

TCC Full Board Elects

New Leadership



"It is good to be here again with our people. How much we need each other – I find out more and more each year," said First Traditional Chief Dr. Trimble Gilbert during his opening remarks at the 2023 TCC Annual Convention and Full Board of Directors Meeting, "We hold each other up. Our Athabascan people and Native people of Alaska – we are very, very strong,"

This year's meeting was the first one open to the public since 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the world. Over the past three years, in-person attendance was limited to delegates, alternate delegates and essential TCC staff, with the general public able to watch the livestream online. This year, tribal members were able to attend in-person, participate in

discussion and pose questions to the panelists and presenters.

"It felt good to have all of us together in one room again," said Chief/Chairman Brian Ridley, "It's important that we feel connected to one another and that our tribal members are able to voice their concerns. It helps us understand the issues at hand and how we can take action to improve our services."

Continued on page 4

May 5th Is Wear Red Day

For generations, Indigenous persons, including American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, have been forced to mourn a missing or murdered loved one without the answers and support they deserve.

On Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day, we remember these victims and their families, and commit to working with Tribal Nations and Native communities to achieve justice and healing. We encourage everyone to wear red on May 5th in recognition.



In This Issue:

BOF Fails to Prioritize Subsistence Harvest
Page 3

TCC Convention Breakdown
Page 4-6

Award Winners From Honoring Dinner
Page 10-11

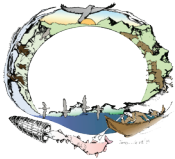
Johanna Coghill CHAP Highlight
Page 13

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.

Vision

Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

TCC Executive Board Members

Trimble Gilbert/Arctic Village
1st Traditional Chief

Andy Jimmie/Minto
2nd Traditional Chief

Brian Ridley/Eagle
Chief/Chairman

Sharon Hildebrand/Nulato
Vice President

Charlie Wright/Rampart
Secretary/Treasurer

Herbie Demit/Tanacross
Upper Tanana

Claude 'Joe' Petruska/Nikolai
Upper Kuskokwim

Nancy James/Gwichyaa Zhee
Yukon Flats

Eugene Paul/Holy Cross
Lower Yukon

Lori Baker/Minto
Yukon Tanana

Charlie Green/Louden
Yukon Koyukuk

Peter Demoski/Nulato
Elder Advisor

Alex Hanna/Minto
Youth Advisor

Chief's Report

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

First of all, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our Full Board of Directors for electing me to serve as your Chief/Chairman for the next three years. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the 42 Tribes and Tribal Organizations of our region and I look forward to continuing that service in the future.

Over the years, I have visited nearly all of the communities in our region – sat down with your tribal members and listened to your stories. Each time I visit one of your communities – it makes me want to work and advocate harder to protect our lands and secure a future for our next generations. I understand the importance of our rural communities and why it's important for us to do everything we can to protect them.

My commitment to our Tribes is to ensure that TCC remains tribally-focused. My goal is to work alongside and at the direction of our Tribes to establish TCC as a forward thinking, innovative and solution-focused organization.

I would like to take a moment to recognize our newly re-elected Executive Board Members; Chief Herbie Demit of Tanacross and Chief Charlie Green of Loudon. I am looking forward to continuing to work alongside these great leaders who are strong advocates for their subregions. Congratulations to you both.

Having our 2023 Annual Convention and Full Board of Directors meeting be open to the public for the first time since 2019 gave me renewed energy and motivation to work harder for our Tribes and those we serve. It felt good to gather, talk about the challenges we must overcome, celebrate the great things our Tribes and people have accomplished, and be reminded of the strength we have when we work together. As First Traditional Chief Trimble Gilbert said in his opening remarks "It is good to be here again with our people....we hold each other up."

Mahsi' Choo,
Brian Ridley
Chief/Chairman



MISSING PERSONS



Lorraine Ginnis



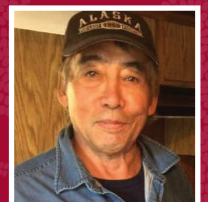
Willis Derendoff



Doren Sanford



Debbie Nictune



Frank Minano

**SUBMIT TIPS
ANONYMOUSLY:**
Text AKTIPS followed by your
tip to 84711 or visit [https://
dps.alaska.gov/ast/tips](https://dps.alaska.gov/ast/tips)



Call the Alaska State Troopers at
907-451-5100, Fairbanks Police
Department at 907-450-6500 or
TCC Public Safety at 907-452-8251
ext.3269.

Visit www.tananachiefs.org/missing
for more information.

Board of Fisheries Fails to Prioritize Subsistence Harvest

On Saturday, February 25, The Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) voted against Proposal 140, submitted by the Fairbanks Advisory Committee Fisheries Subcommittee. The proposal aims to reduce the allowed commercial fishing times and area in the South Alaska Peninsula (Area M) during the month of June in order to protect Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) Chum Salmon from severe commercial interception. During the BOF meeting on Sunday, February 26, Alaska Natives from throughout the AYK area walked out of the meeting in protest after the BOF clearly demonstrated their unwillingness to compromise.

The BOF's decision not to adopt Proposal 140 directly violates their statutory obligation as stated in AS 16.05.258 to prioritize subsistence needs over non-subsistence harvest. AS 16.05.258(b)(4)(A) states "if the harvestable portion of the stock or population is not sufficient to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses, the appropriate board shall adopt regulations eliminating consumptive uses, other than subsistence uses."

