

# Kenaitze Indian Tribe

2018  
Annual  
Report



# From the Chairperson

What a great year for the Tribe!

It was an awesome day and a major milestone for the Tribe when we paid off the 20-year loan for the Dena'ina Wellness Center within four years. The early payoff will result in a \$3.8 million savings which will contribute to the future success of DWC and the services that it provides for years to come.

The Council worked jointly with its leadership on the Tribe's strategic plan which included evaluation of the management of the Tribe and its programs. As part of this process, the organizational chart was restructured to include an Executive Director of Health Systems and an Executive Director of Tribal Administration. We believe that this organizational change will ensure additional growth and success for the Tribe.

The Council established the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board whose responsibility will be to advise the Council on all matters related to health care services. The Council has committed to hiring two additional physicians which has been a long-term goal. We have contracted with a company who has provided a temporary physician while we are recruiting these physicians.

Another strategic initiative has been to build relationships with other tribes and tribal organizations. The Tribe hosted the first Cook Inlet Tribal Fisheries meeting where all of the tribes of the Cook Inlet region met to discuss enhancement, preservation and protection of this valuable resource. The Tribe's First Fish Potlatch was held in May to celebrate our rich and common

heritage that all Dena'ina people share and treasure.

We are currently working with other tribes and Native organizations to develop a unified voice on local, state and national issues. The Tribe signed an agreement with the State of Alaska that established the framework for tribes to provide child welfare services that would otherwise be provided by the Alaska Office of Children's Services. Negotiations are ongoing to increase these services.

The Tribe worked alongside Cook Inlet Region Inc. in negotiating the terms of the programmatic agreement which was instrumental in the selection of the alternate route for the Sterling Highway Milepost 45-60 Project. This route has less impact on the Dena'ina historical sites and salmon habitat as well as providing a safer route for travelers.

The Council has been attaining recognition on a state and national level with members of the Council serving as the alternate Alaska Vice President to the National Congress of American Indians and as a member of the Tribal Self Governance Advisory Committee.

Over the past year, the Tribe has funded 67 Tribal Member scholarships for over \$120,000 in educational and training programs. The Council's long-term vision for education is to provide a culturally appropriate educational environment that facilitates



**Wayne D. Wilson Jr.**

lifelong learning for all Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina with a focus on our youth. In addition, the TERO Commission continues to work hard on behalf of the Membership to ensure that Tribal Members and Alaska Natives have more opportunities to obtain jobs and training at the Tribe.

Another success story for the Tribe is our Henu' Community Wellness Court. Not only has the Tribe received state recognition for its success with the Court, but we were honored to be selected to host a visit from Surgeon General Jerome Adams. The Surgeon General reached out to the Tribe in search of an alternative solution to deal with substance abuse after hearing about our therapeutic court. This fall, the Henu' Court will have its first graduate who also happens to be a Tribal Member.

The Council is looking forward to the success of the next year, and encourages each Tribal Member to participate in Council meetings, its committees and the quarterly gatherings.

I want to thank everyone who has helped the Tribe have a successful year to assure that Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever! It has truly been an honor to serve as your Chair.

Sincerely,

*Wayne D. Wilson, Jr.*

Wayne D. Wilson, Jr.  
Council Chairperson





Above, Tribal Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson, Council Member Jennifer Showalter Yeoman, Executive Director of Tribal Administration Dawn Nelson, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams, Chairperson Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Secretary Diana Zirul, Council Member Liisia Blizzard and Vice Chairperson Bernadine Atchison pose for a photo following the Surgeon General's Kenaitze tour. Left, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, at right, addresses the Council during a visit.

# Meet the Executive Council

Seven Tribal Council Members govern the Tribe in accordance with the Tribe's constitution, bylaws, ordinances and resolutions. Council Members are elected at the Annual General Membership Meeting in October. The Tribal Council holds regular meetings open to Tribal Members. Dates and times are regularly posted to the Tribe's website.



**Wayne D. Wilson Jr.**  
Chairperson



**Bernadine Atchison**  
Vice-Chairperson



**Diana Zirul**  
Secretary

## Committees and Commissions

The Tribe maintains several standing commissions and committees to help inform and guide decisions made by the Tribal Council. Commissions and committees are led by a chairperson and made up of members of Tribal Council and Tribal Members. Tribal Members are encouraged to apply for committee and commission positions throughout the year. Typically, committees and commissions meet once a month. Meetings are held in Kenai. For additional information, please contact Tribal Member Services at 907-335-7200.

### **Audit and Finance Committee**

Clinton Lageson, Chair  
Ben Baldwin  
Diana Zirul  
Sharon Isaak  
Paxton Oder  
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.  
Linda Ross

### **Court Code Committee**

Diana Zirul, Chair  
Liisia Blizzard  
Bernice Crandall  
Clinton Lageson  
Bernadine Atchison

### **Constitution Committee**

Liisia Blizzard, Chair  
Clinton Lageson  
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.  
Rita Smagge  
James O. Segura  
Mary Ann Mills  
Elsie Maillelle

### **Education Committee**

Bernadine Atchison, Chair  
Mary Ann Mills  
Rita Smagge  
Ben Baldwin  
Sondra Stuart  
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman

### **Elders Committee**

Bernadine Atchison, Chair  
Phyllis Bookey  
Betty Porter  
Mary Lou Bottorff  
Rita Smagge  
Tom Stroman  
Sharon Isaak

### **Election Board**

Phyllis Bookey, Chair  
Sharon Isaak  
Katheryn Rodgers  
Bernice Crandall, Alternate

### **Enrollment Committee**

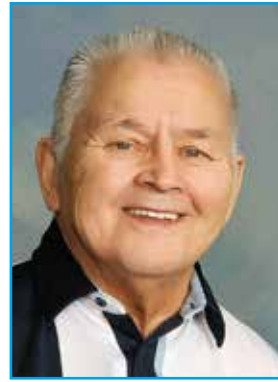
Liisia Blizzard, Chair  
Katheryn Rodgers  
Bernice Crandall  
Clinton Lageson  
Linda Ross  
Evelyn Boulette  
Elsie Maillelle



**Clinton Lageson**  
Treasurer



**Liisia Blizzard**  
Council Member



**James O. Segura**  
Council Member



**Jennifer Showalter Yeoman**  
Council Member

### **Hunting, Fishing and Gathering Commission**

James O. Segura, Chair  
Clare Swan  
Elsie Maillelle  
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman  
Kaarlo Wik  
Liisia Blizzard  
WayneD. Wilson Jr.  
Clinton Lageson  
Bernadine Atchison

### **Land Committee**

Clinton Lageson, Chair  
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.  
Elsie Maillelle  
Kaarlo Wik  
Sharon Isaak  
Paxton Oder  
Vernon Stanford

### **Policies, Ordinances and Procedures Committee**

Diana Zirul, Chair  
WayneD. Wilson Jr.  
Clinton Lageson  
Bernadine Atchison  
Liisia Blizzard

### **Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance Commission**

Bernadine Atchison, Chair  
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.  
Clinton Lageson  
Mary Ann Mills  
Susan Wells

### **Traditional Healing Committee**

Jennifer Showalter Yeoman, Chair  
Bobby Oskolkoff  
Jon Ross  
Linda Ross  
Mary Lou Bottorff  
Elsie Maillelle

