

Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

The Council

Incorporated as Dena' Nena' Henash
Vol. 49 No. 11 • November 2024



TCC Signs Historic Agreements with the Department of the Interior, Advancing Tribal Self-Governance and Co-Stewardship

On October 16th, TCC signed two groundbreaking agreements with the Department of the Interior (DOI). These agreements, the Self-Governance Funding Agreement and the Gravel to Gravel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), represent a unified commitment to strengthening Tribal self-governance and co-stewardship of Alaska's lands and resources.

Self-Governance Funding Agreement

The Self-Governance Funding Agreement is a first-of-its-kind, inter-agency agreement between TCC and key bureaus of the Department of the Interior, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Geological Survey. This landmark agreement centralizes Trib-

al voices and priorities across federal public lands and programs. By fostering consultation, communication, and strong partnerships, the agreement aims to create a sustainable framework that emphasizes reciprocity with the lands and waters, while ensuring the well-being of future generations.

"This agreement is a powerful step toward long-term self-governance," said Chief Brian Ridley. "It is built on

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Join Us! 2024 TCC Special Full Board of Directors Meeting

November 13th-15th, 2024 • Westmark Hotel • Fairbanks, AK
See page 3 for more information.



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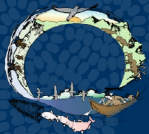


Mission

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

Executive Board

Trimble Gilbert, Arctic Village
1st Traditional Chief

Andrew Jimmie, Minto
2nd Traditional Chief

Brian Ridley, Eagle
Chief/Chairman

Sharon Hildebrand, Nulato
Vice-President

Charlie Wright, Rampart
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Herbie Demit, Tanacross
Upper Tanana

Claude 'Joe' Petruska, Nikolai
Upper Kuskokwim

Nancy James, Gwichyaa Zhee
Yukon Flats

Ivan Demientieff, Grayling
Lower Yukon

Lori Baker, Minto
Yukon Tanana

Charlie Green, Galena
Yukon Koyukuk

Peter Demoski, Nulato
Elder Advisor

Mackenzie Englishoe, Gwichyaa Zhee
Youth Advisor



Letter from the Chief

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

Here at Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), we are preparing for our Special Full Board of Directors meeting taking place later this month. A few years ago, TCC began hosting a fall Special Convention to provide our delegates with ample time to discuss the issues and priorities that matter most to them. During this meeting, Tribal delegates will come together to address important matters affecting our communities, including fishing and hunting, reclaiming our people, and combatting drug trafficking. Additionally, delegates will deliberate on the implementation of a Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Arming Pilot Program. These are vital discussions to have, and I look forward to seeing you all there and hearing your thoughts.



Last month, TCC partnered with Tlingit and Haida to host the Annual Tribal Unity Gathering in Anchorage. The event was a success, bringing together Tribal leaders and representatives from across the state. It is always inspiring to witness the unity and collaboration that emerges when our communities come together. Following the gathering, we celebrated the signing of two historic agreements with the Department of the Interior.

The first agreement, a Self-Governance Funding Agreement, signifies a step toward increased autonomy and resource control for our Tribes, ensuring that we have the flexibility to manage and direct funding in ways that best serve our communities. In 2022, the Full Board of Directors passed Resolution 2022-12, guiding TCC to engage with Federal and State agencies to develop Tribal co-management of our traditional territories. I am grateful to our Tribal Leaders and Executive Board for their leadership and vision in setting this direction and paving the way for this important agreement.

The second, the Gravel to Gravel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), fosters collaboration for ecosystem co-stewardship, highlighting our shared commitment to the stewardship of our lands and waters. Both agreements reflect a unified dedication to co-stewardship, respect for Traditional Knowledge, and the future sustainability of our ways of life. You can learn more about these agreements on page 1 of this newsletter.

I am also pleased to share that last month, the Federal Subsistence Board made a final decision to add three Tribally-nominated seats to the board. This is a positive step toward a more equitable and inclusive decision-making process, ensuring that our voices and perspectives are better represented in managing our resources.

Additionally, last month I testified at the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council, where I emphasized the need for focused efforts on bycatch reduction in Area M. Ensuring sustainable fisheries is essential for our communities, and I had several key asks of the Committee to address these issues. You can learn more about my testimony on page 6 of this newsletter.

