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THE Mukluk Telegraph



THE QUARTERLY NEWSPAPER OF THE ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

JANUARY - MARCH 2019

ANTHC Health Aide Training Programs awarded High Honors by Harvard Honoring Nations



In 2018, the Community Health Aide Program celebrated its 50-year anniversary at the annual CHAP Forum. CHAP's innovative method of care delivery inspired the creation of the Dental Health Aide and Behavioral Health Aide programs, all recognized by Harvard University.

The Harvard Honoring Nations awarded the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's three health aide training programs, collaboratively known as the Tribal Community Health Provider Programs, with its High Honors award during a special presentation at the 75th annual National Congress of American Indians conference in Denver, Colorado.

According to The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, Honoring Nations "identifies, celebrates and shares excellence in American Indian tribal governance. At the heart of Honoring Nations are the principles that Tribes themselves hold the key to generating social, political, and economic prosperity and that self-governance plays a crucial role in building and sustaining strong, healthy Indian Nations."

Based at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and administered by the Harvard Project on American Indian

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ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PREVENTION

Alaska Native artist creates murals to inspire API youth

When Tlingit artist Benjamin Schleifman was presented with the opportunity to create murals for Chilkat, the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) adolescent unit, he answered yes without hesitation.

"I had no idea what the scope was," Schleifman said. "It was totally unexpected. When I found out it was for the youth wing and something that was being funded for suicide prevention – something I've battled with my entire life – I really just felt the need to do it."

Last year, Schleifman met with Dr. Tamara Russell, API Clinical Director, two Chilkat unit leaders and a representative from the ANTHC Suicide Prevention Program. They went over Schleifman's portfolio and came up with a plan of action. He would create three murals in the main entryway into the Chilkat wing, a button blanket chalkboard and an abstract Tlingit design surrounding the center point of the wing.

"Prior to the completion of the murals, the Chilkat unit looked pretty sterile and not interesting," said Dr. Andrew Pauli, Chilkat unit psychiatrist. "The artwork makes it look inviting and lets the adolescents know that someone cares about them, their background and their recovery. We want our kids to know that they are loved and valued. The murals, both the ones done by Benjamin and the mountain scenes done by other artists, let them know they are worth a lot of effort."

The adolescent unit has 10 beds and provides mental health hospitalization for youth ages 13 to 17 who may live in any region of Alaska. The teens often present with suicidal impulses or have engaged in self harm, may be significantly depressed or anxious, could have a significant trauma history, or may be exhibiting the first symptoms of a major mental illness such as bipolar mood disorder or schizophrenia.

As someone who has battled thoughts of suicide and depression, Schleifman understands the power of art as an outlet.

"I use art as therapy every day. It doesn't matter which medium I'm using – metal, wood, graffiti – it's all art therapy."

Schleifman, whose family is from the Taku River region and of Raven moiety, Frog crest, used traditional Tlingit formline for the murals. He hopes children in the unit can find some inspiration and a connection through the art, whether they are Tlingit, Native or of another heritage.



Tlingit artist Benjamin Schleifman used traditional Tlingit formline to create the murals in the Alaska Psychiatric Institute adolescent unit, Chilkat.

"That's the ultimate goal. The Tlingit formline isn't indigenous to this area of Alaska, there's plenty of indigenous children in this unit who can identify with some aspect of it," Schleifman said. "Eagles and ravens are pretty universal throughout the state. It gives them a little icon that they can identify with and hopefully get them through the day."

API provides emergency and court-ordered inpatient psychiatric services in a safe environment using culturally sensitive, effective, person-centered treatment followed by a referral to an appropriate level of care and support for recovery from mental illness.

"Many of the adolescents admitted to API for treatment have thought about or attempted suicide. The wonderful murals on the walls help them connect with their communities and with nature. In addition, the artwork lets these teens know they are valued and that both API and ANTHC are committed to their recovery," stated Dr. Russell. "The artwork brings a sense of hope and a spirit of fun and future to the unit."

When he's not creating, Schleifman teaches part time in the Anchorage School District through Title VI under the Indian Education Act. He also led art classes at API in conjunction with the project. He

thinks art can connect Alaska Native children to their culture and also give them a positive outlet for their feelings.

Schleifman led four 90-minute classes at API, discussing Tlingit legends and other indigenous stories the students wanted to share. Discussions took place while he shared an introduction to Tlingit formline art, allowing students to explore possible new healthy forms of expression, both artistically and conversationally.