### **Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity**

James O. Segura, Chair  
Rita Smagge Vice-Chair  
Clinton Lageson, Secretary/  
Treasurer  
Rosalie Tepp  
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman  
Chris Monfor  
Kaarlo Wik

### **Kenaitze Early Childhood Center/ Head Start Policy Council**

Melissa Larson, Secretary, Moose Room  
Jessica Lageson, Moose Room  
Hannah Hand, Moose Alternate  
Chelsea McDonald, Moose Alternate  
Danielle Bailey, Vice Chair, Salmon Room  
Lynette Percival, Salmon Room  
Natika Flanders, Raven Room  
Kiersten Consiel, Raven Room  
Casey Matranga, Raven Alternate  
Jacqueline Franke, Chairperson, Otter Room  
Ashley Poulin, Otter Room  
Lisa Rucker, Otter Alternate  
Jena Kruzick, Otter Alternate  
Kathy Calloway, Community Member  
Holley O'Brien, Community Member  
Liisia Blizzard, Tribal Council Liaison  
Bernadine Atchison, Tribal Council Liaison Alternate



# About the Kenaitze Indian Tribe

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe was federally recognized as a sovereign, independent nation in 1971 under the Indian Reorganization Act as amended for Alaska. Today, we have more than 1,600 Tribal Members who live across the Kenai Peninsula and beyond. We employ about 300 full-time and part-time employees.

The Tribe delivers a variety of programs and services that promote the wellness of our people and the community. In 2014, we opened the 52,000-square-foot Dena'ina Wellness Center, a fully integrated health care facility. In 2016, we opened the 6,500-square-foot Tyotkas Elder Center within walking distance of the Dena'ina Wellness Center and our Tribal Court. The Dena'ina Wellness Center Campus grew in 2018 with the addition of the Ch'k'denlyah yuyeh Greenhouse. We also operate an Early Childhood Center, the Yaghanen Youth Program, social services, family services, education and career training, and environmental protection programs.

At our Annual General Membership Meeting in October, we elect members to the Tribal Council to serve staggered terms. The seven-member Tribal Council governs the Tribe in accordance with our constitution, by-laws, ordinances and resolutions. It also appoints a Chief Judge to oversee Tribal Court and uphold Tribal laws and hires an Executive Director of Health Systems and an Executive Director of Tribal Administration to manage the day-to-day operations of the Tribe.

Our funding comes from

federal, state and private grants, as well as third-party revenue generated by our health care programs.

Our Tribe is more than buildings and programs; it is our people, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina. It has

been thousands of years since the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina first inhabited Yaghanen, the good land. Our mission, to assure the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever, continues to guide us in all that we do.



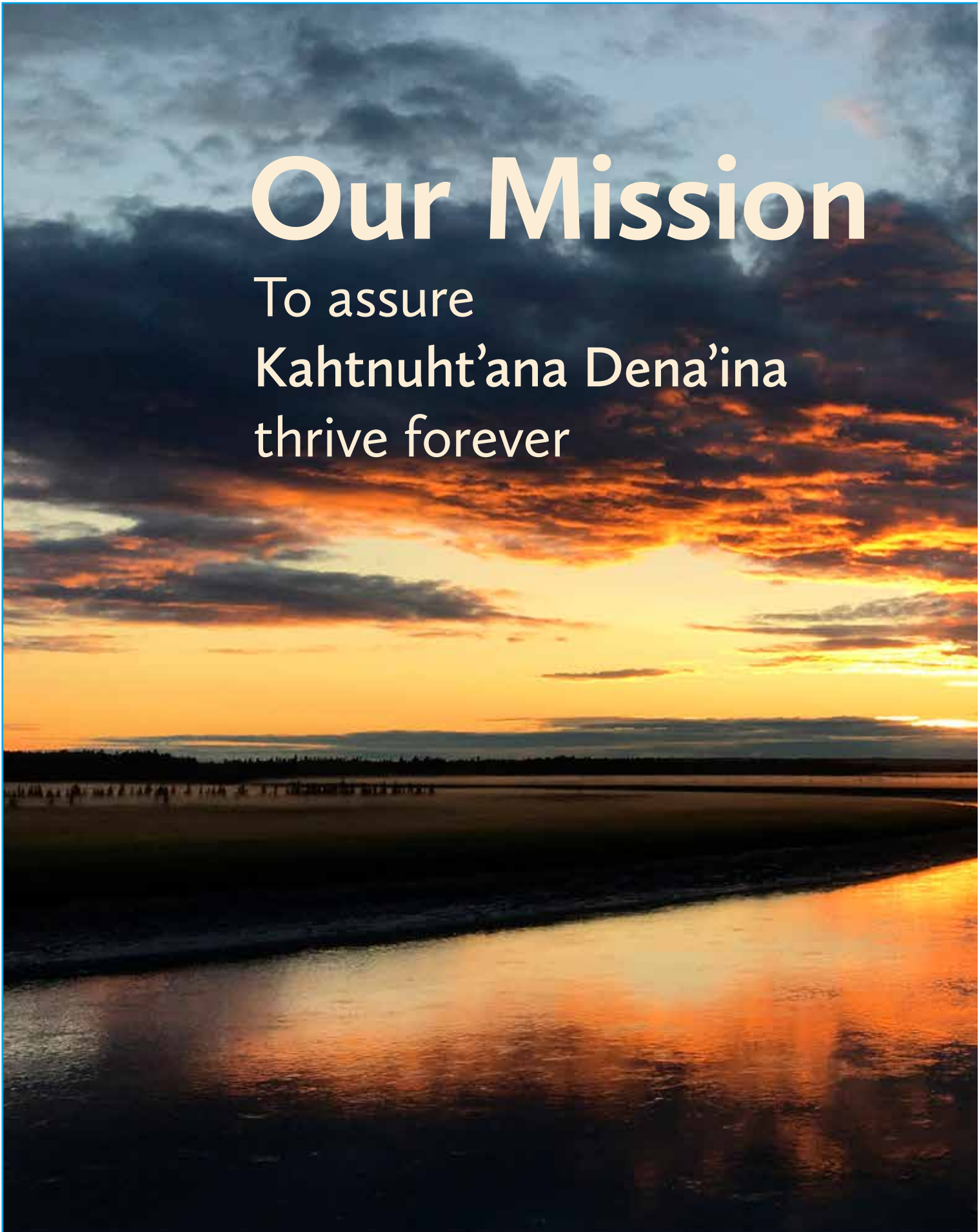
At top, Jake Kooly, Dawson Yeoman and Eli Darien set the Tribe's net into the rising tide at the educational fishery. Above, Jenna Yeoman seal hops down the gym floor during the final day of the Tribe's Native Youth Olympics Invitational in January. At right, Joel Isaak and Roseanne Wilson serve moose soup during the Tribe's First Fish Potlatch in May.



