

Sharing Our Pathways

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A newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative

Alaska Federation of Natives ♦ University of Alaska ♦ National Science Foundation ♦ Rural School and Community Trust

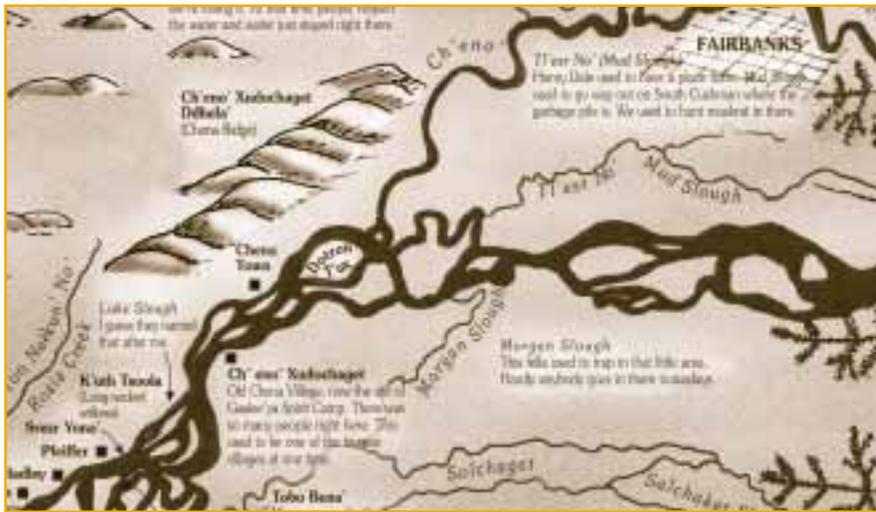
Blowing in the Wind

by Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley

There are messages for us, as a Native people, blowing in the wind that are older than any of our Native languages. I think one message is telling us that we can make change for the better in our lives through dedication, motivation, tenacity and traditional creativity to overcome the limitations of the current education system. This means that we educate our Native people in their Native languages and English to become articulate in both. This will enable them to think in their own worldviews for answers to their problems and exercise the means of control of the modern world to clearly and effectively articulate demands for change.

I use the tetrahedral metaphor as a way of trying to explain the synergistic process of keeping balance in one's life. The base is a triangle with the human, natural and spiritual worlds as the foundation of the worldview. I have read a book which analyzes the number three as a "breaking through to a world of infinite possibilities" (Brailsford, 1999). He further points out that three symbolizes creation and that one and two are the parents of number 3, the first born. If I think of it in this manner then the triune God of the Bible comes into mind. For the tetrahedral, it is the spiritual power

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A portion of the traditional map included with Howard Luke: My Own Trail.

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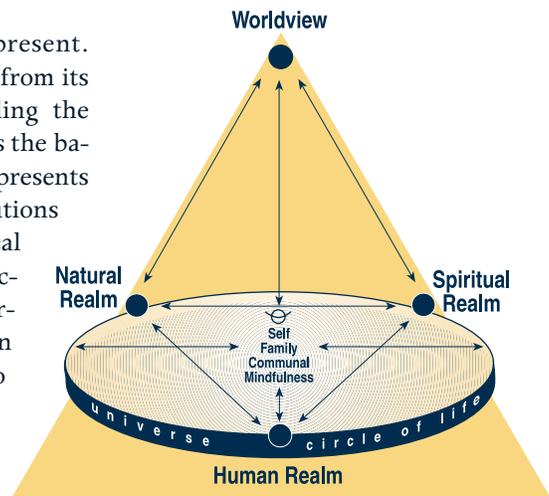
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that is eternal and omnipresent. Mother Earth is created and from its rocks comes all life, including the human being, thus serving as the basis of all life. This process presents infinite possibilities of solutions for overcoming a mechanical worldview that is so destructive to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It then behooves the Native people to pursue education diligently in their own thought world as well as in the disciplines of the modern world. This enables Native people to use their own problem-

solving tools as well as those of the mechanical world to effect change.

I have often said and heard that sense of place serves as the basis for identity and a home for the mind and heart. In some schools, students have been engaged in cultural mapping activities to identify the Native geographic names associated with the features of a particular place. This gives a cultural grid to place over the land, that provides order, meaning and stability to those who live on that land. To know place is to know oneself, which empowers us to do things with courage and determination.

I have experienced a process in New Zealand whereby Maori Elders were taken to landmarks of the Waikato traditional lands. They were reviewing a booklet that had been prepared citing important places, what had transpired there and myths associated with that place. A guide was appointed who gave a running dialogue of points of interest and what was known about them, which the Elders then critiqued. The process was very constructive as it entailed correction of pronunciation of place names and added information to what was already known that sometimes led to significant revisions to the name and what actually happened there.



The author's tetrahedral metaphor

This authentication process is needed as the Maori want to rewrite their history, not from the point of view of an outsider, but from within.

Wouldn't it be advisable for Alaska Native people to engage in a similar process? For urban areas such as Fairbanks, a group of knowledgeable Native Elders could be taken to various historical sites whereby the traditional Native name is given and the story told as to its use, occupancy, burial places of leaders, old migration trails, battle skirmishes, peacemaking, kinship, alliances, particular resources and so forth. All this information would be recorded by video and audio tape, transcribed and edited and later the Elders would again gather to piece together a story acceptable to all. Some beginning examples of this are already available, such as the Minto Mapping Project (www.ankn.uaf.edu/chei/mapproj.html), the Angoon Cultural Atlas (www.ankn.uaf.edu) and the traditional map and book assembled by Howard Luke (Luke, 1999).

I can foresee a caravan of snow machines transporting Elders to different areas such as camp sites, places of warrior skirmishes, hunting grounds and burial places where the correct name and what transpired

there would be clarified. In the summer, boats loaded with Elders could be taken to significant sites agreed upon to tell their stories. I can envision a bus full of Elders slowly going around Bethel recounting the old sites of fish camps, the *kasegiq*, the original location of Mamtellrilleq south of the Kuskokwim River by the old Air Force airport, and the island that once was in front of the present site. They could explain why the original Yupiat did not settle in the present site, the history of Kepenkek (now Brown Slough) and *orutsaraq* (place for gathering sphagnum moss for caulking), the location of old reindeer corrals and so forth. This would give our Yupiat a sense of kinship and belonging to a place that one could call home and mean it, because it has a well-documented story from the perspective of the Yupiat people.

I would encourage teachers to take their students out into nature whenever possible, where the local language and culture can come alive in natural ways. By doing this, you are not limiting what is taught to knowledge alone, as the school typically does, but paying attention to the deeper needs of the student and the community. Within the classroom, the natural rhythms of life can be tapped into through singing, dancing and drumming, as well as other traditional activities that are acceptable to Elders and parents. The essential balance that is represented in the tetrahedral metaphor requires attention to all the realms of life, including the human, natural and spiritual. This message is blowing in the wind—a message older than our Native ways.