"It's a complicated system, having students for a grand total of maybe four hours is barely the tip of the iceberg. But there are some tremendously talented kids in there," Schleifman said. "When you're teaching something that's not indigenous to the population, I always encourage them to take the art form and make it their own. Watching them take snippets of the art form and take it into their own perception and create what they wanted to create was rewarding."

ANTHC Suicide Prevention Program partners with API to promote mental health resources to Alaska Native people. Schleifman was honored to be selected for the project and is proud to know there

See Page 3, Murals

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 patients, employees and partners of ANTHC statewide.

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

Murals

Continued from page 2

are organizations that support mental health for Alaska Native people.

"Anyone that empowers Alaska Native people is an amazing organization in my eyes; I didn't know anything about the ANTHC Suicide Prevention Program until I was asked to do the project," Schleifman said. "We have the highest rates of suicide amongst any ethnicity so anything that can be done is literally lifesaving."

The mural and article were developed under grant number SMO61935-02 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The views, policies and opinions expressed are those of the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or HHS.



Honors

Continued from page 1

Economic Development, the Honoring Nations Award identifies, celebrates, and shares outstanding examples of Tribal governance. Honoring Nations helps expand the capacities of Native nation builders by enabling them to learn from one another's successes.

"It is such an honor for the Consortium to be named as one of the recipients of the High Honors designation by the 2018 Honoring Nations," said Dr. Tina Woods, ANTHC Senior Director of Community Health Services. "Our health aide providers are the foundation of the Alaska Tribal Health System. Through self-determination, our people receive health care closer to home."

ANTHC's Community Health Aide, Dental Health Aide and Behavioral Health Aide training programs are uniquely Alaska Native-centered programs in Alaska dedicated to expanding culturally appropriate health care at the village level. These programs train Alaska Native people

who are on the front line of rural health care, addressing community members' medical, dental and behavioral health needs within their unique rural settings.

Following an on-site visit of the three health aide training programs in July, ANTHC was named a finalist for the 2018 award. During the visit, three community Elders and Tribal leaders gave personal accounts of the positive impact health aides have in rural Alaska Native communities. Anna Frank, former Health Aide with Tanana Chiefs Conference, James Sipray, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, and Mary Schaffer, Maniilaq Association, gave stirring accounts of their time as recipients of health care in their rural areas from health aides and testament to how the programs are the backbone of health care in our rural Alaska Native communities.

Schaffer recalls how much technology has changed over the last 50 years, bringing improved health care to our people.

"I am so pleased that ANTHC was honored for their work on the health

aide programs over the years. I'm so thankful to ANTHC for providing the training needed to make this possible throughout the state and our regions," Schaffer said. "Health care has changed and grown so much from the early volunteer stages, to now using telemedicine in many villages."

"Our Elders' heartfelt memories and stories of health aides providing care for our people closer to home undeniably tells the story of how important Tribal sovereignty is to our people," Woods added.

The visiting Harvard Honoring Nations spent the rest of the day visiting ANTHC's Dental Health Aide Training Center, the new Education and Development Center, the Community Health Aide Training

Center and took a tour of the Alaska Native Medical Center hospital. They also enjoyed a taste of traditional foods during lunch including fresh salmon and akutaq (Eskimo ice cream).

Learn more about Honoring Nations and the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development:

hpaied.org/honoring-nations.

In 2016, Harvard Honoring Nations awarded the Alaska Rural Utility Collaborative, an ANTHC program that was created to manage, operate and maintain water/sewer systems in rural Alaska, with its highest honor. Read more: anthc.org/news/alaska-rural-utility-collaborative-earns-highest-honors-and-national-recognition-from-harvard-honoring-nations/.

Missed the 2018 ANTHC Annual Meeting?



Learn more about ANTHC's work!

Read about and watch highlights of our latest work in our 2018 annual report and year in review video at anthc.org.



Your flu vaccine protects me My flu vaccine protects you

- The flu vaccine is safe. You can't get the flu from a flu vaccine.
- Pneumonia and flu are a leading cause of death among Alaska Native and American Indian Elders.
- Please get a flu vaccine each year to protect you and your family.

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/flu
or call 1-800-CDC-INFO



ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER

ANMC Inpatient Pediatrics adds entertainment options for kids

Being in the hospital is no fun, especially if you are a child. In order to make our youngest patients' hospital stay as comfortable and pleasant as it can be, ANMC Inpatient Pediatrics, through the generosity of donors to the Healthy Alaska Natives Foundation (HANF), were able to install entertainment consoles in each inpatient room. The PlayStation 3 consoles are preloaded with child-appropriate games and movies to suit the needs of our inpatient children.