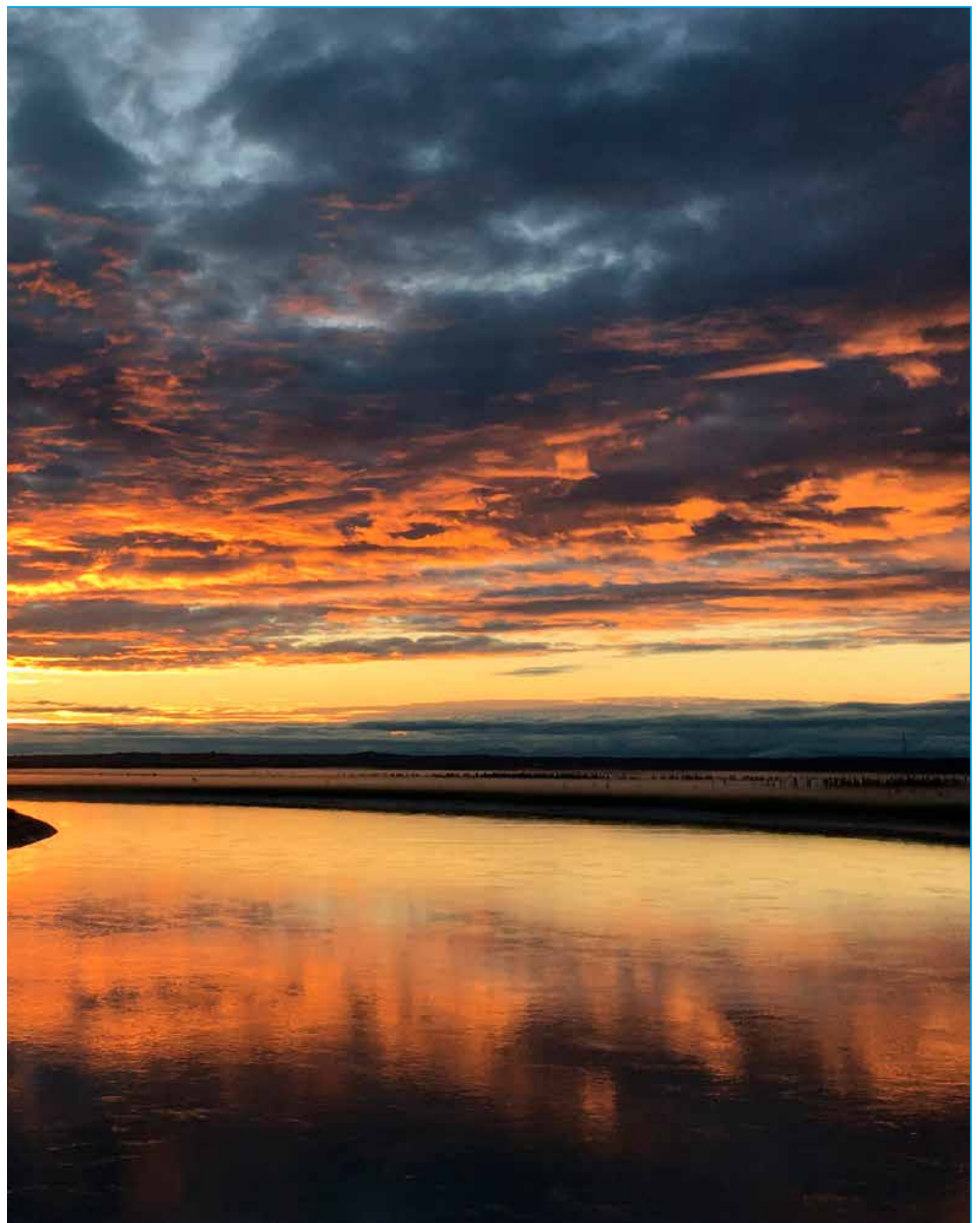


# Our Mission

To assure  
Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina  
thrive forever









# Our Values



## *Education*

Passing down cultural knowledge and traditions and supporting formal education.



## *Stewardship*

Respectful use of land, resources and all creations.





## *Spiritual Beliefs*

Acknowledging the existence of a higher power and respecting spiritual beliefs.



## *Family*

Honoring and sustaining health and happiness of family as a “first responsibility.”

# Dene' Philosophy of Care

We value an approach to service that places our un'ina, those who come to us, at the center. Our Dene' Philosophy of Care takes a whole-person approach toward wellness – addressing physical, spiritual, emotional and social health as contributing factors to overall well-being.

## **Dena'ina Wellness Center**

The Dena'ina Wellness Center is a fully integrated health care facility offering a holistic approach to care. Our un'ina – those who come to us – receive access to medical, dental, behavioral health, chemical dependency, wellness, physical therapy, pharmacy support, optometry and traditional healing – all beneath one roof. The building also features a gym, classroom space and educational kitchen. Alaska Native and American Indian people gain access to all services, while programs that receive state funding – primarily behavioral health – are open to the entire community. The 52,000-square-foot facility opened in 2014 at an early Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina village site in Old Town Kenai.

## **Family and Social Services**

At our Na'ini building in Old Town Kenai, we serve some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Our social services include child care, a food cache, energy assistance, burial assistance, and emergency help. Our family services include sexual assault and domestic violence support, child protection, adult protection, foster care, preservation and Indian Child Welfare Act services. The program supports the Tribe's traditional value of family – honoring and sustaining health and happiness of family as a first responsibility.

## **Educational Fishery**

We operate an educational fishery

through a permit issued by the State of Alaska. The fishery opens each year with a celebration on May 1. Tribal Members wishing to fish can schedule time at the net, and many fish are given to Elders and others who can no longer fish for themselves. Members of the Salamatof Tribe also fish the net. The fishery gives us more than just subsistence and food security. It preserves the culture and traditions established by early Dena'ina people, bringing us together and creating a sense of unity. It represents the resiliency of our people.

## **Early Childhood Center**

Ch'anikna – love for children – is one of the Tribe's most important values. At our Early Childhood Center, we emphasize family support and involvement, healthy choices and traditional Dena'ina culture. The center's no-fee services, which include Early Head Start, Head Start, after-school and summer programs, are open to Native and non-Native children regardless of household income. We offer students dental and health screenings, nutrition services and many culturally appropriate activities.

## **Yaghanen Youth Programs**

Yaghanen – “a safe place” – is where youth come to develop life skills, learn culture, make friends and stay on track academically. We are a prevention and early intervention program open to prekindergarten through 12th-grade students.

Students can participate in dance, drum and traditional sports, among other opportunities. We teach archery, healthy eating habits and highlight the risks of using drugs and alcohol. The program also offers study hall and tutoring during the school year and camps during summer.

## **Tyotkas Elder Center**

Honor and respect for Elders, who provide abundant wisdom and guidance, is important to us. Our Elders program is administered at the Tyotkas Elder Center. We offer a daily lunch service, caregiver support, transportation, home visits, abuse and neglect prevention, advocacy, exercise, field trips, and more. To promote independent living, we also provide information and resources to family members who care for parents, grandparents or older relatives.

## **Tribal Member Services**

Our Tribal Member Services Department assists Tribal Members with enrollment, records, the educational fishery, and more. We work closely with government agencies to ensure the best interests of our people are represented. Tribal Member Services also offers administrative support to the Tribal Council and the Tribe's committees and commissions.

