

September 11, 2022



Ilisagvik College
President Justina Wilhelm
PO Box 749
Barrow, AK 99723

Anpetu Waste Mitakuyepi (Good Day Relatives),

Thank you for your partnership and the work your institution is doing to holistically support students. As part of our June 30, 2022 year-end close, we reflect on our purpose and mission to support American Indian students and Tribal Colleges and Universities. During this past fiscal year, the American Indian College Fund was able to provide the following direct financial supports to Ilisagvik College and your students:

TCU Scholarships	\$92,000
TCU First Time College Going Scholarships	25,000
Full Circle Scholarships	39,271
TCU Summer Scholarships	22,148
Full Circle Summer Scholarships	1,175
Subtotal - Scholarships	\$179,594
NEH Endowed Cultural Preservation	6,028
Native Arts & Performing Arts Enrichment	25,000
TCU President's Fund Award	50,000
Endowed Unrestricted Operating Support	10,000
Total Direct Financial Support during FY 21-22	\$270,622

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Tammy Miller-Carlson at tcarlson@collegefund.org.

Wopila (We thank you!)

Sincerely,

Cheryl Crazy Bull (*Sicangu Lakota*)
President and Chief Executive Officer

OVERVIEW - AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

In the early 1970's the presidents of the tribal colleges formed the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in response to the need to work collectively toward the development of the tribal colleges. In 1987, the American Indian College Fund (College Fund) was created to generate greater support from the private sector, to give the tribal colleges a vehicle to solicit donations from the private sector, and to fund an endowment and scholarships for the students attending tribal colleges. Although incorporated in 1987, the American Indian College Fund was not staffed until late in 1989. Today, the American Indian College Fund serves all of the accredited regular member tribal colleges of AIHEC.

The College Fund's website is <https://collegefund.org/>. Because of a prior settlement with an organization with the same initials as the College Fund, you may see the College Fund referenced as A*CF in internal documents only. We never use the acronym AICF publicly. Our address is: 8333 Greenwood Blvd. • Denver, CO 80221 • P: 303.426.8900

The American Indian College Fund is a national organization with a crucial vision. It helps the tribal colleges with resources for infrastructure and programming and assists thousands of students with scholarships and leadership training. The College Fund will continue to have a substantial positive impact on Indian Country, one student at a time.

The information provided below is current as of August 2022. Please consult our website, contact Carrie Basgall, cbasgall@collegefund.org, or Cheryl Crazy Bull, ccrazybull@collegefund.org if you have any questions about the College Fund and its programming.

Mission Statement

The American Indian College Fund invests in Native students and tribal college education to transform lives and communities.

Vision Statement

The vision of the American Indian College Fund is for healthy, self-sufficient, and educated American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Transparency and Accountability

The American Indian College Fund's mission is important and worthy. It is a mission that demands that we achieve - and maintain - the very highest level of public trust and accountability. In our commitment to accountability and transparency, the College Fund complies with federal law to provide public access to our annual reports, audited financial statements and IRS Form 990s by annually posting these documents on our website:

<https://collegefund.org/about-us/press-media/>

The College Fund annually completes all requisite state registrations in addition to its annual corporate filing in the State of Colorado.

CHARITY WATCHDOG RATINGS

The American Indian College Fund meets all charity watchdog standards:

- Based on our IRS Form 990 for the fiscal year ended 6/30/2020, Charity Navigator, the nation's top charity evaluation system, awarded the College Fund a three-star rating. As noted on their website, the IRS is significantly delayed in processing nonprofits' Forms 990, and as a result, any updates to the Financial and Accountability & Transparency scores may be outdated and the overall rating may not be representative of current operations. Charity Navigator is requesting that donors check with charities directly for any questions related to these ratings areas.
- In September 2020, the College Fund was reaffirmed by the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance as meeting its 20 Standards for Charity Accountability for another two years.
- The College Fund earned the "Best in America Seal of Excellence" from the Independent Charities of America (also known as America's Best Charities). Of the one million charities operating in the United States, fewer than 2,000 organizations are awarded this designation.
- In July 2021, the College Fund received a "B+" rating from *CharityWatch* (formerly the American Institute on Philanthropy) and is the sole Native American organization classified under its index of top-rated charities.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

In September 2012, the American Indian College Fund welcomed Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull as its new President & CEO. Cheryl whose Lakota name *Wacinyanpi Win* means "they depend on her," has worked in education since 1981. Her experiences in education are primarily with higher education, and K-12 with Native American institutions. Dr. Crazy Bull is experienced with community and organization development with strong skills in strategic planning, assessment and evaluation, public relations, and fundraising.

Dr. Crazy Bull served as the President of Northwest Indian College (NWIC), a regional tribally controlled institution located on the Lummi Nation in Washington, from 2002 until 2012. During her tenure, the college became a four-year degree-granting institution and completed substantial campus improvements, including building seven new buildings as part of a capital campaign. Prior to joining NWIC, Dr. Crazy Bull served as the superintendent of St. Francis Indian School and in several teaching and administrative capacities at Sinte Gleska University.

Cheryl served four years as the Chair of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium Board along with an additional four years as member-at-large of the AIHEC Executive Committee. She has served on the boards of the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, and currently serves on the board of IllumiNative, an organization that focuses on a widespread accurate narrative about Indigenous people, Native Ways Federation, a national association of Native non-profits, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Organization (SHEEO) Equity Advisory Committee, and the Brookings Institution Board of Trustees.

Executive Team Personnel

Cheryl Crazy Bull (*Sicangu Lakota*), President & Chief Executive Officer

Carrie Basgall, Executive Assistant & Corporate Secretary

Dave Pacella, Website Manager

Aleks Humeyumptewa is a team member in ORSP who communicates directly with the TCU Presidents on behalf of the Executive Office

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Our Resource Development Department is comprised of five teams, who all work together to create meaningful, productive relationships with donors and potential donors:

The **Marketing** team uses broad communication and outreach strategies (digital communications, texting, digital advertising, email, organic social media platforms, websites, PR, PSA campaigns) to increase awareness among the general population to acquire new donors and cultivate those donors who prefer to engage via online/digital channels.

The **Special Events** team provides logistical support for both virtual and in-person fundraising and awareness events, such as the EATSS culinary event and the virtual Indige-Bration concert celebration.

The **Major Gifts** team focuses on those donors who give annual, cumulative gifts of \$10,000+, including corporations, foundations, and individuals. The team consists of major gift officers (\$50,000+), associate major gift officers (\$10,000-\$50,000), development coordinators, a corporate relationship manager and grant writer/researchers. Each fundraiser has a portfolio of people (who are either giving at a specific level or have the capacity to give at a specific level) to cultivate and grow their relationships with the College Fund. The Major Gifts Team also works in partnership with the Programs, Research & Evaluation and Student Success Services departments to secure foundation funding for program-specific needs within the College Fund.

