

A PROMISE KEPT; TCC Prepares for New Chief/Chairman

In March 2014, Victor Joseph of Tanana was elected as the new Chief/Chairman of Tanana Chiefs Conference. During his acceptance speech he made a promise to the tribes of the region.

"The only thing that I can promise to you is that I will continue to work as hard as I can for you. I'll advocate, I'll fight for our rights, and I'll fight for what you need. I won't stop," said

Chief Joseph, "I will take the lead from you. As we know, the tribes drive the organization. The tribes are the owners of Tanana Chiefs. We will work on your behalf and we'll know that when you walk into our building – our owners have arrived."

This month was Chief Joseph's last serving as Chief/Chairman of Tanana Chiefs Conference, as a new Chief/Chairman is voted in. We would like

to honor and recognize Chief Joseph for his leadership, guidance, and unwavering commitment to serving the tribes of the interior for the past six years and for the past several months as our tribes have worked to navigate through this ongoing pandemic.

You can learn more about how Chief Joseph kept his promise to the tribes during his term on **pages 4-5**.

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE
2020 ELECTIONS
UPDATE! NEW DATE:
Tuesday, October 13th, 2020

Delegates will be able to attend the meeting virtually or in-person. The meeting will be limited to delegates, candidates, and key TCC staff only in order to maintain safe social distancing. However, the public will still be able to watch the elections live from our website,
tananachiefs.org/live



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MISSION STATEMENT

Tanana Chiefs Conference provides a unified voice in advancing sovereign tribal governments through the promotion of physical and mental wellness, education, socioeconomic development, and culture of the Interior Alaska Native people.

VISION

Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes



TCC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Donald Honea Sr./Ruby
1st Traditional Chief

Trimble Gilbert/Arctic Village
2nd Traditional Chief

Victor Joseph/Tanana
Chief/Chairman

Charlene Stern/Arctic Village
Vice President

Jerry Isaac/Tanacross
Secretary/Treasurer

William "Chaaiy" Albert/Northway
Upper Tanana

Nick Alexia Sr./Nikolai
Upper Kuskokwim

Nancy James/Fort Yukon
Yukon Flats

Eugene Paul/Holy Cross
Lower Yukon

Frank Thompson/ Evansville
Yukon Tanana

Norman 'Carl' Burgett/ Huslia
Yukon Koyukuk

Peter Demoski/Nulato
Elder Advisor

Jolie Murray/Beaver
Youth Advisor

CHIEF'S REPORT

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

This past month I have spent much of my time out hunting with my family and enjoying our last days of autumn. I look forward to this season each year not only because of the quality time I get to spend with my family, but for the time I get to spend out on the land.

This year has been a huge adjustment for everyone including TCC, and COVID-19 cases are still on the rise. I want to advise everyone to stay diligent and follow the recommended preventative measures - avoid large groups, wear a mask while in public, wash your hands frequently, and stay home if you are sick. Mask usage when out in public is the easiest way to protect our elders and vulnerable population. By simply wearing a mask you are showing you care for the lives of those around you.

I have worked with TCC for 28 years and started as an expeditor. I was promoted to the program director of the Old Minto Recovery Camp, later hired as the Deputy Health Director, and then Health Director. In 2014 I was elected as the Chief/Chairman of TCC. I have always believed in working hard and relied on my work to speak for itself, and this work ethic help me progress professionally at TCC. During the past 28 years together, we have achieved a lot.

TCC will always hold a special place with me- it is the place that gave me the opportunity as a young native man looking to turn my life around. It is a place that allowed me to grow, learn, and expand my life in ways that I didn't always think were possible, while caring for my family.

Leadership is a gift and I am thankful that I was given this gift to lead our organization. The past six years as serving you as Chief/Chairman has been an honor and a privilege. I would like to thank our Full Board of Directors for giving me the opportunity to serve our region. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to all of the employees at TCC – without you, none of this would have been possible.

As I look to the future, I have faith that our employees, tribes, and tribal leadership will continue to carry forward our vision of 'Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes'.

Ana Bassee'

Chief/Chairman



2020 - Papa's Hunting Partners

WHAT WILL BE ON THE BALLOT?

There will be several important elections on the ballot this year!

Below is a highlight of what to expect when you go to the polls (or get your ballot by mail).

