



**Rural CAP**  
Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.

Rural Alaska  
Community Action Program

# Youth Engagement Programs



# Presentation Highlights

*RAY AmeriCorps Program*

*Elder Mentor Program*

*Resource Basket*

*Alaska Tribal Victim Services*

## Presenter and Team

*Cathie Clements, Community Services Director*

*Cuckoo Gupta, Youth and Community Programs Manager*

*Emma Zayon, AmeriCorps Program Coordinator*





# Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP)

## 60 Year History

### Mission

*To empower low-income Alaskans through advocacy, education, affordable housing, and direct services that respect our unique values and cultures*

### Vision

*Healthy People, Sustainable Communities,  
Vibrant Cultures*





# RurAL CAP's AmeriCorps Programs

## 30 Year History

- 1994 – AmeriCorps created nationwide
- 1995 – EPA and RurAL CAP partnered to establish first AmeriCorps program serving rural Alaska
- **RAVEN AmeriCorps Program** –  
*Rural Alaska Village Environmental Network*  
AmeriCorps Members worked to support environmental education, solid waste management, recycling, and other local priorities
- **RAY AmeriCorps Program** –  
*Resilient Alaska Youth (RAY)* Engaging youth in healthy activities that build skills and promote youth and community wellness



# Resilient Alaska Youth (RAY) AmeriCorps

**GOAL** – Promote positive youth development and skills that build resiliency and protect youth from risk of substance abuse or suicide

Evidence-informed model

**Protective factors for youth resiliency:**

- connection to culture
- meaningful relationship with adults
- finding meaning and purpose in activities





# RAY AmeriCorps Members

- 15 RAY AmeriCorps members, ages 18+, are recruited from their rural communities each year
- Serve as Youth Activities Coordinator
- Members serve for 11-12 months and receive a monthly stipend of **\$1,700** and an education award of **\$7,395** after completion of service.
- AmeriCorps Members may serve up to 4 years
- Local organizations provide supervision and support (Tribes, schools, and city governments)
- RurAL CAP provides support, training, peer connections, plus \$1,000 supply fund
- Focus on career development, including in person and virtual training



# Youth Activities – Designed by Each Community

- **In-School** - presentations during assemblies or class, support for special events
- **Afterschool** - youth group activities:
  - **Cultural:** subsistence hunting and gathering, beading, skin sewing, traditional dancing, drum making, and language preservation
  - **Service Projects:** community wellness activities, assisting Elders, community clean-ups, recycling
  - **Peer Mentoring**
- **Multi-Day** - culture week, culture camps and overnight hunting trips





# RAY Outcomes

- 250+ youth participate every year
- 150+ community volunteers supporting youth activities

## 2022-23 Evaluation Results

- Increase in youth self-perception as a community leader
- Increase in community engagement
- Increase in identifying value of the land they live on

*In many communities, RAY offers one of the only afterschool or summer program available*



# Current AmeriCorps Member Sites

Alakanuk Tribal Council  
Cordova - Prince William Sound Science Center  
Igiugig Tribal Village Council  
Kokhanok Village Council  
Koyukuk Ella B. Verneti School  
Mentasta Traditional Council  
Native Village of Nanwalek  
New Stuyahok Traditional Council  
Native Village of Ouzinkie  
Russian Mission Tribal Council  
Scammon Bay School



# 2025 AmeriCorps Recruitment

Recruiting for 15 new and continuing AmeriCorps members and host organizations

Applications due end of June for positions that start in August

Applications and Info:

[RurAL CAP | The Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.](#)

[americorps@ruralcap.org](mailto:americorps@ruralcap.org)

907-764-4983





# Elder Mentor Program

Engages Senior volunteers, ages 55+, in supporting healthy youth development



# Elder Mentor Volunteers

- 55 years +
- 5-40 hrs/week (20 + Hours per month)

## Benefits

- Small “thank you” stipend
  - \$4.00 per hour for volunteering
- Tax exempt, income exempt
  - Income from this program is not reported.
- Transportation and meals reimbursement
- Training opportunities
- Share knowledge and wisdom to shape future generations





# Benefits to Children

- Positive relationship with Elders
- Positive role models
- Children get one-on-one support
- Connection to history, culture and values – and sense of who they are
- Kids know that the Elders are there out of love and compassion – this builds self esteem





# Benefits to Teachers

- Support in the classroom
- Extra attention to students with needs
- Bringing culture and values to learning
- Elders contribute to learning through traditional ways
- Bridging the gap between school and community



