



THE

Mukluk Telegraph

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

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2013

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE



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Powering our present, Fueling our future

ANTHC offers scholarships, mentorships and more to tomorrow's Tribal health leaders

BY JOSH NIVA

For the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) to reach its vision that Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world, the Alaska Tribal Health System (ATHS) must also be healthy. That's why ANTHC plays many roles in strengthening our Alaska Native workforce and developing future ATHS leaders.

ANTHC offers scholarships, internships, externships, apprenticeships and more. Staff acts as mentors, facilitators and even inspirations. ANTHC opens its doors and offers real world experience for future health care professionals, including some who return to ANTHC as our talented coworkers.

In fact, many current ANTHC staff and ATHS employees once received opportunities as ANTHC interns and scholarship recipients. In this Mukluk Telegraph, we'll share some of their stories, introduce you to some recent interns, and explore some of the many ways ANTHC supports the next generation of ATHS leaders.

SEE POWERING OUR PRESENT, PAGE 6-8 ▶



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

ANTHC EpiCenter intern Heather Gatti, left, with ANTHC Research Associate Danielle Pratt, whose internship experiences at ANTHC inspired her to become a full-time employee.

ANTHC continues assisting partners, Alaskans with Affordable Care Act navigation

The Affordable Care Act is quickly changing the health care insurance landscape and these changes will have monumental impacts on Alaska Tribal Health System (ATHS) members and Alaskans. ANTHC and our partners around Alaska are working to remain in front of the changes while helping consumers stay informed of affordable coverage options.

In August, ANTHC, along with the United Way of

Anchorage, received an anticipated \$300,000 grant to assist Alaskans with Health Insurance Marketplace education. ANTHC is working with partners in the ATHS and with each Tribal Health Organization that wishes to participate in outreach activities to raise public awareness of how the new Health Insurance Marketplace impacts them and the health care system.

Alaska Native people and American Indian people are exempt from the requirement to have insurance, but still need to apply for an exemption. Navigators can help people apply for this exemption. Through the Navigator grant, community members will be trained to speak to

SEE MARKETPLACE, PAGE 3 ▶

Alaska Native, American Indian providers balance excellent, personal care at ANMC

The Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) in Anchorage is one of the nation's most unique hospitals, and one of Alaska's most distinguished. But what also makes the ANMC hospital special is the warmth, familiarity and comfortable healing environment it offers our Alaska Native and American Indian people.

Alaska Native and American Indian staff at the ANMC hospital balance culture, comfort and care. When these staff offer frontline services and bedside care, it comes with a welcoming face and voice, it improves communication, and it speeds healing.

For ANMC's Alaska Native and American Indian staff, there's pride in caring for their people and in playing a role in helping our people become healthier. Here are a few profiles of those staff members ANMC hospital.

Longtime Emergency Department doctor excited about leadership opportunity



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC
ANMC ED Service Chief Dr. Patti Paris

ANMC recently named Dr. Patti Paris the new Service Chief of the ANMC Emergency Department (ED). Dr. Paris, an American Indian and member of the Penobscot Tribe of Maine, takes over from

longtime ANMC ED Director Dr. Richard Brodsky after his 36 years of service.

In her new role, Dr. Paris will direct the professional, administrative and educational activities of the ED, ANMC's busiest department, which saw more than 57,000 patient visits in 2012. She will also provide strategic leadership and direction for all aspects of the department.

"Working in the emergency room, we see patients from all across Alaska who need outstanding, prompt treatment. It is rewarding to be part of ANTHC, which provides comprehensive care to our people, including high level specialty care," said Dr. Paris. "I am proud to lead a team of top-notch physicians, nurses and care staff to provide the highest quality care to patients with serious illness and injury."

Dr. Paris began working as an emergency physician at ANMC in 1999. Her background also includes serving as an emergency physician for a year at the Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston, Maine, and as a clinic physician at the McMurdo Base Station in Antarctica. She returned to ANMC in 2005. She was recognized as an ANTHC Employee of the year in 2008 for her expertise and outstanding patient care.

New Orthopedics Service Chief proud to serve his people

Dr. C. David Hightower was recently named as the new Service Chief of Orthopedics at ANMC. Dr. Hightower has worked at ANMC for the past year and is a member of the Cherokee Nation. He was born



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC
Chief of Orthopedics Dr. David Hightower

in Fairbanks, grew up in Anchorage and received his care at ANMC.

Dr. Hightower joined ANMC in 2012 as an orthopedic surgeon and treated patients with a variety of musculoskeletal conditions. In his new role, he is responsible for clinical supervision and leadership of providers assigned to the Orthopedics department. This includes overseeing the outpatient clinic, operating room, specialty field clinic services, and office staff.

"As an orthopedic surgeon, I'm focused on preventative measures to help patients maintain healthy bones, joints and muscles," said Hightower. "Our team in Orthopedic Services provides outstanding care to our patients and sees great results. I'm proud to function as the department's service chief and continue providing the best care possible for Alaska Native and American Indian people."

In 2007, Dr. Hightower earned his doctorate degree from the University of Minnesota Medical School, where he also completed the Orthopedic Surgery Residency Program. During his residency, Hightower served as a premedical admissions tutor for the Association of American Indian Physicians and guided Native American medical

school applicants through the MCAT, personal statement and interview processes.

Alaska Native RN Akerelrea elected ANMC Nursing Staff President

ANMC RN Andrea Akerelrea recently began serving a yearlong term as ANMC Nursing Staff



PHOTO BY JOSH NIVA / ANTHC
Longtime ANMC RN Andrea Akerelrea

President, taking over from outgoing president Sara Bailey. The Nursing Staff President represents ANMC nursing staff on many councils and committees, while promoting ANMC's vision of nursing, shared governance and Magnet. They also work with fellow nurses to improve processes and continually deliver the best care and services to ANMC's customer-owners.

Akerelrea has worked in ANMC's Inpatient Pediatrics unit for five years and is of Yup'ik descent. She said she feels a strong connection to ANMC, its young patients and their families, and is excited about the difference she can make as Staff President.

