



# RESILIENCY & RENEWAL

Tanana Chiefs Conference  
2021 Annual Report

# Vision

Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes

# Mission

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.

More information can be found on the TCC website at [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)



Tanana  
Chiefs  
Conference

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Second Traditional Chief



# Strategic Planning

A diverse strategic planning group has been meeting regularly to develop TCC's 2021-2025 strategic plan. The plan has been redesigned to better communicate the priorities and focus of TCC, so Tribes and staff can easily identify how their priorities and work aligns with the direction of the organization. The plan is based on five pillars that TCC has always addressed since incorporation. The goals under each pillar derive from Chief Simon's priorities, the feedback we gathered from meeting with village councils, and the priorities listed in the community plans. Chief Simon will share the pillars and goals with the Executive Board in March, then the executive management will begin formulating strategies to present to the board at the spring retreat.

## Water & Sewer

The water and sewer workgroup is in the process of compiling data from the community plans to determine the needs and priorities for the region. It was determined that there is a range between 450 - 500 homes in our region without water and sewer. Most of those are in the 13 unserved villages, but that number includes some of the served villages that have new homes / subdivisions with unserved homes.

There is an opportunity to achieve getting water and sewer

into our communities as sanitation funding is at its highest level. At the same time, as we improve access to water and sewer throughout the region, TCC will experience a reduction in funding though there will be a need to update the aging existing infrastructure.

An early success on this initiative is bringing water and sewer to 137 households in our region:

- ANTHC has been funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for 70 mini-pass units

for the following villages in our region: Birch Creek (5); Rampart (10); Venetie (15); Stevens Village (5); Circle (15); Chalkyitsik (10); and Allakaket (10). ANTHC will be manage this project and work with Tribes to determine what homes will receive the units.

- TCC received CDC funding for 67 additional mini-pass units. After the initial 70 homes are identified through ANTHC, TCC will start working with tribes to identify homes.

## Food Security

This team's focus has been on identifying what food security and food sovereignty mean to the TCC region. A review of the Alaskan Inuit Food Security Framework has helped guide the group's discussion:

Food security is characterized by environmental health and is made up of six interconnecting dimensions: culture, availability, accessibility, health and wellness, stability, and decision-making power and management. Without food sovereignty, food security will not exist.

Food sovereignty is the right to define their hunting, gathering, fishing, land, and water policies; the right to define what is sustainable, socially, economically, and culturally appropriate for the distribution of food and to maintain ecological health; the right to obtain and maintain practices that ensure access to tools needed to obtain, process, store and consume traditional foods.

The workgroup is focusing on access to high quality foods in rural grocery stores, animal husbandry and gardening, advocacy, food co-ops and climate change.

### Initiatives identified so far:

- A comprehensive climate change report will be developed for the tribes to ensure tribes are making/guiding strategic decisions.
- Process map the village grocery supply chain to identify areas of improvement.
- Comprehensive needs as-

essment to identify village-specific needs.

- Prepare to advocate for emergency spring 2021 subsistence hunting.

## Public Safety

The workgroup's goal is to build holistic public safety through tribal unity, education, and reconciliation. Areas of focus include community policing, protecting women and children, strengthening the Tribal Peace Officer program, revising Reclaiming Our People, addressing law enforcement response, addressing historical trauma and substance abuse, and building strong relationships between communities and law enforcement.

Challenges we are facing include difficulty with recruitment and retention of VPSOs, poor public perception of law enforcement, lack of resources in villages, substance abuse, and the loss of Fairbanks-based troopers.

### To address challenges, we will be working on:

- Rebranding law enforcement and tribal justice in partnership with the Alaska State Troopers
- Developing a standardized protocol to follow when someone goes missing.
- Developing a crisis protocol plan for various emergencies (domestic violence, suicidal people,

endangered children, assault, etc.).

- Developing a regional intertribal court, which will be Fairbanks-based.
- Developing Community Public Safety Response plans.
- Developing stronger relationships with community partners.

## Broadband

The broadband workgroup is compiling baseline data related to internet connectivity for each village to determine the current status and need. Last week, a new Low Earth Orbit satellite service became available for preorder from Starlink - to be available in 2022. The service promises to offer quality internet to rural Alaska for any household that signs up and could dramatically improve broadband opportunities for locations with limited internet options. Costs include \$499 for hardware, \$99 monthly costs, and \$50 shipping fee. TCC plans to identify subsidies to off-set the costs for tribal members. It appears this service will out-perform any other existing service, so we are encouraging people not to enter into long-term agreements with other service providers and to pre-order with Starlink as it will be provided on a first-come-first-served basis.

*The goals under each pillar derive from Chief Simon's priorities, the feedback we gathered from meeting with village councils, and the priorities listed in the community plans.*

# Administration

The Administration Department includes several divisions including Finance and Accounting, Human Resources, Information Technology, Communications, Legal, Quality Management, Compliance and Facilities.

## Compliance

The program continues to work on implementation of RL Datix to track patient and employee incidents, manage policies, patient satisfaction, root cause analysis (RCA) management, and compliance reporting.

Compliance's Safety Program continues leading TCC efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The CAIHC incident command team remains activated and meets weekly with safety leading multiple work groups and teams to continue to assess and provide guidance on a variety of issues. Safety continues to provide weekly situation reports and to assist in leading weekly calls with our tribal and community partners. The group is continuing to proactively develop and implement process improvements, identify gaps and acquire supplies to ensure

the highest level of safety for our staff, patients and tribal partners.