Mahsi' Choo,
Chief Brian Ridley

Every Salmon Counts

Celebration Potluck

November 14th, 2024 • 6:00 - 9:00pm

Bring a dish
& celebrate
with us!



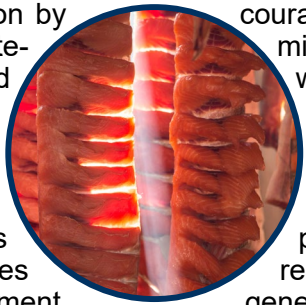


Federal Subsistence Board Adds Three Tribal Seats

TCC applauds a significant move toward greater Tribal representation following the recent decision by the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to add three Tribally-nominated seats to the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB). This decision marks a vital step in ensuring that the voices of Alaska Native communities are heard in the management of subsistence resources on federal lands and waters.

Subsistence practices have been at the heart of the livelihood, survival, and cultural identity of Alaska Native people for thousands of years. These practices are more than a means of sustenance—they are a connection to the land, a way to pass down traditional knowledge, and a vital part of our wellness and sense of community. The inclusion of Tribally-nominated members on the FSB acknowledges this deep-rooted connection and brings essential perspectives to the decision-making process. It recognizes the vital role of traditional ecological knowledge in sustainable resource management.

“Tribal representation on the Federal Subsistence Board is an essential step toward a more equitable and inclusive decision-making process,” said Chief Brian Ridley of TCC. “Our



communities have long advocated for a seat at the table, and we are encouraged by the Board’s commitment to listening to those who are most affected by subsistence policies. We look forward to the positive impact this will have on ensuring our traditional practices and food security remain protected for future generations.”

The Federal Subsistence Management Program, co-managed by the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, oversees subsistence use and regulations for fish and wildlife on federal public lands and waters in Alaska. The addition of three Tribally-nominated seats means the Board will benefit from the firsthand knowledge and experience of rural Alaska Native communities, leading to more balanced and informed decisions.

This decision is a testament to the importance of Tribal consultation and the ongoing efforts to include Native voices in critical discussions that impact their way of life. TCC remains committed to advocating for the protection of Alaska Native subsistence rights and ensuring that these voices continue to be heard and respected in all matters of land and resource management.

2024 Special Full Board of Directors Meeting: Nov. 13-15

The 2024 Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Special Full Board of Directors Meeting will take place at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks from November 13th-15th. TCC Tribal delegates will come together to discuss important topics affecting our communities, including:

- Fishing and Hunting
- Reclaiming Our People
- VPSO Arming Pilot Program
- Combatting Drug Trafficking

This meeting is open to the public and provides an opportunity to address and discuss these critical issues. If you can’t attend in person, tune in via livestream by scanning the QR code below.

Scan here to view livestream



<https://www.tananachiefs.org/live>

Help is always here...

988

24 HOURS A DAY • 7 DAYS A WEEK



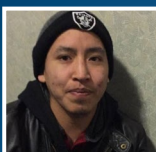
Free & confidential
support for people in
suicidal crisis

Your story isn't over...

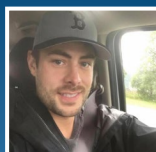
MISSING



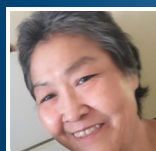
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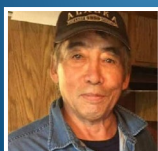
Willis
Derendoff



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>



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.

TCC Signs Historic Agreements with the Department of the Interior

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the foundation of respectful and meaningful consultation, and it reflects our shared commitment to protecting the lands and resources that define who we are as Alaska Native people.”

The framework established by this agreement will enable the growth of Tribal Self-Governance Co-Stewardship Agreements, empowering Tribes to actively participate in the management and sustainability of the lands and resources that are integral to their way of life.

Gravel to Gravel MOU

TCC, alongside leaders from the Department of the Interior and Alaska Native Tribes, signed the Gravel to

Gravel MOU. This agreement is a testament to the long-standing relationship between the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and Norton Sound regions and the people who have depended on their ecosystems since time immemorial. These regions are vital for sustaining fish, birds, wildlife, and resilient communities.