"This is a place where you can inspire change," said Akerelrea, who added that she hopes to build on the strong evidence-based nursing practice and family centered care already provided at ANMC.

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.

How are we doing?

Have a suggestion or a compliment for the Mukluk Telegraph?

We would love to hear from you. E-mail the ANTHC Marketing Department at marketing@anthc.org.

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MISSION

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

VISION

Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world

VALUES

Achieving excellence

Native self-determination

Treat with respect and integrity

Health and wellness

Compassion

Congressman Young, Senators Begich, Murkowski and Cantwell engage with ANTHC's work

ANTHC's innovative and personal work often draws attention around Alaska and from partners who want to learn more about it firsthand. In recent weeks, ANTHC hosted Alaska Congressman Don Young, Alaska Senators Lisa Murkowski and Mark Begich, and Washington Senator Maria Cantwell for visits to the Alaska Native Health Campus. Our teams also recently visited Senator Murkowski's staff at her Anchorage office.

Congressman Young and Senator Murkowski each visited specifically to learn more about ANTHC's efforts to combat diabetes around Alaska. As diabetes rates continue to increase among Alaska Native people, ANTHC offers a range of traditional and non-traditional care, services and support. ANTHC's Diabetes team presented highlights of their work, shared an overview of diabetes impact around Alaska and discussed the Special Diabetes Program for Indians with Congressman Young, Senator Murkowski and Consortium and Alaska Native Health Board leadership. Senator Murkowski also visited the Alaska Native Medical Center's (ANMC) Podiatry department to see the diabetes team at work.

As part of their visit to the Alaska Native Health Campus, Senators Begich and Cantwell, who is the Chair of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, toured the ANMC hospital with staff and then spent time with ANTHC's Store Outside Your Door team. The group learned about Alaska Native traditional foods and our



PHOTO BY FIONA BROSINAN / ANTHC
Alaska Senator Mark Begich, second from left, and Washington Senator Maria Cantwell, far right, join ANTHC's Wellness and Prevention team during a shoot of a Store Outside Your Door traditional foods cooking program. From left are Chef Melissa Berns, Senator Begich, ANTHC's Dr. Gary Ferguson, ANTHC's Dr. Rita Blumenstein, and Senator Cantwell.

unique work to promote healthy lifestyles around Alaska.

Alaska's traditional foods are of particular interest to Senator Begich. He recently introduced The Traditional Foods Nourishment Act of 2013 to encourage the access and use of healthy traditional foods around Alaska. "Many Alaska Native traditional foods have been proven to increase physical, emotional and spiritual wellness," Senator Begich said in a press release. "If passed, my bill would allow for food service programs in schools, hospitals and Elder care

facilities to serve traditional foods."

Members of ANTHC's Environmental Health and Engineering team met with Senator Murkowski's staff to discuss our energy work around Alaska. Our team shared examples of how the ANTHC Energy Program's energy audits and efficiency work are already reducing sanitation costs for organizations and residents of many communities.

Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, right, discusses diabetes trends in Alaska with ANTHC Diabetes Program Director Judy Thompson during a recent tour of the Alaska Native Medical Center's Podiatry clinic.



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC



PHOTO BY FIONA BROSINAN / ANTHC
Alaska Congressman Don Young visits with ANTHC and Alaska Native Health Board leadership, as well as diabetes staff during a recent visit to the Alaska Native Health Campus. Young wanted to learn more about ANTHC's efforts to combat diabetes around Alaska.

MARKETPLACE, FROM PAGE 1 ▶

the choices available through the Marketplace. They will be a resource, ensure consumers get the answers they are looking for, and will be trusted to keep the health information private.

ANTHC's grant was part of \$67 million in grant awards given by Health and Human Services (HHS) to create Navigators in federally facilitated and state partnership

More info

Consumers can learn more and enroll in coverage this fall at: www.healthcare.gov/tribal

To learn more about health care reform from ANTHC's staff, please contact Monique Martin at (907) 729-1956 or mmartin@anthc.org, or Lorena Skonberg at (907) 729-1928 or Lmskonberg@anthc.org.

marketplaces. These Navigator grantees and their staff will serve as

in-person resources for Americans who want additional assistance shopping for and enrolling in plans in the Health Insurance Marketplace beginning this fall.

"Navigators will be among the many resources available to help consumers understand their coverage options in the Marketplace," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

"We need to think about

insurance in how we think about our traditional foods in our communities," explained ANTHC's Valerie Davidson when speaking on the importance of all Alaskans having access to health insurance. "If someone catches a fish or gets a moose, they share with the community and no one goes without. We need to look at health care the same way and ensure everyone has access to the same basic level."

DHAT graduates, students continue improving dental access and care

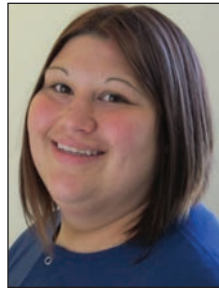
BY JOSH NIVA

Alaska's Dental Health Aide Therapists (DHATs) and ANTHC's training efforts continue to improve access to excellent dental care in rural communities around Alaska. ANTHC's Educational Program is the starting point for future DHATs who improve the oral health status of Alaska Native people. There are currently 25 certified DHATs providing dental care in Alaska, most in their home regions. In recent weeks, those efforts were bolstered by a new class of DHAT graduates and the seventh class of DHAT program students.

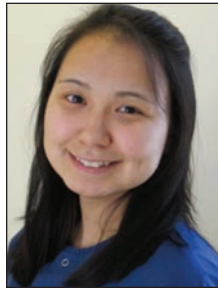
Four new DHATs recently graduated from the two-year training program. The graduates are Cora Roberts from Hoonah (sponsored by the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium); Elsie Pelowook from Savoonga (Norton Sound Health Corporation); Savannah Bonorden, Sitka (SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium); and Melanie Kerschner, Bernville, Pa., and Aniak (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation). At the graduation ceremony, first year students also received their lab coats symbolizing the end of the first year of coursework in Anchorage and the beginning of their second year of practical education in Bethel.

