“In our language, in the Tanacross dialect, they say ‘ntsîn ntsîn’ which means ‘we are few’. TCC allows us, through banding together, become bigger. ‘Nił’éł’—together—is forever more intense in terms of its need today, because of the complexity of the lifestyles that are prevalent today.”

Jerry Isaac
President 2006-2014
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
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“It’s still kind of amazing to me where we came from, just a few people with a good idea. You can change the world, you’ve just gotta do it.”

Al Ketzler, Sr. -
President 1962-1964 & 1968-1972
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
Traditional Chiefs - 1915
Top left to right: Chief William, Paul Williams, Chief Charlie of Minto
Bottom left to right: Chief Alexander, Chief Thomas, Chief Evan, Chief Alexander William
Dear Tribal Members and Beneficiaries,

This convention marks one year since I was elected as Tanana Chiefs Conference President and I am thankful for the honor and privilege to serve the 42 members of our region.

During my first month of presidency, I outlined my initial objectives for the organization:

1. **Improve the delivery of Customer Service**; assuring that our tribes, tribal members, customers and business partners are highly satisfied with the services they receive.
2. **Identify the must-do’s (Vital Few)** to be accomplished within the year.
3. **Develop a Community Resource Guide** that will improve communication and awareness of services TCC provides to each community.
4. **Develop a Five-Year Strategic Plan 2015-2020** that is in alignment with our tribes, executive board and administration.

To be more efficient and to assure success in achieving our strategic goals, we re-organized our non-health programs into one department. Today TCC has three departments: Administration, Health and Tribal Client Services (TCS) that work together to achieve the goals and directives of our tribes.

This year I travelled to nearly 30 communities in the region to meet with tribal councils and members to ensure that TCC’s planning remained in alignment with the tribes. In November, TCC held a special delegates meeting where tribal leadership met to review, revise and approve TCC’s 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

As part of the Strategic Plan, departments were asked to identify the Vital Few objectives that were to be completed by the end of the year. You can find the objectives identified by our departments and how they achieved them in the ‘Presidents Report: Significant Accomplishments of TCC’s Strategic Objectives’ booklet.

“Remember our past, know what we need today and always plan for the future.”

Victor Joseph, TCC President
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
While it was important for us to identify our immediate goals, there were several reoccurring concerns brought up during my meetings with tribal leadership. A few of the main concerns included the king salmon decline, housing shortages, climate change, Land into Trust and more recently the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It’s important for us to address these issues in our strategic plan and prioritize them as a need for our communities.

In order for us to be successful we must work together to achieve the goals outlined by our leaders. We must continue to advocate for a meaningful voice in the management of our fish and game, the protection of traditional lands of our people, and the authority for our tribes to self-govern. This fight is long-standing, from when our Chiefs first met with Judge Wickersham to today. We must continue this battle on all fronts to ensure that our way of life stays intact while the increasing pressure of development on traditional lands is all around us and our sovereign authority is consistently challenged.

This July TCC will commemorate the centennial anniversary of the 1915 meeting of Tribal Chiefs with Judge Wickersham, where Interior native leaders fought to protect our land and way of life. It is important for us to honor this historic meeting, as it served as a catalyst that propelled TCC to where it stands today. Our tribal leaders came together to fight for a common goal.

This is why the theme for this year’s TCC Convention is Stronger Together for the Next 100 Years. It is through unity that we find strength.

I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the coming years.

Ana Basee,

Victor Joseph
TCC President

“It is through unity that we find strength.”

- Victor Joseph, TCC President
Accounting and Finance

TCC’s Fiscal Year 2014 was successful overall. We had an increase in net position of $16.6 million, or 30%. A total of $14 million of this increase was from the Indian Health Service (IHS) paying the full amount of the agreed $30 million joint venture staffing package halfway through the year and it is taking time to ramp up the clinic to be fully staffed.

Unrestricted net assets decreased by $355 thousand primarily due to the administrative pool expenses being higher related to the opening of the clinic while at the same time not being able to recover indirect on the increased funding that was not spent in 2014 and was carried over into 2015.

To show some historical perspective, from FY 2009 to FY 2014, TCC had revenues increase 81% and net assets increase 59%. We currently expect this to continue in FY 2015 with revenues increasing to 102% and net assets to 100% from FY 2009 to FY 2015. As TCC grows, please be patient as we may see growing pains as our support services grow along with the rest of the company.

Accounting and Finance maintains its mission to look for ways to be fiscally conservative in order to continue to provide increased services in a sustainable manner into the future.

For more detailed information on our audit, please refer to the FY14 Financial Statements, Supplementary Information & Single Audit Report.

By the end of 2014, TCC had 729 employees. 60% of those employees were Alaska Native and 30% of jobs were based in rural villages.

Human Resources

By the end of 2014, TCC had 729 employees. 60% of those employees were Alaska Native and 30% of jobs were based in rural villages. Over the past year, Human Resources (HR) has focused efforts on improving the hiring process, providing meaningful training, and creating village job opportunities. In 2014, HR was able to shorten its portion of the hiring process to 22-27 days (down from 35-40 days).

HR has been providing training for managers as they improve their hiring processes, as well as collaborating with IT on a revamp of Oracle iRecruitment. For new hires, as well as others, production has begun on a cultural sensitivity training video. Monthly Leadership Development training continues, and we are working with consultants to improve training delivery through Oracle Learning Management. In addition, HR continues to work closely with our benefits broker to ensure compliance with the Affordable Care Act. For 2015, we aim to bring more awareness to employees about how to utilize their available benefits.

The new Rural Jobs Creation and Compensation work group reviewed positions across TCC, flagging those that could be village-based given adequate technology. A new “region-wide” category in Oracle will allow these positions to draw from an increased pool of applicants. We will continue to recruit for location-specific positions, and innovate the structure, scope, and pay scale of positions to promote stability.
Information Technology

In 2014, Information Technology continued its mission to provide strong leadership, communication, and advocacy to the Tribes it serves. We secured a three-year seat on the Native Nations Tribal Broadband Task Force under the FCC Office of Native Affairs and Policy. The task force is responsible for the advancement and expansion of broadband and wireless services in Indian Country. We established membership on the FirstNet Tribal Working Group under the Federal Commerce Department, which is responsible for advancing the development of the next generation emergency 911 services across the United States. We aim to standardize quality healthcare by securing and providing support for highly reliable and advanced information technology systems.

In 2015, our goals include striving for excellent financial management and strong financial performance. We hope to achieve full participation in TCC IT Governance to ensure that financial resources are effectively put towards projects and services to support TCC strategic goals. Methods for accomplishing this will include staff training and standardizing equipment and systems across the region.

With the provisions of a new five-year contract for increased village broadband connectivity to the clinics, we have paved the way for the expansion of broadband to our Tribal offices and eventually residential customers. This will also allow for decentralization of TCC jobs to be region wide.
**Communications**

The Communications Department strives to convey TCC’s key messages and inform tribal members of services while positively reflecting the region’s land, culture and people. We have assisted the Culture & Traditions committee in driving this effort by producing a TCC history video, planning TCC’s 100 Year Commemoration event, supporting culture and language revitalization camps, and many other activities. We have also started production on a training video that will help raise employee awareness of the different cultures valued throughout the TCC region.

We continue to work with Health Services to promote the work they do, including creating a brief video documentary that highlights the impact Housing First has had on the Fairbanks homeless. Our three-minute “Centering Pregnancy” video for the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) promotes their newest initiative. Finally, to promote TCC’s new Tobacco-Free Policy, we drafted digital and print content, and created youth pledge cards in both Gwich’in and Koyukon.

