Tribe Prepares Workplace for Coronavirus

The Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is closely monitoring all communications from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health authorities on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as more and more cases are being reported in Alaska and around the country.

As an employer with more than 200 employees throughout Southeast Alaska, Tlingit & Haida has developed contingency preparedness and business continuity plans to ensure there are no interruptions to client services while safety measures are implemented for the health and wellbeing of its employees, citizens, clients and contractors, and to reduce the risk and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Tlingit & Haida's offices have closed to the public and a majority of staff are now working remotely. This decision was not made lightly, but was necessary as we continue to take the COVID-19 pandemic seriously.

“Tlingit & Haida’s number one priority is the safety of our tribal citizens and staff,” shared President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson. “As individuals and employers, we must all do our part to limit its spread. Now is the time to prepare and simple precautions and planning can make a big difference. Action taken now will help protect our employees and Tribe. Tlingit & Haida will take all necessary and appropriate steps as we continue to monitor the situation.”

Continued on page 15
Tribal Assembly Postponed Due to Coronavirus

Under its constitutional authority, Tlingit & Haida’s Executive Council voted to postpone the 85th Annual Tribal Assembly considering the evolving pandemic. The Tribal Assembly, which was scheduled to take place April 22-24, 2020 in Juneau, Alaska, will be rescheduled to a later date yet to be determined.

Article VII(1)(o) of Tlingit & Haida’s Constitution provides the authority for the Tribe’s governing body to enact resolutions, regulations and statutes to safeguard and promote the peace, health, safety and general welfare of the Tribe in conformance with applicable tribal or federal law. The decision of the Executive Council was adopted through resolution EC 20-11, entitled “Postponement of 85th Annual Tribal Assembly.”

In a memo sent to Delegates, President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson outlined several items that addressed resolutions, elections and deadlines. Delegate elections concluded on March 19, 2020; however, newly elected Delegates are not seated until Tribal Assembly. Therefore, Delegates listed on the 84th Annual Tribal Assembly roll call will remain in office until the newly elected Delegates are sworn in at the 85th Annual Tribal Assembly.

“This is a precautionary measure taken by the Executive Council to protect the health and safety of our Delegates, tribal citizens, staff and communities,” shared President Peterson in an email to Delegates. “We appreciate your grace as we navigate these uncharted territories.”

This year’s Tribal Assembly was to include the election of Tlingit & Haida’s President, Vice Presidents, Chief Justice, Associate Justice and Emerging Leader. With the postponement, President Peterson and the current Executive Council will remain the governing body of the Tribe until Tribal Assembly convenes and Delegates have the opportunity to vote.

The Office of the President will release revised deadlines for resolutions and elections once a new date for Tribal Assembly has been identified.

2020 Delegate Election Results

Congratulations to our elected Delegates! The general election of Delegates to the Tribal Assembly was held in each of Tlingit & Haida’s 21 registered communities.

Delegates are representatives of their community and are the governing body of Tlingit & Haida while Tribal Assembly is in session. Each Delegate will serve a two-year term and attend the annual Tribal Assembly to legislate for and govern, conduct and manage the affairs and property of the Tribe.

The number of Delegates per community is recalculated every two years based on the total number of tribal citizens registered to each community as of December 22nd per Tlingit & Haida’s Rules of Election. One Delegate is allocated for every 200 enrolled tribal citizens per community. This year’s election process resulted in filling 114 of 116 Delegate seats.

2020 Delegate Election Results: www.ccthita-nsn.gov/government/elections/results
Native Issues Forums Kick Off

Tlingit & Haida kicked off this year’s Native Issues Forum series on February 3, 2020 with emcee Jacqueline Pata welcoming everyone and introducing Juneau’s Legislative Delegation panel - Senator Jesse Kiehl, Representative Sara Hannan and Representative Andi Story.

Each lawmaker briefly talked about issues they are currently working on and how they hope to accomplish their goals.

The delegation all agreed that fixing the underfunded Alaska Marine Highway system is a top priority and reiterated their commitment to seeking solutions that maintain or increase ferry service to communities.

