

AANG
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ANĠAĠIN
ANĠAĠINAS

2024 APIA CULTURE CAMP

The 2024 APIA Culture Camp was the most attended since it's inception in 2008 with 197 participants and 94 visitors throughout the week! In addition, eleven Culture Bearers/ Elders were hired, six apprentices/interns were recruited, and three volunteers provided assistance.

We are grateful for the community support to make the camp a success. From dedicated Culture Bearers and Elders, generous donors, volunteers, and camp staff. Thank you to them all for creating a healing space for our Unangax community and your part in making the APIA's Culture Camp a great event!



Moses Dirks	Patty Gregory
Lydia Vincler	Tina Gauen
Robert Golley	Teresa Smith
June McGlashan	Dailey Schaack
Josy Shangin	Tim Shangin
David Gregory	Marc Daniels
Daniel Shellikoff	Chyonne Buterin
Nikkita Shellikoff	Charlotte Rutherford
Lydia Dirks	Hillary Smith

With such a large event, there is a lot of behind the scenes work. A big shout out to the Cultural Heritage Department staff for their hard work!! Several Cultural Heritage staff are also Culture Bearers, Elders and Interns who teach during camp.

What an amazing team!



Qaġaasakuq! Qaġaalakux! Qaġaasakung!
Thank you!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Dimitri Philemonof, President/CEO

Our Fall telephonic Board meeting took place on September 3rd. We wanted to share some of the highlights from that meeting as well as our summer activities.

Fisheries Decline Hardship

Outreach We know it has been a tough fishing season throughout the region. Our board members have shared the hardships and concern. We will continue our efforts to advocate for assistance. We sent letters to our state legislature and Washington D.C. delegation describing the hardship caused by the fisheries decline and processors pulling out of our communities and calling for aide. We received an invitation from Senator Sullivan to meet in person to review the letter and the need in more depth. We met with Senator Sullivan's staff on August 12th and they heard our concerns and shared legislative actions the Senator is working on. They assured us they will continue to work with us to find ways to help.

BIA Increases Payments We received a News Release from the DOI Office of the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, Bryan Newland, that the BIA has increased payment limits for Burial Assistance from \$2,500 to \$3,500 per burial; Emergency Assistance from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per household; and Child Assistance for Adoptions/Guardianships no longer limited to 75% of the basic foster care rate in the state.

Nikolski Clinic & Staff Housing

The Nikolski Clinic and housing renovation is under way, and we are on schedule; the project should be complete soon. Again, we would like to thank the Nikolski IRA Council for working

with us on this much needed renovation project. The Council opted to use its US Treasury SLRF funds to fully fund the project. We also purchased an emergency response storage unit for Nikolski and it will be fully stocked with emergency response supplies such as food, drinking water, first-aid supplies, blankets, and much more. Thank you to the Nikolski IRA Council



APIA Staff Host Native It's Your Game Camp

Our Community Health Services staff, Katie Kutschbach hosted the camp edition of Native It's Your Game, at

Unangam Ulaa, the APIA office in Anchorage July 22- 26, 2024. Native It's Your Game is an HIV, STI and pregnancy prevention curriculum for 6-8th grade students. The program is intended to teach youth about healthy relationships, life skills, communication and refusal skills using interactive activities. Students enjoyed engaging activities like beading, painting, soap stone carving and games as part of the curriculum during the five-day camp.

Cultural Kiosk When we designed the Unangam Ulaa building, it was the Board's wish to have it be a "Home for the Aleuts" as well as the "Gateway to the Aleutians." One concept we spoke of some time ago was to have a Cultural Kiosk. A kiosk is a type of self-contained, interactive device with a screen that displays information. Through our Cultural Heritage Department, we are using the Mukurtu platform to create kiosk information. Mukurtu helps native communities manage, share, narrate and exchange information and cultural heritage objects. Through it, we are able to share

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

photographs from our archives, artifacts from our collections, historic and contemporary video content, and audio recordings. We are excited to see this project progress. We will make an announcement when the Kiosk is live at the Unangam Ulaa.