The **Planned Giving** team develops strategies specific to potential planned gift donors, including targeting those individuals with the greatest likelihood of making a planned gift, cultivating those people who have told us they are making a planned gift, developing specific communications strategies (special newsletters, personal visits) and oversees the administrative responsibilities required for those planned gifts that are received.

The **Direct Response** team focuses on acquiring and cultivating donors giving gifts up to \$10,000, using traditional communication channels, including direct mail, telemarketing, and email. This team also oversees prospect research and portfolio placement as donors grow in their relationships and giving, as well as responds to the thousands of incoming communications we receive from donors with questions, comments, requests, etc.

Our Resource Development team uses a combination of the donor journey approach (developing strategies to meet people where they are at) and the moves management cycle (identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward/renew), in developing an intentional plan to engage and strengthen productive relationships with our constituents. We have developed a complex but effective omni-channel approach to donor communications and cultivation that finds our donors where they are, whether they like to read written newsletters, hang out on Facebook or Instagram, talk on the phone, tweet, watch YouTube, read mail, text and more. This approach is the foundation to the incredible growth in donors and revenue the College Fund has experienced over the past several years.

Resource Development Team Personnel:

NancyJo Houk, Chief Marketing and Development Officer
Dana Bunker, Executive Assistant and Special Events Coordinator
Jamie Schwartz, Senior Director of Major Gifts
Karen Cheung, Marketing Director
Emi Deguchi, Senior Planned Giving Officer
Elissa Regan, Senior Manager of Direct Response
Aaron Smith, Assistant Director of Major Gifts
Natasha LaRose, Major Gifts Officer
Amy Hartenstine, Major Gifts Officer
Janna Stieg, Senior Major Gifts Officer
Dan Khouri, Associate Major Gifts Officer
Liana Epstein, Associate Major Gifts Officer
Elizabeth Russell, Manager of Corporate Partnerships
Mackenzie Parker, Sr. Major Gifts Grants Manager
Vacant, Grant writer/Researcher
Ted Downum, Grant writer/Researcher
Vacant, Manager of Marketing and Data Analytics
Heather Sabo, Prospect Research and Management Associate
Vacant, Coordinator Community Engagement
Aly Thomas, Senior Constituent Services Coordinator
Kim Williams, Constituent Services Coordinator
Amita Manandhar, Senior Coordinator Web Marketing and Graphic Design
Vacant, Coordinator E-marketing and Social Media
Justine Leininger, Corporate Partnerships Development Coordinator
Jessie Carlson, Planned Giving/Major Gifts Development Coordinator
Katie Keating, Event Planner (part-time)

Current Agency Partners:

The College Fund also relies on the tools and talent of several agency partners:
Amergent/Amergent Portfolio - direct mail acquisition and renewal production and mailing, CRM tool and management
VeraData - acquisition lists, modeling, digital acquisition
Vladimir Jones - all digital strategies, website, insights/research
Wieden+Kennedy - PSA campaigns
Synergy/Gateway Communications - mid-level donor program, telemarketing, SMS texting
Engaging Networks - e-marketing tool
Zuri Group - e-marketing strategies and tool usage
Good United - Facebook challenge
RKD - donor analytics and segmentation
Aspire - Prospect Research consulting firm

PROGRAMS

The American Indian College Fund Programs Department supports tribal college and university capacity to develop or expand academic and community-based programming to support student success and completion.

Place-Based Tribal Colleges and Universities Programs:

- Supported by the College Fund and **administered by Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)** - with the purpose of: **growing institutional and program capacity - on a continuum of work** - to address student, faculty, institutional, and tribal nation needs
- Strengths-based, Indigenous approaches to programming shaped by broader issues faced by TCUs and their communities
- Focus on **co-visioning, planning, systems development/implementation, evaluation, storytelling, and sustainability** seeking to strengthen TCUs in areas of need
- Build TCU capacity to leverage successful programming and impact

Programs Include:

Indigenous Early Childhood Education

- Supports teacher attainment through program alignment and articulation, a community of practice, pathways development, parent and family engagement/empowerment, enhanced child development pedagogy, and storytelling
- Eligible TCUs have the opportunity to improve teacher education programming, build strategic partnerships supporting professional development and dissemination of knowledge, conduct family and community outreach, and engage in national conversations about ECE best practices and lessons learned
- Grounded in the five IECE domains: integration of Native language and culture, strengthening early childhood teacher quality and instruction, strategic and intergenerational family and community engagement, successful pathways from Pre-K to K-3 education and beyond, and children's development skills (cognitive and non-cognitive)

Native Arts & Culture

- Support to 27 tribal colleges and universities located in the Midwest, Southwest, and Pacific Northwest
- Support for eligible TCUs to enrich, enhance, and expand traditional and contemporary Native arts knowledge and skills at their institution and the communities that they serve
- Curriculum Development and Enhancement, Community Based Learning and Sharing, Research and Sharing and Innovation grants

Environmental Stewardship

- Support for the 10 TCUs located in the Northern Great Plains to develop Indigenous environmental and natural science focused capacity building programming, support place-based research, and build strategic partnerships
- Community of practice - TCUs within and beyond the Northern Great Plains are engaged in knowledge and resource sharing, working to develop a network amongst each other and planning/developing opportunities for collaboration towards environmental stewardship practices considerate of the next seven-generations

High School Equivalency

- Supports students in pursuit of their GEDs or high school equivalency
- Supports TCUs in implementing GED/HSE programming, resulting in strong student success outcomes and creating pathways toward college persistence and completion, and career aspirations
- Supports TCU GED/HSE programs in improving instructional approaches, sharing programming practices and experiences across TCUs, and creating increased visibility and resources for students

Computer Science

- Primary focus supports faculty hiring, professional development, and development/enhancement of computer science programs and curriculum at 4 selected TCUs
- Also supports TCU-identified needs for creating a computer science culture at their institutions and within their communities through place-based community engagement projects, K-12 pathways such as dual credit courses, and by supporting students through industry partnerships
- Selected TCUs participate engage in a Community of Practice. TCUs not currently receiving support through the initial *TCU Computer Science Capacity Building Grant* are invited to attend knowledge and resource sharing, networking, and informational webinars on topics related to computer science

Native Teacher Education

- TCU grantees and the College Fund will learn about community informed barriers and opportunities to entering the teaching profession
- Support for 5 tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) with current K-12 Teacher Education degree programs
- Support for TCUs to implement or enhance a pathway starting with pre-education: recruiting and admission into teacher education programs, education program retention, through attaining state certification, and community of practice

Indigenous Visionaries

- Place-based and experiential Women's leadership program supporting fellows and mentors in building skills, knowledge, and opportunities for them to become strong Indigenous leaders in their communities
- Support includes fellow and mentor stipends, funding for a community-based project, virtual training and professional development, and an annual convening

