The 2014 Substance Abuse Summit was the first of many of its kind. Larry Cotter, APIDCA CEO closed the conference with an announcement that he will seek a $100,000 for the next substance abuse summit. The location of the next conference is to be determined.

Dr. Gary Ferguson opened the summit along with Governor Sean Parnell. The summit was well attended by many from the Aleutian and Pribilof region as well as experts from across Alaska. There was a series of breakout sessions held which allowed participants to focus on a wide variety of important challenges throughout our region. The sessions were action-oriented and comprehensive, taking on issues of prevention and outreach focused on the region’s young people; access to treatment and follow-up programs for those seeking help with substance abuse; and ways to strengthen drug interdiction efforts and bring more drug traffickers to justice.
Aang! Here we are in the middle of winter, past the holiday season and spring is right around the corner. I hope your fishing season was profitable and things were in order for the winter. If you find yourself in need of Energy Assistance as we come to the latter half of winter, please feel free to contact our Human Services Department. With the holidays just past, our wish for you all is a blessed and bountiful new year.

At our Board meeting December 8 – 11, 2014, we welcomed a new Board member from False Pass, Siri Goulette; we thank Ruth Hoblet for her years of service. We welcome Delores Kochuten back as the Belkofski Tribal Representative. Amos Philemonoff is the new representative for the St. Paul Tribe, replacing the late Mike Zacharof.

We dedicated this Board meeting to Michael Zacharof who served on our Board for over 22 years. Mike was the long time St. Paul tribal representative who served as our Sergeant at Arms and the Board Health Committee Chair. God Bless. Memory Eternal. I know he looks at us from up above with that ‘special’ smile!

Congratulations to Mark Snigaroff for being re-elected as our Board Chair; Chris Merculief for being re-elected as our Board Vice Chair and newly appointed as Mike’s replacement as our Board Health Committee Chair; David Osterback’s for being appointed as Mike’s replacement as our Sergeant at Arms; and Zenia Borenin as our new Board Secretary/Treasurer.

See below some highlights from FY2014 that I shared at this Board meeting:

Unalaska & Atka Clinic Replacements – You all know too well that during World War II, communities within the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region suffered historic losses. Many died due to inadequate health care and poor living conditions during removal by the U.S. Government to internment camps in Southeast Alaska. Two health care facilities that were destroyed and have not been rebuilt or accounted for in prior restitution made to the Aleutian and Pribilof Island regional tribal communities. One of these facilities was in Unalaska which was destroyed by the Japanese; and the other was in Atka which was destroyed by the U.S. Navy when they burned the community to the ground to keep it from being occupied and used by the Japanese. We are working to secure funding to replace these two health care facilities and have completed the draft business plan, which is a starting point to discuss the types of services and facilities design. To be clear, there are no plans to change any regional travel routes in relation to the proposed Unalaska Hospital. Regular stakeholders meetings are taking place. The Indian Health Service Joint Venture Agreement was approved, which means once built, we will receive staffing packages. We are hopeful the amendment of the Restitution Act will move forward through Congress at the upcoming session and we will continue to educate our delegation of its importance. When funding is in place, this is expected to be a 3-5 year process.
Qaqamiigux Traditional Foods Book – The title of this book means ‘to hunt or fish for food and collect plants; subsistence’. It is traditional foods of the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region book we published this year. The book launching was held at the Unangum Ulaa July 29, 2014. The book is part of the six year Traditional Foods project funded through Community Disease Center (CDC) and donations by the Aleut Corporation and APIA. Highlights of the book include: traditional values, stories, hundreds of recipes, historic and contemporary information. I want to thank Ken Selby, Community Services Director; and Sue Unger, the book’s author, for their work on this book. Sue was awarded a Local Impact Award for Traditional Foods Book from the National Indian Health Board. This is a very prestigious award and we are honored to have Sue win it! We are working to widely share this book with the intention of spreading our traditional food recipes and the historical content included as well. Thank you to all of you in the region who contributed to the making of this book in one way or another, we couldn’t have done it without your input. Please visit our website at [www.apiai.org](http://www.apiai.org) to see how you can order your very own Qaqamiigux Traditional Foods & Recipe book.

