

Kenaitze Indian Tribe Annual Report 2020



Our Mission

TO ASSURE
KAHTNUHT'ANA DENA'INA
THRIVE FOREVER



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. The Dena'ina Wellness Center campus also includes Tyotkas Elder Center, Tribal Court and the Ch'k'denlyah yuyeh Greenhouse.

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 Tribally Designated Housing Entity office. To accommodate expanded services, Behavioral Health programs will move into a newly re-modeled building on the Old Town Kenai campus this fall.

In 2020, the Tribe broke ground on a 65,000-square-foot education facility to provide a permanent home for early childhood, youth, and education and career training programs.

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 in October, we elect members to the Tribal Council to



Above, Sonya Ivanoff talks to Joel Isaak, Language Institute Coordinator, about the Dena'ina language story she worked on during a language camp last winter.



At left, Valery Haney and Steve Boling hug after registering for the Annual General Membership Meeting in October 2019.

serve staggered terms. The seven-member Tribal Council governs the Tribe in accordance with our constitution, by-laws, ordinances and resolutions. It appoints a Chief Judge to oversee Tribal Court and uphold Tribal laws. The Tribal Council also hires two Executive Directors, one for Health Systems and one for 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 Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever, continues to guide us in all that we do.

Meet the Tribal 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.



Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Chair



Bernadine Atchison
Vice-Chair



Diana L. Zirul
Secretary



Clinton Lageson
Treasurer



Liisia Blizzard
Council Member



Mary Ann Mills
Council Member



Sharon Isaak
Council Member

Hello,

This has absolutely been a year to remember. The past year has been very crazy, to say the least. COVID-19 has given new meaning to life events. The pandemic has made us change the way we function in society as a whole – from social distancing to face masks, and everything in between. Council and staff have been working extremely hard to make sure that we can provide as many quality services as we can and at the same time make sure our Tribal Members, employees and especially our Elders are safe.

I would like to give a recap of the efforts that have transpired this past year “To Assure Kahtnuht’ana Dena’ina Thrive Forever.”

The Tribe’s fiscal year started off really well with Tribal Council Treasurer Clinton Lageson getting elected as treasurer for the National Congress of American Indians, which truly is a great feat. This gives the Tribe a true voice at the national level. I was also selected to be the Alternate Vice President for the Alaska Region for NCAI. This has been one of the goals of Council, to have representation at local, state and national levels. With a voice at the table, we know we can create more benefits and opportunities for our people.

Through lots of adversity, due mostly to COVID-19, the Tribe has been moving forward with all its projects that, in time, will pay big dividends to our people through positive growth. We have several ventures in the works. The biggest project is the Educational Campus Facility. This project has been in the works for a few years now and we broke ground in July. This project will be completed in late 2021. The Dena’ina Wellness Center is currently being remodeled, which



will help provide new and better services for our un’ina. Other projects include a building expansion for Tyotkas Elder Center, construction of new office spaces in the Toyon building and Behavioral Health moving into the newly remodeled Birch House, the former location for Na’ini Family and Social Services. The Tribe also purchased the old Anchor Trailer Park land for future expansion of programs.

The fishery had its own special challenges as well. With social distancing being an issue, plus the low return of fish to the river this year, the staff were challenged to new heights. The fishery staff had to complete all work without the help of any Tribal Members, which was very challenging to say the least. Jake Kooly and his crew deserve a special thanks for all their hard work. The Tribe just recently purchased a boat, so that Jake and his crew will be able to bring fresh halibut, salmon, clams and other traditional food to our Tribal Members. The Council is super excited about being able to provide food security to our people through our subsistence way of life.

The Elders program has been another one of our true highlights throughout COVID-19. The entire Elders staff and all the helpers they

had along the way have been doing a truly amazing job. The Elders program has always been successful, but throughout COVID-19 they picked it up a few notches. One of the main goals for Council was to make sure our Elders were taken care of and to make sure they received their lunches. The Elders staff used to prepare 40-100 meals a day to be served at the Elders building and now they deliver 230 meals a day to our Elders’ homes. Nothing makes me prouder than to see all our vans sitting outside of the Elders building waiting to load up, so that the drivers can make all their deliveries to our Elders.

The Tribe has come a long way over the past 20 years and every year we seem to get bigger and stronger than ever before. Our people have persevered for thousands of years through long and harsh winters, natural disasters, early contact from the Russians, smallpox, and the migration of the Lower 48 people settling in our area. Now we face a new challenge with COVID-19. This pandemic has affected most of the world’s population in many ways from illness, to job losses, shortage of supplies and life overall. We are all challenged daily with this. But through all this the Tribe has stood strong and continues to strive forward to make sure we can provide the most we can for our people, our employees and our community through teamwork. We will persevere; we always do. In closing, I just want to thank everyone for working hard together in an extremely difficult time to make sure we continue to thrive as a community.

