

COVID-19 Surge Causes Staffing Challenges at TCC

Last month, the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) faced workforce shortages due to the sudden rise in COVID-19 cases which caused strain on services. In Mid-January TCC saw an increase in employees becoming infected or exposed to COVID-19, requiring staff to self-isolate until they are able to return to the workplace safely.

“Our healthcare staff have been working around the clock to reach out to our patients to reschedule appointments,” says Jacoline Bergstrom, Executive Director of Health Services,

“It’s difficult to keep up with because it seems like more staff are either testing positive or are exposed each day.”

In early January, TCC began shifting many services to telehealth and adjusted staffing schedules to allow employees to work from home or in shift schedules to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

“Despite taking swift action to mitigate infection in the workplace, many employees have spouses or children who pose a risk of exposing them to the virus at home,” explained

Bergstrom, “Our goal is to keep our services operational while ensuring the health and safety of both our staff and patients.”

TCC is asking the public to practice kindness and patience while interacting with staff as staff may continue to reschedule appointments or move services to telehealth appointments. We are also encouraging continued masking, social distancing and getting the COVID-19 vaccine or booster to slow the spread of infection in the community.

2021 TCC Annual Convention and Full Board of Directors Meeting

**INNOVATE.
ADVOCATE.**
Protect Our Way of Life

March 14th-17th, 2022

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and limited spacing at the venue, in-person attendance will be limited. This meeting is open to the public and will be livestreamed, however many portions of the meeting are expected to be held in Executive Session where the public view will be closed.

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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

Trimble Gilbert/Arctic Village
1st Traditional Chief

-
2nd Traditional Chief

Brian Ridley/Eagle
President

Charlene Stern/Arctic Village
Vice President

Charlie Wright/Rampart
Secretary/Treasurer

Herbie Demit/Tanacross
Upper Tanana

Claude 'Joe' Petruska/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

Alex Hanna/Minto
Youth Advisor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

I write to you again in a new year. While our community is currently facing the surge of the extremely contagious Omicron variant of COVID-19, we are hopeful this wave will crest quickly, and we look forward to new beginnings and hopefully the return of some sense of normalcy in the coming months.

I understand the end of last year was extremely tumultuous and led to many questions among our member Tribes and people we serve. I cannot comment on many of those actions as like many of you, I participated in them only as an observer, not a Board member. But I do know that the situations leading to two special full board meetings and the recall of TCC's former Chief/Chairman were unfortunate and unprecedented. Consequently, the highest priorities for my short tenure have been: restoring stability, ensuring a healthy work environment for staff, and starting the healing process for our organization. This is a long road and something one person cannot fix alone. I ask all our member Tribes to help me in fulfilling these goals.

I am also focused on leading with transparency. Like you, I have read the newspaper articles and heard a lot of misinformation, rumors, and allegations related to the events that took place before and during the special Full Board meetings last year. Many of these articles are full of inaccuracies and false statements, and they appear to be written only for the purpose of making TCC look bad. While the press should be ashamed to reprint such misstatements, we include the actual facts later in this newsletter.

As I mentioned last month, I am both humbled and honored that the Board chose me to lead our organization through this time of transition. While I have been with TCC as an employee for 13 years, at heart I too am a Tribal member that has always put my confidence and faith in our Tribal leaders. Our elders counsel us to look to our Tribal leaders to guide us in the right direction. I trust that they will look out for the best interests of TCC and for the people we serve.

In times like this, I am always reminded of the words of former Chief/Chairman Jerry Isaac, "There must be sincerity in your leadership to the point where it is based on one credential – love for the people." We may disagree, but that has not tempered my love for TCC and all the people we serve. I encourage all in our region to set our differences aside and remember that we are strongest when we stand together.

Mahsi' Choo,
Brian Ridley
President

Meet President Brian Ridley

President Ridley is Han Gwich'in and a tribal member of the Native Village of Eagle. He grew up in Eagle on banks of the Yukon River. He received a bachelor's degree in business finance from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and has more than 20 years of experience in the finance industry. Ridley previously served as Chief Finance Officer of Tanana Chiefs Conference from 2008-2021. He also worked as a branch manager and business banker for 11 years for National Bank of Alaska and Wells Fargo Bank.

Ridley currently serves as vice president of Hungwitchin Corporation. He previously served on the Doyon, Limited Board of Directors, as treasurer for the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center and Dillingham Chamber of Commerce and the Copper Valley Economic Development Council.

In his free time he enjoys hunting, golfing and spending time with his family including his wife Alexandra Swenson-Ridley and four sons, Gabe, Adam, Jacob and Fritz.



The Facts about the Healy Lake and Dot Lake Lawsuit

In November 2021, the TCC member villages of Healy Lake and Dot Lake filed a lawsuit against four members of the TCC Executive Board. There is a great deal of incorrect and misleading information circulating about this lawsuit and the validity of the actions taken at the December Special Full Board of Directors Meeting.