Fred Bauer Retires After 21 years with the Association, Fred is retiring. He has been a key manager and has done well growing our IT Department. He has had many great projects such as updating our health records system to maximizing our cybersecurity effort. Reggie Northcutt has been with us for more than six years, working as the Senior Tech with Fred. Throughout this time, Reggie has proven his skills in leadership, critical thinking and understanding the needs of the Association. Join us in thanking Fred for his outstanding service and dedication to the Association and those we serve. We wish him all the best. Please join us in welcoming Reggie to his new role.

APIA 50 Year Anniversary (2026)

We are planning for APIA's 50 Year

Celebration in 2026. We have contracted with Charles "Chuck" Mobley, to create a publication about the history of APIA. Chuck is an anthropologist, historian and author who has published over 50 historical non-fiction books, reports, assessments, and other publications on the Aleutians and Alaska. Chuck will be conducting research through APIA archives and conducting interviews to compile a historical timeline of the history of APIA. More to come on this exciting project and it's upcoming commemorative event.

WWII 80 Year Commemoration (2025)

We are also in the early planning stages of a WWII Remembrance event for June 3 - 4, 2025. We will provide updates as planning progresses on both of these upcoming events.

Visit us online to learn more about our programs and upcoming events. When you are in Anchorage, please come by and visit us at the Unangam Ulaa!



Qaġaasakuq! Qaġaalakux! Qaġaasakung!
Thank you!

Community Supporters of the 2024 APIA Culture Camp



QDOBA
MEXICAN EATS

MARIA TKACHUK



The
Alaska Community
Foundation



Unangax Heritage Association, Inc.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AIDE NEWS



The Behavioral Health Aide (BHA) Program at APIA has exciting news! We now have an Unangam Tunuu name which reflects the unique role and identity of BHAs—Kidunam Hakaatxaa (W) and Sismidan Akaatxaa (E). This name refers to the “pillar of support” language in our vision statement and the role that BHAs are asked to serve in their communities. We are very grateful for the collaboration with APIA’s Cultural Heritage Department to provide appropriate translations.

Melanie Prokopiof, BHA I, is an avid photographer who graciously allowed us to use her powerful photograph from St. George as one of our new program graphics.



Dr. Alicia Marvin (BHA Program Supervisor) used a photograph from Unalaska as the inspiration for another graphic. These graphics are now on flyers and clothing to help spread awareness about the BHA program and the resource it is for regional communities.

New Learning Congratulations to Melanie Prokopiof (BHA I Unalaska), Trinity Nevzoroff (BHA-T in Atka), and Chloe Ramirez (BHA-T in Unalaska) for successfully completing all coursework for quarters two and three! Additionally, Melanie Prokopiof has been selected to receive additional training to become an instructor/facilitator for the Alcohol and Drug Information School and Prime for Life program! We know Melanie will thrive in these rolls while providing a valuable service to the region.

The BHA team has also been working to deepen their cultural competency through exploration of intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the many kinds of identities that a person holds and considering how this can impact treatment.

Community Engagement The BHA program has been invited to submit a report about our efforts to decolonize Behavioral Health care, which include implementing the Cultural Identity Project curriculum with BHA providers, making provisions for BHAs to have paid work time for cultural learning and practice, and holding monthly talking circles to discuss our cultural growth or to learn about new topics related to culture. Regarding BHA events, our Unalaska based BHA providers have been actively supporting the Community 4 Community “C4C” community action group in Unalaska who meet monthly. BHAs regularly support community activities such as attending job and health fairs.



UNANGAM TUNUU ACHIIGASALIX PROGRAM

We would like to congratulate the following Unangam Tunuu Achiigasalix Program cohort members on their recent Teacher Certification.

Bobbi Dushkin—Novice-high
 Chyonne Buterin—Novice-low
 Crystal Dushkin—Intermediate-low
 Charlotte Rutherford—Novice-low
 Darling Anderson—Novice-high
 Nikkita Shellikoff—Novice-high
 Lynnette Mack—Novice-low

These cohort members continue to learn and teach Unangam tunuu at their respective fluency levels. If you would like to learn Unangam tunuu, join us Tuesdays for Unangam Tunuu Community Night or contact us at unangamtunuu@apiai.org for inquiries.

Unangam Tunuu Community Night

Come and learn Unangam tunuu (the Aleut language) through lessons, songs and games!