## **K'Beq' Interpretive Site**

Kenaitze ancestors, recognizing the abundance of fish and natural



resources across Yaghanen, the good land, settled along the banks of its rivers. One of those areas was Sqilantnu in present-day Cooper Landing, where we operate the K'Beq' Interpretive Site. K'Beq' offers a depiction of Dena'ina history, customs and traditions through informational displays. The site, which includes a gift shop, is open four days a week from June to September. We manage K'Beq' in partnership with the Chugach National Forest.

### **Housing Assistance**

Our Housing Assistance Program offers a variety of services, including emergency housing, sanding and snowplowing, student housing, transitional housing, and more. We also manage rental units in Kenai that are available to qualified individuals.

### **Environmental Protection**

Our Environmental Protection Program embodies the traditional Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina values of stewardship and education. We host youth science camps every summer, teaching campers traditional stewardship values and introducing them to

environmental conservation practices. Throughout the year, we partner with many organizations on events and projects supporting environmental protection.

### **Education and Careers**

Our Education and Career Training program supports the traditional Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina value of education – passing down cultural knowledge and traditions and supporting formal education. The program assists Tribal Members and other Alaska Native and American Indian people as they pursue higher education and career advancement, offering scholarships, job training and placement, internships, and more.

### **Tribal Court**

Established in 1986, our Tribal Court ensures the efficient and fair administration of justice while honoring the Tribe's customs, history, traditions and experiences. Hearings are conducted in a culturally appropriate manner with a panel of judges, including at least one Tribal Elder, or through a collaborative circle process. The

court hears a wide range of cases, including child protection and custody, domestic violence, tribal adoption, voluntary relinquishment and involuntary termination of parent rights, and conservatorship and guardianship. The court also administers the joint-jurisdiction Henu' Community Wellness Court with the State of Alaska Court System and Yaghalich Tinitun Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court, both of which serve people facing legal trouble stemming from substance use.

### **Ts'itq'u Circle**

The Ts'itq'u Circle, meaning “coming together as one,” is a place where people come to have important or difficult discussions in a good way. Many participants are teenagers facing legal trouble who are referred from the Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice or the State of Alaska Court System. The Circle gives them a chance to work with family, friends and community members on a plan to make amends for their offense. The Circle also is available to employees, families and other groups. It is administered at the Tribal Court-house.



**The Dena'ina Wellness Center anchors the Tribe's Old Town campus.**

**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by elevating the wellness of our people.

**This year:**

A Nurse Practitioner was hired in Primary Care as a full-time medical provider in July. Andrew Fuhrman, NP-C, will help support same-day visits. A Medical Doctor joined Primary Care for a six-month assignment in August as recruiting efforts continue for a full-time doctor. Dr. Judy McDonald will join our Nurse Practitioners to continue providing quality medical care.

Optometry provides routine eye exams, contact lens fittings, and examination for diabetes, glaucoma, and cataracts. We provide glasses for un'ina with Medicaid and have begun selling contact lenses.

Behavioral Health's Ch'anikna Youth Outpatient program partnered with the Kenai Peninsula Community Care Center to provide services to Alaska Native youth in residential treatment, including extending cultural prevention activities to them.

The Behavioral Health department's Café 13 Peer Support program helps develop social and life skills for un'ina in recovery from mental and substance use challenges, as well as serving meals for homeless and other people at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. Approximately 850 people were served throughout the year, with a \$50 weekly budget and the donations of staff and un'ina. Café 13 has grown into a popular and positive social recovery opportunity.



**Traditional Alaska Native foods from around the state, including salmon, candlefish, and bowhead whale muktuk are pictured at the monthly Native Foods Potluck hosted at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.**

Behavioral Health held a three-week Spirit Lake Treatment Camp for the second year. Integration of services was increased by including a Medical Assistant to provide increased safety to those with higher medical risk.

Tyotkas Elder Program focused on health, nutrition and Elder rights. Monthly speakers and topics included: Alaska Legal Services to discuss wills and living wills; the Wellness department's Dietician to talk about healthy eating and physical health; a billing services advocate to discuss Medicare and Medicaid information; and stress reduction information and activities were provided by a Behavioral Health Clinician. Monthly exercise,

provided by a Personal Trainer from the Wellness department, encouraged Elders to get up and move and provided easy exercises to do on their own. The Elders program also provided information and contacts for Elder rights and Elder abuse throughout the year.

Na'ini Family Services achieved a partnership with California Indian Legal Services for the provision of pro bono (no fee) representation for six Tribal children currently involved in the legal system in the State of California. This partnership will ensure the successful implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act on behalf of these children and the Tribe.





**Council Vice-Chairperson Bernadine Atchison; Secretary Diana Zirul; Finance Committee member Linda Ross; Accounts Payable Specialist Christine Uribe-Koivisto; Director of Financial Services Michael Dixon; and Finance Committee members Kenneth Oder, Ben Baldwin and Sharon Isaak watch as Council Chairperson Wayne D. Wilson Jr. and Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson sign a check to pay off the Dena'ina Wellness Center loan in July.**

## Dena'ina Wellness Center loan paid in full in 2018

The Tribe marked a major milestone in July as the Dena'ina Wellness Center construction loan was paid off in full 16 years early. The early pay-off will save the Tribe \$3.8 million in interest over the next 16 years.

"It's an awesome day," Council Chairperson Wilson D. Wilson Jr. said after he and Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson hand-delivered the check for \$9,462,511.19 to First National Bank Alaska's Kenai branch.

A number of factors allowed the Tribe to be able to pay off the loan

early. The Tribe saw savings from careful budgeting, experienced greater-than-anticipated revenue growth, and favorable federal contract negotiations. Other factors include an increase in Medicaid payments, as well as an increase in other insurance payments.

Wilson emphasized that it has been a group effort for the Tribe to be in a position to pay off the loan while still maintaining a healthy savings account.

Wilson said one of the Tribe's concerns is sustaining services

at the Wellness Center after the Indian Health Service Joint Venture expires. Joint Venture funding covers staffing costs for the Wellness Center for 20 years. The Tribal Council has made a motion to put the \$834,829 per year that would have gone toward paying the loan into an account to be used for future projects which will continue to fund Wellness Center operations when the time comes.

"We need to be saving it for what happens in the future," Wilson said.

**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by developing and implementing a Tribal education system.

**This year:**

Following a yearlong strategic process focused on program development, space availability, building renovations, personnel and funding strategies, the Kuya Qyut'anen Early Childhood Center launched the Early Head Start Home Based Program. Early Head Start became a reality after receiving a grant of \$4,960,546 through August 2021 to implement an early childhood education program for children from birth to age 3 that will serve 48 children and their families. We employ 14 team members and have dedicated partnerships established across the region.

The Early Childhood Center served 123 children through its Head Start, after-school, and summer camp programs.

An important milestone was achieved in 2018 with the full establishment of the Tribe's academic and career scholarships. The Education and Career Training department worked with the Policies, Ordinances and Procedures Committee to develop new policies and procedures for all the scholarships the department manages. During this process the award amounts for the scholarships increased, and there was a more intentional focus placed on availability of funding, as well as the Tribal value of education. A total of 45 scholarships were awarded. Twenty-five percent of those receiving scholarships were



**Daniel Blankenship watches for marine wildlife from the bow of a tour boat during a Kenai Fjords cruise that was included with the Tikahtnu Ocean Science Camp operated by the Tribe's Environmental program.**

studying within the medical field, and each have met the Tribe's GPA academic standard of 3.5.