"We are incredibly disappointed with the decision to prioritize commercial fishing over the needs of our subsistence users throughout Alaska by disregarding their statutory obligations," says Chief/Chairman Brian Ridley, Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC). "There has been no subsistence fishing on the Yukon River for years, but subsistence fisherman are still expected to unfairly carry the burden of conservation, making extreme sacrifices to protect what little salmon there is left. Meanwhile, Area M fishermen are unwilling to make meaningful sacrifices that would help our salmon stocks replenish."

The BOF permits Area M commercial fishermen to intercept enormous quantities of chum from the AYK stock while they are migrating to their spawning grounds. Chinook stocks on the Yukon River are in the most severe decline ever seen, and recent chum salmon returns to the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers are the lowest on record.



"The Board's actions this week will not deter TCC or our Tribes from continuing to do everything we can to ensure the protection of our salmon and our way of life," said Chief Ridley, "The testimonies by our subsistence fishers are backed by science, data and indigenous knowledge and we will continue to fight for our salmon to return to the rivers. I want to thank all of our tribal leaders, tribal members and partners throughout the AYK, Bristol Bay and Chignik for standing with us this week."

TCC will be exploring other options to ensure that subsistence use is prioritized in the future.



TAKE ACTION!

- 1 Write to the Alaska Board of Fisheries and let them know that you disagree with their decision not to adopt Proposal 140 or any additional amendments and recommendations brought forth by subsistence fishers.
- 2 Contact Governor Dunleavy and your legislators and ask for an emergency meeting of the Alaska Board of Fisheries.
- 3 Use #EverySalmonCounts on Social Media



TCC Full Board Elects New Leadership

Continued from front page

This year's Convention theme was 'The Future is Indigenous', which focused on a future with strong, Indigenous representation. This year's keynote speaker was climate activist and model, Quannah Chasinghorse of Eagle, who embodied this year's Convention theme by her work in breaking barriers in the fashion industry and paving the way for increased Indigenous representation in the media. You can read more about Quannah's speech on page 6 of this newsletter.

Several presentations and panels were presented at the meeting based on the topics voted most important to our Tribes. This included presentations on Elder Housing and Services, Rural Education, Broadband, Energy, and Behavioral Health and Wellness.

The Full Board of Directors also reviewed and discussed the 19 proposed resolutions put before the Board. Of the 19 resolutions, 7 were pulled for

further discussion and amendments, but all 19 were ultimately approved by the Full Board of Directors. A complete list of the resolutions plans to be posted on our website at www.tananachiefs.org/resolutions.

On the final day, several elections were held. Kristen Moreland of Gwichyaa Zhee was elected to serve on Seat E of the Interior Regional Housing Authority against candidate Fred Bifelt of Huslia after three rounds of voting. Julie Roberts-Hyslop was re-appointed as the Alaska Federation of Native Interior Representative with unanimous consent from the Board.

Official announcement were made on the elections of two subregional representatives to the TCC Executive Board of Directors. Chief Herbie Demit of Tanacross was re-elected to a three-year term as the Upper Tanana representative and Chief Charlie Green of Loudon was re-elected to a three-year

term as the Yukon Koyukuk representative.

"I will bring our voice to the table in the Executive Board meetings," said Chief Green, "I am humbled to be in this position and I'm going to work hard to represent us well."

"I'd like to thank the people of Tanacross for trusting in me to be their leader and the leaders in the Upper Tanana," said Chief Demit, "I appreciate the opportunity to serve another three years for you. I look forward to working with our Board and making decisions that benefit the people that we serve."

The last order of business for the meeting was the election of a Chief/Chairman to serve the organization for the next three years. Chief Brian Ridley of Eagle won the election against candidate Chaaiy Albert of Northway.

"I just want to thank all of you," said Chief Ridley, "It's really humbling to be in this position."

Tanana Chiefs Conference 2022 Election Results

Executive Board of Directors



Chief/Chairman
Brian Ridley, Eagle
Term: 2023-2026



Upper Tanana Representative
Herbie Demit, Tanacross
Term: 2023-2026



Yukon Kuskokwim Representative
Charlie Green, Galena
Term: 2023-2026

TCC Education Council



Yukon Tanana Representative
Phyllis Erhart, Tanana
Term: 2023-2026

Health Advisory Board



Yukon Flats Representative
Patricia Salmon, Chalkyitsik
Term: 2023-2026

Interior Athabascan Tribal College



Yukon Tanana Representative
Alex Hanna, Minto
Term: 2023-2026

Snapshot TCC 2023 Convention Week



Quannah Chasinghorse TCC 2023 Keynote Speaker

Visit the TCC website for the full video of the Keynote Address and Convention Videos!

By Taryn Calhoun, Public Relations Specialist

Quannah Chasinghorse – long known for her activism, and more recently known as one of the world’s most famous supermodels – delivered the keynote address at this year’s Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Annual Convention and Full Board of Directors Meeting.

Quannah is a Han Gwich’in and Sicangu/Oglala Lakota land protector, climate justice activist, and fashion model from Eagle Village, Alaska and the tribes of South Dakota. At Convention, she represented herself equally as a relatable young woman from a small village, and a truth bearer with a deeply impactful message. While introducing Quannah, Chief/Chairman Brian Ridley joked about growing up in Eagle with her mother, Jody Potts-Joseph, and refers to Quannah by her childhood nickname, “Q.”