"Minecraft is one of the really popular games I see our inpatient kids playing a lot," said Joanna Davis, ANMC Child Life Specialist. "Our patients, their parents and nurses are all raving about these entertainment consoles. There are sports games,

puzzle games, all kinds of movies and cartoons — something for everyone."

Davis requested the funding of these entertainment consoles from HANF because often there was nothing appropriate on the inpatient TV programming for children to watch.

"We had a little girl who was about three years old staying in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. She was really sick and all she wanted to do was watch some cartoons. We flipped through the channels and there were no cartoons on for her to watch. It really broke my heart that she couldn't do the one thing she wanted to do while lying in her hospital bed," said Davis.

It cost \$13,000 to outfit all Inpatient

See Page 5, Kids



The Walk-in Clinic at ANMC Open seven days a week!

For our patients living outside of the Anchorage Service Unit, ANMC offers a Walk-in Clinic for non-emergent health care services for our people while visiting Anchorage.



ANMC's Walk-in Clinic is for patients of all ages who have an illness or injury that needs immediate care but are not experiencing a medical emergency. Here are some reasons to visit the Walk-in Clinic at ANMC:

- Medication refills
- Vaccinations
- Fever
- School and DOT physicals
- Sore throats and colds
- Cuts and minor skin infections
- Sinus and ear infections
- Muscle strains and sprains
- Urinary tract infections
- STI testing

Located on the third floor of the Healthy Communities Building, 3900 Ambassador Drive
Open Monday-Saturday from 9 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Phone: (907) 729-1500



HEALTHY HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

ANTHC Environmental Health and Engineering Crew construct new Akutan water impoundment and pipeline

On a hillside above the community of Akutan in the Aleutian Islands, an ANTHC Environmental Health and Engineering crew is using hand tools to build an 8-foot-tall concrete dam and accompanying 860-foot-long pipeline to capture community drinking water.

The new concrete dam and pipeline, funded by the City of Akutan and the USDA Rural Development, will replace the former plywood structure and leaky pipeline.

At the community's request, the ANTHC crews have avoided using heavy equipment and all-terrain vehicles to complete the project, keeping the sensitive hillside environment as pristine as possible. The workers start each day navigating steep, wet terrain carrying whatever supplies they need up to the project site. Anything that the crew cannot carry up the steep path to the site, which has included electric generators for power tools, sacks of concrete and pipe for the line, is flown in by helicopter. Another physically



challenging element of this project involved creating the footings for the dam. The crew cut into the island bedrock with a rock saw, jackhammered the cut rock to break

it up, then lifted the large chunks of basalt out of the holes by hand.

In addition to the physically taxing work, the Aleutian weather was also a challenge for the team.

Joe Hess, ANTHC project engineer, noted that sometimes people working on the dam struggled to reach the community when helicopters couldn't land due to thick fog, rain, or gusting winds. When the remnants of a Pacific typhoon made landfall on the island, the drainage where the dam was being built filled in a matter of hours, sending a deluge through the construction site, keeping the crew from work that day.

Despite the challenging terrain, weather and remoteness of the job site, the project moved forward and completed on schedule.

For more information about ANTHC construction projects, visit anthc.org/construction-engineering.

CAN Quit Study

Connecting Alaska Native People to Quit Smoking



The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Mayo Clinic want to learn how to help Alaska Native people who smoke.

If you join, you will take part in a phone interview for up to 1 hour. You will give opinions on content we created for a Facebook group. The group connects Alaska Native people to quit smoking.

Receive a \$25 Visa gift card for your time.

More info at www.mayo.edu/research/can-quit-study.

To participate, you must be an Alaska Native person meeting the following:

- Be 19 years or older
- Be willing to use Facebook
- Have internet access
- Be currently smoking
- Be willing to try quitting
- Not in a quit smoking program right now

Call 1 (833) 874-2522 (toll free) or email canquitstudy@mayo.edu to participate.



ALASKA NATIVE
TRIBAL HEALTH
CONSORTIUM

HEALTHY TRADITIONS

Following a subsistence hunt in Selawik

Subsistence is a way of life in Selawik. In the fall, that means hunting caribou and gathering tundra berries.