We continue to produce The Council Newsletter and have increased our social media presence, garnering a 46% increase in Facebook likes over the past year, bringing the total up to 2,729. Goals for 2015 include gaining a comparable bump in Twitter followers and maximizing our YouTube channel, as well as increasing our radio presence and continuing to improve the navigability and accuracy of content on the TCC website.

**Legal**

In 2014, Legal Services remained committed to strong leadership, communication, and advocacy. At the state level, we coordinated the Alaska Regional Coalition, a partnership of four Native non-profits advocating rural priorities in Juneau. We also organized the Spring and Winter Interior Delegation meetings, worked with Senator Coghill to expedite the return of land to Native allotment applicants and coordinated TCC’s participation in Ambler mine road meetings.

At the federal level, we worked with The Pew Charitable Trusts to draft government-to-government relationship Memoranda Of Understanding with Bureau of Land Management for management plan coordination, assisted Tribal Client Services on goals towards stronger Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) advocacy partnerships, organized leadership talking points for President Obama’s tribal delegates meetings, and organized travel to Washington, D.C. for advocacy work on appropriations, self-government amendments, and Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance.

We coordinated efforts to reduce program cuts due to state budget issues, advocated for funding increases for multiple programs, and promoted the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) self-government amendments for more-flexible funding. In addition to helping tribes and staff confidently navigate workers compensations, subpoenas, and court orders, we drafted HUD home resident lease agreements, edited the Civil Diversion Agreement for better alignment with tribes, advocated with Environmental Health for safer water and sewers, and helped develop a restorative justice program. We also assisted out-of-state child protection cases, potential banishment proceedings, and petitions for transfer of jurisdiction from state to tribal court. We continue to advocate for affordable broadband for rural Alaska. We plan to utilize the TCC website to communicate tribal advocacy efforts.

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[www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)
**Advocacy**

TCC Advocates on both national and state levels. Federal advocacy included attending conferences, writing letters of support and appeal to Senators and other representatives, meeting with policymakers and organization representatives, co-leading Indian Health Service’s negotiations, giving testimony, and filing emergency petitions related to bycatch regulations. Subsistence fisheries were a primary focus of our advocacy efforts this year. We wrote to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council regarding Agenda Item C-5 Chinook/Chum Bycatch, and to Senators Begich and Murkowski regarding the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Regarding the Fish Commission, we met on separate occasions with Don Young, Lisa Murkowski, and the Department of the Interior Deputy Secretary.

State advocacy included direct engagement with policymakers, including letters to Senators Kelly, Coghill, and Bishop regarding the Alaska Judicial structure, and executive board meetings with Interior legislators. We hosted the Alaska Interior Legislative Breakfast at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center, met with Byron Mallott, and engaged with the Office of Governor Sean Parnell regarding Village Energy Efficiency Program (VEEP). The TCC President met with Senator Click Bishop, Representative Dave Talerico, and Commissioner Val Davidson.

We advocated with Alaska Department of Fish and Game regarding ongoing bycatch and subsistence issues, and participated in the Walk for Tsucde: Subsistence March. TCC hosted the Education Summit, and attended Allakaket and Fairbanks meetings to discuss Ambler Road plans.

We remain strongly committed to advocating on behalf of our people’s cultural, spiritual, and nutritional health and strength.
“Advice to future leaders: Get your education. If you have bad habits—dump them, just get rid of them. You have to take care of yourself.”

Will Mayo - President 1991-1999

Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
Tribal Client Services

TCC Presidents - 2014
Top left to right: Will Mayo, Steve Ginnis, Jerry Isaac, Victor Joseph
Bottom left to right: Spud Williams, Melvin Charlie, Tim Wallis, Al Ketzler, Sr.

Historical photos of TCC Presidents
Dear TCC Tribal Membership,

Since coming back on staff, after a fifteen year break, I have been having the time of my life. I love working for the Tribes and helping carry the load with the wonderful team of employees working for you. Being gone for so long has given me a different perspective of TCC, there are others that have received much-needed attention. Certainly, our theme for this year’s convention, “Stronger together for the next 100 years,” strikes just the right note as we progress along the path President Joseph is forging towards our goal of “Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes.”

One hundred years ago our chiefs met with Judge Wickersham to talk about some important issues of the day. Wickersham wanted to talk about land claims but the chiefs brought up jobs, contracts, education, and health care. Today we face these same needs but much progress has been made.

The reports that follow are the operations of the Tribal Client Services Department, or “TCS” for short. This is the department that I manage for you. It is comprised of three Divisions: Tribal Development, Client Development, and Natural and Cultural Resources. We have 40 different programs.

TCC has two other departments in addition to TCS: Administration and Health. The formation of TCS is a recent development and did not exist with that name until last October when President Joseph created it to give a home to a collection of programs that were previously referred to as “TCC non-Health Programs.”

The new title for my department has brought us together as an identifiable team of employees. I am truly proud to work with the professionals on the TCS team. They work so hard to bring quality services to our region. I hope you can take the time to carefully read their reports contained herein.

Due to the recent challenges of our state and federally based funding sources, the TCS team is seeking alternative programs for TCC and the Tribes from other sources. A recent report I heard says that across all departments of the Federal Government, there are about 29 billion dollars identified for Tribes and Native people. The BIA portion of that is only about 2.6 billion, so that means there is a lot more we could be going after to address unmet needs of our people.

I hope you enjoy the reports provided here. They represent a large portion of TCC operations important for our members.

Ana Basee,
Will Mayo
Executive Director of Tribal Client Services
TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

Self Governance

The intent of the Self Governance program is to enable Tribes to develop the administrative capacity necessary to become effective sovereign governments. A Tribe shares this intent by entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) relationship with TCC, which gives them the opportunity to expand their administrative capacity at their own pace. Careful expansion will help prepare them for a successful transition to contracting their own Federal funds directly with Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Self Governance program assists each member Tribe in their effort to self-govern by providing quality training and technical assistance unique to their tribal needs. The training and technical assistance provided by the Self Governance program is approached as a partnered effort. Tribes communicate to the Self Governance staff their capacity building needs and the Self Governance staff develops tools and training workshops to meet those needs.

This year the Self Governance Program, along with Human Resources and Accounting Departments, provided training workshops that coincided with the fall subregional meetings. We also conducted our annual Tribal Administrator (TA) training in Fairbanks April 8-10, 2014 at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center. 25 Tribal Administrators participated in the training.

In FY 2014, Self Governance staff made 56 on-site visits, processed 319 Village Travel Authorizations, funded the employment of 26 Tribal Administrators, processed 1,734 check requests (for a total of $6,734,537), and assisted with 122 budget revisions.

Tribal Government Services

Tribal Government Services supports the vision of Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes through technical assistance, training, and guidance. In 2014, we facilitated a 3-day tribal justice class in Tok, a 3-day tribal justice track within the Alaska Rural Providers Conference, and 3-day tribal court judge and clerk training and Alaska Tribal Court Development Conference in partnership with the National Judicial College. Other trainings included circle sentencing, court development, and code drafting.

We continue to provide constitution and code development services for regional tribes, and conferred with 15 tribes in the region regarding election issues. Our Alaska Tribes documentary film aired on many occasions on statewide television. We continue to work with tribal office personnel, TCC program staff and the general public on issues concerning tribal membership, ranging from Affordable Care Act (ACA) logistics to tracking tribal member numbers.