LGBTQ2+

- Conducts outreach to better understand how TCUs are situated in their support, knowledge, resources, or lack of around our LGBTQ2+ relatives
- Hosts trainings and workshops to educate College Fund staff and TCUs
- Supports consultants and learning partners to engage in this work and develop educational tools to better support TCUs in this space

Reentry to Education for Native Young Adults

- Support for formerly incarcerated youth
- Identifies trainings and workshops to educate College Fund staff and TCUs

Strengthening Workforce Development Opportunities and First-Generation Workers Across Indian Country

- Supports programming community-based best practices in workforce development

Programs Team Personnel:

Emily White Hat - ewhitehat@collegefund.org

Veterans, Tribal and National Outreach, Workforce Development, and Reentry to Education

Aleks Humeyumptewa - ahumeyumptewa@collegefund.org

Assistant to the Vice President of Programs

Bridget Skenadore - bskenadore@collegefund.org

Native Arts and Culture Programs and Veterans

Kai Teague - kteague@collegefund.org

Environmental Stewardship Programs, LGBTQ2+ Initiatives

Hannah Gonzales - hgonzales@collegefund.org

High School Equivalency programming and Indigenous Early Childhood Education

Erin Griffin - egriffin@collegefund.org

Indigenous Early Childhood Education, Indigenous Education, and Indigenous Visionaries

Gerry Himmelreich - ghimmelreich@collegefund.org

Computer Science Initiative

Leona Antoine - lantoine@collegefund.org

Native Teacher Education, LGBTQ+ Initiatives, and Indigenous Visionaries

Cassandra Harden - charden@collegefund.org

Indigenous Early Childhood Education

RESEARCH AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Research and Faculty Development is responsible for conducting internal and external research initiatives across TCUs and within the College Fund. This team is also responsible for envisioning, planning, implementing, evaluating, and reporting on Program Initiatives seeking to strengthen TCUs' work aligned with the College Fund Strategic Goals: TCU Capacity Building, Scholarships and Student Success, Public Awareness, and College Fund Capacity and Sustainability. The current work of the Research and Faculty Development team:

MELLON MASTERS FELLOWS – Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Mellon Master's Fellowship was initially a five-year grant funded in 2013 and is now part of the three-year (2018-2021) Mellon *Growing Their Own* Fellowship grant currently funded through the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to provide fifty fellowships to tribal college faculty or staff to earn a master's degrees while continuing to work at their TCUs.

In total, 43 fellowships were awarded from a diverse and competitive pool of applicants. To date, 31 fellows completed their degrees. Fellows represent 21 TCUs

MELLON GRADUATE HOURS PROGRAM – Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Beginning July 2018, the Mellon Graduate Hours Program is funded through the Andrew W. Mellon to assist 40 faculty members (full-time and adjunct) at TCUs seeking to complete up to 18 graduate credit hours in the fields they teach or will be teaching to meet new accreditation requirements for highly qualified faculty. Priority is given to faculty at TCUs accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and fellowships are awarded for a period of up to three consecutive semesters for each candidate; the amounts received will be based on candidate's application, funder qualifications, and review committee.

As of August 2021, 35 fellows received funding from this program, of those:

- 27 fellows have completed the program
- 8 are on track with course completion.
- 2 applications are under review for Fall 2021 start

MELLON CAREER ENHANCEMENT FELLOWS – Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Mellon Career Enhancement Fellowship program is funded through the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation since 2004 to TCU faculty to complete terminal degrees. The fellowships are awarded to TCU faculty who completed all required coursework and comprehensive exams, the funding and mentoring support the fellows through the writing stage of their dissertations. The grant was renewed in 2018 and will fund eight TCU faculty members with one-year fellowships to complete their dissertations over the three-year grant cycle. In total, 40 of the 51 Mellon fellows completed their terminal degrees. Mellon Career Enhancement Fellows represent 22 TCUs

NYSWANDER-MANSON AND BLANCHARD FACULTY FELLOWSHIP

The Nyswander-Manson and Blanchard Pre-Dissertation Faculty Fellowships are one-time grants awarded to TCU faculty members working on their doctorate degrees or terminal master's Degrees. The Nyswander-Manson Fellowship is offered to faculty members working at TCUs with four-year degree programs. The Blanchard Fellowship is available to TCU faculty members from both two- and four-year TCUs. The fellowships are designed to assist with tuition, travel expenses, and research prior to the dissertation stage. In addition, the

Nyswander-Manson Fellowship is designed as a pipeline for the Mellon Career Enhancement Fellowship program. Since 2005, 54 pre-dissertation fellowships were awarded to faculty from 16 TCUs

Investing in Tribal College Faculty: Building a Culture of Research for Transformative Change— *Henry Luce Foundation*

The 2022-2023 Investing in Tribal College Faculty grant focuses on cultivating Native intellectual leadership and capacity at TCUs through activities designed to support TCU faculty. The grant fosters the intellectual leadership within TCUs by supporting faculty through the following activities: 1) hosting the annual TCU Faculty Convening; 2) publishing the annual TCU Research Journal (TCURJ); 3) hosting an annual Writing Retreat for manuscript development; 4) offering Professional Development stipends for conference attendance; and 5) cultivating mentoring opportunities with senior Native faculty. The main purpose of this project is to expand research opportunities for TCU faculty in pursuit of establishing a culture of research across the TCU system of postsecondary institutions.

AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND TCU SUSTAINABILITY - LUMINA FOUNDATION

The Lumina Foundation funded a 30-month \$600,000 collaborative exploratory research project investigating four topic areas: AIAN College Affordability; Institutional Barriers to Student Success; Post-Secondary Credentialing Process and Credential Quality Assurance; and TCU Sustainability.

The project began in December 2020 and will conclude in September 2022 (we received a four month no cost extension to complete the grant). Four literature reviews, one per topic area, were completed in May 2020. A TCU sustainability and college affordability convening was held in February 2021 to launch the grant. An additional TCU convening was held in May 2022 to share findings with TCU partners. Two AIAN College Affordability survey instruments were developed. Data collection began in October 2020 and was completed in April 2021. We gained IRB approval for the College Affordability portion of this grant in August 2020 and gained NWIC IRB approval in October 2020 and Tribal Nations/TCU IRB approval soon thereafter for the remaining three strands of research, namely TCU Sustainability, TCU Barriers to Student Success, and TCU Credentialing and Quality Assurance. Data collection (namely interviews and institutional documents) began in May 2021 and was completed in October 2021. We are nearing the end of our analysis across the across the three strands of research. Data analysis for The College Affordability Study was completed in September 2021. An executive summary was completed in Summer 2022 and was made public on August 18, 2022. The AIAN College Affordability Study can be accessed here: <https://collegefund.org/press-releases/four-national-native-scholarship-providers-release-national-study-on-college-affordability-for-indigenous-students/>

Partners in the project include: The National Native Scholarship Providers Working Group (NNSPWG) will utilize their respective population of AIAN scholarship recipients (both former and current) to develop a sample to describe AIAN college affordability. Working group members are: American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES); American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC); and Indigenous Education, Incorporated. (IEI)

COLLEGE FUND CAPACITY BUILDING - MARGARET A. CARGILE PHILANTHROPIES

The College Fund received funding for a two-year \$600,000 grant from the Margaret A. Cargile Philanthropies in August 2020 to allow the College Fund to develop and integrate two new organization wide databases. This grant also received a no-cost extension and will be completing in September 2022. The first database was integrated by the Resource Development team and will serve the activities associated with fundraising information and data. The second database is being designed to replace the CiviCore scholarship database and will serve as the hub for scholarship recipient data, financials related to scholarship funding, student level data, and programs data. The larger purpose of the College Fund Database is to eventually provide a solid platform from which the organization and staff members can demonstrate impact of our work with native students, TCUs, and the communities we serve with scholarships and programs.

