

Kenaitze

Indian Tribe

Annual Report

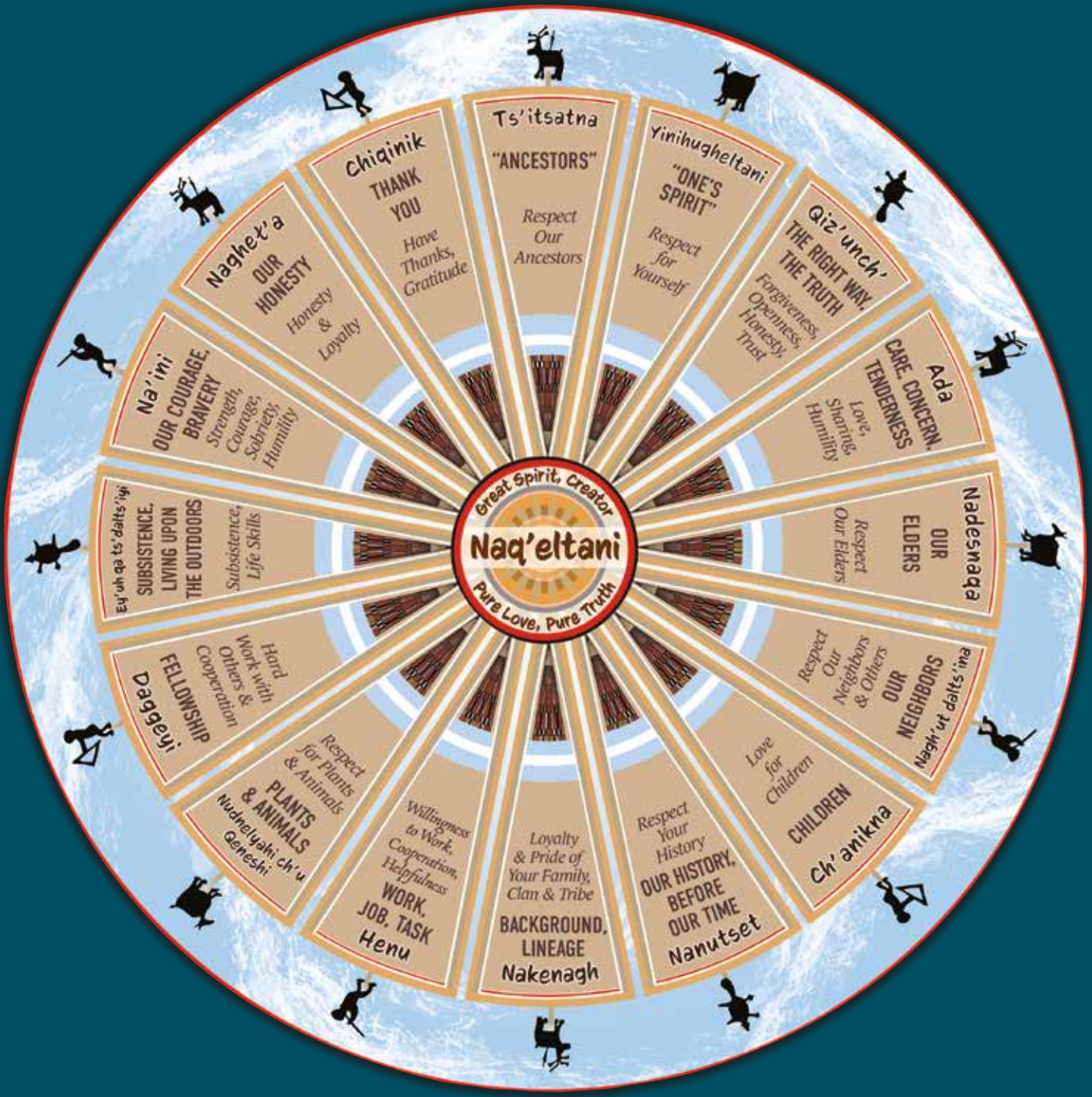


2022



Kenaitze Indian Tribe

Traditional Values





About the Tribe



Linda Ross and Helen Dick work together to make a birch bark basket during a workshop at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.



The Heartbeat of Mother Earth drum group performs at the Opening of the Net in June.

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 about 1,800 Tribal Members who live across the Kenai Peninsula and beyond. We employ about 350 full-time and part-time employees and interns.

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, an integrated health care facility. Kahtnuht'ana Qayeh, the Tribe's campus in Old Town Kenai, also includes Tyotkas Elder Center, Qiz'unch' Tribal Court, and Chuq'eya Qenq'a (Birch Tree House), which houses the Tribe's Behavioral Health services.

The campus expanded in 2019 with renovations to the adjacent Toyon building to accommodate offices and workspaces for Na'ini Family and Social Services and the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity office.

The Tribe's new Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus opened for in-person services in September. The 67,259-square-foot building is home to the Tribe's Early Learning, Yaghanen Youth Language and Culture, Community Education and Career



Kenaitze's Kya Ahlers competes in the one-hand reach during a Native Youth Olympics competition.

About the Tribe *Continued*



The Tribe's Educational Fishery on Cook Inlet at the mouth of the Kenai River preserves Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina culture and provides traditional food for Tribal families.

Training programs, and the Dena'ina Language Institute.

The Tribe also operates an educational fishery from its beach site on the shores of Cook Inlet near the mouth of the Kenai River.

At our Annual General Membership Meeting on the first Saturday 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. The Council appoints a Chief Judge to oversee Qiz'unch' Tribal Court and uphold Tribal laws. The Tribal Council also hires the 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. The Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina have inhabited Yaghanen, the good land, since time immemorial. Our vision, to assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever, continues to guide us in all that we do.



Meet the 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 posted to the Tribe's website.



Bernadine Atchison
Chair



Mary Ann Mills
Vice-Chair



Ronette Stanton
Secretary



Diana L. Zirul
Treasurer



Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Council Member



Virginia Wolf
Council Member



Liisia Blizzard
Council Member



Message from the Chair

Yaghali du?

When I think about the past year, I think about resilience and our ability to overcome adversity. As individuals and as a Tribe, we have supported each other through challenges.

I think of our traditional value of Na'ini, which means our courage and bravery, and Ada, which is care, concern and tenderness. Several of our values teach us to love and respect others, such as Nadesnaqa, our Elders; Ch'anikna, our children; and Nagh'ut dalts'ina, our neighbors.

I think about how all of our values have guided our response to the challenges of the past year in a way that helps us shape our vision for the future.

Our Annual General Membership Meeting is being held at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus, "the Kenai River People's Learning Place." This building provides a home for all of our education programs, where learners of all ages can come to share knowledge, Dena'ina language and Dena'ina culture. This building has been a dream for many years, and I am honored to see it become a reality through the hard work and dedication of many.

The Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus is just one sign of our Tribe's growth since we first organized as a political entity in 1962, and adopted our Constitution in 1971.

Many of you have stories about working in the Tribe's first offices out at Wildwood; when we moved to the ATCO trailers at Shanteh t'uh on Ames Road; when we had to travel to Anchorage for health care; when our beach front for the fishery had no shelter for our Elders or cleaning station for our

Tribal Members; or before we established our Tribal Court, and our children were lost in the legal system.

Now, we have a state-of-the-art integrated health and wellness facility right here in Kenai. Our educational fishery and harvest program provide many Tribal Members and Elders with traditional foods. A new pavilion will enhance our use of our Waterfront. Our Qiz'unch' Tribal Courthouse is expanding to accommodate the court's growing services.

As amazing as the growth of our facilities and services has been, the heart of our Tribe is its people. It is through the contributions of many that the Tribe has been able to provide support for so many over the past two years.