In 2014, we provided tribal court assistance by analyzing Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) between tribes and the Division of Juvenile Justice, as well as between tribes and the Alaska Attorney General to handle misdemeanor offenses. We also worked with state court judges on circle sentencing outreach strategy, advocated for improved integration of tribal justice education into the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) Justice Center, and facilitated and supported numerous child protection efforts.
Public Safety

The Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program’s 2014 initiatives included increasing presence in villages and trooper-coordinated policing, bolstering community policing, engaging in youth outreach, including attending the Denakanaaga Youth and Elders Conference in Minto, purchasing upgraded equipment, and increasing training and recruitment efforts. We also implemented a VPSO Field Training Officer Program, started a VPSO infrastructure plan, and now require new hires to pass (and all VPSOs to take) an annual physical fitness test.

We completed installation of the Digital Fingerprint Machines (located in Anvik, McGrath, Galena, Tanana, Fort Yukon, and Tok, and supplemented with portable units elsewhere). The VPSO Program coordinator made 23 village visits for patrols, meetings with tribal councils, or other support work within those communities.

VPSO Firearms legislation was signed into law in July, and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and VPSO coordinators have established an implementation plan. With approval of the tribe they serve, VPSOs who wish to carry a firearm will undergo a physical fitness test, background check, and psychological evaluation, in addition to training at the Department of Public Safety Training Academy in Sitka. Three TCC representatives will be among the first VPSOs to attend the 16-week Alaska Law Enforcement Training there. Additionally, a VPSO will attend the VPSO Firearms Transitional Course in March and April.

The DPS, which funds the VPSO program, is looking at a 5%-8% budget reduction in FY16. We continue our efforts to meet growing public safety needs on a decreasing budget.

VPSO ANNUAL TRAINING: The TCC VPSOs had their Annual Training November 3-7, 2014 in Fairbanks where they had refresher courses in Ethics, Verbal Judo, Trauma Informed Care, Suicide Prevention, Tribal Courts, DUI training, Defensive Tactics, Alcohol and Drug Interdiction, Police Report Writing and Personal Trauma Kit Use. VPSOs are required to do 40 hours of training annually to maintain their certifications. This year we collaborated in-house TCC Behavioral Health Department, Tribal Courts Department, the Alaska State Trooper Academy Commander, along with AST and VPSO instructors.
**Housing**

The Housing Program oversees the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation’s Weatherization Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Program (BIA HIP). This year the Weatherization Program completed work on all 44 designated projects. Each home worked on received new smoke alarms, CO2 detectors, fire extinguishers, and Panasonic fans. The majority of materials installed for this project were heat-efficient windows. The program has been well received by our members, but was cut by 40% last year. We will travel to Juneau in February to advocate for the program.

The Housing Improvement grant, which began in 2013, funded $225,000 for one new construction in Hughes. The Housing Program met with the Tribe and client, a house package was selected, and the team determined where the new home was to be built. The new homeowners moved in October 2014.

The 2015 application process for The Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Program (BIA HIP) funding was opened to all villages in the TCC region in late fall of 2014. Our program contacted every village and provided the updated BIA HIP application, a checklist for supporting documents, income guidelines, and a flyer with an overview of the BIA HIP program. As of January 23, 2014, we had received 103 applications from thirteen different villages.

**Transportation**

In 2014, the Transportation Department assisted the compact tribes Kaltag, Grayling, and Shageluk to help develop long-range transportation plans and inventory updates to improve the health, safety and economic development of tribal members.

For the Grayling Third Street rehabilitation project, we collaborated with Western Federal Lands and completed a reconstruction design. Our transportation manager attended the City of Grayling monthly meeting in December to learn about the water system in Grayling, as that project will need to be completed before street reconstruction can begin. In Shageluk, we also worked with Western Federal Lands to develop plans, specifications, and an estimate package for the reconstruction of Housing Street. Transportation Manager made a site visit to Shageluk in July along with staff from Federal Highway Administration. In Grayling, with the leadership and assistance of Mickey Allen and NOVI Machinery, we offered a Heavy Equipment Maintenance and Repair Training.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities invited the TCC Transportation Manager to sit on the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Plan Transportation Advisory Committee. We will be working on updating the 20-year Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Transportation Plan, which will be incorporated into the State Transportation Plan.
Village Planning and Development

Since the January 2013 launch of the Village Planning & Development Program (VP&D), we have awarded 26 contracts to 16 different TCC communities. Contracts fund 16-week village-based Community Planning Specialist and Grant Development Specialist positions. The total FY15 contracts represent $239,400 of employment and training opportunities for TCC communities. In Northway, a half-contract model for Community Planning Specialist, with extensive TCC support, was successful. We are discussing using this model more widely.

The Community Planning Coordinator completed the Interior-specific guidebook “Planning for Your Community,” in collaboration with UAF staff. A comprehensive Village Planning and Development manual is being finalized, and will serve as the program’s standard operating procedure. We expanded use of Google tools for training and support; while this has sped completion of planning projects, slow internet in rural areas remains a challenge.

We seek to better support beginning grant writers in 2015. To help accomplish this and other goals, we have been learning from Planning and Development programs from around the state, such as Kawerak, Inc. We also continue to collaborate with institutional partners such as the University of Alaska Fairbanks’ Interior-Aleutians Campus (UAF I-AC) to expand training opportunities. Four of the 26 village-based employees sought to further their education by taking additional UAF courses. In spring 2015, I-AC will offer a permanent Grant Writing and Grants Management course using resources developed by TCC. Given the gains already seen from the program, we anticipate that by 2020 all TCC communities will have updated community plans.

Agriculture

The Tribes Extension Program aims to educate, engage, and support the communities of the TCC region through connection with UAF. Strategies for promoting healthy, self-sufficient people and communities focus on education, wellness through prevention and intervention, subsistence and food resources. In 2014, 27 workshops and courses were taught in Birch Creek, Koyukuk, Ruby, Northway, Tanacross, Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Palmer, as well as other communities using distance delivery, enrolling a combined total of 564 people.

We also assist in ordering agricultural supplies, starting individual gardens, and community gardens for subsistence gardening and providing seeds to tribal gardeners. To this end, seeds were sent to 23 Tribes for 412 tribal gardeners. Recipients are located widely throughout the region, including the villages of Alatna, Allakaket, Arctic Village, Beaver, Birch Creek, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Eagle, Evansville, Holy Cross, Hughes, Huslia, Manley, Minto, Nenana, Nikolai, Northway, Ruby, Tanacross, Tanana, Tetlin, Tok, and Venetie. In recent years, securing adequate funding has been an issue; one direct result has been a reduction in the Program Assistant’s hours from full to half-time employment.

Since the creation of the program in 2012 approximately 25 grants that we reportedly applied for, 11 were successfully awarded for a total of $574,712.
The annual Child Protection Program gift drive helped bring Christmas gifts to 71 children in custody. We would like to thank TCC employees for their ongoing support of this program.

**Workforce Development Program**

The Workforce Development Program continued its efforts to provide Financial Literacy training for interested communities in conjunction with the Earned Income Tax Credit program of the Alaska Business Development Center. Approximately 315 families were provided supportive services.

We provided childcare services to 1,098 children. We also closed 301 welfare cases because the participants gained employment and exceeded the income limits for the program. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program continues to experience an overall decrease in the number of Tribal Families requesting and receiving assistance this year. Rural cases accounted for approximately 55% of the total average annual caseload. We continue our initiative to match families in TCC villages with under-utilized resources, to consolidate assistance programs and funding, and to incorporate Individual Self Sufficiency Plans and increase the number of Tribal Work Experience Program (TWEP) Contracts for the General Assistance/TWEP Program.