SPENCER FOUNDATION RESEARCH GRANT - SPENCER FOUNDATION

The College Fund and the National Native Scholarship Providers (American Indian Science and Engineering Society, American Indian Graduate Center, and Indigenous Education, Inc.) received a 5-year \$1M grant from the Lyle Spencer Foundation on August 1, 2020. The grant will allow the College Fund to continue its line of work with the IHEEI work led by Cheryl Crazy Bull. More specifically, we will work with consultants to develop institutional assessments to measure effectiveness of AIAN student support. Additionally, we will work with the NNSP to develop a database to share organizational data aimed at efforts to develop student success measures to help understand better student pathways from college entrance to completion. The work in this grant is just beginning but promises to have far reaching impact.

Building Montana Tribal College Transfer Pathways for Student Success - ECMC Foundation

The initiative will strengthen transfer pathways between the Montana TCUs to support Native student completion and employment in two-high demand fields: healthcare and teacher education. The proposed initiative will build progressive education pathways from certificate to associate to baccalaureate degree attainment across the Montana TCUs through 1+1 and 2+2 articulation agreements. More broadly, it will increase the capacity of the Montana TCUs to collectively support Native student success, on-time transfer, and degree completion and will also harmonize the Montana TCUs' transfer policies, procedures, and student supports.

Strengthening Postsecondary Career Pathways across North Dakota's Tribal Colleges: Braiding Workforce Development and Native Student Success - ECMC Foundation

This initiative addresses a gap in the current capacity of the five North Dakota (ND) ND TCUs to systematically meet workforce needs in ND for high-demand occupations in healthcare. The initiative presents an opportunity for the College Fund and ND TCUs to develop a cohesive system to deliver robust academic programming, stackable credentials, and coordinated career supports to prepare Native students to meet workforce needs in healthcare across the state.

IMPACT EVALUATION

Impact data demonstrates how positive social change is occurring through the College Fund's work. The College Fund defines impact evaluation as an adaptive four-part process that

includes collecting data to inform program design; defining specific and measurable goals and objectives for programming; identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) for programs and broader initiatives; and systematically collecting data to assess program progress and outcomes. Specifically, the College Fund's evaluation work: 1) facilitates program learning, discussion, and story-telling; 2) assesses if programs are achieving their goals and objectives as intended; 3) tracks information on key performance indicators; and 4) captures high impact practices and opportunities to improve and inform future program design. Impact evaluation is integral to measuring how the College Fund's work creates positive social change for the Native communities, tribal colleges and universities, and Native scholars it serves. The College Fund practices culturally responsive impact evaluation, premised on respect, reciprocity, relevance, relationships, and responsibility.

Dr. Rebecca Garvoille, who leads the College Fund's impact evaluation work, continues to collaborate with College Fund staff, TCUs, and partners to create a more evidence-based and clearly articulated impact story about how the College Fund's programming.

Research and Faculty Development Team Personnel

David Sanders, Ph.D., (*Oglala Lakota*), VP for Research Evaluation and Faculty Development

Rebecca Garvoille, Ph.D., Senior Learning and Evaluation Officer

Crystal Loudhawk-Hedgepeth (*Diné*), Research Associate

Erik Dutilly, Ph.D., *Research and Evaluation Associate*

Heidi Normandin, Program Officer–Faculty Development

Raj Moona, Database Administrator and Analyst

STUDENT SUCCESS SERVICES

The College Fund provided over \$10.1 million in scholarships and other student support to nearly 4,000 students in 2021 - 2022. The Student Success Services (SSS) team administers two overarching scholarship programs, the **TCU Scholarship Program** and the **Full Circle Scholarship Program**. Within these two overarching scholarship programs are a few hundred unique named scholarship programs. Recipients generally must be enrolled members of a federal or state recognized tribe or be descended from an enrolled parent or grandparent. Tribal college students may receive awards from both programs unless individual college policy prohibits this. Detailed recipient reports are provided to donors by the Resource Development team to assist with donor stewardship. (www.collegefund.org/scholarships)

- The **TCU Scholarship Program** focuses on empowering the tribal colleges to make their own scholarship awards to provide access to higher education. Approximately \$4.6 million is being disbursed in 2020-21. The amount varies each year depending on the colleges' Indian Student Count (ISC) and the amount of additional funding available. Scholarship recipients are selected each semester by the tribal colleges based on specific eligibility criteria communicated by the College Fund.
 - Funds are given to each AIHEC Regular Member tribal college. One half is disbursed for each semester.
 - Guaranteed funding: \$100,000 per year to schools with an ISC of 100 or more; \$1,000 per ISC/per year for smaller schools
 - Additional funding (when available): disbursed only to schools with an ISC of 100 or more
 - Students apply through the College Fund's online scholarship application and database tool
 - Scholarship recipients are selected by each tribal college based on donor requirements
 - TCUs provide the College Fund with recipient information through the on-line scholarship application and database tool
 - Up to \$7,000 per year may be used for scholarship administrative expenses
 - Up to \$7,000 per year may be awarded to non-native students enrolled at the college
 - Approximately 3,500 students awarded annually

- In the **Full Circle Scholarship Program**, recipients are selected through a scoring/selection process at the College Fund. Approximately \$4.2 million was disbursed in 2020-21. Students at tribal, public, and private non-profit colleges are eligible to apply. Awards are often multi-year scholarships.
 - Students apply through the College Fund's online scholarship application and database tool
 - Applications are scored by external reviewers
 - Recipients are determined by College Fund staff based on score and donor requirements
 - Primarily for undergraduates and certificate/diploma students but also includes some graduate level scholarships
 - Yearly award amounts per student vary from \$1,000 to \$100,000

- Funds are sent to the college's financial aid office for disbursement to the recipients
- Approximately 900 students awarded annually

The College Fund's **Student of the Year** award is considered part of the Full Circle Scholarship Program, even though applications and recipient selections are managed by the tribal colleges. Each TCU President is asked to nominate its institution's Student of the Year every January.