The Environmental program hosted several workshops on healthy homes with hands-on activities to help families make and use non-toxic cleaners. We also provided canvas shopping bags in support of local efforts to re-use, reduce, and recycle. We applied for grant funding to help increase recycling for Tribal families, and in Kenaitze buildings and offices.

The Environmental program worked with Kenai Peninsula College Professor of Anthropology Dr. Alan Boraas and Dr. Ripan Malhi of the University of Illinois to support a DNA study the pair has partnered

with the Tribe to complete. Youth in the Environmental program collected Kenai River wild salmon DNA samples for research on the Kenai and Russian River salmon runs. We also hosted three science camps. The Growing Green camp focused on food security and learning about local foods, pollination and availability of traditional foods. Campers learned about watershed systems and Dena'ina traditional knowledge at the Junior Earth Scientist camp. The Tikahtnu Ocean Science Camp included hands-on activities for coastal species, a Kenai Fjords marine mammal tour, and an overnight stay with classroom labs at the Alaska SeaLife Center in Seward.



# Daggeyi Internship Program is a path to a career

Imagine having a chance to sample a wide range of career options while you're still figuring out what you'd like to pursue when you finish high school.

That's the opportunity Cheyenne Juliussen has as a participant in the Tribe's Daggeyi Internship Program.

Daggeyi is the De-na'ina word for "hard work with others and cooperation."

Juliussen, a high school sophomore, said she applied for the Daggeyi program to get a range of experiences. She recently completed a 10-week internship with Tribal Member Services, and started an internship at the Early Childhood Center. By working with several Tribal programs, interns are able to work in a number of different settings.

While in Tribal Member Services, she said she spent a lot of time filing paperwork. But she also gained a new skill — answering the phone in a busy department.

"I had to answer a lot of calls," Juliussen said.

Juliussen said she's shy, so learning phone skills was a challenge. But it also showed her the importance of the department — many callers, she said, were Tribal Members calling to update their addresses.

While the Daggeyi program provides interns with valuable workplace experience, they also work on setting goals for their future.



**Cheyenne Juliussen is learning career skills in the Tribe's Daggeyi Internship Program.**

Since school started in late August, Juliussen said she's been meeting with Daggeyi Intern Supervisor Misty Klodt about once a week.

"We go over goals, and things I've done in the department I'm working in," Juliussen said.

In fact, goal-setting, mentorship and support are important components of the Daggeyi experience.

"I make some (goals), and then I set new ones," Juliussen said.

Discussions also include homework and academics, as well as goals for things Juliussen would like to accomplish outside of school.

At the Early Childhood Center, Juliussen will be helping with the after-school program. She'll be serving up snacks, supervising play, and helping students with their homework — mostly reading,

she said.

Juliussen has participated in other Tribal programs. She's attended a Yaghanen Youth Program camp, competed in some of the Native Youth Olympics events and participated in the Jabila'ina Dance Group.

The Daggeyi program is open to youth ages 14 to 24. Openings are posted at the Careers page on the Tribe's website, and prospective interns follow an application process, just as they would for other positions.

Daggeyi participants have pursued college as well as career training through their internships.

Juliussen said she's thinking about college, but her internship has also shown her there are other options.

"It's given me more ideas to think about my future, and what field I want to work in," Juliussen said.

**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by working toward a united effort with native organizations and other governments that affect our people.



**Participants in Yaghanen's Fish Camp prepare salmon for canning. Earlier, they learned how to smoke the fish.**

**This year:**

Construction, Senior Fish and Moose Camps are all accredited with the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District so that youth that successfully complete the requirements can earn a half credit elective for high school. It is anticipated that by next summer both of the Yaghanen Program's Susten Camps will also be accredited by the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. Yaghanen continues to work in partnership with the Chugach National Forest, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

fisheries staff and the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Title VI Native Education Department to host our camps. Because of these partnerships we are able to enhance and highly enrich learning while continuing to teach the culture, language and values of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe.

The Tribal Environmental Program continues to work for the protection of human health by efforts to assure Kahtnuht'ana families have access to clean air, clean water, and clean lands for the protection of subsistence resources. We actively review

permits and prepare for Tribal government-to-government consultations with federal agencies. Topics included the importance of plants and berries for traditional foods and medicine; requests for the Alaska Department of Transportation to use local plants in revegetation efforts along the Sterling Highway relocation project; and notice to the Tribe of the removal of plants and berries for harvesting or re-planting. We also worked with the Tribe's Land Committee on plans to develop a Kenaitze Tribal Conservation District for future conservation activities for Kenaitze people.



**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by living our traditional values and practices.

**This year:**

Behavioral Health provided culturally relevant treatment at the educational fishery site, demonstrating healthy recovery skills for approximately 75 un'ina – those who come to us.

One of Yaghanen's greatest accomplishments is the program's ability to consistently host camps that cross a variety of interests, spark academic curiosity, and focus on the cultural practices and traditions of the Tribe and the region. Construction Academy Camp, Junior and Senior Susten Archaeology Camp, Junior and Senior Fish Camp, and the Harvest Camp were each well attended. Moose Camp is again planned for the late fall of 2018. Construction, Senior Fish and Moose Camps are all accredited with the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District so that youth who successfully complete the requirements can earn a half credit elective for high school.

Tyotkas was filled with music this year with the purchase and installation of their new Bose stereo entertainment system. The new system ensures better audio quality for movies and presentations.

The Christmas Party was a joyful event with great food, delicious desserts, door prizes, an exciting raffle and a guest DJ playing favorite holiday tunes.

The monthly Native Food Potluck continues to grow with an average



**During a plants as food and medicine workshop at K'beq' Cultural Site, Ben Baldwin tells a story about how ch'wala - the spruce tree - became so important to Dena'ina people.**

of 70 people attending. Many of the students attending Alaska Christian College and Kenai Peninsula College are grateful for the opportunity to connect with Elders and relatives and to be able to eat familiar foods from home. Seal oil, muktuk, and dry fish are some of the favorite foods that attendees look forward to sharing and eating.

Plants as food and medicine workshops are offered monthly in the Skilak Lake Kitchen at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and traditional teas are enjoyed weekly during Tea Time. Wellness staff are asked to share their knowledge with other Tribal Health Organizations. Estelle Thomson, Traditional Healer, and Tia Holley, Wellness Consultant, were able to

share their expertise at regional plant symposiums this year. Thomson presented at the Yukon Plants as Food and Medicine Conference as keynote speaker and plant medicine knowledge bearer. Holley presented at the Tikahtnu Plant Symposium hosted by Southcentral Foundation.

Free tables are offered to our Alaska Native artist vendors at the monthly arts and crafts sale held in the gathering space at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. Six to twelve artists typically display their works for sale. The variety of items include beadwork, jewelry, fine paintings, crocheted scarfs, fur mittens, grass baskets and more. Vendors tell us that they appreciate the opportunity.

**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by using our talents and resources to ensure we are able to take care of ourselves and share with others.