In her speech, Quannah juxtaposes feelings of loneliness in an industry where the pressure to assimilate is constant with testimony to her refusal to work with designers who call for erasure of her authentic Indigenous

representation. “When you work with me,” she says, “you work with all of me.”

She followed this by calling for Indigenous people to occupy spaces with pride, even in the presence of fear. “We are our ancestors’ wildest dream,” she said in her address, “Don’t be afraid to occupy the spaces. This is our land.”

The way that Quannah has moved between the worlds of Indigenous power and modern fashion, utilizing her platform to spread messages of Indigenous sovereignty, land stewardship, and climate justice has in itself contributed to the movements in which she participates. But she takes it further, urging her people to carry traditions unapologetically into the future. “I have traveled all over the world, and met Indigenous people from so many places,” she recalls, “but the common thread is the same. Our lands, waterways, and lifestyles are under attack, and it’s up to us to protect them.”

Quannah is an activist first and a model second, and she makes it

very clear in telling the story of how she became a walker of both the high fashion runways and the rugged Alaskan tundra, and how she now uses her platform to create change. Interwoven with stories of life in Eagle, dog mushing with her family, and returning home for her Aunties’ moose soup, is her message of why It’s important to protect our ways life. “We are fighting just to have clean water, fresh air, and food on the table; we are fighting to live,” she says, “I will always use my platform to bring awareness to the issues my people have been facing for hundreds of years.”

The theme of this year’s Convention was, “The Future is Indigenous,” and Quannah’s message was inspirational and emphasized the need to protect the place we all call home. TCC would like to thank Quannah for embodying and emboldening the message that an Indigenous future is a brighter future for everyone.



Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr'eedaa (We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors) and Walking Two Worlds **Movie Screening**

After day three of Tanana Chief's Conference Annual Convention concluded, the Gold Room of the Westmark started to fill with the anticipation for the premiere of Walking Two Worlds and Diiyeghan naii Taii Tr'eedaa (We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors).

Diiyeghan Naii Taii Tr'eedaa (We Will Walk the Trail of our Ancestors) features Alisha Carlson (Gwich'in) as she learns from her grandfather, Dr. Rev. Trimble Gilbert, about the reciprocal nature of the relationship between hunters and caribou. This short-film is 6 minutes long, and the dialogue is completely in

Gwich'in. Director Princess Daazhrai Johnson along with Alisha share that, "Every story we tell and everything we do is dedicated to keeping the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou Herd safe from oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." More information on the film can be found at <https://www.reciprocity.org/films/diiyeghan-naii-taii-treedaa>

Walking Two Worlds features Quannah Chasinghorse and their mother, Jody Potts-Joseph, as they take a stand

to defend their sacred homelands and way of life while breaking barriers in Indigenous representation.

This 29-minute documentary is not released yet, but the audience at Convention was treated with the screening and full panel in which Princess, Jodi, Quannah, cinematographer Keri Oberly and Alisha answered questions and discussed the importance of both films. More information on the film can be found at <https://tribecafilm.com/films/walking-two-worlds-2022>



TCC Convention Services Fair

TCC held a Services Fair during the first two days of the Annual Convention, where participants could learn more about the different programs and services offered through TCC. This year's fair included 40 different tables focusing on a wide array of services including clinical services at the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples resources, IT Security, Wildland Fire Program, Red Cross, Education, the Fairbanks Native Association, Native Research, Native Movement, National Weather Service, and more.



TCC Hosts Honoring Potlatch

On March 16, TCC held its Annual Potlatch for the first time since 2019. This event brings together Athabaskan people from throughout the TCC region to come together, eat food and share our traditional songs. This year, a special honoring was held for First Traditional Chief Trimble Gilbert. Chief Gilbert was appointed First Traditional Chief in 2020 after the passing of the late Chief Don Honea. Since Chief Gilbert was appointed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, an honorary potlatch and gifting was not able to be held at the time.

TCC would like to thank everyone who made the potlatch possible; Luke Titus, Anna Frank, Steve Ginnis, TCC Facilities Division, TCC Security Division, TCC Administrative Support Staff, Franklin Thompson, Travis Cole, Sonja Kokrine, Barbie Williams, Bonnie Carroll-Ginnis, Tanna Carter, Cliff Joseph, Richard Frerichs, Roger Manuel, Lance Albert, Nate Flynn, the late Jay Sommer, the students from the Effie Kokrine Charter School, the Emerging Leaders, TCC GO Students, all of the cooks, servers, hunters, everyone who helped clean up after the potlatch and anyone else we may have missed. Mahsi' Choo to all of you!



Preparing For Flooding In Your Community

Tanana Chiefs Conference is always willing to assist tribes when significant flooding strikes one of our interior communities! However, it's still important that communities be prepared before flooding occurs. The villages that have the best outcomes after a disaster have prepared well for the disaster response and recovery, so we encourage everyone to be ready. TCC offers these tips to help you get ready for possible flooding:



Make an Emergency Kit

Having an Emergency Kit is an essential step in preparing your household for flooding! Here are some of the things we recommend including in your kit:

- First aid kit
- Water
- Food (non-perishables)
- Batteries
- Waterproof matches
- Flashlight
- Extra clothes
- Emergency poncho
- Whistle



Know The Flood Risk

Stay updated on changing weather conditions, forecasts and other emergency events. This will ensure that you are prepared and ready when you need to take action! It's important to monitor weather reports and know the status of breakup on the rivers.