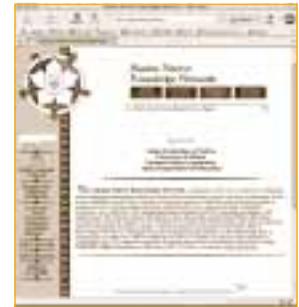
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ANKN Website Update

by Asiqluq Sean Topkok

The Alaska Native Knowledge Network website has grown quickly in the last few years. I was looking at the server statistics from 1998 seeing that we received about 590,000 hits in nine months. Currently, the ANKN website gets between 500,000 to 770,000 hits each month.



There are some very popular items on the ANKN website, including:

- **Marshall Cultural Atlas**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Marshall/
- **ANKN Cultural Standards and Guidelines**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Standards/
- **Village Science**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/VS/
- **Cultural Units**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Units/
- **Sharing Our Pathways Newsletters**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SOP/
- **Alaska Clipart Collection**
http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/clipart.html

All of the resources on the ANKN website are equally helpful for educators, students and community members. We receive many publications produced by ANKN (<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/publications/>). We also get some requests from individuals to name their dog or do their homework: "Please send me all your materials on Alaska Natives." There is a website by Alaska Native Language Center just for dog names and I would feel more comfortable having students do their own research for their assignments.

There is a search engine on virtually every page of the ANKN website so finding resources should be easily accessible. The ANKN directory, <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/directory.html>, is another way of finding what is on the ANKN website. Paula Elmes and I are currently looking at how to better organize and present the site, so if you have any comments or suggestions, feel free to contact us anytime. We are directly accessible from the website (fncst@uaf.edu). ✨

Moving On . . .

by Masak Dixie Dayo

I have accepted a position as an assistant professor with the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development and am excited about beginning a new career as a faculty member. This change was a difficult decision for me as I was so happy working at the Alaska Native Knowledge Network as a program assistant and editor of *Sharing Our Pathways*. Teaching rural development classes has long been a goal of mine. The opportunity to teach about such subjects as the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and the concepts and principles of healing was too much to resist.

As an RD assistant professor with duties of a student recruiter and advocate for the RD program, I will also be able to pay back the program that has given me so much both personally and professionally. When the opportunity came, I tearfully wrote my letter of resignation and literally cried when I spoke to my co-workers about my decision. I haven't gone far though and I think of my new position as an extension of our AKSRI work.

When I think about what prepared me for a rural development faculty position, I fondly remember when my Aunt Sally Hudson invited me to her Johnson O'Malley-sponsored skin sewing and beading class. It was here that she taught us how to bead, lectured about Alaska Native values and told us great stories from her childhood in the traditional Athabascan way. The class covered much more than tacking down beads on moose hide—it fostered a keen interest in Athabascan culture including food preservation, hunting, gathering, respect for others and care of self in addition to boosting our adolescent self-esteem.

Being an Iñupiaq of mixed blood I wasn't very knowledgeable about my mother's Iñupiaq heritage and therefore was a confused soul. Indian edu-

cation and sewing brought a new perspective to my life. I was taking correspondence courses to complete high school as I hadn't adjusted very well to the boarding home program and large city high school in Fairbanks. I soon discovered when I worked hard and completed my course work, I had more time to sew beads! Spending time with my two moms, Elizabeth Fleagle and Judy Woods, enlightened me in new ways—it added exciting new dimensions to our relationships. When Western education was introduced to Alaska Natives, its goal was to teach us the Western ways of living, thinking and being. There was little or no thought that the skills and lifestyles of Alaska Natives were equally rich in meaning and filled with spirituality. Being an active participant in Alaska Native culture gave my life new meaning and it began in an Indian education class.

The rural development B.A. and M.A. programs remind me of my Indian education experience. Rural development classes are relevant to employment opportunities in rural Alaska and our lives. RD graduates work for the regional and village corporations and tribes as CEOs, presidents, vice presidents, land managers, tribal administrators and in many



other professional positions. Rural development classes can be taken on campus or through the applied field-based program. Elders lecture on such topics as the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and are hired as culture bearers to share their traditional knowledge about subsistence and many other areas. Seminars are the cornerstone of the applied field-based program and provide opportunities for networking, meeting faculty members face to face and learning place-based education firsthand from local experts. Expanding one's worldview with a traditional education and a global perspective is a powerful combination for a well-rounded higher education. I describe the rural development program as, "Place-based education with a global perspective."

I applaud the hard work of the AKRSI and Alaska Native Knowledge Network. It has been a wonderful six years working at the ANKN office. Mentoring from the directors, staff, regional coordinators and MOA partners definitely prepared me for my professional and personal life challenges today and for the future. I look forward to our continued working relationship. Please stay in touch. I can be reached at 907-474-5293 or email dixie.dayo@uaf.edu. ✨

Southeast Region:

S'áxt': Incorporating Native Values in a Place-Based Lesson Plan

Vivian Martindale

In many Native American communities, plants have medicinal, spiritual and cultural value. They aren't just some green things that grow in the woods or in your front yard. According to Tlingit oral traditions, Raven created man from a leaf. At first Raven was going to create man from a rock, but then man would have lived forever and that wouldn't have been right, so by using a leaf man could move faster and also man would die. This story illustrates the importance that plants have in the lives of the Tlingit people.

One such plant, which is highly valued among the Tlingit people, is found predominantly in the temperate rain forests of Southeast Alaska. This plant is sacred to the Tlingit people. The Tlingits call it *s'áxt'*; science calls it *Oplopanax horridum* (Araliaceae) and local residents call it devil's club. The *s'áxt'* is also related to the oriental ginseng and is sometimes called Alaska ginseng. According to *Alaska's Wilderness Medicines* many different Native peoples in Alaska use this plant for a variety of reason: cold, flu, fever, stomach ailments, tuberculosis and poultices for wounds such as black eyes and burns. Modern pharmaceutical, naturopathic companies and other researchers are studying the plant for its commercial medicinal values. Their studies reveal that *s'áxt'* may possibly have hypoglycemic capabilities because the plant contains a substance similar to insulin (Vioreck 1987). Many Elders believe that the plant will also prevent cancer or help in healing many types of cancers.

In Southeast Alaska, among the Tlingit people, the *s'áxt'* plant was used by shamans and contains very powerful medicine and "when placed

above doorways and on fishing boats it is said to ward off evil" (U.S. Forest Service). In the past, devil's club was associated with shamanism. "Shamans may carry a power charm made with spruce twigs, devil's club roots and their animal tongue, acquired during their quests. During the quest (a novice who feels called to shamanism quests for his power) a novice goes into the woods for one or several weeks, eating nothing but devil's club" (*Alaska Herbal Tea 2002*).