Here are the facts:

- The Executive Board met several times last fall to consider serious issues involving former President P.J. Simon.
- Every Executive Board meeting to discuss these issues was called properly and in full accordance with the TCC Bylaws.
- In November, former President Simon called a full TCC Board of Directors meeting to address these issues. TCC Directors from the entire region came to Fairbanks for the meeting.
- Former President Simon encouraged the full Board to abruptly adjourn the November meeting before the issues were fully discussed or resolved.
- Fourteen TCC Tribes then called for a second full Board of Directors meeting in December to resolve the issues about former President Simon.
- The December meeting was properly called by those fourteen Tribes. All of the Tribes independently confirmed that they called the meeting and wanted it to go forward.
- The fourteen Tribes set the agenda for the December meeting, as is their right. The Tribes called the meeting to resolve many unanswered ques-

tions concerning internal management and personnel issues at TCC.

- The December meeting was held properly and in full accordance with the TCC Bylaws.
- Three member Tribes announced they would refuse to participate in the December meeting: Dot Lake, Healy Lake, and Loudon. Healy Lake later changed its mind and decided to participate.
- Representatives of Dot Lake and Loudon did not request credentialing for the December meeting, did not appear at roll call, and did not listen to or participate in the Board of Directors' consideration of the issues.
- The Board of Directors had an extended executive session and learned further details and information about the issues brought forth by the Tribes.
- Former President Simon attended the December meeting but walked out when the Board went into executive session and did not return to the meeting despite multiple attempts to reach him.
- After the Board of Directors came out of the executive session, a motion was made and seconded to remove former President Simon.
- Dot Lake and Loudon representatives then signed into the meeting remotely and asked to vote on whether former President Simon should be removed.
- The Board of Directors respectfully considered the request. After discussion and consideration of Roberts Rules of Order and TCC's Board ethics policy, the Board decided to not allow these representatives to

vote since they had not been credentialed, had not appeared at roll call, and had not participated in or listened to the discussion.

- When the vote was taken, former President Simon was removed from office by a vote of two-thirds of the Tribes present and participating.
- The TCC Bylaws state that when an officer is removed, "the Board of Directors shall by majority vote of the quorum present appoint a successor to serve the unexpired term of the officer removed."
- The Board of Directors appointed Brian Ridley to serve as President until the TCC Annual Convention in March, when the Board will make another appointment to fulfill the remaining year of our previous President's term.
- The removal of former President Simon and the appointment of President Ridley were proper and in full accordance with the TCC Bylaws.

It is unfortunate that these Tribes have filed a lawsuit about this internal TCC governance matter in the State of Alaska court system. There is no basis for their claims. Most importantly, this is a Tribal dispute that should not be decided by a State judge. We are especially disappointed that these member Tribes would argue against the application of sovereign immunity—a fundamental right of all Tribes that impacts the way they serve their members and conduct their internal business. That said, we are committed to protecting our organization, to standing up for the rights of all our members, and to continuing to provide quality services for the people of our region.



TCC Employment and Training Department

By Evelyn Ekada, E&T Coordinator

The Employment and Training (E&T) Department services the 42 villages within the TCC region to provide training and empower tribal members facing barriers to employment. Other services under the E&T department are the Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO), work experience, On the Job Training (OJT), and Youth Employment Services (YES). In order to be considered eligible for adult assistance services, individuals must meet the federal low income guidelines and/or be facing a barrier to employment. For Youth Services, there are no income requirements to obtain work experience or supportive services. This is exciting and new moving forward for youth participants.

The department partners with various local and state agencies to provide training opportunities to better serve our tribal members.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES?

- Be enrolled into a federally recognized tribe –show proof of either tribal ID, CIB card, BIA letter
- Have recently obtained or be seeking verifiable employment, such as a letter of intent of hire.

- Be pursuing training in an occupation in which there is a reasonable expectation of obtaining employment.
- Show financial need, be unemployed or underemployed for adult assistances.
- Be registered for the selective service, if applicable.
- For the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) be between ages 14-21 years old
- For the Get Driving program, youth ages 16-17 years old, must have obtained their driver's permit for at least 6 months prior to application.

WHAT HELP IS AVAILABLE?

- Supportive services can include; tools, work clothing, arctic work gear, interview clothing, firefighting gear, training expenses to include airfare, hotel, and food per diem.
- Funding can only be awarded in cases where the supportive service is directly linked to full time or part time employment.
- Services are not guaranteed and dependent upon available funding.
- Summer Youth Employment Pro-

gram (SYEP) for youth ages 14-21, goes from June 1 – August 31 with respective village participation.

- Driver's Education for both adult and youth.

HOW TO REACH US:

Please call us toll-free 1-800-478-6822 or locally at (907) 452-8251, ext. 3172 to make an appointment due to COVID restrictions. The department is located at the Chief Peter John Tribal Building in Fairbanks on the 5th floor in Family Services & Support, formerly known as Client Development. Application for assistance are available upon request, we can send out via email, fax, or in person.

Evelyn Ekada, E&T Coordinator can be contacted by email at evelyn.ekada@tananachiefs.org or via phone at ext. 3231

Lenora Rideout, E&T Program Assistant can be contacted by email at Lenora.rideout@tananachiefs.org or via phone at ext. 3172

Department email: employment_dept@tananachiefs.org

Fax number: (907) 459-3885.



TCC Now Offering Child Care Assistance Coverage for Subsistence Activities!