“We hunt to fill our freezers,” said Enoch Stalker Jr. He and other hunters in the community share the bounty with friends and family members who are unable to harvest caribou meat for themselves.

An unseasonably warm October day made for a picturesque backdrop during an afternoon hunt. However, the inclement weather has made the typically bountiful herd’s presence on the tundra notably absent. Hunters, who usually begin to use snowmachines on the frozen ground and rivers around this time, were able to take out their boats later than usual.

The warmer fall also allowed for late-season berry picking while out on the hunt. Low-bush cranberries and blueberries help supplement fiber in diets of those in communities who do not have steady access to fresh produce.



Families build scouting towers at subsistence hunting camps along the river to get a better view of the tundra.



“Never lie down in the tundra,” Tille Ticket (left) recalls a saying that means don’t be lazy. Berry picking provides needed nutrition but also is a great way to stay active.



Above: Alaska Native hunting traditions have evolved to allow for harvest of caribou without displacing their historic migration routes.

Left: Late season low-bush cranberries deliver fiber and other nutrients for community residents in Selawik.



Quana Ticket shows off the berry bounty.



Zooming upriver. Personal floatation devices keep the whole family safe on the water.



Subsistence hunters look for animals that are fat and in good shape before they shoot. The shape of the back, the color and quality of the hide, and the upward curve of the tail can be clues they look for when choosing an animal to harvest. *



Slowing down to patrol the shoreline for caribou.



Processing the bounty is a family affair with children learning to help at a young age.



Mealtimes are when families can gather and enjoy each other’s company.

* Information provided by Caribou Trails, a publication was released by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to support the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group. adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/library/pdfs/wildlife/caribou_trails/caribou_trails_2018.pdf

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PREVENTION

Supporting children's grief and loss from cancer: Q&A about Camp Coho

Often, loss from cancer in rural Alaska can have a widespread impact on our Native communities.

To address the need for grief support for children ages 6 to 12 who have experienced the death of a loved one from cancer, the ANTHC Cancer Program created a one-day grief camp called Camp Coho. To help bring healing closer to home, the Cancer Program supports regional Tribal health organizations with resources to host their own Camp Coho for local community children.

Here are some common questions Tribal health organizations ask when they first pursue hosting a Camp Coho.

Why is there a need for resources in the Alaska Native community, especially for youth, like Camp Coho?

Children can be underestimated for their ability to grieve and experience distress due to the death of a loved one. Indeed, children are resilient. However, they also experience sadness, anger and sometimes guilt due to the death of a loved one. Camp Coho offers the space for children to be with others just like them to process their thoughts and emotions in a healthy manner.

How can attending Camp Coho help kids dealing with the loss of a loved one from cancer?

Camp Coho is a well-structured day camp offering children the opportunity to talk about the death of their loved one in a safe environment with other children who have endured similar experiences. Children are paired all-day with a Big Buddy who is responsible for their Little Buddy's comfort and support. Children participate in three different Talking Circles, which explore the range of emotions that children might experience. Children also create memory boxes specifically about the person that died. Children take their memory boxes home to share with their families. The memory boxes allow participants to visit positive memories when they are feeling sad. Children learn during Talking Circles that it is OK to cry and that boys and girls cry when they are sad. They also learn that the sadness they feel will get better. Finally, children play, laugh, listen and observe one another as each goes through their own healing journey.

Why should a regional Tribal health organization host a Camp Coho?

ANTHC's mission is to provide the highest-quality health services in



Camp Coho 2018 volunteers and participants.

partnership with our people and the Alaska Tribal Health System. Self-governance and self-determination are what have made our Tribal health system so successful. We strongly feel that regional Tribal health organizations should take ownership for programs like Camp Coho at the local level to be able to facilitate in a culturally responsive manner within their respective region. ANTHC staff are available to offer technical support and training for the camp logistics.

Does my Tribal health organization need clinicians to host a Camp Coho?

Camp Coho does not require a

clinician on site during camp. However, having someone with a clinical background available can be helpful for making observations during camp and debriefing with parents at the end of the camp day.

How can ANTHC support a Camp Coho in my region?

ANTHC can offer training, technical assistance and on-site support to a regional Tribal health organization offering its first camp.

Where can my Tribal health organization go for more information on Camp Coho?

You can find more information about how to host a Camp Coho in your

region by contacting Karen Morgan, ANTHC Program Coordinator, by email at kmmorgan@anthc.org or phone at (907) 729-4491.

Where can we go to find resources about cancer and cancer prevention?