United States President/Vice President

OPTIONS:

- **Pierce, Brock / Ballard, Karla** - Petition Nominee
- **Trump, Donald J. / Pence, Michael R.** - Republican Nominee
- **Biden, Joseph R. Jr. / Harris, Kamala D.** - Democratic Nominee
- **Blankenship, Don / Mohr, William** - Constitution Nominee
- **De La Fuente, Rocque "Rocky" / Richardson, Darcy G.** - Alliance Nominee
- **Janos, James G."Jesse Ventura" / McKinney, Cynthia** - Green Nominee
- **Jorgensen, Jo / Cohen, Jeremy "Spike"** - Libertarian Nominee

United States Senator

OPTIONS:

- **Howe, John Wayne AK** - Independent Nominee
- **Sullivan, Dan** - Republican Nominee
- **Gross, Al** - Democratic Nominee

United States Representative

OPTIONS:

- **Galvin, Alyse S.** - Democratic Nominee
- **Young, Don** - Republican Nominee

Ballot Measure 1

An Act changing the oil and gas production tax for certain fields, units, and nonunitized reservoirs on the North Pole.

OPTIONS:

- **YES** – this initiative should become law
- **NO** – this initiative should not become law

Ballot Measure 2

An Act replacing the political party primary with an open primary system and ranked-choice general election, and requiring additional campaign finance disclosures.

OPTIONS:

- **YES** – this initiative should become law
- **NO** – this initiative should not become law

What else is on the Ballot?

Based on what house and judicial district you are located in – you will be voting on different State Representatives for your district as well as judges on the Supreme court, court of appeals, district court, and superior court.

You can view sample ballots by visiting:

<https://www.elections.alaska.gov/Core/sampleballots.php>



TCC'S ACHIEVEMENTS

TCC COMPANY

- In 2014, Chief Joseph worked with TCC's Senior Management, Executive Board, and Tribal Governments to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan for the Organization. Over 150 objectives were defined, along with initiatives to reach them. Today, TCC has achieved over 95% of those objectives.
- Established the Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission and hired the director in March 2016.
- Established the TCC Planning and Development Program, which includes a Planning and Development Manager, Community Planning Coordinator, and Rural Economic Development Specialist.
- Established the Emerging Leaders Advisory Council.
- TCC helped preserve Alaska Native culture through 'The Legacy of Our Elders', a video series documenting the lives of Alaska Native elders throughout the region. So far, 64 elder stories have been documented.
- Annually the service desk receives and closes over 12,000 work orders, deploys over \$100,000 in computer equipment and software and provides IT support to our partner organization, Fairbanks Native Association. They also make over 40 visits each year to TCC rural communities to upgrade technology systems operations in village clinics and tribal offices.
- Upgraded all of TCC's Fairbanks facilities, including the Patient Hostel, Willow House, the Chief Peter John Tribal Building, and the Al Ketzler Sr. Building.
- Assisted in the negotiations of the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact that was made effective on December 15, 2017.
- TCC debuted the short documentary – A Centennial History of TCC, which recounts the history of TCC from 1915-2015 as told by the former leaders of the organization.
- TCC administrators and Executive Board members

worked actively with the Alaska Federation of Natives, the National Congress of Natives, the National Congress of American Indians, and other inter-tribal organizations to support our positions.

- TCC hosted the DHHS Secretary Tribal Advisory Committee meeting and tour – elevating Interior rural health needs to the highest level of government.
- TCC hosted the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to tour 20 Yukon River villages and fish camps over three consecutive summers.
- TCC leadership met with former President Barack Obama along with other Alaskan tribal leaders.
- TCC launched a new website that is mobile-friendly, fast loading, and easy to use.
- TCC received an investment grade rating of A+ resulting in a 3.51% interest rate, saving millions in interest and \$4 million less than other A+ rated companies.
- TCC's workforce increased from 850 employees to 1,044 budgeted staff positions - 945 of which are filled.
- TCC offers 323 village-based positions.
- Starting pay increased by \$5 for TWDS workers in effort to look at Client Development village employees to ensure competitive pay.
- TCC increased the Native hire rate from 60% in 2015 to 65% in 2019.
- TCC hired a full-time Government Relations Specialist to increase coordination and to ensure effective government relations with both the federal and state governments.
- TCC implemented a new Quality Management Division – Overseeing quality of all of TCC's programs and services.
- TCC has begun its journey in pursuit of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program, with the intent of achieving high standards of quality and high performance as an organization.
- All of TCC's policies and procedures have been better organized, updated, and communicated to

2014 Election Victor's Speech

staff and our tribal governments, our patients and clients.

