

Mukluk Telegraph

THE OFFICIAL QUARTERLY NEWSPAPER FOR THE CUSTOMER-OWNERS OF THE ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012

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Screening, sharing to improve colorectal health around Alaska



A group of Community Health Aide/Practitioners from around Alaska takes a break during their cancer education digital storytelling class in Anchorage in May.

Traditional care to nontraditional education fuels ANTHC's work

BY JOSH NIVA

olorectal cancer is the secondleading cancer killer of Alaska Native people, but it's also highly preventable and survivable. That's why so many ANTHC employees and partners around Alaska dedicate their work to colorectal health for Alaska Native people.

From providing education and

awareness to offering screenings and sensitive topic. Beyond providing other services, ANTHC employees are making a difference: the Alaska Tribal Health System average colorectal cancer screening rate for 2011 was 58.5 percent, a 102 percent increase from 2000.

One crucial piece to improving colorectal health is convincing people to talk about the sometimes

screenings and care, ANTHC's work also includes brochures, books and even movies that introduce the topic, as well as an inflatable, touring colon. But sometimes face-to-face conversations make the biggest difference.

Don Torgramsen knows that SEE COLORECTAL HEALTH, PAGE 5 ►

Quyana House remodel is just one piece of ANMC's customer service upgrades

BY JOSH NIVA

Change is a constant at the Quyana House these days – some of it cosmetic, some of it behind the scenes, all of it aimed at improving service for customer-owners at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

The most evident Quyana House change is the large-scale remodel that began in February. Crews are currently putting the finishing touches on the project, which has created a friendlier atmosphere in the gathering area for customer-owners and SEE CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS, PAGE 6 ►



Quyana Hospitality Services Manager, shows off some of the remodeling of the Õuuana House at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

Carol Dunn,

PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation breaks Raven's Ball record, launches golf tournament

The Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation (HANF) continues to redefine fundraising and increase the impact of its work to raise awareness and funding to further ANTHC's vision that Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world.

In March, HANF's Raven's Ball, the fifth edition of its annual blacktie event, sold out and raised more than \$335,000 in sponsorships and cash contributions. Nearly \$32,000 of the total was raised during the "paddle raise," a silent auction which directed funds to Camp Coho, a summer camp where Alaska Native children can honor the memory of a loved one who died from cancer or a traumatic death such as suicide.

Not every HANF effort is blacktie worthy, but all are impactful in their own way. In recent months, HANF has helped the Lori Lange Fund raise nearly \$2,500 to help provide toys to children undergoing surgery at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

On July 27, HANF will host its first Golf Classic: Teeing Off For Tribal Health at the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson EagleGlen Golf Course in Anchorage. Learn



PHOTO BY BRENDAN SMITH / ANTHO

ANTHC President Andy Teuber, left, and Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation Committee member Marissa Flannery, far right, celebrate with Luminary Award winners, from left, Val Davidson, Dr. James Tiesinga and Sid Smith at the 2012 Raven's Ball in

more about the tournament at inspiringgoodhealth.org/2012/03/ golfclassic.

HANF was also recently selected by Kendall Alaska statewide auto dealership to participate in the Kendall Cares campaign, which spotlight's Alaska's unique nonprofits for prospective donors.

"Our Foundation is certainly recognized for the growing success

Learn more about HANF or give a gift by visiting

inspiringgoodhealth.org

of the Raven's Ball," explained HANF Director Carrie Brown, "but it is equally important for the public and potential donors and volunteers to know about all the ways they can partner with HANF to make a difference in the health of Alaska Native people around our state."

MISSION

Providing the highest quality health services in partnership with our people and the Alaska Tribal Health System

VISION

Alaska Natives are the healthiest people in the world

VALUES

Achieving excellence Native self-determination Treat with respect and integrity Health and wellness Compassion



Connect with your culture and excel at your career at ANTHC, where there are hundreds of diverse jobs that all help provide the best health care to 140,000 Alaska Natives around our state.

Contact ANTHC's Recruiting team today.



THE MUKLUK TELEGRAPH

The Mukluk Telegraph is the official newspaper of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

The paper is published quarterly and distributed at no charge to customer-owners, employees and partners of ANTHC statewide.