Have an Emergency Plan

- Do you know where your community's emergency shelter is? Is it the Tribal Hall, the school, or somewhere else?
- Do you know who will be in charge during a flood event?
- How will you know if it is time to move to a local shelter? Will there be a radio announcement or other warning?

If you don't know these answers, get involved and ask your Tribal Council about the local emergency plan!

Questions?

Contact TCC's Office of Environmental Health.

Phone: (907) 452-8251 ext. 3436

Email: oeht@tananachiefs.org

Website: www.tananachiefs.org/flood-preparedness

Flood Preparation Tips

A MONTH BEFORE BREAKUP:

- Find the high points around your property and other parts of the village where you can move items above flood level if needed.
- Make a list of any equipment (generators, snow machines, and chainsaws) that will need to be moved to higher ground during a flood.
- Locate any fuel storage that will need to be secured during a flood.
- Start putting together an emergency kit of items needed if you must leave your home.
- Ask your Tribal or City Administrator about the community flood preparations. This may include a local area to evacuate to, designated people to observe the river level and alert the community.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE BREAKUP:

- Finish putting together your emergency kit. Remember food, water and medications!
- Remind others to plan for potential flooding, and help if needed.
- Track down available emergency response equipment in the village (boats, flotation devices, and maintenance and rescue tools).
- Get essential facilities (clinic, water treatment plant, electric utility, records storage with the City and/or Tribe, etc.) ready for possible flooding.
- Help identify "at risk" residents of the community. These are the people that need to be evacuated before flooding for medical reasons.
- Identify elders or other people that may need assistance during a flood and help to make sure they are prepared. Remember their medications.

WHEN A FLOOD WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED:

- Flood proof the essential facilities and other public buildings.
- Secure fuel tanks, small fuel containers and barrels to keep them from floating away.
- Move all vehicles and equipment to higher ground.
- Move all dry goods and canned food items above the high water level in your home.
- Mattresses and other items that could be damaged by water should be moved above the high water level in your home.
- If a shelter has been identified, move your needed items to this location.
- This groundwork can go a long way in avoiding damage and decreasing stress during breakup flooding. OEH is ready to support TCC villages with their environmental health concerns before and after flooding.

Robert Pilot and George Albert- Patti Hyslop Leadership in Sobriety Award



The 2023 Patti Hyslop Leadership in Sobriety Award winners are a pair of brothers from Koyukuk. Robert Pilot is 22 and George Albert is only 19, yet these two young men are setting examples for their village community and Indigenous Youth.

Both men have been sober and drug-free all their lives. Robert is an Ella B. Vernetti School teacher aide and recently joined the Tanana Chiefs Emerging Youth Leaders Committee. George works for the Koyukuk Tribe as the Tribal Court Bailiff.

Both are the sons of Robert and Sharon Albert. Together, the brothers open the City/Tribal Office on the weekends and in the evening hours for the Koyukuk youth, providing a safe place for the youth in the community to go. They are always willing to assist the community and have responded to emergencies, helped at the cemetery, and assisted at other community events as needed. Both young men are kind, courteous, and helpful.

"These two young men are a pure example of what this award was created for," said Donna Folger of Tanana, who has facilitated the Patti Hyslop Award since its inception 28 years ago. "Koyukuk appreciates these men and would like to recognize them for all their hard work."



Sergeant Mark Haglin- Village Public Safety Officer of the Year -Nenana

On December 3, 2022, a Fairbanks jury convicted two people for defrauding a Nenana Elder of her home. In 2019, a TCC VPSO was contacted by the Nenana Elder Center who reported an elder signed papers she was not familiar with and she was confused as to why someone else now owned her home. The Nenana VPSO conducted an investigation in conjunction with the Alaska State Troopers Commercial Crimes Unit out of Anchorage. They found that two women garnered the victims trust and offered to pay her back taxes she owed on her home. The Nenana VPSO's investigation revealed the City of Nenana had a tax exemption for elders which the victim qualified under, so no taxes were owed on the elder's home. The commercial crimes investigator along with the TCC VPSO gathered enough evidence to have the two women convicted by jury.

On December 10, 2022, Alaska State Troopers Dispatch received a call from

a woman reporting her husband had left a suicide note and was missing. The Nenana VPSO Sgt responded and began a search of the community eventually locating the husband in a highway pullout. The man pulled out a handgun and indicated he was going to shoot himself in the head. The VPSO was able to create dialogue with the suicidal man and convinced him to surrender the handgun and go to the hospital for mental health and other medical treatment.

After the incident the VPSO continued to check on the victim to ensure he was doing well.

This is just an example of the exemplary work conducted daily by VPSO Sgt Mark Haglin which often goes unnoticed outside of the small EMS and Law Enforcement circle in Nenana.

TCC recognizes and commends Sgt. Haglin for his work, we hope others will look up to his inspiring example and follow suit.



Sgt Haglin's wife Robin accepts the Public Safety Officer of the Year award on his behalf.

Martina Ekada- Rural Employee of the Year

Martina Ekada has 33 years of service to Nulato. In the early 1990s, when she started as a health aide, Interior Alaska did not have formal medevac services. After talking with the doctor, the health aide would prep the patient and jump on whatever plane would come and headed to town with them.