Federal leaders took this opportunity to listen directly to the voices of Alaska Native Tribes, gaining a deeper understanding of the ecosystem collapses that have deeply affected communities and cultures. The MOU establishes a collaborative effort between federal agencies and Tribes, creating a foundation for co-stewardship where Traditional Knowledge and

western science work together to address ecosystem challenges.

“This agreement is about more than policy; it’s about partnership,” said Chief Brian Ridley. “By integrating Traditional Knowledge with western science, we can take collective action to support resilient ecosystems and communities. The Gravel to Gravel MOU sets the stage for co-stewardship, ensuring that our traditional practices and values are at the forefront of decision-making.”

As TCC continues to advocate for Tribal rights and environmental sustainability, these agreements mark a significant step forward in the journey toward meaningful self-determination and co-stewardship.

2024 Infrastructure Summit: Building Stronger Communities Together

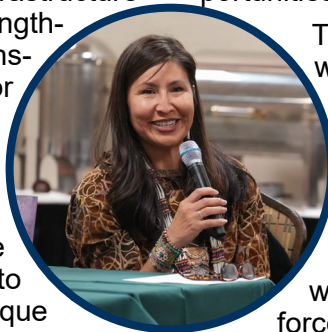
On September 26th-27th, 2024, Tribal leaders, agencies, and experts gathered at the Wedgewood Resort in Fairbanks for the 2024 Infrastructure Summit, focused on strengthening housing and transportation infrastructure for Alaska Native communities. The event provided an opportunity for collaboration with participants sharing innovative solutions and resources to address the region’s unique challenges.

Throughout the summit, the importance of working together to support the development of vital infrastructure was emphasized. The agenda featured updates on housing projects, including the Home Electrification Project and the use of BIA Housing Improvement Program (HIP) funds, aimed at improving energy efficiency and broadband access in rural villages. The event also highlighted innovative housing efforts in various

communities and provided valuable discussions on topics such as Community Planning, Housing Grant Opportunities, and Elder Housing.

Transportation infrastructure was another key focus of the summit, with presentations on funding opportunities through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), as well as updates on workforce development and critical transportation programs. Participants had the opportunity to connect with agencies one-on-one, discussing strategies to move projects forward and improve safety, accessibility, and efficiency.

We are deeply grateful to all who attended and contributed to the success of this event. The collaborative spirit and shared knowledge will help ensure continued progress toward stronger, more resilient Alaska Native communities.



November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Within minutes of quitting smoking your last cigarette, your body begins to recover. Check out these health benefits of quitting smoking over time.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 20 mins | Your heart rate and blood pressure drop. |
| A few days | The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. |
| 2 weeks - 3 months | Your circulation improves, and your lung function increases. |
| 1-12 months | Coughing and shortness of breath decrease. Tiny hair-like structures that move mucus out of the lungs (called Cilia) regain normal function, increasing their ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce the risk of infection. |
| 5-10 years | Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, and voice box (larynx) is cut in half. Your stroke risk decreases. |
| 10 years | Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, and voice box (larynx) is cut in half. Your stroke risk decreases. |
| 15 years | Your risk of coronary heart disease is close to that of a non-smoker. |

Join TCC on November 28th for the Great American Smokeout

Quitting smoking isn't easy, but it's possible with time and a plan. You don't have to quit all at once- just start with day one. Let the Great American Smokeout, held on the third Thursday in November, be your first step toward a smoke-free life. Join others across our region in taking this important step toward better health and reducing your cancer risk. Plus, the American Cancer Society can also provide the resources and support you need. Quitting starts here.

Learn More Here!

TCC Wellness & Prevention

Scan to access TCC's Tobacco Prevention Resources:
<https://www.tananachiefs.org/services/wellness-prevention/tobacco/>
 Email: prevention@tananachiefs.org
 Call: 907-452-8251 ext. 3037



American Cancer Prevention Society

Scan to access ACPS's Tobacco Prevention Resources:
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/tobacco.html>



Scan to access Great American Smokeout Resources:
<https://www.cancer.org/smokeout>
 Toll-Free Line for Resources: 1-800-227-2345



TCC Shuttle Service

TCC's complementary Patient Shuttle Service now has extended hours to meet the needs of patients traveling to Fairbanks for medical appointments.