Are you engaged in subsistence activities such as hunting, fishing, berry picking, gardening, food preservation or wood cutting? Did you know that if you have children under the age of 13 **we can pay a family relative to provide child care** for them while you are doing these activities? That's right, if a family relative is willing to be an approved child care provider we can pay! Usually a grandparent or a close relative are already providing care your children so why not have them get paid. If you would like further information please contact us at 907-452-8251 ext. 3365 or email us at childcare@tananachiefs.org.

Behavioral Health Aide *Spotlight*

Bernice Hetherington - Itinerant

By Linden Staciokas

Bernice Hetherington is the Itinerant Behavioral Health Aide (BHA II) responsible for providing itinerant mental health services to Rampart, Evansville, and Stevens Village. She was born and raised in Kalskag, a small village along the Kuskokwim River. Fredrick Carl Holmberg Sr. and Dunia (Kameroff) Holmberg, her parents, raised their children in a subsistence lifestyle. She remembers being taught traditional values and survival skills and, above all, to honor and respect the land, animals, and each other, especially the elders. Bernice's parents and grandparents, uncles and aunties were her first teachers; their teachings and guidance shaped who she is today.

Her parents' home was a safe home in the village, a place where victims of domestic violence could turn when they needed shelter for the night, or where children were welcomed. Bernice recalls that "My mom always had something to give anyone who came by, no one left empty handed."

Bernice began her higher education adventures in 2006, when she was accepted into the Rural Human Services certification program. The courses focused on developing the counseling and case management skills needed to address issues such as interpersonal violence, mental illness, substance abuse and recovery, grief and family systems. Alaska Native values and culture were integrated throughout the curriculum. She then entered the Human Services program, which led to the Bachelor of Social Work degree program through the University of Alaska's Kuskokwim and Fairbanks campuses.

In 2008, while also studying for her certifications and social work degree, Bernice became the Behavioral Health Aide at the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation, a position she held for eight years. With her husband's help, she also ran a small grocery store called the Airport Trading Post, in her garage.

In 2017, Bernice and her husband moved to Fairbanks to be close to their children, who had decided to pursue

higher education at UAF. This was not an easy move, but it was a family decision grounded in the belief of the importance of keeping the family together. Being there for each other, because life is too short and can be very hard, is one of the guiding principles of their family.

At the time, there were no Behavioral Health positions available at Tanana Chiefs, so in 2017, she became TCC's Wellness Coordinator for Suicide Prevention. Two years later, in 2019, the position for Itinerant BHA II at Tanana Chiefs Conference was posted. Bernice eagerly applied even though she knew taking a position like that would be a huge risk. She would have to devote herself to more intense and extensive training. And it was more than her own commitment. Her family would have to take over some of her chores in order for Bernice to have time to study and attend classes.

Bernice is now going on her third year as a full time Itinerant BHA II. In addition to the ongoing training TCC provides, Bernice is working on a Masters in Social Work through the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Originally designed as a combination of long distance learning with periodic visits to the campus for intense in-person classes, during the Covid pandemic all classes are being conducted via the internet. She hopes to complete her degree by May 2022.

In July of 2021, Bernice was injured in a five vehicle accident. Whiplash and a concussion made it difficult for her to work or attend classes, and she still receives physical therapy to deal with the long term problems the accident caused. She is back working at her job, which like her education, has gone almost completely to video conferencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Covid has not just changed her education and profession. As Bernice observes, "Covid has worn everyone down. I see a lot more depression, anxiety, and isolation. There has been an increase in substance abuse and suicidal ideation. And the grief over relatives, friends and neighbors dying is enormous." While

she and her co-workers continue to provide a broad range of mental health and addiction services via phone and computer programs such as Zoom, the inability to meet with individuals and groups has made the job harder.

Asked how she cares for herself when she is immersed in the problems of others every single day, Bernice says that she has learned "not to take it home with me. I leave them at the office. At the end of the day, I turn back into a wife, a mom to five adult kids and a grandma to ten, with one more on the way." It also helps that she has learned not to take things personally, to remember that it is a huge challenge for a client to make significant life changes. "I expect people to work at their own pace, they are in charge of the change they want. I can help them, but they make it happen when they are ready."

When not involved in family activities, Bernice enjoys spending her free time beading, skin sewing and crafting, and listening to gospel music. She makes what she calls "danglies," small chandeliers of ribbon and beads that are about a foot and half long and are meant to hang in windows so that they "bling from the sun light."

Although her parents have been gone for several years, Bernice continues to feel their guidance and encouragement. "Before he passed, my father told me I needed to go out and help people. It made me feel good to be able to tell him that I was doing exactly that. He and my mother are always in my thoughts, this gives me peace." The others who have helped her along this journey include her two older sisters. "And my husband, because I would not have come this far without his support. He encourages me and has taken on a lot of my responsibilities so I could be free to do this work and to continue my education. I also feel a debt of gratitude to all who helped me, the Kuskokwim campus of the University of Alaska, the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), and Tanana Chiefs, for taking me in and encouraging me to continue growing in this career Quiana/Annabase."