You may find resources about cancer and cancer prevention by visiting ANTHC's website at anthc.org/cancer-program.

ALASKA NATIVE MEDICAL CENTER

ANMC prepared for earthquake safety

Recent earthquake activity in Anchorage had ANMC and Anchorage residents thinking about earthquake safety. This article was pulled from the Mukluk Telegraph archives.

When it opened on November 29, 1953, the Anchorage Medical Center of the Alaska Native Service was the largest civilian building in Alaska. The hospital experienced a great deal of change in its first 11 years in downtown Anchorage, but few things altered the facility more dramatically than the 9.2-magnitude earthquake that hit Alaska on Good Friday of 1964.

The earthquake caused a handful of deaths around the state and significant damage around Anchorage, particularly to downtown buildings and infrastructure. There were also large and small landslides around the Anchorage bowl. Then known as the Alaska Native Hospital Anchorage, the building sustained serious damage, particularly in its concrete support beams. And it narrowly avoided a deadly disaster — the hospital's north wing missed a landslide by a few hundred feet.

Following the earthquake, the general cleanup, plastering and painting was completed within a few months, but it took two full years to complete all of the structural repairs to the damage caused by the earthquake. That work mostly consisted of placing steel plates over damaged concrete to stabilize the structure.

Today, the Alaska Native Medical Center hospital is one of the safest places in Anchorage to be in the event of a large earthquake or natural disaster. According to Robert Wilson, ANTHC's longtime Director of Facilities Services, the hospital was designed to withstand a 9.5-magnitude seismic event and was intentionally built in the UMED area, which is one of the safest seismic locations in the Anchorage bowl.

In addition to being a safe haven during an earthquake, the ANMC hospital is also equipped for survival in the days following a catastrophic event. Onsite are:

- 100,000 gallons of potable water storage, including 40,000 gallons reserved for fire emergency
- Three 1,250-kilowatt emergency electrical generators for power
- 50,000 gallons of diesel fuel to be used in the event that natural gas or grid power is no longer available
- One 3,000-gallon primary, and one 300-gallon reserve, cryogenic (liquid) oxygen tanks
- Three high-pressure steam boilers, dual-fuel fired to use natural gas or diesel fuel
- One 5,000-gallon sanitary sewage holding tank to be used if gravity flow is lost on existing sewage lines

That's enough reserve essentials to probably keep ANMC running for up to five days in the summer and nearly four days at 20 below.

"So, the bottom line is given the



ANMC in former downtown Anchorage location after the 1964 Earthquake.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN EARTHQUAKE

(From the Federal Emergency Management Agency, more info at FEMA.gov)

- Secure items such as televisions and objects that hang on walls.
- Practice Drop, Cover, and Hold On with family and coworkers.
- Create a family emergency communication plan that has an out-of-state contact.
- Make a supply kit that includes enough food and water for at least three days, a flashlight, a fire extinguisher and a whistle.
- Consider a retrofit of your building if it has structural issues that make it vulnerable to collapse during an earthquake.

structural design, as well as these other on-site emergency capabilities, ANMC in my mind is the place to be," said Wilson. "Not to mention that we have a great staff that is really well-trained and will have high confidence if a situation were to occur."

I already have IHS care at my Tribal health clinic. Why do I need health insurance?

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is not health insurance. IHS provides many services, but it may not cover all your health care needs. There may be times when you need certain care that is not covered under IHS services at our Tribal hospitals or health clinics.

Many American Indian and Alaska Native people qualify for health insurance through Medicaid, Denali KidCare and the Health Insurance Marketplace. New health insurance options can give you the peace of mind knowing you are covered. When you have insurance, you can still get care from your Tribal health facility. Your

Tribal health provider can bill your new insurance for services, making more health care resources available for more people.

CAN I GET COVERAGE?