Devils' club can be found in small or very large patches throughout the woods or beach areas. The plant likes wet, but filtered soil. *S'áxt'* grows up to eight feet tall and the large maple-like leaves and stalks of the plant are stems are covered with stickers, similar to slivers of glass or wood that can easily get under the skin or through light clothing. Stickers from the plant can cause infection and pain if not removed immediately. The plant also contains blooms of berries in the summer. "These berries are not edible by humans but bears do eat them" (U.S. Forest Service). According to local harvesters "The roots and shoots of devil's club are edible," however, the stage for harvesting the plant is in the

spring when the stalks first sprout new green growth. This is the best time to harvest the roots and new shoots, which can be ground into a powder and made into tea. Some Elder sources say that in late summer or fall you can harvest the bark from the stalks and the root-stalks. It is best to consult the local Elders rather than rely on conventional scientific documents or public agencies. Despite this, the U.S. Forest Service advises, "The leaf spines, though visible, are soft and pliable at this stage. Once they stiffen, however, the shoots should NOT be eaten." The leaf clusters may be nibbled raw, or added to omelets, casseroles and soups like a spice. "One or two is enough to add a unique tang to a common meal" (U.S. Forest Service)."

Hence the reason I have chosen the subject of *s'áxt'* is so I may illustrate how educators can create a lesson plan that will enable the introduction of one or more of the Tlingit values, as outlined by Elder Dr. Walter Soboleff, into the curriculum. The Native values, according to region, can be found on the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Alaska Native Knowledge Network website located at www.ankn.uaf.edu. Dr. Soboleff lists these values:

- ◆ **Respect** for self, others including Elders
- ◆ **Remember** our Native traditions, families, sharing, loyalty, pride and loving children
- ◆ **Responsibility**
- ◆ **Truth** and wise use of words
- ◆ **Care** of subsistence areas, care of property
- ◆ **Reverence:** *Haa Shageinyaa*

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- ◆ Sense of **Humility**
- ◆ **Care** of the Human Body
- ◆ **Dignity**: *Yan gaa duuneek*
- ◆ **Peace** with family, neighbors, others and nature

As well, this lesson explores the concept of “naturalist intelligence” as outlined by Howard Gardner. By enhancing the student’s naturalist intelligence a curriculum such as this guides the students to the understanding of how their Native values work in everyday life. The naturalist intelligence “refers to the ability to recognize and classify plants, minerals and animals including rocks and grass and all variety of flora and fauna” (Checkley: 9). Author and educator Karen Roth examines this intelligence in her booklet *The Naturalist Intelligence: An Introduction to Gardner’s Eighth Intelligence*. Implementing the eighth intelligence into the classroom setting is accomplished by introducing students to the practicality of the natural world—one that they can relate to their own lives in their own regions. Many local Elders are rich with this intelligence, able to identify, classify and relate the plants to the spiritual and cultural workings of the Native communities. By utilizing this naturalist intelligence, Elders and educators can introduce the Native values into the classroom and community.

Roth introduces educators to the various ways with which a classroom could implement this intelligence. In one method, Roth outlines a model based on four stages. This model, designed by David Lazear, is used to awaken the naturalists’ intelligence. “. . . he suggests the naturalist intelligence be triggered by immersing the student in the natural world of plants, animals, water, forests, etc., using the five senses” (Roth 1998). First, there is the “Awakening” stage, which is accomplished through immersion. The second stage is called “Amplify” and

in this stage the intelligence is strengthened through practice, such as learning about where the plant grows and why. The third stage, “Teach,” is “using specific tools of this intelligence and applying them to help learn”; it is the stage when your objectives are achieved (17). “Transfer” is the fourth stage. This is when students apply the naturalist intelligence beyond the classroom. In other

By enhancing the student’s naturalist intelligence a curriculum such as this guides the students to the understanding of how their Native values work in everyday life.

words, students will be thinking about how to view their Native values beyond that they have learned about the *s’áxt’*.

Through the study of the abundant and highly recognizable local plant, students will be able to recognize how the Tlingit values play out in their everyday lives. In *A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit*, Dr. Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley points out how important it is for students to acquire knowledge from the experiences in the world around them. Kawagley contrasts this relation to the whole with the Western classroom that may pose an “impediment to learning, to the extent that it focuses on compartments of knowledge without regard to how the compartments relate to one another or to the surrounding universe” (1996:87–88). It is knowing about the plants in our environment, such as *s’áxt’*, and how to use that knowledge in our environment that makes the knowledge we seek worthwhile. Therefore students, searching for knowledge in their natural environment, will flourish

and be able to apply new concepts to their familiar place.

To begin, the introduction of Native values need not be difficult. I suggest a dialogue to open up the discussion about the values and how they are transmitted from one generation to another. Students will be able to see the difference between rigid book learning and field-based or place-based learning models. Then introducing a teaching unit that will tie in one or more of those values will get the students to thinking about how those values are transmitted through daily life. In the article “The Domestication of the Ivory Tower: Institution Adaptation to Cultural Distance”, Barnhardt illustrates how the field-based environment is prime for learning. The field-based program outlined by Barnhardt is “a reality-based, collective learning process ” (4). In a field-based program Barnhardt points out the benefit to both teachers and students when the students are required to participate in experiences. The experiential learning environment is not detached, but thrives in the interactions between people and their experiences. This place-based or field-based environment is key to relating the Native values to the curriculum and to the outside world.

S’áxt’: Incorporating Native Values in a Place-based Lesson Plan

Grade Level

Middle school, high school and possibly college level

Course Objectives

Utilizing place-based education to introduce the Tlingit values (see list of values above)

Curriculum Area

Math, science, art, writing, language and cross cultural studies

Objectives:

1. Working with Elders:
 - a. Elders explain the cultural significance of *s'áxt'*: spiritually, medicinally, etc. (value: reverence, care of human body, responsibility, dignity).
 - b. Elders can show students the best places, times and type of plants to harvest (value: care of subsistence areas, peace with the world of nature).
 - c. Elders can talk about the methods of harvesting and assist with this in the classroom and outside the classroom (value: remember Native traditions, responsibility).
 2. Proper identification of *s'áxt'*, its habitat, uses and preparations.
 3. Introduction to Tlingit terms for the parts of the plant and words and phrases associated with the activities.
 4. The role of *s'áxt'* in art: beads and/or rattle and then translate to ceremony (value: dignity, remember traditions).
- (value: care of human body, sharing).
 2. *S'áxt'* tea: The roots and greenish inner bark can be shredded and dried or fresh steeped into tea (value: humility, peace).
 3. Roots:
 - a. Students can peel, roast and then mash the roots.
 - b. Wash the roots as soon as possible with a plastic bristle vegetable scrubber. Then peel off the root bark with a knife and place on screens to dry (value: sharing, respect, peace).
 4. Making Beads, Jewelry or Deer Hoof Rattles:
 - a. Pauline Duncan's instructions for Deer Hoof Rattles can be found on the ANKN website (value: remember, reverence).
 - b. Beads: Beads are made from dry stalks of *s'áxt'*. They are cut from the stalk, hollowed out and then dried. They can be painted or left natural. The twine for stringing the beads is usually made from mountain goat (value: sharing, humility).