Head Start *News*

By Kristi Walmsley

The FY22 Head Start school year is going strong! Nenana, Northway and Tanancross continue to be open for kids to be cared for in person. Huslia and Nulato opened this month for in person classes as well! Other sites are still supporting families with home based care. We're hoping to be able to open more sites to classroom based care soon, depending on staff availability.

Head Start has open enrollment for children birth-4 year olds. Please contact Tanya Yatlin at 907-452-8251 or 800-478-6822 ext. 3469 for more information.

TCC Head Start has teamed up with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library! Every month enrolled children from the ages of birth to 5 will get a free age appropriate book! Reading together is a wonderful way to build a

lifelong love for reading with children and promote family time.

In December we partnered with a number of local village stores to provide ham dinners to enrolled families and Head Start staff. We are still waiting for an invoice to be submitted to us from one of the village stores, but we estimate that by doing this instead of buying in Fairbanks and freighting these meals we put approximately \$4000 back into the local communities.

With COVID-19 cases on the rise we are no longer able to brush teeth in the classroom, so we're participating in the Brush, Book and Bed program. We continue to send out care packages with tooth brushes, tooth paste and books to enrolled families to help instill good oral hygiene and promote family time.

In January, Head Start sent out 100

books to our enrolled children, as well as 216 fleece tie blanket kits to enrolled children and their siblings. We're hoping families use these blankets to help their little ones work on their fine motor skills while at the same time promoting literacy and quality family time.

Head Start has positions open in in the following villages: Galena, Grayling, Huslia, Nenana, Nulato and Tetlin. The positions available are Lead Preschool Teacher, Preschool Assistant Teacher, Infant/Toddler Teacher, Family Visitor, Early Head Start Cook and Substitute Teacher/Assistant Teacher. We also have an ERSEA position open in Fairbanks. Please visit our website at www.tananachiefs.org/careers to see what's open in your area or call Kristi Walmsley at 907-452-8251 or 800-478-6822, ext. 3015.



TCC DENTAL CLINIC

As of August 1st, 2021

TCC Dental is expanding access to urgent care dental appointments by having a modified walk-in system. To allow for social distancing we will offer appointments in Zones.

Zone 1: Check in at 7:45am

Zone 2: Check in at 9:45am

Zone 3: Check in at 1:45pm

Patients will be assigned a Zone and will be seen in order of urgency.

Patients must present at the designated check in time in order to be seen.

Each Zone is 2-3 hours in length. This is the length of time you should prepare to wait to be seen.

For questions or concerns please contact the Dental Clinic

TCC Dental Clinic
907-451-6682 x3200

Supporting Youth In Your *Community*

Strategic Prevention Framework Partnerships for Success (SPF – PFS)

By Autumn Cantu

Building a healthy foundation for your children is your goal, so this Valentine's Day should be filled with love and support! Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) – Partnership for Success (PFS), The Indigenous Wellness Academy (IWA) and the Youth Wellness Warriors (YWW) would like to help families build new healthy traditions. Our programs would like to encourage families to participate in cultural traditions, consistent communication, and healthy interacting. SPF PFS program's purpose is to help prevent and reduce youth from developing substance misuse with underage drinking and prescription drug misuse. We encourage having more interaction with your family because it can lead to healthy routines and more fulfilled daily lifestyles.

Creating a strategy to help improve your family's wellness doesn't have to be a struggle. SPF PFS would like to

offer some small tips. Take one step at a time; this will help your family transition into your new routine smoothly. Always keep communication open for suggestions. It's important to remember to include our youth in the process. You never know, they may have great ideas! Ask your children what they like and don't like about the new routine.

Here are family wellness activities from SPF-PFS:

- Have favorite family food night.
- Have favorite family activity.
- Teach your children the importance of healthy communication.
- Get active as a family, and go sled-ding together!

Participating in all of these activities plays an important role in a child's life because they are protective factors. What is a protective factor? It can be a parent, significant individual,

grandparent, or even your community that helps create positive life qualities. These individuals can help you learn how to deal with stressful situations and lower the possibility of a negative outcome that might cause an impairment on your mental health. We hope to inspire and support the healthy changes in your community for the holidays and after. On behalf of The Division of Wellness and Prevention here at Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), be the change for betterment for your family this winter, and please break trail for a healthy lifestyle alongside your family.

Want to know more about Risk & Protective Factors on alcohol & drug prevention for youth?

Contact the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Partnerships for Success (PFS) Program:

- Autumn Cantu SPF Manager (907) 452-8251 ext. 3056.



RITA KOYUKUK HUGHES

Rita Koyukuk was born in June 1933 in Hughes. She spent most of her time as a child traveling and staying in her family's summer fishcamp and winter camp.

She grew up in the old traditional way; trapping, fishing and migrating with the seasons. She learned a lot from her parents. Her Mom taught her how to write and cut fish, and her father taught her to trap.

She remembers meeting her husband and when he declared to everyone that Rita will be the one he will marry. They had six kids together.

Rita remembers good times during fishing season and spending time with her family in fish camp. Her and Sophia Beatus put up a fish camp and raised their kids together every summer. She passed away during the winter before Rita's interview.

"I really miss her. She's my sister and I love my husband's sister."