I want to thank our Tribal Council Members, who have put in many extra hours this year as we emerge from the pandemic and return to normal operations. I also want to thank all of our committee members, who always go the extra mile to ensure the Tribal Council has good advice and recommendations, so that we can make well-informed decisions.

I also want to thank all our employees, who work so hard to implement the Tribal Council's decisions and provide such outstanding services.

Last but not least, I want to thank our Tribal Members. You provide the reason for all that we do to build our Tribe's resilience and "to assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever."

Duk'idli, respectfully,
Bernadine Atchison
Tribal Council Chair



External Affairs



Sen. Lisa Murkowski meets with the Tribal Council during a tour of the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

Members of the Tribal Council participate in regional, state and national organizations in support of the Tribe's mission, vision and values.

Alaska Native Health Board

The Alaska Native Health Board serves as the statewide voice and advocacy organization for health needs of Alaska Native people with emphasis on the importance of self-governance and self-determination in health care services. ANHB's advocacy encourages wellness in Native communities through recommendations for policy change on a federal and state level.

The Tribal Council appointed two Council Members, Diana Zirul and Mary Ann Mills, to serve as the Tribe's Primary and Alternate representatives for ANHB. Diana Zirul serves as the Chair of ANHB and as the Co-Lead Negotiator for the Alaska Tribal Health Co-Signers

and IHS Compact Negotiations. Mary Ann Mills serves as a representative to the ANHB Behavioral Health Directors meetings.

The Tribe's representatives have further been appointed by the Tribal Co-Signers and/or ANHB to serve on national and state advisory committees. Mary Ann Mills serves as a representative to the ANHB Behavioral Health Directors Committee and has been appointed as the Primary Representative for the Alaska Area to the IHS Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Tribal Technical Advisory Committee.

Diana Zirul serves as the Alaska Area Tribal Representative to the Governor's Advisory Committee on Opioid Remediation. She has also been appointed as the Primary Representative for the Alaska Area to the IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee, to the IHS National Tribal Advisory Committee on

Behavioral Health and to the newly-formed U.S. Government Accountability Office Tribal Advisory Committee. Diana also serves as the Alternate Representative for the Alaska Area to the IHS Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee and to the National Indian Health Board.

Diana Zirul and Mary Ann Mills recently attended the Region 10 Department of Health and Human Services Tribal Consultation along with members from the Portland Area Indian Health Board which includes tribes from Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Representatives from each of the agencies under DHHS were present such as Indian Health Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, SAMHSA, Administration for Children and Families, Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Administration for Community Living. Tribal Leaders from ANHB and

PAIHB provided talking points regarding the individual and common issues that the tribes throughout our region are experiencing including the need for expanded and strengthened self-governance for all of the programs, health equity of funding sources and resources for our elderly and children closer to home such as housing, assisted living, palliative care for our elderly and foster care for our children.

The Tribe's representation on a federal and state level impacts the following:

- Preservation of the trust responsibility with the federal government for health care services to ensure that funding agreements with IHS are honored.
- Preservation and growth of third-party billing such as Medicare, Medicaid and commercial insurance to increase funding for health care services provided by the Tribe.
- Preservation of the Tribe's diabetes program with a focus on continued growth of this program.
- Preservation of the Tribe's suicide prevention program.
- Ensures the Tribe's recommendations regarding the use of the funds received by the state from the opioid remediation settlements are heard.
- Increased behavioral health funding and funding for alternative treatment for those with substance use disorders.

- Communication with other tribes from across the nation to ensure that tribal priorities are addressed by IHS and our Congressional delegation.
- Preservation of recruitment and retention funding for the Tribe's health care professionals.

Unaffiliated Alaska Native Tribal Health Committee (UANTHC)

UANTHC consists of tribes and sub-regional tribal organizations in the Cook Inlet area who have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose "to describe the means and methods for electing two representatives to the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Board of Directors and to describe essential rules for the operation of UANTHC."

The Tribal Council appointed Diana Zirul, primary representative, and Mary Ann Mills, alternate representative. UANTHC provides recommendations through its ANTHC representatives regarding services provided at Alaska Native Medical Center and its specialty clinics. Diana Zirul has been elected by the UANTHC to service as its primary representative to the ANTHC Board of Directors, and currently serves as the ANTHC Treasurer.

Village Service Management Team Board

The Village Service Management Team has the primary

responsibility for communications with beneficiaries who are residents of the member communities and who receive village field health care services from Southcentral Foundation. The VSMT is also responsible for communicating to the Southcentral Foundation Board of Directors the community health needs and concerns raised by the beneficiaries eligible to receive village field health care services from Southcentral Foundation.

Board Member Liisia Blizzard has been attending meetings in person and attended the VSMT strategic planning session in Homer.

Office of Children's Services Compact Negotiations

Bernadine Atchison is the Co-Chair for the Office of Children's Services Compact Negotiations. In 2017, the Tribe signed an inter-governmental agreement between the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Human Services to transform the OCS system. The goal of the OCS Compact is to transform the system to be culturally appropriate for the Tribal children and families. The Office of Children Services and the Tribe have a long history of collaboration and cooperation in providing services to children and families involved in the child welfare system within and outside of Tribal Court.



Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Board

Bernadine Atchison sits on the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area Board as Treasurer. KMTA's mission is to recognize, preserve, and interpret the historic, scenic, natural resources, and cultural landscape of the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm historic transportation corridor. KMTA was the first partner to request a Dena'ina land acknowledgement from the Tribe, and works with the Tribe to share with the community cultural knowledge about the Kenaitze Indian Tribe.

Sterling Highway Milepost 45-50 Project

As work progresses on the Sterling Highway near Cooper Landing, the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Cultural Observers continue to monitor construction activities and archaeological data recovery in culturally rich areas.

One site, labeled KEN-00092, has been of particular interest. A crew from project contractor HDR has been excavating the site, which sits between the current roadway and the Kenai River and is the most significant site impacted by the project. Discoveries at the site have included agate; pressure flakes, which indicate stone tool-making; fire-cracked rock; and faunal bone fragments.



Nick Jacuk, an Environmental Intern, and Moses Jordan, Environmental Programs Manager, stop for a photo after cleaning trash - including a refrigerator - from Kenai Natives Association land this fall.

In August, Cultural Observers were present for the discovery of a ground slate point, uncovered at a depth of 41 inches. The slate point is believed to be from the Kachemak tradition, which was present in the area more than 1,000 years ago and predates Dena'ina habitation of the area.

Council Member Virginia Wolf serves as a liaison between the Tribe and state and federal agencies also involved in the project.

Health and Human Services Region X Tribal Consultation

Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Mills attended the Health and Human Services Region X Tribal Consultation with the Alaska Native Health Board and testified on the Indian Child Welfare/Title IV-E and offered requests on behalf of the Alaska Native Health Board. The consultation was fruitful. Mary Ann was able to make contact with

Nikki Hatch, Administration for Children and Families, Regional Administrator, Office of Regional Operations, Region 8 and 10. Ms. Hatch had planned a trip to Alaska in September and asked to visit the Tribe's programs, which is positive exposure for Na'ini Family and Social Services, Qiz'unch'Tribal Court and Tribal programs.

Alaska Tribal Recognition

Mary Ann Mills and representatives from the Alaska Regional National Indian Education Conference were asked to be on a panel to speak on State House Bill 123 and State Initiative 21 AKTR, which was the state's attempt to recognize federally recognized Alaska Tribes, which they didn't. The state only recognizes that the federal government recognizes tribes, not the state. In short, it wasn't a meaningful recognition of Alaska tribes by the State of Alaska.