Sincerely,

Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Tribal Council Chair

Tribal Council Engagement

Members of the Tribal Council participate in regional, state and national organizations in support of the Tribe's mission, vision and values. Attendance at conferences provides training, education and resources that help to assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever. Participation in state and national organizations provides opportunities to advocate on issues affecting the Tribe, as well as the nationwide tribal community.

National Congress of American Indians

Clinton Lageson was elected as treasurer to the National Congress of American Indians. Wayne D. Wilson Jr. was selected to be the Alternate Vice President for the Alaska Region for NCAI.

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-determination in health care services. ANHB's advocacy encourages wellness in Native communities through recommendations for policy change on a state and federal 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. Mary Ann Mills serves as a representative to the ANHB Behavioral Health Directors meetings. Diana Zirul also serves as Vice Chair of ANHB and as the Alaska Tribal Health Compact's Co-Lead Negotiator. The Tribe's representatives have further been appointed by ANHB to serve on national and state entities as follows: Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee – Diana Zirul, primary member; Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee – Diana Zirul, alternate member; and National Indian Health Board – Diana Zirul,

alternate member.

Through the Tribe's involvement impacts include:

- 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 other 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.
- 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 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.

Village Service Management Team Board Member

The VSMT 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 healthcare services from Southcentral Foundation.

Newly appointed Board Member Liisia Blizzard has attended one meeting in person and all other meetings telephonically in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sterling Highway Mile 45-60

After 20 some years of fighting to have the Sterling Highway re-routed around the Tribe's Cultural sites and away from the Kenai



River, it became a reality last year. This year the Tribe signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work with the Department of Transportation to hire two Tribal Members to be Cultural Observers and one archeologist. This summer was the kick off-of this project and Tribal Member Norma Johnson began work in the Archeologist role. Next summer the Tribe will hire the two Cultural Observers. The Tribe looks forward to working with DOT on this project for the next 4-5 years.

First Alaskans Elders and Youth Council

Sharon Isaak was selected as an Elder Representative and Tribal Member Danielle Mills was selected as a Youth Representative for First Alaskans Institute State-

wide Elders and Youth Council's Southcentral region. The council is a group of 51 Elder and youth representatives and alternates who are elected by their regional peers at the annual October conference. This group of individuals serve as the eyes and ears of their regions to keep FAI Indigenous Leadership Continuum staff informed of the issues pertinent to Alaska Native people. The council helps develop and plans the overall conference while helping distribute opportunities and resources available within their regions. The council meets every month up until the October conference.

Due to COVID-19, the 2020 Elders and Youth Conference will be held virtually from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Oct. 11 to Oct. 14, 2020. This year the theme "Asirqamek

Apruciluta" (Sugt'stun), "Asisqamek Aprut'liluta" (Alutiiq), assures us that we are moving in the right direction – physically in our real world today and symbolically in life. Its translation into English, "We Are Making a Good Path," exemplifies our ancestral responsibilities to protect our peoples and communities, including through this time of COVID-19. From the beginning of this current pandemic, our Elders have informed the critical decision-making of Tribes, communities, families, and individuals by sharing the brilliance of our peoples' ways of persevering and thriving throughout history. This theme exemplifies our commitment to protect our ways of life, celebrates our diversity and the many beautiful ways we are good relatives to one another.

Committees and Commissions

The Tribe maintains commissions and committees to inform and guide Tribal Council decisions. Commissions and committees are led by a chairperson and made up of members of Tribal Council and Tribal Members. 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 and are announced on the Tribe's website. For additional information, please contact Tribal Member Services at 907-335-7200.

Constitution Committee

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

Report from the Chair:

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 quarterly basis to review and recommend revisions to the Constitution. The most recent Constitutional amendment was accomplished on February 28, 2019, granting the Tribe the right to amend its Constitution by a majority vote of all qualified voting members of the Tribe.

Enrollment Committee

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

Report from the Chair:

The Tribal Enrollment Committee receives and verifies eligibility of all applications for Tribal enrollment. Applications require formal documentation to be accepted by the committee. All approved applications for Tribal enrollment are ratified on a yearly basis during the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Annual General Membership Meeting. The total number of enrolled Tribal members in September 2020 is 1,678.

Election Board

Phyllis Bookey, Chair
Bernice Crandall
Maria Sweppy
Katheryn Rodgers, Alternate

Elders Committee

Mary Ann Mills, Chair
Phyllis Bookey
Sharon Isaak
Mary Lou Bottoroff
Rita Smagge
Ronette Stanton
Harriet Seibert
Tom Stroman, Honorary Member
Betty Porter, Honorary Member

Report from the Chair:

To protect Elders from COVID-19 all Elders Committee meetings were conducted via teleconference and staff have exercised the following precautions:

- All staff have food handler cards;
- All staff have daily temperature monitoring;
- All staff are tested for COVID-19;
- All staff have received hand hygiene training;
- All staff have received PPE training (mask, gloves); and
- All staff understand social distancing requirements.