Activities and Methods: Harvesting & Preparation

A. Harvesting the *s'áxt'*

1. Have Elders or other local plant experts assist with appropriate harvesting tools, what types of plants to look for, appropriate clothing such as gloves for protection, thick pants and coats (value: care for human body).
2. Roots: Dig up long, straight pieces that are 1/2" thick or larger.
3. Make sure there is a time for thanking the plant for its gift (value: care, respect, reverence, truth).

B. Explore methods of preparation:

1. Salve or ointments: One method is to shave the bark off the stalks and boil with canola oil, strain it, mixed it with beeswax. Afterwards this mixture is poured into empty medicine containers for use as a salve

Resources

- Local Elders
- Local plant experts: Elders, U.S. Forest Service, local medicinal healers, herbalists
- Pauline Duncan's *Tlingit Curriculum Resources: Picking Berries* can be located at <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Tlingit/PaulineDuncan/Books/Berry/devilclub.html>
- *Alaska's Wilderness Medicines: Healthy Plants from the Far North* by Eleanor Viereck (can also be found on the ANKN website)
- A good kitchen and work space for making salves, beads, etc.
- Harvesting tools: knives, small shovel, cooking implements, beeswax, oils
- Other books illustrating what the plant looks like, paper and pencils for on-site illustrations

Evaluation

Evaluation methods should be culturally and community relevant. Students can keep a journal or write about what values they observed in action. As well, students should be able to produce salve, brew tea, know the basics of harvesting and prep procedures and also to be able to make a piece of jewelry or art from the plant. Afterwards students should be able to relate what they have done, at every step of the way, to one or more of the Tlingit values.

In conclusion, educators and Elders should be constantly considering where and how values can be incorporated into learning activities. At first it might be necessary to point out where the values might fit in, however, as the lesson and the relationships with the Elders progress

... educators and Elders should be constantly considering where and how values can be incorporated into learning activities.

that will no longer be necessary. Prior to undertaking the lessons, have the students be aware that they are looking for those values. At the end of each day, excursion or lesson, students can be asked what values they observed at work and how they might pass on those values to others or apply them in their daily lives, stressing that almost all the Tlingit values can be applied in one way or another to any daily living situation.

Raven knew what he was doing, creating man from a leaf. By using the simplicity of a leaf, Raven connected us to our environment forever weaving Native values into our creation thus into our lives. ✨

Editor's note: Reference list available upon request.

Southeast Region: SEANEA Update

by *Andy Hope*

The Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association elected a new board of directors and officers in January. Here is the list of officers and board members for 2004:

Officers

Ted Wright, Chair

I was born and raised in Sitka where I graduated from high school in '74, and then went to college for several years in-between some years of work. I graduated from Southern Oregon State with a degree in education/English and another in educational administration from Penn State. I worked for the Sitka Tribe and then moved over to Mt. Edgecumbe High School as an English teacher and basketball coach. I worked for the Commissioner of Health and Social Services as a special assistant and then returned to Penn State to finish a Ph.D. in education theory and policy. Somewhere in there I got married, had a son, got divorced, had two dogs, saw some of the world, managed the Sitka Tribe, worked several years as a consultant in Juneau, Sitka and other places, taught at Southern Oregon University, ran the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, spent a year in Anchorage at UAA, did some other stuff, came back to Sitka and Juneau to develop a tribal college and now I am working on a regional Native charter school. I'm Eagle/Kaagwaantaan. My Grandmother is Jennie Wright (98 years young and still having a good old time at the Sitka Pioneer Home). There will be a test later. Happy trails.

Roxanne Houston, Vice-Chair

My name is Roxanne Houston and I am Tlingit and Iñupiaq. My Tlingit name is Wooshdei.dioo and I belong to the Kaagwaantaan Clan. I am the daughter of Roscoe and Vivian Max Jr. and granddaughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Paddock and Roscoe and Harriet Max, Sr. My husband, Dennis, and I will celebrate twenty years of marriage in the fall and between us we have five children: Joshua, Katrina, Jeremiah, Dennis, Jr. and Jacob. I received my Bachelors of Education in elementary education from the University of Alaska Southeast, in August of 1995. I applied and received a Hawkins Fellowship to attend the Pennsylvania State University in January of 1996. In December of 1996, I received my Masters of Education in educational administration. I am currently employed as a tribal recruitment coordinator for the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium. I serve as a council member for the Sitka Tribe of Alaska. I am honored and look forward to serving on the Southeast Alaska Native Educator's Association board. *Gunalcheesh!*

Rhonda Hickok, Secretary

I was born in Anchorage, Alaska and grew up mostly in Glennallen and Valdez. My mother is from Holy Cross and my father was from Beaver. I am Athabascan, Iñupiat and Aleut. I am

married and have three children: two boys in high school and a daughter in the third grade. My higher education began at UAA and I eventually earned my Bachelors of Education through the University of Alaska Southeast. Currently I am finishing up a Masters of Arts in cross-cultural studies through the University of Alaska Fairbanks. At present, I work for the University of Alaska Southeast, Center for Teacher Education as the director of the PITAS program. Prior to that I worked as a junior high teacher for the Copper River School District (going back home was fun!) and as a secondary social studies teacher for the Juneau School District. I also worked as the Indian Studies and Title VII ESL/LEP director for the Juneau School District. During my time at the Juneau School District I was a teacher in the Early Scholars Program, which is a joint program between the University of Alaska Southeast and the Juneau School District that aims at increasing the participation of Alaska Native students in higher education. I miss the classroom environment and hope to someday be back in the trenches of education.

Laurie Cropley, Treasurer

I am Tlingit, a daughter of Mabel Moy and Ike Cropley, T'akdeintaan, Raven. I am an advisor/counselor at Sheldon Jackson for Native students in Sitka employed under SJC's Title III grant. I graduated from this infamous but historic 125-year-old college with a degree in human services. I currently produce KCAW-FM's "Indigenous Radio", serve on the associated alumni board of Sheldon Jackson, serve as secretary of Sitka ANB Camp #1 and serve on the presidential search committee for the Sheldon Jackson College president. (Please forward candidates names from Alaska for this permanent position.)