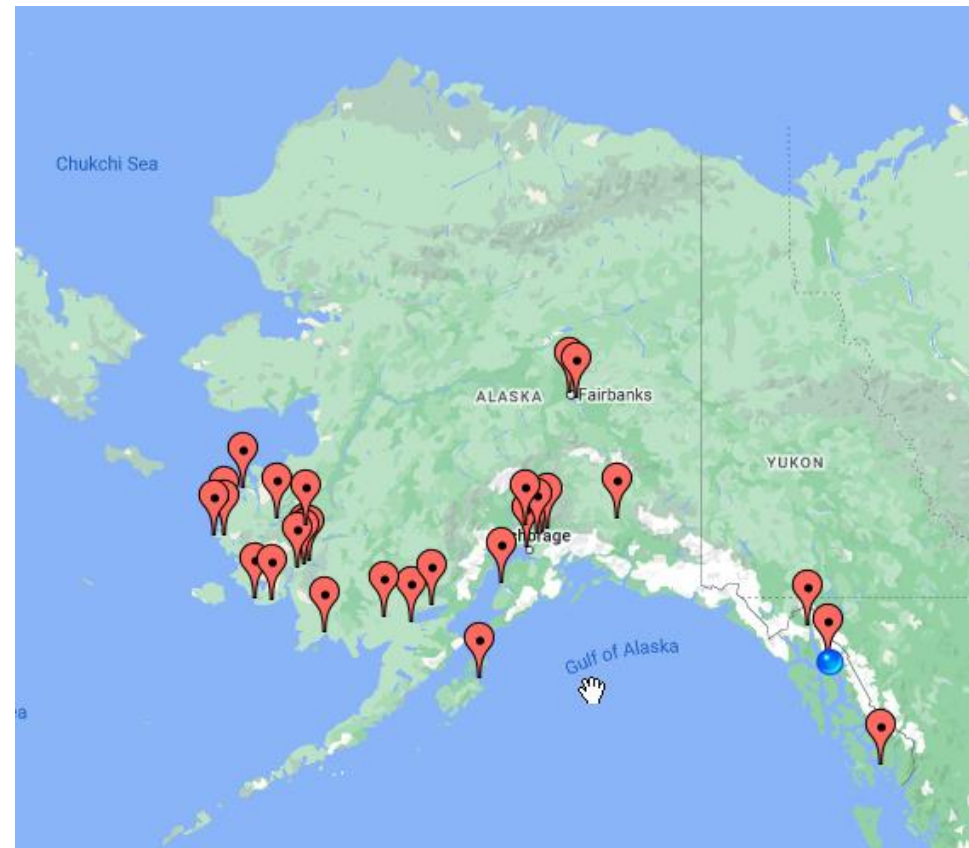
# Impact

- 80+ Elder Volunteers
- 30+ Communities
- 2500 + Youth

Recruiting for more!

Open enrollment

[www.eldermentor.org](http://www.eldermentor.org)





# The Resource Basket

Training and technical assistance to Tribes, rural communities and service providers as they grow healthy, successful and culturally connected Alaska Native Youth

Supports:

- DOJ's **Tribal Youth Program** grantees
- DOJ's **Juvenile Healing to Wellness** grantees
- All service providers for youth





# Resource Basket Offers

- Access to a network of youth serving partners and tribal organizations
- Online training and resources
- Phone/web consultation
- Statewide and regional training
- Community-based training and technical assistance
- Peer-to-peer training and exchanges



# Resource Basket – Funding for Tribes

DOJ's Office for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

## Tribal Youth Program Grantees

- Chickaloon Traditional Village Council
- Louden Village Council
- Hoonah Indian Association
- Huslia Village
- Knik Tribe
- Salmatof Tribal Council
- Kawerak
- Kotlik Village Council
- Fairbanks Native Association
- Kipnuk Traditional Council
- Port Heiden
- Aleut Community of St.Paul Island
- Qagan Tayaguning Tribe (Sand Point)
- Native Village of Selawik

- Tetlin Village Council
- Healy Lake Village Council
- Copper River Native Association
- Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
- Maniilaq Association

## Juvenile Healing to Wellness Grantees

- Chickaloon Traditional Village Council
- Kongiganak Native Village
- Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes
- Orutsaramiut Native Council

# Resource Basket

How to receive grant funds for

- Tribal Youth Programs
- Juvenile Healing to Wellness Courts??

Apply to DOJ's Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS)

[FY25 U.S. Department of Justice Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation | Bureau of Justice Assistance](#)

CTAS typically opens in December, with grants due in March





# Resource Basket – Other Funding for Youth Projects

## Youth Development and Culture Grants

- \$8,000 - \$16,000 per grant
- Applications open July 1

## RurAL CAP Foundation

- \$500 - \$25,000 per grant for a variety of educational, wellness, cultural, and capacity-building activities in rural communities.
- Applications due April 30, August 31, November 30

## More information and resources:

[The Resource Basket – Alaska Native Youth](#)

[RurAL CAP Foundation | Alaska Grants](#)

# Alaska Tribal Victim Services

Training and technical assistance for Tribes on developing and operating victim service programs

Supports:

- **Denali Commission** grantees
- Other Tribes interested in developing victim service programs

Grant funds for Tribes:

- DOJ's, Office for Victims of Crime, Tribal Victim Services Set Aside Funding
- [Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside | AI/AN Victim Services Resource](#)



Bay Haven Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Shelter  
Hooper Bay, Alaska

# Contact Info

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907-764-4983

*Elder Mentor Program*  
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**Thank you**

Healthy People | Sustainable Communities | Vibrant Cultures