Shortly after graduation, a new class of seven DHAT students arrived to begin their training in the Alaska DHAT Educational Program. This marked DHAT's seventh class since ANTHC began training students in 2007. The students from around Alaska will go through two years of courses: the first year in Anchorage, the second year in Bethel, followed by a preceptorship with a dental supervisor and certification

ALASKA DENTAL HEALTH AIDE THERAPIST STUDENTS: CLASS OF 2015



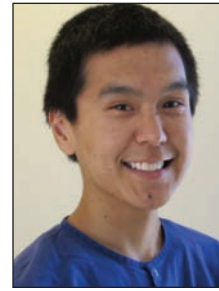
Amanda Miles
Kodiak
Kodiak Area
Native Association



Carrie Tikiun
Bethel
Yukon-Kuskokwim
Health Corporation



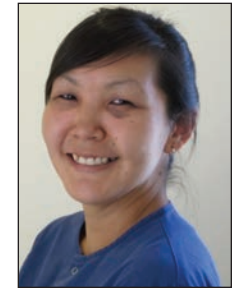
Sadie Green
Hooper Bay
Yukon Kuskokwim
Health Corporation



Charles Redfox
Emmonak
Yukon-Kuskokwim
Health Corporation



Sabrina Manacio
Juneau
SouthEast Alaska Regional
Health Consortium



Sharon Johnson
Togiak
Bristol Bay Area
Health Corporation

Online

Read more about the Community Catalyst report at:

www.communitycatalyst.org/newsroom/press_releases?id=0185

Learn more about ANTHC's work with the Alaska DHAT program at:

www.anthc.org/chs/chap/dhs

Or on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/anthcsmile

through the Community Health Aide Program Certification Board to practice in their communities.

The seven students in the new class, and their regional sponsors, are: Charles Redfox from Emmonak (sponsored by Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation); Nuna Katchatag from Elim (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation); Carrie Tikiun from Bethel (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation); Sharon Nanalook from Togiak (Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation); Amanda Miles from Kodiak (Kodiak Area Native Association); Sabrina Manacio from Juneau (SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium); and Sadie Green from Hooper Bay (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation).

The DHAT program has received a significant amount of national media attention in recent months, as well.

The health care advocacy group Community Catalyst recently released a report that projects midlevel dental providers in the U.S., like Alaska's DHATs,



PHOTO BY KRAIG HAVER

Recent Alaska Dental Health Aide Therapist Educational Program graduates, from left, are Savannah Bonorden from Sitka (sponsored by SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Corporation), Cora Roberts from Hoonah (sponsored by SEARHC), Elsie Pelowook from Savoonga (sponsored by Norton Sound Health Corporation), and Melanie Kerschner from Burnville, Pa., and Aniak (sponsored by Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation).

are providing excellent care and improving access in rural communities while remaining economically viable. "This report underscores just how critical dental therapists could be to fighting what has become the number one chronic but preventable disease affecting children," said David Jordan, director of the Dental Access Project at Community Catalyst.

Sterling K. Speirn, the President of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, recently wrote a commentary piece for Roll Call, a national political media outlet. In "Midlevel Providers Are Critical to Improving Oral Health," Speirn notes the plight of people living in America's rural communities who struggle to gain consistent access to dental care. He points to Alaska's DHAT program and the positive impact

it has made in providing excellent care while improving access for Alaska Native people. He holds up Alaska's DHATs as models for national improvements and also illustrates some of the political issues these efforts have faced from the American Dental Association.

SAVE THE DATE

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Annual Meeting
Monday, December 2,
In Anchorage

ANTHC's Annual Meeting features opportunities to learn more about the Consortium's work around Alaska and discuss opportunities with ANTHC leadership.

Call (907) 729-1915 for more information or look for updates in your mail and at www.anthc.org.



ANMC Shuttle: Let us do the driving!

A fleet of ANMC Shuttles are available to help patients and families get to and from ANMC and a handful of other important Anchorage destinations, including the Ted Stevens International Airport.

Let us drive! Find our ANMC Shuttle schedule and information about traveling to ANMC at www.anmc.org/travel.

For more information, call us toll free at (855) 482-4382 or in Anchorage at 563-ANMC (2662).



ANTHC's summer construction and support efforts continue across Alaska

ANTHC's Construction teams recently passed the midway point of their many summer efforts to provide sanitation, clean water, sewer, energy efficiency upgrades and more to Alaska Native communities across Alaska. Here is an update on a few of the 24 projects and numerous work requests currently taking place.

One of the largest ongoing construction efforts continues in Galena as we support the community's flood recovery. ANTHC's involvement began following a request by the City of Galena and the State of Alaska for assistance in conducting a damage assessment. The inspection identified apparent damage and proposed repairs of the water and sewer infrastructure. As a result, ANTHC Construction crews were mobilized with heavy equipment and are currently working on recovery operations.

In addition, ANTHC crews recently completed and commissioned water treatment plants in Gulkana and Kwethluk, and are continuing construction on new water treatment facilities in Scammon Bay, Kasigluk, Golovin and Toksook Bay. A new two-story, 5,300-square-foot health clinic is being built in Tyonek. Sanitation facilities improvements in Ouzinkie include a 365,000-gallon sewage stabilization pond and nearly a mile of new water main.

In Hoonah, construction of approximately 23,000 feet of raw water transmission line replaces the community's aging iron pipe, which is in poor condition and has failed in recent years. In Kwethluk, 96 low-pressure sewer systems are being installed for individual homes, while in Kasigluk 77 homes are receiving bathroom upgrades with their sewer systems.

ANTHC's construction has created more than 140 seasonal construction jobs in 27 communities and offered training and other skill development opportunities for local workers.