To hear Rita's full story,
visit www.tananachiefs.org/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.

Central Scheduling Services at *Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center*

Scheduling an appointment

In order to schedule an appointment, Central Scheduling staff will ask for the following information:

- Date of Birth
- Patient's Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email (for Telehealth Zoom appointments or Patient Portal)
- Reason for being seen

Departments that schedule their own appointments

- Dental Department
- Diabetes Department
- General Surgery
- Physical Therapy
- Behavioral Health
- Eye Clinic
- WIC
- Radiology

Calling on behalf of a patient?

When a person is calling on behalf of a patient and are not authorized in the Chart, the following must be completed with the Health Information Management Department (HIM):

- Verbal Request must be taken by the HIMs Department– Central Scheduling is not able to forward requests to the HIMs department.
- When calling HIMs, leave a voicemail. The phones at HIMs are still going straight to voicemail but are monitored throughout the work day.
- For any requests that are time sensitive due to appointments or travel for appointments please make sure the form or email subject line is labeled High Priority when sending HIMs the request form or have the Patient include that in their Voicemail.
- For all other requests they will be sorted in order in which it was received.

If person is not listed, but the Patient does in fact want to have that person to have access to their information, HIMs will take a Verbal Request or the Patient will need to fill out the Release of Information Form and send it to the HIMs Department

Where can I find the Medical Release Request form?

You can download the form from: <https://www.tananachiefs.org/central-scheduling/>

How can a Request be submitted?

- Email: medicalrecords@tanachiefs.org
- Fax: 907-459-3867
- Phone: 907-451-6682 ext. 3630

What Central Scheduling Does

Our department schedules in-person or Telehealth appointments for 29 medical providers, Urgent Care Department, Lab, COVID Testing, COVID Monitoring, COVID Vaccine, Orthopedic, Family Medicine, Women's Health, Pediatrics, and nurse care clinics.

Telehealth appointments are scheduled for all patients who reside in the TCC Service Area

- Provide support 7 days a week for the Urgent Care department
 - Monday to Friday 8 AM to 5 PM
 - Saturday to Sunday 8 AM to 6 PM
- Provide support to 24 villages in the TCC Service area
 - Villages with no health aid, we are the emergency dispatch to the emergency phone
 - Village with no behavioral health aid, we are the emergency dispatch for the behavioral health.
 - Coordinate Zoom Visits in village health clinics
 - Schedule with Primary Care Provider or Care team and coordinate travel authorization request

What Central Scheduling Does Not Do

- Central Scheduling staff does not diagnose any patients– this is the role of the Medical Provider or any RN
- No more Walk-Ins. All patients must have a schedule appointment to be seen.

About Central Scheduling Staff:

Central Schedulers has CMA Schedulers who either have their Associates degree and/or their Certificate in Medical Assisting. Medical Assistants are multi-skilled allied healthcare professional who may administer medications, assist with minor procedures, record vital signs, take medical histories, prepare patients and rooms for examinations, handle laboratory specimens, provide patient education, and much more.

Central Scheduling is under the realm of Treatment as we assist patients and health care providers coordinate healthcare services and are trained in HIPAA.

Within HIPAA, Central Scheduling asks questions to assist and to understand the patient's needs and or concerns. The scheduler may ask further questions to identify if the call needs to be handed to a RN Triage or to create a patient case- note in the chart that is sent directly to the care team.

• Scheduling Staff:

- We have both CMA's, and non-medical schedulers
- CMA schedulers can relay results, where non-medical staff cannot

• Central Scheduling Call Volume:

- receives on average 500 calls per day
- reschedules on average 100 appointments per day

Telehealth Zoom Appointments

Telehealth Zoom Appointments at CAIHC are Safe and Super-Convenient

A visit with your medical provider over zoom instead of in-person might seem impractical to some people, but for Koyukon Athabascan Audrey George, she hopes to never go back to regular in-person appointments. "I'd prefer keeping zoom appointments forever!" she says. "It's such a time-saver. I followed up with labs and a trip to the pharmacy. Easy peasy!" As the owner of a local accounting firm, Audrey says she likes the convenience of logging in to an appointment from her office.

Koyukon and Inupiaq Eskimo Denise Newman, who is a busy Special Education teacher at Arctic Light Elementary in Fairbanks, agrees. "I liked the zoom appointment because I could be anywhere...ANYWHERE... and log in. I didn't have to take time off work, I didn't have to drive anywhere, I didn't have to sit in a waiting room with others."

While the concept of telehealth has been around for years, its adoption has moved at a glacial pace across the nation. But with the COVID-19

pandemic and the need to keep COVID-19 positive patients away from other patients, clinics across the United States have had to change their appointment system quickly. Now, both providers and patients at Tanana Chiefs Conference are embracing the benefits. Telehealth offers quality care that is safe, convenient, and often times allows you to see your provider much sooner than an in-person appointment.