**Dawson Yeoman rides the new bike he earned for reading 100 books during the 100 Books for a Bike challenge.**

**This year:**

We added a second urgent care clinic to a Preferred Provider Agreement to support Primary Care at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. The agreement was established with Urgent Care of Soldotna. Primary Care will utilize the MediCenter or Urgent Care of Soldotna for overflow care when no same-day appointments are available.

Behavioral Health case management care coordination between departments included: locating permanent housing for several homeless, chronically mentally ill un'ina (those who come to us);

offering support to the un'ina once they are housed; assisting un'ina with Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Income; applying for public assistance, Medicaid and mini-grants from The Alaska Mental Health Trust Fund; and referring un'ina to detox and successfully getting them into a residential facility and back into our services.

The Tribe and Girls Scouts partnered during Na'ini's ongoing sleeping bag and blanket drive to support those in need. Girl Scout Troop 254 donated 129 items to the drive. Items were distributed to homeless people across

the community and handed out at Project Homeless Connect.

During the year, more than 1,000 food boxes were distributed through the Na'ini Food Cache to almost 3,000 individuals, both adults and children.

Tyotkas Elder Center expanded its holiday baked goods menu to include a variety of baked pies, brownies, cookies and breads. The items were gift boxed and delivery was made possible through the generosity of volunteers. Sales of the items raised additional funds for Elder activities.



# New greenhouse grows support for wellness

The Ch'k'denlyah yuyeh (We grow plants inside) Greenhouse grand opening took place in June, sprouting a new opportunity to support wellness on the Dena'ina Wellness Center campus.

Elder Linda Ross provided an opening prayer, Traditional Healer Estelle Thomson conducted a blessing, and songs and celebration were provided by George Holly.

Several programs are helping un'ina – those who come to us – learn greenhouse and gardening skills.

The Wellness Department staff are available to assist un'ina in watering and other gardening activities. Produce is used in workshops, the Tyotkas Elder Center lunch program, and distributed through the Na'ini Food Cache. Tea Time has been scheduled in the greenhouse to provide additional opportunities for people to harvest and enjoy the greenhouse environment.

“I love fresh herbs,” Tyotkas Elder Center Cook Carey Edwards said. “I grow them at home, too. I'd much rather use the real stuff, especially when I'm doing a roast or steaks. They really give off a good flavor.”

Wellness staff have been tracking this year's harvest, carefully weighing the produce before it's distributed. Red kale and red cabbage were big producers in June, while cucumbers, squash, zucchini and green beans tipped the scales in July. All told, 37 pounds of produce came out of the greenhouse in June and July and more was expected in August and September.

Edwards said she is expecting next year's growing season to be even better.



Above, Rose Guilbeau waters her raised bed in the Tribe's new greenhouse. With support from the Wellness department at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, Elders and Tribal programs were able to grow vegetables this summer in the new facility on the Wellness Center campus. Left, baby carrots are just one of the edible treats to come out of the facility.



**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by striving for excellence in all our programs.



**Participants of the Tribe's Jabila'ina Dance Group and Del Dumí Intertribal Drum Group perform a recital to a standing room only crowd of family members at Tyotkas Elder Center.**

**This year:**

The Dental department focused on reducing the new patient exam wait list. The number has stabilized to less than 50 un'ina – those who come to us – compared to more than 400 about a year ago. We hired two new full-time dentists, as well as four new full-time assistants.

We have been able to save from \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year for Purchased and Referred Care by using a company that works out of Central Peninsula Hospital's to interpret and provide radiology reports.

Behavioral Health successfully renewed its accreditation through the Commission of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for three years. Accredited programs serve adults, children and adolescents coping with alcohol, drug or mental health challenges. Accreditation demonstrates that we continue to provide excellent integrated care to an extremely diverse population, in terms of age, ethnicity/race, income, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and type of need, especially co-occurring disorders.

Behavioral Health was able to

maintain lower wait-list numbers for mental health and substance use treatment and increase immediacy of access to substance use recovery services. The department implemented Moral Reconnection Therapy (MRT) to support those who are returning to the community after serving time in jail.

Behavioral Health held a three-week treatment camp at Spirit Lake. Other departments, including Primary Care and Wellness, joined volunteer Elders and alumni from last year's camp to support this year's participants.



# Transportation services expand to meet demand

On the central Kenai Peninsula, access to reliable transportation plays a key role in maintaining a good quality of life.

For Virginia Trenton, that's where the Tribe's transportation services come in. She's able to get a ride from her Nikiski home into Kenai twice a week for physical therapy appointments at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

Trenton doesn't have a car or driver's license. Her adult grandchildren help her with groceries and other errands, but they're typically at work during the times her appointments are scheduled.

The Tribe's transportation program was launched with a Federal Transit Administration grant in May of 2015. The program provides transportation for individuals enrolled in any of the Tribe's programs. Those eligible for Medicaid-covered transportation are encouraged to use those services first, but the Tribe's program fills the gap for un'ina, those who come to us, who fall outside that coverage. There is no fee for the Tribe's service.

The program averages between 65 and 80 regular monthly riders, with most of them using the service several times each month. In fact, many Elders who use the transportation service do so three times a week.

Trenton said the transportation services give her one less thing to have to worry about. Transportation Coordinator Brandi Grimm works with most of the Tribe's

other departments to anticipate appointments and schedule rides. She also encourages un'ina to contact her if they have transportation needs.

"The drivers are all really nice," Trenton said. "I use a cane, so it's hard to get around. They help me in and out of the van and take me to my appointments."

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, the program's main focus is pick-up and drop-off of Elders for lunches. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, drivers concentrate on appointments and help with errands.

The program's two current drivers both have commercial driver's licenses. In addition, they have first-aid and CPR training, as well as Mandt conflict resolution training.

Drivers cover a large swath of territory, from Halbouty Road in Nikiski, to Scout Lake Road in Ster-

ling, and Pollard Loop in Kasilof.

"I'm proud of our drivers," Grimm said. "They do a very good job of caring for our passengers."

Grimm says the need for transportation has been proven, and the program benefits other Tribal services. For example, un'ina are able to make it to their scheduled appointments at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, meaning staff there don't have to manage around missed appointments or late arrivals.

For Trenton, being able to get where she needs to go simply means a better quality of life.

"Oh yes – very much so," Trenton said of the program's positive impact.

For more information on the transportation program, contact Transportation Coordinator Brandi Grimm at 907-335-7212.



**Virginia Trenton and Kenaitze driver Allen Wiser pose for a photo at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. Trenton said she appreciates the personal service.**

**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by continuing to demonstrate resiliency.

**This year:**

The Yinihugheltani Suicide Prevention and Awareness Project provided Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training to 56 people and hosted a safeTalk workshop for 47 people. We partnered with Kenai Peninsula Borough School District for weekly behavioral health education and coping skills groups at Skyview Middle School and held the first LGBTQ Pride Walk in Soldotna with more than 100 community members in attendance. We provided cultural prevention camps for middle and high school youth, including the National Geographic Camp at Denali National Park, to deepen their knowledge of culture, explore internship opportunities, take healthy risks and participate in behavioral health talking circles. We also hosted the first local Gathering of Alaska Natives at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. The three-day event encouraged community engagement by building on four themes: belonging, mastery, interdependence and generosity.