Senator Kiehl also shared that the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program will be a topic much discussed during this year’s legislative session to improve public safety in rural Alaska.

During the Q&A session, Representative Hannan spoke out against barrier licenses that preclude someone with a felony on their record from certain licenses. She said the laws that are encoded in statute don’t necessarily do what they’re intended to do.

Representative Story discussed House Bill 24, a bill she co-sponsored that would allow districts to hire language immersion teachers who are qualified to lead a classroom in an Alaska Native language but are unable to earn a full teacher certification. She also discussed a bill she plans to introduce that would increase the base student allocation by $30 million.

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Save Our Ferries Rally

On February 11th, over 100 people gathered outside the Alaska State Capitol building to rally in support of the Alaska Marine Highway System which is a critical link for many communities and an integral part of Southeast Alaska’s transportation system.

President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson spoke during the rally and shared, “From the Tribe’s perspective, enough is enough. Our communities are the most affected and the marine highway is the lifeblood of Alaska.”

Several legislators also spoke at the rally including Senator Jesse Kiehl and Representatives Sara Hannan, Andi Story and Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins.
Will Ware Promoted to Chief of Project Development

Submitted By: Office of the President

Tlingit & Haida is pleased to announce the promotion of Will Ware to Chief of Project Development.

In this new capacity, he will oversee current projects such as Tlingit & Haida’s Cultural Immersion Park, land development of the Kowee Creek subdivision, and startup of the Tribe’s new construction company Southeast General Contractors. He’ll also provide broad oversight of the Tribal Transportation and Business & Economic Development departments, as well as the Tribe’s social enterprises – Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall, Little Eagles and Ravens Nest (LEARN), Sacred Grounds cafés, Sacred Shine Auto Detailing and Smokehouse Catering.

“In the years that Will has served as Tribal Transportation Manager, he has proven his ability to oversee complex projects and navigate and build needed relationships,” said President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson. “I have full confidence in his leadership to develop the Tribe’s projects.”

Will served over six years as manager of the Tribal Transportation department which administers the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) for Tlingit & Haida and the Organized Village of Saxman.

“I am honored to accept this new administrative role within Tlingit & Haida,” shared Will. “I will continue to move Tlingit & Haida forward as we work on projects that support the Tribe in its goal to secure economic sovereignty and create workforce development and employment opportunities for our citizens.”

Will previously served as the chair for both the Inter-Tribal Transportation Association and National Congress of American Indians Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and as a member of the Alaska Marine Highway Reform Project Steering Committee, Governor’s Community and Public Transportation Advisory Board, and Governor’s Tribal Advisory Council.

Will (I-gei’l Eesh) is of the Raven moiety and Ta’akdeintaan clan. He was raised in Petersburg, Alaska by his mother Patricia Svetlak (Chanaat Tlaa) and grandparents Billy (Sagooch) and Martha (Kaatsu Waa) James where Tlingit culture, values and traditions were a part of his everyday life. Will and his wife Christy have four sons - Evan, Adam, Brandon and Billy.
Tribe Welcomes Child Welfare & Tribal Child Support Attorneys

Submitted By: Office of the President

Tlingit & Haida is pleased to welcome Child Welfare Attorney Holly Handler and Child Support Attorney Brent Mulvaney.

Through an agreement with Alaska Legal Services Corporations (ALSC), Holly will represent Tlingit & Haida in State of Alaska child welfare cases to enforce the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and represent the Tribal Family & Youth Services (TFYS) department in tribal court cases. Although she will not represent family members directly, she’ll support the Tribe’s ICWA staff who advocate for the best interest of tribal families and children in foster care. She will also advise TFYS regarding child welfare program development and legislation that impacts tribal families.

“It is such an exciting time to work with the talented and energetic team at TFYS,” shared Holly Handler. “I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of the strong advocacy work that Tlingit & Haida is providing families and children.”

Holly served as the supervising attorney for the ALSC’s Southeast offices for 13 years, representing low-income clients in housing, health care, public benefits, elder law and domestic violence cases. She has also represented Alaska tribes and tribal organizations in matters regarding sovereignty and child protection, and represented Tlingit & Haida in the successful Alaska Supreme Court appeal to recognize tribal jurisdiction over child support matters with former Tribal Child Support Unit (TCSU) Attorney Jessie Archibald.