Telehealth appointments are simple. Instead of going to Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center and waiting to see your medical provider, you connect to the appointment with your smart phone or computer. You will actually be seeing and talking to your provider, and they will see you too. For those who are "old school" and think they need to see a doctor in person to get good care, that's not necessarily the case. Shawna Hildebrand, Tribal Development Division Director at Tanana Chiefs Conference, says she felt like she got more focused attention from her provider during the zoom appointment. Shawna said, "They were very thorough and asked tons of questions to make sure they understood the issue I was being seen for. It didn't feel

rushed, and didn't seem like they had to hurry to run out to another appointment."

Telehealth Zoom appointments aren't appropriate in every case. If someone has shortness of breath, an injury, burn, or bleeding, they need to be seen in the clinic for proper care. But things like cold, flu, sinus pain, ongoing care for diabetes, allergies, depression, and medication refills can be handled safely and efficiently via telehealth. Call Central Scheduling at 907-451-6682, option 1 to schedule an appointment. The schedulers can help you determine if your appointment is eligible for a simple and convenient zoom appointment.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR A ZOOM APPOINTMENT:

- Internet connection
- Email
- Smart phone OR a computer with a camera and speakers
- Zoom app which can be download for free

Call Central Scheduling at 907-451-6682, option 1 to schedule an appointment. They can assist you in getting set up for your zoom appointment.



Thank you Security Officer *Larry Mark!*

On Monday November 22nd a fire suppression sprinkler head froze and burst in the Upper Tanana Health Center (UTHC) boiler room due to extreme cold weather. TCC Security Officer Larry Mark was on duty, heard the alarm and took immediate action by covering mechanical units with plastic and turning off the fire suppression system. Officer Mark's quick thinking and fast response prevented significant damage that would have likely closed the clinic until repairs could be made. This would have been a devastating loss for the Upper Tanana region and surrounding communities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and would have forced patients to travel to Anchorage or Fairbanks to receive medical treatment. Instead, the clinic was able to remain open and damage was kept to a minimum. Thank you, Officer Mark! We appreciate you.

Election Criteria: 2022 TCC Full Board of Directors Meeting

SUBREGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD ELECTIONS

TCC EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Subregional Positions:

Yukon Flats Subregion3 Year Term (2022-2025)

Currently Nancy James, Ft. Yukon

Yukon Tanana Subregion3 Year Term (2022-2025)

Currently Frank Thompson, Evansville

TCC ADVISORY BOARDS

The three TCC Advisory Boards make recommendations to the TCC Executive Board and President. The Regional Health board is selected by each respective subregion. (Article 7, Section 2). The President has the authority to appoint all individuals to the other advisory boards, (Article 7, Section 3), but the most recent process has been for the subregions to democratically select representatives to each advisory board. All candidates must be Alaska Native.

TCC Regional Health Advisory Board

Upper Tanana Subregion.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Sylvia Pitka, Northway

Upper Kuskokwim Subregion3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Agnes Tony, Nikolai

TCC Education Council

Upper Kuskokwim Subregion.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Alice Dale, McGrath

Upper Tanana Subregion.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Diane Titus, Tanacross

Interior Athabaskan Tribal College Board of Trustees

Yukon Tanana Subregion.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently VACANT

Yukon Flats Subregion.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently VACANT

Lower Yukon Subregion.....3 year term (2021-2024)

Currently Margie Walker, *expired 2021

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

Individuals who want to declare themselves a candidate for any of the above seats must submit a written, signed and dated letter of intent between **8:00 AM February 3, 2022 and 5:00 PM-March 4, 2022.**

Letter of intent (see example on next page) must be received by fax, mail or delivered in person **no later than 5:00 PM on March 4, 2022** to:

Tanana Chiefs Conference
ATTN: Norma Dahl, Board Secretary
122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, AK 99701
1-800-478-6822 ext.3118 FAX # (907) 459-3884

2022 TCC Full Board elections process follows the TCC Elections Rules; the elections rules are posted on the TCC website at www.tananachiefs.org under the 2022 TCC Annual Convention information and is also enclosed with the First and Official Call to Convention mailed to TCC member tribes. A copy of the elections rules can be requested by contacting Rebecca Patterson, Acting General Counsel.

For a full list of eligibility criteria, please visit

www.tananachiefs.org/2022-annual-convention

**INNOVATE.
ADVOCATE.**
Protect Our Way of Life

FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

AFN Village Representative

1 SeatOne year term (2022-2023)

Currently Julie Roberts-Hyslop, Tanana

IRHA Board of Commissioners

Seat C3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Speedy Sam, Huslia

Seat D3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Leah Woods, Fairbanks/Rampart

* Must be eligible to serve on TCC Board of Directors

- Employees of TCC or IRHA are not eligible to serve as IRHA Commissioners (Article 7, Section 7)

FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

Officer Positions

Vice President.....3 year term (2022-2025)

Currently Charlene Stern, Arctic Village

President/Chairman Position

Per Article V, Sec. 3 of [TCC's Bylaws](#), "the Board of Directors shall by majority vote of the quorum present appoint a successor to serve the unexpired term of the officer removed." The Board made a temporary appointment of Brian Ridley as Acting President until the March convention, at which point the Board must appoint a successor to serve the one year unexpired portion of the President's term. This appointment process differs from an election process in several important ways—notably, there will be no campaigning or speeches, and there will not be a ballot with all the interested candidates' names.