The Safety program has been assisting with design review, project planning, site safety, regulatory and code compliance for the Upper Tanana Health Clinic, University Road Building, CAIHC expansion and several village based projects.

The Safety program coordinated with several programs on the selection, purchase and distribution of more than 150 hospital grade HEPA filters across TCC facilities to assist with improving indoor air quality.

The Health Information Management staff have moved to the University Road Building and staff are available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. via telephone. If there are any questions regarding release of information, please call 451-6682, ext. 3630.

## Legal

- Legal assisted TCC and tribes with funding, compliance, and public safety enforcement related to the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- In addition we worked on various contractual and legal issues for our continued facilities projects.
- Continued work for USAC subsidy, provider agreements, internal investigations. Staffed advocacy, elections and resolutions committees.
- Initiated the Ambler road litigation. Coordinated meetings with the Biden transition team. Started on the Doyon redistricting team.
- Renewed insurance information.
- Finalized the Agiloft contract management system. Entered the Opioid and Vaping class actions.



The Chief Peter John Tribal Building in Fairbanks.

## Communications

Since March, the Communications Division's focus shifted to the COVID-19 pandemic response. The division has assisted in developing social media posts, creating a COVID-19 webpage, drafting press releases, arranging radio interviews and PSAs, video messaging, flyers and signage.

With the distribution of the COVID-19 Vaccine beginning in December, the Communications Division has been working closely with health to ensure that our tribes and tribal members are up-to-date and informed.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Legacy of Our Elders premiere was postponed – with the division instead doing a 'virtual movie night' every Friday on our social media/website where a new elder story premiered each week. All videos from Volume 1-10 of the project are now available to watch on the TCC website.

Prior to the pandemic Communications did interview several elders but since then we have



not conducted additional interviews in order to maintain safe social distancing and to not put any elders at risk. Communications does plan to continue the project and will provide updates when those are available.

In March 2020, Communications re-launched the TCC website ([www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)). The new website is redesigned and reorganized to increase ease of use for users, provide faster load times for the villages, and is now a mobile-friendly platform. The new website improved page load time from

45.9 seconds to 11.7 seconds. Since March 2020, the Communications Division has recorded, edited, and produced 58 videos ranging from public service announcements, messages to staff, to educational videos.

TCC has also been working with the press to positively promote TCC, the tribes we serve, and Alaska Native people as a whole. As a result, TCC has been featured in several major news outlets throughout the state and the nation, including the Today Show and NBC Nightly News.

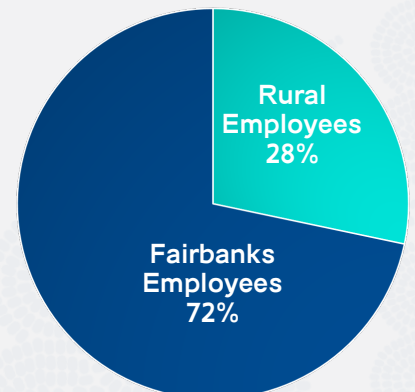
## Human Resources

TCC currently holds a 60% native hire rate throughout the organization and in 2020 processed 242 new hires.

Much of 2020 was spent assisting with the COVID-19 response through policy development, compensation practices, work-from-home strategies, addressing unique employee challenges faced from potential COVID-19 exposure as well as

working offsite during a global pandemic.