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Celebration, graduation and statewide recognition for Alaska's CHA/Ps

A graduation ceremony, a handful of awards and an executive proclamation from Governor Sean Parnell highlighted a busy spring for Community Health Aide/Practitioners (CHA/Ps) around the state and for ANTHC staff that work closely with them.

Community Health Aides (CHA) have some of the most complicated and demanding health care jobs in Alaska, often providing access to care for the sick and injured people of their communities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. ANTHC and ANMC play key roles in preparing future CHAs for this work and also celebrate their sacrifices and efforts.

ANTHC recently hosted a graduation ceremony for six new Community Health Aides that completed the classroom portion of their training. The graduating group consisted of Panita Pigngayak of Chevak; Sarah Potter of St. Mary's; Minnie Thomas of Buckland; Aimee Gallahorn of Point Hope; Miranda Petruska of Nikolai; and Sandra McCafferty of Allakaket.

Another big event was the recent weeklong annual CHAP Forum. Fifty CHA/Ps representing 14 tribal health organizations participated in the forum, which offered 27 hours of continuing education credits, as well as numerous awards and honors.

Torie Heart, ANTHC's Director of CHAP/ Rural Health, said that the week is always highly anticipated. There are opportunities for CHA/Ps to further their education and talk directly with ANMC clinicians. It is also a chance to network with colleagues from their regions and around the state, and for ANTHC staff that trained the CHA/Ps to reconnect with former students.





PHOTOS BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

Minnie Thomas of Buckland, left, and Sarah Potter of St. Mary's, right, are congratulated during the recent Community Health Aide graduation ceremony in Anchorage.

"When you get people together from so many regions, it's an opportunity to make connections," Heart explained. "It's great for the people coming to Anchorage and it's gratifying for our staff."

There is also plenty of time for special recognition. Presented at the CHAP Forum by State of Alaska Public Health staff, Governor Parnell's proclamation declared April 23-27 as Community Health Aide, Community Health Practitioner, Dental Health Aide and Behavioral Health Aide Week in Alaska. The proclamation encourages "Alaskans to recognize the significant contributions of these health care providers, and thank them for their tireless dedicated service."

The forum also lets CHA/Ps recognize one another's unique work. The group announced its Shining Stars, Rising Stars, outstanding accomplishments and celebrated the memory of CHAPs that passed away in recent months. Andy McLaughlin of Chenega Bay (Chugachmiut) was named Shining Star of 2012 for his role as a leader, teacher and healer, as well as a standout community member. Johanna Coghill of Nenana (Tanana Chiefs Conference) was named Rising Star of 2012 for her commitment, communication, teamwork and patient care in a busy work environment. Senta Lockett of Palmer (Eastern Aleutian Tribes) earned the Outstanding Accomplishments of 2012 for work as a dynamic health aide, EMS instructor and mentor.

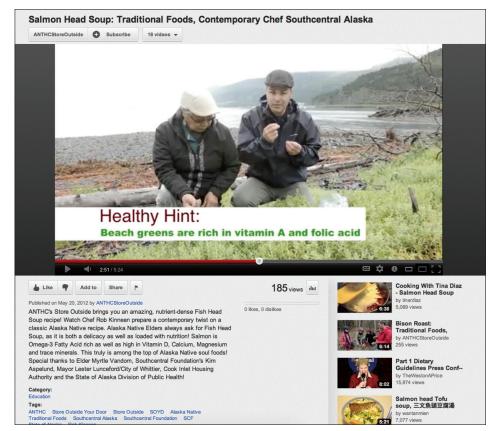
Because the week is filled with training and presentations, Heart said attendees like to work with their hands while listening to speakers. This year, CHA/Ps used their hands to knit and crochet 27 infant caps, which were given to ANMC's volunteer group to distribute to mothers and babies.

"Traditional Foods, Contemporary Chef" series travels the state, inspires the plate

BY ESTELLA CLAYMORE

ANTHC's online video series "Traditional Foods, Contemporary Chef" continues to inspire viewers to rethink traditional foods and modern cooking. Word about the work also continues to spread: more than a dozen episodes have been uploaded and the series was featured in the April/May edition of *First Alaskans* magazine.

As the title suggests, the series follows Tlingit chef Rob Kinneen around the state as he joins community members to create contemporary recipes and dishes out of traditional foods. The concept complements the project's parent program, the ANTHC Division of Community Health Services' Store Outside Your Door initiative, which promotes nutrient-dense traditional foods and healthy lifestyles to young Alaska Native people and families. Elders also appear in episodes to share stories about the



importance of traditional foods and being mindful in eating.