Weekday Schedule

Monday - Friday • 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Call 907-347-0765 for appointments outside the route schedule

Weekend Schedule

Saturday - Sunday • 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Call 907-687-8338

Airport Transportation

Monday-Friday • 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Saturday • 6:30 AM - 8:00 PM | Sunday • 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**SCAN TO VIEW MORE
SHUTTLE INFO!**



Chief Brian Ridley Calls for Urgent Action on Salmon Crisis

In October, Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Chief Brian Ridley addressed the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council (EIRAC), highlighting the severe consequences of the ongoing salmon crisis on Alaska Native communities. Salmon, which has historically accounted for more than 50% of the subsistence harvest for TCC member Tribes, has become scarce, leading to alarming health impacts.

Chief Ridley emphasized that the decline in salmon stocks over the last decade has directly contributed to a significant rise in food insecurity, which in turn has affected the health of Alaska Native people. Since 2019, TCC has seen a 24.6% increase in diabetes and a staggering 70% increase in pre-diabetes among its beneficiaries. These troubling numbers reflect the loss of salmon in local diets, which previously provided essential nutrients that supported the health of individuals living in remote areas.

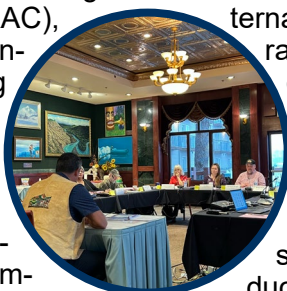
Chum salmon, in particular, was highlighted as a critical food source, being rich in protein, B vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids, and essential minerals like potassium and phosphorus. This nutritional profile makes salmon invaluable, especially in Alaska's harsh environments where access to store-bought food is limited and often

prohibitively expensive. With the loss of salmon, Alaska Native communities are forced to turn to less nutritious alternatives, contributing to rising rates of lifestyle-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Chief Ridley presented several key requests to the EIRAC, aimed at improving salmon management and reducing bycatch:

- **Achievable, trackable actions** on salmon management at the Regional Advisory Council level, such as the proposal for a conservation corridor.
- **A letter to the State Board of Fish** urging similar action on bycatch reduction in area M.
- **A letter to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council** calling for immediate measures to reduce bycatch.
- **Inclusion of trespass education** and Native Allotments on all hunting maps as part of the Hunter Ethics Education & Outreach Initiative Working Group.

As the salmon crisis continues to affect both the environment and the health of Alaska Native communities, TCC is committed to working alongside partners and regulatory bodies to protect this vital resource for future generations.



Needle Disposal Kiosks Now Available

Hypodermic needles are a part of modern life, whether for managing conditions like diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, or Crohn's disease, or due to the ongoing issue of illicit drug use. Unfortunately, this often leads to improper disposal of needles in makeshift containers tossed with regular trash. But there's a better option: needle disposal kiosks!

Tok and Nenana now have their own needle disposal kiosk! This free service is available for safe and sanitary disposal of medical waste. These kiosks are built to endure all weather conditions, ensuring they're ready whenever you need it.

You can find the kiosks at the following locations:

Public Health Nursing
1314 Alaska Highway
Tok, Alaska 99780

Mary C. Demientieff Health Clinic
806 G Street
Nenana, AK 99760

In the News: Elder Mentoring at Denakkanaaga Culture Camp

In October, *Senior Voice*, a publication highlighting the lives of Alaskan Elders, featured an article about the third Denakkanaaga Elders Mentoring Elders Cultural Camp. This camp brought Elders together for healing, connection, and learning. This year included special emphasis on the harvest of moose and all of the associated cultural activities that go along with that. Scan the QR code to read the full story from *Senior Voice*.



Ready for a Rewarding Career?
Become a Dental Health Aide Therapist!

Apply Today for this Training Opportunity!

Deadline to Apply: February 15th, 2025

Contact:

Dr. Christine Ho, DHAT Coordinator
christine.ho@tananachiefs.org
907-451-6682 ext. 3587



TCC Housing Update

By Mitchell Shewfelt, Housing Department Manager

As we transition into the colder months, Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) is excited to share updates on various housing initiatives taking place across our communities. Our commitment to improving living conditions and expanding housing opportunities for our Tribal members remains strong. Here's a look at our ongoing and upcoming projects.