Energy efficiency and better health around Alaska

ANTHC's Environmental Health and Engineering (DEHE)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & ENGINEERING AROUND ALASKA



Work crews install water lines in Scammon Bay. The work is part of a large project which includes a new water treatment facility for the community.

team provides services that build healthier communities and infrastructure for Alaska Native people, while allowing Alaska Tribal Health System partners to provide the best care and maximize their resources.

Earlier this year, ANTHC received a \$267,378 grant from the Denali Commission to implement energy efficiency measures at 26 rural health clinics. The clinics were selected after two years of energy audits conducted by ANTHC staff across Alaska. Audit findings suggest that more than \$68,000 in energy costs will be saved annually by these clinics and communities, where energy rates have tripled in recent years and are well above national averages.

DEHE staff have spent the summer installing the energy efficiency measures, which include training for building operators, lighting improvements and heating and ventilation systems improvements. Teams have already completed work in Chevak, Russian Mission, Marshall, Napaskiak and Newtok. The weeks ahead will find our teams working in Teller, Savoonga, Upper Kalskag and Sleetmute. All work is anticipated to be finished this fall.

"Most of the work can be small retrofits and fine-tuning, but they all make a big difference because energy is so expensive in rural Alaska," explained Gavin Dixon of

ANTHC's Energy Innovations team.

"Every community we go to, we'll do weatherization work, replace exterior lighting with LED lights, and install proper thermostats."

ANTHC receives HUD grant to improve air quality in Southwest Alaska homes

ANTHC was recently notified of its selection for a \$743,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This grant will build upon a pilot project to improve indoor air quality through the implementation

of low-cost household remediation. The grant was part of the nearly \$10.5 million in grants distributed recently from the HUD Healthy Homes Technical Studies Program designed to protect children and other vulnerable groups from health hazards in their homes as part of HUD's Healthy Homes Initiative. This funding highlights the link between housing and health, and the development of cost-effective methods for mitigating residential hazards.

HUD's grants are awarded to academic and nonprofit research institutions studying new methods for recognizing and controlling residential health and safety hazards such as asthma triggers, bed bugs, mold and radon. ANTHC was among 15 organizations, and one of the few non-academic organizations, to receive this award.

ANTHC aims to improve the respiratory health of Alaska Native people through home-based interventions. Environmental Health staff will work with regional health care providers to select 30 homes in four Southwest Alaska communities that are reporting a high incidence of childhood respiratory disease for continued testing of low-cost, home-based interventions to reduce the presence of indoor air pollutants. The project will also develop educational materials and provide home-based education to teach and reinforce model practices of maintaining a healthy home environment.



Above: A view of the new water storage tank in Stebbins.



Left: An operator works on the foundation of the property where a new health clinic will be built in Tyonek.

Powering our present

FUELING THE FUTURE, FROM PAGE 1 ▶

ANTHC's nurses work around the clock at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) hospital providing bedside care to customer-owners, and they also play roles as mentors to future nurses. As many as 30 nursing students come to ANMC each year for their Senior Practicum Nursing Preceptorships and to work in the hospital's inpatient units.

"Lots of very talented nurses started out here at ANMC in the Nurse Preceptorship Program," said Linda Oxley, ANMC Director of Professional Practice. "It's a really great way for future nurses to get some valuable clinical experience. And when our staff really likes one of the students, they always make a point of informally recommending the student to the unit managers in hopes that an official application will come through. When one of these students joins the unit, they have already achieved some aspects of the orientation process. This is really beneficial for both the new nurse and ANMC."

CHARLOT PIERCE



Charlot has been an ANTHC employee since 2009 and is currently an RN in ANMC Inpatient Pediatrics, where she also plays a role as a preceptor for nursing students.

ANMC internship experience: Charlot attended the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) School of Nursing. She knew she wanted to work in pediatrics, so when a senior nursing practicum preceptorship was available at ANMC, she jumped on it. "Actually, I didn't really think I wanted to work inpatient, but when I got to the unit and met the nurses, I realized it was a perfect fit for me."

Why Charlot chose to pursue a career at ANMC: "After doing my preceptorship here, I loved it. ANMC's Magnet designation for nursing excellence is also really important. I came here and really felt like part of a team. I love the culture, the staff, the teamwork and our patient-and-family-centered care model."

Giving back to nursing students: She began precepting after about a year and a half

at ANMC and has worked with three nursing students. "You always feel like there is somebody else better to precept than you, but as a nurse who recently went through the process, I feel like I can provide a valuable perspective."

RUTHIE EVANS



An RN in the ANMC Mother Baby Unit, Ruthie grew up in Dillingham and has worked for ANTHC since January. She will begin working on her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) this fall with Thomas Edison State College.

ANMC practicum experience: Ruthie was attending a UAA distance program in Sitka. For Associate of Science Nursing (ASN) students, a senior practicum is not required, but Ruthie desperately wanted the experience. She had done her labor and delivery rotations at ANMC and was so impressed by the nurses that she knew this was the place that could take her skills to the next level.

Why Ruthie chose ANMC: "I knew that ANMC nurses were the best. The people who work here are so passionate about what they do and I wanted to be a part of that."

Why Ruthie pursued a career at ANMC: "My preceptorship confirmed everything I had heard about ANMC and I knew this was the place for me. I love this hospital and the people we provide care to. I was so passionate about working here and with this population that I wouldn't take no for an answer."

What she loves about working at ANMC: "I am really drawn to the uniqueness of the situation of the mothers delivering here. Many of them travel alone from rural Alaska villages to have their babies. We become their support system in the absence of family and we really bond with these mothers."

— By Darbi Daley, ANTHC

Building future careers: DEHE hosts interns and apprentices

ANTHC's Environmental Health & Engineering (DEHE) staff hosts interns from a range of disciplines each summer and provides apprentices hands-on work experience year-round. This summer, four interns, all Alaska Native, worked in five different DEHE departments.