There was no electronic health record on a computer. The community health aide manual was a single edition paper book, not an app on an iPad. There may or may not be running water at the clinic. The clinic supplies needed for patient care may or may not have arrived by the time they were needed.

Despite all the challenges, Martina has been vital to the health and wellbeing for the community of Nulato. She is the embodiment of Ch'eghwtsen' through her commitment, dedication, sacrifice, and compassion.

365 days a year over 33 years divided across three health aides, she has spent 1/3 of her adult life on-call, waiting to respond to someone else's

emergency. She has responded to medical emergencies involving neighbors, family, and friends.

She regularly travels throughout the TCC region to provide clinic coverage where it is needed most. On more than one occasion, she has dropped everything on a moment's notice – traveling to another community to provide help after a traumatic event or death.

She retired from being a full-time health aide in February of 2023, but even in what is supposed to be her retirement; she continues to serve the region working now as a part-time itinerant Health Aide.

Beyond her role as a Health Aide, she is a Tribal Court Judge and a foster parent. She has an unconditional love and willingness to support the youth. She has adopted and fostered over 10 children. Her heart is so big, she cares so deeply for the health of her community and for everyone that lives there. She is more than an employee of the year - she is a hero.



Teri Vent - 2022 Tribal Foster Parent of the Year

Teri Vent is a Tribal member of Huslia and is tribally licensed through the Huslia Tribe as well. Teri has held a Tribal license since 2018, and always cooperated with TCC Tribal Licensing to ensure her home remains compliant.

Teri is an amazing mother, she is devoted to caring for her two teenage children and her foster child. Above being a mother and a resource parent, Teri also works full-time for her community. Her work and time spent at the office carries a lot of responsibilities but with her partner helping her, they are doing a great job raising the children in their home.

Teri is kind and shows respect for others, one of the people whom nominated her described Teri as humble. Often our natural helpers in our community go unseen and unnoticed. We want to make sure she knows that we see what she gives to her community and her family and we are proud to recognize her for her love and commitment to family and community.



Teri lives a sober lifestyle on behalf of the children in her home and herself, leading by example and fostering a healthy environment for both her children and her foster child. Teri and her partner provide a safe and stable home; they prioritize teaching the children to live a subsistence lifestyle and practice the different cultural traditions.

As a foster mom, Teri has given this child all the love, protection, and devotion that any mother would give her own. Their foster son is now a thriving young toddler that is mischief as can be.

She goes above and beyond for his needs. Her family has grown to love their foster child so much and it shows in her daily life, her sacrifices, the way he is raised right alongside her daughters-he is truly a part of their family. Being a foster parent is one of the most challenging roles to fulfill and Teri makes it look easy. We would like to recognize Teri as TCC's 2022 Tribal Foster Parent of the Year.

Keil Couch - Fairbanks Employee of the Year

Keil Couch has developed a reputation for being accessible, excited by complex problems, eager to volunteer his assistance and has an eye for spotting opportunities to leverage technology to reduce the reporting burden on staff. He enjoys mentoring and sharing his knowledge of how to improve systems and doesn't try to keep his knowledge and skills to himself.

In 2022 when TCC had turnover in the Lab and Endoscopy, the required reporting done by these positions was in jeopardy. What could have been a bad situation resulted in a drastic improvement in the reporting process for COVID, RSV, flu and endoscopy data analysis that this employee was instrumental in driving through the integration of Athena and Excel with PowerQuery.

He dove into the components of each report and identified the fields which could be automated to eliminate the burden of manual data entry for staff. These reports are now automated with



much less risk of error.

For every hour of time Keil invests in his projects, he ends up saving other staff ten-fold. In addition, through technology improvements, he helps reduce the element of human error resulting in improved patient outcomes.

During a time where employers across the country are short-staffed and employees are feeling burnout, he finds the energy to take on any challenge that could improve patient care and always follows through. He does all of this with the best attitude and patience for others. He has literally made the impossible, possible!

Our support departments are often doing so much work behind the scenes that is instrumental in our ability to deliver quality services to our tribal members. It is work that often goes unknown or unnoticed.

We are happy to recognize one of those unsung heroes - a member of our IT Department.

Michelle Peter - 2022 State Foster Parent of the Year



Michelle Peter is a Tribal member of Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government. She is currently a foster parent licensed by the State and she has

held a Tribal license in the past. She has held either a Tribal or State Foster Care license for over 20 years. She has four adult daughters and she is raising three foster children as a single parent while working full-time. She comes from a large family in the interior. Her grandmother, the late Hannah Solomon, is someone who always had her door open and she took care of countless children.

Michelle was raised to live by the traditional value of loving our children and she has worked in several capacities to make sure all children feel loved and supported.

Michelle received several nominations. One nomination stated, "She comes from a long line of love. Women who have opened their hearts and their homes to the children that needed it. She has continued the tradition of creating a safe, loving and supportive home to children in need."

She has worked hard to ensure both her biological, foster, and adopted children are given the same opportunities. Sometimes that's waking up at 5:30 am to bring her girls to basketball practice, driving 6 hours after working for five days straight to bring them to a camp in Anchorage or using her own money and time to take them on vacations they otherwise would not have experienced. She wants all the children in her life to feel loved and safe.

