li-sai-jit-tia-vaa-luk”, “u-qau-si-li-ri-ji”, “u-qau-si-li-ri-jim-ma-rik”, “son of Tigullaraq”, “son of Ootoovak”, ‘qaq-sauq”, “u-na-ru-luk” “the younger brother of Abraham or Joe”, “Ni-ngauk of Kalluk”, “Tig”, ”Tigullaraq”, “Tiggy”, “inspector” “doctor” “Hey you!” “nephew of Jimmy” and others I’m sure that I’m not aware of. I guess I never really impressed someone enough to give me a nick name that will stick. I’ll settle for Elijah...for now.

Elijah Tigullaraq
QSO, October 2010