Every Tuesday night
 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
 at APIA's Unangam Ulaa

1131 East International Airport Road, Anchorage, AK 99518



For more information please contact
 Darling Anderson at darlinga@apiai.org or
 at 907-276-2700



WEEKLY CULTURAL GATHERINGS

As the culture camp season comes to an end and the colder winter months approach, the Cultural Heritage Department has begun hosting Cultural Gatherings here at Unangam Ulaa in Anchorage. These gatherings focus on creating space for our Unangax people to come together and learn traditional crafts in a supportive and healing environment.

The kickoff to these gatherings, which included a potluck, was held on October 3rd and was a great success. Many people of all ages attended, brought delicious food to share and worked on a variety of craft projects. The room was full of laughter, good conversation and the warmth of community.

The schedule for future gatherings will be Thursday evenings from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm in the first floor conference room at Unangam Ulaa.

During the month of October, each weekly gathering will be an open space for independent crafting. Folks are welcome to bring their own projects from home to work on or start something new, using the supplies we will have available.

Beginning in November, there will be cultural instructors who will facilitate classes for those interested. We will also continue to have tables set up with miscellaneous craft supplies for anyone who would like to work independently or bring their own projects from home.

Coffee, tea and light snacks will be provided and folks are also welcome to bring their own food or a dish to share with the group.

We look forward to seeing you! Please contact Erin Levesque with any questions: (907) 222-9712 or erinl@apiai.org.



The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

is honored to offer

Fatherhood is Sacred®

Motherhood is Sacred®

curriculum

by the Native American Fatherhood and Families Association

JOIN US

SESSIONS WILL BE HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY 5:30 - 7:30 PM

BEGINNING OCTOBER 23RD

THIS IS A 12-WEEK PROGRAM DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES
BY INCITING CHANGE THROUGH CONNECTION.

HONORING THE SACREDNESS OF PARENTHOOD AND BRINGING
PEACE AND STABILITY TO CHILDREN

DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED AND WE WILL OFFER CHILD CARE
(SEATS FOR CHILD CARE ARE LIMITED)

TO REGISTER, SCAN THE QR CODE OR CLICK THE LINK
[HTTPS://THEALEUTIANPRIBILOFISLAND.RSVPIFY.COM](https://thealeutianpribilofisland.rsvpify.com)



SUPPORTING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IN ALASKA

Data shared by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) show that many youth in the U.S. struggle with their mental health. For example, they report that among children aged 3-17, approximately 9.8% have ADHD, 9.4% have anxiety, 8.9% have behavior problems, and 4.4% have depression based on 2016-2019 data.¹ Furthermore, among children aged 2-8, approximately 17.4% are diagnosed with a mental, behavioral, or developmental disorder.¹ Mental health challenges may be even more dire in Alaska, with a 2023 article reporting that Alaska has the highest rates of youth suicide with Alaska Native youth being at highest risk.² These statistics highlight a clear need for youth to get support with their mental health, especially in Alaska. APIA hopes to be a part of the solution in making sure that Alaskan youth have options for mental health services within our state.

APIA is pleased to be supporting the State of Alaska, Children's Mental Health Initiative in addressing the mental health needs of children in Alaska. This initiative strives to make mental health services for children accessible and sustainable, with a goal to prepare Alaska's youth for adulthood. While APIA's team of behavioral health clinicians has already provided services for youth in the Anchorage area and our region—including Atka, Nikolski, Saint George, Unalaska, and the Belkofski Tribe—additional funding will help in supporting our existing services as well as exploring new ways of better helping our youth.

APIA's involvement with the initiative is still in its beginning stages. Yet, clinicians have shown a great interest in getting involved, including forming a workgroup to brainstorm ideas for trainings, understanding community needs, and otherwise promoting better mental health among youth. Some of APIA's goals include continuing to offer telehealth services to remote communities, giving training oppor-

tunities to its staff, and working with other agencies such as Head Start. In all, APIA endeavors to do what we can as an organization to give our youth the support they need to navigate life's challenges.

If your child is struggling with their mental health, please know that you have qualified clinicians who are happy to talk with them. Our Behavioral Health department offers services including mental health therapy, psychological assessments, crisis/emergency services, and case management.. APIA also offers substance misuse treatment and medication assisted treatment (MAT).

Contact the Behavioral Health department at 907-222-9764. to see if you are eligible and to get scheduled.