Michelle's foster children call her grandma. One of the girls wrote, "My grandma Michelle is the most warming grandma you'll ever meet. I'm so thankful to have her in my life and for taking care of me and my sister. Even though she's a single grandmother she's been working super hard to raise us and help us when it's needed. I love my grandma." We would like to recognize Michelle as TCC's 2022 State Foster Parent of the Year.

April Head Start News

In March Head Start management staff conducted a week long strategic planning event in Anchorage. There we reviewed policies and procedures, program goals and started preparing for our next school year. We also discussed current challenges our program is facing, such as staffing and a continuing onboarding process. This was a great chance for us to set aside our daily tasks and focus on the overall vision of our program and where we want to take it.

March also had Fairbanks staff travelling to different Head Start sites to conduct quarterly site visits as well as visit with staff and families to offer support and training as needed. Thank you to all the schools, villages and teachers that hosted us and made us feel so welcome.

There are still spots available in many of our classrooms. If you have a child under the age of 5 that you'd like to be enrolled please contact Waverly Neal at 907-452-8251 or 800-478-6822 ext. 3998 for more information.

FY23 School Year sites:

- Allakaket: Vacant
- Grayling: Vacant
- Holy Cross: Vacant
- Huslia: HS is open and EHS is vacant
- Minto: Vacant
- McGrath HS: Open
- Nenana EHS & HS: Open
- Northway HS: Home Visiting Open
- Nulato HS: Open
- Tanana: Home Visiting Open
- Tetlin: Home Visiting Open
- Tanacross HS: Open
- Tok HS: Open

TCC Head Start has teamed up with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library!

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.

If you do not have a local Head Start educator, please contact Waverly Neal at 907-452-8251 or 800-478-6822 ext. 3998 for ways to sign up.

Head Start has positions open in the following villages:

We Allakaket, Grayling, Holy Cross and Huslia we have Family Visitor positions available. In Grayling, Nenana and Tok we have Preschool Lead Teacher positions available. In Grayling and Nenana we have Preschool Assistant Teacher positions available. In Nenana we have Infant/Toddler Teacher positions as well as an Early Head Start Cook position available. In Nenana, Nulato and Tok we have Substitute Teacher positions available. 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.



Tanacross students exploring blubber as insulation



Easton in Huslia playing with the volcano he made in class



ADA American Dental Association® Give Kids A Smile Event

February was National Children's Dental Health Month. TCC Dental participated again in the American Dental Association's (ADA) 'Give Kids A Smile' event. This program was started in 2003 by the ADA with a goal to provide improved access to dental care for children. It has now become an annual event for TCC Dental Department. During this year's event, which took place on February 1st, the dental team completed 30 children's exams, as well as cleanings and other preventive treatment. As part of the festivities for the event, the children were able to participate in various games and received prizes in addition to their dental care. We look forward to continuing this tradition next year.

Healthcare From Your Home!

For your next appointment at the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, request a video telehealth appointment and meet with your provider from the comfort of your own couch!

Call us today to schedule at 907-451-6682, option 1.



Community Health Aide *Spotlight*

Johanna Coghill - Nenana Health Aide

By Linden Staciokas

The road to finding the career that makes you joyful may seem unpredictable or full of detours, and then suddenly you may find yourself just where you should be; where your gifts are needed most. Who would

have thought that Johanna Coghill's job detours as a waitress, gas station attendant, reindeer herder, tree farm worker, custodian...or as she puts it, "all sorts of random jobs" would end with her becoming a health aide and then Operations Officer of the Mary C. Demientieff Health Clinic and Nenana Community Health Center?

Johanna's interest in medical services began early. Born in Seward, her family moved to a homestead near Nenana when she was two years old. By the time she was a teen, she was a volunteer in the emergency medical services of the Nenana Fire Department. She eventually married one of the firefighters and he encouraged her to get certified as an Emergency Trauma Technician, then an Emergency Medical Technician I and II. When the opening for a health aide in Nenana was posted, she felt ready. However, health aide applicants need the endorsement of the local tribal councils, and since she was not a beneficiary, she thought she would not be considered. Still, family members who knew of her interest in medicine urged her to try. Before she knew it, one interview with the Nenana Native Council and she was on her way to her first training session.

At that time, in 2008, the Nenana Clinic was not the subregional entity it is now, responsible for health services in Nenana, Galena and Tok, with eight direct service providers. It was a two-person show and it took two years for Johanna to complete all the trainings. "At that time there was no training center up here, so I went to three trainings in Anchorage and one in Nome, once for only three weeks but usually for an entire month. Then I had to complete what is called a preceptorship, meaning I worked with patients under the

direct supervision of a doctor for the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center in Fairbanks." At the same time, Johanna kept working on her college degree in Community Health, which she received in 2012.



Johanna eventually became not only a health aide but an instructor at the training center set up in Fairbanks. In late 2022, she was offered the job as Operations Officer of the clinic, responsible for onsite supervision, budgets, staffing and building maintenance. She agreed, with the stipulation that 20 percent of her job would remain as a direct provider, giving health care to patients. This arrangement enables her to continue to be involved with patients she has known for years, keeps her skills sharp, and keeps her certification current.