- TCC adopted Ch'eghwtsen', which focuses on core values and ensures that all staff are trained in compassionate care and cultural sensitivity.
- TCC improved the internal processes of developing, approving, and monitoring the program budgets.
- TCC receives an A+ investment rating from Fitch Ratings, 5 Steps Above the minimum investments grade, saving us million in future financing.
- TCC has had no audit findings the last 3 years, and only 1 finding over the last 5 years.
- TCC has successfully completed 100% of their financial initiatives from the 2015-2020 strategic plan.
- Total assets of the organization are over \$250 million.
- TCC's annual total revenues increased from \$154 million in Fiscal Year 2014 to \$217 million in Fiscal Year 2019, an increase of 41% over a 5-year period.
- As of FY19, TCC is officially a \$204 million company, far exceeding the goal of \$200 million set in 2014.

HEALTH

- TCC is the highest rated native entity in Alaska and the highest rated native healthcare organization in the U.S.
- TCC created the Division of Wellness and Prevention which focuses on healthy lifestyles and disease prevention.
- TCC established a Cancer Care Team at the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center.
- TCC opened a Sobering Center in Fairbanks, providing a safe, secure environment for intoxicated individuals to rest and get connected with resources if they choose to seek help.
- TCC opened the only CHAP Training Center in Interior Alaska, providing Community Health Aides the opportunity to complete training at an

accelerated rate. Since opening, 125 CHA's have been trained at the training center.

- TCC's Community Health Aid/Practitioners serve twenty of our villages, providing over 5,700 patient visits each year.
- TCC integrated new complementary medicine services, including integrative medicine, physical therapy, osteopathic manipulation, acupuncture, and massage.
- TCC's Diabetes Program supported over 650 patients and 1,400 pre-diabetic patients.
- Between 2015 and 2019 Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center established its three care teams, and hired additional physicians, mid-level practitioners, and medical support staff to expand Family Medicine and Urgent Care.
- TCC expanded behavioral health services by over \$3 million annually, serving over 1,600 clients for intervention, substance abuse treatment, psychiatric services, therapeutic counseling, and case management.
- TCC began construction on the expansion of the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center to meet the needs of those we serve, which plans to be completed by the end of 2022.
- TCC began construction on the new Upper Tanana Health Clinic which plans to be completed this year.
- New village clinics were constructed or are under construction in Circle, Tanacross, Manley Hot Springs, Evansville, Healy Lake, Northway and Allakaket.
- TCC became the sole healthcare provider in the Upper Tanana region.
- TCC implemented a new Electronic Health Record system at CAIHC, improving the quality and coordination of medical care for our patients.
- IT Enterprise Architecture recommendation led to installation of generators in 23 village clinics
- TCC hired a patient navigator at the Alaska Native Medical Center and a case manager at the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital to improve patient care

across organizations.

- CAIHC received accreditation twice from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Centers (AAAHC) and Behavioral Health received accreditation twice from the Council on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).
- TCC refinanced the bond debt that was taken out to fund the construction of the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, saving TCC \$67 million over the life of the original bonds, then TCC paid off the \$72 million in bonds in 8 years.
- TCC received \$17M settlement from IHS for past contract support cost claims.

TRIBES

- \$43.4 million has been sent out to Tribes from TCC over the last 6 years– a first in TCC history.
- Developed an internship program at TCC, providing career exploration opportunities in both our rural villages and in Fairbanks.
- A cooperative Labor Agreement was signed, giving tribes in the Yukon Koyukuk subregion more decision-making powers on local hire, finding qualified workers within their area, and training.
- TCC provided \$2M worth of funding for 26 Culture and Wellness Camps throughout the region- which focused on promoting wellness through the practice of cultural traditions.
- TCC hosted the U.S. Attorney General which prompted a declaration of a public safety emergency in Rural Alaska, additional grant funding and a promising discussion for future law enforcement funding.
- Established the Alaska Tribal Unity, a statewide forum of tribal leaders to discuss challenges facing Alaskan tribes and provide advocacy on behalf of all tribes
- TCC partnered with Kelly Fields and the Alaska State Troopers to purchase a K-9 drug dog to

reduce drugs in interior communities.