Boards, Committees and Commissions

Policies, Ordinances and Procedures Tribal Council Workgroup

Diana Zirul, Chair

Liisia Blizzard

Mary Ann Mills

Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

Bernadine Atchison

Virginia Wolf

Ronette Stanton

The purpose of the Policies, Ordinances and Procedures Tribal Council Workgroup is to review the Tribe's proposed and existing ordinances, policies and procedures in order to establish guidelines for the Tribe and to provide recommendations to the Kenaitze Tribal Council for approval. A new computer platform will be implemented during this next year to assist in tracking new and existing policies in order to ensure bi-annual review is completed in a timely manner.

Constitution Committee

Liisia Blizzard, Chair

Logan Wik

Elsie Maillelle

Samantha Singleton

James O. Segura

Mary Ann Mills

Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

Sharon Isaak

Amanda Wearly

As a sovereign, independent Nation, the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Constitution establishes basic principles and rules that we use to self-govern, and ensures that the rights of our citizens are protected. The Constitution Committee meets

on a regular basis to review and recommend revisions to the Constitution.

The committee will be creating a process for the Tribal Membership to be able to vote and approve an amended Constitution.

Court Code Committee

Mary Ann Mills, Chair

Liisia Blizzard

Sharon Isaak

Bernadine Atchison

Russelle J. Wilson

Ben Baldwin

Bernice Crandall

The Kenaitze Court Code Committee has been reviewing, revising and rewriting its Domestic Codes to comply with Title IV-E, which were completed and approved by Council prior to federal approval. The committee reviewed and revised the Elders and Vulnerable Adult Code with careful consideration which include Dena'ina values. The Court Committee was split on the definition of marriage and many ideas came to the table. It has been forwarded to the Policy, Ordinance, Procedure Committee for their input and thought. The decision will, more than likely, have to be made by our citizens.

Education Committee

Bernadine Atchison, Chair

Amanda Wearly

Samantha Singleton

Mary Ann Mills

Lisa Huffman

Linda Ross

Sondra Stuart, Community Based Education Expert

Jennifer Showalter Yeoman

Ben Baldwin, NIEA

Board Member

Christina Stuiwe, KPC Ex Officio

Quinton Kimball,

Tribal Youth Member

The Education Committee has continued to support the Tribe's Education department in completing the new Tribal Campus, Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht (The Kenai River People's Learning Place). Head Start and Yaghanen programs that have been offered in the years past have moved into the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht, with services starting in September. New pilot programs, such as Kenaitze Home School and Early Learning Full Day services, will start this year and be expanded upon in the year to come.

Elders Committee

Ronette Stanton, Chair

Mary Lou Bottoroff

Katheryn Rodgers

James Coveyou

Russell Wilson

Phyllis Bookey

Arnold Oskolkoff

Betty Porter,

Honorary Lifetime Member

Mary Ann Mills,

Honorary Lifetime Member

Ronette Stanton was elected to be the committee chair last December. The Elders Committee meets on a monthly basis, and is open for all Elders to attend.

In the past year, the Elders Committee passed a memorial

Boards, Committees and Commissions *Continued*

policy for non-Tribal Member participants in order to honor those who pass away. This would allow for the Elders Center to provide a sympathy card, flowers and a meat tray and fruit tray to the family, upon notification of the Elder who passed.

Along with honoring those who have passed, the Elders Committee and Tribal Council are in the final stages of creating a conceptual design for a Tribal Member Elders' Memorial wall at Tyotkas.

The Grants team assisted the Elders Committee in creating an Elders Housing Survey, for interest in Elders housing facilities. Kenaitze was awarded a HUD Indian Housing Grant for \$5 million with a \$1.6 million Kenaitze match, to provide funding for affordable housing to Elders. The grant would allow for 18 housing units.

Election Board

Maria Sweppy
Bernice Crandall
Katheryn Rodgers
Krista Holloway, Alternate

Enrollment Committee

Liisia Blizzard, Chair
Evelyn Boulette
Samantha Singleton
Katheryn Rodgers
Elsie Maillelle
Bernice Crandall
Linda Ross

The Tribal Enrollment Committee receives and verifies eligibility of all applications for Tribal enrollment. All approved

applications for Tribal enrollment are ratified on a yearly basis during the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Annual General Membership Meeting.

The regular process for the ratification of enrollment applications by the general body will be followed during the hybrid Annual Meeting on Oct. 1.

In the event that the Tribe determines a need to move to a virtual annual meeting, the process used in the prior two years during the COVID-19 pandemic will be implemented. Under that process, the 2022 list of new enrollees will be mailed to the qualified voting membership. If no objections to the list of new enrollees are received, the list will be considered ratified within 30 days after the Annual Meeting.

Environmental Protection Committee

Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Chair
Virginia Wolf
Ronette Stanton
Mary Ann Mills
Julianne Wilson
Paul Shadura II
Sam Schimmel,
Youth Committee Member

The Environmental Protection Committee was created in 2022 to help ensure that the air, land and water of the homeland of the Kenaitze people is protected. The committee has been studying local, state and federal environmental issues with the potential to affect Yaghanen, the Kenai Peninsula. The committee is also working closely with the

Tribe's Environmental team.

The future of our people depends on a safe environment for our moose and fish. This strong and active committee has an open seat for one additional member.

Finance Committee

Diana Zirul, Chair
Linda Ross
Ben Baldwin
Krista Holloway
Maria Sweppy
James Coveyou
Sharon Isaak

The Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing drafts of the Tribe's financial statements on a monthly basis and making recommendations to the Tribal Council. The committee is also responsible for reviewing the Tribe's annual audit and making recommendations regarding any findings.

Krista Holloway joined the committee during this past year.

Head Start/Early Head Start Parent Policy Council

Danielle Shedd, Chair
Nola Irwin
Brittany Miller
Holly Rust
Tanya Rocho
John Bayne
Michelle Teates,
Community Member
Kiersten Consiel,
Community Member
Liisia Blizzard,
Tribal Council Liaison
Virginia Wolf,
Tribal Council Liaison

Hunting, Fishing and Gathering Commission

Kaarlo Wik, Chair

James Coveyou

Alex Coxwell

Liisia Blizzard

Elsie Maillelle

Sharon Isaak

Logan Wik

James O. Segura,

Honorary Lifetime Member

Mary Ann Mills,

Honorary Lifetime Member

Bernadine Atchison,

Honorary Lifetime Member

Clare Swan, Honorary

Lifetime Member

Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board

Diana Zirul, Chair

Mary Ann Mills, Vice Chair

Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Secretary

Sharon Isaak

Maria Sweppy

Samantha Singleton

The Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board is responsible for providing recommendations and advice to the Tribal Council on matters related to the health care services at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and the behavioral health services at Chuq'eya Qenq'a.

The board is currently updating its bylaws and has been focusing on a new Credentialing and Privileging Policy with Corresponding Procedure for Dena'ina Wellness Center providers.

The board has also been focusing on the workforce challenges as we continue in our provider and staff recruitment efforts. This year we welcomed

Nate Saltzgeber, Physician's Assistant, who has joined Dr. Callum, Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Marcotte in Primary Care.

Dr. Phillips continues to expand the available testing in Optometry and we encourage you to check out the new eyewear available to our un'ina.

Dr. Richards and his staff continue to expand the type of services available in the Dental department including Invisalign and dental implants when appropriate.

We also welcome Laboratory Director Masood Safari, who will assist in the full use of the updated and new laboratory and radiology equipment.

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities conducted an onsite survey of the Behavioral Health services this past November, and the Tribe received another three-year extension of its CARF accreditation.

The Wellness program now offers extended hours of operation at the gym from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. which has been well-received. The addition of a new greenhouse and the relocation of the "old" greenhouse to Ames Road has produced hundreds of pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables for our Elders.