Project Highlights

- **Ruby:** We are pleased to announce our collaboration with the Ruby Tribe to rehabilitate eight homes under a HUD Healthy Homes grant. Materials have been sent, and this project aims to enhance living conditions for many families in Ruby.
- **Circle:** With the arrival of colder weather, our housing project in Circle is set to restart, with an anticipated completion date in the fall of 2024. Additionally, a Circle Tribal member is leading TCC's first BIA Category D mortgage buy-down assistance program, which will provide \$75,000 from HUD for down payment assistance on a traditionally financed home in Fairbanks.
- **Northway:** Progress continues in Northway, where the housing project is now 98% complete, with full completion expected by the end of August 2024.
- **Koyukuk:** In partnership with the Koyukuk Tribe, TCC is executing a HUD Healthy Homes grant, sending materials to rehab seven Tribal homes. We are also collaborating with a Tribal crew to construct two new homes under a BIA HIP grant.
- **Nikolai:** TCC is working closely with the Nikolai Tribe on the construction of seven new homes.

The home packages have been delivered, and the Tribe is coordinating with TCC's survey department to assist with platting parcels and construction.

- **Grayling:** A new two-bedroom home is being funded through the BIA HIP program, enhancing housing options for our community members.
- **Holy Cross:** Two homes selected for BIA HIP rehabilitation services will commence once materials arrive via barge. Additionally, a two-bedroom home is planned for funding through BIA HIP in 2025.
- **Minto:** A four-bedroom home is being funded under the BIA HIP program for a Tribal member in Minto.

Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance (EFLEA) Grant

The TCC Housing Department is also making strides with the EFLEA Grant, having received funding to rehabilitate or build new VPSO offices and holding cell spaces in Alatna, Eagle, Kaltag, Rampart, Tetlin, and Venetie. Materials for these projects have been ordered and delivered, with completion expected by the grant's end date of August 2024.

Department of Energy Electrification Grant Update

TCC's housing program, in partnership with the Native Village of Hughes, is taking the lead on a DOE Housing Electrification rebate program grant. This initiative under the US Department of Energy Office of State and Community Energy Programs offers over \$3 million in formula funding

aimed at low-income Tribal homes. Eligible projects include replacing water heaters, installing heat pumps, and upgrading electrical panels. Each Tribe has an allocation of approximately \$100,000-\$200,000, which could potentially double or triple. Applications are due by May 2025, and we encourage all Tribes to participate to secure their funding.

Looking Ahead

2024 Projects:

- Jail rehabilitations in Alatna, Eagle, Kaltag, and Tetlin.
- New jails in Rampart and Venetie.

2025 Projects:

- BIA HIP homes in Minto, Circle, Huslia, Holy Cross, and Grayling.
- Home rehabilitation programs in Koyukuk (7 homes) and Ruby (13 homes).

Employment opportunities related to these projects are being handled by the Tribes. For more information on job openings, please contact your local Tribal office.

We're Here to Help!

For further details on any of our housing initiatives, please reach out to:

Mitch Shewfelt

Housing Department Manager
907-452-8251 ext. 3319

Mitchell.Shewfelt@tananachiefs.org

Floyd Green

Housing Project Manager
907-452-8251 ext. 3319

Floyd.Green@tananachiefs.org





Stay Healthy During the Holidays: Order Your FREE COVID Test Today!

By Jacoline Bergstrom, Executive Director of Health Services

The Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR), an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service has reopened [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov), so that households across the country can order four additional over-the-counter COVID-19 tests for free. These tests are intended for use throughout the 2024 holiday season to detect currently circulating COVID-19 variants. Clear instructions are included on how to verify extended expiration dates.

These efforts complement ASPR's ongoing distribution of free COVID-19 tests to long-term care facilities, low-income senior housing, uninsured individuals, and underserved communities. Through this community organization distribution program and the home-ordering program, ASPR has provided a combined total of more than 1.9 billion COVID-19 over-the-counter tests.

As the fall and holiday seasons will create increased close proximity gatherings of people, the Administration remains committed to helping Americans access tests to help so that, if they develop a respiratory illness, they can learn whether it is due to COVID-19 and then make the best choices about seeking medical care and reducing risks to family, friends, and co-workers. To order four free, over-the-counter COVID-19 tests, visit [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).

Scan to order your **FREE** COVID-19 test



REAL ID Deadline: May 7, 2025 No More Extensions!