Regional Substance Abuse Summit – APIA hosted a Regional Substance Abuse Summit which took place September 10 – 12 in Anchorage. On Thursday October 2, APICDA hosted a follow-up meeting on the Reclaim Alaska. Several A-Team entities were represented, as well as other critical partners. The group reported follow-up from items at the Anchorage Substance Abuse Summit held in September; and identified action yet to be taken. Reclaim Alaska presented at the Aleut Corporation’s Village Seminars and even at AFN. Future meetings will take place to continue work on this important matter throughout our region and the state.

St. Paul Health Services Transfer – The St. Paul Tribe chose to transfer their health services from APIA to the Southcentral Foundation effective January 1, 2015. Charles Fagerstrom, APIA Health Director; Carolyn Crowder, former APIA Health Director; and I, traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with the delegation and Acting Indian Health Service Director, Yvette Roubideaux, and discuss the details of the transfer. We were able to secure $152,000 of additional dollars to help mitigate the immediate impact on the Tribal communities of Atka, St. George, Unalaska, Nikolski, and Belkofski who are still in our regional Health Models. On Wednesday December 31, 2014, we had a virtual luncheon with the staff of the St. Paul Health Center where I had this message relayed: “On behalf of the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the community of St. Paul Island for allowing the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.
(APIA) to serve your health care and wellness needs for the past 20 years.

We are honored that the people in St. Paul have entrusted us to partner to deliver the best possible care to the community. We thank each and everyone one of you working at the St. Paul Health Center for your part and service to provide the highest level of care possible.

Throughout the years, we have developed countless and lasting relationships. It is our pleasure to be a part of your success in building a healthy community.

We have greatly appreciated the opportunity to serve the people in St. Paul and appreciate all of your work in helping us do so. We wish you all the best. We will always be appreciative of and cherish our experience and journey with you. God Bless.”

Board Member Support – I want to express my appreciation for our board members support during this challenging time. Mark Snigaroff, our Chairman from Atka, rescheduled travel home on several occasions, to attend meetings with our attorney, managers and myself in relation to the transfer and the effect on the Association and remaining tribes. Chris Merculief, our Vice Chairman & new Health Committee Chair from St. George; Denise Rankin, our Secretary from Unalaska; Arnold Dushkin, from Nikolski, and Delores Kochuten, from Belkofski, all gave their time and support as well. I also spoke with nearly all of the rest of our board on many occasions to keep them abreast of the situation. I sincerely appreciate all of their time, input and support.

We apologize for not getting this newsletter out sooner. At our recent Strategic Planning Update Session with management, we talked about many things including how to improve our newsletter. We plan to produce them more frequently, shooting for every other month or so. They are to be a little shorter, with a more of a quick read format. You may find we do more ‘flash reports’ of events and/or activities as they are coming up or happen. We certainly used our facebook page more frequently this past year and will continue to do so. If you have any thoughts about how we can improve, please feel free to share them with us at apiai@apiai.org.

As you can see 2014 was quite a busy year. We made it through some challenging times and see many exciting things coming in this new year. We send you best wishes and pray God grants you many blessings in this new year.

SAVE THE DATE!

Capture the Culture
Gala 2015

March 14
Anchorage Downtown Marriott
5 to 9pm
Join us for an evening of fun
fine dining, remembrance,
and amazing auctions!

To register, make a donation or for more information, please visit https://apiai.charityx.org/gala2015

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Honoring, Preserving and Protecting the
Unangax̂ Culture
Now and into the Future
The Human Services Department’s Family Programs Division Staff had the opportunity to travel to Sand Point and King Cove last summer to assist in providing valuable information about enhancing child safety in our communities. In collaboration with the State of Alaska, Office of Children’s Services and the Anchorage Police Department’s Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force the week-long trip to the region included presentations to the communities and school personnel, as well as meetings with Tribal Presidents and other local entities.

Makenzie Frye and Tandra Donhaue of the State of Alaska, OCS, provided information regarding Mandatory Reporting and Foster Care Licensing in the State of Alaska. They covered topics of how and when to report child abuse and neglect, as well as the steps to becoming a foster parent and/or home in the State of Alaska.

Detective James Estes and Cyber Tech Brandon Hunter from the Anchorage Police Department’s ICAC Task Force Program provided information regarding child safety in today’s modern technological world. They covered internet crime topics including Cyberbullying, Child Pornography, and many others for both the Sand Point & King Cove School personnel.