The **Pechanga Wi'áaşal (Great Oak) Future Leaders Scholarship** program provided approximately \$1.4 million of the total Full Circle Scholarship disbursement for FY 2020-2021. This scholarship supports enrolled members of California federally recognized tribes with limited or no gaming.

College Access and Success: These programs provide information and support services to students intended to create a college going culture in Native communities and increase access, persistence, and success. Programming includes career exploration and experiences to help students identify and progress in a college pathway leading to a career that is meaningful to them.

- **High School to College programs:** SSS works with approximately 80 high schools and multiple TCUs with the objective to increase college going and first-year experience success rates. Programming includes college prep, summer bridge programs, college application support, financial aid education and FASFA support, college exploration and college fairs, dual enrollment programs, and first-year experience holistic supports.
- **Transfer College Admissions programs:** Financial and technical support is provided to select 2-year TCUs to implement a transfer prep program to help increase the number of transfers to 4-year institutions.
- **Strategic Enrollment Management:** The SSS department currently leads programming with 5 TCUs where they complete data analysis, consider their colleges strengths and needs, and student and community needs, to develop a data informed enrollment and retention plan.
- **Student Coaching:** SSS coaches work directly with students in selected Full Circle Scholarship programs. Coaches also collaborate closely with TCUs to support students' holistic needs. Coaching includes academic planning and academic progression check-ins, helping students identify supports on their campuses (i.e. tutoring, financial aid, food banks, mental health supports, and career services), program implementation specific to each scholarship program, and supporting students with career exploration and readiness (resume and interview skills development, engaging with mentors and professionals, leadership development, and career and networking experiences).
- **Career Readiness:** SSS provides direct student supports and enhances TCUs abilities to provide these supports. Programming to students includes CONNECT, an on-line tool to support students in connecting with mentors and professionals and internship and career opportunities. SSS connects students with internships provided by our corporate partners, host internship and career fairs, provides webinars on various career sectors, and supports students with networking and professional conference opportunities. The College Fund provides financial and technical supports to select TCUs to develop and enhance their abilities to support students with career exploration, resume writing and

interviewing skills. The College Fund also supports select TCUs in enhancing their employer partnerships to better align college curriculum to support knowledge and skill development to best prepare students for career success, to provide student internships and other career experiences, and to provide employment opportunities for graduates.

- **Student Engagement and Communication:** SSS seeks to provide supports and opportunities to all TCU students and American Indian scholars at mainstream institutions. Scholars have access to all on-line resources which provide a vast variety of supports and information. Electronic newsletters and other communications are sent routinely. The College Fund also utilizes text messaging and social meeting to engage with and provide information and opportunities to American Indian scholars. Webinars are also routinely provided. Information and resources shared encompass a broad range including: scholarships provided by the College Fund and others, FASFA and financial literacy, college fairs, career fairs, student activism and leadership, census and voting, techniques and resources to support mental and emotional well-being, internships, resume writing and interviewing, arts and creative writing competitions, photo and video contests, student and TCU highlights, opportunities provided by other Native organizations, and many more.

Student Success Services Team Personnel

Tiffany Gusbeth (*Northern Cheyenne*) - Vice President of Student Success Services

Juan Ruiz - Scholarships Manager

Daniel Sauve (*St. Regis Mohawk*) - Senior Scholarships Coordinator

Currently Vacant - Scholarships Administrative Assistant

Kaylyn Flowers - Scholarships Administrative Assistant

Lisa Silverstein, Ph.D. - College Access and Success, Senior Program Officer

Jonathan Breaker - TCU Student Success Program Officer

Kelley Mitchell (*Diné*) - Student Success Program Administrator

Julio Barron - College Success Coach

Loyola Rankin (*Diné*) - College Success Coach

Adrianna Tso (*Diné*) - College Success Coach

Nicolette Weston (*Oglala Lakota*) - Transfer & Admissions Program Administrator

Sandy Packo (*Iñupiaq*) - College Readiness Program Administrator

Currently Vacant - College Readiness Coach

Erin Red Shirt (*Oglala/Sicangu Lakota*) - College Readiness Program Assistant

Jack Soto (*Diné/Cocopah*) - Career Readiness, Senior Program Manager

Amber Grant - Career Readiness Coach

Ben Molzhon - Student Engagement & Communications Program Administrator

Currently Vacant - Student Engagement & Communications Coordinator

Krystyna Cisneros - Student Success Services Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public Education's mission is to create awareness of the tribal colleges and universities and the mission of the American Indian College Fund. It does so through a multi-prong approach.

Public/Media Relations

The College Fund distributes press releases to media outlets, pitches stories, and arranges interviews with staff, students, student ambassadors, alumni, and TCU faculty and staff to mainstream, education, business, philanthropic, podcasts, and Native media channels for earned and placed media. Interview topics include equity in higher education, college affordability, culturally based education, Native visibility, and issues impacting our communities and students such as mascots, education funding, and more.

The College Fund also works to position team members at national education and equity conferences and to publicize participation at conferences, events, convenings. We also publicize team members' published articles, research, fellowships, honors, awards, and more.

The goal of all public relations is to ensure the visibility of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN) in higher education and the visibility of the College Fund, while giving the organization and the communities it serves access to and a voice in higher education issues. In addition to creating greater visibility of Native students, Native education, and the importance of access to an equitable education, we seek to position the College Fund and TCUs as national experts on Native education (in particular Native higher education). The public education team also creates and publishes special reports on issues impacting higher education.

Digital Media

The College Fund's main information portal is the web site at <https://collegefund.org>. Public education works with all teams to ensure that the web site meets measurable national expert and visibility goals with regards to information about the College Fund, our mission and history, blogs, and the College Fund's media outreach results.

The College Fund is also leading a national campaign, This is Indian Country, to bring greater public awareness of Native peoples, their history, and the land within the United States. The goal is to create a movement for Native American recognition, representation, and equity. The website for This is Indian Country is <https://thisisindiancountry.com>.

Social media is decentralized in the organization. The College Fund maintains the following active outlets:

- Facebook group for donors, American Indian College Fund at www.facebook.com/collegefund
- Facebook group for students, Native Scholars at www.facebook.com/nativescholars
- Twitter page (collegefund)
- The College Fund YouTube channel www.youtube.com/TheCollegeFund
- Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.com/thecollegefund/>
- Linked In <https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-indian-college-fund>
- Instagram <https://instagram.com/instacollegefund/>

Public Education Team Personnel

Dina M. Horwedel, J.D. - Director of Public Education & Communications

Colleen R. Billiot (United Houma Nation), Public Education Coordinator

OPERATIONS

The American Indian College Fund is headquartered in Denver, CO. The College Fund raises resources for the TCUs and Native American students and stewards all resources raised. The College Fund's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. The College Fund is audited annually and shares its annual audit and IRS tax form 990 on its website by October each year. The College Fund's annual report is typically available no later than December.