A new generator has been installed at the Dena'ina Wellness Center utilizing federal maintenance and repair funds to ensure that services are not disrupted in the event of a disaster or federal emergency. A new covered, dedicated

entrance to the pandemic suite has been installed for those un'ina who have tested positive for COVID and for those who suspect that they may have other infectious diseases.

With the everchanging range of COVID-19 variants, Alaska continues to be considered at "high" community levels as defined by CDC, and the number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 continues to increase. The Dena'ina Wellness Center offers vaccinations, including boosters, medical therapeutics when indicated and medical advice for your questions regarding COVID.

With the flu season upon us, we encourage un'ina to contact their provider regarding recommendations for health care needs and/or risks, especially during the pandemic.

Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board Behavioral Health Committee

Mary Ann Mills, Chair

Diana Zirul

Alex Coxwell

Maria Sweppy

Kahtnuht'ana Development Corporation

Gabriel Juliussen Jr., President

Bruce Gabriel, Vice President

James O. Segura

Virginia Wolf

Land Committee

Virginia Wolf, Chair

Mary Ann Mills

Kaarlo Wik

Elsie Maillelle

Boards, Committees and Commissions *Continued*

*Sharon Isaak
Vernon Stanford
Russelle Wilson*

The Land Committee has been researching ownership of the Kalifornsky Village and K'beq' sites as well as how to register historical sites with the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act on information regarding historical gravesites. The committee has also been working closely with the Environmental Committee on the protection of Tribal lands and creating a Kenaitze cemetery.

Niĭ Qenach'delghesh Board of Directors

*Diana Zirul, Chair
Ivan Encelewski, Vice Chair
Maria Goins, Secretary/Treasurer
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Ronette Stanton
Greg Encelewski*

Niĭ Qenach'delghesh, an intertribal consortium, was established in 2021 by the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and the Ninilchik Village Tribe. Both Tribes have been licensed by the FCC to provide broadband deployment and delivery for the benefit of the Tribes and their Members within the Kenaitze and Ninilchik service areas.

An engineering assessment has been conducted to identify existing towers that will provide optimal speed and service for the system. Four additional tower sites have been identified to ensure adequate coverage to meet the needs of those Trib-

al Members who responded to the needs survey as part of the application process.

Niĭ Qenach'delghesh is applying for grants to fund operations and possible network buildout.

Research Review Board

*Bernadine Atchison, Chair
Virginia Wolf, Elder
Elizabeth Atchison, Cultural Representative
Norma Johnson
Robert Mitchell, D.O.*

The Research Review Board continues to work in collaboration with Dr. Ripan Mahli from the University of Illinois and Adam Dunstan at Kenai Peninsula College on the Salmon DNA Project and the process for interviewing Elders as part of the project. The board invited Adam to attend meetings quarterly and provide updates from the project. The board is also in the process of revising the 2016-03 Research Ordinance and Policies regarding the protection of Tribal Members and cultural resources.

Kenaitze/Salamatof Trially Designated Housing Entity Board

*Kaarlo Wik, Chair
Eric Morrisson, Vice Chair
Diana Zirul, Secretary
Ronette Stanton
Maria Sweppy
Mary Ann Mills
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman,
Community Member*

Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance Commission

*Lisa Huffman, Chair
Bernadine Atchison*

*Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Mary Ann Mills
John Juliussen*

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance 2017-01 was adopted by Tribal Council on Jan. 24, 2017. This ordinance established the Tribal Employment Rights Office and TERO Commission. The ordinance was amended and restated on Oct. 26, 2017 and again on Aug. 2, 2019.

The TERO Commission is composed of five Tribal Members with five-year staggered terms. The commission follows the goals established by Tribal Council and has successfully established a TERO applicant pool consisting of Tribal Members, Tribal Member spouses, and other Alaska Natives and American Indians seeking employment opportunities. From the TERO pool, qualified applicants are identified for employment opportunities within the Tribe as well as with other companies and businesses for which TERO applicants are interested in pursuing a career.

Kenaitze provides hiring preference to eligible and qualified Kenaitze Tribal Members, Tribal Member spouses, and Alaska Native and American Indian applicants pursuant to the TERO Ordinance and P.L. 93-638 Indian Self-Determination Act. In addition to employment preference, Kenaitze provides preference to TERO employees for promotion, training, or retaining to the maximum extent permitted by Tribal law.



The TERO Commission reviews job descriptions to ensure barriers are removed and opportunities are made available to eligible and qualified TERO applicants. The TERO Commission also reviews variances to hiring preference to ensure TERO preference is applied when filling vacant positions or promoting individuals within the Tribe. Variance requests receive final approval from Tribal Council.

The Tribal Employment Rights Office has been instrumental in connecting TERO applicants with jobs at Kenaitze Indian Tribe and with businesses in our communities. Additionally, the Tribal Employment Rights Office has assisted TERO applicants with education and training so that more opportunities become available to our Tribal Members in line with our vision, "to assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever."

The Tribal Council is reviewing the TERO ordinance to bring the Ordinance into alignment with Tribal Council's vision and goals for a Tribal Employment Rights Office.

Title IV-E Committee

- Mary Ann Mills, Chair*
- Samantha Singleton*
- Mandee Cogley*
- Liisia Blizzard*
- Diana Zirul*
- Bernadine Atchison*
- Bernice Crandall*

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has been approved by the federal government to run its own Title IV-E Program. Region X staff

came to Alaska to celebrate with us on Aug. 17, 2022, and recognized that we were the first tribe in the nation to complete its application within the two-year allotted time. Approval of Title IV-E is extremely important as it affords the Tribe to move forward in exercising and implementing its self-determination and sovereignty. As the Chair of the The Title IV-E Committee, I am extremely proud of the Committee Members who went through the process line by line and offered their wisdom and adherence to our traditional values and customs. The committee is grateful to Maria Guerra, Director of Na'ini Family Services, and attorney Kimberly Kirchner for their technical support, along with the many other partners who gave their support.

The Indian Child Welfare Act is crucial to helping Native children and families receive protections that balance bias in state child welfare systems and stay connected to their culture and tribal nation. Sixty-five percent of children in state custody are Alaska Native, which is significant because Alaska Native people make up about 16 percent of Alaska's population. The history of Alaska's Office of Children Services has been a bumpy ride for Alaska Native people, as it created the loss of our children in a system that promoted placement and adoption of our children into non-Native homes, often without Tribal knowledge or consent. The loss of our children

has had a traumatic and devastating effect on our families and on our Tribe, as a whole.

The approval of our Title IV-E program is vital as we will be able to protect our children and families and offer parity to our foster parents. As we follow federal law we were also able to implement Dena'ina traditional laws and values which will begin the process of healing for our Tribe.

Tribal Council Charter Workgroup

- Ronette Stanton, Chair*
- Wayne D. Wilson Jr.*
- Diana Zirul*
- Bernadine Atchison*
- Virginia Wolf*
- Mary Ann Mills*
- Liisia Blizzard*

The Tribal Council meets periodically to review and make revisions as needed to the Boards, Commission and Committee Charters.

Tribal Council Orientation Workgroup

- Ronette Stanton, Chair*
- Wayne D. Wilson Jr.*
- Diana Zirul*
- Bernadine Atchison*
- Virginia Wolf*
- Mary Ann Mills*
- Liisia Blizzard*

The Tribal Council is creating an orientation manual for new Tribal Council, Board, Commission and Committee Members, that would include, but is not limited to, the Traditional Values Wheel, Tribal Constitution, Ordinances and Policies.



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**Our Vision:
To Assure**

**tnuht'ana
ena'ina**

Survive Forever





Education programs come together



Trixie Spicer leads preschool students through a lesson on the first day of school at Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

After two years of finding ways to share knowledge, language and culture from a distance, the Tribe's Education programs have come back together at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

In-person services at Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht, "the Kenai River People's Learning Place," began with the new school year in September.

