

# Barrow's MacLean crowned Miss NCAI at 50th convention

For the second year in a row, an Alaskan has been named Miss National Congress of American Indians. Tara MacLean of Barrow was crowned at the organization's 50th annual convention in Reno, Nevada on December 1. She succeeds Ann Cooke of Bethel.

MacLean, 20, is a junior at Cornell University in New York where she is majoring in industrial and labor relations. She is the daughter of a very proud Eileen MacLean, a state representative from Barrow. But well-wishers were not limited to friends and family in Barrow. Shortly after the announcement, *Tundra Times* received a fax from the Metlakatla Indian Community in distant southeast Alaska saluting MacLean as an "excellent role model for our youth."

In a letter to MacLean, Metlakatla Mayor Casey Nelson, Sr. said he and other community members were in the audience during the competition and felt proud to be represented by MacLean.

"You instilled in our hearts a



Tara MacLean

striking reminder of who we are and your prayers and songs were truly felt," Casey wrote. "Again, congratulations . . . our youth will truly know that you are there for them and that they will now have a national voice which will be heard."

MacLean traveled to Reno after being named Miss Eskimo-Indian Olympics in Fairbanks in July. Like the event in Fairbanks,

competition for the NCAI title included a talent event, as well as individual interviews with the judges.

In her talent presentation, MacLean discussed Inupiat culture, survival in the Arctic and living in harmony with the land. She described the whaling traditions of her people, including women's roles in whaling, distribution of the whale meat and the many ways in which whale parts are used for practical and artistic purposes. She also gave each of the judges a piece of maqtaq (whale skin and blubber) to taste.