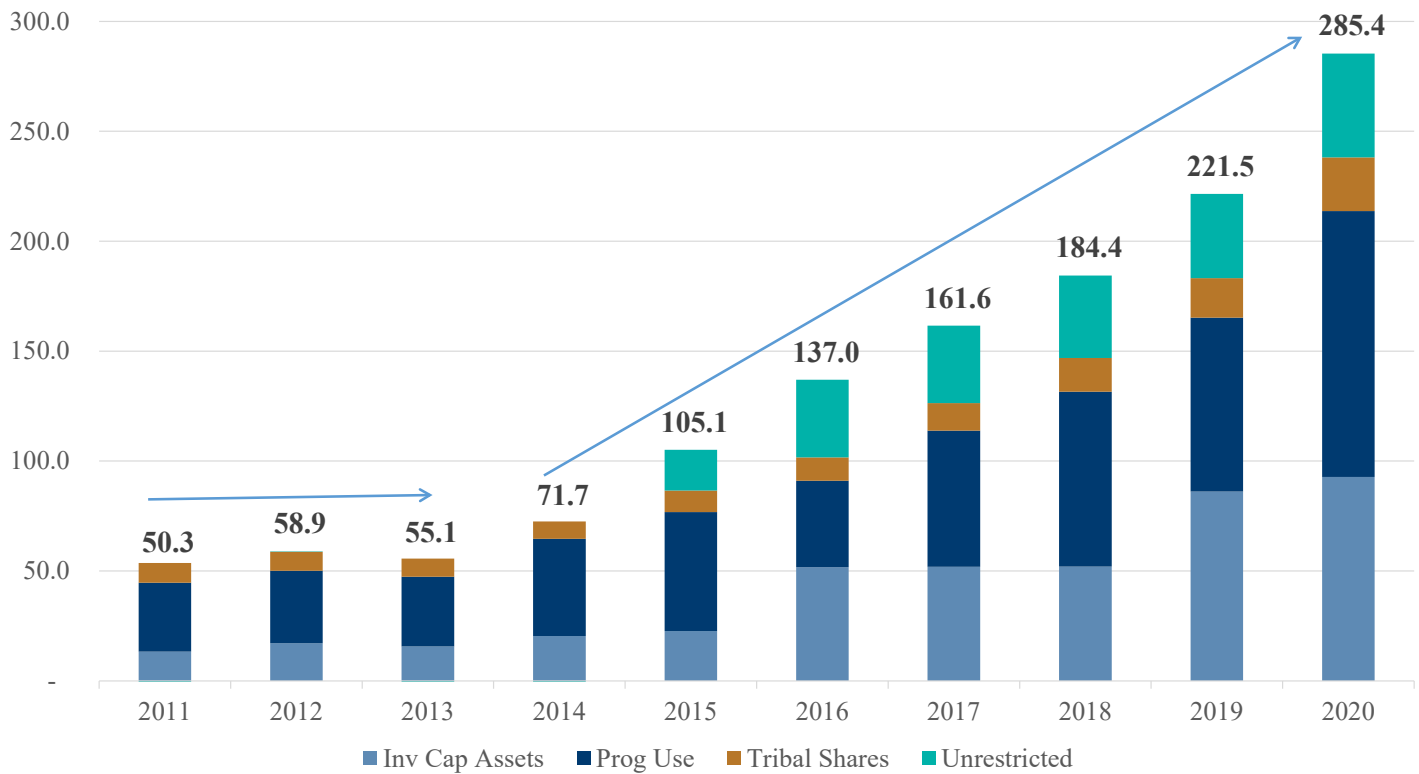
Human Resources has also been working on ensuring that employees do not experience burnout by offering tools to assist with stress management, as many employees are experiencing heightened levels of stress and anxiety amidst the global pandemic.



As of December 31st, 2020 TCC had a total of 982 employees.

## Total Net Position History

In Millions



## Finance & Accounting

Finance and Accounting successfully closed out a challenging FY2020 and passed budgets and opened up a promising FY2021. The annual audit went very well and for the fourth straight year had zero findings. The annual 990 and 5500 tax returns were completed as well as the audit of the profit sharing plan. In addition to these annual tasks, the Finance & Accounting team implemented a new reporting structure for the Health De-

partment.

Other highlights include:

- Facilitated distributing \$21.4M in unrestricted and COVID related funding to our rural communities.
- Managed approximately 300 active awards
- Completed 320 grant reports
- Created 1,249 P.O.'s
- Audited 2,943 PCard reports
- Processed 25,959 invoices

- Issued 16,761 checks
- Processed 1,867 Travel Authorizations and 1,831 Trip Reports
- Expanded the electronic Travel Authorization pilot program to 75% of the company
- Processed payroll for biweekly payrolls including paper checks and auto deposits
- Completed quarterly payroll tax reports, annual W-2s, 1099s, and Affordable Care Act forms



## Quality Management

Quality Management is leading the organization on the Journey Towards Excellence by adopting the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Framework and building capacity for quality and process improvement throughout the organization. Over the past year, over 130 staff and leaders have been trained on the foundation of quality improvement and the Baldrige criteria. Several programs and teams have been engaged in process mapping exercises and strategic planning.

In light of COVID-19, staff quickly adapted to the changing landscape to ensure that we maintained compliance with regulatory requirements. Clinical Training certifications in particular became challenging for staff to attain due to travel restrictions, distance requirements and staffing. In response to this, our Clinical Training Specialist implemented the Resuscitation Quality Improvement Program (RQI). RQI utilizes a cart with a computer linked to both Adult and Infant CPR manikins. Three RQI carts are in place in Fairbanks and several 'travel' RQI carts will be deployed to our rural areas. Staff will be able to recertify more frequently, resulting in regular, measured practice and

continual verification of competence and a high degree of mastery in emergency training skills.

Customer Experience was officially expanded to become corporate-wide last March. Previously they were only involved with healthcare patients. Their goal is to expand services and partner with Tribal Client Services (TCS) and Administration in order to provide excellent service to all TCC customers. The team is working to expand and streamline our approaches to listening to customer feedback and suggestions for improvement. Our patient transportation team was very involved in transporting COVID-19 positive patients and medical supplies to various TCC locations, and will continue to evaluate how we can meet more of our customers'

## Information Technology

During 2020, the IT division was instrumental in expanding and increasing the use of technology at TCC in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In every TCC operated clinic, new mobile video teleconferencing equipment was deployed for telehealth appointments.

The IT Service Desk saw an

increase in call volume by 19.5% in 2020 over 2019. As a result, two new rural IT positions were approved and currently advertised in Tok and Galena. The position in Tok will be used to provide support at the new clinic as well as faster response to other clinics in that sub-region. The position in Galena will provide support to the clinic there as well as remote support to all TCC staff.

The Oracle iRecruitment Project was completed which improved the functionality of our system and saves TCC \$100K annually in contract costs.

A new Tribal application called RiteTrack was approved to implement in 2021 as well as a new position to oversee the purchase, implementation and continued support and training of this application. The job description has been finalized and will be advertised soon.