The Tribe's Early Learning program serves children from six weeks old to age 5 at the new education campus. All Early Learning services are provided from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Thursday. An extended learning day pilot program is being offered to Kenaitze Tribal Member students

enrolled in the Early Learning program this fall.

The Yaghanen Language and Cultural programs, which serve students from kindergarten through 12th grade, were spread out across five central Kenai Peninsula schools over the past year to reach as many learners as possible while maintaining COVID-19 safety protocols. Culture Instructors led groups after school, and also were available to assist students throughout the school day.

Beginning with the Yaghanen Summer Culture Camp in June, learners once again were able to gather together. The Summer Culture Camp included traditional activities and day trips across the Kenai Peninsula for

youth ages 5 to 14. Youth ages 14 to 18 also had the opportunity to participate in the Susten Archaeology Camp.

Yaghanen after-school programs resumed at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus this fall. Activities include the Jabila'ina Dance Group, the Del Dumi Drum Group, Native Youth Olympics, and homework help. Youth also are learning the Dena'ina language, outdoor skills and activities, and archaeology through the Susten program.

In 2021, the Tribe launched the Dena'ina Language Institute, an evolution of the Tribe's Dena'ina Language and Culture Revitalization Project. The Dena'ina Language Institute has

at Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht



Tammy Grimes laughs with Charlotte Bedford in an infant and toddler learning class during the first day of school.



The Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus is now open.

developed an interactive Dena'ina audio dictionary, which can be found on the Tribe's website. The Dena'ina Language Institute has published a pocket dictionary, and a Dena'ina Qenaga sounds baby board book.

Education staff have been receiving Dena'ina language lessons, and Dena'ina Language Institute staff are offering free community Dena'ina Language classes.

Fourteen Daggeyi interns participated during the sum-

mer cohort. Interns were placed at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, Dena'ina Language Institute, Yaghanen, Chuq'eya Qenq'a Behavioral Health, Na'ini Family and Social Services, the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity, as well as the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Kenai Watershed Forum.

Interns learned basic employability skills, resume writing, cultural values, crafts and traditional plant uses. Interns were certified in Basic Life Sup-

\$227,750
Amount distributed in
scholarships in
2022

81 of 83
scholarships
awarded to Tribal
Members

\$23,350
Increase
to scholarship funding
for **2022**

 **View audio dictionary**

port and as Food Handlers, and explored career pathways.

Seven Child Care Apprentices have started a 12- to 18-month program. The apprenticeships lead to highly qualified child care workers for the community.



Health Systems



Greenhouse Coordinator Jessica Louise Newton prepares a hanging basket in one of the Tribe's two greenhouses.



Occupational Therapist Sarah Huot leads James Torkelson through an exercise in her office at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

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.

The Dena'ina Wellness Center, along with Chuq'eya Qenq'a, is an integrated health care facility offering a holistic approach to care. Un'ina have access to Primary Care, Dental,



Jessica LeClair's mom Caitlin watches as she tries on frames in the Dena'ina Wellness Center's Optometry office.

Behavioral Health, Chemical Dependency, Wellness, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Pharmacy Support and Laboratory Services, all on one campus.

The Dena'ina Wellness Center also features a gym and classroom space.

In January, the Tribe earned a fresh three-year accreditation from CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. The Tribe first earned CARF accreditation in 2015.

CARF International accredits the Tribe's integrated Behavioral Health and Primary Care services; outpatient Behavioral Health programs for adults, children and adolescents, which includes substance use disorder treatment for adults; and the services provided through the joint-jurisdictional therapeutic Henu Community Wellness Court.

CARF accreditation shows the Tribe's commitment to continually enhance the quality of our services, and to focus on the satisfaction of those we serve. It shows that the Tribe's services conform to internationally accepted standards through our policies, procedures and practices. A three-year accreditation shows that the Tribe is able to demonstrate quality improvement from previous CARF surveys.

Christopher Koski, a Kenaitze Tribal Member, was hired as Director of Health Systems in July. Chris oversees operations at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and Chuq'eya Qenq'a, Birch Tree House.

Chris also provides guidance to Tribal leadership in planning health and wellness strategies, integration of care, goals, initiatives and structure in alignment with the Tribe's values and vision.

An Occupational Therapist has joined the Dena'ina Wellness Center staff, providing a range of services, including Lymphedema Therapy, to help un'ina develop, improve, or maintain skills to do the things they want and need to do in their day-to-day lives.

Services in the Dental department have expanded to include Invisalign, an alternative to orthodontic braces, and dental implants.

The Tribe's complementary medicine services have also expanded to include a Certified Rolfer and a new Traditional Healer, in addition to Medical Massage Therapy.

Drumming returned to Chuq'eya Qenq'a this year as drum circles with the Heartbeat of Mother Earth Drum resumed. Drumming is an important part of the Chemical Dependency program, and all are welcome to take part.

There are now two greenhouses in operation at Shanteh t'uh, the Tribe's Ames Road property. As of September 1, the greenhouses had provided 650 pounds of fresh produce to Tyotkas Elder Center for use in Elders' meals.

The Wellness gym has expanded hours and is now open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., with a selection of group fitness classes.

Arts and crafts workshops and traditional activities offered by Wellness staff continue to be popular.



Elders get back in the swing of things

14,015

Meals delivered to Elders from Oct. 1, 2021 to March 9, 2022

275

Meals delivered three days per week while Tyotkas was closed

120 to 160

Hours of advocacy work provided by Elder Advocates each week

120

Elders who receive weekly advocacy



Dave Hobson, Mary Hunt, Lucy Daniels and Alice Mathlaw share a laugh during a "net day" for Tyotkas Elder Center participants.

Tyotkas Elder Center re-opened for in-person activities and meals on March 14, two years after the building closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the fall of 2021 and winter of 2021-22, Elders program staff continued to provide support for Elders with delivery of hot meals three days per week, and regular outreach by Elder Advocates.

Tyotkas hosted the first Tribe-wide gathering since 2019 in April with the return of the family Easter party. Elders had the opportunity to help with preparations for the party, assembling Easter

baskets for the children who attended the party.

Activities at Tyotkas ramped up throughout the summer, with trips to the Seward Sea Life Center, the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center, Homer and Seldovia, as well as to area beaches and the Tribe's Waterfront.

Activities at Tyotkas have included Bingo, special tea parties, arts and crafts, Elders fitness classes, and new groups for men and women. After starting with three dine-in meals per week in March, Tyotkas began serving dine-in meals Monday through Friday in June.



Tribal Fishery

Rough weather made for some challenging conditions this summer at the Tribe's educational fishery.

"The problem was, all of the fish came through when the weather was super bad," said Tribal Harvest Program Manager Jake Kooly, noting the frequent high winds and big waves on the beach.

To compensate for the conditions, fishery staff had to make sure the net was in the water to fish every tide.

"We got as many (fish coming to the net) as we needed. We just had to work harder for them," Kooly said.

As of Sept. 1, 8,722 fish had come to the Tribe's nets.

Kooly credited the fishery staff for keeping things running smoothly and a successful season.

"It boils down to having a good team, how good of a crew you have working the net," Kooly said.

The fishery opened on June 1 this year. Tribal Members kicked off the start of the season with the Opening of the Net Celebration at the Tribe's Waterfront.

Tribal Members were happy to once again be able to gather at the net and celebrate culture and traditions.

Kooly also reported good days of fishing from the Tribe's 32-foot fishing boat, named the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina. The boat is used for



Chelsea Farmer picks fish from the Tribe's net during a September tide.

king salmon fishing out of Homer in the winter, and halibut fishing during the summer months.

The fish that come to the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina are

shared with Elders. King salmon are harvested under state sport fishing and proxy fishing regulations. Halibut fishing is done under federal subsistence fishing regulations.

