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Alaska's Sister State Heilongjiang, China Hosts First Lady Donna Walker
First Lady to Headline Child & Family Cultural Exchange Conference

June 13, 2017 JUNEAU—By invitation initiated by the First Lady of the People’s Republic of China, Madame Peng Liyuan, First Lady Donna Walker will be the keynote speaker for the Women and Children Cultural Conference in the Province of Heilongjiang on Wednesday, June 21. All travel, lodging and related expenses for Mrs. Walker and her party will be paid by the Province of Heilongjiang, Foreign Affairs Office.

Alaska and Heilongjiang have had a sister state relationship for over 30 years. The conference is hosted by the Heilongjiang Women’s Federation and Heilongjiang People’s Association for Friendship and Foreign Countries. The Foreign Affairs Office will arrange meetings and social services site visits in addition to the conference.

“Meeting President Xi and Madame Peng was a high honor for Governor Walker and me,” First Lady Walker said. “To have that wonderful visit followed up so quickly with this generous invitation is quite remarkable and we do look forward to building and strengthening our relationship with China which has long been Alaska’s largest trading partner. To have the opportunity to extend that economic relationship into social and cultural arenas is exciting and important. I am grateful to play a small role.”

Madame Peng visited Alaska with her husband, President Xi Jinping on April 7. While Governor Walker and President Xi discussed Alaska’s vast resources, its liquefied natural gas (LNG) export project and other trade opportunities, Mrs. Walker and Madame Peng had an extended conversation about their roles as first ladies and the issues important to them. On May 15, a representative from the Province of Heilongjiang hand-delivered the conference invitation to Mrs. Walker in Juneau, emphasizing President Xi’s priority of strengthening Chinese-Alaskan ties and relationships. In addition to Chinese government officials, scholars and experts, the Walkers’ daughters and daughter-in-law, by invitation, will also speak at the conference as noted below; Mrs. Walker will speak on parenting and on the work of the Alaska Children’s Trust.

Lindsay Walker Hobson holds a B.A. in Spanish and Communication and a J.D., and is currently Communications Manager and spokesperson for Enstar Natural Gas Company. As the working mother of two, Lindsay knows the challenges and rewards of balancing career and family. She has been asked to speak on “Supporting Women in the Workplace.”

Tessa Walker Linderman holds a Doctorate of Nursing Practice in Community Health Systems Nursing, and is currently the Program Director for the Lead in Homes Initiative for Healthy Babies Bright Futures. Tessa has been asked to speak on “Lead Poisoning: Protecting Your Children and Family.”

Sabrina Smith Walker holds a BA in Elementary Education and is an English-as-a-Second-Language Teacher for Chinese students at VIPKID Online/Beijing. A cancer survivor, Sabrina battles cystic fibrosis every day; she has been asked to speak on “Facing Adversity with Family Support, an Action Plan and a Positive Attitude.”

Students in Anchorage Scenic Park Elementary School’s Chinese immersion program recorded [this greeting](#), which will be played at the conference.

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