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (n.d.). *Data and Statistics on Children's Mental Health*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>

²Mason, M. (2023). *Alaska Native youth at highest risk for suicide, depression*. *Alaska's News Source*. Retrieved from <https://www.alaskasnewsSource.com/2023/05/19/alaska-native-youth-highest-risk-suicide-depression/>



**Life has its UPS -
and its DOWNS**

Every challenge cannot be done alone.

**APIA is here with youth behavioral
services to help you and your
family to thrive.**



MEDICATED ASSISTED THERAPY (MAT)

MAT is primarily used for the treatment of addiction to opioids such as heroin and prescription pain relievers that contain opiates; however, we are also able to treat alcohol misuse. The prescribed medication operates to normalize brain chemistry, block the euphoric effects of alcohol and opioids, relieve physiological cravings, and normalize body functions without the negative and euphoric effects of the substance used. We work directly with Behavioral Health to ensure an integrated whole patient approach by offering their services to those patients.

If you know of anyone struggling with substance misuse, please encourage them to reach out to APIA by calling: 844-359-0001.

BREAKING WAVES TEAM IN SAND POINT

Becks Jacobs, Wellness Project Coordinator/BH Clinician

This trip was designed for five days of route consultation. We scoured weather, tides, currents, and topography to find trends and ascertain the feasibility of kayaking in the Aleutian communities so that no more precious lives are lost. As I reflected on our journey, the parallel between our intention to find the safest kayak routes and our commitment to mitigating risks in suicide prevention struck me profoundly. Both require vigilance, adaptability, and a deep sense of responsibility to one another. In the downpour, we huddled close, protected by dry suits and comforted by each other's presence. We shared stories and strategies, finding strength in our company amidst the storm. On a beautiful sunshine day, we paddled together, our spirits buoyed by the weather and the camaraderie. Each stroke on the water was a reminder of our shared purpose, reinforcing the bonds that would help us in our vision.

On pristine beaches, we explored and exchanged feedback, using each moment as a learning opportunity. Our discussions were as much about kayaking techniques as they were



about the strategies we can employ to support and safeguard our communities. When we rafted up in splashy waves, sensing the potential for danger, we talked through plans and reassured each other. We celebrated fiercely when one of our own achieved a personal goal, recognizing that every victory—no matter how small—contributes to the larger mission. These achievements remind us of the importance of support and encouragement in our kayaking journey.

We huddled. We paddled. We explored. We rafted. We celebrated. Each action was a step towards understanding how to create safer environments, just as each day on the water was a step toward ensuring our collective safety and well-being.

I walked away from Sand Point, humbled and inspired. This experience has reinforced my commitment to Breaking Waves and to our mission of suicide prevention. The lessons learned and the promises formed here will guide us as we attempt to make a difference, both in the communities we serve and in the hearts of those who need support.

CHANGE FOR TRIBAL HEAD START NATIONWIDE



In December 2023, we were contacted by Senator Murkowski's office to draft language to include in the Omnibus bill so Tribes can self-determine eligibility for the Head Start Program. We submitted that language and later received the great news we have successfully changed the Federal Head Start Performance Standards nationwide to allow Tribes to select their own eligibility criteria for the Head Start program! This is a major win for ALL Head Start Programs Nationwide!

Thank you to Dimitri Philemonof, APIA President/CEO, for the letters and communication that made this happen. This is an effort we have been working on since 1998

when our Head Start Program was first started. Many thanks to MaryEllen Fritz, DFCD Director, Ken Selby, former DFCD Director, Bonnie Mierzejek, former Head Start Director, Caroline Wolkoff, current Head Start Director and all of the other tribal leaderships nationwide and all of our Head Start staff for their work and efforts towards achieving this win! Dimitri noted this happened with us all standing together. Ataqan akun.

On August 8, 2024, at the Northwest Indian Head Start Coalition, Dimitri was recognized and given an award for his efforts in getting this important bill passed, granting all tribes this sovereignty. The government regulations regarding Tribal Head Start eligibility has been an issue for rural and remote Alaska programs for decades.

This success now provides all tribes across the Nation with the ability to determine their own eligibility for their Head Start Programs.

Other tribal programs, such as Child Care, are now advocating to receive the same right of self-determination for Child Care and other programs. We hope to see this trend continue to spread throughout other tribal programs.

