The Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska’s (Tlingit & Haida) 85th Annual Tribal Assembly was called to order virtually via Zoom on October 1, 2020. Over 100 Delegates from Southeast Alaska, Anchorage, California, Washington and beyond gathered to legislate for and govern, conduct and manage the affairs and property of the Tribe.

In order to conduct business virtually and to assist in setting the policy of the Tribe during Tribal Assembly or between sessions, Delegates adopted proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Order.

“Even during a pandemic, it’s important that Tlingit & Haida continue to operate and demonstrate our governance,” shared President Richard (Chalyee Éesh) Peterson. “While we may not have been able to gather in person, we have proven our resilience and adaptability to using technology available to carry on. Our Delegates came together and approved budgets, resolutions and elected our officials just as we’ve done for 85 years.”

The Tribal Assembly was webcast live on Tlingit & Haida’s Facebook page and commenced with a moment of silence to honor the passing of tribal citizen David Leask who served many years as a Delegate, Executive Council member, chair of the Enrollment Committee and Parliamentarian for Tribal Assembly. This was followed by an introduction of the Tribal Host William E. Martin and Tribal Hostess Corrine Garza who were chosen for the honorary positions for their many years of contributions and dedicated service to their community and the Tribe.

Continued on page 15
Reentry Transitional Housing Projects Update
Submitted By: Reentry & Recovery

The Reentry & Recovery department has been working diligently on the construction and remodel of three reentry transitional housing projects in Juneau, Alaska. The objective of the housing projects is to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and increase public safety by reducing recidivism. With current statistics showing that citizens returning from incarceration are 10 times more likely to experience homelessness, providing housing and supportive services to the reentry population keeps the vulnerable out of congregate shelters where social distancing is difficult.

The floor plan layouts for each facility include mitigation strategies providing individual bedrooms for each resident as well as a quarantine and isolation space with the ability to further separate living quarters in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition to creating a safe space that keeps our reentry population out of congregate shelters, the housing programs will provide cultural and peer-supported reentry and recovery programming, employment and training opportunities, and intensive case management.

The properties are currently identified by location, but will be named in a traditional manner in consultation with tribal Elders to ensure the names honor the purpose of the houses and our traditional tribal values.

Allen Court
The 12-resident home will be a low-barrier program for formerly incarcerated males that may otherwise struggle to find housing, including those with sexual offenses.

Alaway Avenue
The 15-resident home will support formerly incarcerated males and will include a focus on lifting up our formerly incarcerated fathers.

Haven House
The 5-resident home was acquired by Tlingit & Haida in 2020 and will support women coming from prison or residential treatment.

Although the housing is located in Juneau, it will support incarcerated citizens from other communities that must remain in Juneau to meet probation/parole requirements upon their release. Interstate transfers for tribal citizens incarcerated out-of-state will also be considered to assist in their homecoming to be closer to family and cultural resources. Residents will be housed for up to two years and will pay rent and any other financial obligations such as child support, legal fees or restitution.

An important goal of these programs is to close the gap between release from incarceration and access to supportive services. Eligibility will be limited to those that are currently incarcerated in a prison or halfway house. Those within three months of their release date are encouraged to apply. All housing programs will be available to Native and non-Native applicants, although Native applicants and parents of Native children will have preference.

If you are interested in learning more about Tlingit & Haida’s housing programs, contact the Reentry & Recovery department at reentry&recovery@ccthita-nsn.gov or 907.463.7366.
Each year, on the second Monday in November, we celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ Day. The holiday began as a counter celebration of the federal holiday known as Columbus Day. In Alaska, Indigenous Peoples’ Day became a permanent state holiday in 2017. Across the country, more than 60 cities and 13 states also recognize this important day.

Like most things this year, the celebration took place virtually. The Facebook Live event was hosted by President Richard (Chalyee Éesh) Peterson with guest speakers Lyle (Xeetl’i Éesh Ka) and Kolene (Dax Kilatch) James, David R. (Gyibaawm Laxha) Boxley, Stephen (Qacung) Blanchett, and Ben (K’uyáang) Young.

Stories, songs and language lessons were shared with open discussions and humor. The panelists all agreed that it’s important we continue to learn our songs, dances and art, but learning the language and keeping it alive is crucial.