Board Members At Large:

Ronald E. Dick PhD

My father is A-ni Tsalagi (Cherokee Western Band) and my mother is German. When we moved to Sitka, we enrolled the girls (Collauna and Chohla) in the Sitka Native Education Program where they grew up Tlingit. Vicki Bartels adopted me into the Eagle Moeity, Chookaneidi Clan. I have a B.A. in psychology and a Ph.D. in forest resources. I have been a college professor for over 25 years and I have been active in Southeast Alaska Native education for 19 years. My highest priority now is to help develop the Southeast Alaska Tribal College.

Mary Jean Duncan

I was born in Juneau and raised in Yakutat by Maggie Harry, my very wise, old grandmother whose Tlingit name was Neechx yaa nas.at of the Kwasshkakwaan Clan. I am from the Raven Clan and my moiety is (*chaas*) Humpy. My house is the half moon house (Dis Hit). I grew up in a Tlingit-speaking environment which I had to leave at the age of six. I could understand Tlingit as a little child, but it wasn't long before my first language was forgotten in a new English-speaking environment. My grandmother taught me that it is very important in our Tlingit tradition to know one's name, moiety, clan and protocol. She taught me that this is the way things are, this is the way it must be and gave me an understanding of what was right and wrong, of identity and place that has stayed with me like a seed that would grow when I was ready to find it. I am currently teaching fifth grade and the head teacher at Angoon Elementary. I have been teaching elementary for thirteen years. As an educator, what I find most satisfying in the classroom is that moment when my students comprehend a concept

(the "Ah ha!" moment). In my teaching practice, I strive to find ways to "hook" my students, spark their natural curiosity and keep them interested in learning more. I am familiar with the Macintosh computers that my school is currently using. I integrate technology into my curriculum by using computer programs to rehearse word processing, create multimedia projects and student-directed research on the Internet. Students gain valuable computing skills through the integration of technology. I look forward to the many new techniques I can learn and bring home to students at Angoon Elementary and my colleagues at both the elementary, middle and high school.

Andy Hope

My Tlingit name is Xaastanch. I am a member of the Sik'nax.ádi clan of Shtax'héen Kwáan, X'aan Hít (Red Clay House). My father's clan is Kiks.ádi X'aak· Hít (Point House) of Sheet'ka Kwáan. I was born and raised in Sitka and have lived in Juneau since 1988. I graduated from Juneau-Douglas High School in 1968 and received a Bachelors of Education from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1979. I am currently working on a Masters of Arts in cross-cultural studies. I have served as Southeast regional coordinator for the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative since December, 1995 and took on the Teacher Leadership Development coordinator position in September, 2003. I have served as chair of the Southeast Alaska Tribal College board of trustees since 1999.

Rhoda Jensen

My name is Rhoda Jensen from Yakutat, Alaska. My Tlingit name is Naat'see and I am Kaagwaantaan Wolf. I am the child of Iñupiaq Roscoe H. Max, Jr. of Pelican, Alaska. I am the grandchild of Lukaax.adi Joseph H. Paddock. I am very proud of being born and raised in Pelican, Alaska which is a community that my grand-

father helped build (he was a piledriver) in the late 1930s. In 1991, I married Jonathan Jensen of Yakutat and we are the proud parents of Jocelyn, Cody and Jonathan, Jr. I have worked for the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe since 1999 as the JOM/education director and recently took over the tribal environmental planner position. I consider myself a strong advocate for education for all our Native peoples. I also consider myself a Tlingit language advocate and have continually looked for funding to rekindle our language for our children's future. I currently am the ANB/ANS Camp #13 secretary and hold a seat on the Yakutat Indian Education committee. I look forward to serving on the Southeast Native Educator's Association board (SEANEA). *Gunalcheesh!*

Marie M. Olson

I was born in Juneau, Alaska. I attended elementary BIA schools in Juneau and Douglas and Alaska High School at Wrangell, Alaska. I graduated from Garfield High School in Seattle, Washington. I have been married and divorced, with one daughter and three sons (one deceased, 2003). I attended Berkeley University in 1970 and 1971 on a Ford full scholarship and earned a BLA degree from UAS, cum laude. I have also completed 200 plus credits of continuing education courses. I have worked for Pacific Telephone Company in San Francisco and Communications Workers of America (executive board member of Local 9410, SF, CA). I managed overall operation of Alaska Native Arts and Crafts in Juneau, served as executive director of Southeast Community Action Program, Southeast Elder for AKRSI, board member of AKABE/BMEEC and volunteer for HeadStart/Auke Bay Elementary School. I teach a graduate class on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights for UAF; author a Tlingit Coloring Book and own Card Shark Cultural Consultant. ✨

Southeast Region: A Native Charter School in Juneau

by Ted Wright

The Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association are in the midst of planning for development of a Native charter school in Juneau. A charter school operates as a school in the local school district except that the charter school is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program, curriculum and scheduling requirements. The principal of the charter school is selected by an academic policy committee and can select, appoint or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school. In addition, the school operates under an annual program budget as set out in the charter contract between the local school board and the charter school.

We are discussing the creation of a Native charter school at an interesting time. Late winter events in Juneau include a petition drive to re-examine the issue of funding and building a second high school in the valley and new incidences of racism remind us that old attitudes and beliefs die hard as too many Native students continue to feel alienated and even unsafe in their own schools. But even before these events were unfolding, we were considering the possibility of a Native charter school. In the final analysis, at least three factors are critical to our decision to undertake this work:

- Native students continue to score far below their white peers on grade-level tests of academic proficiency in reading, writing and math, and on tests of general achievement.
- As they consider their relative academic standing and struggle to fit-in at a school where they

may feel alienated, many Native students simply leave the system.

A few find their way to alternatives like GED programs and correspondence study, but many do not and so they fall through the cracks. The language, culture and place-based curriculum of a Native charter school will inspire many students to learn and to succeed. Further, higher numbers of Native teachers employing a more traditional pedagogy and an underlying focus on Native ways of knowing, will be attractive to Native and non-Native students alike. And finally, regardless of whether we can

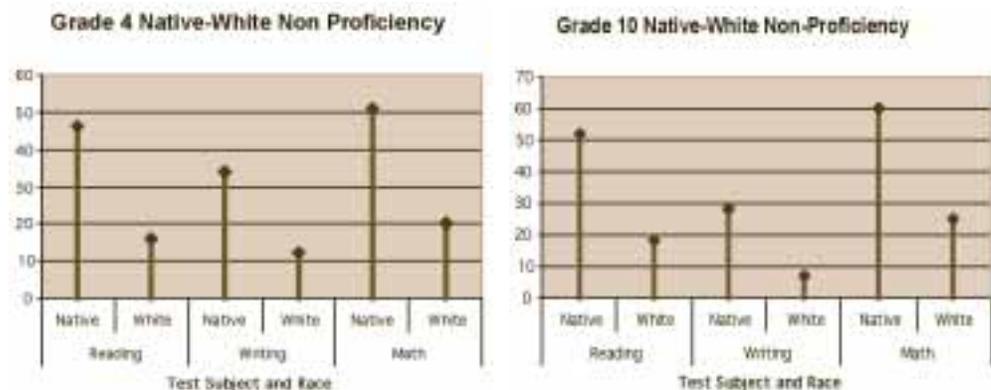
verify a causal link between the above factors and academic success, the fact that there is substantially increased attention to the particular needs of Native students will increase their likelihood of success.