New clinics in Tok, Manley, and Evansville were brought online. The IT division expanded the service capability through the use of technology at several TCC facilities including the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center, Bertha Moses, Willow House and the University Building.





# Health Services

**TCC Health Services manages the health care delivery to the villages within the TCC region through the Community Health Aide Program, Wellness and Prevention Division, Behavioral Health Division, Office of Environmental Health and more.**

## Clinic Expansion

In April 2020, construction began on the expansion of the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center. The expansion will add 108,000 gross square feet to the already 95,000 square feet, and will add a few new services to the clinic. The new addition will be two stories and will have a third unfinished story for growth in the future.

The clinic expansion will provide an ambulatory surgery center, an expanded urgent care clinic, diagnostic imaging with a CT -scan, hematology/oncology, ophthalmology, a larger laboratory, and additional support spaces with offices, public waiting areas and a receiving area.

TCC established a cultural committee consisting of elders and cultural experts who worked

closely with the architect's design team in order to ensure that the expansion is a space that reflects the heritage, culture and traditions of the interior Alaska Native people.

TCC is working on the details of the project plan for staffing needs, policies, procedures, and workflows for both the expansion of existing services and for the implementation of new services.

A cross-functional group met

on February 25-26th, 2021 to holistically review each health service line plan for the expansion to ensure everyone is on the same page for timelines, needs and expectations.

Currently the construction of the facility remains on schedule, with the facility fully enclosed and construction started on the interior of the expansion. The expansion plans to be completed and ready to open by May 2022.



## New Upper Tanana Health Center

In November 2020, the new Upper Tanana Health Center in Tok opened to the public. The new facility provides health-care for Tok residents as well as the TCC villages in the Upper Tanana sub-region including Eagle, Healy Lake, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, and Northway.

The facility is approximately 15,900 square feet and is designed to support an additional 8,000 square feet for future expansion. The new facility provides primary care, dental, behavioral health, trauma, and triage functions with full laboratory, radiology, and pharmacy services all under one roof.



## Behavioral Health

The division of Behavioral Health managed services well with the COVID-19 pandemic. As the majority of providers had offered services via telehealth already, it was a smooth transition to move to full telehealth services. Behavioral Health staff continued to provide in-person services to crisis and high-risk clients when necessary.

In 2017 Behavioral Health approved an additional \$3 million in funding to meet the needs of people who are seeking services. A 3-part phased hiring plan was put in place and completed hiring all of the staff in late 2019. With the host of new staff, including crisis-and assessment clinicians, intake coordinators, case managers and Behavioral Health Aides. Behavioral health has been able to make positive changes in its programs including significantly reducing the waitlist for integrated assessments and improving access to care. At this time there are fewer than 50 people on the waitlist. No one is on the waitlist longer than 3 months and people in crisis are prioritized for immediate assessment and stabilization.

Camp the goal is to have an 85% utilization rate. With new safety measures to meet COVID-19 safety standards, capacity was reduced from 10-12 clients to 6-7 clients. Staff have maintained working at capacity since March 2020. Changes have been made to improve services and provide treatment for the different types of substances clients may be using, including opioids and methamphetamines. As substance use is considered a public health issue and treated regularly for often a long period of time, we grew our outpatient substance use treatment program to make services accessible throughout our region. Client satisfaction rates continue to be over 90% positive.

## Housing First

2020 has been a difficult year due to quarantine and social distancing requirements for both tenants and staff. Housing First tenants are considered a vulnerable population and due to the high risk of tenants acquiring COVID-19, weekly COVID-19 antigen testing was put in place for both tenants and staff in close collaboration with the medical staff at Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center.

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation Special Needs Housing grant in the amount of \$1,281,750 to continue providing services, and also received notification that the Continuum of Care grant was awarded, which augment the Special Needs grant.

## Wellness & Prevention

We completed the 2nd Cohort of the Indigenous Wellness Academy, with graduates from Dot Lake, Tok, Beaver, Tanana, Minto and Ruby. The 3rd cohort began with participants from Fort Yukon, Tanacross, Northway, Arctic Village and Huslia.

We have prepared the curriculum and started recruiting for the following programs:

- Youth Wellness Warrior
- Indigenous Wellness Academy
- Commit to be Fit
- Healthy Ambassador

We are doing Community Check-ins on a monthly basis with tribes and clinics. Talking circles were held monthly for rural community members to talk about grief and trying times during COVID-19. Grief Support and Recovery 1:1 Groups are offered weekly.

For Old Minto Family Recovery

Housing First received the

Health Services staff were on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.



## COVID-19 Response

In March, Health Services quickly shifted focus to respond immediately to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On average, TCC performed 600-650 COVID-19 tests per week at TCC facilities across the region. In Fairbanks, testing started as a drive-through testing site in the CAIHC parking lot and was later moved inside the former Bertha Moses Patient Hostel for the winter.

Over the course of the year we have been able to increase the COVID-19 testing capacity with additional lab-analyzers in Fairbanks and villages. For a period of time, TCC was the only entity in the Interior with the capability to perform same-day-testing in house.

All village clinics operated by TCC Health Services have at least 45 test collection kits available and all Health Aides are trained in collecting specimen. Larger communities / sub-regional clinics have larger quantities available. In case of an outbreak that required large scale community testing, additional testing support was

provided. A team from Fairbanks was deployed several times to communities when the situation required large scale testing.