Youth Services was realigned under the broader Behavioral Health department. The program provided direct services for children and adolescents in eight schools and hosted a two-month summer rehabilitation program for youth to maintain and improve recovery from mental health challenges. Daily mindfulness practice was implemented during the summer program, using the "Island of Compassion" Yoga and Havening exercises to teach and practice



**Participants gather at Raven Plaza during a vigil to remember and honor those who have been affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.**

positive coping skills.

The Out of the Darkness Walk, hosted by the Tribe along with the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention, had 230 participants register and walk through Old Town Kenai. We raised \$9,000 for AFSP prevention efforts. Chiqinik gheli – thank you very much – to the many sponsors who donated generous door prizes, to the Kenai River Brown Bears Junior Hockey Team for their support, the city of Kenai for its mayoral proclamation for National Suicide Prevention Week and to Jennifer Moreau, Deputy Behavioral Health Director from the Alaska Department of Health and Human Services, for speaking at the event.

With the support of the U.S. Department of Justice, the Nuhugelyix t'uh Advocacy Center

opened its doors in September. The Center is both a place and a process through which victims of sexual and physical abuse, domestic violence, neglect and those who witness crimes can tell their stories. The Un'ina Advocacy Team will incorporate both the Child and Adult Protection Teams into one group dedicated to healing, hope and justice for victims.

The Tribe's Communications department was recognized with two Aurora Awards of Excellence by the Public Relations Society of America's Alaska Chapter at the organization's annual awards banquet in Anchorage. The 2017 Annual Report received third place in the annual report category. Hot Topics, the Tribe's weekly employee newsletter, received third place in the internal publications category.



**We envision:** By 2025, the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have enhanced and strengthened the prosperity, health and culture of their people and Tribe by empowering our sovereignty.



**Kenaitze Tribal Council Vice-Chairperson Bernadine Atchison and Gov. Bill Walker, right, sign the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact during a ceremony at the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Anchorage. Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner Valerie Davidson and Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott celebrate the moment. The government-to-government agreement will make it possible for participating tribes and tribal organizations to provide child welfare services that would otherwise be provided by the Alaska Office of Children's Services.**

### **This year:**

The Tribe and the Alaska Office of Children's Services entered into a binding agreement when Gov. Bill Walker signed a historic compact with Alaska tribes and tribal organizations that strengthens the state's child welfare system and reduces over time the disproportionate number of Alaska Native children in foster care. The compact – signed at the 51st annual Alaska Federation of

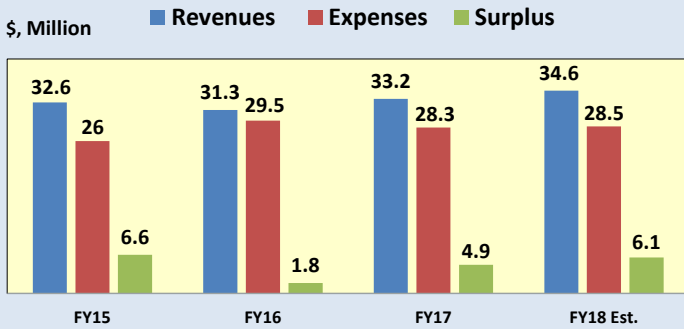
Natives Convention in Anchorage – recognizes the authority of Alaska tribes to provide child welfare programs and services on behalf of the Alaska Office of Children's Services, providing greater local oversight of family services.

The Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact establishes a system to better deliver child welfare services. The compact acknowledges the government-to-government

relationship between the state and tribes, and clearly identifies child welfare services for tribes and tribal organizations to carry out within a defined jurisdiction or service area. Alaska tribes and tribal organizations have successfully partnered with the state to deliver essential health care services for years. This compact builds on those partnerships and strengthens child welfare services in Alaska.

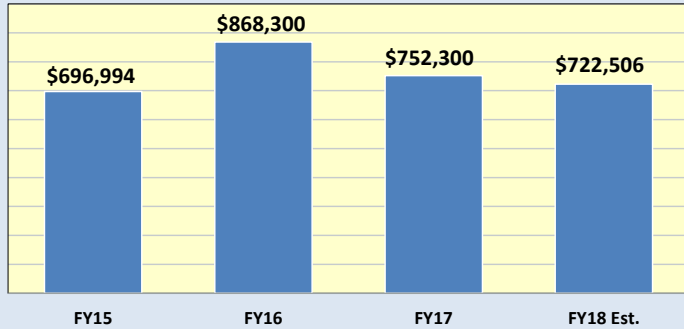
# Tribal Finances

## Financial Performance From Operations



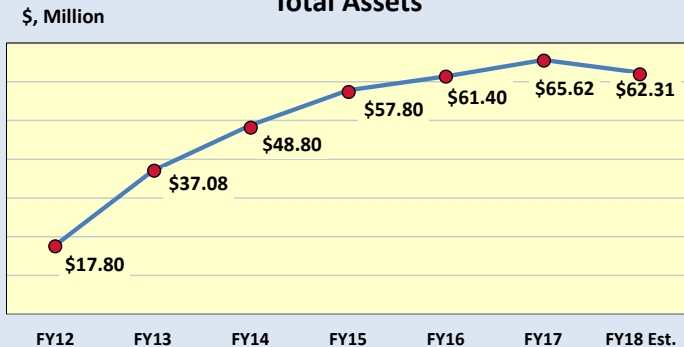
In FY18, the Tribe earned \$34.6 million in revenues and spent \$28.5 million on Tribal operations to provide programs and services. Operations had a surplus of \$6.1 million. Surplus funds are used for future capital projects, debt payment and Tribal development activities.

## Financial Assistance Payments



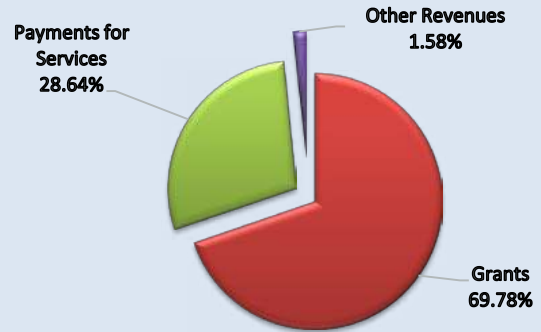
For FY18 the Tribe will spend about \$722,000 on direct payments to those we serve to assist with housing, education, training, transportation, and emergency needs. This amount reflects enhanced support in the Federal Budget for childcare assistance payments for eligible applicants.

## Total Assets



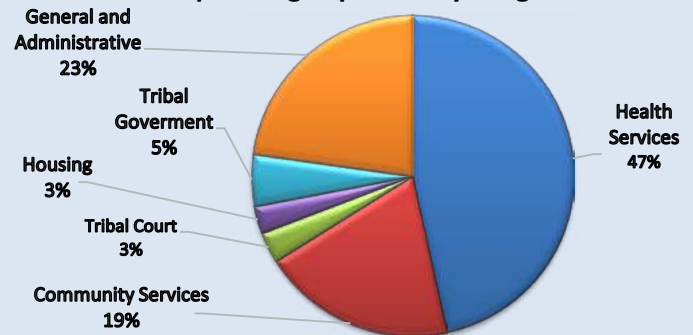
The Tribe's assets (cash reserves, accounts receivable, prepaid expenses, and capital assets) have increased substantially over the past seven years, due to investments in capital assets (the Dena'ina Wellness Center, Toyon Villa Apartments, Na'ini Social Services Building, and Tyotkas Elder Center Building) and positive returns on Tribal operations. The change from FY17 to FY18 reflects a withdrawal from cash reserves to pay off the Dena'ina Wellness Center construction loan. The payoff became possible following recent improvements in operational cash flow. The Tribe will save \$3.8 million in interest over the next 16 years.