Holly received her Law degree from Harvard Law School and Bachelor’s degree from the University of Chicago. She is the proud mother of twin boys.

As the new Tribal Child Support Attorney, Brent will represent the Tribal Child Support Unit (TCSU) in its interactions with tribal and state courts and work on the implementation and development of law and policy that will best serve the interests of tribal children.

“One of the best things that any advocate can do is help clients to reach points in their lives where they can best advocate for themselves and those around them,” shared Brent. “In working with Tlingit & Haida, I hope to contribute to this end by helping to strengthen the bonds between children and their families, which I hope will allow them to thrive and grow together.”

Brent holds a Juris Doctor of Law from Seattle University School of Law, a Bachelor’s degree in Philosophy from the University of Washington, and an Associate of Arts degree in Philosophy from Edmonds Community College.

He previously served as a legal intern for the Administrative Law Clinic at Seattle University School of Law, writer and executive editor for the American Indian Law Journal and judicial clerk for Tulalip Tribal Court.

Brent resides in Juneau, Alaska with his partner, Regina, and her nephew, Gage. In the time that he is not working or studying, Brent enjoys hiking, writing and drinking coffee.
Gill Net Prep & Hanging Knots Workshops

Submitted By: Office of the President

Tlingit & Haida was pleased to partner with Sealaska Heritage Institute in co-sponsoring free gill net prep and hanging knots workshops in Angoon and Hoonah, Alaska in February. A total of five nets for each community were produced during the workshops with supplies purchased by the Tribe’s 477 Division.

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa to instructors Thomas (Sonny) Williams Jr., Walter Lindoff II and organizer Mick Beasley (Sealaska Director) for sharing their knowledge so these communities can be equipped with new gill nets for the coming sockeye subsistence salmon season!

“I always looked at a net and wondered how many fish it would catch,” said Mick. An Angoon Elder responded, “I wonder when I look at the net how many families it will feed.” “It makes me understand the importance of this project,” said Mick.

A gill net is a single sheet of net, floating in the water that is supported by a cork line. It is weighted down by a lead line that is sewed along the bottom of the net. These nets are a football field long or 300 feet. The idea is for salmon to swim along the net and turn into the netting, twisting and turning to get away. Since sockeye are a salmon that like it up near the surface, these nets are shallow at 12 feet deep.

Looking forward, communities and families will benefit at harvest time. Mick hopes to expand these free net workshops to include beach seines and that schools will consider establishing sustainable food programs where youth can learn to build nets for use within their communities. Long live the Knots.
Elders Valentine’s Day Dance
Submitted By: TFYS

The Tribal Family & Youth Services (TFYS) department’s Elders program held their third annual Valentine’s Day Dance on February 13th at the Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council Building. Over 100 guests smiled, laughed and danced the afternoon away to songs from the “Golden Years”. The Elders were joined by Juneau Police Department’s Lieutenant Krag Campbell and Police Officers Ken Colon and Sean Ahshapanek, State Legislative Aide Eric Carrillo, Juneau Assembly Members Greg Smith and Alicia Hughes-Skandijs, and TFYS staff.

In addition to dancing, Elders were treated to a lunch, learned Tlingit Valentine’s Day words and phrases, smiled for photos under the balloon arch, and took home a cedar bark carnation handmade by Kitty Eddy.

“This was the most fun I’ve ever had during the day,” one Elder excitedly said. “I can’t wait for next year!”

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa to all of the volunteers and our fun boogie-woogie dance partners! Sigóowu Ixsixani Yagiyee!

Elders Door Dash
Tribal Family & Youth Services…brightening the days of our Elders

To help hold our Elders up during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tribal Family & Youth Services (TFYS) department through its Elders program launched “Elders Door Dash” in March to deliver lunches and care packages to regular participants in the Elders program.

The Elders Door Dash was a huge success and a lot of fun. TFYS shared they very much appreciate their staff and the support received from the Office of the President and Tribal Court in bringing joy to our Elders. One Elder was so happy to see a thermometer in their bag with the Tlingit words Xhat yaneekw written on each of the thermometers...“I’m feeling sick”.

