



TIDE POOL TIMES

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association's Monthly Regional Newsletter

May Wellness



Photo Courtesy: Google Images

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Program Update

Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Project

Our Veteran Program here at APIA has waited a long time for our new Veteran Peer Support Specialist (VPSS). We have wanted to bring you more support, more connection, and more offerings, and now we get to offer our Veterans and active service members and their families just that. As we all know, connection is prevention, and Destiny Key is a joy to know. Connecting with her is easy. Read about her and her indigenous Alaskan roots, and military service in our Staff Highlight section. Welcome Destiny!

In other news, the planning for the annual Alaska Native Cultural Health and Resilience (ANCHR) Gathering is in full swing. Qawalangin Tribal representative Anfesia Tutiakoff is working in tandem with Jenna Larson here at APIA to create a synergistic planning team for the healing gathering to be held in Unalaska the last weekend in August. Mark your calendars! It's going to be another phenomenal time of culture and connection as prevention. Dr. Gary Ferguson gladly threw his hat in the ring as our facilitator for the second year in a row. We also have our Cultural Specialist, Lydia Vincler teaching us how to make traditional drums this year! Stay tuned for more on the ANCHR.

Our local Anchorage Vet Center has been renovated and has all new flooring in the talking-circle and yoga room. Come join us Mondays and Wednesdays at noon! If you or your family member are a Veteran or active service member and are interested in joining our program, please contact jennal@apiai.org.



VA Suicide Prevention Grant Recipient

Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program Award Recipient



Photo Courtesy: Makenzie Fox



Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Program Update

Alaska Native Cultural Health & Resilience Gathering Coming to Unalaska!

Sink into our Unangaŋ ways.

Join us for a weekend of culture, art, dance, and honoring each other and our Ancestors as we talk-story. Friday evening, we kick off with an Indian-Taco dinner! Lunches are provided Saturday and Sunday.

This delicious and healing event is free! Register at apiai.org/news



AUGUST 30 -

SEPTEMBER 1

Friday: 5PM - 8PM

Saturday & Sunday

10am - 7pm

At the Unalaska
High School Gym.

For any questions or comments

Please call Jenna Larson at
(907) 222-9748



APIA
ALEUTIAN ISLANDS ASSOCIATION
With Spirit and Strength

A NOTE ON WELLNESS

Resilience is an intriguing phenomenon. It's a buzzword these days, but the concept itself is powerful. According to Kendra Cherry, "A resilient person is someone who has strong coping skills and is able to marshal their available resources, ask for help when needed, and find ways to manage the situation they are facing."

Psychologically resilient people utilize their strengths and hone their coping skills during times of adversity. In the Buddhist philosophy, the first thing to realize about life is that there will be suffering. It's a fact. The trick is not trying to avoid the emotions that come with life's tragedies and disappointments.

There is a wise saying, "You can't heal what you don't feel." But boy is it hard! People think that if they let themselves feel the grief or anger or other scary emotion that it will devour them. The opposite is true. If we deny the feelings, it becomes a form of dis-ease in our bodies.

The good news is that we can practice and get better at being resilient. If you want to hone your skills of resilience, check out this [article](#).



Photo Courtesy: Jenna Larsons

Program Update

Every year sometime in the spring, the National Council on Mental Wellbeing has a conference. It's called NatCon. In April, Amy and Jenna were able to attend, and the knowledge gleaned was immense. They are still disseminating the many days of information packed into the pre-conferences, breakout sessions, and Ted Talks. As if it wasn't enough with the middle-management pre-conference training, and the trauma informed motivational interviewing, there were three additional days of fantastic mental health information, research, practice-based and implementations to take us from theory to practice. From indigenous practices in mental health, and how music can help, to creating a personal resilience and destressing the office in crisis work, the offerings were poignant. We heard about the power of failure, the effects of social media on the brain, and how to quit playing small. Resilience was a multi-faceted topic, along with turning pain into purpose. Some highlights were seeing Kevin Hines and having him sign his latest book, and hearing from our former First Lady, Michelle Obama, how important our efforts in mental health are truly changing the nation and the world by reducing the stigma.