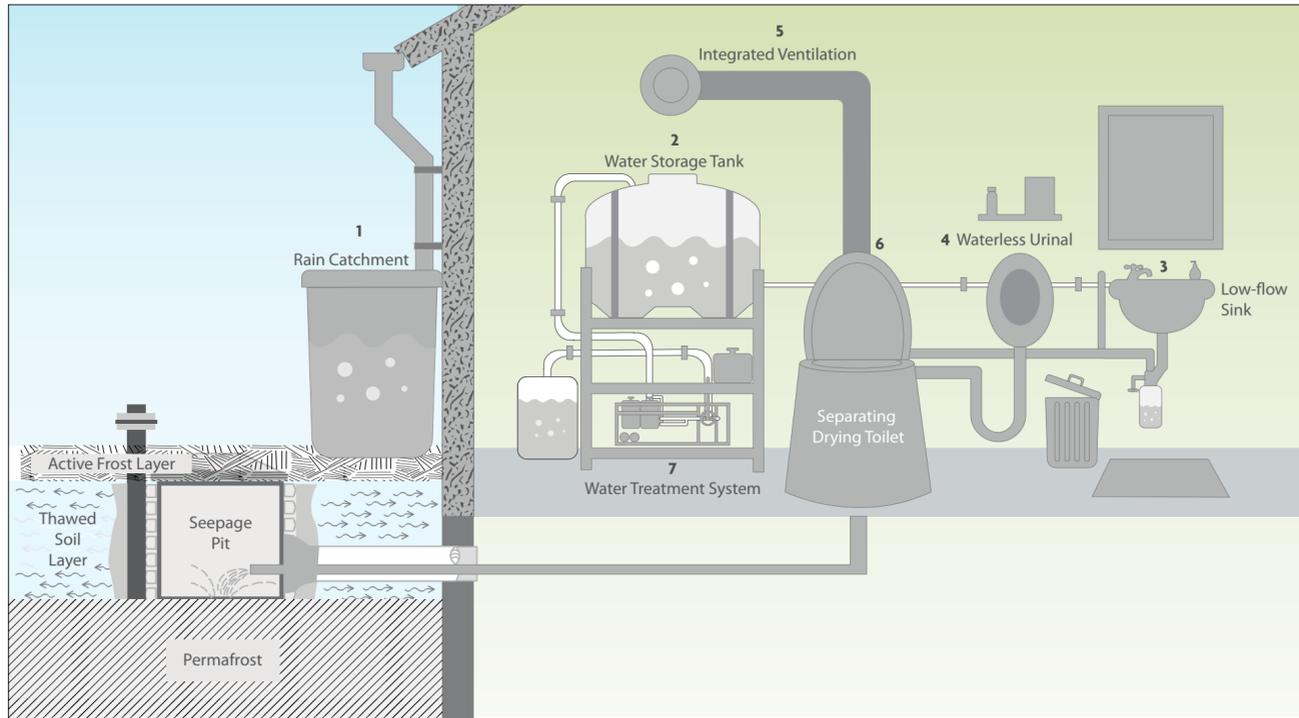
The Tribally-Sponsored Health Insurance Program (T-SHIP) provides health insurance coverage for you if you qualify.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION AND SIGN UP?

Visit anthc.org/tship to find the contact in your area. T-SHIP staff will see if you are eligible and help you with enrollment.

HEALTHY HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

Portable Alternative Sanitation System connects in-home sanitation systems where it was impossible before



Healthy homes and communities are the foundation for improving the health of Alaska Native people. Many Alaska villages continue to need adequate sources of water to meet health and hygiene needs, and facilities that can safely dispose of their wastewater.

Today, 33 Alaskan communities still use the honey bucket. For some of these communities, the possibility of eliminating the honey bucket and the health hazards that go with it seem to be getting farther out of reach as climate change threatens opportunities for traditional piped water and sewer service.

Climate change is creating new challenges in providing access to in-home water and sanitation systems. Many of the remaining unserved communities face significant challenges to building and supporting sanitation systems in part because of their small size, lack of available fresh water, unique soil conditions and often their status as “environmentally threatened communities” at risk to the effects of climate change.

INNOVATIVE HEALTH SOLUTIONS: PORTABLE ALTERNATIVE SANITATION SYSTEM

In response to this issue, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium developed the Portable Alternative Sanitation System or PASS. The PASS is an intermediate solution for protecting public health in communities without piped water and sewer systems, and it functions as a stepping-stone toward more permanent sanitation solutions. ANTHC engineers designed PASS to contend with two major problems

RESEARCH STUDY: UNDERSTANDING THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF THE PORTABLE ALTERNATIVE SANITATION SYSTEM

In order to understand the health benefits of PASS, the National Tribal Water Center (NTWC) is conducting a health study to explore the ways that the system affects health and well-being in Kivalina and Newtok. Kivalina, in the Northwest Arctic Borough, has home with PASS currently installed. Newtok, in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, is relocating due to climate change and does not currently have PASS in homes. PASS will be a feature installed in homes in Newtok’s new village site Mertarvik as a way to provide water and sanitation for community members before piped infrastructure is funded and built.