The loss of language in Alaska from government policies that forced westernization on indigenous cultures has pushed many languages to the brink of extinction. However, many language warriors have risen to save our languages.

“It’s a real challenge to fight against what the outside world is bombarding us with everyday,” David said. “But that makes it all the more crucial that we are victorious in this effort.”

Lyle and Kolene James believe that language is a salve that can heal. Lyle used a metaphor of a tree to describe the community’s ability to spread the knowledge, traditions and healing nature of our languages.

“We are like a tree and when we connect to our languages, we dig into our roots and become grounded,” Lyle said. “When our branches reach out, we begin to catch more and that is how I believe our languages are going to heal.”

Indigenous Peoples’ Day
Celebrated Virtually

Headquarters Established for TEOC

The Tribal Emergency Operations center (TEOC) was created as a regional hub for Tlingit & Haida’s response to the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

In August, Tlingit & Haida purchased a facility located at 5750 Concrete Way in Juneau, Alaska to serve as the TEOC headquarters.

“Beyond the Coronavirus pandemic, we have seen the importance of having a regional presence to aid our tribal communities with any unforeseen disasters that may occur,” said President Richard (Chalyee Éesh) Peterson.

The new headquarters house the Tribal Office of Emergency Management, as well as a logistics warehouse and the Operations team.

The facility provides the TEOC the space, tools and technology necessary to stay in communication with partner tribal communities, as well as the ability to monitor the status of the Coronavirus and its impact on the world, nation, state, and our tribal communities.

It also allows the Tribe to respond quickly to all hazards that may threaten tribal citizens.
Virtual Family Pumpkin Carving Night Snapshots

General Contractor Hired for Construction Company Startup

The experienced and hard-working Ernie Bernhardt was hired as the General Contractor for the Tribe’s new construction company - Southeast General Contractors.

Ernie was born and raised in Sitka, Alaska and is from the Kaagwaantaan clan. His Tlingit name is Yanshkewooyoo, his Inupiat name is Karrutuuq, and his Haida name is Babishta. Ernie graduated from Chemawa Indian School and Western Washington State, majoring in Accounting and Business Management.

Prior to joining Southeast General Contractors, Ernie owned and operated Karrutuuq Construction, LLC, named after his Inupiat name. He also owned and operated ANC Construction LLC (2006 to 2018) and Blackhawk Construction, Inc. (1990 to 2005). His past experience also includes joining the Carpenters Apprenticeship in 1980 and working for Sitka Tribe of Alaska as a comptroller.

As the General Contractor, Ernie will be the point person for day-to-day oversight of construction sites, management of vendors and trades.

Southeast General Contractors currently has 10 people working on the construction crew and 90 percent are tribal citizens. On the crew, there are three experienced employees and three new, young employees who are just starting in the trade.

“I became interested in working with Tlingit & Haida because we share the same vision. In talking with the President and COO we agreed that we need to pass on to our young people the experience that we have acquired through training, working and business ventures.”

- Ernie Bernhardt

“I watch as they learn and gain experience and start taking pride in their work and themselves which benefits not only them, but the community as well,” Ernie said. “It is important to me that we take the time and invest it in our younger people. There are great opportunities for growth in the construction industry.”

“The goal is not only to grow the company into a viable enterprise, but also to train younger generations to take over the company eventually and thrive in whatever venture they pursue,” Ernie said.
Since the onset of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, Tlingit & Haida has committed to protecting and promoting the health and safety of our tribal citizens and communities. When Tlingit & Haida received its CARES Act funds, our leadership made the conscious decision to begin planning and preparing our region for emergency response.

Our very first effort was to establish the Tribal Emergency Operations Center (TEOC) and implement mitigation strategies to support our communities served.

Working closely with community councils and Southeast Alaska village tribes, the TEOC set to task ordering supplies for the deployment of COVID-19 Community Care Kits. Although there were some initial challenges securing items due to supply chain shortages throughout the nation, the TEOC was able to secure enough emergency response supplies. The COVID-19 Community Care Kits include a three-month supply of basic necessities to serve as a starter kit to support communities in their effort to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus or prepare for a future disaster.