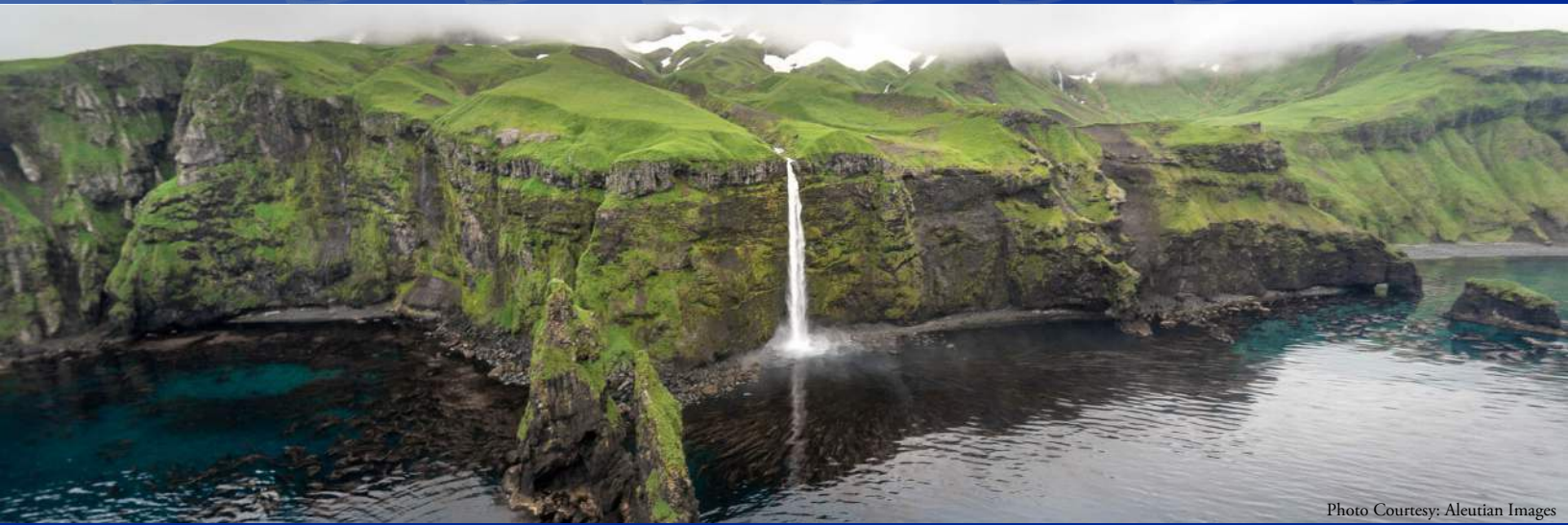


Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Monthly Spotlight

Dagote! A greeting in Apache. My name is Destiny Key, and I'm thrilled to introduce myself to you. I hail from a rich cultural background, being half Dena'ina Athabascan from Tyonek, Alaska on my mothers' side, and half Chiricahua Apache from the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona on my father's side. Since March of this year, I've had the honor of being a part of APIA, serving as the Veteran Peer Support Specialist under the SSG Fox Grant.



My journey into this role has been shaped by my late great grandfather, Calvin Key's service to our country and my four years of active-duty service in the United States Navy, where I served as a Master-at-Arms, also known as Base Security Forces, stationed in Gulfport, Mississippi. Transitioning from the Navy, I found purpose in contributing my experiences towards the success of our suicide prevention initiatives here at APIA. It's my heartfelt mission to meet and assist more veterans within our program, providing them with the support they need.

Anchorage, Alaska, is my birthplace, and I graduated from West High in 2017. From a young age, I've been drawn to helping others, particularly in the medical field, which led me to internships with Southcentral Foundation and ANTHC since the age of 14.

TIP OF THE MONTH



One of my very favorite self-help books ever is *The Four Agreements*, by Don Miguel Ruiz. I read it years ago while I was going through a really hard time and needed extra support. Toltec wisdom has been the guiding principles of my life ever since and have made navigating the tough spots in life much easier while simultaneously helping with my emotional and spiritual growth.