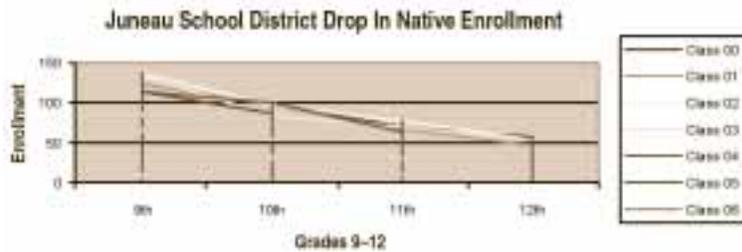
Native students, teachers, parents, community leaders and other concerned citizens will have to want their own school; attendance has to be at a high enough level to make it financially feasible (150–200 students).

Sufficient human, financial and political resources have to be directed at the creation of a Native charter school in Juneau so that it sets a standard for how such schools can be developed in our region and throughout the state. Moreover, a full-range of commitment will demonstrate that we truly believe that the education of our children is our highest priority and that our actions speak louder than our words.

Plan for Development

At least two meetings a month will be scheduled between the beginning of February and the end of April. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, Native leaders and others of the general public will be invited to participate. The agenda will include most of the critical elements of charter school development that will be required in a completed charter school application, including at least the following:





- ✓ Whether a school is needed/wanted
- ✓ Grade levels & time frame for additions
- ✓ Overall school model
- ✓ Governance (bylaws/policies)
- ✓ Curriculum model
- ✓ Administrator(s) and teachers
- ✓ School calendar and daily rotation
- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Budget
- ✓ Course credit/grading
- ✓ Evaluation
- ✓ Classroom accommodations

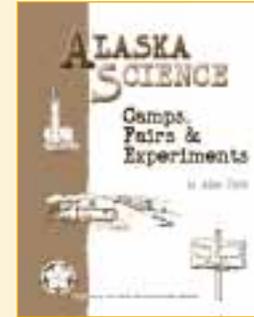
Concurrent with the public meetings, a planning team organized from those who attend will meet with representatives of the Juneau School District, University of Alaska Southeast and Department of Education and Early Development. These meetings will ensure that the charter school is

developed in accordance with the wishes of the Native community, the requirements of state law, the best practices known to the academy (university) and the cooperation of local district educators and administrators.

In May the finished application will be presented to the Juneau School District board, followed by a presentation to the State Board of Education. Upon approval, serious fundraising and organizational development will commence. It is anticipated that the school will begin classes in the fall of 2005, though the planning process may lead to adjustments along the way, including when certain milestones are to be achieved.

For more information or to participate in the charter school planning process, please contact Ted at (907) 523-2128 or send email to: tedtrmp@aol.com. ✨

The Alaska Native Knowledge Network announces:



Alaska Science Camps, Fairs & Experiments: Available in mid-March. Meanwhile, the full version is available in a PDF download from our website at http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/Alaska_Science.pdf.

Camps

Camps have emerged as successful means of sharing information and experiences that are not possible in the regular classroom setting. They provide young people with the opportunity to interact with Elders and instructors in an environment that naturally promotes learning.

Fairs

The need has long been expressed, and is now fulfilled, to have a science fair with projects based on locally- and culturally-relevant events. This book details how to plan and sponsor a culturally-relevant science fair.

Experiments

There is no better place for science exploration than villages as there are so many questions that have not been asked or answered by scientists. Students learn how to pick and develop an exciting project that is based on their local culture.

For more information or to order contact ANKN at 907-474-5086.

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Unangaġ Region: The Education of a Seal Hunter

by Moses Dirks



A prime example of the way learning occurs in an out-of-school setting is when Native people go about their subsistence activities. The topic I will use to illustrate traditional learning is sea lion hunting.

Long ago, Unangaġ men were the main hunters of sea mammals. The men would prepare to go hunting by cleansing themselves before a hunt by sleeping separately from their wives, because they did not want the sea lion to get jealous of the hunter if s/he found out that he had slept with his wife the night before. This also had to do with the woman's scent. If the animal smelled a woman it would scare the animal away and the man would not experience a successful hunt. The scent of a woman was considered bad luck for hunters. When I was growing up my sister or mother were not allowed to touch the fire-arms used in hunting. The men believed that it caused the hunter to come home empty-handed.

Long ago Unangaġ men hunted from an *iqyaġ* (one-man) skin-boat with only a harpoon. He would harpoon the animal and the tip of the harpoon would enter the animal and detach inside the animal without killing it. On the other end was an inflated seal stomach, which served as a buoy. The hunter pursued the animal until it got tired and then he would pull up alongside and club it to death. Once the animal was dead, he and his partner would tow it ashore and the butchering took place on the beach. All parts of the animal were used. The sealskin was used for clothing and covering the *iqyaġ*, and the stomach was used for packing dried fish and meat. The intestines were used in

making gut skin raincoats, called *chigdaġ*, which were durable and light enough so they did not hamper the paddler from maneuvering his *iqyaġ* in tricky waters. The whiskers of the sea lion were used in decorating the hunter's hat, called *chaxudaġ*. The length and stoutness of the whiskers determined the status of the hunter. All the meat was preserved by drying until the Russians introduced rock salt, which was then used in storing the meat for the long winter months.

All of the traditional form of education occurred in the natural world. The young hunters responsibility was to observe and learn by watching and imitating the moves that were produced in making the event happen. The young hunter was most likely the nephew trained by the mother's brother. He would be the apprentice hunter learning under the tutelage of his uncle. Training at times was really harsh. Cold water bathing was one of the tactics used, where the young man was told to take a bath in the cold saltwater early in the mornings. They called it "toughening the hunter up" so that he could endure the cold frigid waters when hunting on the sea.

The training started at a very early age when the young boys arm was stretched back while sitting down on the ground as if sitting in the *iqyaġ*, so that he would grow up naturally to throw the harpoon with velocity and distance. Other kinds of training included hanging from the *barabara*

roof rafters to strengthen their arms in case they had to climb cliffs for bird hunting or egg gathering. The exercises continued until he could prove to his uncle that he was capable of being a successful hunter. He would prove that by getting his first seal or sea lion. Only then would he be considered a man in the Unangan hunting and gathering society. Before the coming of the Russians, the Unangan were a very self-sufficient and healthy people. Even with their crude weapons they were excellent hunters.