HEAD START NOW ENROLLING!



All children ages 3—5 can enroll for King Cove, Sand Point, and Unalaska Head Start Programs beginning in September every year. Our program supports child development, health, and well-being through early childhood education, while focusing on school readiness, and social development. We integrate culture, Qaqamiigux Preschool Curriculum, and serve daily nutritious meals. Our goal is to enrich family lives with our program and promote self-sufficiency, safety, and well-being in Unangax communities. For more information or applications, visit your local Head Start to inquire.



Head
Start
Strong!



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS TEAM (HRT)

On October 12th from 1pm—4pm, Healthy Relationships Team (HRT) joined at least 17 other agencies under the Anchorage Alliance for Violence and Prevention in hosting an awareness event at The Tribal Drum Room of Southcentral Foundation (4085 Tudor Center Dr, Anchorage, AK)

Healthy Relationships staff Higina Rabanal and Rochelle Greenley, in partnership with Alaska Native Justice Center (ANJC) traveled to Unalaska in August for outreach at the Heart of the Aleutian Festival. About 51 community members visited the APIA HRT table and received healthy relationships related materials and information.



ANJC, in partnership with USAFV also hosted a Human Trafficking Presentation in Unalaska.

HRT also completed an Office of Victim's for Crime site visit



last week of September and awarded a new Office on Violence Against Women grant!

The HRT attended Alaska Native Women's Resource Center's Wellness, Healing & Hope Summit: Culture as Our Protective Factor that was held at the Embassy Suites in Anchorage.

If you are in need of any of these services or want to learn more about our HRT program, please contact us at 907-276-2700 or toll free at 1-800-478-2742.



Purchased & Referred Care (PRC) funding is for all eligible patients referred to medical services not directly available at APIA or ANMC. Authorization is required before non-emergency treatment can be started. A provider must initiate all referrals for medical care. A referral does not mean payment will be authorized. Outside care must be approved by PRC. For cost to be covered of outside emergency medical care, PRC must be notified within 72 hours of the start of emergency services (65 years and older have 30 days to notify). IHS facilities must be used instead of private facilities, if available. If you go to the IHS website you can find a list of locations of tribal clinics or hospitals. For more information, please contact PRC at Phone: 907.729.2470 | Toll-free: 800.478.1636 | Fax: 907.729.2483

PURCHASED/REFERRED CARE

- Proof of eligibility must be on file at ANMC.
- Accepted eligibility documents are Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) or federally recognized tribal enrollment card.
- Permanent resident of Alaska for immediate prior 180 days with the intent to remain indefinitely.
- Apply for alternate health resources, e.g., Medicaid, Medicare, if determined eligible.



- Only emergency care is considered for payment outside Alaska.
- Indian Health Service facilities must be used when available.
- After moving from Alaska, emergency care is covered for only 180 days.
- After business hours, leave a voice message with your name and contact number for your call to be returned.
- Patient or guardian must provide medical records. If care is determined non-emergent, PRC cannot authorize payment.

(907) 729-2470 • 1-800-478-1636
www.anmc.org/prc

STAFF SERGEANT PARKER GORDON FOX PROJECT

September was Suicide Prevention Month, and the SSG Fox team was in high gear. The whole purpose of our program is to prevent Veteran suicide. We do this by offering alternative means of prevention that have always been a part of our indigenous cultures here in Alaska for time immemorial. One of the big events we have each year through our program is the Alaska Native Cultural Health & Resilience (ANCHR) Gathering.

This year marked the 4th annual ANCHR Gathering. It's a healing gathering based on the SAMHSA sanctioned, practice-based Gathering of Alaska Natives (GOAN) that has been transposed to fit our Unangax̂ region.

The ANCHR Gathering was a transformative experience that beautifully honored our Veterans and elders. Even amidst unexpected challenges, although the shipped gear didn't arrive as planned and our facilitator couldn't make it, Jenna stepped in with grace, infusing the event with love, positivity, and wellness. Many Veterans from both the local community and beyond attended, created a sacred space to heal and uplift one another while emphasizing the importance of suicide prevention and mental health support. Our esteemed elders generously shared their wisdom, bestowing gifts of stories and memories that enriched our understanding of

resilience.