While the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) discontinued funding for the Tribal Work Experience Program, clients receiving General Assistance (cash assistance payments) under the TCC P.L. 102-477 program are still required to work. General Assistance was provided to 576 individual clients in 31 village locations (in addition to 15-20 families, which received immediate assistance with referrals to other TCC P.L.102-477 assistance programs). In 2014, 97% of all General Assistance applicants completed and were following an Individual Self Sufficiency Plan.

**Fifteen Year Caseload Trend for Native Families Receiving Temporary Assistance**
Employment and Training

In 2014, we prevented barriers to employment by assisting with tools, transportation, hotel, meals, training, work-related clothing purchases including firefighting gear, and rental assistance. We offered computer training, collaborated with Interior-Aleutians Campus's Facilities Maintenance endorsement classes, and facilitated Fatherhood/Toyo Stove training in three sub-regions. We also offered soft skills development with resume, job search, and interview skills support, and updated on-site computers commonly used for job searches. Assistance with transportation ranged from car repairs and work-related taxi rides to bus tokens and acquiring driver’s licenses.

In collaboration with Doyon, Limited and Doyon Drilling, Inc., we facilitated the recruitment, interviewing, and selection of 18 Roustabout recruits for training and hire. One Tribal member was sent to semi-end dump truck training that pursued a job based on the training through the Teamsters union. Six Tribal members received Hazwoper refresher training, one attended Troubleshooting Wastewater training, and five attended Foreman training with Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA). Additionally, we helped two members with online flagging courses, two with North Slope Training Cooperative (NSTC) cards, two with Chauffeur’s licenses, one with pipe insulation training, three with book assistance, and two with obtaining business licenses.

In response to Resolution 2014-1: Winter Employment for Youth, submitted by Venetie Village Council, we applied for and received a State of Alaska grant to fund youth job-shadows in a field of their interest. Participants ages 16-24 can make up to $500 total with this grant in the winter months.

Eliza and Dan Winfrey awarded the Foster Parent of the year award at the 2014 TCC Convention.
A total of $147,827.45 was provided to Tribes, Native business owners and other employers to employ 164 youth in 27 Interior villages, in addition to 11 youth in Fairbanks.

25 students were funded to complete the driver’s education program to obtain a driver’s license under the “Get Driving” program.

Youth Services

The Youth Services provides short-term work experiences, GED assistance, career exploration, leadership training, educational incentives, funding for tutoring, career camps and supportive services for youth between 14-24 years of age.

TCC contracted with the Tribes to employ 164 youth in 27 villages during the summer of 2014; 11 youth hired were employed in Fairbanks. Youth program staff increased travel to the villages to meet with Tribal leadership, school personnel and youth. We implemented the new State of Alaska grant to promote youth job experience in winter months.

In addition, a strategic plan was developed to establish closer working relationships with area school districts and the Jobs Center to utilize their resume writing workshops and coordinate career awareness activities for youth.

The second annual Alaska Youth Academy was held in Fairbanks in July of 2014. TCC partnered with Alaska State Troopers, Village Public Safety Officers, U.S. Marshals and other Public Safety agencies. Youth Academy students spent one full week participating in workshops and classroom instruction including wilderness survival, CPR/First Aid, fire safety, crime scene investigation, defense tactics, career exploration, responsible decision-making and prevention of teen pregnancy. Twenty villages participated in the academy - Allakaket, Beaver, Circle, Dot Lake, Fairbanks, Fort Yukon, Galena, Holy Cross, Hughes, Huslia, Kaltag, Manley, Nenana, Nikolai, Northway, Nulato, Ruby, Tanana, and Venetie - and 41 youth attended and graduated.
**Education**

In 2014, TCC’s Education Program focused on deepening connections and opportunities between TCC and other educational institutions throughout the region. We organized and hosted an Education Summit for the TCC Region on August 5th and 6th in Fairbanks, which included topics such as best practices for implementing Athabascan language and culture in classrooms. Staff attended seven University of Alaska Chancellor’s Advisory Committee meetings on Native Education, four AK Native Studies Conference planning meetings, six Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Board Diversity meetings, and (via teleconference) two Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) meetings. We have also outlined potential collaborative projects that could be undertaken in collaboration with Interior School Districts.

Through Johnson O’Malley (JOM) funding, Tetlin and Nenana are planning culture camps for this coming summer. To compliment increased efforts to support cultural knowledge throughout our region, in 2015 we want to better train incoming teachers on our Athabascan culture before they begin to teach our children. We also hope to increase the number of AK Native teachers in schools.

The Interior Athabascan Tribal College (IATC), currently seeking accreditation, has been attending joint meetings with the TCC Education Council to ensure that all sub-regions within TCC are expressing their concerns of issues in education within our region. They also continue to seek funding to fill the position of IATC Director.
In 2014, we assisted 6 new families with children with disabilities apply to the Senior and Disabilities Services Grant program.

Developmental Disabilities Program

Developmental Disabilities program staff provided case management and advocacy for 31 clients and families residing in 18 Tribal villages and Delta, and provided oversight to 12 independently contracted Family Directed Respite Care Providers working 21 to 43 hours per month in 10 communities. Program staff traveled to Venetie, Nulato, and Galena. New staff traveled to Anchorage for a 3-day Care Coordination training and stayed in Fairbanks from October to December due to training and administrative grant activities. In Venetie, staff met with clients and provided outreach to the Tribal office personnel, local clinic staff, and schoolteachers.

Program staff co-facilitated the 2014 Day Rehabilitation Program June 18-20 with clients and staff from the Fairbanks Resource Agency (FRA). TCC clients from Ft. Yukon, Venetie, Nulato, and Delta participated with four additional FRA-served tribal members, three of whom reside outside the TCC region. Social activities strengthened socialization skills among people with disabilities, and contributed to a diverse cultural experience for all clients.

Throughout 2014, program staff participated in activities that promoted disabilities awareness, and our program itself. Activities included attending Key Coalition meetings, the Key Unity 2014 Dinner, and the Key Campaign Rally; contributing at 10 Disability Abuse Response Team (DART) meetings; and attendance at the 2014 “Elders in Training” Summit. Staff also participated in Care Coordination training this year. Finally, we received funding for the 3rd year of a 3-year State Community Developmental Disability Grant.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program assists individuals with documented physical or mental disabilities to prepare to obtain or retain employment in the competitive workforce, through self-employment, or by performing subsistence activities consistent with their individual strengths, capabilities, priorities and informed choices. In 2014, staff provided services to 69 Tribal members in 25 villages and Fairbanks. We have closed 19 of these cases in successful status. The overall success rate among 21 clients exiting the program was 90%.

Our staff has performed many outreach, advocacy, and service-related activities in 2014. We participated in three Disability White House teleconferences, six Alaska Center for the Blind teleconferences, 10 Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) teleconferences, and monthly Consortia for Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation (CANAR) teleconferences, among others. We attended the Statewide Choose Respect Rally in Fairbanks, the Elders in Training summit, and 9 TCC leadership trainings to improve supervisory skills and customer service.

We successfully navigated Workforce Innovation Act (WIA) reauthorization in June; the organization is undergoing a name change and will be the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) effective July 2015. Subsistence Camp, held September 24-26 in conjunction with the Fairbanks Resource Agency, was a success; four consumers and four staff participated at mile 76 of the Elliott Highway. Finally, we were awarded the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation (AIVR) 5 year grant for a total of $2,108,295 ($421,659 annually).