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa for the opportunity to work together to support our communities and ensure the health and safety of our tribal citizens!

“Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of Tlingit & Haida employees, tribal citizens, communities and neighbors.”

Supplies Included in Starter Kits:
- Meals Ready-to-Eat (MREs)
- Dehydrated Food
- Generator
- Dehumidifier
- 50 ft. Extension Cords (2)
- 10 Gauge 100 ft. Extension Cord
- First Responder Kit
- 50 ft. LED String Lights
- LED Work Lamps (2)
- 3-in-1 Dolly (1)
- Rolling Cart
- 10x10 Tarps (2)
- 6 Heavy Duty Shelves
- 96 Large Plastic Totes
- Rice, Beans, Sugar, Salt, & Baking Soda
- Tables & Chairs
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
  - Medical Gloves
  - Masks
  - Hand Sanitizer
  - Face Shields (Masks)
Tlingit & Haida is pleased to welcome Gail Cheney and Mary Johnson to its management team! Gail was hired as the new Senior Director of Organizational Development under Tribal Operations and Mary was hired as the Director of the Tribal Family & Youth Services (TFYS) department.

Gail was born and raised in Kake, Alaska and is the daughter of Bill and Della Cheney. She is Raven of the Kaach.adi clan (Fresh Water Marked Sockeye House) and Eagle of the Tiits Gitee Nei clan (Hummingbird House).

In her new position as Senior Director of Organizational Development, Gail will support Tlingit & Haida’s leadership and management team to develop strategies that foster organizational change and promote innovation and growth, enhance effectiveness, and uphold the mission and vision of the Tribe.

Gail holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Urban Studies & Planning, Master of Arts degree in Business Administration & Management and Ph.D in Leadership & Organizational Change.

Mary was born and raised in Sitka, Alaska and is the daughter of Ralph Johnson and the late Jill Johnson. Her Yup’ik name is Miisaq and she is enrolled with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and Native Village of Scammon Bay.

As the TFYS Director, Mary will provide direct oversight of all department staff and the planning, development and implementation of the Tribe’s Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Elderly services and Wellness programs and activities.

Mary received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work, Master of Arts degree in Community Psychology and is a Licensed Professional Counselor. She previously served as the Program Manager of Tanana Chiefs Conference’s Child Protection Program.

Meet Sacred Grounds Café’s New Barista Manager

Congratulations to Alison Schoonover who has been promoted to Barista Manager for Sacred Grounds Café! Alison joined the Sacred Grounds team in 2017 soon after they opened their doors. She has six years of experience in the café community, loves creating new, fun drinks and is always working on her newest latte art.

As the Barista Manager, Alison will oversee the hiring and training of new baristas, expand the café’s brand, and develop and execute sales and profit plans that are in line with budgetary goals to ensure profitable operations.

As one of the Tribe’s social enterprises, Sacred Grounds Café proudly maintains a Native hire rate of nearly 100% and continues to partner with Tlingit & Haida’s 477 programs to provide work experience opportunities to tribal citizen clients.

Alison, nicknamed Shagleit, is Wooshkeetaan from Hoonah, Alaska. She grew up in Juneau and plans to complete her Bachelor’s degree in small business management. The only things she loves more than coffee are her pets, Tobi and Sarge!
Mark Your Calendars

December Events
16: Executive Council Meeting – Zoom
17: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
18-20: New Year’s Fireworks Sale – Juneau, AK
23: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
24: Christmas Eve (Offices Closed)
25: Christmas Day (Offices Closed)
28: Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veterans Allotment Application Period Opens
31: Deadline to Register for Elders Talking Circles
31: New Year’s Eve (Offices Close Early)

January Events
1: New Year’s Day (Offices Closed)
7: Elders Talking Circle Begins – Zoom
7: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
11: Virtual Scholarship Workshop – Zoom
12-15: Tribal Enrollment Committee Meeting – Zoom
13: Navigators Spring Study Group Sessions Begin – Zoom
14: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
19: 32nd Alaska State Legislature Convenes – Juneau, AK
21: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
28: Native Issues Forum Series Begins – Facebook Live

February Events
4: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
11: Native Issues Forum – Facebook Live
16: Elizabeth Peratrovich Day (Observed 2/15)
17: Presidents Day & Washington’s Birthday (Observed 2/16)
18: Lunchtime Chats – Facebook Live
25: Native Issues Forum – Facebook Live

Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veterans Allotment
Are you an Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veteran who served between August 5, 1964 and December 31, 1971, or are you a descendant of one? You may be entitled to apply for a Native allotment of up to 160 acres. The application period for the five-year program officially opens December 28, 2020. For the latest information, visit the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management’s website at https://on.doi.gov/3hvUaCn.