Some of the resources raised support an endowment fund that is a commingling of approximately 140 individual endowment funds. Endowment funds are invested with the intention of providing support through earnings for perpetuity. The College Fund's endowment portfolio is made up of many individual endowment funds that provide support for scholarships and other financial support for the TCUs. The total endowment portfolio is approximately \$75 million.

The College Fund utilizes an investment policy statement (IPS) to provide direction as to the investment of endowed funds and the disbursement of earnings. The IPS is approved by the College Fund's Board of Trustees and is reviewed at least annually. The current IPS provides an annual disbursement equal to the lesser of 4.25% of the three-year rolling average of each endowment fund's fair market value or 4.25% of the current year fair market value calculated on the fair market values on the last day in February.

The College Fund maintains high standards for efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and governance. We work within Board direct budget goals and seek to achieve high scores and acceptance by non-for-profit watchdog agencies.

Operations Team Personnel

Tammy Miller-Carlson, CPA - Chief Financial & Operations Officer

Cherylynn Tsikewa (*Zuni Pueblo*) - Assistant to the Chief Financial & Operations Officer

Steve Miller - Sr. Accountant

Currently Vacant - Accountant

Yasaman Parks - Accountant

Currently Vacant - Office Manager

Kevin Maier - Front Desk and Accounting Coordinator

Moustapha Fall - IT Services Manager

Michael Pupkin - IT Services Coordinator

Anna Luthens - HR Director

Currently Vacant - HR Associate

Megan Thoms - Data Services Manager

Sharon Hurley - Data Entry Specialist II

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July 14, 2022

LOSING GROUND



Photo by: Alan Sauer / NSM

Sen. Lisa Murkowski, at right in orange, talks with North Slope Borough Mayor Harry Brower about the coastal erosion situation in Utqiagvik on June 26.



Learning legacy

Ilisagvik College honors educator Akpik-Tiuk.

PAGE 2



Outer Coast

Lessons from a half century in a dynamic place.

PAGE 3



Next step

Administration releases draft environmental review of giant oil prospect.

PAGE 8

Point Hope ceremonial whale bones vandalized

Historic site marked location of ancient whaling feasts

ALENA MAIDEN
Arctic Sounder

Several Point Hope residents expressed frustration after the whale bones at the historical ceremonial site were vandalized last week.

The whale bones at the Old Town Oalgi Site near Point Hope marked the spots where residents once celebrated whaling feasts thousands of years ago. The City and the Native Village of Point Hope officials announced on July 8 that someone cut the bones. People with information about the incident were asked to contact the North Slope Borough Police Department.

"This news hurt our community and (we are) in shock that someone could do this to us," said former city mayor Daisy Sage.

The incident happened late Tuesday or early Wednesday, according to Steve Oomittuk, a long-time Point Hope resident and community leader. Oomittuk said he witnessed the bones cut and lying on the ground on Wednesday and said that "it was a sad sight to see."

"We are all pretty devastated. It hurts from the inside," said Oomittuk who was born and raised in Point Hope. Generations of his family have lived in the village, known as Tuldgaq in Inupiaq. "It really took a toll on the people, especially the elders,

In Utqiagvik, rapid erosion spurs urgent seawall construction

Army Corps working to fast-track design for rock revetment

ALENA MAIDEN
Arctic Sounder

Miranda Rexford-Brown stood on a cliff in front of the house her father built. The ocean was still partially bound by ice in late June, and the seaside wind frizzled Rexford-Brown's hair as she spoke about the coastline quickly approaching her home and the land beneath it giving to.

"It gets our window wet,"



Photo by: Alan Sauer / NSM

Miranda Rexford-Brown's family home in Utqiagvik is one of many that has been impacted by coastal erosion due to changing weather and ice patterns in the region.

See page 12, SEAWALL

See page 6, WHALE BONES

Ilisagvik: A place to study, a place to call home

College helps preserve Inupiaq culture

ALENA MAIDEN
Arctic Sounder

When Mary Jane Litchard came to Ilisagvik College, she felt more accepted and encouraged than ever before in the world of education.

Growing up in Utqiagvik,

Litchard was among the students who were punished when they spoke their Native language — a traumatic experience that made her feel shame for being Inupiaq. When Litchard showed interest in studying nursing, she was told her English was not good enough to be in that program. Later on, working as an elementary teacher, she learned about Ilisagvik College, loved that the courses the college offered were focused

on Inupiaq culture and decided to continue her education.

"I was so happy that our culture is finally going to be recognized," she said. "That's how I got myself all the way up to masters — starting here, in Ilisagvik College."

The only tribal college in Alaska, Ilisagvik College, is a place that offers hands-on educational programs and fosters culture preservation. From Inupiaq studies to

allied health, from construction to education, the college focuses on the needs of the North Slope communities and the unique challenges local students face. Soon, all these programs will be taught in a modern, environmentally sustainable building.

New campus is underway

The college currently operates

See page 7, ILISAGVIK

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ILISAGVIK

FROM PAGE 1

out of a 70-year-old building that was never meant to be a college, so college officials and architects are in the process of the pre-concept design of the new building. The new campus is going to consolidate operations in a single, modern campus and will expand services to all North Slope Borough villages by allowing for greater capacity, according to the college officials.

"The new college campus is so beautiful," said Asisaun Toovak, the external affairs coordinator at Ilisagvik College, looking at the draft of the building. "We're hoping we will be completed with a pre-concept design by July and, depending on funding, continue on with concept design."

To complete the pre-concept design, college officials are using the \$1 million they received from the North Slope Borough in 2018, Toovak said. They are continuously looking for funding to move forward to the next stages.

Designing a 91,300-square-foot college building in the Arctic has its unique challenges: architects need to take into account winds, temperatures and the environment, Toovak said.

The process is split into three phases: constructing the spaces for vocational

education, workforce development and maintenance first; then turning to the academic classrooms, wellness space, cafeteria and offices. The last stage would focus on constructing childcare facilities and student dormitories.

After the pre-design stage, the college officials and architects will move to the concept design. By then, they will need to know how many people the classrooms need to fit, what the dimensions of the desks and boards should be, and how much the electricity is going to cost. The college is working with different sources to obtain funding for the next stage.

During the pandemic, the process, which started back in 2016, slowed down.

"Our need was to continue to try to continue higher education and deliver that to our students," Toovak said. "Now that we're out of the pandemic where it seems a bit more normal, we've come back to" the pre-design of the campus.

While some funding was allocated to the project before the pandemic, now college officials and architecture need to rework the initial design of the facility, based on the changes in the budget that happened during the pandemic and on the reassessment of the college needs, for example. Toovak said that most of the classes offered at the college are hands-on, and it is important for the

college leaders to be able to offer these classes in a safe environment – for example, in spaces designed for teaching small groups of students where students can also physically distance.

"When we think about our pre-concept design, we want to keep the pandemic in mind," Toovak said. "We want to continue to think about being able to serve our students even during a pandemic and educate as many students as we can — safely"

Summer programs

Besides regular classes, the college also offers students summer camps in such areas as Allied Health, leadership, crafts, sports and STEM. The camps go from a few days to several weeks in duration, and many of them provide college credits and match the programs and classes offered during regular sessions at the college, said Simon Aina, student support coordinator.