“What an impact that the native organizations made on Alaska’s economy. It’s just mind boggling.”

Tim Wallis, President 1972
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
**Child Protection**

The Child Protection Program is committed to a future in which all children who need it can attain protective custody in their own communities, and communities and families are resilient and thriving, minimizing the need for our services.

In 2014, The Child Protection Program deepened incorporation of Title IV-E foster care eligibility regulations, both in training opportunities and in our operations across the TCC region. Every new Tribal court case is now screened for Title IV-E Maintenance project criteria; templates for home visits and case planning are now in compliance. Judges and staff attended several trainings and a peer-to-peer learning session, and four staff attended the Tribal IV-E Summit in Anchorage.

Other achievements in 2014 include the completion of a procedures manual and a Judicial Reference Guide, to be distributed to all tribes in both physical and electronic form. We hosted the Tribal/State Collaboration Group co-chair strategic planning session and three TCC staff sharing sessions. Our Foster Care and Adoption Specialist presented in New Mexico on collaborating with Alaska Center for Resource Families and Casey Family Programs. James Bell & Associate staff performed a site visit towards evaluation of the TANF-Child Welfare grant, and we received a Borough of Indian Affairs (BIA) special project grant for $26,000.

For 2015, we wish to increase the number of tribally licensed foster homes and Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)-compliant state licensed foster homes. We will build and maintain state and federal partnerships, and seek to support tribal participation in open cases through interdepartmental collaboration and training on ICWA regulations.
Elder Nutrition

In 2014, we provided 482 Elders in 17 villages a total of 11,277 meals at 25 village-based elder nutrition sites funded through five consortia Title VI Indian Elder Nutrition program grants. These totals include the 132 elders in 17 villages who also received a total of 1,780 monthly food boxes (approximately 53,400 meals) through a partnership with the Fairbanks Food Bank. We employed local part-time cooks and maintained cooking facilities at the village sites through funding from the five Title VI program grants. We used $2,000 to provide meals for elders attending the annual Denakanaaga Elder/Youth Conference in Minto.

Infant Learning

The Infant Learning Program (ILP) and Outreach in 2014 developed and deepened working relationships between institutions, within our own program, and with the families we serve and aim to empower. This year, ILP staff traveled to 13 villages to work with families towards referral, enrollment, and services. Parents continue to be active participants in determining goals and objectives for each Individualized Family Service Plan, which entails assessing a child’s strengths and areas for improvement, identifying the specific developmental services needed, and coordinating delivery of these and other family services.

Outreach continues to deepen our relationships with clinics, Tribes, early childhood educational programs, private practitioners, and other relevant entities. The multi-disciplinary team, consisting of service providers and ILP staff, continues to meet on a semi-monthly basis. ILP staff presented program information to Tribal Family Youth Specialists (TFYS), Tribal Workforce Development Specialists (TWDS), and foster parents at their annual training; Fairbanks Memorial Hospital staff during their in-service training; and to staff at the Office of Children’s Services.

A shortage of providers in the Interior leaves some children without services for extended periods, and we are limited in what we can provide to late referrals (children over 36 months old). In addition, some home visits were canceled due to weather, and several positions remain vacant due to grant staffing requirements. However, these issues are similar to those other programs face, and we hope to identify potential solutions as a result of ongoing outreach and collaboration with other institutions.
Early Head Start and Head Start

The TCC Head Start Program, together with the region’s families and communities, continues to strive to foster positive, successful experiences for children, and to incorporate local values and beliefs into the program. In August 2014, Head Start staff from Huslia, Nenana, Northway, and McGrath attended Teaching Strategies Gold and Strengthening Families training. In addition, all Early Head Start and Head Start site staff and central office staff attended in-service training in November 2014. The TCC E-Board also participated in a Head Start orientation in November 2014. All coordinators continue to visit sites every 6-8 weeks to provide training and support to site staff and to participate in parent meetings.

We also engaged in outreach and enrollment efforts. Central office staff and site staff completed Head Start & Early Head Start health fairs in each community. They provided screenings for hearing, vision, blood pressure, and height and weight, in addition to administering fluoride varnish, providing Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening, and sharing nutritional information. Parents, community members, and staff collaborated on FY14-FY15 Community Assessments.

Children’s medical requirements haven’t been consistently completed within the required time frames. We are collaborating with TCC Dental and Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) to better coordinate services. Recruitment and hiring continues to be a challenge. We are contacting affected families and discussing possible distance delivery solutions until personnel can be hired. We are also working towards solutions to high incidence of canceled home visits and low group socialization attendance.
Wildlife and Parks

Wildlife & Parks (W&P) Program oversees fishing, hunting, trapping, and gathering activity within the region and neighboring areas that have an effect on local resources. This includes proactive monitoring of fish and wildlife populations, and participation in regulatory activity at all levels and working with fish and game managers.

Cooperative fish and wildlife management efforts dominate our work, with the majority of W&P Program staff time since 1995 has centered around State, Federal and International advocacy for Tribal control of Yukon River king salmon. TCC continues to have influence with other partners in western Alaska fisheries over an appointed seat on the “Salmon By-Catch” Committee of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC). Final action on the new regulations will take place in February and April with final rules to be implemented in the 2016 fishing season.

TCC continues to participate in the development of many new escapement goals for Yukon River and Kuskokwim River salmon with State, Federal and Canadian managers. Our participation resulted in consistent goals being developed for submittal to the Alaska Board of Fish (BOF) during the 2012 Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) and the statewide cycle, and during the winter 2014 and spring 2015 Department and Yukon Panel process meetings and associated pre-season meetings. We are now preparing for the 2015-16 Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Board of Fish cycle.

We assess impacts of climate change to these dynamic systems. Our efforts always place tribes as the direct representatives of their own direction within our TCC region. In addition, concerted effort to incorporate elders, local knowledge, local hires (cooks, drivers, etc.) wherever possible during site visits. We promote educational opportunities, incorporating science, language, and culture.

Realty

Realty has improved information sharing to landowners because of new internal processes in Information Systems and Communications Departments. Information can be sent to clients using our updated web site, Facebook, village e-mail, or fax. We also meet face to face with hundreds of clients each year.

Under the primary Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Realty Contract, reality specialists, archaeologists, and appraisers processed many real estate transactions in 2014. We brought into trust eight Native allotments, have 140 transactions in process, approved 51 deed transfer transactions (mostly gift deeds to family), and processed two leases, four trespasses and four subdivisions. Probate specialists started 58 probates, submitted 24 to the judge, and approved 50 probates. Realty employees worked with 4,000 clients to pursue benefits from the Indian Trust Settlement. To date, the majority of landowners have received their Trust Settlement check at an average of $869.

Staff continues to help Galena residents, both restricted and unrestricted lands, to confirm their title with new deeds – this will help with FEMA funding and rebuilding. We provide No Trespass signs to tribal members for Native allotments and investigate sites when possible. 300 Native allotments statewide are still held by the State, and we continue to advocate for reconveyance to our members.
Forestry

In 2014, the TCC Fire Crew and Forestry staff continued to conduct activities related to land management, development, protections, energy, wildland firefighting, and advocacy.

Land management entailed ongoing management services for the region’s Native allottees, work on new and existing forest inventory contracts, and ongoing TCC Fire Crew work in response to the Upper Tanana Region windstorm of September 2012.