"Traditional foods are like medicine to our Alaska First People," said Dr. Gary Ferguson, ANTHC's Director of Wellness and Prevention and part of the group that produces the series. "Social media outreach has been a unique way to engage our younger Alaska

Online

Watch episodes of "Traditional Foods, Contemporary Chef" at youtube.com/ANTHCStoreOutside Learn more about Store Outside Your Door at

facebook.com/storeoutside

Native audience."

The series has traveled to regions like Norton Sound, Southcentral, Interior, Southwest and Southeast Alaska. Episodes show community members harvesting game, collecting greens and fishing the rivers.

Those foods are turned into recipes like Alaskan fresh roll, foraged salad, rockfish fumet, venison skewers, seal posole, whale scallopine, bison roast, wild duck risotto, salmon scramble, salmon head chowder, ocean duck pasta, salmon head soup, salmon spread and moose meatloaf with dandelion pesto.

Division of Environmental Health and Engineering teams more efficient, impactful than ever

BY JOSH NIVA

ANTHC's Division of Environmental Health and Engineering (DEHE) teams are always on the cutting edge of construction and engineering work around Alaska, but the division is also constantly finding ways to work more efficiently in all phases of its production. Recently, DEHE teams reported that they have nearly cut their project completion times in half in recent years.

Historically, DEHE Vice President of Operations Matt Dixon explained, a DEHE sanitation facilities project typically took five years from identification for funding to completion. This period included the administrative processes involved, planning, design and construction. Over the past two years, DEHE teams have been able to reduce the time for newly funded USDA-RD projects to become operational to less than three years.

Dixon said that the improvement is the result of many factors, including refining internal processes at DEHE. But the most significant, he noted, was ANTHC successfully negotiating to receive special considerations for Alaska projects in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between IHS, ANTHC, the State of Alaska and USDA-RD. This MOU instantly streamlined many processes regarding work specifically for rural Alaska villages.

"This has not only provided critical health facilities to Alaska Native people sooner than has been done in the past, but it has impressed USDA-RD staff to the point that they are now working with us to keep the program funded at a national level," said Dixon. "With the dramatic improvement in provision of services, the program has been shown to be efficient and effective."

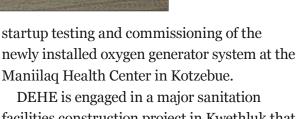


PHOTOS BY ANTHC STAFF An ANTHC construction team breaks rock in Klawock.

Rural Energy Efficiency Program earns Health and Human Services honor

DEHE's Rural Energy Efficiency Program was notified by the U.S. Department of Health





Construction teams

unload buildina

materials from a cargo plane in

Chalkyitsik.

facilities construction project in Kwethluk that will provide the first piped water and sewer to the community's homes. DEHE Construction plans to complete water service to the eastside of Kwethluk this fall; sewer service will be complete by spring 2013.

DEHE staff recently attended a final inspection and open house celebration with community members in Ouzinkie. The completed project included a new 1,800-square-foot water treatment plant, a new backwash stabilization lagoon, and a percolation cell, as well as an updated backup water infiltration gallery to provide an alternate water source in the event the primary source has problems.

DEHE's Energy Department started installing advanced electrical monitors in homes of 12 communities in May. The monitors will allow residents to become aware of the costs to power their homes and modify behaviors to save energy and money. Meter installation will continue through the summer and it is expected that between 1,000-1,400 residents will choose to participate in the program, which is funded by the Department of Energy.



ANTHC employees continue work on a water and sewer project in Galena.

and Human Services (HHS) that DEHE will be a recipient of a Green Champion Award. The award honors HHS employees and Native American tribal members involved in outstanding sustainability projects. ANTHC and IHS earned the Change Agents Award for work around Alaska.

HHS noted ANTHC's work involving reducing operating costs of water systems for community buildings and homes, protecting the environment, and providing sustainable public health infrastructure that saves on fuel and health care costs. HHS specifically talked about DEHE's work in conducting energy audits and heat recovery at sites around Alaska. To date, DEHE has conducted 21 audits of water systems and found that, on average, a 50 percent reduction in total energy use can be achieved.