- TCC expanded cultural programs at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center – offering several cultural workshops.
- TCC advocated for and received newly appropriated funding for tribal courts in Alaska
- TCC lead negotiations in the Civil Diversion Agreement, the first ever agreement with the State that allows tribal courts to sentence criminal offenders.
- TCC assisted in the creation of statewide advocacy such as the Village Public Safety Officers and the Alaska Tribal Unity.
- TCC distributed a total of \$22.5 million in direct unrestricted funding to our member tribal governments, allowing them to fund their highest priority projects and services.
- TCC assisted 25 rural communities in completing or updating their community plans as well as identifying and applying for funding for operations and priority community projects.
- Assisted our rural communities in securing more than \$14 million federal and state grant funds.
- A total of \$45 million in State and federal funds were awarded for both small- and large-scale water and sanitation projects in the TCC region between 2015 and 2019.
- TCC constructed eleven homes, weatherized 55 homes and is coordinating with housing authorities to expand funding for more housing opportunities.
- TCC provided child care assistance to over 400 children from 280 households.
- TCC's Housing First now provides housing for nearly 40 homeless chronic inebriate clients.
- TCC completed a Regional Energy Plan for Interior Alaska communities, and deployed alternative energy systems for heating and electricity in numerous villages, including solar arrays and biomass fuel projects.



2016 President Barack Obama and Chief Joseph



2014 Convention Election Celebration
Robert Charlie, PJ Simon, Jerry Isaac, and Victor Joseph



2014 Victor with TCC Village Public Safety Officers



2014 Denakkanaaga Elders & Youth Conference in Minto with Andy Jimmie



2014 Strategic Planning Summit



2015 Aaron Schutt, Marvin Roberts, and Victor Joseph
at Alaska Federation of Natives Annual Convention



2015 National Congress of American Indians
Convention



2015 Troth Yeddha Honoring at UAF



2015 Walk for Tsucde



2015 Walk for Tsucde



2015 Koyukuk Clinic Opening





2014 Victor Elected



2014 Victor Elected



2014 Victor Elected



2015 With Benedict Jones in Koyukuk



2015 Denakkanaaga Elders & Youth Conference in Anvik



2015 Centennial Celebration



2015 Upper Tanana subregional meeting in Eagle



2015 Victor in Nulato with Paul Mountain



December 17, 2015 Victor, Andy Jimmie, Steve Ginnis, and Aaron Schutt the day the Fairbank Four were freed



2016 Celebrating with Elizabeth Fleagle and Trimble Gilbert for their Honorary Doctorates from UAF



2016 Leo Lolnitz and Frank Thompson at White House Tribal Nations Conference



2017 Allakaket Clinic Opening



2017 Traditional Chief Don Honea Sr. honors Chief Joseph after relected



2017 Victor Re-Election



2017 Meeting with tribes in Takotna



2017 Meeting with Don Young



2017 Meeting in Eagle



2018 Deputy Secretary Erik Gargan and Victor at Secretary's Tribal Advisory Council



2018 - Rampart with former Lieutenant Gov Byron Mallott





2018 Annual Convention with Luke Titus



2018 Denakkanaaga Elder & Youth in Tanacross with Jerry Isaac



2019 TCC donation to the Interior Alaska Cancer Association



2019 Galena Subregional Meeting



2019 Chief Joseph, Ed Alexander and Sarah Obed met with Secretary of Education Betsy Devos



2019 Meeting with tribal leadership in Nulato



2019 National Attorney General William P. Barr and Victor



2019 Yukon Koyukuk Elder Assisted Living Facility



2019 Special Full Board Meeting



2020 The Health Executive Management presents Victor with an award on behalf of his Dedication of Service



Don't let your voice go to waste **VOTE.**

Although voters will be able to vote in-person during the General Election on **November 3rd** – many of us will be opting to mail-in our votes in order to maintain social distancing during the ongoing pandemic.

But don't worry – filling out an absentee ballot is easy!

How to Complete an Absentee Ballot:

- 1. REQUEST YOUR BALLOT** – Visit <https://absenteeballotapplication.alaska.gov/> to fill out an application and submit it online. Please do this as soon as possible as the **deadline to request a ballot is October 24th, 2020.**
- 2. CHECK YOUR STATUS** – Your application is officially complete when it is approved and processed by the Division of Elections. You can check your application status by visiting <https://myvoterinformation.alaska.gov/>
- 3. FILL OUT YOUR BALLOT** - When your ballot arrives in the mail, read it carefully and follow the instruction to complete and return it.
- 4. YOU'RE DONE!**

Please remember that this election is an important one for our communities, our state and our country.



MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED! WHAT SHOULD I DO?



If your child is being bullied — **ask questions and respond immediately.** Take action and create a safe space for your youth to openly communicate.

Develop a plan to address and stop the bullying. Educate yourself and your youth on the impacts of bullying and how we can prevent it as a community.

We are in this together.

For more information on Bullying Prevention, please contact:
TCC • Division of Wellness & Prevention • Zhiiniidzelt'aey Project
(907) 452-8251 Ext. 3164 • (800) 478.6822 • prevention@tananachiefs.org

COMMUNITY HEALTH AIDE *Spotlight*

Betty Jo Schmitz - Evansville Health Aid

Written by Linden Staciokas

What do you do when you are in your 60s, your children have left home and your husband has retired? Not many people would say, "I think I'll become a village health aide!"

But Betty Schmitz, known as B.J., did just that. She and her husband had lived in Bettles many years before, but moved to Fairbanks and raised their two girls there. When the girls went off on their own adventures (one is an Intensive Care Unit nurse at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, while the other is in her last year of veterinary school), B.J. and her husband started dreaming about heading back to the small village life they'd enjoyed so much.

"My husband and I love hunting and we started talking about a new phase of life. I saw the advertisement for a health aide position in Evansville, and thought 'I could do that!' My college degree was in biology, and between home schooling my girls and the fact that my husband was a science teacher, I'd stayed somewhat aware of the advancements in science. As soon as I was hired, we moved to Evansville and I began the extensive training program. I think I was their oldest recruit ever!"

Book learning had always come easy to B.J., so the intensive health

aide training program was not the hardest part of her new career. "Actually, it was treating patients that made me very nervous at first. It is

a huge responsibility! But I love caring for people and feeling like I have a purpose in life. And people out here are so appreciative of your efforts. Even the simple things make a huge difference, like someone stepped on a nail and I was able to take it out and give a tetanus shot."

The hardest part of the job is that B.J. is the sole health aide in the area. As a result, she is on call 24 hours a day when she is in town, and there is no other health professional to bounce ideas off of or debrief with when she has a troubling case. There is an abundance of support from her coordinator instructor Jo Miller and others at the CHAP office in Fairbanks, but sometimes a face to face conversation would be comforting.

When B.J. is not working, she loves being outdoors hunting and berry picking. When not busy gathering and storing food for the winter, she can be found with her nose in a book. Like any avid reader, she will read anything but her preference is non-fiction. "I just like learning new things," is how she puts it.

Asked what advice she would give to someone else who sees an advertisement for a health aide position and wonders if it would be a good fit for them, B.J. said, "I would stress that it is a huge commitment. You are never really off duty and the responsibility of figuring out how to help someone ill or in pain is a huge one. And sometimes people can get mad at you if they don't like the advice or information you give them. One thing TCC stresses in the training is that you are representing not only yourself but the entire health aide program, so you have to hold yourself to very high standards in how you behave—not only at work but when you are going about in the community. But it is a great job and I would not trade my life now for anything. Not everyone who just qualified for Medicare is lucky enough to have a job where you help people and learn something new every day!"

Jo Miller, the Coordinator Instructor for CHAP, and B.J.'s supervisor, says, "Working with B.J. over the last few years has been an absolute pleasure. She is motivated and dedicated to providing the very best of care for her patients. Her past life experience along with enthusiasm and positive attitude creates a welcoming environment for her patients to seek much needed care in the village."

EXPANDING TO THE FUTURE WITH *New Services* FOR CAIHC

It has been over 7 years since the vision for the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) became a reality, and now it's time for another expansion. The clinic, which opened services to the public in December of 2012, was designed with the expectation that additional services and expansions would be added in the future. It wasn't long ago that the health care services for the 42 tribes of the Interior centralized care in a leased space on the 3rd and 4th floors of the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, and now the CAIHC is in dire need of expanding its walls.

The expansion of the clinic started in April and is currently in both the design and construction phases. The goal of the 2020 construction season is to fully enclose the building by early January 2021 and continue the work on the interior thereafter. This expansion will be adjacent to the existing CAIHC center in Fairbanks, and will be connected by a corridor near the existing Pharmacy exit. The

expansion will add 108,000 gross square feet to the already 95,000 square feet, and will add a few new services for the clinic. The new addition will be 2 stories and have a 3rd unfinished story that will be ready for growth in the future.