In order to be considered for appointment, candidates must:

- Must be a resident of the State of Alaska and physically reside in the State
- Must be an Alaska Native member of a member village of TCC
- Must pass a DHSS Alaska Barrier Crimes Act and ICPA-compliant federal Background check (per TCC Executive Board Policy 50-5003)
- Must pass a drug test (per TCC Executive Board Policy 50-5001)

Those interested in being appointed for the position without a valid background check on file must contact Heather Rogers, Human Resources Director, at heather.rogers@tananachiefs.org by **Friday, February 25th at 5:00pm** in order to complete a drug test and background check prior to the March Convention. We highly encourage interested candidates to reach out early to ensure timely results.

NOTE: Per Article V, Sec. 2 of TCC's bylaws, "No person elected President for two full successive terms shall be again eligible to hold that office until one full term has intervened."

Important Dates for the 2022 TCC Elections

Submit between now and February 15th:

The last day TCC is able to guarantee a background check will be completed in time for the required 10 day announcement of candidates before the meeting.

February 3rd at 8:00am

The open period in which a candidate may declare written candidacy begins. Please confirm receipt of your letter of intent.

March 4th at 5:00pm:

The open period in which a candidate may declare candidacy ends. Candidates must declare their candidacy in writing. TCC must provide a list of eligible candidates to member tribes.

March 17th:

TCC elections held at the TCC Full Board of Directors Annual Meeting at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks.

Background Checks and TCC's Full Board of Directors Election

ICPA BACKGROUND CHECK INFORMATION:

The Indian Child Protection Act (ICPA), requires TCC Executive and Health Board of Directors to pass a federal ICPA background check, and the Alaska Barrier Crimes Act background check.

The TCC Executive Board has made the commitment to both comply with current laws, Board policies and advocate for reasonable changes in background check requirements. As part of compliance, TCC Executive Board and Health Board candidates must submit their complete background check application which includes fingerprints **by February 15th** submitted to Heather Rogers, Human Resources Director. This allows enough time for the check to be complete. Only those candidates that pass the background check will be eligible to continue as official candidates for the respective elections.

2022 TCC ELECTIONS: ELECTION RULES

RULE 10. MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

To be elected to a position, nominees are required to receive a majority vote from the votes cast by the TCC Board of Delegates. If no nominee receives a majority vote on a ballot, the Election Committee shall conduct a subsequent ballot provided by these Election Rules until a nominee receives a majority vote.

RULE 11. FAILURE TO ACHIEVE MAJORITY

1. In the event of a tie occurring for a Subregional seat after the third ballot, a coin toss will occur to determine the outcome of the election.
2. Ballots where there are four (4) nominees or more. If no nominee receives a majority vote on the first ballot the following rules will apply with the intent to eliminate candidates to achieve a majority:

The Election Committee will eliminate all nominees except for the three (3) nominees receiving the highest number of votes and conduct a subsequent ballot.

If there are three (3) or more candidates that receive the second highest number of votes, all those with the second highest number of votes will proceed to the next ballot including the

candidate with the most votes. The remaining candidates will be eliminated.

If there is a tie for candidates with the third highest vote and there are two (2) or more candidates that receive the first and/or second highest number of votes, only the two (2) or more candidates that receive the highest number of votes will proceed to the next ballot. The rest will be eliminated.

If there are more than three (3) candidates tied for first highest vote, all of those receiving the first highest will proceed to the next ballot. The rest will be eliminated.

If all but one candidate ties for second, the Election Committee will distribute an "elimination ballot" that includes only the nominees who tied for second. The Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes on the "elimination ballot" and resume the balloting between all remaining nominees.

3. Ballots where there are three (3) nominees. If no nominee receives a majority vote on a ballot having three (3) nominees, the Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes, and conduct a subsequent ballot. If all three (3) nominees tie for the votes cast, the Election Committee shall conduct a subsequent ballot including all nominees. If two nominees tie for the fewest votes cast, the Committee will distribute an "elimination ballot" that includes only the two nominees who tied for the fewest votes cast on the prior ballot. The Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes on the "elimination ballot" and resume the balloting between all remaining nominees.
4. Ballots with two (2) nominees. The nominee receiving a majority vote shall be elected. If neither nominee receives a majority vote, the Election Committee will prepare another ballot without elimination of the nominee receiving the fewer votes. This Election Committee will repeat this process as necessary until one nominee receives a majority vote.

** Majority is based on the number of Directors present for the 2022 Full Board of Director's roll call.

DATE (Must be between 8 a.m. February 3, 2022 and 5 p.m. March 4, 2022).

I, _____ of _____ declare my intent to run for the Tanana Chiefs Conference
(Name) (Village/Enrolled to)

position of _____
(Insert seat you intend to run as a candidate for. Example: Secretary/Treasurer, Subregional Executive Board, TCC Health Board, TCC Education Council or /ATC)

Signature

City, State, Zip Code

Print Name

Phone Number

Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act, 25 USC sec. 3207 provides that each tribal organization that receives funds under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act shall not employ individuals that have committed certain crimes when the position involves regular or foreseeable contact with Indian children. The TCC Executive Board has reviewed and passed procedures to implement the ICPA background checks and the Board requires all Executive Board of Directors, Health Board of Directors and TCC employees to pass ICPA background checks and the Alaska Barrier Crime Act, when applicable.