Construction season in full swing around Alaska

DEHE Construction teams recently launched into a summer work season that was expected to include 43 projects in 33 communities.

DEHE's Construction teams are currently engaged in vital projects around the state, while also getting an early start on key future projects. In recent weeks, the group held a preconstruction meeting in Kaltag for its upcoming 2,400-square-foot health clinic project; a preconstruction meeting in Chalkyitsik for its new 2,400-square-foot health clinic project; and began construction in Kasaan on the community's new water treatment plant and a 150,000 gallon water storage tank.

Maniilaq Association recently partnered with DEHE Health Facilities, along with Oxygen Generating Systems International, to conduct

Alaska nurses: Inpatient OB Certification course



Nationally recognized educator Sharon Hall, RNC, BSN, MS, leads the course which prepares nurses with the intense clinical background knowledge needed for everyday practice and for those taking the RNC exam.

August 27-28 in Anchorage

Cost: Two days: \$329; One day: \$199. Space is limited to 50 participants.

Register now or learn more at 907-729-3205 or jmehring@anthc.org



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's Community Health Aide/Practitioner (CHAP) Educator Melany Cueva leads a cancer education digital storytelling class in May.

Why ANTHC works on colorectal cancer education and screening

- · Cancer is the leading cause of death among Alaska Native people. Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the secondleading cause of cancer death. CRC mortality and new cases of cancer are nearly two times higher among Alaska Native people as U.S. whites.
- If found early, CRC has a 90 percent 5-year survival rate. Half of CRC deaths could potentially be prevented if everyone age 50 and older received screenings.
- The Alaska Tribal Health System average screening rate for 2011 was 58.5 percent, a 102 percent increase from 2000. The CDC 2014 national goal is 80 percent.

How ANTHC makes an impact on colorectal cancer

SCREENINGS AND TRAINING: Offers CRC screenings at the joint ANTHC and SCF clinic; trains providers in endoscopy; offers itinerant physician and mid-level practitioner CRC screenings at rural health facilities; provides technical and financial assistance to tribal health organizations to increase CRC screening.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS: Creates and disseminates health education materials like brochures, videos, CD-ROMs, social media, and radio and TV PSAs to patients, providers and communities; tours Alaska with Nolan the Colon; offers outreach to patients and families at increased risk of CRC; implements patient navigation training and programs.

RESEARCH, DATA, PARTNERSHIPS: Compares methods of CRC screening among Alaska Native people; participates in CDC-sponsored statewide endoscopy capacity survey; participates in statewide Colorectal Cancer Partnership to increase screening rates.

COLORECTAL HEALTH, FROM PAGE 1 ▶

well. He has big shoulders, strong hands, loves wearing a baseball cap, and holds a physically demanding job as a warehouse supply tech job at ANTHC's Regional Supply Service Center.

Torgramsen is also man enough to take ownership of his health.

When faced with a colorectal screening a few years ago, he admits to feeling anxious about the process. But he said he had plenty of reasons to get over his fears: his health, his children, his seven grandchildren, and his conversations with Judith Muller. Muller is an ANTHC Cancer Program coordinator who regularly visits Torgramsen at ANTHC's warehouse. It is there that her group stores the popular Nolan the Colon inflatable colon, which tours Alaska providing colorectal health education.

The decision to get screened may have saved Torgramsen's life.

When Torgramsen, a 52-year-old Tlingit-Aleut whose family is originally from Wrangell, was screened at the Alaska Native Medical Center, the doctors spotted potentially cancerous polyps. Torgramsen said they were removed quickly and relatively painlessly.

"I had chickened out about getting screened

Online

Learn more about colorectal health and ANTHC's work at anthctoday.org/epicenter/colon.html

before, but I'm so glad I finally did it," Torgramsen said. "If I wouldn't have got it done I could have been dying.

"I didn't really know about it until I started talking to Judith when she came to the warehouse," added Torgramsen. "She told me about her work and about going to villages to help people get checked. What a neat job."

Muller said: "If we had someone like Don in every community, we wouldn't have this problem. I think we can all identify with Don, especially men. He really helps normalize the discussion about colorectal health."

Indeed, Torgramsen is now a colorectal health advocate. He said he enjoys telling his story and hopes that it inspires others to get screened.

"My experience was fantastic – they were some of the most professional people I've been around and they made me feel comfortable," Torgramsen said. "For big, strong men, (not getting tested) can be an ego thing. But don't take it lightly. Now I encourage all my friends to get screened."