If you believe you are eligible to apply and need assistance, contact Tlingit & Haida’s Native Lands & Resources (NL&R) department.

Irene Lampe, Realty Specialist
ilampe@ctthita-nsn.gov
907.209.2186

Note: It has been brought to our attention that the Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veterans Allotment article in Tlingit & Haida’s 3rd Quarter newsletter had incorrect information for the eligibility dates. The digital copy of the newsletter has been updated on our website.
Virtual Scholarship Workshop

Join Tlingit & Haida’s Navigators program for a virtual Scholarship Workshop on January 11, 2021!

The free workshop will cover the scholarship and FAFSA application process, help students identify and apply for scholarships, and provide writing assistance for cover letters and essays. All participants will be entered into a random drawing for some great door prizes.

Doorkes:
- Smart safe backpack (Grand Prize),
- Noise cancelling headphones,
- College snack box and more!

Register Now:
bit.ly/3KwUKnP

For more information on the scholarship workshop, contact:

Navigators Program
Navigators@ccthita-nsn.gov
907.463.7752

Virtual Southeast Environmental Conference Held

Tlingit & Haida’s Native Lands & Resources (NLR) department has been hosting the Southeast Environmental Conference annually for over a decade. With the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s conference looked much different. To keep our communities safe, the conference went virtual. Instead of a two-day event, the conference extended to two days a week for five weeks to accommodate schedules.

Every year, the Southeast Environmental Conference brings together Southeast Alaska tribes, natural resource professionals, agencies and organizations within the region to learn and address common environmental priorities. This year, a total of 64 registrants and 20 tribal organizations participated and received information and training on transboundary mining, climate change, harmful algal blooms, tribal conservation districts, oil spill response, brownfield sites, and more.

Partner Agencies & Organizations:
- United States Environmental Protection Agency,
- University of Alaska,
- United States Forest Service,
- Adapt Alaska,
- United States Department of Agriculture,
- Spruce Root, Inc.,
- Sustainable Southeast Partnership,
- Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership,
- Southeast Alaska Conservation Council,
- Southeast Alaska Watershed Council,
- Washington Sea Grant,
- Northwest Climate Hub,
- Sitka Sound Science Center,
- United States Geological Survey,
- Ecotrust,
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium,
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation,
- Alaska Housing and Urban Development, and
- Sealaska.

Partner Tribes & Tribal Organizations:
- Prince of Wales Tribal Conservation District,
- Prince of Wales Tribal Consortia,
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska,
- Klawock Cooperative Association,
- Metlakatla Indian Community,
- Hoonah Indian Association,
- Craig Tribal Association,
- Skagway Traditional Council,
- Organized Village of Kasaan,
- Chilkat Indian Association,
- Chilkoot Indian Association,
- Douglas Indian Association,
- Wrangell Cooperative Association,
- Ketchikan Indian Community,
- Organized Village of Kake,
- Petersburg Indian Association,
- and Native Village of Eyak.

Southeast Environmental Conference Theme:
“Our Land and Belonging to Our Land.”
Department of Justice Grants Awarded

The Department of Justice awarded nearly $3 million in funding to Tlingit & Haida through three grants. With the funds awarded, Tlingit & Haida will add a new courtroom, continue to expand victim services and establish a civil diversion program for tribal citizens impacted by opioid abuse. The continued growth and development of Tlingit & Haida’s capacity to provide support services and a culturally-appropriate forum to meet the judicial needs of tribal citizens is a key priority.

Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation ($608,758): The grant will be used to establish an additional courtroom for the Tribal Court to address prioritized justice and judicial service needs impacting tribal citizens. With two courtrooms, the court process will become much more streamlined. Improvements will be especially evident for domestic violence protective orders, which are same-day processes.

Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Program ($1,775,698): This program helps tribes develop, expand and improve services to victims of crime and other public safety initiatives by providing funding, programming and technical assistance. The grant will be used to expand access to culturally-appropriate intervention and treatment services to tribal citizens who have been severely impacted by crime and related violence.

Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, & Substance Abuse Site-Based Program ($599,673): This program supports effective local, state and tribal responses to illicit substance use and misuse in order to reduce overdose deaths, promote public safety, and support access to treatment and recovery services in the criminal justice system. The grant will be used to plan, develop and implement a civil diversion program for tribal citizens impacted by opioid abuse. The project will utilize a stakeholder consultation model for completing assessment, capacity building and strategic planning necessary to implement and sustain a comprehensive, culturally-competent diversion program and system.

Winter Wellness Tips

Even in a normal year, winter weather and long nights can take a toll on your physical and mental wellbeing. With the Coronavirus pandemic, this winter may feel especially challenging for those who have seasonal affective disorder or depression. Taking steps to reduce your stress in a healthy way is important. Here are a few tips and coping strategies to safely boost your mental health this winter:

- **Connect Virtually with Friends & Family**: Schedule a digital social hour or bring your friends together to participate in trivia sessions, movie screenings, and other activities via video conferencing tools.
- **Prioritize Sleep & Healthy Eating**: A healthy amount of sleep and good diet can improve mental and emotional resilience.
- **Try Light Therapy**: Seasonal affective disorder may be caused by the lack of sunlight exposure in the winter. Make sure that you choose a light box that is rated for 10,000 lux and that the light source is placed within two feet of your face when in use.
- **Stay Active Inside & Outside**: Try online workout videos, take a short walk outside and don’t forget there are some great outdoor winter activities such as snowshoeing or cross-country skiing.
- **Take a Break from Television, Smartphones & Social Media**: Unplug from the constant stimulus of social media and news feeds and find a good book to read.
Tlingit & Haida and USDA Forest Service Sign Agreement for Indigenous Guardians Program

Tlingit & Haida and the USDA Forest Service have signed a long-term partnership agreement supporting the creation of an Indigenous Guardians program for Southeast Alaska.

The five-year agreement awards up to $300,000 of federal funding and, through collaboration, will support a variety of projects and programs connecting community-led indigenous stewardship, technical knowledge, conservation science and natural resource management of the national forest system and adjacent lands throughout Southeast Alaska.

Tlingit & Haida and the Alaska Region Forest Service entered into the agreement to ensure the integration of diverse perspectives into activities and efforts associated with shared stewardship to bring new capacity to watershed restoration efforts; adaptation planning to ensure integration of diverse knowledge into vulnerability assessments and adaptation efforts; heritage to provide assistance in monitoring and protecting heritage sites and resources; and subsistence to increase information sharing and opportunities for public and tribal involvement related to the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

“We recognized that the tribes are the land’s first stewards, conservationists, and multiple users of the Tongass National Forest,” said Dave Schmid, Alaska Regional Forester. “Through this agreement, we will continue to enhance our collaboration and identify priorities to meet the needs of the people in our communities who depend on forest resources for food security, health, and sustainable economies.”

A network of partners will continue to build the capacity of the Indigenous Guardians program and identify priorities and future visions that promote shared leadership by tribes and other indigenous entities. Current partners under the program include Hoonah Indian Association, Organized Village of Kake, Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Sealaska Corporation, Southeast Sustainable Partnership, Spruce Root, Nature Conservancy, Ecotrust and the Alaska Conservation Foundation.

“We have been inspired for years by the work of the Coast Funds, Coastal First Nations, Coastal Stewardship Network, and Indigenous Guardians programs in the First Nation territory of the north coast of British Columbia and Haida Gwaii. This agreement with the Forest Service recognizes the critical role and inherent sovereignty of tribes in all aspects of stewardship of our homelands and waters and importance of a co-management governance structure to monitor, protect, restore and manage our natural and cultural resources to ensure our customary and traditional way of life for our future generations.”

