



TIDE POOL TIMES

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association's Monthly Regional Newsletter

August Wellness

Program Update Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Project

The Alaska Native Cultural Health and Resilience (ANCHR) Gathering took place in Unalaska from July 10–13, bringing together community members, Veterans, and active service members for a weekend of healing, connection, and cultural revitalization. The event offered a supportive space where individuals could reflect on shared experiences, reconnect with traditional practices, and find strength in community.

The gathering began Thursday evening with a warm welcome and an Indian Taco Dinner, setting the tone for a weekend rooted in nourishment and togetherness. Facilitator Crystalyn Lemieux guided participants through important discussions about historical trauma—helping individuals and families understand the long-lasting impacts while offering pathways toward healing through traditional knowledge and practices.

Each morning of the gathering, Jenna Larson led a beginner-friendly yoga session. A highlight for many was when one of the Veterans, who is completely blind, attended his very first yoga classes. He shared how meaningful the experience was and expressed interest in starting a yoga group for the blind once he returned home.

Throughout the weekend, listening-circles, games, and traditional arts were offered as part of a holistic approach to wellness. Piama Oleyer shared her expertise in salve-making using local island plants, reconnecting participants to the healing properties of the land. Anfesia Tutiakoff led beading workshops,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Update
Page 1

Tip Of the Month
Page 3

Monthly Spotlight
Page 3

Community Board
Pages 4-5

Upcoming Events
Page 5

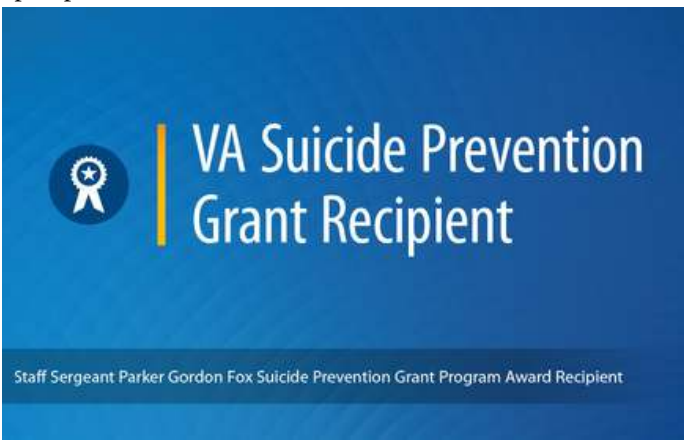




Photo Courtesy: Jenna Johnson

ANCHR Gathering (Cont.)

teaching how to create beautiful, beaded fur earrings—blending cultural preservation with personal expression. Veterans and active service members found a strong sense of community during the gathering. For many, it was a rare and meaningful opportunity to feel seen, heard, and supported—not only as individuals who served but also as cultural bearers and members of Indigenous communities.

On Saturday afternoon, the comedy team 1 Degree of Separation brought levity and power to a critical topic with their suicide prevention training. Their unique approach helped destigmatize mental illness and opened up conversations about the importance of seeking help and supporting each other through difficult times.

The weekend concluded with heartfelt Elder and Veteran honoring ceremonies on Sunday, closing out the event with gratitude, respect, and a renewed sense of unity. The 2025 ANCHR Gathering in Unalaska was another reminder of the power of culture, laughter, and community to guide the path to healing.

We couldn't have brought this Gathering to life without the incredible support of our community partners, sponsors, and donors. A heartfelt thank you to the Qawalangin Tribe for welcoming us onto their ancestral land and waters to hold this regional healing event. We're grateful to Grant Aviation and OptimERA for their generous door prizes, including airline tickets, Wi-Fi access, and other large donations. Deep appreciation goes to UniSea, Seashare, Trident Seafoods, Safeway, and J&G Airport Restaurant for providing an abundance of food that helped nourish our attendees throughout the weekend. The Unalaska City School and the PCR graciously hosted our activities and gatherings, while Damien Castaneda volunteered his time and talent to create our beautiful event programs. Finally, a big thank you to KUCB and Channel 8 for helping us spread the word and sharing our story on the air. This Gathering was truly a community effort, and we are deeply thankful to everyone who helped make it happen.

Thank you ANCHR Partners & Donors



VPSS REPORT

August marks a time of transition—summer is winding down, and many Veterans are preparing for seasonal shifts or life changes. It's also a perfect time to pause and check in with your mental health and support systems.

One helpful peer support tip this month: schedule a “buddy check.” Whether it's a quick call or meeting for coffee, reaching out to another Veteran can make a big difference. These regular, low-pressure connections help prevent isolation and remind us that we're not alone.

You've already made it through so much. Take a moment to recognize your strength—you're doing amazing. Keep reaching out, and keep moving forward. I've got your six. Destiny

Destiny Key is our Veteran Peer Support Specialist (VPSS) here at APIA. She served in the U.S. Navy from January 2020-January 2024. Reach out to her for help with the VA.





Photo Courtesy: Jenna Larson

Monthly Spotlight

Aang! My name is Ian McCarthy, and I have had the honor of working with people from APIA's welcoming, hardworking, and caring communities for the past year. As the Project Coordinator for the Southwest Area Health Education Center (SW AHEC) grant, I support healthcare workforce development throughout the region.