Encapsulated by the invigorating salty, misty air of Unalaska, from the opening ceremony of the Iliilux Axanaan dancers and sage smoke cleansing, to the talking circles, and the indigenous art of drum making, attendees felt connected immediately. The ocean breeze, and the sight of soaring bald eagles made us feel embraced by Mother Nature and the Creator, instilling a deep sense of healing in each of us. The team from the Alaska State VA were there to support the Veterans and even a representative from Senator Dan Sullivan's office spoke. Seven Veterans previously not enrolled for VA benefits got signed up, and one life was saved. This gathering was a true celebration of Alaska Native culture, community, and the wholehearted strength found in connection and honoring each other.

Huge gratitude to our sponsors: the Qawalangin Tribe, PCR, OptimERA, Trident Seafoods, KUCB, and Grant Aviation. We could not do what we do without our supportive community partners. When we come together to support each other in our wellness, amazing things happen. Healing happens.

If you are a Veteran or active service member and you are interested in joining our program, please contact destinyk@apiai.org or call us at 907-276-2700 or toll-free at 1-800-478-2742.



2024 CULTURAL HUMANITARIAN AWARDEE—DR. ALICIA MARVIN



Dr. Alicia Marvin, APIA's Licensed Psychologist/Regional Services Supervisor, was awarded the 2024

Cultural Humanitarian Award by the Alaska

Psychological Association for her work to incorporate culture into BHA training. Dr. Seth Green, APIA Clinical Supervisor, presented the award along with Alaska Psychological Association CEO, Dr. Arthur Evans.

Congratulations Dr. Marvin!



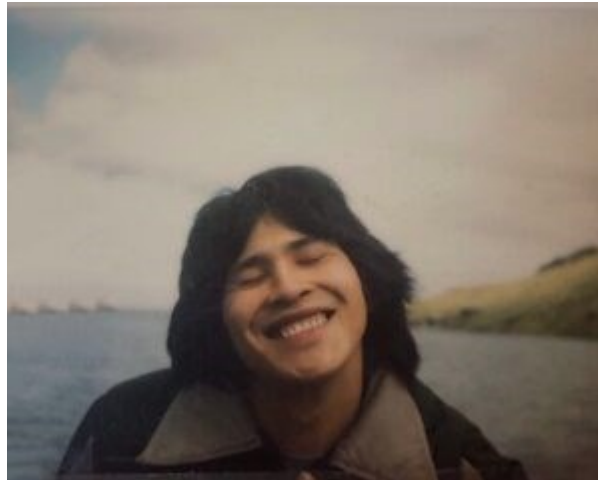
JACOB STEPETIN—MEMORY ETERNAL

At the request of his family, we share this beautiful account of Jacob's life. He is greatly missed. Memory Eternal.

Provided by his family

Jacob Martin Stepetin, aged 71, of Akutan, Alaska, passed away on December 18, 2023. Jacob was born on November 5, 1952, to Mattie and Art Stepetin in Akutan, Alaska. Jacob was an innovative Unangax leader who left a long legacy of progressive change. He inspired everyone who knew him, and he is remembered as a beloved Elder, Unangax leader, and culture keeper of Akutan.

Jacob was also known as a gifted community leader, a dedicated Unangax advocate, a skilled fisherman, and a loving father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and friend. At only 19 years old, Jacob was the first mayor of the City of Akutan. He worked dutifully and diligently to incorporate Akutan as a City in order to harness benefits, such as the raw fish tax amidst the early heydays of crab fishing in Alaska. Akutan became a superpower in the fishing industry due to the inspired leadership and dedication which Jacob displayed for many years. Jacob was an original board member for the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA), the Alaska Native non-profit organization serving the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Region for health and social services, and he served on numerous boards throughout the Aleutian Region during his lifetime. Jacob's work was pivotal to informing fishery conservation policy that created the Aleutian Pribilof Island Community



Development Association (APICDA), of which he was an active stakeholder and affiliated fisherman, and he testified on the national stage on behalf of the Aleutian

fisheries. Jacob served his community as the former President of the Akutan Tribe, the Akutan Village Corporation, and the Akutan Fisheries Association. In his community roles, he masterminded the construction of the Port of Akutan, developing a small boat harbor for the community, and he retired as the Tribal

Administrator for the Native Village of Akutan, where he managed a multi-million-dollar Indian Roads Reservation project through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Jacob also developed one of the most viable Tribal courts in the State of Alaska and advised statewide experts on issues of Tribal justice over the course of his tenure as Akutan Tribal President and Administrator. He provided significant direction for planning, governance, fundraising, seamanship, Unangax subsistence practices, traditional foods, and cultural arts and traditions.