Servicing over 15 thousand tribal members and beneficiaries in the interior is a huge task that has since called for more services to aid in the health of those we serve. Tanana Chiefs Conference's (TCC) vision is for the CAIHC facility to be a complete healthcare campus to serve its people now and for future generations. TCC is currently in the next phase of delivering that promise. This addition of services will add an Ambulatory Surgery Center, an Urgent Care Clinic, Diagnostic Imaging, Hematology/Oncology, Ophthalmology, a larger Laboratory, and additional support spaces with offices, public waiting

areas and a receiving area.

The Cultural Committee team works closely with the architect's design team, and is in charge of creating a space that reflects the heritage, culture and traditions of the People. This design concept will be on display in the interior and exterior of the building and will include inspired design elements similar to the existing building which will be embodied into the landscaping, floors, wall and ceiling features, most of which will include medicinal plant graphics, the story of health aides, and a completely curated art gallery of local crafts, masks, baskets, clothing, beadwork and artwork from various Alaskan Native artists.

After years of hard work, dedication, and the perseverance of the Health Board, Executive Board, Cultural Committee, and all the TCC Health Services staff, the expansion is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2022.



Patient Advocate at ANMC

Kristy Supsook, TCC Patient Advocate, works closely with the medical teams at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) to ensure TCC patients receive clear communication about their care, experience safe discharges and can access support if concerns arise while at ANMC.

Please call Kristy if you need assistance with anything at all. Out of respect for patient privacy, Kristy does not automatically contact patients in Anchorage for care unless the patient or a healthcare provider calls requesting assistance.

For more information, contact Kristy Supsook, TCC Patient Advocate at ANMC
907-687-9193 • Toll Free 1-800-478-6682 ext. 3604 • kristy.supsook@tananachiefs.org



Don't Learn *Cooking Safety* By Accident

Cooking Fires are the leading cause of home structure fires and injuries. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you must leave the kitchen, even for a short time, turn off the stove.

If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind



you that you're cooking. Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stovetop. Keep the stovetop, oven, and burners clean. Keep small children away from the stove.

If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner.

Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.

If a fire starts in the oven, turn off the oven and leave the door closed. The oven should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

To prevent cooking fires, you have to be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have taken medicine or drugs, or consumed alcohol that makes you drowsy.

For more information on Home Safety, please contact:

TCC • Division of Wellness & Prevention • Health & Safety Program
(907) 452-8251 Ext. 3584 • (800) 478.6822 • prevention@tananachiefs.org



ISABELLE JOHN TANACROSS

Isabelle John was born in the old village of Ketchumstock, but was raised in Tanacross.

"Ever since we were little kids, we talk in our language," says Isabelle, "Our grandma, she teach us to go out and bring some woods, pack water, and warm up water."

Isabelle's grandma raised them to be strong and independent, making sure they knew how to take care of themselves if they needed. "Whenever we need our food, we get out gun and we go out in the woods and get what we want," says Isabelle, "I killed ducks. I killed rabbit. I killed muskrat."

Even in 65 below weather, Isabelle and her sister would still have to go outside to chop firewood. "We just make block wood and we fill up our sled," says Isabelle, "Even in cold weather, we'd make two trips."

When she was twelve years old, her grandma began teaching them how to sew and do beadwork. "[When] we don't do good, we just get razor blade and cut it all off," says Isabelle, "She let us do all over again. Now we try hard to put that beads on the slippers."

Isabelle remembers that her grandma was strong and tough, even in her old age. "Grandma, she used to walk around, no walker, not nothing. No pills. She's healthy and she live by Alaska food," says Isabelle, "At 106 she died of pneumonia." After her grandma's death, Isabelle continued to practice the lessons she learned. Sewing slippers, gloves, boots, and fur hats. Never forgetting the old ways she was taught.

"Nowadays, I getting old and world change. People change," says Isabelle, "My dad Titus Isaac used to tell us

"Something come up that you never see, down the line you see a different life. So be careful."

To hear Isabelle's full story,
visit www.tananachiefs.org/legacy-of-our-elders/

LEGACY
OF OUR
ELDERS

TCC's Legacy of our Elders series documents the lives and stories of Elders throughout the TCC region.
These videos are available on our website.

STATE OF ALASKA VS.