Educational Fishery Productivity

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Kings	3	1	4	0	0
Reds	6,155	8,572	7,040	10,758	8,170
Pinks	259	168	118	0	261
Silvers	945	24	506	568	291
Totals	7,362	8,765	7,668	11,326	8,722

*As of Sept. 1, 2022



Tribe continues to expand facilities

With children now learning in the new Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus, work continues on three other new projects.



Qiz'unch' Tribal Court

At Kahtnuht'ana Qayeh, the Tribe's campus in Old Town Kenai, renovation and expansion of the Qiz'unch' Tribal Courthouse is underway. The contractor on the project, UIC Nappairit LLC, began work on May 9. When completed, the expansion will add 3,200 square feet to the building, for a total of 4,748 square feet.

The expanded and renovat-

ed building will include two new, 700-square-foot Tribal Courtrooms. There will be two rooms for the Ts'itq'u Circle, both about 300 square feet. The design also includes new and remodeled space for Tribal Court Judges and administrative staff, and a more comfortable waiting area for those participating in Tribal Court proceedings.

Work on the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Community Hall and Harvest Pavilion at the Tribe's Waterfront began after the June 1 Opening of the Net. UIC Nappairit LLC also is the contractor for the project.

When completed, the new pavilion will be 3,453 square feet and have space for gatherings of up to 299 people. The pavilion, which replaces a much smaller structure, will enhance and support the Tribe's educational fishery, and

provide additional opportunities for Tribal and Tribal Member gatherings.

Construction on the Qenq'a Yuyeh Qiqizdlu Maintenance and Warehouse began on May 13. Qenq'a Yuyeh Qiqizdlu is Dena'ina for "the house we put things inside." The building is located on the Kenai Spur Highway and accessible from South Spruce Street in Kenai.



Qenq'a Yuyeh Qiqizdlu warehouse building

The contractor for the pre-engineered metal building is AMES1 LLC. The 15,050-square-foot building will include storage, as well as workspace, offices and a conference room for the Tribe's Maintenance department staff.

The Tribe has also issued a request for proposals to erect the Hetl Qenq'a Transportation Building, to be located next to the Maintenance and Warehouse. Hetl Qenq'a means "sled house."

The 7,000-square-foot building will include an office, training room, two bus bays and two wash bays. The project also includes a 20-stall covered parking area. The facility will extend the useful vehicle life for the Tribe's Transportation fleet.



Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Community Hall and Harvest Pavilion



Tribe's Title IV-E plan approved

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has a new resource available to support children and families.

In August, the Tribe received approval of its Title IV-E plan from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The Tribe has been working toward a Title IV-E plan for several years, and spent the past two years developing the plan for approval.

Title IV-E is a federal law which provides partial reimbursement for foster care maintenance payments, adoption assistance payments, and guardian assistance payments for children who meet specific eligibility requirements.

Title IV-E allows the Tribe to provide assistance for families so that Tribal children in need of foster care are able to stay with relatives or Tribal Members. The Tribe is able to exercise its sovereignty and self-determination by protecting the



Tribal Council Chair Bernadine Atchison, right, signs the Title IV-E agreement with Nadia Nijim, from the Office of Child Welfare, Region X Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

welfare of vulnerable children and families.

Through the planning process, the Tribe has been able to integrate traditional Dena'ina values into the plan while meeting federal regulations and guidelines.

The Na'ini Family Services team worked with the Tribe's

Title IV-E committee to develop the plan. Na'ini also collaborated with the Qiz'unch' Tribal Court, the Finance department, Information Technology staff, and outside agencies such as the Indian Child Welfare Program at Casey Family Programs, and the Tribal Child Care Capacity Building Center.



Housing supports renters, homeowners

Over the past year, the Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity has administered a number of programs to assist individuals and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Programs include:

- Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program, which provided assistance with rent and utilities for 113 households;

- Housing and Urban Development American Rescue Plan, which provided assistance with mortgage and utilities for 98 households;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs COVID Fund, which provided assistance for urgent minor home repairs for 43 households;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Pro-

- gram, which provided assistance with home repairs for two households; and
- Treasury Homeowner Assistance Fund, which provided mortgage and utility assistance for 61 households.

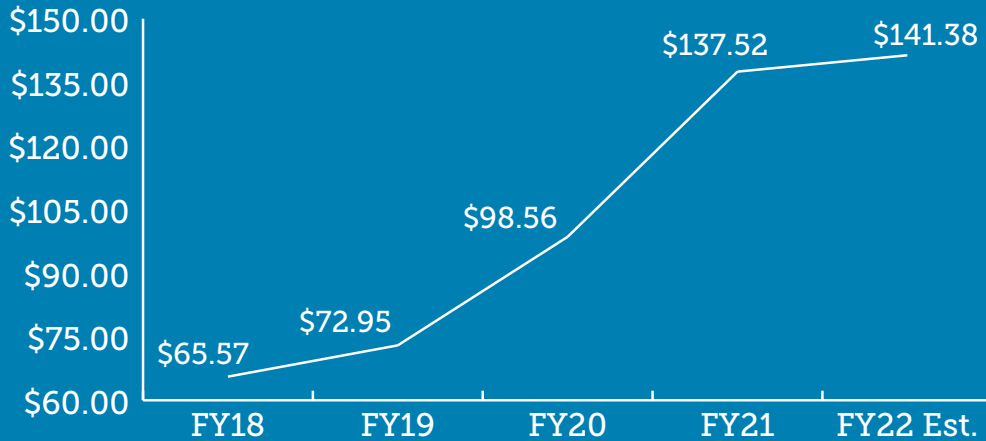
Housing also administers SafeHome and Healthy Homes programs to ensure safe living conditions in un'ina homes.



Financials and Demographics

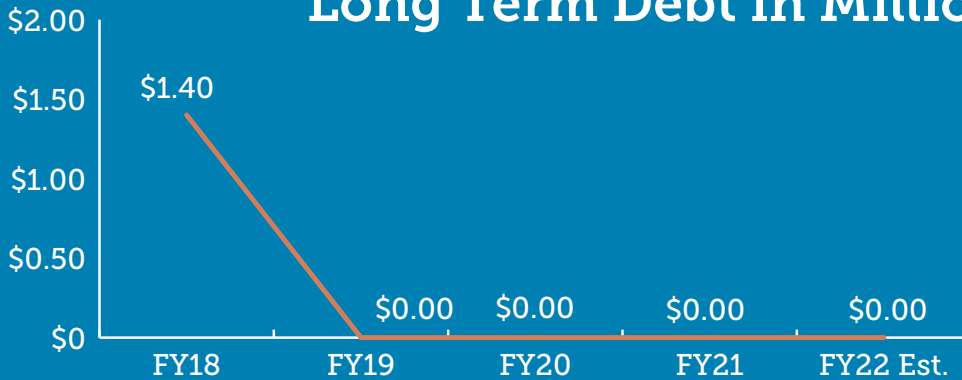
All figures presented in the report are derived directly from the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's audited financial statements. FY22 numbers are estimated as of Sep. 1, 2022.