Forthcoming work includes BIA-supported preparation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and National Park Service- and Bureau of Indian Affairs-supported fuel reduction work on allotments in the Yukon-Charlie National Preserve.

Biomass harvest plan documents were completed for four villages under an Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium contract, as well as a recon-level biomass resource assessment for eight villages through IRHA contract work and the Alaska Renewable Energy Fund. Biomass energy training took place in Fort Yukon. The TCC Fire Crew deployed to wildland fires in the lower 48 for 65 days, in Alaska for 20 days, and undertook project work for 50 days. Invoices submitted to the state exceeded $955,000.

Training sessions were facilitated in McGrath and Nikolai.

In Tanana, TCC fire crew conducted chainsaw training and provided for firefighter red-card certification for Class A falling. Six individuals were identified and placed into single-resource wildfire training, and a new partnership with University of Alaska’s College of Rural and Community Development aims to increase future opportunities.

We continue advocacy and outreach via involvement with Alaska Wildland Fire Coordination Group, Intertribal Timber Council, Alaska Wood Energy Development Task Group, and EFF Crew Management and GIS committees, as well as via new ventures such as the Director’s participation in the Reforestation Science and Technology Advisory Committee.

The TCC Fire Crew deployed to wildland fires in the lower 48 for 65 days, in Alaska for 20 days, and undertook project work for 50 days.
Energy

This year, Energy focused on maintaining or strengthening partnerships, advocacy, revenue, and customer service related to energy, subsistence, and food resources. Interior villages continue to benefit from the Village Energy Efficiency Program (VEEP), as well as other funding sources for alternative energies such as solar and improvements to existing infrastructure including biomass systems. One example is our work with the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government (GZGTG) on a passive solar greenhouse.

We are working with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) on biomass projects in Anvik, Hughes, Huslia, and Koyukuk; all of these projects with the exception of Huslia are under construction. We have also been working closely with Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG) natural Resources dept on their Energy Efficiency outreach projects. TCC Energy worked closely with the Iditarod Area School District (IASD) to provide logistical support for the renovation of their future dorm buildings.

Work spearheaded by TCC and the rural energy committee on Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP) has led to the re-inclusion of VEEP in the 2016 governor’s budget. We continue to work with the state of Alaska and the EPA to allow an Alaskan Waiver for diesel fired generators so they can continue to bypass locally untenable EPA emissions standards while we seek solutions that are more realistic for our region. TCC region tribes received three funded projects in the FY 2015 Renewable Energy Grant Fund (REF) cycle; we continue to lobby the legislature to keep these projects funded throughout the budget.

Cadastral Survey

TCC Cadastral Survey remains dedicated to improving customer relations, employee growth and learning, partnerships, and technology.

Contract work with BLM in 2014 included original surveys for 14 interim conveyances on land selected by Doyon, final entitlement surveys for four interim conveyances to Chalkyitsik Native Corporation, and Minto 14(c) land boundaries identified by Seth-de-ya-ah Corporation, to be reconveyed under ANCSA.

Four seasonal hires in 2014 enabled completion of the planned field schedule; we also hired a new Survey Manager, boosting our organizational resume for critical upcoming proposals. In anticipation of the completion of the BLM contract survey, and reductions in federal funding of such surveys going forward, Cadastral is eager to establish new partnerships and funding sources. We have applied for a multi-year Alaska Department of Transportation Innovative Term Agreement for Land Surveying and Mapping Services, and continue to maintain PL 638 BLM contract workflow. We have also partnered with UAF and the Geophysical Institute’s Alaska Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration (ACUASI) to explore survey uses for drone-based aerial photography. We extended our partnership with Mullikin Surveys of Homer, increasing potential gas pipeline work. In addition, Cadastral subcontracted with PDC Inc. Engineers to complete slough and river crossing topographic surveys and to flag property corners for IGU gas line layout proposals.

Finally, Cadastral is ready to work efficiently and relevantly after completing a transition to new AutoCAD Software and upgrading our computer systems.
Archeology

Archeology remains committed to excellence in Native allotment fieldwork, National Science Foundation (NSF) grant procurement, report writing, media outreach and sharing transportation resources. We conducted field work on numerous Native Allotments during the summer of 2014 and conducted intensive documentation of a series of ground caches on an allotment along the Yukon River near Rampart.

We continued work for the NSF Secondary Education grant and conducted three field sessions with high school students. We are deepening collaborative relationships with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the National Park Service, the US Forest Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We continue to do outreach through maintaining a media presence, including orchestrating a press conference announcing the ancient DNA and biomedical results on the diet of the Tochak McGrath Discovery family.

Internal departmental collaboration has been a focus in 2014. We began sharing office space, equipment (riverboats and trailers), and maintenance with Wildlife and Parks program. We also collaborate with the Forestry program regarding Trimble XT spatial data gathering and GIS capacity. We also focused on high school student outreach, such as field schools Healy Lake in cooperation with local community leadership, tribal officials, and the Rural Alaskans Honors Institute (RAHI) high school program.

We obtained supportive funding and collaborated with the Cross-Cultural Studies program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks to bring Gwich’in elders together for a traditional story-telling session under the leadership of elder Paul Williams, Sr. of Beaver.
“Our youth they need to realize—someday the reigns of leadership will be in their hands and they have to start preparing for that.

There must be sincerity in your leadership to the point that it is based upon one credential—love for the people.”

Jerry Isaac -
President 2006-2014
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
HEALTH SERVICES

Future leaders - 2015
Top left to right: Dax Alexander, Ashton Peter, Trey Sweetsir
Bottom left to right: Mason Demit, Allen McGinty, Gunner Frank, Conan Olson

Historical photos of TCC Presidents
Stronger together for the next 100 years, to become the healthiest people across generations. “There is so much to do together, the time is now.” Those were Victor Joseph’s closing comments as the health director last year. He couldn’t have said it better at that time, because it marked the start of his Presidency, in which he is now leading TCC to the next level, building a solid foundation to make us stronger together, for the next 100 years.

To outline the next 5 years, Victor has lead the TCC departments in establishing an organizational strategic plan 2015-2020. The draft plan was presented to our delegates at the Summit in November 2014 to make sure we are in alignment with the Tribes. Valuable input from the delegates is now incorporated in the plan. For Health Services, this means focus on elder services, behavioral health, wellness and prevention, coordination of services, and growing providers and staff from our region.

I am happy to share that we received the remaining $20M staffing dollars from IHS in 2014, which has allowed us to further expand services. We were able to fully staff and open the new physical therapy clinic at Chief Peter John Tribal building. Two dental teams were added and the wait list for routine dental care has reduced from 22 months in 2011, to 12 months at the end of 2014. Patient visits for medical services at CAIHC have increased by 26% since 2012 and pharmacy filled 19.6% more prescriptions. We also finalized our agreements with ANTHC that allows us to provide certain types of chemotherapy at CAIHC, bringing cancer treatment closer to home.

The wage increases for Homecare, Respite, PCA and CHAP staff that was approved by the Executive Board, is paying off. We have hired 31 new homecare providers in 2014 and we have the lowest vacancy rate for CHAP ever. We are also starting the renovations for the CHAP training center so we can start training our own health aides in an expedited training model, from level I to level IV in 12 months. With internet and technology improvements, coding and billing positions are now available in villages and the Community Health Aide Manual is now available on an iPad.

Financially, Health Services did well in 2014, despite challenges with systems and with Medicaid. But challenges are on the horizon. Implementation of new coding regulations on October 1st, 2015 could reduce 3rd party collections by 20-40%. The State budget will be significantly cut in the next couple of years. We are working together with TCC administration to determine ways to minimize impact of these cuts and are advocating together for services and funding needs for our Tribes.