"They fly in and then they learn about the college and the self, they love being around the atmosphere," Aina said. "A lot of our kids, they may graduate from high school and not go to college, but down the line, they end up saying, 'Hey, you know, I went to summer camp, and so I'll come to college.'"

Summer camps also help keep children busy and entertained during the summer months when oftentimes,

especially between cultural activities, there are not that many activities.

"It's filling that void of like, there's nothing to do for the kids," Aina said.

The younger children sometimes encounter homesickness when they attend summer camps. This is why camp leaders started offering shorter summer programs to help students adjust to the new environment gradually. They also prioritized including "traditional things from their home" in day-to-day programs, Aina explained.

"Nalukataq was great for a lot of our kids because a lot of our kids are coming from the villages and they love to be around the culture, so we try to incorporate it," he said.

Timothy Ferreira was in middle school when he first attended a summer camp at the college and since then, he attended the one on Allied Health, public safety, photography and Inupiaq culture. Now he is 25 and is teaching the Inupiaq language in Point Hope elementary school. One of his sisters, Lauren Ferreira, completed the leadership summer camp this June.

"I think it's good for the kids because they connect with each other and other cultures and traditions and identities," he said. "They unite. They form a connection with each other and with themselves."

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Ilisagvik College celebrates educator Akpik-Piquik

Event includes unveiling of portrait on display in lobby

Arctic Sounder

The Ilisagvik College Board of Trustees honored the life and educational legacy of Fannie Kuutuq Akpik-Piquik at their summer Board of Trustees meeting on June 29.

Akpik-Piquik was a beloved educator and cherished member of the North Slope community who died from cancer on May 14, 2021.

Over the years, she taught at Meade River School, Ipalook Elementary School, Barrow High School, and was an Associate Professor of Iñupiaq Studies at Ilisagvik College for 20 years.

The event included the unveiling of a portrait of Akpik-Piquik painted by Alaska artist Austin Parkhill, and remembrances by family members, colleagues and students.

Ilisagvik College board member Roxanne Brower presented a plaque to the attending family members honoring Akpik-Piquik's 40-plus years of educational service. Then college president, Justina Avu



Photo provided by Ilisagvik College

Family of Akpik-Piquik pose with the portrait painted by Austin Parkhill. From left, Ethel Kuutuq Burke, Stacy Qallut-aqsraq Burke, Chelsi Alaglaq Overby, and Robyn Niayuq Burke.

Wilhelm, and Dean of Administration, Nicole Manuluuraq Evans, unveiled the painted portrait to audible gasps.

In the remembrances that followed, Etta Pakak Fournier recalled enlisting Akpik-Piquik to help start the Iñupiaq Word of The Day program on KBRW Radio. Granddaughter Robyn

Niayuq Burke recalled that she dedicated her whole life to education and the Iñupiaq language and culture. Burke, who is the Executive Director of Human Resources at Ilisagvik, said, "When I came back to work at Ilisagvik it was like coming home because we grew up in these halls."

Jana Pausuraq Harcharek, a long-time colleague, described working with Akpik-Piquik to get two Iñupiaq Studies classes, "North Slope History, Language, and Culture," and "Iñupiat Land Use, Values, and Resources," accepted by the State of Alaska as part of the teacher certification program.

"It improved the quality of education in all the schools across the North Slope," said Harcharek.

Jerica Niayuq Leavitt (Aamodt), a former student and current Ilisagvik College Assistant Professor of Iñupiaq Studies, remembered Akpik-Piquik's kindness, even when correcting students, and her ability to see her students' innate gifts, such as when she told one student, "You have the hands of a seamstress."

Kimberlee Brent, another Ilisagvik College professor who took classes with Akpik-Piquik remembered her as, "The most enthusiastic [person], always open with a hug and a smile. Even when she was tired, she had more energy than anyone I ever knew."

Chief School Administrator for the North Slope Borough School District, David Vadivaloo, summed up Akpik-Piquik's approach, saying, "She was not teaching or transmitting Iñupiat Culture, she radiated it. She embodied it."

The portrait painted by Parkhill will hang in the Ilisagvik College lobby with a commemorative plaque. The lobby is open to visitors Monday-Friday 8:30-5.

[Tweet](#) [Recommend 14](#)

Arctic microbes get closer look by Ilisagvik students thanks to research grant

August 20th | Kendra Mack, Ilisagvik College

Ilisagvik College has recently received a second grant from the National Science Foundation Tribal Colleges and University Program (NSF-TCUP) for work studying microbes in the arctic tundra.

The \$200,000 two-year grant supports student research into the varieties and concentrations of microbes in the permafrost, soil, and vegetation in the tundra around Utqiagvik. Specifically, students are looking for pathogenic bacteria that may have consequences for human health as they are released by melting permafrost. Student worker Emily Weech describes it as, "hunting an animal you can't see."

Linda Nicholas-Figueroa, associate professor of biology and chemistry, is the principal investigator on the project. Apart from a year-long hiatus during the recent pandemic, the project has been ongoing for more than five years.

Students drive all aspects of the project, going out into the field throughout the year to collect soil and ice samples with a core drill. They then process the samples, isolating and culturing the bacteria, and extracting DNA. To identify the bacterial species, samples are sent out to professional biomedical labs for sequencing and analysis. Students then do further research on the properties of these bacteria.

Students are also tapped to present their findings at conferences, including the American Society of Microbiology annual meeting and the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS).

Two students, Daphne Mueller and Garrett Taylor, helped write the final report to the NSF for the first grant. Mueller and Taylor were dual credit students at Ilisagvik, taking college courses while attending high school at Barrow High School in Utqiagvik. Both are now undergraduate students at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF).



Ilisagvik College summer camp students James Toovak from Utqiagvik, along with Tyson Phillip, Anthony Ramos, and Jamie and Trinity Albrite, all from Akiak, help Mikhail Kanevskiy of UAF drill a soil and ice sample in the tundra outside Utqiagvik. - Photo provided

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[Anaktuvuk Pass Elder shows the art of making caribou face masks to two Iñupiaq Studies teachers](#)

An advertisement for Alaska Airlines. It features a blue background with a white outline of the state of Alaska. The text reads "Connecting Alaska, serving Alaskans." Below this is the Alaska Airlines logo, which includes a stylized "49" in a circle. At the bottom, there is a white button that says "LEARN MORE".

Facebook Activity

An advertisement for ESI TOUGH GENERATORS and HEATERS. The top part features the ESI TOUGH logo and the text "GENERATORS". Below this is a photo of a yellow generator unit. The bottom part features the text "HEATERS" and a photo of a yellow heater unit. The text "#1 heaters on the North Slope oil fields." is also present. At the bottom, there is contact information for Anchorage and Fairbanks, including phone numbers and addresses.