The Four Agreements are as follows:

1. Be impeccable with your word.
2. Don't take anything personally.
3. Don't make assumptions.
4. Always do your best.

One of my favorite quotes from the book is, "It is when we lose control that we repress the emotions, not when we are in control." This taught me to "let it rip", so-to-speak, with my emotions. If we are sad, we can cry instead of bottle it up. If we feel angry, we can go for a run to get it out of our bodies or write it all down in a journal so we can explore what the real emotion is under the anger. If something makes us happy, let's laugh without inhibition. Being human is about feeling all the emotions, noticing what they have to teach us and then letting go without attachment. In Good Health ~Jenna



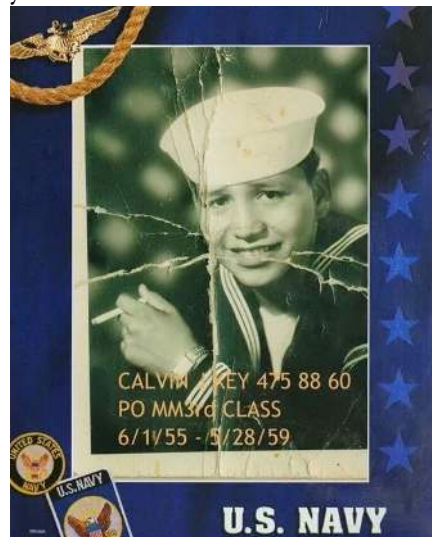
Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Monthly Spotlight (cont.)

While serving in the military, I embarked on my academic journey at Alaska Pacific University in Fall 2020, pursuing a full-time course load in Health Sciences with a focus on chemistry. My ultimate aspiration is to attend medical school and specialize as an anesthesiologist. Recently, I was honored with a research grant from the Biomedical Learning and Student Training program to delve into the study of microplastics in Alaska's freshwater resources.

Outside of work and studies, you'll often find me at the gym, indulging in weightlifting, or enjoying leisurely walks with my beloved puppy, Bella. She's a Belgian Malinois Husky and has been my faithful companion since I adopted her just five days after my service ended in Gulfport, MS.

I am excited about the journey ahead and eager to connect with you and others within our community.



Pictured:
Destiny's
Grandpa,
Calvin Key,
circa 1955.
Destiny in
the Navy
circa 2023.



ABOUT MEMORIAL DAY

This year Memorial Day happens on the 27th. It had always fallen on the 30th of May. It originated as a day to honor Union soldiers who died in the civil war. After WWI it expanded to include all the fallen soldiers who served in action. Decoration Day, as it was known prior to WWII, was a tribute to the southern way of honoring their fallen troops. In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed. It was a switch to use federal holidays to create three-day weekends.

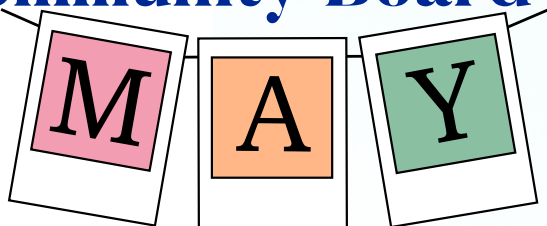
Now we use Memorial Day as a day to honor all our fallen military and it symbolizes the start of summer. Memorials and celebrations of the change of seasons go hand in hand. The Federal holiday with a three-day weekend is a great time to honor those who have gone before us and kept our country safe.

Now is a good time to get out and display your flag half-staff from dawn 'til noon, and visit the cemeteries and memorials with our kids to teach the younger generations how we honor those who came before us. Other traditional ways to observe the day are with family gatherings, picnics, and getting out in nature with a little camping trip. Stay safe and have fun with your loved ones this Memorial Day.



Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Community Board



CAREGIVER PROGRAMS

Alaska VA Program of General Caregiver Support Services (PGCSS)

The Alaska VA PGCSS has several skills development, education, connection and support options. Contact the Caregiver Support Program office at 907-375-2606 for more information or to speak with the PGCSS Coordinator.