In addition, four apprentices – two electrical workers and two plumbers – entered their second year in the DEHE Construction Apprenticeship Program. All four are Alaska Native apprentices who upon completion of 8,000 work hours with DEHE staff and testing will become journeyman-certified in their respective trades with the State of Alaska.

"One of the goals of the program is to groom future staff and future Tribal health system leaders," explained Ed Lohr, Manager



ANTHC's summer 2013 interns included, in front row, Michael Ulroan, Jen Montgomery and Brittany Hippe. ANTHC's Ed Lohr, behind, manages ANTHC's Environmental Health & Engineering internship program.

of ANTHC's Tribal Utility Support program and longtime DEHE internship program lead. "It gives them an exposure to the work we do and we get an exposure to them. We see their abilities, see who is passionate, and mentor them. Hopefully, many of them will come back to work with us and our Tribal partners."

MICHAEL ULROAN

Originally from Chevak, Michael is a senior civil engineering student in UAA's Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program (ANSEP). He was a DEHE Project Management team intern.

About his internship: "When I graduate, I will be the first engineer from my village. I'm really excited about that. ... I'd heard a lot of great things about ANTHC and I wanted to be a part of that. ... I've learned that communication is the most important thing in this business and I've learned a lot about communicating within the professional network and with local people in the rural villages."

JEN MONTGOMERY

A mechanical engineering and UAA ANSEP student, Jen grew up in Anchorage and Dillingham and was an intern with DEHE's Safety and Environmental Health Support teams.

About her internship: "As an ANSEP student, I really wanted to work for a Native-owned organization. ... I hope to do work that involves my degree someday, but I've been able to do a lot of different things here and that's kept it interesting and exciting. ... And I've learned a lot here, culturally speaking. It's helped me understand my own culture better."

BRITTANY HIPPE

Originally from Anchorage, Brittany is entering her senior year as a civil engineering student at Stanford and was a DEHE Project Management team intern.

About her internship: "I've done internships in Anchorage before, but I was interested in getting out and seeing things around the state. I've been able to go out and see some scattered sites projects and talk with home owners. It's been a lot of fun. ... And it's been interesting to see the funding part of the job. You can design great things, but if someone doesn't fund the project, you can't build it."

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

ANTHC and IHS offer opportunities to students and externs

ANTHC and the Indian Health Service (IHS) share a vested interest in growing and strengthening the Tribal health system, and we work together to provide opportunities to future Tribal health staff. ANTHC coordinates IHS scholarships and extern placement, helping with everything from filling out applications to finding the right externship fit in Alaska and beyond. Each year, ANTHC also hosts IHS externs from across the country in our unique working environment – it is a chance for future Tribal health professionals to become familiar

with the people and cultures we serve. This year, as many as five IHS externs worked at ANTHC.

DAVID BEVERIDGE



David has worked at ANTHC since 2001 and is the Director of DEHE's Project Management team. Originally from Pennsylvania, he spent the summer of 1986 working as an IHS COSTEP extern, inspiring his career and love of Alaska.

About his externship experience: "I must have worked in 15 or 20 communities that summer – surveying, transporting stuff, inspecting projects, doing as-builts. ... I spent a lot of time in Minto. I was surveying with (future ANTHC Board of Directors member) Andrew Jimmie. ... The families and communities were always so welcoming. ... The experience really gave me a sense of mission and planted a seed in the back of my head."

About returning to Alaska as an IHS officer 15 years later: "I always love a challenge, and I knew Alaska would be a challenge. There were still homes and communities that weren't being served. I wanted to make a difference in people's lives and I knew I could really do that here."

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

DANIELLE PRATT



Danielle grew up in St. Mary's and Talkeetna and has been an ANTHC employee since 2006. She is currently a Research Associate with the ANTHC Liver Disease and Hepatitis Program.

ANTHC internship experience: Danielle interned for three summers in three different departments: ANTHC Human Resources Professional Recruiting after her junior year of high school; ANTHC's Community Health Aide Program after her senior year; and ANMC's Internal Medicine department after her freshman year of college. She studied sociology at Dartmouth and UAA.

Why Danielle chose to intern at ANTHC for three summers: "They were really incredible experiences. I learned so much about ANTHC, ANMC and even the inner workings of rural hospitals and clinics. In Internal Medicine, I shadowed doctors and even spent a day in the operating room. It was just a valuable experience for me. ... The internship programs are such valuable programs for Alaska Native students – they can be exposed to the work environment and most of them want to stay."

Why she returned to ANTHC as a professional: "ANTHC is like home for me and it was where I was comfortable. I already knew so many people who worked here and a lot of the doctors here knew me since I was a kid. ... I'm a beneficiary from St. Mary's, so I also saw relatives here, too. ... Working in research, I feel like a big part of my job is figuring out what we can do in the future to make ANTHC's vision a reality."

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

HEATHER GATTI



Originally from the Ketchikan area, Heather is a graduate student studying social work at UAA and a summer intern with ANTHC's Alaska Native Epidemiology Center. In her internship, she researched and developed materials about domestic and sexual violence and child maltreatment related services provided in Alaska.

SEE FUELING THE FUTURE, PAGE 8 ►

Fueling our future

FUELING THE FUTURE, FROM PAGE 7 ▶

Why she chose to intern at ANTHC:

"I really wanted to give back to the Native community and help Alaska Native women feel respected and treated equally. I'm passionate about that issue and I'm always writing about that topic in my papers. ... It is so important to gather data and share it with the people who do the work and the policy makers who can bring changes into effect."

How has her experience been so far:

"It's been really good! I've learned so much from day one and I've still got a lot to learn."

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

JASON PASKVAN

Intern Jason Paskvan spent the summer working with ANTHC's Alaska Rural Utility Collaborative (ARUC) team. Paskvan is a junior mechanical engineering student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a First Alaskans Institute intern. This summer, Paskvan completed emergency measure plans for water and sewer systems in 26 ARUC communities, as well as many communities in the Maniilaq region. His plans were some of the first completed in Alaska and were shared with other communities to assist in their own planning.