Tribal delegates at the Summit in November were very clear in their feedback. We need to listen and communicate better to our patients and tribal members, and we need to teach all our staff about cultural differences in communication styles and create a better understanding among all staff about village life and circumstances of the people living in our region. We take this very seriously and I believe this is the most important change we can make to improve the quality of service delivery and patient satisfaction.

Thank you for your support and trust and for allowing me, in my new role as the health director, to be your partner in this exciting endeavor to make us stronger together, at the start of the next 100 years.

Jacoline Bergstrom
Executive Director of Health Services
**Total prescription volume for the year was 179,428. This equates to 83 prescriptions per hour, or 1.38 prescriptions every minute, that the pharmacy is open.**

Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) continues to work toward improving the patient experience, improving health outcomes, reducing cost, increasing revenue, and creating a well workforce (our “Vital Few”). Staff are encouraged to develop improvement projects that fall in line with one or more of the Vital Few. Some suggestions have included the Centering Pregnancy program, development of maternity housing, expansion of preventive dental care services, and an accountability group for wellness. We initiated a new chronic pain management program where the team is more fully able to guide the care of the patient in discussion with other health care professionals to ensure the patient is receiving optimal care.

Case management meetings have begun that will help identify duplication in work and gaps in care. Meetings with registration and nursing staff have begun to improve the coordination of service for patients and improve communication between departments. All departments within CAIHC are currently working on department specific strategic plans that outline how they are contributing to the overall Health Services Strategic Plan 2015 -2020.

**Village Support Services**

Medical services are fully staffed, allowing for more village visits. This year providers and support staff were in villages 504 days and saw 2,879 patients. Providers continue to utilize visual visits (telemedicine visits) and have increased from 1 visit per week to 5.75 per week (week to week is variable).

**Expansion of Services**

With the additional staffing funding received in 2014, we expanded staff in Specialty clinics including Elder’s Clinic, Women’s Health, Pediatrics, and Ortho, and other CAIHC-based programs such as pharmacy, dental, optometry and the VA clinic. New services include a wound-care clinic, geriatrics, and infusion therapy. Staff are also preparing to implement Centering Pregnancy as a new model of care for OB-services, which will be followed by implementation of Centering Families.

**Pharmacy**

CAIHC Pharmacy had a very busy 2014. The volume of business has continued to grow at extremely fast rates. Total prescription volume for the year was 179,428. This equates to 83 prescriptions per hour, or 1.38 prescriptions every minute, that the pharmacy is open. CAIHC Pharmacy’s prescription volume has grown 7.8% over 2013 levels and 19.6% over 2012 levels. The Telepharmacy program was expanded in 2014. Telepharmacy units were installed at four additional clinics, bringing the total units to 18. This program facilitates better pharmaceutical care for village-based patients.

Pharmacy staff was involved in finalizing several MOA’s in the last year. Notably, the MOA with ANTHC regarding the Chemotherapy Pilot Project was finalized at the end of 2014. Under this project, patients diagnosed with cancer receiving select chemotherapy regimen will be able to receive their infusions in Fairbanks instead of Anchorage, if they choose to. Services begin in February 2015.
Dental

2014 was another year of growth and improvement at TCC Dental. There were several significant changes and accomplishments for the year. Perhaps the most exciting change was the addition of seven staff members. This was a direct result of the staffing package funding that TCC received from the Indian Health Service (IHS), as part of the Joint Venture Construction program. This funding allowed us to add two additional dentists, a hygienist, three dental assistants, and a program assistant to our team. We currently have our largest staff ever – 44 employees. These additional resources have allowed us to reach several landmarks for the program.

First, we were able to complete the largest number of itinerant village trips yet, with a total of 107 weeks of travel. Secondly, with our growing staff over the last 3 years, we have been able to decrease the wait time for routine adult care from approximately 22 months 3 years ago, to about 12 months today. This represents the shortest wait time since staff reductions occurred in 2006. We also successfully met all of our GPRA performance goals established by Indian Health Services.

Another noteworthy accomplishment is our successful collaboration with the University of Alaska Fairbanks-CTC Dental Assisting Program, to help train Dental Assistants for our region. This included a pilot project to allow for both local and distance learning of didactic curriculum, with completion of clinical requirements at CAIHC. This has helped to provide valuable job training to many individuals while ensuring a much better trained and stable workforce for our growing staff.

We finished the year by completing our draft strategic plan for TCC Dental, as part of the overall TCC strategic plan for the next five years (2015-2020). We were able to map out multiple goals and initiatives for TCC dental improvement. In summary, we are striving to increase access to our services while continuing to improve our technology and customer satisfaction for the delivery of care throughout our region.

Vision

Despite staffing challenges in 2014, the Eye Clinic provided 5189 comprehensive optometric care visits and saw 3405 patients. The Eye Clinic saw 349 patients during site visits, and performed 87 screenings for Head Start participants. We hope to expand frequency of visits to all TCC communities in 2015.

Radiology

In partnership with UAA, TCC Radiology continues to train students with UAA Radiology program. New x-ray tables were installed at Galena, Tok, and Nenana clinics. Tok and Nenana Radiology systems are now able to send images to Vista Imaging and ANMC for radiologist interpretation. Radiology is involved with establishing radiology services in Tanana, awaiting new equipment.

Laboratory

The lead laboratory technician for “point of care lab” made 13 trips to sub-region clinics and villages in those respective sub-regions, providing training, delivering supplies, observing health aides, and reviewing documentation of laboratory testing.

Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy (PT) is a new service line and is located in the Chief Peter John tribal building. This new department is fully staffed with 2 physical therapists, 1 physical therapy aide and 1 receptionist. The PT program will also provide VTC visits (Telehealth) as needed.
This year CHA/P’s provided 5,800 direct patient care visits; this is 200 more than 2013.

Community Health Aide and Community Health Center Programs

In partnership with patients, TCC programs and other health care entities, Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) and Community Health Center (CHC) provide clinical staffing, training, supervision, and support to rural medical providers for the purpose of delivering excellent primary health care.

This past spring the Executive Board approved TCC to operate a certified health aide training center. We are currently in the process of converting part of the first floor at AKSB into the new TCC CHAP Training Center. The CHAP Training Center will be an accelerated training model; that means that health aides will go from session I through Session IV in about 12 months. Currently it takes 3-5 years to complete.

Community Health Aide/Practitioner (CHA/P) statewide sustains annual attrition rates of 20-30%. A central goal is to lower this number. This year we hired nine Community Health Aides (CHAs) and three itinerants. Recruitment and retention of this critical resource – personnel – remains a priority for TCC. At the end of 2014 we have vacancies for four part-time, seven itinerant, and eight full-time positions (out of 42 available positions). While this is the lowest vacancy rate ever recorded for our programs, we still have work to do.

This year CHA/P’s provided 5,800 direct patient care visits; this is 200 more than 2013. In addition our staff has completed the following training: Basis health aid session (Level I-IV), Completed or renewed highest level of training as a CHP, Initial or recertification of Emergency Medical Response, and Community Health Aide Standards and Procedures Federal Certification Board.
Community Health Outreach Programs

It has been a busy year in Community Health Outreach Programs, with an improved focus on recruitment and retention. We hired 31 new home care providers, increased wages, and increased emphasis on the importance of having Home Care Workers in the village. These workers can make a big difference in an Elder’s life, as well as increase their own confidence, skills, personal satisfaction, and sense of community. Home Care provided over 5,000 instances of service, including elder home visits, caregiver home visits, and caregiver counseling, support, and training.