By May 7, 2025, everyone must have a REAL ID for air travel, including small aircraft and medical evacuation (medevac) flights. After this deadline, a standard driver's license won't be accepted for flights. This deadline is final, and there will be no extensions.



To get your REAL ID, visit your local DMV with the following:

1. **Proof of Identity** (passport, birth certificate)
2. **Proof of Social Security Number** (Social Security card, W-2)
3. **Proof of Residency** (utility bill, lease agreement)
4. **Name Change Documents** (if applicable)

Without a REAL ID, you will need a passport or other federally accepted ID for travel, even for emergency flights like medevacs. Avoid last-minute delays by applying early.

Prepare now and ensure you're ready for the May 7, 2025 deadline. Visit Alaska's DMV REAL ID page (<https://doa.alaska.gov/dmv/>) or contact your local DMV for more information.

Protect Your Sight This November and All Your Life

During National Diabetes Awareness Month, it's important to highlight how diabetes can affect your vision—and to share the good news that you can take steps to protect your eyesight.

People with diabetes are at risk for various eye conditions, including cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy. Diabetic retinopathy is the most common cause of vision loss for adults with diabetes and is the leading cause of blindness in adults aged 20-74. Alaska Natives are among those with the highest risk of losing vision from diabetes, but with the right care, this risk can be greatly reduced.



To protect your eyes while living with diabetes, it's essential to keep your overall health on TRACK:

- Take** your medications as prescribed.
- Reach** and maintain a healthy weight.
- Add** physical activity to your daily routine.
- Control** your ABC's: A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol.
- Kick** the smoking habit.

Keeping your diabetes in check is key to slowing the progression of diabetic eye diseases. Just as important is staying on top of your regular eye exams. Since diabetic retinopathy and other eye conditions may not show early symptoms, having a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once a year can catch problems early and prevent serious vision loss. Early detection and timely treatment can reduce the risk of severe vision loss by up to 95%.

Managing diabetes can be challenging, but you don't have to lose your vision because of it. Take charge of your eye health today by scheduling your annual eye exam. Call the Eye Clinic at 907-451-6682 and choose option 4 or check when Rural Eye Services will be in your community next. Visit [Tananacheifs Eye Clinic](https://www.tananachiefs.org/services/health/chief-andrew-isaac-health-center/eye-clinic/) (<https://www.tananachiefs.org/services/health/chief-andrew-isaac-health-center/eye-clinic/>) to learn more about available services. You can protect your vision while living with diabetes—and we're here to help you every step of the way.

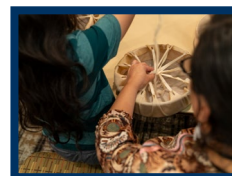
Celebrating Resilience at the Traditional Healing Gathering

The Traditional Healing Gathering, held from October 8th-10th, 2024, at Wedgewood Resort, was a vibrant three-day event celebrating culture, traditional healing, and community unity. Each morning began with a communal prayer, uniting participants with a spirit of respect and connection. Special guests, including Elders and cultural advocates, shared inspiring insights into resilience and cultural pride.

Workshops provided hands-on experiences in traditional arts such as caribou tufting, fish skin jewelry, drum making, and plant-based healing practices. Attendees explored these arts with guidance from master artisans like Joyce Roberts and Rochelle

Adams, gaining skills and a renewed connection to cultural roots. The event also featured Men's and Women's Circles, language workshops, and group discussions on how communities can sustain resilience through traditional ways of being.

Each evening ended with celebrations, including family-friendly gatherings, a regalia fashion show, and an artist showcase complete with music, art, and a Denakkanaaga pop-up sale. As the gathering concluded, participants departed with new skills, enriched cultural understanding, and stronger community bonds, underscoring the healing power and resilience within our traditions.



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where you can
experience a warm and
tight-knit community?
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- ✓ Small Class Size
- ✓ A Fall Subsistence Break
- ✓ The Chance to learn about native culture and traditions.
- ✓ College Classes Sponsored by TCC GO

601 Loftus Rd, Fairbanks, AK 99709

k12northstar.org/effiekokrine

Exploring Eielson AFB's Micro-Reactor Project: An Initiative in Energy Resilience for Alaska

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

My name is Nancy Balkus, and I serve as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Energy, and the Environment. I am deeply honored to be included in this newsletter and want to share some information about Air Force energy initiatives within Alaska.