- President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson
This spring, Tlingit & Haida will establish its first greenhouse under the Tribe’s vision to create a tribal community garden and food sovereignty. Based on an initial award of $90,000 in funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to purchase a greenhouse, Tlingit & Haida’s Native Land & Resources (NLR) department applied for and was awarded a $50,000 planning grant from the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF). The fund supports community-led efforts to increase access to traditional foods and bolster indigenous food sovereignty.

The greenhouse will arrive this coming spring and be established behind the Edward K. Thomas building located at 9097 Glacier Highway in Juneau, Alaska.

“With this being Tlingit & Haida’s first greenhouse, we are going to be looking for guidance from local experts on soil health, best gardening practices, storage and preservation, and composting,” said Lindsey Pierce, Environmental Specialist. “Our first year we are hoping to learn a lot so that we can eventually expand into a tribal community garden!”

For more information on Tlingit & Haida’s greenhouse project, contact the NLR department at deptnlr@ctthita-nsn.gov or 907.463.7186.

**Food Security • Sustainability • Sovereignty**

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### Elders Talking Circles

**HELD VIA ZOOM • 5:00 - 6:30 PM • JANUARY 7 - MARCH 18, 2021**

COVID-19 has left many feeling isolated from their loved ones and community. Tlingit & Haida’s Wellness Court, in partnership with the Elders program, invites all tribal citizen Elders to join them for a weekly talking circle on Thursdays beginning January 7, 2021. The talking circles will be led by Lyle and Kolene James and provide a safe space to connect, share and participate in cultural activities.

For more information or to register, contact: Ann Stepetin, Family Service Worker 907.463.7131 • astepetin@ctthita-nsn.gov

**Promoting Connection to One Another and Culture**

The COVID-19 pandemic has left many of us isolated from our loved ones and community. Tlingit & Haida’s Wellness Court, in partnership with the Elders program, invites all tribal citizen Elders to join them for a weekly talking circle on Thursdays beginning January 7, 2021. The talking circles will be led by Lyle and Kolene James and provide a safe space to connect, share and participate in cultural activities.

In light of the pandemic, the talking circles will be held virtually via Zoom. Participants may join by electronic device (laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc.) or by calling in by phone.

**Registration Deadline:** December 31, 2020

For more information or to register, contact: Ann Stepetin astepetin@ctthita-nsn.gov 907.463.7131

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### Sign Up for Tribal eNews

Help us reduce the Tribe’s paper consumption and print/postage costs by signing up to receive news from Tlingit & Haida via email! Join other tribal citizens and friends who have subscribed to receive our newsletter, press releases and other news on the Tribe’s activities and events.

To sign up, please contact:

**Communications**
Office of the President
9097 Glacier Hwy. • Juneau, AK 99801
Toll Free: 1.800.344.1432 ext. 7368
Direct: 907.463.7368
communications@ctthita-nsn.gov

To view past newsletters, press releases or eNews, visit our website at www.ctthita-nsn.gov.
Special Statement from President Peterson

This year has been challenging for us all to say the least. We have all been impacted by the Coronavirus in some way. Many of us have experienced feelings of isolation, fear, anxiety and financial hardship. As if it wasn’t enough, our hearts were also quelled as we watched our country become even more polarized. For some of us, it has been difficult to feel peace, joy and hope this holiday season, but we must take the time to reflect back, cherish the smallest of silver linings and remember what we have overcome and accomplished so we can step into a new year.

What will you remember about this year? I will remember the resiliency of our Tribe that quickly adapted to using technologies in new ways to continue to serve our tribal citizens as well as govern and fulfill our constitutional mandates. I will remember our tribal citizens who fiercely protected their families and communities and our hard-working staff and parents who navigated the challenges to support our children’s virtual education. I will remember the formation of our Tribal Emergency Operations Center which established its emergency response presence in Southeast Alaska, deployed COVID-19 community response kits to 21 communities and stepped up to provide on-the-ground support to a community in distress. I will remember through this experience how important it is to take care of each other and that we need each other and are stronger together.

I am proud of the leadership of our Executive Council and Delegates and the work of our Tribal Emergency Operations Center and staff. I am honored to have them by side as we continue to move the Tribe forward. Their hard work and dedication have proven that nothing is impossible as we navigated uncharted territories to keep our tribal citizens, communities and employees safe.