Elders Valentine’s Day Snap Shots
Community Drive for Food & Sundries

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa (Thank You) to all who donated to our Community Drive for Food & Sundries to support rural communities affected by the loss of ferry service. Through these donations, thousands of pounds of food have been distributed!

A lot of people have come together to make this drive a success. Super Bear IGA has been an incredible partner! They’ve been collecting, sorting, packaging, and delivering donations to shipment destinations and even Airlift Northwest donated one of their medical jets to deliver 651.5 lbs of supplies to Gustavus. We also want to thank our other partners: Angoon Community Association, Angoon Senior Center, City of Gustavus, City of Pelican, City of Tenakee, Fred Meyer, Hoonah Indian Association, Hoonah Senior Center, OfficeMax, and Organized Village of Kake.

Although Tlingit & Haida’s offices are currently closed to the public, donations are still being accepted at Superbear IGA and Fred Meyer. Monetary donations to assist with shipping costs can be made by calling 907.463.7703.

Practice Based Coaching

Submitted By: Head Start

Tlingit & Haida Head Start is moving in the direction of providing ongoing and wholistic support for the students and families they serve. In doing so they recognize, honor and appreciate their teachers whose invaluable work makes a difference in the lives of Head Start children and families.

Laine Rinehart, Head Start Mentor Coach, is happy to announce their Practice Based Coaching (PBC) method using the Teachers Learning and Collaborating (TLC) model. This system, in conjunction with ongoing professional development, will give teaching teams the opportunity to hone in on best teaching practices and perfect methods already in use in their classrooms. This aligns with Head Start performance standard 1302.92 (C) which states, “A program must implement a research-based, coordinated coaching strategy for education staff...”

Using this new method, three Head Start sites are receiving in-depth support, guidance and reflective time to focus on a teaching practice they would like to see thrive in their classrooms. This methodology will concentrate on both the teaching teams and individuals to empower teachers to make the best possible impact on their classrooms!

As a mentor coach, Laine is providing on-going communication and training to these teams to best support them in their goals. The TLC model launched in February and will run through May 2021.

“It is our hope as a program that ongoing professional development will result in strong, dynamic teaching teams and the best possible outcomes for our children and families,” said Laine. “I look forward to working with these teaching teams and the program as a whole.”

Head Start Extends Classroom Closures

On March 20, 2020, the State of Alaska issued COVID-19 Health Mandate 008 which suspends public and private schools through May 1st. Following these guidelines, Tlingit & Haida Head Start has extended its closure of all classes through May 1st.

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa (Thank You) for bearing with us as we get through these times together.
Tlingit & Haida’s Third Vice President (VP) Will (Yaan Yaan Eesh) Micklin recently participated in the 2020 Yukon First Nations (YFN) Climate Action Gathering at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada, in support of YFN’s leadership, citizens and partners uniting around the challenge of climate change. The gathering facilitated knowledge sharing and elevated the voices of youth, Elders and traditional knowledge keepers as they explored climate change solutions held in ancestral teachings for resiliency, and self and collective reliance.

The gathering included presentations from youth and Elders on a shared future, a discussion about renewable energy solutions happening in communities and a presentation on the draft strategy for “Our Clean Future”. Breakout sessions discussed the climate and environment initiatives happening in communities and covered topics on Transforming Our Governments; Feeding Our Families; Empowering Our Children & Tomorrow’s Leaders; Stewardship & Caring for Our Relations; Resilient Adaptation to Change and Revitalizing Our Traditional Trade & Skill Economy.

A strategic session focused on signing the YFN Declaration on Climate Action (CBC news article: tinyurl.com/qssf4av) concluded the event.

While attending the gathering, VP Micklin was interviewed on CBC Radio where he discussed the gathering, and Tlingit & Haida’s enrollment process and Tribal Identification cards for eligible inland Tlingits residing in the Yukon Territory. To listen to the interview, visit: tinyurl.com/uv6cnuu.