Family Programs Division Staff also took this opportunity to introduce new key staff to the region including Veronica Driskill, APIA’s new Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Coordinator, and Margaret Warren, APIA’s new Tribal Child Support Program (TCSP) Coordinator.

While the overall focus of this travel was to provide valuable information to our regional communities regarding child safety, it was also to help create stronger partnerships. We were honored to have the State of Alaska, OCS Office and the Anchorage Police Department, ICAC Task Force accompany us on this trip to provide information to our community leaders and members. We also appreciated the warm welcome to the communities by our Tribal partners, as well as the hospitality shown to us by the Aleutians East Borough School District and their staff at both the Sand Point and King Cove Schools.

The Human Services Department and Family Programs Division plan to conduct similar trips to more of our regional communities in the future.
Mark Wasierski joined Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association in 2009 and has since brought excellence, leadership and a good dose of humor to the Head Start pod in Anchorage and Head Start communities located in Sand Point, Unalaska, Saint Paul and King Cove. In addition to the day-to-day operations of running our Head Start program, Mark has chaired the Alaska Head Start Association Conference Committee; in fact, he spearheaded three major conferences and was essential in combining the Head Start conference and Alaska Early Childhood conference so all early childhood educators and staff could learn and benefit from the same programs. In 2013 he took on the additional responsibility as the President of the Alaska Head Start Association.

Above and beyond his active work with AHSA, Mark completed an amazing feat when he submitted and processed two APIA Head Start grant applications – one in the shortest clocked time ever, a mere four hours. This is unheard of with minimum routing timelines at APIA! These grants resulted in three brand new buses and over fifteen thousand dollars in additional travel funds for the APIA Head Start Program.

Overall, Mark is a conscientious, calm director that is always able to see the big picture while maintaining a detailed personal focus. He is always available to listen to and support program staff as well as empathetic, fair and consistent in his approaches. While recent lack of program funds have taken more of his time away from being directly at our program centers, Mark strives to be responsive and ensures follow up on request and questions. He genuinely empathizes the issues at hand, while at the same time, gently reminding our staff of maintaining clear understandings of their roles and responsibilities.

Mark is a strong advocate for children and families. He is very knowledgeable in early childhood practices and willingly shares his knowledge and experience with staff and parents. Mark’s Bachelor’s degree in Communication Disorders and his years of experience in providing Early Intervention Services to Rural Alaska children and families is a direct reflection of the enhanced quality of our Head Start program here at APIA.

APIA Head Start would like to recognize and celebrate the leadership of our Director, Mark Wasierski. We believe the mentioned characteristics above speak to the very reason for our nomination for Mark Wasierski as Alaska Head Start Director of the Year!

Congratulations on your well deserved award Mark!
CAPTURE THE CULTURE GALA 2015

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

The Capture the Culture annual Gala fundraiser benefits our cultural programs through a silent and live auction that includes a wide variety of items. Donations for our Silent and Live auctions help our event to be a success. No item is too big or too small! Your donation may be tax deductible. Our Tax ID # is 92-0073013. Thank you.

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Name and Description of item(s): This information helps us to appropriately present and exhibit your donation to our guests attending the Gala Auction.

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Would you like us to pick up your donation? (If applicable): _____ Yes _____ No. I will deliver it.

I (we) pledge a total of $___________ to be paid: □ now □ monthly □ quarterly □ yearly.

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Please use the following name(s) in all acknowledgements: ____________________________

☐ I (we) wish to have our gift remain anonymous.

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OUR MISSION

- To promote self-sufficiency and independence of the Unangan/Unanagas\(^1\) by advocacy, training, technical assistance, and economic enhancement;
- To assist in meeting health, safety, and well-being of each Unanga\(^2\) community;
- To promote, strengthen, and ensure the unity of the Unangan/Unangas; and
- To strengthen and preserve the Unanga\(^2\) cultural heritage.

\(^1\)Unangan [Eastern dialect], Unangas [Atka Dialect] - Aleuts, plural form; \(^2\)Unanga\(^\prime\) - Aleut, singular form

ALEUTIAN Pribilof Islands Association’s Board of Directors

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