The first grant supported research into microbes that could influence plants and animals in ways that might affect the subsistence diet. Through the course of their research, students found a very direct link to health when they found *Mycobacterium simulans*. *M. simulans* is a mycobacterium that can cause symptoms that mimic tuberculosis but require a different course of treatment. The second grant continues this work, hunting for other pathogens or any changes in pathogen prevalence.

Nicholas-Figueroa emphasizes that they are still establishing a baseline and it is too soon to draw any conclusions. However, it is not too soon to see the impact the work is having on students. None of the students involved in the project had any prior research experience, but several have gone on to continued studies in biomedical research and other science-related fields.

"When I was in high school, I thought research was something for these people that were mega brainiacs," says Nicholas-Figueroa. "It's great that students get exposed to this, and they get paid."

Weech, who is Nicholas-Figueroa's current student worker, recently accompanied a half-dozen high school students out into the tundra with Nicholas-Figueroa, two meteorologists, and five UAF researchers, who are also funded by the NSF, on a field trip for the Arctic Perspectives in Climate Change and Sustainability camp. The group drilled two soil and ice cores and measured carbon and methane levels and ground temperature. Those cores will go back to the -80-degree freezer that Nichols-Figueroa was able to purchase with a previous grant.

Between the two NSF-TCUP grants and an earlier BLaST (Biomedical Learning and Student Training) grant through UAF, Nicholas-Figueroa has managed to transform space in a Quonset - that didn't have a safety shower or fire-proof benchtops when she arrived 12 years ago - into a science classroom suitable for postsecondary research and teaching. These days the lab has proper floors, benchtops, vents, and freezers, and is also equipped with digital microscopes, culture incubators, a hand-held DNA sequencing device, and a proper core drill.

Weech, who is a first-generation college graduate, moved to Utqiagvik for the tuition waiver she was able to get at Ilisagvik. She graduated in April of 2022 with a certificate in Indigenous education and an associate of arts degree in liberal arts and was on the president's list with a GPA of 4.0. Weech has been able to secure \$7,500 in additional grants from UAF to support her microbe research.

"I'm in love with my work," says Weech, "Every day I'm learning something new, and I get to use my passion. It would be cool if I had a bacterium with my name on it."

She hopes that she can impart to students that no matter where they come from, they "can make it happen if they have the passion."

For Nicolas-Figueroa, the best part is the "aha moment" for students.

"I'm not a microbiologist," she says, "This is something I do because I want the students to have the experience."

Tweet Recommend 53

Anaktuvuk Pass Elder shows the art of making caribou face masks to two Iñupiaq Studies teachers

September 2nd 10:25 am | Alena Naiden

The molds are carved into a face, and the caribou skin is processed and sewn over the mold. After the skin dries, you can add eyelashes, eyebrows, hair, beard or mustache, and an isigvik - or ruff.

This is the process of making a skin mask - a craft with a thousand-year-long history that served a variety of ceremonial and spiritual functions in Inuit and Yupik cultures. Now the craft is practiced by very few.

Earlier this month, Inupiaq Studies team at Ilisagvik College, Jerica Niayuq Leavitt and Natasha Eqagin Itta, traveled to Anaktuvuk Pass to learn from Elder Louisa Kakianaq Riley how to make caribou skin masks, according to the post from Ilisagvik College.

"Traditional knowledge is so important," Leavitt said to the Arctic Sounder. "Anaktuvuk Pass has always been known for the caribou skin masks. Very few people practice the art, and it is in need of being revitalized. Kakianaq is one of the few who continue to practice the art form."

One of the goals of the Inupiaq Studies program, Leavitt said, is to document various aspects of Inupiaq culture and "learn from Elders or community members, whether it's traditional stories or art forms, so that we can revitalize them and also use them in our classes."

When Leavitt and Itta came to the community, Kakianaq hosted them for a few days and taught them the process from start to end, Leavitt said.

"Kakianaq does beautiful, quality work, and we are ever so grateful she taught us what she knows," Leavitt said. "It was definitely not enough time, but it sure was an enriching trip."

Before going to Anaktuvuk Pass, Leavitt went on a walk to the Utqiagyik beach with her husband. He helped Leavitt find the right type of driftwood needed for the wooden mold.



A person holds a caribou face mask with thick eyelashes. The mask was made in Anaktuvuk Pass, the community with a long history of mask making art. - Courtesy of Ilisagvik College.

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An advertisement for ESI Power Systems. The top part features the company logo and the text "GENERATORS". Below this is a photograph of a yellow generator unit. To the right of the generator, it says "Alaska's largest manufacturer." The bottom part of the ad features the text "HEATERS" and a photograph of a yellow heater unit. To the left of the heater, it says "#1 heaters on the North Slope oil fields." At the bottom, the website "esialaska.com" is listed, along with contact information for Anchorage and Fairbanks offices.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Justina Wilhelm, President

THROUGH: Dr. Steven Zani, Dean of Academic Affairs

FROM: Benjamin Glover, Career & Workforce Director

DATE: 9/9/22

SUBJECT: Board Request to research previous Workforce Development work completed by former employee. Dr. Holloway

Justina Wilhelm et al.,

I was tasked to reach out to Dr. Holloway to assess previous WFD work completed during her time at Ilisaġvik College. I met with Ms. Holloway on August 31st and discussed the WFD work during her time at Ilisaġvik College. She asked that I prepare a document of what workforce and construction trades programs we offer that are certificates, non-certificate programs, and summarize a cross collaboration of North-Slope entities that the college has been working with the past 1-2 years.

We discussed a potential proposal that can most likely be conducted in house to perform a workforce/career development assessment. This would identify where are the jobs, who occupied the jobs and the employer needs, that will help provide the college with the needs of our North-Slope communities.

Dr. Holloway provided a preliminary proposal that will be reviewed internally. After we have time to meeting internally, I strongly see that we are doing a lot of the proposed assessments and would like to evaluate our current operations before committing to the assessment. Below are three factors limiting the value of a formal exercise at this time, and they listed below.

1. We are already conducting regular roundtables with the communities we serve. We have two scheduled for this fall already and will likely add more.
2. We have a staff built of primarily of people with significant North Slope experience
3. We interact with the companies we would be surveying daily.

With these factors in mind, we believe that we are already gathering the very information we would be seeking. That does not mean there isn't significant room for improvement in our department but would like time to assess. I would love to see how we could improve Workforce Development by doing any of the items listed below.

1. Improve the effectiveness of our instructors
2. Improve the depth of our training pool and the depth of topics our trainers can teach
3. Cultivate more affiliate instructor to broaden our reach without having to expend Ilisaġvik College resources

I look forward to continuing to assess the critical workforce needs that will support our mission and vision of Iḷisaḡvik College.

Thank You,
Benjamin Glover M. Ed.
Iḷisaḡvik College
Associate Dean of Career and Workforce Development

