

Rochelle Adams: Sharing her Alaska Native culture with MOLLY OF DENALI'S International Audience

Rochelle Adams grew up fully immersed in her Alaska Native culture in the villages of Fort Yukon and Beaver. She currently lives seasonally between the village of Beaver and the city of Anchorage with her three children Amaya, Koso and Khan. It is a balance of living the best of both worlds. Now she is sharing the beauty of her culture and language with children across the United States and Canada through her work on the new PBS KIDS series, MOLLY OF DENALI. Adams is a member of the Alaska Native working group that has been an integral part of the creation of the show and advises on Alaska Native culture and language on many platforms for the series, which will debut on July 15th, 2019.

As a member of the MOLLY OF DENALI working group, it was important for Adams to ensure that Alaska Natives were being accurately portrayed. Adams provides feedback on art, culture, storytelling and language in a genuine and authentic way, as these are all incorporated into MOLLY OF DENALI and is such a great opportunity to educate many about Alaska Natives and Indigenous people. But the real honor, for Rochelle, is to reflect the true beauty and uniqueness of Alaska Natives to be able to see themselves on the big screen and to see the pride and love on their faces.

Adams sees Molly as a reflection of herself: an Alaska Native young person with a diverse group of friends; someone who is modern, with a strong desire to learn and use technology while also holding strong to her Indigenous roots.

Growing up, Adams was encouraged to ask questions and learn as much as she could about her surroundings. She has fond memories of being with her parents Angela Peter-Mayo and Cliff Adams out on the land. Rochelle spent countless hours traveling on the Yukon River with her family in the summer going to fish camp and salmon fishing with the family fish wheel. She also has great memories of being out on the trapline with her father in the winter. She learned to hunt, fish and gather, which are all traditional Alaska Native activities that maintain a strong connection to the lands and waters. Some of her earliest memories are of watching her great grandmother do beadwork, skin sewing and listening to her tell stories with such love for everyone. She was creating things for the whole family that was made with her love, well wishes and prayers for her family. It is with these same values that MOLLY OF DENALI is being created to share with the world.

Just like Molly, Adams is proud of her diverse Gwich'in, Koyukon, Japanese, Swedish and Dutch heritage. The characters in the show are proud to honor their heritage, culture and ancestors by interacting and learning from and with many different people from many different backgrounds.

Adams sees Molly as a youth ambassador to share the views and experiences of Alaska Native people and Native Americans as modern people who are part of today's world. Adams is

confident that MOLLY OF DENALI will educate and inspire all viewers to learn more about the beautiful stories of Indigenous people.