Total Assets in Millions



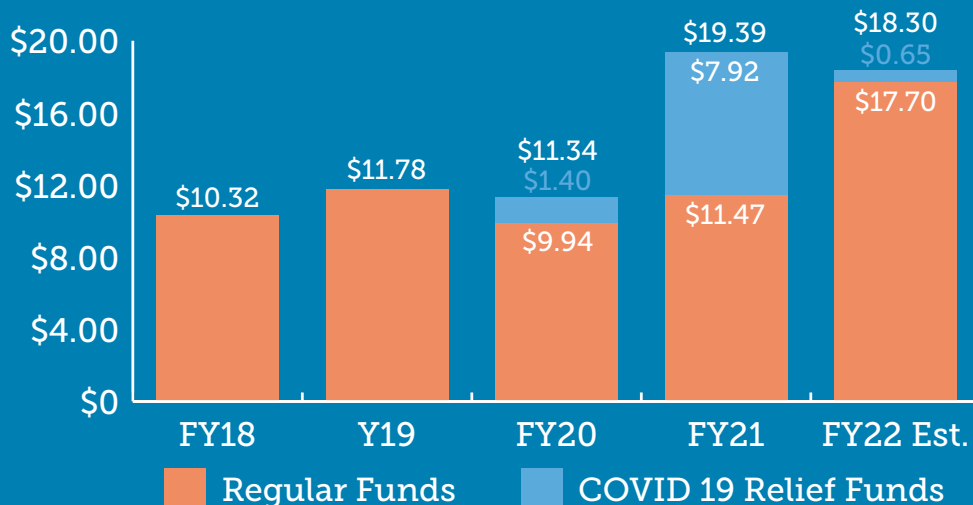
The Tribe's assets increased by \$30 million during FY21 due to COVID funding, which allowed the Tribe to better respond to the COVID pandemic as well as future pandemics. During FY22, the Tribe has about \$20 million in additional ARPA/ COVID awards which will continue to add to the Tribe's total assets in the next fiscal year.

Long Term Debt in Millions



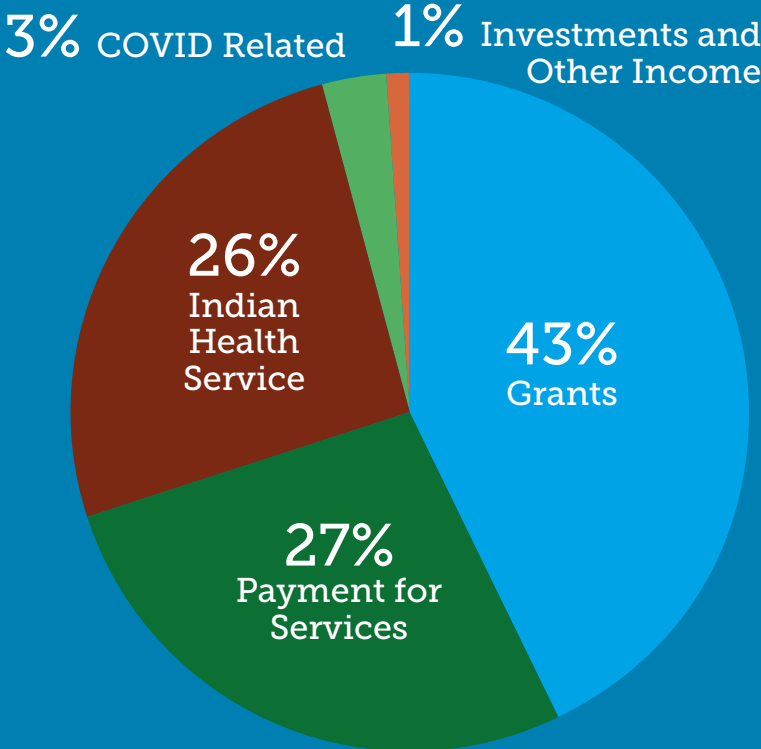
In FY22, the Tribe continues to hold no long term debt. The Tribe may consider acquiring long term debt to complete future construction projects to expand services.

Health Systems Billing in Millions



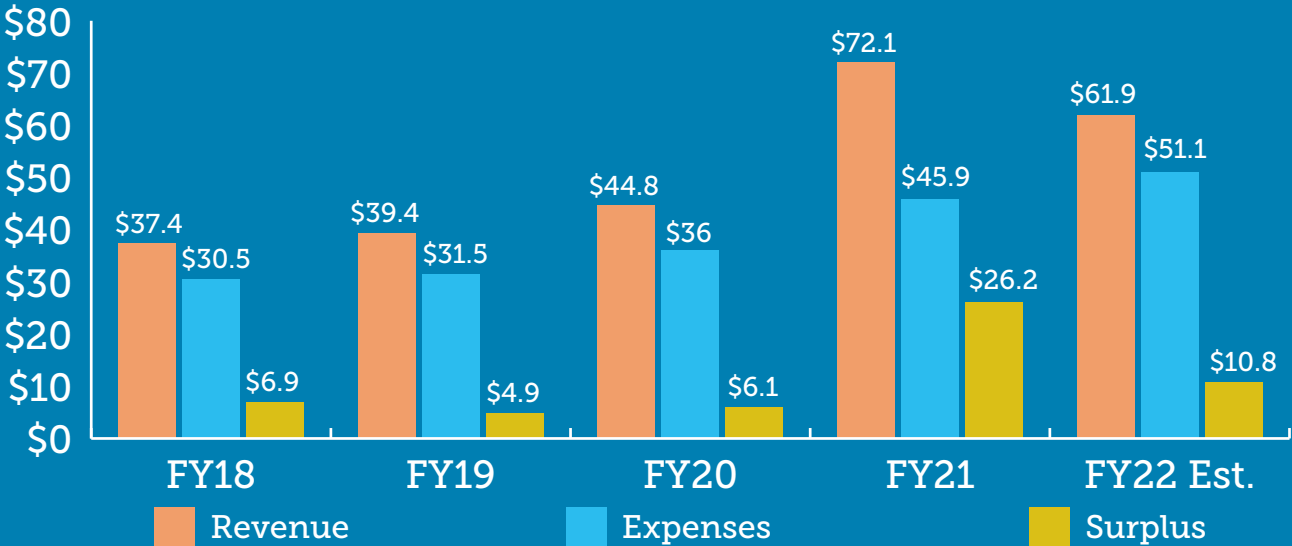
The Tribe saw significant increases in medical billing revenue for FY22. Historically, overall billing generated \$10 to \$12 million per year for the Tribe. Billing revenue is expected to exceed \$18 million in FY22 from expanded services provided at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

Sources of Revenue



In FY22, \$16 million of the Tribe's total revenue came from Indian Health Service funding. About \$26.6 million came from federal, state and private grants, and about \$1.9 million came from COVID-19-related funds. Reimbursements for health services provided by Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance are estimated to generate about \$17 million. The rest of the Tribe's revenue came from program user fees, donations, interest income, contributions and investment income.

Financial Performance from Operations in Millions



In FY22, the Tribe earned \$61.9 million in revenues and will spend \$51.1 million on Tribal operations to provide programs and services. Operations is expected to have a surplus of \$10.8 million. Surplus funds are used for capital projects and Tribal development activities.



Operating Expenses by Program

In FY22, the Tribe is estimated to spend \$51.1 million on operations. Of the total, \$21.6 million will be spent on health services; \$6.6 million on general and administrative costs; \$6.7 million on Tribal government; \$9.6 million on community services; \$3.9 million on housing; and \$2.7 million on Tribal Court. COVID-19-related expenditures were largely on health services and construction projects. Future COVID expenditures will continue to be a mix of health services and Tribal government heading into FY23.