Alaska Native Medical Center's Colorectal Cancer Screening Clinic staff includes, from left, Paul Davis, MD, Claudia Christensen, ANP, and Paul Ferland, RN.

ANTHC's "Readers' Theatre" receives national spotlight, gets people talking about colorectal health

BY JOSH NIVA

remains a touchy conversational topic, but because of the work of many ANTHC staff, the conversation is becoming easier and more impactful. That conversation is critical: colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death for Alaska Native people, but it is also an easily treatable and preventable cancer.

Earlier this year, ANTHC's Community Health Aide/ **Practitioner Educator Melany** Cueva and other staff participated in the Prevent Cancer Foundation's Dialogue for Action on Colorectal

Cancer Screening conference in For most people, colorectal health Baltimore. At the conference, Cueva project.

> "Readers' Theatre" is the culmination of six months of work by Cueva, who partnered with other ANTHC staff, Community Health Aides, cancer survivors and even a playwright to compose a script that could be used to help everyday Alaskans talk about colorectal health, as well as encourage healthy lifestyles. The conversation is woven through six Alaska Native characters, giving readers and listeners an assortment of characters they can to relate to

Learn more about "Readers' Theatre" and find other colorectal cancer education resources at

akchap.org/html/resources/ cancer-education.html

Watch the short film "What's the Big

anthctoday.org/epicenter/ colon.html

and safe places from which to start sensitive conversations. Eventually, the script became the foundation for the short film "What's the Big Deal?" which features an all Alaska Native cast bringing the conversations to life.

"We wanted to script a conversation about all of those things that are challenging to talk about," explained Cueva.

People are certainly talking now - about colorectal cancer and about "Readers' Theatre." After Cueva presented at the Dialogue for Action on Colorectal Cancer Screening conference, she heard about "Readers' Theatre" scripts being performed at a dinner theatre in Washington and received requests for scripts for other sensitive health topics (breast cancer) and in other languages.

"It's amazing to think how far we've come," said Cueva.

CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS, FROM PAGE 1 ▶

their visiting family and friends, while adding many other services. There's also an improved look and functionality in the reception area for customer-owners and staff, and a new, more efficient space for Quyana Hospitality Services staff.

The gathering area received the most attention. In the past, it was a high-traffic space near the elevators, which is not very quiet or private. By moving the gathering area, it will eliminate much of the foot traffic and create a more comfortable environment. Upgrades to the gathering area will include new finishes, flooring, ceilings and walls, as well as new furniture and a television.

"It has been requested for a long time to have a more family friendly visiting area for people to visit with their loved ones at the Quyana House," explained Leatha Merculieff, ANMC's Vice President of Customer Relations. "This and the other improved services will be a great benefit for our guests."

Those benefits extend beyond the Quyana House remodel. In February, Quyana Hospitality Services launched an online booking function that operates much like a hotel website, allowing case managers to have an easier, more streamlined system. They will be able to check room availability, book rooms, receive confirmation codes, and change or cancel reservations. The new system has already made

Online

Learn more about the Care Coordination Center by calling 855-482-4382 or contacting Michelle Pattison at **mpattison@anthc.org** or Stephanie Myers at **smyers@ anthc.org.**

the booking process easier for case managers and Quyana House staff.

Quyana House is also now a standalone travel management service. It has an agreement with U.S. Travel that allows staff to book, issue and change travel tickets, see last seats available, and even check car and hotel availability.

If you have any questions about the Quyana House or Quyana Hospitality Services, please contact Carol Dunn at (907) 729-2407 or cdunn@anthc.org.

Care Coordination Center update

The work at ANMC's new Care Coordination Center (CCC) continues to gain momentum as teams focus on delivering the highest level of customer service and improving communications and logistics management with customer-owners and partners.

ANMC created the CCC to make the journey to and from ANMC as easy and stress-free as possible for customer-owners. CCC staff now coordinates travel to ANMC like never before, making arrangements with specialty clinics and regional health providers; making lodging arrangements and providing Anchorage airport and hotel transportation information; and providing customer-owners with



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2012

Construction teams put the finishing touches on the new gathering area in the Quyana House at the Alaska Native Medical Center.

one number to call 24 hours a day, seven days a week for all travel related questions and inquiries.