Smokehouse Catering Wins at BaconFest

Congratulations to Smokehouse Catering’s Pastry Chef Kathy Parks and her team who recently took 1st Place in the Sweet category at BaconFest!

Kathy, Paula M. Phillips and Coty Alana Davis whipped up a delicious Bacon Crusted Apple Pie Cheesecake to take home the prize. Way to go Kathy, Paula and Coty!

Gunalchéesh, Háw’aa to Juneau Glacier Valley Rotary Club for hosting BaconFest and congratulations to this year’s winners:

- 1st Place Savory: Forno Rosso (The Drunken Piggy Pizza)
- 2nd Place Savory: The Moose Lodge (Bacon Risotto w/Braised Pork Belly)
- 1st Place Sweet: Smokehouse Catering (Bacon Crusted Apple Pie Cheesecake topped w/Bacon Caramel & Cinnamon Whipped Cream)
- 2nd Place Sweet: Sandpiper Cafe (Bourbon Bacon Jell-o Shot, w/Bacon Whipped Cream & Candied Bacon Stick)
- 1st Place Professional’s Choice: V’s Cellar Door (Pork Fat & Bacon Infused Chocolate w/Bacon Cannoli Cream)
Reentry & Recovery Joins BIA Recidivism Reduction Initiative

Submitted By: Reentry & Recovery

Tlingit & Haida was selected as one of just eight other tribes nationwide to work within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Recidivism Reduction Initiative (RRI) to address the high rates of recidivism in Indian Country. Recidivism refers to “the tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend”. The State of Alaska is seeing a reduction in recidivism for the first time in many years (down to 59.9%). Unfortunately, this reduction is not reflected in the Alaska Native population which still sees a recidivism rate of almost 75%.

In 2014, BIA’s Office of Justice Services (BIA/OJS) created the Diversion to Reentry Division (DRD) within the Tribal Justice Support Directorate to address the need for reducing recidivism in tribal communities. From this division came the RRI, funded to identify and serve groups of individuals incarcerated at adult and juvenile detention facilities in Indian Country who are at high risk for relapsing into criminal behavior.

As part of RRI, Tlingit & Haida will receive intensive technical assistance and access to a data infrastructure specifically designed to assess risk, need, and interventions in justice-involved Alaska Native/American Indian populations. The data collection software system (GAIN-ABS) will allow the Tribe to gather a more complete picture of strengths and deficiencies in systems and programming to establish more appropriate and effective interventions. As part of RRI, the Tribe has direct support from the BIA DRD, the technical support of the software developers and access for 15 users in the GAIN-ABS system. Tribal Court is in the process of joining the initiative in order to include youth and wellness programs in the collection effort.

“Addressing recidivism begins with acknowledging the disproportionate incarceration rates of our people,” said Reentry & Recovery Manager Talia Eames. “It is my hope that having access to the tools that RRI is providing will give us more insight to reducing recidivism for our indigenous population.”

Second Reentry Simulation Held

Submitted By: Reentry & Recovery

Tlingit & Haida’s Reentry & Recovery department held another successful Reentry Simulation in Juneau, Alaska on January 30th in partnership with the Juneau Reentry Coalition and Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. This hands-on event provided community leaders, lawmakers, law enforcement and many others a chance to gain an understanding of the barriers and challenges faced by men and women reentering society after incarceration.

Participants were assigned character profiles during the simulation that created accurate portrayals of every institution that a person reentering society will meet and how many places a person must visit daily to fulfill the needs of the court. The simulation started with a visit to the probation officer’s desk to see what unique steps must be taken to comply with state rules and regulations and complete court-ordered tasks.

“Effective reentry programming is a focus this year as highlighted by Governor Dunleavy in his State of the State address,” shared Reentry & Recovery Manager Talia Eames. “As we go into this legislative session, it’s important for our policymakers to understand the barriers that our returning citizens face.”
On February 22nd, the Nurturing Parenting program celebrated its first graduation at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall with ten parents successfully completing the 10-week parenting program!