Health Services received COVID-19 funding through Indian Health Services for testing and services.

Health Services also applied for CDC COVID-19 funding. This funding allowed for renovations to the University Davis Building, converting it into temporary clinical space due to the need to move programs out of CAIHC to allow for social distancing for patients and staff. It also allowed for purchasing additional lab-equipment, mobile X-ray machines and mobile air filtration units for village clinics and clinical /office space in Fairbanks, as well as handwashing stations for temporary clinical space.

A total of \$10 million from Health Services' COVID-19 funding was set aside to support all the Tribes in the TCC region, through a grant mechanism. The amount a Tribe is eligible for is based on the percentage of health services they receive

through TCC. This still provides those tribes that are part of TCC but are receiving their health services predominantly through another tribal health organization with some funding that they can use towards COVID-19 / public health related expenditures. Examples are: improvements towards washaterias; supporting additional (mini) -PASS systems in the community; purchasing cleaning supplies; supporting elders during the Pandemic; hiring staff for additional cleaning of public areas; lease of a building to store COVID-19 community supplies. Stipends for community members who take food and supplies to those in isolation or quarantine, etc.

At the beginning of March 2021, Health Services had administered over 10,000 vaccines to eligible patients throughout the Interior and had successfully administered both doses of the vaccines to all 26 villages that TCC provides health care services to, ensuring that elders and vulnerable populations and those caring for them, received the vaccine first.

## Willow House

After a complete renovation, Willow House re-opened for services on February 10, 2020. A month later, COVID-19 hit and created new operating challenges that continue into 2021. In close collaboration with Medical staff and infection control staff specific COVID-19 protocols were put in place to address sanitation, personal protective equipment use and social distancing requirements. Due to COVID-19 and for the safety of our patients and staff, the community kitchen for gatherings has been closed. Snack and cold drink vending machines are available for guests who are seeking snacks or drinks between meal deliveries.

Since opening on February 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 The Willow House had a total of 1959 occupied rooms. Hotel Occupancy is at 16.23%. This is a decrease of guests since last annual report due to COVID-19. Total Revenue collected for 2020 is at \$233,323.00

Hotel Nightly Room Statistics:

Medicaid Patients: 952

Tribal Patients: 175

TCC Patients: 867

Self-Pay Patients: 8

\*No Show/Cancellations: 64  
(Weather, COVID-19, or no admittance list)

The major challenges are with meal service, as there is not restaurant onsite. Meal tickets are still available to guests for use at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital cafeteria. However, since the

pandemic, Willow House staff are required to pick-up meals for our hotel guests.

## Patient Travel

Due to COVID-19, Patient Travel has seen a reduction in the number of travel requests. Staff have worked closely with our Tribes to create travel protocols that follow tribal recommendations and State of Alaska Health Mandates. Patient Travel has also created a partnership with Sophie Station and Wedgewood to house COVID-19 positive patients in a safe environment and reduce the spread to our communities.

## Dental Clinic

TCC dental successfully adapted to Adult Enhanced Dental Medicaid Services removal from the state budget and are embracing reinstatement of these services.

TCC Dental proudly participated for the first time in the American Dental Association's (ADA) 'Give Kids a Smile' event. Dental developed a modified version of our pre-existing "Children's Dental Clinic" and completed exams, cleanings and other preventive treatment for children.



Galena Dental Health Aide Therapists designed and implemented a Fluoride rinse and toothbrush program at the Sidney Huntington School.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic travel bans, dental teams performed and successfully completed village travel despite cold weather and frozen

clinics.

In response to COVID-19, on March 16, 2020 TCC Dental began seeing only emergent and urgent dental patients and postponed remaining field visits per State of Alaska mandates. Successfully navigating the various dental mandates and recommendations affiliated with the COVID-19 pandemic and reopened the clinic for dental services with the following:

COVID-19 specific dental treatment protocols were rapidly developed for treating patients during the pandemic. Dental team members were repurposed for COVID-19 related clinic duties mainly focused around PPE (personal protective equipment) management and manufacturing, when there were significant shortages at the start of the Pandemic.

Providing all dental services at a reduced capacity. Completion of facility updates that allowed us to increase availability of services, including dispensing portable HEPA filtration units throughout the clinic. A small portion of dental team members remain repurposed to COVID-19 related duties within the company. The formal village travel season started September 21st. Due to active cases in some communities in the fall, dental teams have already encountered some field travel cancellations but are otherwise providing expected dental field visits.

## Radiology/Imaging

Radiology implemented a portable X-Ray system enabling symptoms of COVID-19 to be imaged in an alternate location. Biomedical and Radiology worked closely to establish a digital solution. Cost was less than \$20,000 to institute a system where outright purchase would have been close to \$100,000.

New Digital portable X-Ray unit was received and placed

in operation. This has helped alleviate some crowding in the waiting rooms to maintain social distancing.

Ultrasound was relocated to the Al Ketzler Sr. Building and later to the University-Davis Building to establish an alternative area for the OB Clinic patients. A second ultrasound unit remained in radiology department to ensure coverage for CAIHC patients.



## Eye Clinic

The Eye Clinic began working with reduced staff on March 18 due to COVID-19. Routine care was postponed and the eye clinic had an optometrist and an optician available during clinic hours for emergencies and to assist patients over the phone. All other Eye Clinic team members were reassigned to help with routine patients in family medicine, urgent care and the drive through testing.