Food Security in Rural Alaska



Food security for the Interior villages has been unstable given both the COVID-19 pandemic and the record low salmon runs which has limited the ability for tribal members to store enough food for the winter. Several tribes requested assistance from the State and Federal managers to provide emergency hunts. The State of Alaska denied the requests. The Federal Subsistence Board took various actions and their decisions were eventually taken to court by the Dunleavy administration.



This spring, as the COVID-19 pandemic hit the tribal communities in rural Alaska, tribes sought assistance from the Hunting, Fishing, and Gathering Task Force (Task Force) to ensure the tribes could provide for their communities through their traditional hunting practices. The Task Force used the administrative procedures and processes to request a state emergency hunt.

According to the pleadings that were presented by the attorney general, the Alaska SEOC Operations Section Chief for the Unified Command Mass Care Group ("Mass Care"), stated that there were no food security problems or food supply disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and communicated this assumption with the federal employees, without considering input from impacted Tribes.

The Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) was the next avenue for the

Tribes to request emergency hunts, this time on federal public lands. The Task Force worked with Tribes to prepare and submit Special Action Requests (SAR) to the FSB.

The Koyukuk tribe submitted a SAR, WSA19-15, for an out of season moose hunt in the Game Management Unit 21D on Federal Public lands near or in the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge, BLM administered land, Special Management Area, and Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge. Koyukuk cited food security issues during the pandemic and heavy reliance on subsistence ways of life to provide nourishment for their community as the reason for the SAR.

On August 4th, Chief Leo Lolnitz received a letter from the FSB stating the Board voted to defer Koyukuk's SAR for an emergency hunt. The reason for the deferred vote stated the need for well-defined criteria and guidance to be developed for the determination on how and when food security concerns become a demonstrable and imminent threat to public safety. Federal subsistence regulations authorize the Board, in emergency situations, to open federal public lands for the taking of wildlife for subsistence uses, under certain circumstances, including for public safety reasons.

The FSB took action on other tribal

requests, including the Village of Kake's request to allow a short-term subsistence hunt of moose and deer. FSB authorized a limited hunt of no more than two moose and five deer per month over a 60-day period, "for reasons of public safety related to food security concerns in Kake due to intermittent and unreliable food deliveries caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and limited ferry service."

On August 10, the State of Alaska sued the FSB citing violations of ANILCA, the Open Meetings Act, and the Administrative Procedures Act. The State's Complaint argues the FSB: exceeded its authority under ANILCA by "opening" new harvests as they only have authority to "close" or restrict a harvest; violated ANILCA by allowing a hunt for Kake tribal members only and not all federally qualified members; violated ANILCA in its decision to close Unit 13 for two years to non-federally qualified hunters in order to limit competition between hunters; and violated the Open Meetings Act and acted without adequate notice and in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act when field managers took action.



On August 20, 2020, several Alaska Native entities including the Organized Village of Kake, Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Bristol Bay Native Association, Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Native Peoples Action, First Alaskans Institute,



and Sealaska Corporation took a stance against the State's actions and in a public news release stated, "The Alaska state government in its current lawsuit against the federal government, is once again prioritizing action to sue its own citizens. Unfortunately, this is a continuation of attempts by the State to target and punish Alaska Native peoples for

living our ways of life by usurping the laws of the land in such a way as to try to deny our inherent sovereignty and constitutionally protected rights. This action is stunningly shameful."

The Native Village of Kake then filed for intervention on August 27, 2020. On September 18, 2020, Judge Gleason denied the State's request

for preliminary injunction regarding Game Management Unit 13 (Ahtna area). The denial of preliminary injunction does not mean the FSB won the matter. The denial means the court will not take immediate action in the State's interests before the court's final decision. The case will now proceed to the briefing phase.

Anticipated Opening of Upper Tanana Health Center

TCC plans to begin operations of the Upper Tanana Health Center in Tok. The 16,000-square-foot clinic will be expected to open its doors and offer primary care, urgent care, dental, behavioral health, lab, radiology, and pharmacy services to patients in the Upper Tanana Health region. There will be a small ceremony where Chief Chaaiy Albert, tribal delegate from Northway and Executive Board member representing the Upper Tanana Sub region, will be the first patient at the new facility on October 19th, 2020. Tribal delegates and the UTHC cultural committee will also be

present at the celebration. The public is not encouraged to attend in order to maintain safe social distancing.