The Tribal Family & Youth Services and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) departments partnered to implement the parenting program. The program is delivered via group instruction and one-on-one home visits. Nurturing Parenting is an evidence-based curriculum that was developed by Dr. Stephen J. Bavolek, a recognized leader in the fields of child abuse and neglect treatment and prevention, in 1983. It is a family-centered trauma-informed initiative designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglectful parenting and child-rearing practices. The long-term goals are to prevent recidivism in families receiving social services, lower the rate of multi-parent teenage pregnancies, reduce the rate of juvenile delinquency and alcohol abuse, and stop the intergenerational cycle of child abuse by teaching positive parenting behaviors.

The Nurturing Parenting curriculum teaches parents nurturing skills to combat the five constructs of abuse and neglect which have been identified by Dr. Bavolek as inappropriate developmental expectations of children, lack of parental empathy towards children’s needs, belief in corporal punishment as a means of disciplining children, reversing parent-child family roles, and oppressing children’s power and independence. Several topics were covered, including “You are the Child’s First and Most Important Teacher,” Communication, Effective Discipline, Behavior & Attitude Management, Healthy Social & Emotional Living, Addiction & Its Effects on Family, Positive Community Connections, Problem Solving, Improving Self-Worth, Anger & Stress Management, and a “parent’s choice” topic. Parents also prepared presentations for the graduation ceremony and wrote essays about what they learned in the class and how they were going to implement it with their families.

Since one-on-one instruction is part of the program, space is very limited. Participants must be referred by providers and high-risk families are priority. Nurturing Parenting will be extending from 10 weeks to 12-16 weeks for subsequent sessions.

For more information on this program, contact Family Caseworker Crystal Christensen at cchristensen@ccthita-nsn.gov or 907.463.7144.

Air Force Lieutenant General Thomas A. Bussiere and his aides met with clan Elders and other tribal citizens in a historic meeting to discuss ways to reconcile and heal from the tragic military bombardments on the villages of Angoon, Kake and Wrangell that occurred in 1869 and 1882.

Alaska’s senior military leader also met with President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson. During the visit, Lt. Gen. Bussiere shared that he is working to establish a lecture series to train men and women serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and stationed in Alaska on Alaska Native history, culture and structures.

The 2020 Census is underway and Tlingit & Haida wants to make sure you and your household are counted!

Alaska Natives and American Indians were the most undercounted people in the 2010 Census. The results of the census determine how billions of federal dollars will be spent over the next 10 years, including funding for our communities and families.

The census survey takes just two minutes to complete. Follow these easy steps to support your community, tribe(s) and family:

- Start the survey at: www.my2020census.gov.
- If you are Alaska Native and live in a mixed household, list yourself as “Person 1” for Question 5.
- If you are Alaska Native, list the name of your tribe(s) or village(s) (not your regional or village corporation for Question 9).

The Tribal Family & Youth Services department’s Yéil Koow Shaawát (Raven Tail Woman) Phases I, II & III curriculum was selected as one of five tribal projects across the nation by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families to work with the Center for Native Children & Family Resilience (the Center).

This curriculum was selected for its tribally-relevant practice models, interventions and services that contribute substantively to child maltreatment prevention efforts and family resilience developed by and for Alaska Native and American Indian populations.

TFYS will partner with the Center to formalize, pilot, evaluate, refine, and export the family-focused, culturally-based counseling/treatment model. The model will address the complex issues of domestic violence, abuse, unresolved grief, historical, and intergenerational and related traumas impacting Native women within Southeast Alaska. Native spiritual healing practices are part of the curriculum, as well as healthy discussions on the traditional tribal values of Tlingit & Haida throughout each phase.

The Yéil Koow Shaawát curriculum was developed by Amalia Monreal, LCSW, and has been implemented for the past 10 years. The purpose of the curriculum is to build and enhance culturally based programs designed to strengthen community and family resilience.

This is a three-year project with the Center to become a promising, evidence-based curriculum. The Center made their first site visit to Juneau, Alaska on February 19-21, 2020. The women from Phase I participated in interviews with representatives of the Center to discuss changes experienced since beginning their participation in the group in November through February of 2019.