Through state grant funding, we held boating safety classes in the Upper Tanana Sub region and Fort Yukon. Injury Prevention and Education was provided to 12 communities. “Sources of Strength,” a suicide awareness project for youth continues to be a CHOP prevention strategy; we have trained eight teams so far this academic year. In collaboration with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, we released the computer-based life skills program Native It’s Your Game in three communities. We are also piloting a cancer awareness project via TeleHealth.

Our suicide prevention initiative continues with three new grants. Circles of Care is a planning grant for mental health and wellness systems of care for children. The five-year Native Connections (SAMHSA) grant is designed to prevent and reduce suicidal behavior and substance abuse and promote mental health among tribal people age 24 and under. Finally the Wellness Project expands current work and further develops and implements suicide intervention systems for youth.

We hired 31 new home care providers, increased wages, and increased emphasis on the importance of having Home Care Workers in the village.
Behavioral Health

Behavioral Health continues to expand, examine, and improve our services with the goal of providing for our clients in relevant, responsive ways. We hired six additional Behavioral Health Aides (BHAs), and a new Deputy Director. We expanded quarterly itinerant clinician visits to additional villages, and integrated the Tok Area Counseling Center providers into the new Upper Tanana Behavioral Health. We implemented two Strategic Prevention Framework grant-funded mini summits. Upcoming service improvements include integrating behavioral health services into primary care, and streamlining our documentation and billing process.

Tele Behavioral Health is now system-wide, and allows continuous care via VTC, as well as on-demand access to crisis response services. We have applied to the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for a survey towards meeting new grant recipient standards of operation.

Our work acknowledges the widespread impact of trauma on our people and understands the influence it has on paths to recovery. We recognize signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, and staff; we respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and we seek to actively resist re-traumatization through any of our current methods of practice.

Reexaming the WOA is a TCC-wide initiative, involving a TCC-chaired committee with representatives from all departments. Our goal is to outline an action plan for increasing community partnerships, support, education opportunities, etc.; and for reducing substance-related deaths and injuries, violent crimes, and medivacs. In addition, we hope to build and maintain a stakeholder advocacy committee.

Housing First and Willow House

Housing First and Willow House remain important resources for our members. At Housing First, a safe housing option for substance users, all 47 units are occupied. Most occupants have now resided at Housing First for more than 12 months. There has been one eviction, one tenant moved to his village, and six tenants passed away. We fill vacancies with high users of emergency services who are not on the sex offender list and who do not have a history of violent behavior. Tenants can now access medical services. Three tenants are attending Alcohol Treatment and two tenants are waiting to enter treatment. Three tenants are employed full-time and nine tenants have steady day labor jobs. Six tenants have been sober for over a year and a half.

Funding streams for housing vouchers and Medicaid billing continue to be a challenge. However, the number of housing vouchers from Alaska Housing Finance Corporation continues to increase.

Willow House hotel resumed operations in February 2014 after renovations to meet medical hotel standards, after use as a Galena flood shelter. Although this facility's main purpose is to provide safe and affordable housing for patients traveling into town for medical purposes, we have capacity to set aside a block of rooms for Board members and staff traveling to Fairbanks for work. We are converting one area into a conference room for on-site meeting space. We are currently working with Communications department on marketing the Willow House.
Office of Environmental Health

The Office of Environmental Health (OEH) staff travel extensively to TCC member Tribes providing comprehensive service and assistance for water and sewer system operation and maintenance, sanitary surveys, environmental health and safety surveys, environmental regulation compliance, disease prevention, educational outreach, solid waste management, hazardous materials management, utility operator training courses, onsite operator training, new facility design review, sanitation improvement planning, emergency response, and other environmental health issues. With a small staff and limited resources we work efficiently to provide the best service possible.

The OEH training program improves the safety of drinking water in villages by training operators, utility managers, and council members on safe operation and maintenance, budgeting, and management. Course topics include: Boiler Maintenance for Water Operators, Greensand Filtration, Utility Management for City/Tribal Elected Officials, Electrical Controls for Water Operators, Solid Waste Management, Wastewater Provisional Level 1 Review & Exams, Utility Manager Personnel Management, and Water Treatment Provisional/Level 1.

In relation to sanitation technical assistance and facilities, the Remote Maintenance Workers (RMWs) provide onsite training and technical assistance to operators as well as respond to water and waste water system emergencies.

In 2014, OEH maintained or secured five grants through different funding agencies, significantly expanding the OEH program. Half of the OEH budget is funded through these grants directly employing five full time positions and providing for the Solid Waste and Training programs. This results in direct service to TCC member Tribes.

“You gotta keep grounded. Always remember where you came from.”

Steve Ginnis
President 1999-2002
Quote from A Centennial History of Tanana Chiefs Conference
Quality Management

This year Behavioral Health has been preparing for Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation. An independent per-accreditation survey was performed in December and provided valuable information needed to further prepare for the official accreditation survey. A follow-up survey is planned for April, with the final CARF accreditation survey and inspection expected in May or June 2015. Staff have begun visiting and assessing village clinics across the region. The assessments will be used to better estimate what type of resources will be needed to meet new standards. Initial assessment visits have covered six communities.

Participation in patient satisfaction surveys has declined in 2014. In order to increase participation, the Patient Advocate has customized new surveys so they are specific to the department visited by the patient, and specific to the provider with whom the visit occurred. This will allow us to track patient satisfaction by department and by provider, rather than the organization as a whole. We plan to have a quota for each department each month for survey distribution and return to help improve our data integrity.

With the expansion of services, we hired the first of two patient navigators at the end of 2014. They will assist patients with questions and concerns about care, and can help patients navigate our healthcare system. The patient navigators can also accompany patients to appointments, at the patient’s request. We anticipate these new positions will increase overall patient satisfaction in 2015.
Health Services Finance

We exceeded our 2014 cash collection goal by over 1.2 million dollars through continued partnership with Health Resource Group (HRG) and a solid commitment and dedication of our Revenue Cycle staff. In addition to these goals, we have expanded our services, thanks to funding from Indian Health Services staffing, and have added services lines (infusion therapy, physical therapy, wound care), which increases volume for the business office and the need for staff training on coding / billing for new service lines. Challenges this year included Medicaid’s new system delaying payment processing, and a pause on billing due to a program patch. Slow processing persists in certain areas.

Going forward, we aim to meet the goals of our revenue cycle remodel and improvement plan, including staff training; billing, auditing, and reconciliation process improvements; and implementation of new coding guidelines by October 2015. We are working with accounting to improve timely expenditure tracking.

In addition to financial goals, we continue to seek opportunities to foster local ownership of health service finance processes. We have created 6 new rural based coder and biller positions in alignment with the TCC initiative to increase the number of rural positions and to start “growing our own.” These positions require stable and fast internet connections in the village. At the end of 2014 we had 50% filled. Once we hire, train, and certify additional staff, we will be able to reduce our demand on HRG for back-up support services.

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TCC CORE VALUES

NURTURE - Build relationships with village corporations and tribal governments.

ACCOUNTABILITY - Do the right thing.

TRANSPARENCY - Hide nothing and have nothing to hide.

INTEGRITY - Maintain high standards.

VALUE - Make the most of our resources. Live within our means.

EXCELLENCE - Set goals high and then aim to exceed them.