The Eye Clinic reopened for routine exams on June 8, 2020. Eye clinic staff have continued to work with infection control to find the most effective ways to keep our team and patients safe.

## Medical Services

Main Events for medical services in 2020 are related to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the initial lockdown for many services, staff rapidly converted to increased use of telehealth and developed

a robust Telemedicine program. Many in-person services that were on-hold, have resumed, but telemedicine continues to be an important way to provide patient-care for routine care and follow-up care. All of the Family Medicine providers received training to function under this new program.

All services, including Urgent Care have changed to “by appointment only” to ensure patients will be able to have enough space to socially distance in all waiting room areas. Same day appointments for all providers are available, also.

Medical and clinical staff have maintained supporting drive-through testing and vaccination clinics.

In response to the Pandemic, Employee Health needs increased significantly to all TCC staff and provider and nursing staff were added to the Employee

Health Team.

Women’s Health, Pediatrics, Diabetes –WIC, case managers and care coordinators were moved to temporary locations and are now all housed at the University-Davis Building.

Clinical staff play a key roles in the Incident Command Structure, providing COVID-19 guidance to TCC Leadership and staff, Tribal Leadership and patients.

## Laboratory

The laboratory continues to improve operations by standardizing to automation and auto verification using the latest in informatics and information technology. The latest projects include expanding hematology and inventory management via Abbott AlinIQ software and hardware.

The Laboratory continues to improve operations to meet the continuously evolving demands of COVID-19 testing needs and continued operations at TCC.

## Pharmacy

CAIHC Pharmacy prescription volumes have remained largely unaffected by COVID-19. As much as possible, refills were changed to 90-day supply prescriptions, as opposed to 30-days at a time, to prevent unnecessary trips to the pharmacy.

The majority of our prescription volume also converted over to mail-out instead of in-person dispensing in order to decrease patient's needs to come in to CAIHC unnecessarily. The conversion to mailing out a majority of our prescriptions has gone well. This is similar to the mail-out program that was already in place to mail prescriptions to the villages.

The other major workflow change that we have made in the pharmacy is newly offering a "curbside" prescription pickup service. Under this protocol, patients come into the CAIHC parking lot and call the pharmacy from their cell phone. A pharmacy runner then delivers the medications to the patient out in the parking lot. The idea being that the patient never has to leave their vehicle or come into the building.

The number of TCC Dental prescriptions has fallen by ap-

proximately 80% compared to historical averages. Lastly, the number of prescriptions received from outside referrals to ANMC and local private doctors has dramatically fallen due to COVID-19, as well.

## Diabetes

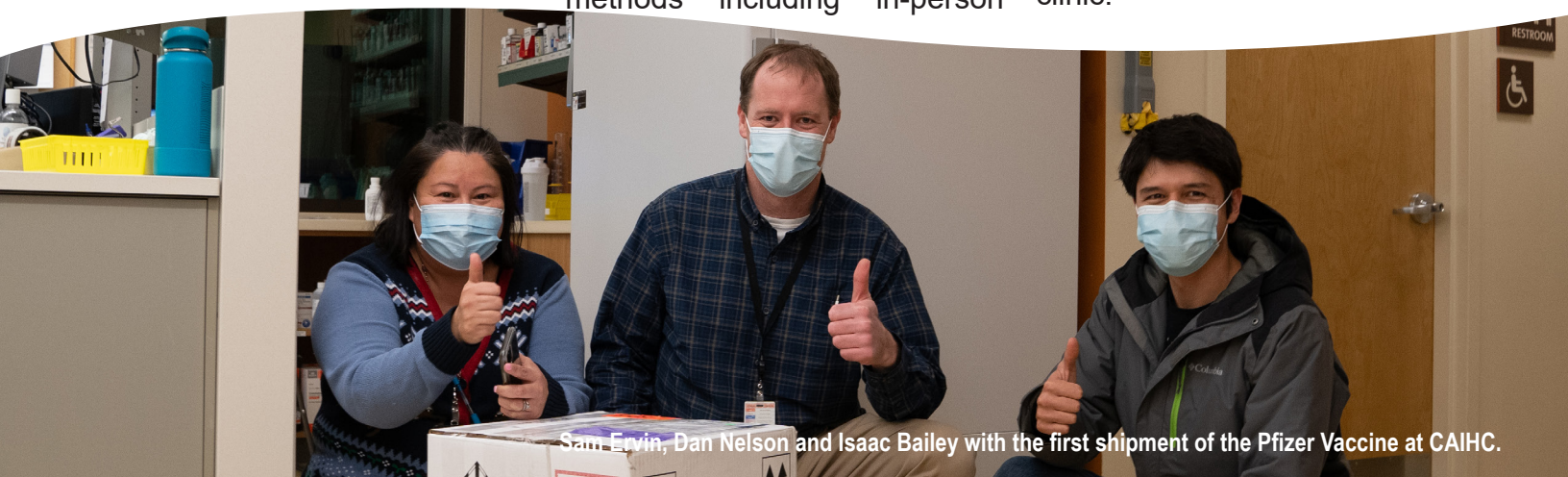
The Diabetes Program continues to provide diabetes education through one-on-one sessions, group classes, and community outreach events. The 6, 7, 8 and 9th cohort of the Prevent T2 Program (DPRP) meet weekly and will transition to monthly sessions. Two staff members at the Galena Clinic agreed to become lifestyle coaches and lead the next Galena based DPP, this was suspended due to COVID-19. Cohort #8 of the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) completed the program in June by using telemedicine to complete monthly sessions. Cohort #7 in Galena has continued with ongoing maintenance via email and telephone. DPP staff are working on developing a plan for the next DPP cohort which will utilize a number of delivery methods including in-person



and virtual sessions. This will allow staff to adapt the delivery method of the program safely to participants based on the current risk level of COVID-19.