Jacob lived a remarkable life that was characterized by several drastic shifts in ways of living both for Unangax Peoples and for residents of Alaska. To the younger generation, he was a true Old Timer and to the older generation, he was a gifted leader. Jacob told stories of his first job sealing with his father, Art, and his brothers, Sam and Peter, in the Pribilof Islands, when that was the only way to generate income for their large family. Jacob went to high school on Kodiak Island where he learned to drive a tractor, tend a ranch, and

JACOB STEPETIN—MEMORY ETERNAL CONT.

study mechanics. He went to automotive school in Chicago with his long-time best friend, the late Demetri Tcheripanoff of Akutan, where they experienced life in the big city for the first time together. He held an Associates of Science degree in Auto Diesel Mechanics, and he achieved a US Coast Guard captain's license.

Jacob was a diplomatic leader for Qigiigun Unangax Peoples of Akutan, and Unangax and Alaska Native Peoples at large, through his years spent dedicated to Tribal governance and Tribal affairs. Amidst his work as an Unangax leader, he also spent 10 years crab fishing in the Bering Sea with his brothers and friends. Jacob was passionate about serving his family but also about ensuring future generations of Unangax People know who we are, where we come from, and what is important for us to keep thriving and living our Unangax way of life. He enjoyed teaching his children, grandchildren, and anyone who would ask, about subsistence hunting, fishing, and

surviving in the turbulent waters of the Aleutian Islands. He was a talented navigator and taught his son, Jacob, how to drive a skiff, how to travel from island to island with only a compass, and how to navigate the island passes and straits.

Jacob is remembered as a loving father, grandfather, uncle, brother, and great friend to many. He is survived by his three children, Jacob Mark, Robin, and Haliehana Stepetin. Jacob thrived in his role as Grandpa over the last decade to his surviving grandchildren Jordan, Jaxson, James, and his "Chubs," also known as "Tato," Jayce. Jacob is survived by his siblings Anita Pelkey, Vera Pelkey, and Art Stepetin II, and by numerous nieces, nephews, and godchildren. He was preceded in death by his mother, Matriona Stepetin, his father, Arthur Stepetin Sr., his brothers Sam, Peter, and Thomas, and his sisters Anna, Alice, Agnes, Pauline, Nancy, Sophie, Florence, and Jennie.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Environmental Health Services (EHS) welcomes Phill Lekanoff to our office! Phill comes back to us here at APIA from a decade at ANTHC as the Environmental Health Services Coordinator. His previous experience in the ETR division and life on St. George Island bring invaluable experience to our work on Air Quality, EPA GAP and other grants. Phill lives the 3 Fs: Family, Fishing and Football! Swing by and say 'Hi'!

APIA will be working with the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island and the Aleutian Bering Sea Initiative on our EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure For Recycling (SWIFR) grant, beginning with hiring a Coordinator this fall.

They will work with our partners to develop a regional recycling network, including incorporating the expertise found at the Aleutian Islands Waterway Safety Committee. The recycling network and the materials management plan will help our communities get recyclable materials out of the landfills, where they are too frequently burned.

Please contact Environment & Safety Program Administrator Karen Pletnikoff at karenp@apiai.org or (907)276-2700 with any environmental issues or to join us on any of these projects for your community.



VPSO CLASS 24-02 ACADEMY GRADUATION

On September 19th, APIA's VPSO of Tyonek, David Atkinson along with five other VPSOs from around the state, graduated the academy in Sitka, AK. During the 8-week program, recruits were up at 4:30AM preparing for their 5:10AM physical fitness training, at least five days a week. Key subjects covered during training include criminal law, Alaska statutes,



domestic violence, crime scene investigation, evidence collection, control tactics, Taser use, and cultural sensitivity. Testing occurred every Saturday, with up to ten tests on some days. Thank you and congratulations to VPSO Atkinson and all graduates for your dedication to rural Alaskans and our VPSO Program.



EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING & RELATED SERVICES (ETR)

In April, ETR attended the Mt. Edgecumbe Career Fair in Sitka and hosted a table with information and raffle prizes. We reached 155 students! There was also a collaborative meeting in partnership with the Aleut Foundation and APICDA and was held specifically for our tribal members who attended this career fair.

In August, ETR hosted the Region Wide Career Fair in Unalaska. There were many employers and service providers who made valuable face-to-face connections while discussing new and existing programs, as well as job openings.

ETR staff traveled to False Pass, Atka, Akutan, and Unalaska for outreach. Visits to Nikolski unsuccessful due to weather. We hosted informational gatherings, shared available services, assisted with applications, and met with local partners and community members. This allowed the opportunity to explore employment and training opportunities in the region, while enhancing the local workforce development efforts.

After the Career Fair, staff and participants attended the ANCHR gathering. This allowed for enhanced relationships and the ability to building new ones. This also allowed for connection with the many cultural

experiences of the region.

ETR Service Expansion ETR Division Administrator, Jacob Timmons attended the quarterly meeting with our collaborative partners in May, which provided more insight about the unwelcome impact to the economy of communities due to seafood-related challenges. This has included the elimination of vital seasonal income that community members depend on, as well as the cancellation of morale building annual community events. With this information, and essential support and services needed by community members, additional assistance was sought out and provided to applicants.

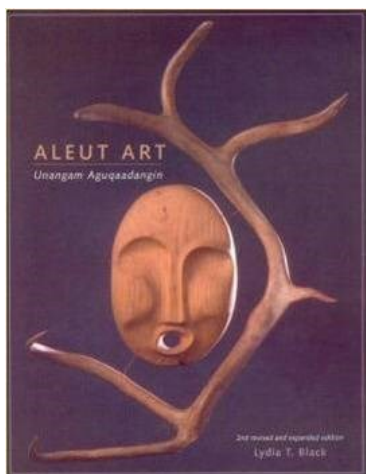
After 25 years of operation, the AANG program was fully refunded for the next 5-year period, providing employment related services to our tribal members who experience medical or mental health barriers. With the recent change in community needs, ETR submitted a renewal of the 477 Integrated Program Plan for the next 5-year period. This was approved to now combine the AANG Program and Energy Assistance along with the other ETR services under one plan, allowing for services to be more efficiently delivered and better meet the needs of the communities.



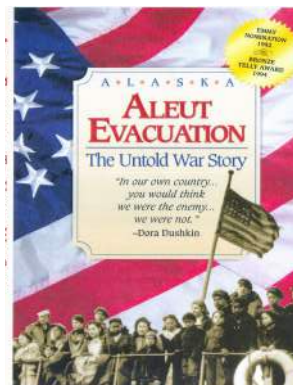
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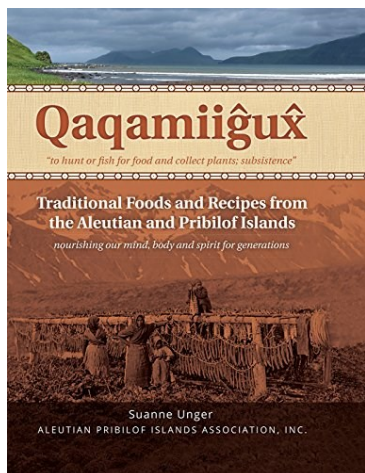
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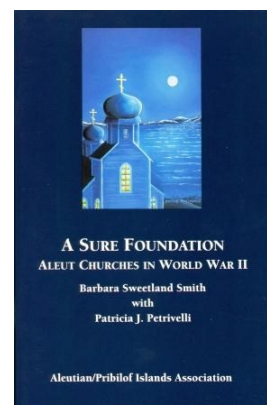


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OUR MISSION

- ◆ To promote self-sufficiency and independence of the Unangan/Unanagas¹ by advocacy, training, technical assistance, and economic enhancement;
- ◆ To assist in meeting health, safety, and well-being of each Unanga² community;
- ◆ To promote, strengthen, and ensure the unity of the Unangan/Unangas; and
- ◆ To strengthen and preserve the Unanga² cultural heritage.

¹Unangan [Eastern dialect], Unangas [Atka Dialect] - Aleuts, plural form; ²Unanga² - Aleut, singular form

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