While the interior of the building will be complete by the October 19th opening date, due to shipping delays associated with COVID-19, the exterior siding of the building may still be under construction. The clinic will be ready for services and due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, scheduling an appointment for any services will be needed to be seen at the clinic.

The clinic is expected to provide full pharmacy services, to include

over-the-counter medications, staffed by a full time pharmacist at a future date to be determined. Until this time, medications will still be available to the extent they currently are.

"The Upper Tanana Tribal community has waited a long time for this project to come to fruition," says Chief/Chairman Victor Joseph, "We look forward to providing the care their communities need and deserve."

When it is safe, a larger grand opening will be scheduled for the region to celebrate the new UTHC, pending COVID-19 restrictions.



THE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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Letters to the Editor, other written contributions and photo submissions are welcome. However, space is limited and program-oriented news has priority. We reserve the right to edit or reject material. Letters and opinions are not necessarily the opinions of Tanana Chiefs Conference. Material submitted anonymously will not be printed.



Find Your Purpose

JOIN OUR TEAM: WWW.TANANACHIEFS.ORG/CAREERS/

Fairbanks Vacancies

- Addictions Behavioral Health Clinician
- Addictions Counselor I
- Ambulatory Surgery Center Manager
- Billing Manager
- Billing Technician II
- Biomedical Equipment Technician III
- Central Scheduler
- Certified Medical Assistant
- Dental Assistant I
- Dental Front Desk Supervisor
- Diagnostic Radiology Technologist
- Education and Outreach Specialist
- Employee Health RN Manager
- Health Informatics Specialist
- Home Care Manager
- Infection Control Specialist
- Licensed Practical Nurse
- Medical Laboratory Scientist
- Medical Laboratory Technician
- Nurse Practitioner - Urgent Care PRN
- OMFRC Behavioral Health Consultant
- Outpatient Behavioral Health Case Manager
- Patient Transport Specialist
- Pharmacy Clerk
- Pharmacy Technician II
- Physician - Urgent Care
- Physician Assistant - Urgent Care PRN
- Probate Specialist Tech II
- Psychiatrist
- Public Health Lead RN
- Purchased/Referred Care Clerk
- Regional Instructor
- Security Officer
- Service Desk Technician
- Subregional Prevention Coordinator
- TCC GO Project Specialist
- TCS Administrative Assistant
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Village Vacancies

- Behavioral Health Aide (Anaktuvuk Pass, Chalkyitsik, Dot Lake, Nenana, Northway, Rampart, Ruby)
- Camp Counselor (Old Minto)
- Community Health Aide/Practitioner (Alatna, Allakaket, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Evansville, Healy Lake, Hughes, Kaltag, Koyukuk, Manley, Northway, Rampart, Ruby, Stevens Village, Tetlin)
- Community Health Representative (Allakaket)
- Elder Nutrition Cook (Nikolai)
- Family Visitor (Hughes, Kaltag, McGrath)
- Home Care Provider (Arctic Village, Eagle, Fort Yukon, Galena, Holy Cross, Huslia, Nikolai)
- Infant/Toddler Teacher (Galena, Nenana)
- Lead Teacher (Galena)
- Old Minto Family Recovery Camp Traditional Counselor (Old Minto)
- Physician Assistant-Upper Tanana Health Center (Tok)
- Preschool Assistant Teacher (Fort Yukon, Grayling)
- Preschool Lead Teacher (Fort Yukon, Tanacross)
- Security Officer (Tok)
- Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook (Anvik)
- Tok Sub-Regional Primary Care Physician (Tok)
- Tribal Family Youth Specialist (Circle)
- Tribal Workforce Development Specialist (Chalkyitsik)
- UTHC Janitor (Tok)
- Village Public Safety Officer (Allakaket, Anvik, Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik, Eagle, Grayling, Huslia, McGrath, Northway, Nulato, Ruby, Tetlin, Venetie)

Region- Wide Vacancies

- Community Health Aide/Practitioner – Itinerant
- Tribal Employment Rights Officer

JOBS LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF SEPTEMBER 22,2020

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS FOR THE 2021 TCC Calendar



DEADLINE TO SUBMIT IS OCTOBER 16TH, 2020

Go to: tananachiefs.org/2021-tcc-calendar-submissions/
Fill out the form, upload pictures, and give a caption and you're done!

HELPING BRING YOUR FUTURE INTO FOCUS

Learn about TCC's newest program, TCC GO, and how it can help high school students!



tananachiefs.org/services/tcc-go/