Beginning in mid-March, in-person appointments were cancelled due to COVID-19. Diabetes Program staffing in the clinic was reduced to adhere to social distancing recommendations, minimize PPE use, and reduce overall foot traffic in the clinic. Appointments changed to phone and telehealth.

The Fitness Center has been closed to the public since mid-March. Current usage includes utilizing the space for Physical Therapy and Integrated Care with chiropractor and physical therapy sessions in the Fitness center space, to allow for better social distancing for patients and staff in the Physical Therapy clinic.



Sam Ervin, Dan Nelson and Isaac Bailey with the first shipment of the Pfizer Vaccine at CAIHC.

# Tribal Government & Client Services

**Tribal Government and Client Services (TCS) is one of three departments at TCC that oversees Client Development, Tribal Development and Natural Cultural Resources. TCS provides assistance and sustainability services to support the tribes and tribal members in our region reach their self-determination and self-sufficiency goals.**

## Public Law 102-477 Plan

Public Law 102-477 Plan ("477") is a consolidate grant that provides funding for assistance, employment and training, and education. On September 25, 2020, the BIA approved TCC's 477 plan for FY2021 to FY2023, but did not approve the inclusion of Burial Assistance and Emergency Assistance in the plan, determining the programs are not related reducing joblessness in native communities. Therefore, TCC no longer has a program that provides burial or emergency assistance. TCC is working with families that need assistance in these areas.

## Tribal Bookkeeping Program

In 2020, Self-Governance grew the Tribal Bookkeeping Program. The main goal is to offer quality, affordable bookkeeping services to tribes who want assistance. In September of 2020, April Mowery was hired as the Village Bookkeeper, and two tribes, Rampart and Healy Lake, entered into contracts to finish FY20. For FY21, the Village Bookkeeper Program entered into three village bookkeeping contracts with Healy Lake, Eagle, and Hughes for bookkeeping services. Bookkeeping and Accounting Support are on track to move towards self-sustainability.

## Real IDs

Due to COVID-19, the REAL ID deadline was pushed to October 1, 2021. After that date, anyone with a traditional license or tribal ID will not be able to use it to enter a federal building, military base or board a commercial airliner (a passport may be used). Tribal Development is developing a plan to assist our tribal members successfully apply for Real IDs.

## Cultural Program

Due to the cut in the tourist season, limitations in operating the program during the health pandemic and low revenue forecasts, the Cultural Program has been shut down.



## Program Changes

- Due to the cut in the tourist season, limitations in operating the program during the health pandemic and low revenue forecasts, the Cultural Program has been shut down.
- As part of Chief Simon's plan to better utilize TCC's resource for infrastruc-

ture throughout the region, Energy and Housing have been transferred under Facilities. This will allow TCC to better coordinate on rural projects and make sure all villages are benefiting from these programs.

- Established the new 'Enhanced Victim Services' program.

- E-board approved developing a Regional Tribal Peace Officer Program (TPO) in August. Received \$683,372.00 from the Department of Justice COPS grant to start the TCC Regional TPO program with a K-9 drug dog. We also received an insurance offer for our TPO program.

## Small And Needy Tribes

TCC submitted a notice of appeal in August to engage the Code of Federal regulations appeals process, asking the BIA to respond to our request for \$3.6 million to ensure all 37 federally recognized tribes in our region received the \$200,000 base level funding for FY2017-2020. TCC submitted a notice of appeal on December 28, 2020. If the BIA fails to respond by February 26, 2021, TCC will submit a formal appeal.

## Missing, Murdered Indigenous People

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## Revisioning

TCS is relooking at its positions, programs and divisions to realign its programs to better serve our tribes and tribal members. Brainstorming resulted in six categories of programs: Tribal Justice, Self Determination, Workforce Development and Support, Youth and Cultural Services, Tribal Food Sovereignty, and Traditional Lands and Resources. TCS Directors are working on staffing hierarchies for each category.

## Child Welfare Compact

TCC agreed to provide safety evaluations for the Office of Children Services (OCS). Before providing these services, staff needs training on entering information into the OCS data system and getting familiar with the forms that were negotiated between the tribes and State. CPP continues to do Diligent Relative Searches (DRS), which includes initial DRS and on-going DRS for a case.

## Employment & Training

A DOL Misplaced Workers COVID-19 grant was received in July for \$832,717, with an additional \$150,188 added. These funds create 37 sanitizing jobs (one in each village) to clean Tribal Village facilities according to the Center of Disease Control instruction, including washeterias, tribal halls, common areas of tribal offices, school rooms, community usage areas, etc. Sanitation Workers are paid \$22/hour for 25 hours a week for 34 weeks (10-12 months). To date, 24 requests for proposals were received and awarded to Tribes. Additionally, ten expediter positions were awarded to the TCC region to work 20 hours a week at \$18/hour for the duration of 34 weeks. This position will assist tribes in picking up and distributing freight at the airport, stores, clinics, schools, tribal offices, and homes.