Longtime ANMC employee Michelle Pattison was recently named CCC Manager; she has worked as ANMC's Manager of Customer Experience. Roxanne Benson was recently named CCC Supervisor. Pattison, Benson and the CCC team are now housed on ANMC's first floor, across from the craft shop.

ANMC's Care Transitions team earns quality honor

The Alaska Rural Health Conference recently acknowledged Alaska Native Medical Center's (ANMC) Care Transitions team with its Alaska Rural Health Award for Rural Health Quality. The Rural Health Quality award recognizes any individual, organization or group that has made significant contributions to the quality or safety of rural Alaskans.

According to the Alaska Rural Health Conference, factors considered for earning the award include the number of rural Alaskans impacted, demonstration of measurable improvement, and innovative approaches to quality improvement or measurement of applicability to other organizations or communities. That certainly sums up the work of ANMC's Care Transitions team.

"We're honored to be recognized for our work – this is great validation that we're delivering what's been asked and expected of us," said Joel Stewart, who directs the Care Transitions team.

"A lot of people are really engaged. And it's all about collaboration – this is as much about our

partners as it is about us."



ANMC preceptors help SEARHC nurses expand their skills

Two nurses from SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium recently wrapped up their eight-week preceptorships on Alaska Native Medical Center's (ANMC) adult inpatient units, working with ANMC nurses to develop new skills and experiences that will help them become medical-surgical nurses.

RNs Jolene Jackinsky and Jennie Phillips, both based at Sáx't Hít – Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital in Sitka, worked with ANMC RNs Kirsten Gamradt, Teri Steinkopff, Christine Ross, Carey Idle, Eric Hall and Jeanie Hestness, as well as ANMC nursing manager Lisa Wourms, during their stay. For Jolene and Jennie, the preceptorship provided an opportunity to expand their nursing skills in ANMC's busy, complex and sometimes challenging environment.

"All of those nursing skills that I saw and practiced maybe once in nursing school and never get to practice, we saw them all the time here," explained Phillips. "I knew it would be busy here, but not this busy!"

The medical-surgical nursing preceptorships at ANMC provide relatively new nurses, often from remote medical facilities, the chance to apply and practice medical-surgical concepts



PHOTO BY JOSH NIVA / ANTHC

SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium nurses Jennie Phillips, left, and Jolene Jackinsky, right, take a break with Alaska Native Medical Center nurse Kirsten Gamradt, center.

and skills. But this isn't a one-way education – ANMC nurses also took advantage of having new peers working on their floors.

"They had lots of suggestions for us, as well,"

explained Gamradt. "We usually mentor nursing students, but Jolene and Jennie are nurses with experience. It was nice to hear the things they see that we may not necessarily see."

PHOTO BY JOSH NIVA / ANTHC

Longtime Alaska Native Medical Center volunteer Jacqui Glavinovich.

ANTHC celebrates ANMC's volunteers

Each year, more than 100
volunteers dedicate around 30,000
hours helping Alaska Native
Medical Center (ANMC) in a variety
of ways: from staffing the ANMC
Craft Shop to holding babies for
exhausted new parents to bringing
art supplies and balloons to young
patients and so much more.

Each year, ANTHC thanks
ANMC volunteers with a Volunteer
Appreciate Lunch during National
Volunteer Appreciation Week. It's
a chance to personally thank those
that give selflessly to improve
ANMC and Alaska Native health
care.

One of the many longtime volunteers at ANMC is Jacqui Glavinovich. Glavinovich has volunteered at ANMC since 1995, when it was located in downtown Anchorage. She said she loves all aspects of volunteering at ANMC, but particularly the time she gets to spend bringing toys and balloons to children, working in the ANMC Craft Shop, and pairing with her husband to play Santa and Mrs. Claus during Christmastime.

"There are so many ways volunteers help here," explained Glavinovich, "And the patients

Online

Learn more about ANMC volunteer opportunities by contacting ANMC's Auxiliary Patient Services Coordinator Roberta Miljure at rmiljure@anthc.org or (907) 729-1120 or by visiting anmc.org/HospitalServices/volunteer.asp

know that we are here to care and help them in any way they can, and if anything, just give them a hug."