Group Skills Training

REACH VA (Resources for Enhancing All Caregiver's Health)
Meets weekly for 6 weeks on Wednesdays 9:30am-10:30am

Caregivers First
Meets weekly for 4 weeks on Fridays 1:00pm-2:30pm

Powerful Tools for Caregivers
Meets weekly for 6 weeks on Thursdays 9:30am-11:00am

Individual Skills Training

REACH VA (Resources for Enhancing All Caregiver's Health)
Meets weekly for 4 weeks on Mondays at 10:00am, 11:00am, 12:30pm or 1:30pm.

Caregiver Health & Wellbeing Coaching NEW!!
Meets for 6-8 sessions. Dates/times will be coordinated with CSP Health & Wellbeing Coach.

Caregiver Wellness Café
Informal virtual place to engage with other caregivers while learning about topics beneficial to your role as a caregiver. Café sessions are held the first Thursday of every month from 1:00pm-2:00pm

Monthly Meetings Plus+

"Caring Conversations" Drop-In Peer Support Group
2nd Thursday of each month from 1:00pm – 2:00pm via Teams.

S.A.V.E. Suicide Prevention Workshop (Quarterly)
Training designed to help people identify the Signs of Suicidal Thinking, how to Ask the questions, how to Validate the Veteran's experiences and emotions and how to Engage in treatment. Quarterly on 3rd Thursday of the month 1:00pm-2:00pm

Plus pop up events on topics such as anger management, handling emotions, dementia, care planning, etc.

National Offerings

Annie Caregiver Text Support: Stress management and self-care tips via text messaging.
Building Better Caregivers™ (BBC): Six week online workshop for caregivers.
Caregiver Self-Care Courses: Topics include Lowering Stress & Improving Mood, Problem Solving, Effective Communication, Taking Care of Yourself and Handling Emotions.

Caregiver Support Line (CSL): 1-855-260-3274 Hours: M-F 8:00am-10:00pm EST / Saturday 8:00am-5:00pm EST *Not a crisis line.

CSL Caregiver Education Calls: Monthly telephone education calls with a theme of "Care for The Caregiver."

Caregiver Support Program (CSP) Website: www.caregiver.va.gov



2nd Annual Women Veteran's Conference

June 22, 2024, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Join us for lunch, guest speakers, fun games, and win door prizes!

Settlers Bay Lodge

5801 South Knik Goose Bay Rd
Wasilla, Alaska 99623

RSVP by May 31, 2024

E-mail: VHAANCWomenVeteransOutreach@va.gov
with your name and phone number and a choice of one breakout session:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| A.) Yoga | B.) Personal Safety |
| C.) Wreath Making | D.) Journaling |

This event will also be
streamed live via TEAMS

Meeting ID:

298 495 243 340

Passcode: 2C98af

POC for this event is
Melinda Erickson
907-257-4876



Bring a Veteran Friend and Get Them Enrolled Into the VA

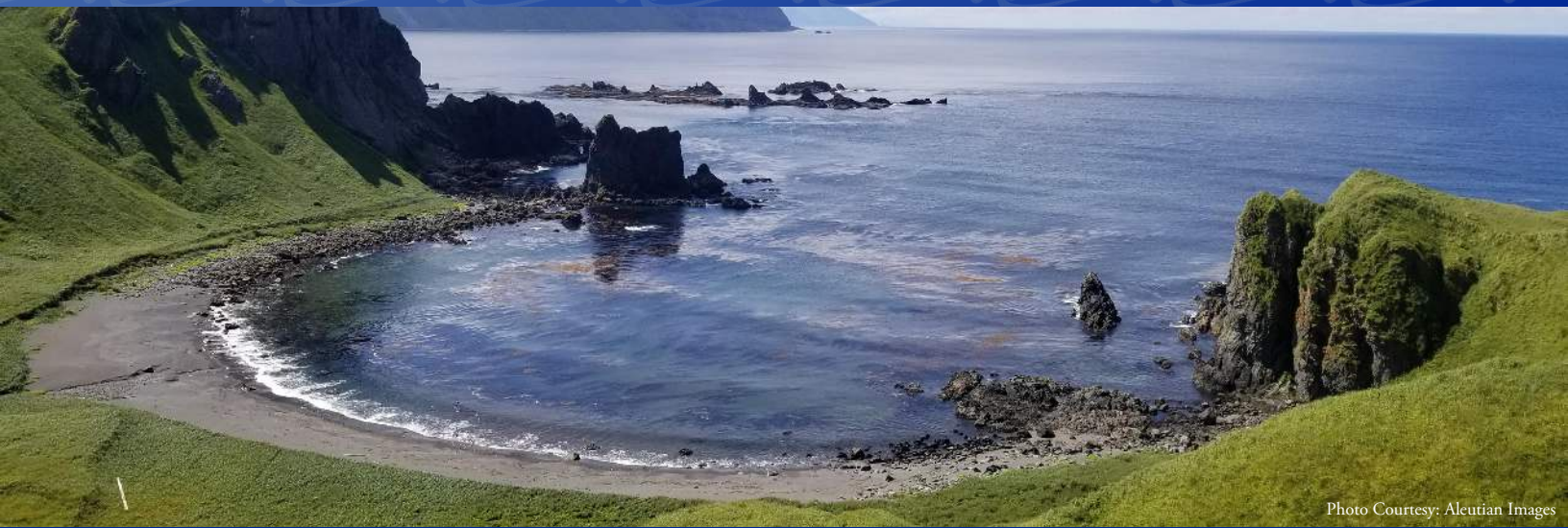


Photo Courtesy: Aleutian Images

Community Board



CBT-INSOMNIA

"Sleep Solutions"

- Learn techniques to improve your quantity and quality of sleep
- Develop better sleep habits through cognitive restructuring, stimulus control, and sleep hygiene techniques
- Improve your ability to fall asleep and start waking up feeling refreshed

Location: Group is offered via Telehealth, Statewide

When: Every Wednesday in June

June 3-26 from 12pm-1pm

Register Today!
907-762-8668

For more information Email:
CaseManagement.CVN@akbh.org



The Steven A. Cohen
Military Family Clinic
at Alaska Behavioral Health

Scan to see
all upcoming
Cohen
Groups



Ch'aqiniya He/She Spoke Out



Are you an Alaska Native veteran from rural Alaska?

Southcentral Foundation wants to hear your voice to help develop new resources for rural Alaska Native veterans. Your voice will guide and develop what these resources look like.

Who: **Rural Alaska Native veterans**

What: **Focus group, interview via Zoom call**

When: **Open March 1st through May 31st**

Where: **Zoom**



To register, please scan the QR code or visit redcap.link/chaqiniya or call Southcentral Foundation Family Wellness Warriors at (907) 729-4842.

Each veteran participant will receive a \$50 gift card after successful completion of a focus group or interview.

Family Wellness Warriors | southcentralfoundation.com





Community Board



**May 31 is
World No
Tobacco Day**

**APIA INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR TEAM FOR THE
100 MILES IN MAY CHALLENGE!**

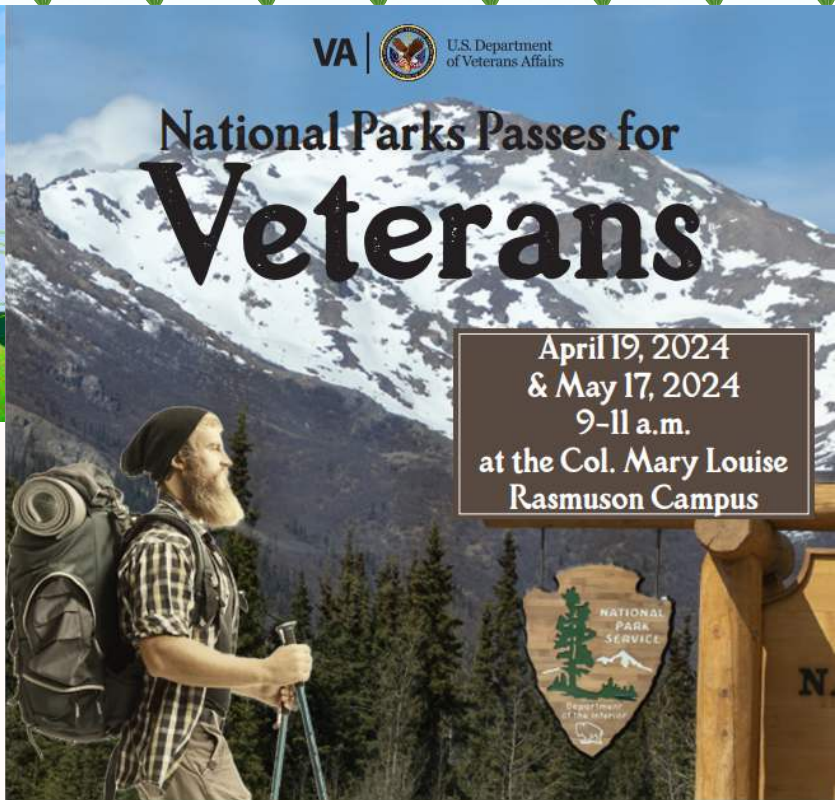
The 100 Miles in May Challenge is a fundraiser for
the [Healthy Futures program](https://100miles.healthyfuturesak.org).