Today hunting technology has changed so much that by the time I was old enough to go hunting, all traditional technology was gone. The wooden dory or homemade plywood skiffs replaced the *iqyaġ*. Later came the fiberglass skiffs and aluminum boats. High-powered rifles, more powerful and accurate, replaced the harpoon. Bolas were replaced by shotguns for hunting birds. Now we have to learn how all these machines work, because the repair shop can be a thousand miles away.

There is usually someone in each village that knows about fixing motors. My cousin, for instance, has never completed high school but he is a master mechanic. He can fix outboards, cars and trucks. How does he do this with no formal training? His aptitude for fixing engines is very high, so he is depended on to fix the machines. Now-a-days, owning and running a skiff is expensive and if you don't have a job it is hard to get out there for hunting, etc. You have to buy gas and oil for the motor, paint and a trailer for your boat as well as a

truck or an ATV to haul it back and forth. Rifles and shotguns need to be kept clean and oiled otherwise they don't function right. Rust is the major culprit on guns. Along with the gun you need to buy shells that are expensive from the local store. These days, hunting is an expensive proposition.

I have taught Unangan culture for the last 15 years and I still can't believe how different it is to teach in a classroom setting. Whenever you want to bring a seal or sea lion into a classroom you have to get permission from your principal, then get approval from DEC to make sure it will be safe to handle the blood pathogens and raw meat. In the past this was never a problem, because most of the butchering was done out in the field before the animal was brought into the village. As a result, if you are trying to teach a unit on traditional activities in a classroom, you often have to resort to textbooks and there are very few texts that deal with the inner organs of a sea lion. What little are available often do not clearly explain where the organs of the animals are located and most of the texts come in black and white so you can't even positively identify the organs.

Elders don't like coming into the classrooms; they were never allowed in the past, so they feel uncomfortable in schools. It is so unnatural to be sitting in a classroom hour after hour learning from a book. I once knew an Elder from one of the villages who told me that he was getting sick because he was not getting any exercise since he moved in from the village. He sat around too much and he said that it was not healthy. He would rather do hands-on type of work, so he always found things to do around town. The Elder lived to be in his nineties.

Classroom settings are good for the Unangaꔁ for the first hour. Listening to a person talk for more than an hour is unheard of in my culture—the only time you would hear talking amongst

the Unangaꔁ would be when they were telling stories at night. Unangaꔁ people are used to hands-on, kinesthetic type of learning; learn by watching how it is done, trying it out and if you don't master it the first time you do it again and again until you know how to do it.

I would sometimes be awestruck by what some of my relatives could do—machinist, electrician, carpen-

try—you name it, and they never went to school for these trades. If you ask them, "How did you learn how to do that?" they would credit God for giving them the skill so that they can do what they need to do. As I venture down the road and think about those intelligent people that I knew, I sometimes shudder to think, what would have happened to them if they had gone to school? ✨

Unangaꔁ Region: The Unangan Science Fair

by Moses L. Dirks

Ang from the Unangan/s Aleut Region. It is good to be back working with the AKRSI and TLDP group and working on Native ways of knowing and indigenous science initiatives. I am presently working with a local science teacher and whenever I get the opportunity I am putting indigenous science into the curriculum where it is appropriate. This is done so that Native students can start thinking about what indigenous knowledge means, what it is and to help them develop a science project they can enter into the ANSES science fair.

I am using ANKN resources available by Alan Dick* on how to set up science fairs. It has been a valuable resource in that it made students start thinking about the science that is all around us in our villages and towns that can be applied to everyday life.

The science teacher allowed me to present some lessons from *Village Science* in his class. This was a good introduction to what to look for in village science projects. After a few lessons from *Village Science*, I contacted Alan Dick and asked him if he

had material on how to set up science fairs. He said that he was working on one and was willing to share it with me. A few days later I received a packet with the booklet and presented that to my seventh-grade class. After presenting the material the question was posed to the students: What do you think would be a good village science project that you could enter in the ANSES Science Fair? These were some of the ideas that we elicited from our students:

(continued on next page)

* See *Alaska Science Camps, Fairs & Experiments* on page 11.

(continued from previous page)

- Weather predicting
- Insulation
- Native technology
- Mollusk investigation
- Plants and uses
- Gathering foods
- Fishing techniques

In November we started research on our science projects and finally, in January, the Unalaska City School District sponsored a science fair so that winners could participate in the statewide ANSES Fair held at Camp Carlquist January 30 to February 2, 2004. The focus of the science fair was indigenous sciences. With very little time left, we had our local science fair and after the judges made their decisions, the following winners were announced:

1st Place: Insulation: How the Unangan People Used Natural Material to Insulate Their Semi-Subterranean Huts Called an Ula

2nd Place: Native Technology—Fox Trap Klisa: How You Can Build a Fox Trap With All Natural Materials and Make it Work

3rd Place: Plants and Their Uses: How the Unangan Used Plants as Food and Medicine.

Our first place winner, Delores Gregory, went on to state ANSES Fair and placed second in the seventh- and eighth-grade category. We are very proud of Delores and hope to see her again next year.

All the students that participated in the science fair had fun and they all know what to expect for next year so they will be better prepared for the event. Not only was it fun for the students, they also learned about the knowledge of their ancestors and how to use the scientific method to do their experiments. ✨

ANSES State Fair Held at Camp Carlquist

by Greg Danner, Director of Programs & Exhibits, The Imaginarium

The Alaska Native Science and Engineering Society (ANSES) Statewide Native Science Fair was a success! The students came, presented their projects and even managed to see some of the Super Bowl. There was the unanimous sense that it was both time and effort very well spent.

We had 8 sites, 37 students and 12 chaperones presenting 21 projects integrating science and local knowledge.

The winning project, by an eighth- and ninth-grade pair from Circle (Yukon Flats School District) was entitled "Surviving with Snow." The

students explored the life-saving properties of an emergency shelter constructed from snow. They even braved a -54° day to gather data on the experiment. It was the clear winner and both the traditional and Western science judges gave it very high marks. They'll be going off to the national AISES Fair in March.

The Imaginarium in Anchorage provided logistical support for the event under contract with the AKRSI and ear-marked \$1500 to support the winning project's trip to the AISES Fair in New Mexico. The grand prize was awarded to the first place winners at the fair and the chaperones from Circle will be accompanying the students to the national fair. It was a very well received. Congratulations go to all the winners and their teachers for their prize-winning efforts.

Thanks to all the students, teachers, chaperones and judges for their help in making the 2004 ANSES State Fair a resounding success. ✨



Tyler Ely and John Carroll (Circle) with their first place project.



Second place winners Victoria Nathaniel and Ronald Mayo (Circle).



Third place winners Ralph Christiansen and Ronnie Tunohun (third and fourth from left) pose with Elder judges.