During a typical shift,
Glavinovich fills children's
balloons with helium in the ANMC
basement, loads a cart with toys
and coloring books, and visits
ANMC's Inpatient Pediatrics
wing. She delivers gifts to infants,
teenagers and parents, and chats
with ANMC staff, who know her as
The Balloon Lady. Glavinovich says
she spent a lot of time in hospitals
as a child, as did her son, so she
understands that little things like a
smile, a balloon and a conversation
can truly improve someone's day.

"Sure, you have some sad days here," said Glavinovich, "but I am usually feeling good when I leave after volunteering."

Glavinovich added, "I really love it here. It's a very rewarding experience. I'll do it forever."

ANTHC receives American Hospital Association's Living the Vision Award

In April, ANTHC was given the American Hospital Association's (AHA) Carolyn Boone Lewis Living the Vision Award for its work to improve the health of Alaska Native people. ANTHC's Board of Directors and staff gathered with other Alaska health care leaders for an award presentation on ANTHC's campus.

AHA noted that it selected ANTHC for the award because of its work to improve the health of Alaska Native and American Indian people through actions that go beyond traditional hospital care. At the award ceremony, AHA President and CEO Rich Umbdenstock noted ANTHC's "wide range of health care work that fully reflects its philosophy of a lifelong commitment to the people and communities it serves, and its efforts touch every part of an individual's health – from ensuring homes have clean water to improving employee health to helping seniors receive appropriate care."

"Recognition like this acknowledges the quality and impact of our Consortium's work, as well as the importance of our relationships and partnerships around Alaska and beyond," explained ANTHC CEO Roald Helgesen.

AHA added that, "ANTHC believes in keeping people out of hospitals by preventing disease and injury. Outreach efforts are centered around its Community Health Aide Program, a network of about 550 Alaskans who practice in more than 170 rural communities as well as their health



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

From left, ANTHC CEO Roald Helgesen and ANTHC President Andy Teuber accept the American Hospital Association's (AHA) Carolyn Boone Lewis Living the Vision Award with Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association President/CEO Karen Perdue and AHA President/CEO Rich Umbdenstock.

promotion and disease prevention work that ranges from tobacco education to encouraging testing and education for sexually transmitted diseases to providing training and technical support that will help build health delivery capacity in regions around Alaska. ANTHC's wellness and prevention efforts also include planning, design, construction and operations support for clean water and sanitation projects throughout Alaska and in partnership with

its Division of Environmental Health and Engineering."

Congratulations to ANTHC's staff and partners on this award. Your passion and dedication to ANTHC's work fuels achievements like these and lead the Consortium toward the vision that the Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world.

ANTHC's Comfort Bag project supports Alaska Native cancer patients

A cancer diagnosis can turn a person's world upside-down, which is why ANTHC's Cancer Program and Alaska Native Medical Center's (ANMC) Oncology Department work so hard to educate and comfort our customer-owners at every step of their cancer journey.

One unique way ANTHC helps is through its Comfort Bag project, which provides a vinyl bag packed with essentials to those who have been recently diagnosed with cancer at ANMC.

Recently, a handful of ANTHC staff and community volunteers assembled and filled the newest batch of more than 300 waterproof vinyl bags. In recent months, our Cancer Program has

rallied volunteers and donors from ANTHC and the Anchorage community to provide items that are focused on a patient's needs: the Cancer Care Guide for education, hot and cold water bottles, fleece blankets and gloves for warmth, toiletries, other necessities and more.

This year marks the fifth time since 2004 that these bags were prepared. Karen Morgan of ANTHC's Cancer Program said that beyond providing comfort at a difficult time for cancer patients, the bags also raise cancer awareness and give ANTHC employees and the public an opportunity to connect to an impactful cause.

The ANTHC Cancer Program and ANMC Oncology department thanks donors: the Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation; ANMC Auxiliary; ANTHC's Marketing department; ANTHC's Regional Supply Service Center; Southcentral Foundation's Dental Clinic; the Municipality of Anchorage's Department of Health and Social Services; Sanofi Aventis;

and Anchorage's faith-based organizations that donated the fleece blankets. Special thanks to Health Information Services and Primary Care third floor west team for their toiletry drives. And thank you to UPS for volunteering.

Learn more about the Comfort Bag project or other opportunities to give and volunteer with ANTHC's Cancer Program by contacting ANTHC's Karen Morgan at kmmorgan@anthc. org or at (907) 729-4491.