The goal is to reach 100 Miles in the month of May doing all kinds of
activities such as walking, gardening and housekeeping that are
converted to miles.

How to participate:

1. Register yourself at <https://100miles.healthyfuturesak.org>
2. Join our APIA team
3. Enter your activity or miles starting May 1st

**HAVE FUN LOGGING YOUR
ACTIVITY ALL MONTH LONG**



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

National Parks Passes for Veterans

**April 19, 2024
& May 17, 2024
9-11 a.m.
at the Col. Mary Louise
Rasmuson Campus**

Who is Eligible to get a free Military Lifetime Pass as a Veteran?

Pass does not expire for Gold Star Families and US Military or Veterans

Who is Eligible to get a free Access Pass Lifetime Pass as a Veteran?

Note: May provide a discount for pass owner on some amenity fees, such as camping (excluding utilities), swimming, boat launch. Inquire locally.

**Provide proof of medically determined permanent disability and residency.
Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) w/service connected.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
DEBORAH HART AT DEBORAH.HART2@VA.GOV OR JEANNE FOX AT JEANNE.FOX@VA.GOV



WWW.APIA.ORG



Community Board (cont.)



Thank you to our prize sponsors:



**In May We Celebrate
Russian Easter &
Mother's Day**

UPCOMING EVENTS

May is the month of...

Russian Easter
Cinco de Mayo
Mother's Day
Memorial Day
Armed Forces Day

May 5th

Russian Easter

May 12th

Mother's Day

May 27th

Memorial Day

June is the month of...

Juneteenth
Father's Day
International Day of Yoga
Flag Day

July is the month of...

Independence Day

1 year after quitting smoking,
the chance of a heart attack is

CUT IN HALF



2024 Unalaska Health Fair

@ Unalaska High School (HS) Gym

presentations and workshops located in the HS Library

Join us for TWO days of health and wellness booths,
games, classes, food and more!

SCHEDULE

Friday May 10th

4-7pm HEALTH FAIR and Potluck

5-6pm Colorectal Cancer 101 W/ANTHC. Walk-ins welcome

6-7pm Paint Night - Sign Up Only- all ages

Saturday May 11th

10am-3pm HEALTH FAIR

10:30-11am Tobacco Presentation walk-ins welcome

11-11:30am Pre Diabetes 101 workshop walk-ins welcome

12-4pm SafeTALK workshop- Sign Up Only

FREE Lunch with the Fire Department
11am-1pm HS Parking Lot

BOOTH TOPICS INCLUDE

- Mother's Day crafts and gift making
- Wellness Prevention
- Traditional Healing
- Traditional Foods
- A1C/ BMI Testing and more
- Behavioral Health Resources
- USAFV
- EMT- Fire Department
- local health clinics
- And more!

To sign up
for workshops or
presentations please email
Courtneye@apiai.org



For more information or if you would like a booth
please contact: Courtney Edwards
Phone: 907-276-2700
Email: courtneye@apiai.org