Tlingit & Haida was one of three tribes to receive a two-year Direct Title IV-E Planning grant. The $300,000 grant will be used to conduct a two-year planning process to explore the pros and cons of working directly with the federal government to receive Title IV-E reimbursement for child welfare related services or continuing to work with the State of Alaska under a pass-through agreement Tlingit & Haida has had for the past 20 years. The planning process will be conducted by the Tribal Family & Youth Services department in collaboration with the Tribal Court, General Counsel, ICWA Attorney and several other departments.

Two representatives from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Region 10 made a site visit to Tlingit & Haida to review and discuss the expectations of the two-year planning process.
Update from Tribal Child Support Unit

Submitted By: Tribal Child Support Unit

What is Child Support? Some may think it is just an agency after money. This thought can lead people to have a primarily negative view toward child support. But, child support is more than just what is collected. The Tribal Child Support Unit (TCSU) sees the primary purpose as supporting children.

Children have a legal right to financial support from both parents and, as a parent, you have legal responsibility to provide support both financially and emotionally. This is a concept that every parent understands, but not all parents are confident in their ability to provide the support they know their children deserve.

For example, when a non-custodial parent finds themselves in over their head with $60,000 in debt owed to child support arrears, it can seem like there is no hope or light at the end of the tunnel, which is exactly how Timothy Eide felt. After many years of struggling to provide his children with the support he knew they deserved, Timothy realized he had to “man up” and take responsibility. This realization meant pulling himself out of a negative place, staying positive and owning his responsibilities. He stopped avoiding and started making child support payments.

Timothy went from feeling powerless to gaining self-confidence. He was then able to walk with his head held high knowing he was making a difference and making a positive contribution to the well-being of his children. In Timothy’s own words, he shared, “The only way to make a change is to change. Change and I never got along. Now, it’s all about the little people. They didn’t ask to be born.”

With advice for non-custodial parents, Timothy shared, “If I have anything to say it’s don’t give up, keep going forward, keep moving, help them (kids), let them know there is a way out,”

Everyone has a story and everyone has a choice on how their story ends. TCSU is available to work with both custodial and non-custodial parents to do what is in the best interest of the child.

Phase I Women’s Group Graduation

Submitted By: TFYS

A graduation ceremony for the Phase I Women’s Group was held on February 19th at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall in Juneau. There were 15 graduates who “held each other up” in their healing journey.

The women’s group is a psycho-educational 12-week program that uses a culturally-infused, trauma-informed treatment curriculum. It incorporates Western therapies, Native American teachings, and Alaska Native culture and tradition with an emphasis on tribal values and creating an environment for healing from abuse and trauma. In Phase I, the women focused on the building blocks of healthy communication, stress reduction, physiology of anger, cycle of violence, anger as a secondary emotion, societal anger and more. Alcoholism, addiction and domestic violence, which are intergenerational issues impacting our people, are addressed throughout the three phases of the program.
VP Will Micklin Participates in NEBSA Annual Conference

Third Vice President (VP) Will (Yaan Yaan Eesh) Micklin recently participated in the National Educational Broadband Service Association’s (NEBSA) annual conference in La Jolla, California. During the conference, he assisted President Richard Chalyee Éesh Peterson with the planning of the March 2-3, 2020 meeting of Alaska tribes, the Office of the Governor, the Denali Commission, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Regional and village ANCSA corporations, and MuralNet, a non-profit company assisting tribes, that will demonstrate the opportunity in deployment of broadband radio spectrum in Alaska villages through individual tribes, as well as regional and state-wide Native consortiums.

VP Micklin has advocated for 20 years for access to high-speed broadband service and the internet for all Native communities to serve needs in education and language, healthcare, public safety, governance and economic development. He has over two decades of service working with the FCC and Department of Interior Tribal Broadband Advisory Committees to achieve the goal of ensuring broadband services to all tribes that are affordable, protected, quickly deployed, easily maintained and available now.

The Tribal Priority Window is a unique opportunity for tribes in rural areas to bridge the “digital divide.” The 2.5 GHz EBS spectrum is suitable for both mobile coverage and fixed point-to-point uses and, depending on a tribe’s needs, it can play an important role in the deployment of broadband and other advanced communications services in villages.