Data on water use, water sources, and sanitation, as well as individuals’ perspectives on overall well-being will

face communities using honey buckets: health hazards and climate-necessary community relocation.

Health hazards from honey bucket use include potential contamination from servicing the honey bucket inside and outside of the home, as well as the issues from inadequate access to clean water. Having in-home water and sanitation makes hand washing and healthy hygiene practices easier, which have been shown to reduce illness according to public health research including reports from ANTHC research studies. Infants in

villages with limited water service have five times more hospitalizations for respiratory infection and 11 times more hospitalizations for pneumonia than the overall U.S. population.

The second issue is community relocation due to climate change. As communities experience the effects of climate change, such as erosion due to lack of sea ice coverage and thawing permafrost, their need to relocate grows imminent. Communities identified as imminently

See Page 11, PASS

be collected before and after PASS is installed in homes in order to see any changes in water access, usage, sanitation, and health of the community members who participate in the study. NTWC hopes to learn how, or if, the system changes water use, germs in the home, visits to the doctor, and the way that people feel.

Researchers will collect data during each of the four seasons in all of the communities. The PASS Health and Wellbeing Study is currently funded for two years through ANTHC and the American Indian/Alaska Native Clinical and Translational Research program of the National Institutes of Health. The Alaska Area Institutional Review Board, ANTHC, and the regional health organizations Maniilaq Association and Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation all approved NTWC interviewing homeowners and collecting data for the health research study.

PASS

Continued from page 10

threatened are ineligible for federal and state-funded projects constructing permanent sanitation infrastructure. Because of this, identifying sanitation infrastructure funding for these communities at their current locations can pose a challenge.

HOW THE PORTABLE ALTERNATIVE SANITATION SYSTEM WORKS

PASS addresses the public health issue by providing basic water and sanitation needs in the home. Treated water in a storage tank and a bathroom

sink replaces the handwashing basin to make handwashing easier and more frequent. The PASS urine-diverting (UD) toilet provides an alternative to the honey bucket. The UD toilet eliminates the need to dispose of the large quantities of the odorous, mixed-liquid wastes associated with honey buckets. Separating urine from feces reduces odor. In addition, PASS is constantly ventilated to the outdoors, which further controls odors and allows solid waste to dry. Dried feces can be disposed of in the landfill or burned, and the small amounts of urine can be disposed of into the ground (see diagram on previous page).

Since PASS is portable, if homes need to relocate away from an eroding riverbank or coastline, PASS units can move with homes. Relocated community members will not have to rely on honey buckets while waiting for community water pipe installation.

Over the last three years, ANTHC has constructed and tested the PASS in five communities and as a result of these tests upgraded the PASS to improve the toilet design and water system aesthetics in response to feedback. PASS installations are in Kivalina, Oscarville, Chalkyitsik, Allakaket and Alatna. All systems, including the first installed in Kivalina,

have received the upgraded toilets. Federal funding agencies have taken notice of the portability factor, and they are beginning to support PASS projects in honey bucket communities. Through PASS, the promise of one day putting the honey bucket in the museum may finally be fulfilled.

Designing alternative sanitation solutions in the most challenging locations and helping communities that are most threatened by a changing Arctic is a priority for ANTHC Environmental Health and Engineering staff.



BASIC FISH TACOS

INGREDIENTS:

- *1 pound cooked fish
- *1 medium onion, chopped
- *2 cups cabbage, shredded
- *1 cup fresh or canned tomatoes, diced
- *1-2 tablespoons oil
- *Tortillas or taco shells
- Taco seasoning

BEYOND:

- Try using *salmon, cod, halibut, sheefish, whitefish, flounder or rockfish.
- Add a variety of vegetables, such as: bell peppers, *lettuce, red or *green cabbage, *corn, jicama, *cauliflower, or squash.
- Enhance flavor by adding salsa, hot sauce, cilantro, guacamole, sour cream, lime juice, jalapeños, wild chives or beach lovage.
- Use healthy cooking oils, such as olive or canola.
- Experiment with healthy options such as *beans, *wild or brown rice, *cheese, plain yogurt, avocado, black olives, mango or pineapple.
- Try making your own tortillas with *blue or *yellow cornmeal.
- Create your own taco seasoning with: 2 tablespoons chili powder, 2 teaspoons cumin, 1 teaspoon garlic powder and red pepper flakes to taste.