I strive to make our national security bases resilient by pursuing safe, reliable, and efficient energy sources suited to the environmental realities and mission needs for each location. To this end, my office is exploring the option of advanced nuclear technology at Eielson Air Force Base.

The Air Force is working closely with the Defense Logistics Agency to select a third-party developer who would license, own, and operate a micro-reactor on Eielson Air Force Base. The Air Force would purchase the carbon pollution-free electricity generated to supplement the base's existing coal-fired power plant.

This technology is different from traditional nuclear plants; it is compact, operates independently from the grid, and has multi-layered safety features. The design will undergo rigorous environmental and safety reviews over the next several years including multiple opportunities for public comment well before a decision is made on implementation. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission will conduct an independent environmental and safety review for the proposed construction and operation of the facility.

Our goal is for this project to demonstrate a safe and reliable energy alter-

native at Eielson Air Force Base and to create an advanced nuclear energy pathway, which can be utilized for potential future applications of similar technology within Alaska, including Alaska Native communities.

The Air Force is sensitive to the history of nuclear technology in Alaska and the impact on communities. We are dedicated to ensuring your voices are heard and understood throughout the program. My intent is to pursue a continuous dialogue throughout the Eielson project and beyond.

My team is committed to consistently sharing up to date information and providing accessible forums for feedback. Information and updates can be found on the Eielson Air Force Base website.

We look forward to continued communication throughout this process to gain your input, perspectives, and concerns regarding this project. Please contact the Eielson Air Force Base, Installation Tribal Liaison Officer, Alexa Greene, at (907) 377-4500 or alexa.greene@us.af.mil with any comments or concerns.

Sincerely,

NANCY J. BALKUS, P.E., SES
Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment)

Scan for more information about this project.



Chief Peter John Tribal Building Modernization Project

In the coming months, you will notice some of our services will be temporarily relocated as Chief Peter John Tribal Building is undergoing upgrades to our HVAC system. Tanana Chiefs Conference's (TCC) Facilities and Communications Departments are working closely together to convey updates to the public in a timely, consistent manner. You can use this page to read updates regarding which services are being temporarily relocated, the duration of the relocations, and where these services are being relocated to: <https://www.tananachiefs.org/chief-peter-john-tribal-building-upgrades-project-updates/#more-45194>

Scan for more information about this project.



Senior Voice Features Rev. Dr. Anna Frank

Senior Voice, a statewide publication celebrating Alaska's Elders, published an article about Rev. Dr. Anna Frank in September. In the article, Anna shares her journey to priesthood, how she supports healing in our region, and her ongoing advocacy. Scan the QR code to access the complete story.



How To Help Kids Say No To Peer Pressure

- » Identify Peer Pressure at Different Ages
- » Have Impactful Conversations
- » Teach How to Say "No"
- » Describe Real Friendships
- » Set a Good Example



Governor Dunleavy Signs House Bill

Limiting Power of Pharmacy Benefits Managers

In September, Governor Dunleavy signed into law a House Bill that places Pharmacy Benefits Managers (PBMs) under tighter regulation. House Bill 226 limits PBMs' ability in Alaska to force patients to get their prescriptions filled at the PBMs' pharmacies of choice. That is, PBMs currently often steer profitable prescriptions away from independent and Tribal pharmacies in favor of mail order and big box pharmacies that they themselves own, creating a clear conflict of interest. Additionally, PBMs employ extremely opaque business practices that drive prescription drug prices up for consumers and employers. House Bill 226 creates transparency requirements that will help address some of the problematic business practices of PBMs. During the Legislative presentations on the bill this year, representatives from Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) highlighted that the bill would mitigate the requirement for rural Alaskan residents to order prescriptions from by-mail pharmacy services, which frequently results in delayed medication



deliveries and frozen medications in those areas.

"We are incredibly proud of all of the hard work from the dedicated team of advocates that were able to get meaningful legislative reform of PBMs across the finish line in Alaska," says Daniel Nelson, TCC's Pharmacy Director. "This bill is the first step in bringing much needed transparency, a level playing field and more reasonable prescription costs to the employers and residents of the state of Alaska."