We have proven our resiliency many times throughout history and we will get through this too. With a Coronavirus vaccine on the horizon, the pandemic will soon take its place in our distant memories. It’s hard to know what this looks like since we are all still living it, but we must all continue to work together to overcome this pandemic and stay focused on the safety of our people and communities.

As we near the end of 2020, let us all remember what we are grateful for despite the pandemic. It is the healing salve many of us need right now. Find hope, be kind and give thanks even if it’s hard.

On behalf of Tlingit & Haida, Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa to our tribal citizens and friends! I am grateful for the opportunity to work tirelessly for you and wish you all a healthy, joyful holiday season and new year!
TANF–Child Welfare Coordination Grant Awarded

On October 6, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced the award of $1.8 million in TANF–Child Welfare Coordination grants to eight tribes and tribal organizations including Tlingit & Haida.

The grant awards demonstrate models of effective coordination of Tribal TANF and child welfare services provided to tribal families at risk of child abuse or neglect. The projects selected for funding are tailored to meet the needs of each tribe and aim to coordinate services to:

- Improve case management for families eligible for assistance from a tribal TANF program,
- Provide supportive services and assistance to tribal children in out-of-home placements and the tribal families caring for such children, including families who adopt such children, and
- Provide prevention services and assistance to tribal families at risk of child abuse and neglect.

Using a “system of care” model, the Tribal Family & Youth Services department, in collaboration with the TANF department and Tribal Court, will develop and fine tune internal policies and procedures, improve current prevention strategies, and develop and implement a culturally-relevant early intervention case management services component to support the needs of TANF families who are at risk of becoming involved with the state’s child protective services (State of Alaska Office of Children’s Services).

The grant will provide $225,000 in funding each year over a five-year period.

Follow Us on Social Media

Social Media has proven to be a valuable tool in sharing information on Tlingit & Haida’s programs, services and activities. We are pleased to share that the Tribe’s Facebook page has grown to nearly 14,000 followers, Instagram has surpassed 3,500 followers, and Twitter is approaching 750 followers. Please help us continue to expand the Tribe’s social media reach by “liking” and “sharing” our posts!

IAK Youth Group Awarded Best Radio Show

Congratulations to our Ixsixán Ax Kwáan (IAK) youth group and KTOO who were awarded the Alaska Broadcasters Association’s Goldie Award for Best Radio Show for their podcast “Just Because it’s Normal, Doesn’t Make it Right”! The podcast addressed racism and solutions to racism in Juneau.

For the past year, KTOO Public Media staff have provided mentorship to IAK youth on media production projects including podcasting and radio programming.

The IAK youth group is part of Tlingit & Haida’s Native Connections program which focuses on providing space for the youth to develop culturally-based social, emotional, mental and spiritual skills to become healthy and resilient.

For more information on the program, contact Will Kronick at wkronick@ccthita-nsn.gov or 907.463.7168.

Congratulations to KTOO and Our Youth!
TEOC Responds to Haines Disaster

On December 2, 2020, the community of Haines was hit by flooding and several landslides following record rainfall. When Tlingit & Haida learned of the landslides, the Tribal Emergency Operations Center (TEOC) called an emergency meeting to determine how the Tribe could help respond to the disaster. It was not known at the time how many tribal citizens had been impacted, but Tlingit & Haida knew that it was important to step up and offer assistance regardless.

TEOC personnel quickly mobilized and worked late into the night to gather essential emergency response supplies (i.e., clothing, food, water, bedding, and toiletry kits) and equipment to be transported the following day on the landing craft Front Runner. Emergency Operations Administrator Corey Padrón and Field Worker Ivan Williams dispatched to Haines on the Coast Guard’s Jayhawk helicopter while other TEOC personnel traveled by landing craft.

Upon arrival in Haines, the TEOC personnel immediately set to task unloading and prepping all emergency response supplies to aid the families evacuated and displaced from the landslides, assess the community’s needs and organize cleanup efforts to essential areas such as the airport and other flooded staging sites.

While in Haines, the TEOC worked closely with Chilkoot Indian Association (CIA) to organize a system of command to integrate into the unified command system which allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional authorities and responsibilities to work together effectively. After three days of emergency ground support and working directly with CIA, the TEOC felt confident that all essential support systems were in place to return to Juneau and provide remote assistance as needed.