## Census

The 2020 census was successful in Alaska with a 99.9% response rate. Several Tribes reported they were confident in their count. Once the numbers are released, we will work with Tribes and the Census if any Tribe feels their count is not accurate.



## TCC Fire Crew

TCC maintains a Type 2 IA (Initial attack) Fire Crew stationed in Tok. The crew is supported through a Cooperative Agreement with the State of Alaska, making the crew available as a State resource on wildland fire incidents. When not deployed on fires, the crew works on fuels or tree thinning projects in the

Tok area that is supported by an agreement with the State of Alaska and BIA contracts. Firefighter training services are supported by expertise developed by TCC Fire Crew personnel. The crew's goal is workforce development, working to prepare tribal members for careers in wildland fire.

## Hunting & Fishing

HFTF partnered with UAF's Tribal Governance (formerly Tribal Management) to educate, train and prepare 29 advocates for the Board of Game (BOG) session in March 2020, in Fairbanks. Key regulatory proposals include:

- Requiring the BOG to implement the ADFG Tribal Consultation Policy;
- Maintaining closure of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area;
- Protecting the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area;
- Protecting the moose population and traditional hunting practices within the Minto Flats and destruction of trophy moose antlers in the GASH; and
- Protecting ceremonial moose harvests.

HFTF partnered with UAF's Tribal Governance program to advocate at the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) meeting in April and May on several subsistence issues and proposals affecting our traditional ways of life that include:

- Indigenous food security and special action requests for emergency hunts in response to the COVID pandemic;
- Protection of the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area;
- Use of snowmachine to position for caribou;
- Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission request to issue hunting permits; and
- Kuskokwim Intertribal Fish Commission request for a federally qualified user-only fishing season.

## BLM Alaska Fire Service Opportunities & Challenges

TCC Forestry has an Annual Funding Agreement (AFA) with the BLM/Alaska Fire Service to provide Emergency Fire Fighter (EFF) training and management services, including the delivery of EFF refresher training and work capacity testing (pack testing). Plans were made to provide these services to 24 villages in and outside of the TCC Region in the spring. Unfortunately, the pandemic required the trainings to be canceled. A new agreement was negotiated for the 2021 and 2022 season and is currently going through the approval process.

BLM/AFS is moving to Type 2 contract crews. In 2020, three contract crews were established in the TCC Region and successfully deployed through the 2020 season. A solicitation for proposals for additional contract crews is to be released in early 2021. TCC Forestry is communicating with villages and tribal entities about submitting contract crew proposals, and may submit a proposal for a type 2 contract crew.

## Fisheries

Staff collaborated with Dr. Erik Schoen (UAF) to initiate a pilot study examining the effects of wildfires on rearing habitat for Chinook salmon in the Chena River. The effects of wildfires on salmon habitats and productivity are not well understood. Wildfires can lead to increased erosion and sedimentation, increased water temperatures, a changing food-base, and increased turbidity and debris loading.

## Probate

Realty ramped-up the work on probate to address the growing back-log of probates. We increased staffing, contracted with an agency providing vital statistics, and increased efficiency in processing probates. As a result, we saw a three-fold increase in the number of completed probate cases filed with the BIA.

Probates are challenged by land ownership fractionation. Fractionation describes the process through which landowners increase with each passing generation. The land itself is not physically divided; rather, the heirs are diluted, called an undivided interest. Many allotments now have hundreds of individual owners, and some will have thousands.

## Education

The Education Program assisted Beaver Village Tribal Council to keep their school in session.

Administration for Native Americans Grant awarded to TCC “TCC Ch’oodoohk’ii” for \$300,000 a year for three years. The grant will digitize all holdings at the Alaska Native Language Archive and make those recordings available to our communities via the internet.

## TCC GO

TCC GO (“Growing Our Own”) is funded through a three year Alaska Native Education Program (ANEP) grant from the Department of Education. It is designed to increase the academic engagement of Alaska Native high school students, and encourage them to pursue a career in a health-related field.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the TCC GO program modified its original goal of bringing students to Fairbanks for job shadowing and course intensives to supporting a distance delivery model.

## Vietnam Veterans Era Allotment Act

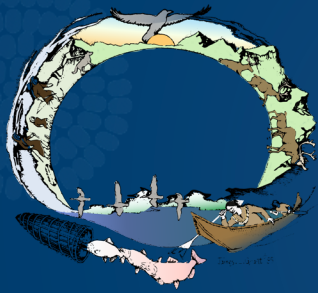
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released the final rule for Alaska Native Vietnam-era veterans and directs Veterans and their heirs to seek assistance from regional service providers. Funding was not made available for these services. Realty is discussing how to best manage these services with a lack of funding.



## Trespass

There has been a significant increase in trespass complaints, particularly due to subsistence trespass by outsiders. During the special convention in 2019, we began the conversation about partnering in trespass prevention efforts with regional and village corporations and tribes. Due to the sheer volume of rights protection issues, legal jurisdictional questions and the lack of funding for legal action, we choose carefully which cases to litigate. We have two rights-protections cases in litigation, which are on the verge of settling one of the oldest and most significant rights protection cases in state history.





Tanana  
Chiefs  
Conference