TCC partnered with Senator Cathy Giessel, Representative Jesse Sumner, the Alaska Pharmacy Association, the Alaska Native Health Board and various other individuals and organizations from around the state and nation to get House Bill 226 passed.

"This is a step forward in promoting the best interests of patients, pharmacies, and pharmacists in Alaska," said Representative Sumner, "By enacting this legislation, we strive to create an environment that fosters quality phar-

maceutical care, empowers patient choice, and enhances the overall integrity of pharmacy services in our state."

PBMs are the key stakeholders in negotiating drug prices, acting as "middlemen" between drug manufacturers and insurers. Recently, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) initiated a probe on PBMs for lack of transparency regarding their process for establishing drug prices, and how much of a "rebate" PBMs retain from drug manufacturers as excess profit as opposed to being passed through to insurers and consumers.

"The PBMs wield enormous power and influence over patients' access to drugs and the prices they pay. This can have dire consequences for Americans, with nearly three in ten surveyed reporting rationing or even skipping doses on their prescribed medications due to high costs," the FTC said.

TCC would like to thank everyone who worked on getting this legislation passed for our people and for all of Alaska's people.



April Johnson
ANMC-TCC Patient Advocate
907-687-9193

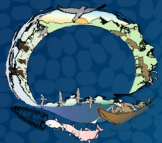
Lucy Frank
Lead ANMC-TCC Patient Advocate
907-687-9193

*Patient Advocates
Here for You!*

Traveling to Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) & Need Assistance?

The ANMC-TCC Patient Advocates work closely with the medical teams at 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.



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

The Council Newsletter

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communications_dept@tananachiefs.org
www.tananachiefs.org

Communications Division
122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701



Sign-Up to receive
our E-Newsletter!
Get important
updates straight
to your inbox.



FIND YOUR PURPOSE

Join Our Team!

New Vacancies

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Alatna | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Birch Creek | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Chalkyitsik | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Circle | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Dot Lake | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Evansville | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Fairbanks | SAPTA Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist |
| Fairbanks | Administrative Assistant I - Alternate Resource |
| Fairbanks | Biomedical Equipment Technician I |
| Fairbanks | Phlebotomist |
| Galena | Nurse Practitioner |
| Healy Lake | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Hughes | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Huslia | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Kaltag | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Koyukuk | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Rampart | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Ruby | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Stevens Village | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Tanacross | Community Health Aide/Practitioner |
| Tok | Nurse Practitioner |

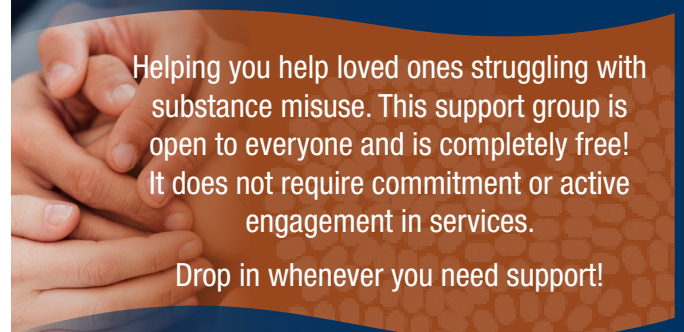


Apply Online or Learn About Our Benefits!

Visit our website at www.tananachiefs.org/careers to see a full list of open positions and learn more about the benefits available through Tanana Chiefs Conference.

JOBS LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF OCTOBER 28, 2024

Let's Talk!



Helping you help loved ones struggling with substance misuse. This support group is open to everyone and is completely free! It does not require commitment or active engagement in services.

Drop in whenever you need support!



Scan the QR Code for more info &
join us Wednesdays via Zoom
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

UPCOMING EVENTS

**NOV
5**

General Election Day
Let your voice be heard!

**NOV
8**

Book Launch: The Story of Tobaan Etseh
6:00pm • Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitor Center

**NOV
11**

TCC Offices Closed
Veterans Day

**NOV
13-15**

TCC Special Full Board of Directors Meeting
Westmark Hotel • Fairbanks, AK
Everyone is welcome in person or at www.tananachiefs.org/live

**NOV
14**

Every Salmon Counts Celebration Potluck
6:00pm-9:00pm • Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall

**NOV
28-29**

TCC Offices Closed
Thanksgiving