Nominees must fill-out a background check application. The background check application can be obtained from Heather Rogers, Human Resources Director at ext. 3095, and is due by February 15th, 2022 to allow for processing before the election. Only those candidates that pass the background check will be official candidates for the 2022 Full Board of Directors' elections.

TCC recommends that you confirm the receipt of your Letter of Intent with the TCC Board Secretary prior to 5:00 P.M. March 4, 2022.

LETTER OF INTENT

Tanana Chiefs Conference
ATTN: Norma Dahl, Board Secretary
122 First Ave, Suite 600
Fairbanks, AK 99701 | Fax (907) 459-3884
1-800-478-6822 ext.3118



The Council Newsletter

122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Phone: (907) 452-8251 ext. 3424

Fax: (907) 459-3884

communications_dept@tananachiefs.org

www.tananachiefs.org

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.



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference



Find Your Purpose

Join our Team at Tanana Chiefs Conference
www.tananachiefs.org/careers

Village Vacancies

- Alatna:** Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, Tribal Administrator-Onsite Supervisor, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Allakaket:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Community Health Representative, Family Visitor
- Anaktuvuk Pass:** Behavioral Health Aide
- Anvik:** Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Rural Trauma Navigator, Village Public Safety Officer
- Arctic Village:** Home Care Provider, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Village Public Safety Officer
- Chalkyitsik:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Village Public Safety Officer
- Circle:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Dot Lake:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- Eagle:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Home Care Provider, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Evansville:** Elder Nutrition Cook, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- Fort Yukon:** Home Care Provider
- Galena:** Physician Assistant - Primary Care, Nurse Practitioner - Primary Care, Service Desk Technician, Behavioral Health Clinician, Clinical Support Staff/Medical Assistant, RN, Behavioral Health Clinical Associate x2, Sub-Regional Care Coordinator
- Grayling:** Family Visitor, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, Village Public Safety Officer
- Healy Lake:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist x2, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Holy Cross:** Home Care Provider, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook
- Huslia:** Preschool Lead Teacher, Family Visitor, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
- Kaltag:** Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Tribal Administrator-Onsite Supervisor
- Koyukuk:** Tribal Office Administrative Assistant
- McGrath:** Elder Nutrition Cook, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Tribal Workforce Development Specialist, Rural Trauma Navigator, Village Public Safety Officer
- Minto:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Nenana:** Preschool Assistant Teacher, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Infant/Toddler Teacher, Rural Safe Home Attendant
- Northway:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Home Care Provider, Rural Safe Home Attendant, Village Public Safety Officer
- Nulato:** Substitute Teacher/Assistant Teacher, Rural Safe Home Attendant,

Village Public Safety Officer

- Old Minto:** Traditional Counselor, Camp Counselor
- Rampart:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Elder Nutrition Cook, Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook, Rural Trauma Navigator
- Ruby:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- Stevens Village:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- Tacotna:** Rural Trauma Navigator
- Tanacross:** Community Health Aide/Practitioner
- Tetlin:** Behavioral Health Aide, Community Health Aide/Practitioner, Village Public Safety Officer
- Tok:** Physician Assistant -UTHC, On-call Janitor, Clinical Support Staff/Medical Assistant, Family Directed Respite Provider, Tribal Family Youth Specialist, Assistant Crew Boss, Certified Medical Assistant, RN Case Manager, Security Officer, Urgent Care RN Advanced, Village Public Safety Officer -Regional Rover, Behavioral Health Clinical Associate, UTHC Team Lead, Wildland Fire Crew Boss
- Venetie:** Tribal Administrator - Onsite Supervisor, Village Public Safety Officer

Region- Wide Vacancies

- Behavioral Health Clinical Associate-FBKS, Lead Family Contact Coordinator - SOC

JOBS LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF JANUARY 27, 2022

February is National Children's Dental Health Month!

TCC Dental is hosting a virtual 'Give Kids a Smile' giveaway where youth between the ages of ages 0-16 can win some great prizes.

Participate online at:

www.tananachiefs.org/give-kids-a-smile/



The American Dental Association's (ADA) 'Give Kids a Smile' program was begun in 2003 by the ADA with the goal to provide dental care to children as well as to increase prevention and education for communities around the country.



2022
Annual Meeting of Shareholders
Friday, March 18, 2022 8 a.m. AKDT
Westmark Fairbanks Hotel PARTICIPATE ONLINE www.doyon.com

ePROXY PRIZE DEADLINE
Fri., Feb. 18, 2022
5 p.m. AKST
Doyon is featuring new eProxy prizes this year to encourage shareholders to vote early and vote online!

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE
Fri., Feb. 18, 2022
5 p.m. AKST
Return your proxy or eProxy by the early bird deadline to be entered to win cash prizes!

PROXY DEADLINE
Tues., Mar. 15, 2022
5 p.m. AKST

VOTE ONLINE
eproxy.doyon.com

QUESTIONS?
907-459-2000
www.doyon.com



Reflecting on our past
REFINING OUR PATH FORWARD