One of the other informal hats Johanna wears might be called recruiter of future health aides. She frequently speaks at the local school, encouraging young people to consider a career in health care. She assures them that though the training is intense, both academically and then especially when they first provide patient care that includes giving shots and taking blood. However, once they are in the program the instructors and fellow students provide plenty of support to get through the hard parts.

That support is critical when the hardest part of the job happens; losing a patient you worked with. When that occurs, TCC mobilizes an entire team of people, including behavioral health employees, to do debriefing and follow-ups in the coming months. If needed, they fly out to the village where the death occurred.

The program also provides support when individual health aides need it because of other stressors in their lives. Johanna says that the one person she credits with inspiring her to stay strong and focused is Leda Cruger, the program assistant who has been with the health aide program for over 20

years. "I now consider her one of my best friends. I have always been able to reach out to her to resolve situations or for encouragement. Not just about the job, but she encourages me to take care of myself so that I have the energy to take care of others. I cannot thank her enough."

While the job is stressful, Johanna continues to be in love with it. "The best part of the job is being able to support people you care about, caring for people you have known your whole life, being the person they can rely on. It is a privileged place to be. Having people trust you, know that you are reliable, that you will keep their information confidential."

When she's not busy with the job or caring for three children under the age of eight, Johanna enjoys snow machining, four wheeling, fishing and spending time with family. "Before I had kids, I loved an adrenaline rush. I used to race cars! But once you have children..."

Johanna does not expect her life to change any more anytime soon. She lives in a community she loves, has a job that is different every single day so she is never bored, and works for an agency that is very supportive of her role as a mother. As she says, "You could not think of a better situation for raising a family."

Ryan Clairmont, Johanna's supervisor when she is doing clinical duties, says that "Johanna's knowledge and skills as a Community Health Aide Practitioner were recognized by Senior Leadership within TCC, which led her to become an instructor at the TCC Community Health Aide Program (CHAP) Training Center. There she taught different subjects and proctored students during clinical rotations during all four session trainings. Johanna did an outstanding job during her time with the CHAP Training Center, contributing to dozens of new health aides' education and training. She most recently was selected to become the first Nenana Medical Clinic Operations Officer, a position that will see the clinic in Nenana expanding its services and growing as one of TCC's Sub-Regional Medical Clinics."

Dan Nelson - Bowl of Hygeia Award Winner

TCC would like to congratulate Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center Pharmacy Director Dan Nelson for recently being recognized by the Alaska Pharmacy Association. Dan was awarded the Bowl of Hygeia Award, the Association's highest honor.

Thank you for the amazing work on behalf of our Tribes, Tribal Members and Patients.

The Bowl of Hygeia Award, established in 1958, recognizes pharmacists who possess outstanding records of civic leadership in their communities and encourages pharmacists to take active roles in their communities. This is the highest award a pharmacist can receive. According to his nomination, he deserves it.

Daniel Nelson has been the pharmacy manager at Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center for more than 10 years. He put in a tremendous amount of time during the pandemic, making major decisions as the situation constantly evolved. He helped pilot the pharmacy through two of the busiest seasons ever, with the

shortest staff ever, including through the loss of a coworker/friend in an unexpected accident.

He remains on the cutting edge of new data and development at all times, especially regarding Covid-19 testing, vaccination, monoclonal antibody treatments, and antiviral therapies.

During the initial vaccine roll-out to villages, when there were tighter stipulations on transportation and expiration and a scarcity that required precision to prevent waste, Nelson was awake at all hours, sending messages and rapidly answering questions regarding vaccine quantities and storage for very early morning flights.

He handled nearly all of the vaccine ordering and transfers for Fairbanks for a long time and personally packaged nearly every vaccine cooler for village trips for many of the early, most critical months.

He helped install an entirely new pharmacy branch in Tok, including

adding pharmacy software updates. He is one of two pharmacists opening Chief Andrew Isaac's new outpatient surgery clinic.

During the pharmacy's catastrophic labor shortage for most of the past year, he frequently worked at the pharmacy window, attended to managerial duties in the evening and when he could fit it in during the day.

He comes in early and leaves late.

"He gets the brunt of problem solving and steering our clinic through the many, never-ending drug shortages," according to his nomination. "I'm honestly not sure if he got to have a personal life since March 2020."

He is actively involved in the Alaska Pharmacists Association.

Outside of work, he is an avid hunter and trapper and serves on the board of the Alaska Trappers Association. He has a family — two children under the age of 10 — so he attends lots of sports practices.

His staff describe him as kind and supportive, always watching out for them in their time of need.



TCC Annual Education Summit News

Join us for the first in-person Education Summit since 2019! The theme for the 2023 TCC Education Summit is, "Advocacy & Action: Advancing Strategies for Educational Success." This year's presentations will center around improving educational outcomes for TCC region students, families and communities.

"The Summit will provide an opportunity for tribal leaders, educators and others interested in improving outcomes

for students to actively engage in discussions about a number of issues impacting education in the Interior," says Stephanie Hinz, TCC's Education and Indigenous Learning Manager, "We'll be discussing cultivating connections to utilize cultural knowledge, addressing development of Native teachers, Tribal Compacting, creating trauma informed schools, and more."

Tanana Chiefs Conference's (TCC) Annual Education Summit is happening

at the Wedgewood Resort on April 11th and 12th. It will be open to the public. Attendance is free and lunch and refreshments are provided. If you plan to attend, use the QR code to register online, or reach out to Angela Rutman by calling (907) 452-8251 ext. 3039, or email angela.rutman@tananachiefs.org. The agenda will be emailed to those who register.