Alutiiq Region: Alutiiq Museum Releases Language Poster & CD

by April Laktonen Counciller and Shauna Hegna

On February 4, 2004 the walls of the Alutiiq Museum reverberated with the sounds of the Alutiiq language. The community of Kodiak joined the museum in celebrating the premiere of the Sharing Words project. This project, which includes an Alutiiq alphabet poster, interactive CD-ROM and a loanable Alutiiq language education box, was developed from the Alutiiq Word of the Week (AWOTW) program.

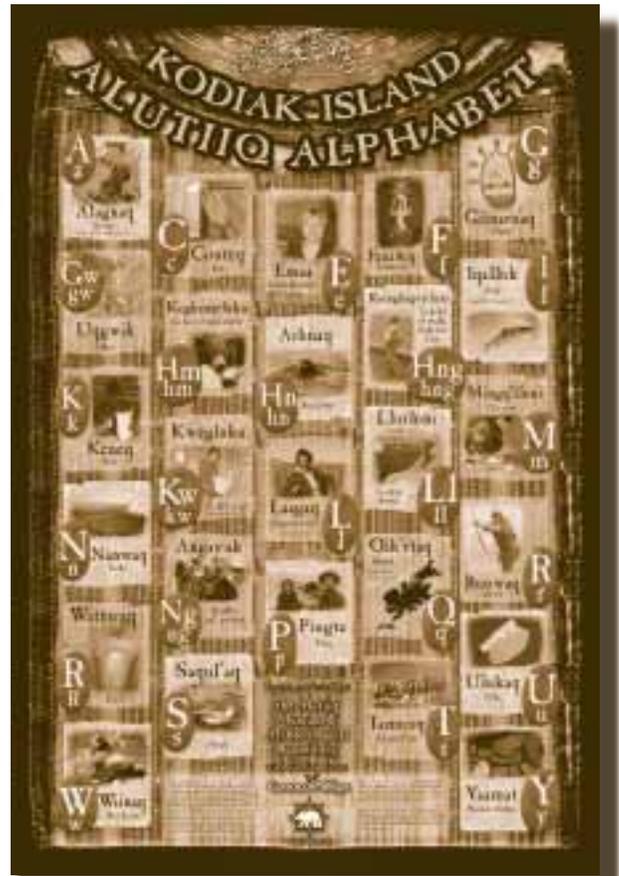
The AWOTW consists of an Alutiiq word, a sentence including that word and a cultural lesson. The AWOTW program is very successful, but people always ask how to sound out the words and sentences they see in print. Because of the level of language loss in the Kodiak region, the average Alutiiq person (also known as Sugpiaq) needs the most basic level of educational language materials. “We wanted to publish a collection of the AWOTW, but we needed to start with the alphabet,” says education coordinator April Laktonen Counciller.

The Alutiiq Museum, with guidance from the Qik’rtarmiut Alutiit (Alutiiq People of the Island) Regional Language committee, created an interactive CD-ROM that teaches the sounds of the alphabet and includes the 260 audio recordings collected from the AWOTW. Language masters Nick Alokli, Florence Pestrikoff and Nadia Mullan provided the audio recordings, while local designer Janelle Peterson engineered the computer lesson. In addition to the alphabet and grammar lessons, there is a foreword discussing the language and its revi-

talization, as well as video clips of Elder Phyllis Peterson singing traditional Alutiiq songs. The Kodiak Alutiiq Dancers donated introductory music. Each CD-ROM is paired with a copy of the Alutiiq Alphabet Poster—a full-color poster featuring the 26 letters of the Koniag Alutiiq dialect and culturally-relevant photographs illustrating each example.

“The Alutiiq language education box, alphabet poster and interactive CD-ROM marks the beginning of a great movement in Kodiak,” Shauna Hegna, Alutiiq language coordinator, said, “We are creating tools that will help our people build the next generation of fluent Alutiiq speakers.”

The alphabet poster and CD-ROM set is being distributed free to local and regional education institutions, museums, libraries and tribal councils. If your organization is inter-



ested in utilizing these language-learning materials and would like a free copy, please contact LaToya Lukin, Alutiiq Museum receptionist at alutiiq2@ptialaska.net or call (907) 486-7004. The CD-ROM is also accessible through the Alutiiq Museum website at <http://www.alutiiqmuseum.com>. Individuals can purchase the set at cost through the museum gift shop. ✨

**NSF Rural Systemic Initiatives • Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative • University of the Arctic
NSF Tribal Colleges and Universities Program • Consortium for Alaska Native Higher Education**

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A week-long series of events for the intrepid educator

May 15-19, 2004

Hess Conference Center • Pike's Waterfront Lodge • University of Alaska Fairbanks

- **Thursday and Friday,
May 13-14: Consortium for
Alaska Native Higher
Education Annual Meeting**

- **Saturday, May 15, Day 1:
Indigenous Higher Education
Colloquium**

The first day will provide an opportunity for representatives from indigenous-serving higher education institutions and the Governing Council for the University of the Arctic to address issues of common concern (e.g. joint programs, distance education, collaborative research, accreditation, etc.) to be followed with the development of an action plan that will be reviewed for adoption during the Part II session on Wednesday, May 19.

- **Sunday, May 16, Day 2:
Indigenous Curriculum Fair**

Day 2 will focus on issues around developing culturally-responsive curriculum materials and teaching strategies, with participants invited to bring examples of culturally responsive curriculum resources to be put on display and shared. Displays will be in the form of posters, interspersed with presentations around curriculum themes.

- **Monday, May 17, Day 3:
Rural Systemic Initiatives
PI/PD Meeting**

Day 3 will be the first of a two-day national RSI PI/PD meeting addressing issues specific to the Rural Systemic Initiatives.

- **Tuesday, May 18, Day 4:
RSI PI/PD Meeting**

Day 4 will be the second of a two-day PI/PD meeting addressing issues specific to the Rural Systemic Initiatives.

- **May 19-23: International
Congress of Arctic Social
Sciences**

The remainder of the week will consist of workshops and symposia associated with the tri-annual International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences, including the symposium listed below. Further details are available at <http://www.uaf.edu/anthro/iassa/icass5sessab.htm>.

- **Symposium on "Integrating
Indigenous Knowledge, Ways
of Knowing and World Views
into the Educational Systems
in the Arctic"**

Abstract: The symposium will provide participants with examples of work that is currently underway in the circumpolar region to assist schools and universities in integrating indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing and world views into all aspects of education, with a particular emphasis on using the local cultural and physical environment as a laboratory for learning. Presentations from each participating country/initiative will include a description of the epistemological basis for the initiative, the organizational structure being utilized, the role of Elders, and the cultural documentation process involved, as well as the implications of indigenous-based education for curriculum development, teaching practices and support structures for schools serving indigenous peoples.

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