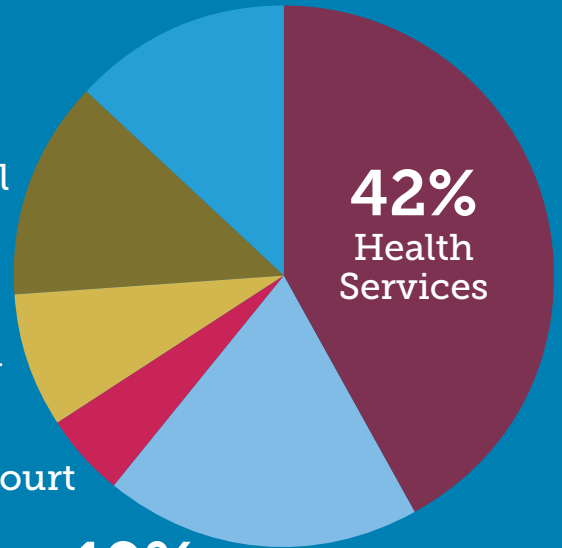
13% General Administrative

13% Tribal Government

8% Housing

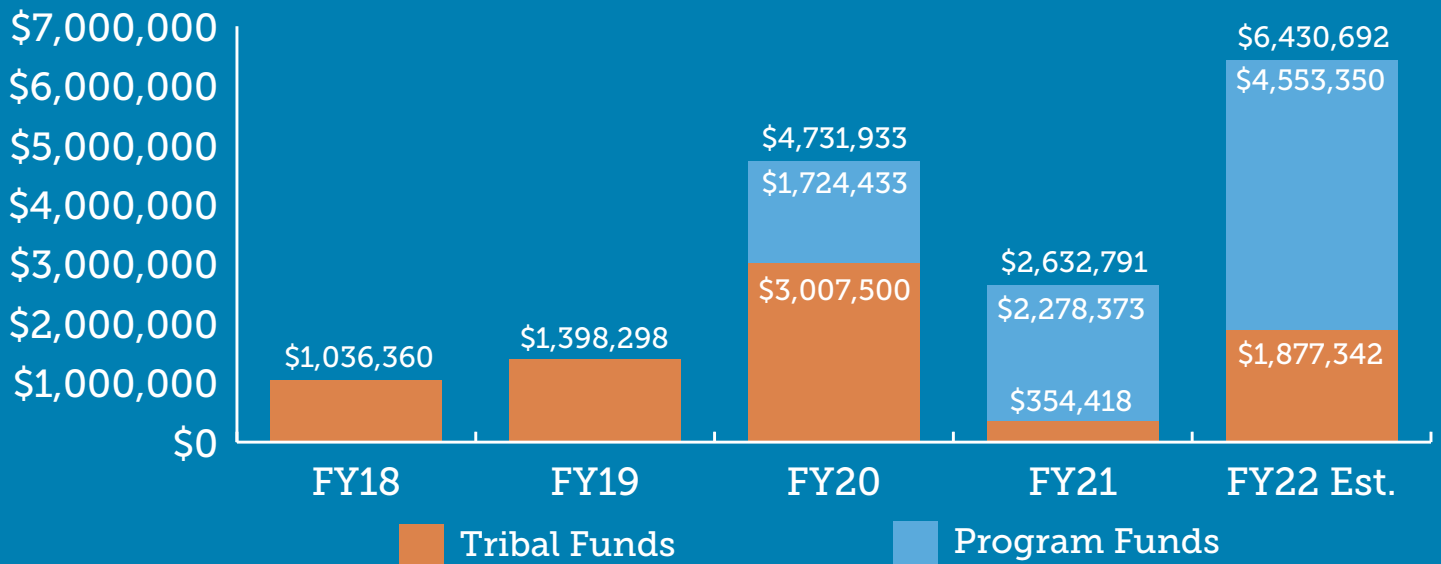
5% Tribal Court

19% Community Services



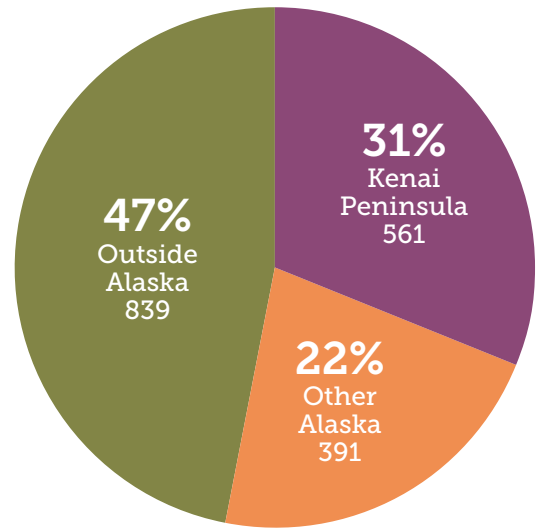
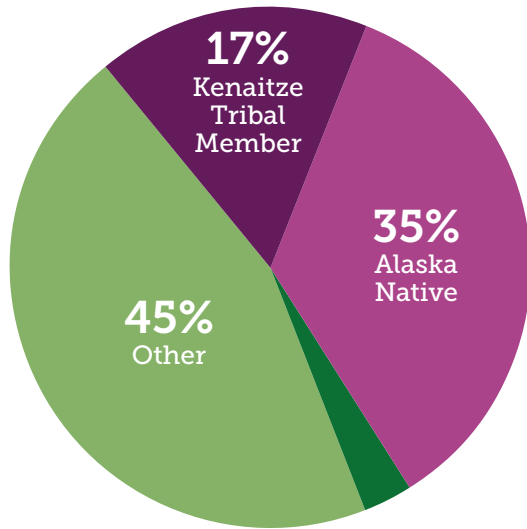
Financial Assistance Payments

For FY22, the Tribe will spend about \$6.4 million on direct payments to those we serve to assist with housing, education, training, transportation and emergency needs. The Tribe increased COVID-19-related direct assistance by \$1.5 million over FY21 with a total of \$1.9 million in Tribally funded assistance.





Tribal Demographics



Tribal Member Benefits



Bequsilna, 'Those who are gone'

Alida Carol Bayes

September 25, 1932 – October 7, 2021

Deborah Anne "Deb" Coveyou

December 14, 1955- October 28, 2021

Lisa Krista Darien Hileman

February 22, 1995 – September 29, 2021

Violet Nora Mack

January 13, 1936 – October 17, 2021

Todd Eugene Smagge

July 1, 1963 – October 5, 2021

Florence Elizabeth "Beth" (Dillanger) Darien

October 29, 1971 – November 6, 2021

Trevor Dewayne Wright

September 21, 1970 – November 12, 2021

Daniel Fredrick Madsen

October 17, 1934 – February 6, 2022

Elizabeth Ann Kirschner

April 7, 1944 – March 12, 2022

Betty Irene Porter

May 1, 1930 – March 17, 2022

Lavonne Lovv Wilson

June 6, 1965 – March 8, 2022

Douglas Alexander Darien Sr.

May 3, 1934 – April 30, 2022

Ronald Wesley Petterson

May 2, 1951 – April 8, 2022

Mildred Jane Schmalzried

March 4, 1937 – April 13, 2022

Philip "Little Guy" Wilson Jr.

March 9, 1948 – April 9, 2022

Virginia Gail Hunter

November 6, 1939 – July 15, 2022

Ian Lee Dell

May 10, 2005 – August 11, 2022

Robert "Bobby" Wilson

November 2, 1948 – August 18, 2022

Addresses and Phone Numbers



KENAITZE

INDIAN

TRIBE

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Kenai, AK 99611

www.kenaitze.org

907-335-7200



Administration Building
150 N. Willow St., Kenai
907-335-7200



Na'ini Family and Social Services
1001 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7600



Qiz'unch' Tribal Court
130 S. Willow St., Suite 3
907-335-7219



Tyotkas Elder Center
1000 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7280



Dena'ina Wellness Center
508 Upland St., Kenai
907-335-7500



Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus
12271 Kenai Spur Highway, Kenai
907-335-7667



**Chuq'eya Qenq'a
Birch Tree House – Behavioral Health**
510 Upland St., Kenai
907-335-7300



**Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally
Designated Housing**
1001 Mission Ave., Kenai
907-335-7228



TO

ASSURE

KAHTNUHT'ANA DENA'INA

THRIVE FOREVER

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