## FY18 Sources of Revenues



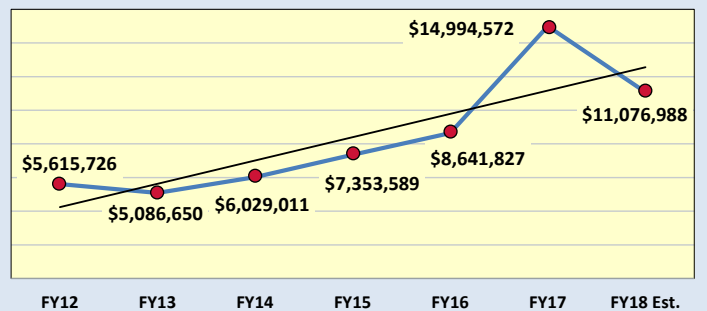
In FY18, about \$24.1 million of total operating revenues were from federal, state, and private grants. Reimbursements for health services paid by Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance generated about \$9.9 million. The balance (\$600,000) came from program user fees, donations, interest income, and contributions.

## FY 18 Operating Expenses by Program



In FY18, \$28.5 million was spent on Tribal operations, \$723,000 was spent on Tribal infrastructure and equipment, and \$9.4 million was spent from reserves to pay off of the remaining 16 years on the Dena'ina Wellness Center construction loan. Total spending was \$38.7 million. Of the \$28.5 million in operational expenses, 76% (\$21.7 million) was spent on direct programs and services. The balance was spent on Tribal Government activities (\$1.3 million) and administrative support of programs (\$5.5 million).

## Unrestricted Net Assets

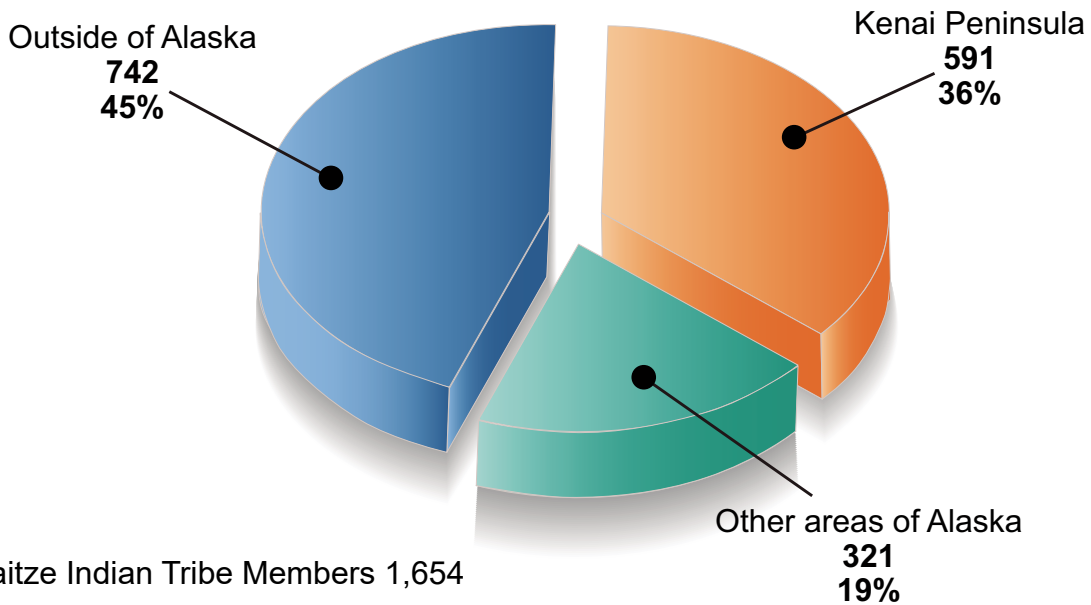


As of the end of FY18, the Tribe has accumulated \$11 million in unrestricted net assets (savings), which provides a reserve for working capital, equipment replacement, facility improvements, and future investments. In FY18, \$6.1 million was added to savings. The \$3.9 million decrease in FY18 from FY17 reflects the \$9.4 million used to pay off the Dena'ina Wellness Center loan. The payoff will save the Tribe \$3.8 million in interest over the next 16 years.

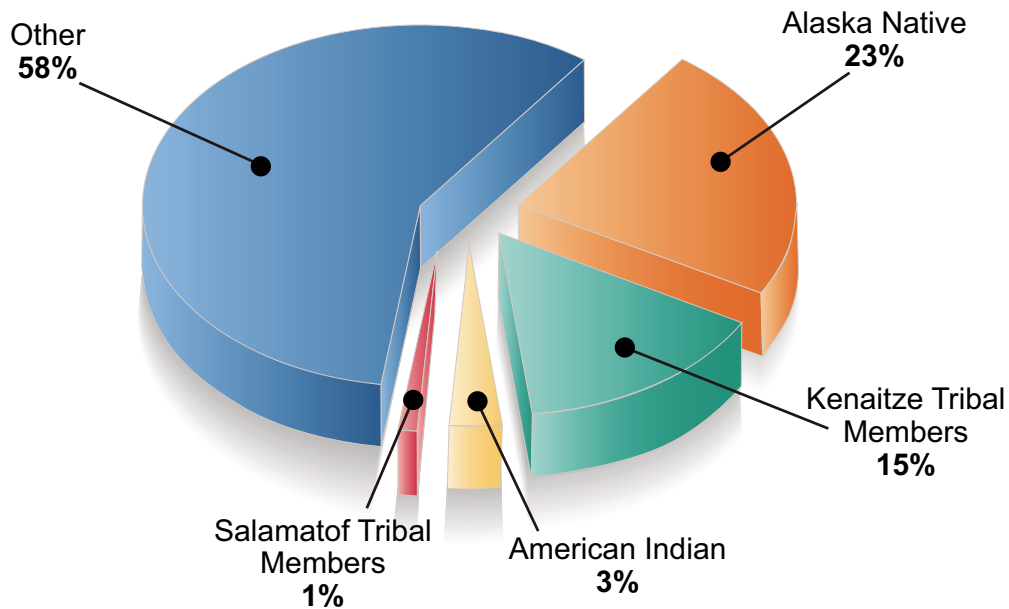


# Demographics

## Tribal Member Enrollment



## Staff Diversity



## Educational Fishery Productivity

	2018*	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
<b>Kings</b>	3	22	10	20	2	19
<b>Reds</b>	6,155	9,311	6,709	8,109	6,109	4,837
<b>Pinks</b>	259	90	203	4	352	24
<b>Silvers</b>	837	222	502	63	261	566
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,254</b>	<b>9,645</b>	<b>7,424</b>	<b>8,196</b>	<b>6,724</b>	<b>5,446</b>

\*As of Sept. 10, 2018