Paskvan also spent two weeks in Chevak with local workers conducting an energy efficiency project and painting the area's water and sewer treatment buildings. ARUC Manager John Nichols praised Paskvan, saying he was "very motivated and excelled at technical tasks and also as a team leader."

Paskvan also enjoyed his experience at ANTHC, saying that, "I've learned that this work is a process and it takes an entire division to make it happen. It isn't just building a water treatment plant. It's about coming up with an idea, getting funding, building it, teaching local operators how to maintain it and more. It's been great to see how everyone works together toward a common goal that's the most beneficial for everyone."

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

ANMC Auxiliary Scholarship celebrates 30 years of supporting Alaska Native students

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the ANMC Auxiliary Scholarship, which has awarded nearly \$1.5 million in funds to support hundreds of Alaska Native students pursuing secondary education. Many former recipients now work in the Alaska Tribal Health System.

"It really is heartwarming and a great satisfaction to be able to help these students go on to college," remarked Jeanne Dougherty, longtime ANMC volunteer who started the scholarship program. "The kids have told me that sometimes it isn't the amount of money we give them, it's the idea that somebody knew they could do it and had faith in them."

To celebrate the anniversary, ANMC's Volunteer Services Coordinator Roberta Miljure and Auxiliary volunteers have created a gallery of scholarship recipient photos in the display outside the ANMC Craft Shop. Visit today and see if you recognize any of the young students.

Learn more about the ANMC Auxiliary

Scholarship by contacting Roberta Miljure at (907) 729-1120 or rmiljure@anthc.org.

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC

ANTHC scholarships to Alaska Native and American Indian students

As an integral part of ANTHC's long-term strategy to increase the number of Alaska Native and American Indian people working in health care fields, ANTHC's Board of Directors established a fund that offers annual education scholarships to Alaska Native and American Indian people, including ANTHC staff. Five recipients received this year's \$5,000 scholarships.

Michelle Warren recently graduated Cum Laude from UAA with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences. She is beginning medical school as a University of Washington WWAMI student. Michelle is from Anchorage and is of Dena'ina Athabascan, Cherokee Indian and Norwegian descent.

Hazel Brogdon is the first person in her family to complete a bachelor's degree and is now entering medical school. Hazel, an Inupiat who lives in Chugiak, just entered the University of Washington WWAMI program. Hazel worked in ANTHC's Suicide Prevention program.

Paula Drake is a Tlingit from Hoonah who is entering her final year at UAA and will graduate with a master's degree in psychology and a certificate in Child Mental Health. Paula is a natural leader who coaches basketball and works in her community. Paula credits her parents as her role models.

Michael Ulroan is entering his senior year at UAA and will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He has long-term plans to obtain his Ph.D.

Erin Feller, affiliated with the Ruby Tribe, is entering dental school at A.T. Still University after graduating from the University of Washington with a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology. While obtaining her BS, Erin assisted children learning about science and oral health, job shadowed with ANMC's dental clinic traveling to rural locations, served as a mentor in the Team Mentoring Program, and was a teaching assistant to pre-nursing students.

— By Josh Niva, ANTHC



ANTHC intern Jason Paskvan, far right, takes a break from energy efficiency and painting work with local laborers in Chevak.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTHC

MAGNET® AT ANMC: EXCELLENCE IN CARE AND LEADERSHIP

Amazing nurses, Magnet care

ANMC'S NURSES have driven our hospital's Magnet designation since 2003.

New Community Health Aides join Tribal health workforce across Alaska

Hundreds of Alaska's Community Health Aides and Community Health Practitioners (CHA/Ps) are often the first providers seen in the Alaska Tribal Health System at the community level. CHA/Ps see about a quarter-million primary care patient visits across Alaska each year. In August, eight Community Health Aides (CHAs) completed their fourth and final basic training class.

A ceremony was recently held in Anchorage to celebrate the graduates: Monica Anderson (Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation); April Frank (Tanana Chiefs Conference); Martha Isaac (Tanana Chiefs Conference); Alvina Murphy (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation); Wayne Sargent (Kodiak Area Native Association); Fannie Smith (Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation); Junior Tsinnie (Copper River Native Association); and Amanda Wise (Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation).

CHA/Ps provide direct primary and emergency health care using the Alaska Community Health Aide/Practitioner Manual, combined with regular referral provider phone consultations. CHA/Ps also coordinate with health providers that travel to our communities and they provide referral



PHOTO COURTESY ANTHC

Alaska's new Community Health Aides celebrate during a recent graduation ceremony in Anchorage. From left, Wayne Sargent, Kodiak Area Native Association; Amanda Wise, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation; Fannie Smith, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation; Dorothy Hight, FNP, ANTHC CHAP Training Instructor/Provider; Monica Anderson, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation; Alvina Murphy, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation; April Frank, Tanana Chiefs Conference; Martha Isaac, Tanana Chiefs Conference; and Junior Tsinnie, Copper River Native Association.

Online

For more information visit:

www.akchap.org

Learn about Alaska's Behavioral Health Aides at:

www.anthc.org/chs/behavioral/bha.cfm

services for customer-owners across Alaska.

The recent CHA grads have now completed 15 weeks of formal training at a Community Health Aide Program Training Center in addition to more than 400 hours of approved field work and other patient care and skills requirements. Following this session, the graduates will complete additional requirements and 200 more hours of field

work that will prepare them for the title of Community Health Practitioner (CHP). Most CHAs take about two years to reach this goal. Approximately 45 percent of the health aide workforce is practicing at the CHP level.

The Community Health Aide Program is a model for the United States and around the world. CHAP was used as a template to develop our successful dental and behavioral health programs utilizing dental health aides and behavioral health aides addressing the health needs of our Alaska Native people.

The health of my people starts with me

—Elias, Computer Support Specialist
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Tlingit, from Anchorage

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 143,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people around our state.