Originally from Washington state, I grew up on a subsistence farm twenty miles outside the town of Tonasket (pop. 1,110). My family, with the help of our neighbors, raised chickens, sheep, pigs, and other animals. In addition, my mother worked as a nurse, tended a large garden, and cared for my brother and me while my father played the role of small-town doctor. Since the early days of my childhood, I am grateful to have lived in a few different places, including Minnesota and Colorado. Four years ago, I moved as a guest to Dena'ina Ełnena, and Anchorage is where I now call home.

Inspired by the meaning healthcare brought to my parents' lives, my career path flowed from medical assisting to healthcare workforce development. I have a dream that one day our communities will have easily accessible, effective, and comprehensive healthcare; that those interested in contributing to the healthcare workforce can do so without facing inequitable barriers; and that our communities will continue to promote health and wellness at a grassroots level.

In service to that dream, as the SW AHEC Project Coordinator, I offer a variety of services, including Emergency Trauma Technician trainings, CPR and First Aid trainings, Mental Health First Aid courses for youth and adults, dual credit courses for high school students, health career exploration camps/activities for middle and elementary schoolers, and more. If you are interested in any of these services or are interested in learning more about healthcare, please reach out at ianm@apiai.org, or 907-222-9763. I look forward to meeting you!



TIP OF THE MONTH



They say that one of the most stressful things one can do is move. I felt that when my landlord let me know that the home I'm living in is being sold. I realized I'd have to downsize and that meant getting rid of most of the things I've accumulated over the past 40 years.

My friend Victoria and her husband moved into a camper a few years ago. Her motto is, "Less stuff, More Experiences". Ever one to look at the bright side I tried to see it from a spiritual perspective. Letting go is a beautiful thing. In nature it happens all the time. When something goes away, it makes room – space and possibly offers more freedom. Maybe the weight of all we have weighs us down energetically without us even realizing it until the moments we are faced with needing to let things go out of necessity.

When we have less clutter, we have more mental clarity, less attachment to things, and more freedom. Downsizing has a way of making us ask ourselves, "What do I really need?", and "What brings value to my life?" This can be true for physical stuff, or old outdated habits, beliefs, or even people who may not be in our best interest to keep around.

In Good Health ~ Jenna



Photo Courtesy: Jenna Larson

Community Board



ALASKA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM!

What is it?

The Youth Leadership Forum is a free transition program that brings together youth with disabilities from across Alaska to build leadership skills and learn how to use disability resources to accomplish their goals!

Join us and learn from experts, professionals and mentors who specialize in:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| ✓ Self-advocacy skills | ✓ Leadership & Communication |
| ✓ Career & education resources | ✓ Disability benefits and financial resources |
| ✓ Disability history & rights | ✓ Independent living |
| ✓ Assistive technology | |

Dates & Locations

July 28th - August 2nd, 2025 | University of Alaska, Fairbanks

August 11th - August 16th, 2025 | Alaska Christian Retreat, Soldotna

Applications are Open!

Visit the SILC website for more information or to apply now! Just go to www.alaskasilc.org/youth-leadership-forum-ylf/ or Scan the QR code -->

To be eligible, you must be an Alaska resident, with any disability, between the ages of 14 and 24. You do not need to live near the event to attend. Contact the SILC below to request accommodations or travel assistance.



CONTACT US

www.alaskasilc.org

+1 907-741-2751

The contents of this pamphlet were developed under grant number H421E230020 under the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1221e-3 and 3474)



Weekly Virtual Elder Exercises with Lorraine

Weekly on Tuesdays

3:15pm - 3:30pm

Facebook Live - APIA's Facebook

Please join Lorraine Thomas, Lead Elder Health Aide and team as they demonstrate simple chair exercises each week through Facebook Live on the APIA facebook page. (www.facebook.com/APIAI)

For more information, contact Lorraine Thomas at (907)276-2700 or via email LorraineT@apiai.org

Community Board (cont.)



Elder Gatherings will be held
August 1st, 8th and the 29th.
1131 E. International Airport Rd,
Anchorage



This ANCHR 2025 was brought to
you by the SSG Fox SPGP through
the Veterans Administration.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August is the month of...

Friendship

Sisters

Garage Sales

August 3rd

National Friendship Day

August 15th

National Relaxation Day

August 26th

National Dog Day

August 30th

Grief Awareness Day

September is the month of...

Labor Day

Grandparents Day

International Day of Peace

October is the month of...

Indigenous Peoples

Teachers

 BE THE REASON

Be
Tobacco-Free!

Being tobacco-free can make a big
difference from everyday living,
especially your health *plus* it
protects your family's well being.

Fun Fact:

A pack of cigarettes cost 5 cents to
produce, but most smokers spend at
least \$14 per pack. Yikes!

Ready to Quit?

We have great resources to help &
get the support you need along your
quit journey. Don't do it alone.
Call your local health clinic or the
Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line Today!

- APIA Local Health Clinic: (907) 276-2700
- Behavioral Health Clinic: (907) 222-9764
- Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

For more information, contact Caroline Nevak at
(907) 222-4237 or email: carolinen@apia.org



BE TOBACCO-FREE FOR YOU & ME!