EBS is a “mid-band” spectrum ideal for starting a rural wireless Internet network. A signal in this range has great propagation and penetration characteristics with high throughput over long distances. Since licenses are required, the networks have a guarantee of reliable operations without worry of interference from unlicensed spectrum. The network equipment is low cost and easy to install and manage.
Tlingit & Haida, in partnership with the Denali Commission and State of Alaska, co-hosted a conference to bring Southeast Alaska tribes together March 2-3, 2020 in Juneau, Alaska to discuss the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) priority to give mid-band spectrum access to rural communities.

The FCC announced the application window in February 2020 for federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native villages to apply for the 2.5 GHz band for free before any commercial auction. If secured, Alaska tribes would be able to control the right to broadcast over an entire spectrum of radio broadband. As reported by the FCC, this band is the single largest band of contiguous spectrum below 3 GHz and can be used for broadband internet connection and other advanced communication needs.

“What’s unique to Alaska is all (2.5 GHz) spectrum is unassigned,” shared Third Vice President Will (Yaan Yaan Eesh) Micklin during the conference. “So eligible tribes may make applications for all of the spectrum. It’s more than sufficient for a radio broadband spectrum.”

To utilize the mid-band spectrum for internet service, whether through satellite or fiber-optic cable, a community would have to partner with local communication networks. Laying fiber-optic cable for internet service is expensive so tribes are looking at the spectrum for internet via satellite.

The Rural Tribal Priority Window will close on August 3, 2020. Any remaining spectrum will be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

The following measures have been taken:

• Health & Safety Awareness posters have been placed at all building locations to remind employees and visitors to cover their mouth when coughing, wash their hands, stay home if sick, practice social distancing when necessary, and wipe down surfaces on a regular basis.
• All Elders program activities have been temporarily suspended to protect the health of our Elders.
• All travel out-of-state has been banned for employees until further notice.
• Alternative arrangements for face-to-face meetings are taking place via MS Teams and Zoom. In the event in-person meetings must take place, meeting participants will be seated six feet apart.
• All departments that administer client support services have been authorized to provide leniency to clients for mandatory case management meetings.
• Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness are instructed to stay at home and self-isolate to reduce exposure to clients and other employees until they are free of fever (100.4°F or greater) and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g., cough suppressants).
• Employees who have developed even a mild cough or low-grade fever (99.14°F or more) will be encouraged to stay home or work from home.
• Regular teleworking will be encouraged across the organization as needed to help keep the Tribe operating and employees safe.

For the latest information on COVID-19, please visit the World Health Organization (who.int/COVID-19), CDC (cdc.gov) and Alaska State Infectious Disease Program (hss.alaska.gov/dph).
Preserve our sovereignty, enhance our economic and cultural resources, and promote self-sufficiency and self-governance for our citizens.

John Hawkins Promoted to Tribal Transportation Manager

Tlingit & Haida is pleased to announce the promotion of John Hawkins Jr. to Tribal Transportation Manager. In this position, John will manage the day-to-day operations of the Tribal Transportation department which administers the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) for the Tribe and the Organized Village of Saxman, and collaborates with other tribal entities and local, state and federal agencies to determine needs and priorities for transportation systems.

“John’s experience and drive made him the logical choice to carry on the work of the Tribal Transportation department for Juneau and Saxman,” shared Will Ware, Chief of Project Development. “I’m happy John accepted this position and look forward to seeing the program’s continued growth under his leadership.”

TTP is administered through the Federal Highway Administration, Office of Federal Lands Highway, which allocates funds using a statutory formula based on tribal population, road mileage and average tribal shares. Tlingit & Haida currently has approximately 236 miles of TTP roads, 19 miles of roadways and .2 miles of parking lot inventoried.

“I’m honored to step into this management role,” shared John Hawkins. “Will Ware has been a great mentor for the past five years and I look forward to continuing the work of the Tribe to promote safe transportation routes that support the transit needs and economic and cultural activities of our citizens.”

John will graduate with a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in April. His Tlingit name is Kistwoo and he is Kaagwaantaan. He and his wife Grace Hawkins have two children – Cherie and John.