Contact ANTHC's Recruiting team today.
1-800-528-6680
www.anthc.org • careers@anthc.org

PRESENTING AN EVENING OF STYLE & INTRIGUE

RAVEN'S BALL

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 2014
HOTEL CAPTAIN COOK

Join us for a night that will surely be the bee's knees – Raven's Ball 2014, the ritzy and premier fundraising event that benefits the health and well-being of Alaska Native people. Arrive looking spiffy!

Reserve your table, become a sponsor or register to volunteer today by visiting inspiringgoodhealth.org or dialing (907) 729-5652.

All proceeds from Raven's Ball 2014 will support health care, wellness and prevention, and healthy village environments that improve the health of Alaska Native people.

HEALTHY ALASKA NATIVES FOUNDATION UPDATE

HANF swings golf clubs, fancy purses and big parties to support better health

From swinging golf clubs to wearing fashionable attire, ANTHC's Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation (HANF) team is constantly creating unique events that help donors, volunteers and advocates support Alaska Native people becoming the healthiest people in the world.

HANF's second annual Teeing Off for Tribal Health Golf Classic recently drew 82 players and 21 teams that swung the clubs and raised more than \$30,000, besting last year's earnings.

HANF is now organizing its first "wearable



Purses for Change

art" auction called Purses for Change: A Purse and Accessory Auction on Friday, November 8. The auction arrives this fall, but HANF is currently accepting donations of purses, jewelry, scarves and other accessories, including men's items and more, for the auction. Proceeds from this inaugural event will benefit the ANMC Oncology Clinic and Cancer Care Fund.

And HANF's signature event, The Raven's Ball, already has momentum moving toward

More info

Learn more about HANF's work, make a donation to the Purses for Change auction, reserve your Raven's Ball table, or connect to a volunteer opportunity by calling (907) 729-5655 or visiting:

www.inspiringgoodhealth.org

its big party on Saturday, March 22, 2014. This year's event will take the fun and fundraising to new levels with a cool, old-school vibe of style and intrigue.

Fighting cancer around Alaska

New Comprehensive Cancer Plan for the Alaska Tribal Health System arrives

ANTHC's Cancer Program released the "Comprehensive Cancer Plan for the Alaska Tribal Health System: 2011-2017," which addresses the burden of cancer for Alaska Native people, shares data, and proposes goals, objectives and strategies to help reduce this burden. The plan also illustrates the importance of quality, prevention and collaboration efforts in the fight against cancer within our health system.

Cancer remains the leading cause of death for Alaska Native people, and the patterns of cancer in Alaska Native people differ from patterns in other populations. In 2003, ANTHC's Cancer Program received a planning grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop the first "Comprehensive Cancer Plan for the Alaska Tribal Health System: 2005-2010." The goals outlined in the plan were to reduce cancer incidence, morbidity and mortality, and to improve quality of life.

The new 40-page cancer plan provides updates from the previous plan, shares successes and challenges, and outlines cancer care components moving forward, with particular emphasis on prevention,

screening/early detection and long-term survivorship. Goals and objectives in the new plan were developed after gathering information from Tribal health organizations and directors; review of state, national and Tribal needs and trends that were gathered from many sources, including health care providers, families and patients with cancer.

ANTHC, Mayo Clinic continue partnership with annual cancer conference

ANTHC and Mayo Clinic staff recently continued a long tradition of education and collaboration aimed to provide the very best cancer care and services for our people. This year's ANMC and Mayo Cancer Center Cancer Conference marked the 16th annual meeting, which offers an opportunity to discuss cancer treatments and trends, cancer research currently in process, and share working experiences.

ANTHC offers a range of high quality and culturally sensitive services to Alaska Native and American Indian people and families experiencing cancer. Whether at the bedside or elsewhere, staff who provide these services value their relationship with Mayo Clinic, the Minnesota-based clinical group that is recognized as a world leader in health care innovation.

The two-day conference was attended by 13 providers from Mayo and more than 70 staff from around the Alaska Tribal Health System and other Alaska health care organizations. The first day of the conference focused on tobacco. Topics on the second day touched on gastrointestinal, breast and pancreatic cancers.

Helping CHA/Ps educate, inspire community members

The June issue of The Indian Health Service (IHS) Provider,

Online

Read the article at: www.ihs.gov/provider/documents/2010_2019/PROV0613.pdf

a monthly journal for health care professionals working with American Indians and Alaska Natives in IHS facilities, featured the story "Arts-Based Cancer Education for Community Health Workers in Alaska." The article was written by ANTHC's Melany Cueva, Regina Kuhnley and Anne Lanier with help from Mark Dignan from the University of Kentucky.

The article outlined how introducing art while teaching 73 Alaska community health workers about cancer created an atmosphere of better understanding and retention. This method translated into 96 percent of the participants describing ways that the arts supported their learning and 93 percent reported being more confident in sharing their knowledge about cancer to patients.

Online

Read the new "Comprehensive Cancer Plan for the Alaska Tribal Health System: 2011-2017" and other ANTHC Cancer Program publications at www.anthc.org/chs/crs/cancer/cancerprogrampublications.cfm

2ND ANNUAL

Golf Classic

TEERING OFF FOR TRIBAL HEALTH

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS AND GOLFERS!

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Improved services for customer-owners at, and traveling to, ANMC

BY DARBI DALEY

Patient Lift and Transport Team supports patients, clinical staff

When patients were transported within the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) hospital, a member of the nursing staff accompanied them. This removed clinical staff from caring for patients at the bedside. When patients were discharged from the hospital, they often left their room and the facility without assistance, posing potential safety and customer service issues.

One of ANTHC's 2013 Strategic Plan Quality Initiatives produced the ANMC Patient Lift and Transport Team, a group that assists patients and supports clinical staff during transport within the hospital and at the time of discharge. This team improved quality by maximizing patient safety and customer service, while allowing clinical staff to continue providing patient care. Among their duties, the team transports patients in the hospital, helps with their belongings at the time of discharge, and maintains ANMC's wheelchair fleet.