Register Here

<https://bit.ly/3Jw49HM>



Memorial Day Potlatch

There will be a memorial potlatch to honor loved ones who are buried on Birch Hill in Fairbanks. The potlatch will be held on May 19-20, 2023 at the David Salmon Tribal Hall. May 19th will be the first night with a potlatch followed by traditional singing and dancing and May 20th will be the second night of potlatch followed by a giveaway.

More information is provided on the Fairbanks Memorial Potlatch 2023 group page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/438986065026562>



April 29th George Attla Jr. Day

"You're trying to beat time and then eventually time catches up with you. You can try your best; you may beat the competitors but you can't beat time."

-George Attla Jr.-
In Attla's Tracks

If there was a word to describe the late George Attla Jr. it would be 'champion.' He was known across Alaska as just that; a champion of Dog mushing, of the traditional lifestyle, and for Native Alaskans.

Born in 1933 at a fish camp just below Koyukuk on the Yukon River, George was raised in a subsistence lifestyle-fishing and hunting off of the land with his family. By the 1950s George had already become a legendary open-class sprint dog racer. His name was known and respected throughout the world. Known as the "Huslia Hustler" Attla Jr. won countless races and was even inducted into the first Alaska

Sports Hall of Fame and later named the Best Musher of the 20th Century.

Governor Steve Cowper proclaimed April 29, 1988 as "George Attla Day" and Tanana Chiefs Conference felt it was important to also recognize his multiple accomplishments and name April 29th as "George Attla Day". Submitted by the Beaver Village Council in 2015, the Full Board of Directors passed resolution 2015-01 to honor him on that day. On April 29th, all TCC calendars now read "George Attla Day" and it will remain a time to honor a true Alaskan champion.

Announcing New Competitive Scholarships!

If you are planning to get a degree in Education or you are enrolling in an aviation related program, we encourage you to apply for the new TCC Competitive Scholarship. Funding will begin in the Fall 2023 semester.

These scholarships assist in raising the number of Native education professionals in the interior of Alaska and the

number of professional pilots and others in aviation related careers. Individuals with these degrees are much-needed in Alaska, and are a priority for the TCC region tribes.

This is a competitive based scholarship for tribally enrolled Alaska Natives that reside in one of the 42 Tanana Chiefs Conference communities. If chosen, recipients may receive up to

a total of \$15,000 for the academic year — up to \$7,500 per semester (for up to 5 years for Educators).

One applicant from the Education field and one from the aviation field will be selected.

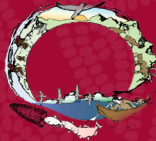
**The deadline to apply is
April 30, 2023.**

For more information about education opportunities, please contact education_dept@tananachiefs.org or call 907-452-8251 ext. 3185

The Council Newsletter

122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

(907) 452-8251 ext. 3424
communications_dept@tananachiefs.org
www.tananachiefs.org



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference



Find Your Purpose

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

New Vacancies

Fairbanks	Acupuncturist
Fairbanks	Administrative Assistant II- Nursing
Fairbanks	Administrative Assistant II-Wellness & Prevention
Fairbanks	Call Center Manager
Fairbanks	Deputy Dental Assistant Supervisor
Fairbanks	Deputy Director of Nursing
Fairbanks	Eligibility Specialist
Fairbanks	Environmental Services Technician I
Fairbanks	Executive Administration Administrative Assistant I
Fairbanks	Executive Coordinator
Fairbanks	Exercise Technician
Fairbanks	Health Services Grants Coordinator
Fairbanks	Human Resources Administrative Assistant I
Fairbanks	Lab Information System (LIS) Specialist
Fairbanks	Lead Certified Medical Assistant
Fairbanks	Lead Clinic Greeter
Fairbanks	Licensed Practical Nurse
Fairbanks	Patient Experience Coordinator
Fairbanks	Physician Assistant - Float
Fairbanks	Residential Care Coordinator I
Fairbanks	Security Officer
Fairbanks	Senior Service Desk Technician
Grayling	Elder Nutrition Cook
Holy Cross	Elder Nutrition Cook
Holy Cross	Tribal Workforce Development Specialist
Northway	Carpenter
Northway	Home Care Provider
Northway	Laborer
Northway	Project Supervisor
Tok	Preschool Lead Teacher
Tok	Referral Coordinator I
Tok	Security Officer
Tok	UTHC Administrative Assistant I
Region-Wide	Travel Coordinator

JOBS LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF MARCH 23, 2023



Traveling to Alaska Native Medical Center and Need Assistance?

The ANMC-TCC Patient Advocates work closely with the medical teams at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) to ensure TCC patients receive clear communication about their care, excellent patient experiences, safe discharge plans, and access to support if concerns arise while at ANMC.

Please reach out to our ANMC-TCC Patient Advocates if needed.

April Johnson

ANMC-TCC Patient Advocate
907-687-9193

Lucy Frank

Lead ANMC-TCC Patient Advocate
907-378-8002

We're Here to Help!

Patient Experience Program

Open Monday - Friday • 8:00am - 5:00pm
907-451-6682 ext. 1918

patientconcerns@tananachiefs.org

ALL COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS WILL RECEIVE A RESPONSE WITHIN 14 DAYS OR SOONER.