In addition to providing direct emergency response, the TEOC also launched a fundraising effort to help the community of Haines. To date, Tlingit & Haida has received over 500 monetary donations totaling over $50,000 for Haines.

Make a Donation to Support Haines: www.ccthita-nsn.gov/info/news
85th Annual Tribal Assembly
Cont. from Cover

A total of 25 resolutions were submitted by Delegates and Tlingit & Haida Community Councils addressing support for congressional legislation, transboundary mining and rivers, marine highway transportation funding issues, public health care systems and data, climate change, and other important matters. Thirteen resolutions were adopted under the consent calendar and 12 were deferred to the Executive Council for consideration at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

During the State of the Tribe Address, President Peterson discussed the Tribe’s continued work toward better serving tribal citizens, strengthening our sovereignty and improving the economic condition of Tlingit & Haida through business and economic development. In the past three years, Tlingit & Haida has established four new social enterprises (Sacred Grounds Café, Smokehouse Catering, Sacred Shine Auto Detailing, and Little Eagles and Ravens Nest [LEARN] Child Care) to provide employment and training opportunities to tribal citizens in partnership with Tribe’s 477 programs. The unrestricted funds generated through these businesses, along with the government contracting work of Tlingit Haida Tribal Business Corporation and its subsidiaries, will strengthen the Tribe’s economic sovereignty and ability to expand services to tribal citizens residing outside of Southeast Alaska. President Peterson also reported on the Tribe’s 86-acre Kowee subdivision and newest business, Southeast General Contractors.

Reports were also heard from Tlingit & Haida’s Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Development Officer, Tlingit Haida Tribal Business Corporation, outgoing Emerging Leader and standing committees (Audit, Finance, Judiciary and Enrollment).

Elections were held for President, Vice Presidents (VP), Chief Justice, Emerging Leader, and Delegate/Citizen of the Year. President Richard Peterson was re-elected to another two-year term. Catherine Edwards (1st VP), Will Micklin (2nd VP), Rob Sanderson Jr. (3rd VP) and Ralph Wolfe (6th VP) were all re-elected to the Executive Council while Tasha Hotch (4th VP) and Delbert Kadake (5th VP) were newly elected. Other election results: Lisa Lang was unanimously elected to serve a four-year term as Chief Justice, Simon Friday was elected as the 2020-2021 Emerging Leader and Cindy Leask was elected as Delegate/Citizen of the Year.

This year’s Large and Small Community Councils of the year went to Anchorage for Large Community Council of the Year and San Francisco for Small Community Council of the Year.

“We are proud to have hosted our first virtual Tribal Assembly,” shared Tribal Assembly Lead Coordinator Helene Bennett. “We experienced some obstacles, however, Delegates and staff maneuvered through them with grace and patience. We all learned a great deal to make improvements should we need to host another virtual Tribal Assembly. Congratulations to our Tlingit & Haida elected officials!”

For an overview of the 85th Annual Tribal Assembly, including presentations and resolutions, visit our website at www.ccthita-nsn.gov/government/assembly/events.

Tribal Assembly Theme:
“Our People, Our Land, Our Purpose”
Preserve our sovereignty, enhance our economic and cultural resources, and promote self-sufficiency and self-governance for our citizens.

EPA Grant Awarded to Provide Emergency Preparedness Training to Southeast Alaska

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded Tlingit & Haida a two-year, $120,000 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement grant to help families plan, prepare and stay safe in an emergency or natural disaster.

The grant provides financial assistance to eligible organizations working on or planning to work on projects that address local environmental and/or public health issues in their communities using EPA’s Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model.

The grant awarded to Tlingit & Haida will be used to host a conference to help Southeast Alaska communities prepare for any natural disaster or emergency that may occur, especially if drinking water is not easily accessible. The event will be coordinated by the Native Land & Resources (NLR) department and held via Zoom.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks’ Homeland Security and Emergency Management program will provide trainings and presentations on emergency preparedness and Red Cross will provide presentations on potable water and what it means to be ‘Red Cross ready’. More presentations will be secured as the conference is coordinated.

For more information on the conference, contact the NLR department at deptnlr@ccthita-nsn.gov or 907.463.7186.