PHOTO BY TODD HENRY / ANTHC

ANMC's Lift Team members include, from left, transporter Christine Hall, transporter and lift Jonas Lestenkof Jr., and transporter Carolyn Deacon.

More info

To learn more about the ANMC Patient Transportation program, contact Leatha Mercurieff at (907) 729-1994 or lnmercurieff@anthc.org.

"The Lift and Transport Team has been very well received by our customer-owners and clinical staff," said Leatha Mercurieff, ANMC Vice President of Customer Relations. "They provide a very important service for our patients and allow our nurses to maximize their time at the bedside providing care, which is the number one objective for Releasing Time to Care, an

international initiative dedicated to helping nurses maximize their time at the bedside."

Members of the Lift and Transport Team have basic life-support training, provide customer service and have fast response times to transportation requests averaging 10 minutes or less 94 percent of the time. The group uses smartphones, which improves response time and communication. The team provides around 4,100 patient transports monthly. The team is comprised of several Alaska Native staff, adding to the customer

experience for patients and building ANTHC's Alaska Native workforce.

Care Coordination Center and Qu yana Hospitality Services merge to improve services

ANMC works constantly to improve services, processes and experience for our customer-owners. On October 1, ANMC's Care Coordination Center (CCC) and Qu yana House merged into a single department. ANMC created the CCC in fall 2012 in response to customer-owner comments, to standardize travel coordination, and improve access to care for Alaska Native and American Indian people around Alaska. This step to merge the departments furthers those objectives. Customer-owners can now book travel and accommodations all through one agent.

Online

Learn more about ANMC's Care Coordination Center, Qu yana Hospitality Services and more patient ANMC customer services by calling (855) 482-4382 or visiting: www.anmc.org/auxiliary/info-hub

ANTHC helps expand nutritional foods program

BY JOSH NIVA

ANTHC staff offers many unique services that help Alaska Native people live healthier. One of ANTHC's more distinctive programs is the group that runs Alaska's Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), which provides nutritional food assistance to income-eligible Native American and non-Native households. Our team helped draft changes that recently expanded eligibility and will help provide healthy food to even more Alaska Native people and families in need.

Gregory Nothstine, ANTHC's FDPIR Manager, announced this week that three new proposals were accepted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expand eligibility for the FDPIR program. The Income Deductions and Resource Eligibility Final Rule went into effect on September 26. Nothstine helped craft the resolution proposals and was excited about this week's announcement.

"More families and people within service areas of existing Tribes administering FDPIR in Alaska will be eligible to receive nutritional food assistance through this program," said Nothstine. "Also, with these rule changes, more Alaska Tribes may be interested in ANTHC helping build the capacity to offer this program and help families in their

Online

Learn more about the Alaska Tribes administering FDPIR by visiting ANTHC's webpage at: www.anthctoday.org/community/fdpir_tribes.html

Tribal administrators of Alaska's federally recognized Tribes are welcome to visit the website to download the ANTHC FDPIR Tribal Application Packet, learn more about the program and complete the application, if interested.

communities. Food insecurity is a major concern in rural Alaska and this program offers a month's worth of food assistance to eligible families. Since this program can only be offered through federally recognized Tribes, ANTHC is positioned to assist Tribes interested in getting started."

The FDPIR program is in its 33rd year of operation, under a service grant offered through the USDA Food Nutrition Service. When ANTHC introduced FDPIR in Alaska in 2007, it was the first Indian Tribal Organization (ITO) to do so in Alaska and was the first new ITO that the USDA Food Nutrition Service helped to get started since 1993. Currently, 17 Alaska Tribes are administering FDPIR. Eligible households in Alaska are certified by ANTHC's FDPIR office based on income and resource standards set by the federal government and must be re-certified at least every 12 months.

We're listening!

At the Alaska Native Medical Center, we listen to our customer-owners so we can provide the very best care and service.

If you have a concern, comment, question, referral or compliment, please contact the ANMC Customer Experience team. Email us at customercontact@anthc.org or call (907) 729-3990 or toll free at (877) 223-9284.

Thank you!

Touchdown for kids at ANMC!

Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) offers the best care and health services to the youngest Alaska Native people and their families. Recently, members of the NFL powerhouse Seattle Seahawks visited the ANMC Pediatrics unit to sign autographs and bring some cheer to the young patients, their families and ANMC staff.

PHOTOS BY **TODD HENRY** / ANTHC



Improvements for babies, moms and families continue in ANMC's Maternal Child Health

BY DARBI DALEY

ANTHC works to provide customer-owners with the very best care and experience for families at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) hospital. As part of this commitment, we are continuing our multi-phase, large-scale construction project on ANMC's Maternal Child Health (MCH) Services facilities, which include the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Inpatient Pediatrics and the Mother/Baby Unit.

Upgrades in Inpatient Pediatrics

will allow for enhanced patient care and a more child-friendly environment. One-third of the area's patient rooms and its outside corridor are already complete; when all of the rooms and the corridor area are painted, new pediatric wall graphics will be added. Two new hand-washing stations have been added into the corridor area, as well. The nurse call system is being upgraded to allow for real time communications between patients and staff. In the weeks ahead, a new nurses' station will be built to make more efficient use of

space for clinical pediatric staff. The upgrades in Inpatient Pediatrics are expected to be complete in October.

There are ongoing improvements in MCH's OB Triage and Support areas. Upgrades of the OB Triage rooms are underway and two new nurse pods are finished. When this project is complete, there will be six standalone triage rooms for expectant mothers. Within the OB Triage and Support area, we will update the nutrition room, nurses' station, staff and patient lounges, staff locker room, bathrooms and an equipment storage room. This

phase is expected to be complete by August 2014.

The final phases of the MCH Services facilities construction include four additional labor and delivery rooms, bringing the total to eight rooms; and an additional C-section operating room (OR), bringing the total to two ORs. All of the postpartum rooms will be updated and double occupancy rooms will be converted to single occupancy. The final phases of construction will be complete in summer 2015.