* INDICATES FDPIR FOOD

DIRECTIONS:

1. Sauté cabbage and onion in oil until tender.
2. Add cooked fish, spices and tomatoes.
3. Mix gently until warmed through.
4. Serve in warm tortillas or taco shells.

This recipe is from the 2019 Basics and Beyond calendar for Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) participants and eligible families, created by ANTHC’s Health Promotion Program. Every recipe in the calendar includes a “beyond” section that provides tips on how to transform and enhance basic recipes by adding more fruits and vegetables, traditional foods and other healthy FDPIR food options to create delicious, flavorful meals, snacks, condiments and more.

Our vision is that Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world. Learn more at www.anthc.org.



HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PREVENTION

Reduce risk of winter slips and falls

As the winter months set in and walkways become slick with snow and ice, the risk of falling increases, even amongst the most surefooted of us. Anyone can experience a slip and fall, leading to injuries ranging from a minor scrape to as serious as a broken bone or traumatic brain injury, or even worse, a fatality.

From 2012 to 2015, the rate of Alaska Native fatalities from fall injuries (13.6 per 100,000, age adjusted) was 67 percent higher than that of Alaska non-Natives (6.8 per 100,000, age adjusted) and 31 percent higher than that of all races in the U.S. (8.6 per 100,000, age adjusted).

To help prevent a slip and fall when it's icy out, clear off snow and ice on entry and walkways, wear appropriate shoes with good gripping soles, take extra time and small careful steps. Keep a mat near the doorway for wiping shoes or keep a broom handy for knocking off snow.

For our Alaska Native Elders, the threat of severe injury or fatality from a fall increases and often happens indoors. For Alaska Native Elders age 60 and older:

- 4 out of every 5 hospitalizations for



Oograk boots with Yaktrax.

injuries were caused by a fall;

- 2 out of 3 due to falls in the home.

TIPS FOR FALL PREVENTION

The Centers for Disease Control provides safety tips on how to prevent Elders from suffering an injury due to a trip and fall:

1. TALK TO YOUR PROVIDER

- Ask your doctor or health care

provider to evaluate your risk for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do.

- Ask your provider to review medicines you take to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy.
- Ask your doctor or health care provider about taking vitamin D supplements and eating food rich in calcium.

2. DO STRENGTH AND BALANCE EXERCISES

Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance.

3. HAVE YOUR EYES CHECKED

Have your eyes checked at least once a year and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed. If you have bifocal or progressive lenses, you may want to get a pair of glasses with only your distance prescription for outdoor activities, such as walking. Sometimes these types of lenses can make things seem closer or farther away than they really are.

4. MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

- Get rid of things you could trip over.
- Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet.
- Put railings on both sides of stairs.
- Make sure your home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs.

For more tips, visit [cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/falls/adultfalls.html](https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/falls/adultfalls.html).

Alaska youth invited to PLAAY Day on Feb. 21

Jumping, dancing and fun await 10,000 Alaskan children from Ketchikan to Kotzebue and all points in between on Feb. 21 – the statewide PLAAY Day, an event celebrating the importance of incorporating physical activity into our daily routines.

At 10 a.m. on Feb. 21, elementary-aged students will be led in a series of synchronized exercises and adaptable body movements aimed to keep Alaska children active and healthy. Positive Leadership for Active Alaska Youth, or “PLAAY” Day, partners with ANTHC, University of Alaska Anchorage Health, Physical Education and Recreation department and GCI to present the event across Alaska. UAA students will host children in person at the Special Olympics facility in Anchorage. Simultaneously, children in rural communities across the state are invited to follow along via a streaming video link, utilizing technology provided by GCI.

“Empowering our children with an opportunity for fun interactive play and a strong sense of community not only strengthens their sense of belonging, it also gives them another layer of protective factors they can



draw from as they enter adolescence,” said Dr. Tina Woods, ANTHC Senior Director of Community Health Services.

ANTHC has been a key sponsor of PLAAY Day since its inception. Our Healthy People and Prevention work focuses on preventative health services

and programs to elevate the health status of Alaska Native people.

PLAAY is an initiative of the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame, dedicated to celebrating the positive impact of sports in Alaska. Sports and physical activity are effective ways to address childhood obesity and its associated

health risks. Adults play a key role in helping to encourage children to maintain a healthy weight and stay active. For more information on healthy activities for children, visit healthychildren.org.

For more information on PLAAY Day, visit [PLAAY.org](https://www.plaay.org).