Tyotkas Elder Center has begun an expansion project to better meet the needs of food preparation and social distancing. Completion is expected in December 2020.

Tyotkas and Transportation staff have significantly increased services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to March, the staff served 40 to 100 meals in the center each day. Now, more than 230 Elders are receiving home delivered meals each weekday.

Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board

Diana L. Zirul, Chair
Mary Ann Mills
Clinton Lageson
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Evelyn Boulette
Harriet Seibert
Maria Sweppy

Report from the Chair:

The purpose of the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Health Board is to provide recommendations and

advice to the Tribal Council regarding matters related to health care services at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

This past year the Health Board has focused on expansion of services which has included relocation of Behavioral Health services to the renovated Na'ini building that has been renamed as Chuq'eya Qenq'a (Birch Tree House). Five fulltime Primary Care provider positions have been approved with the recommendation that a sixth provider be recruited in the next year to increase services. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans for renovation of DWC have been recommended and approved to promote a safe environment for un'ina and the Tribe's employees through social distancing. Expansion of the Optometry services will include two additional examination rooms, a special testing room and on-site availability of eyeglasses. Optometry will be relocated next to the lobby. Primary Care services have been expanded to include a negative-pressure pandemic suite with at least seven examination rooms and a separate outside entrance. Additional laboratory equipment has been purchased to provide onsite testing for COVID-19 and other bloodwork to minimize delays with outside testing. The Dental suite has been expanded to include additional, closed examination rooms and offices. The remodel is expected to be completed by the end of March 2021.

Hunting, Fishing and Gathering Commission

James O. Segura, Chair
Liisia Blizzard

Elsie Maillelle
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman
Kaarlo Wik
Clinton Lageson
Bonnie Juliussen Gibbs
Mary Ann Mills, Honorary Member
Bernadine Atchison, Honorary Member
Clare Swan, Honorary Member

Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance Commission

Bernadine Atchison, Chair
Clinton Lageson
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Mary Ann Mills
Virginia Wolf

Report from the Chair:

The Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance Commission and Tribal Council created a TERO Manager position and hired a Tribal Member, Curtis Hembroff, in June, to fill this role. His four goals are to:

- Develop TERO Policies and Procedures;
- Implement a program for a Tribal Member Job Bank;
- Create a Tribal Member Business Bank; and
- Design a process for succession planning.

Court Code Committee

Mary Ann Mills, Chair
Liisia Blizzard
Bernice Crandall
Clinton Lageson
Bernadine Atchison
Samantha Singleton
Benjamin Baldwin

Report from the Chair:

Alex Cleghorn, attorney for the Alaska Native Justice Center, is assisting us to increase Tribal participation in the Henu Community Wellness Court.

Cleghorn is also assisting us to revise our Elders Protection Code and to establish an Elders Protection Team. The committee is in the process of revising the Elders Protection Code. We are in the process of establishing a Title IV-E program to enable the Tribe to pay stipends to foster parents, guardians, and custodians. The Child Protection Code will be revised to include Title IV-E requirements.

Land Committee

Clinton Lageson, Chair
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Elsie Maillelle
Kaarlo Wik
Sharon Isaak
Mary Ann Mills
Vernon Stanford

Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally Designated Housing Entity

James O. Segura, Chair
Rosalie Tepp
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman
Rita Smagge
Clinton Lageson
Chris Monfor
Kaarlo Wik

Research and Review Board

Bernadine Atchison, Chair
Clinton Lageson
Elizabeth Atchison
Norma Johnson
Dr. Robert Mitchell

Report from the Chair:

The Board is working in partnership with Dr. Ripan Malhi with the University of Illinois on a grant project in Kenai to offer a mini learning class about salmon DNA to Tribal Members. We also will be reviewing vaccine protocols in regards to efficacy for COVID-19.

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

*Danielle Shedd, Chair, Moose Room
Alexa McClure, Vice Chair, Moose
Room*

*Danna Schoof, Salmon Room
Rachelle Pavlinsky, Squirrel Room
Kayleen Justesen, Squirrel Room
Kiersten Consiel, Raven Room
Sandi Semaken, Raven Room
Miranda Nelson, Otter Room
Amanda Painter, Secretary, Otter
Room
Tracy Duran, Otter Room
Kathy Calloway, Community
Member*

*Liisia Blizzard, Tribal Council
Liaison
Sharon Isaak, Tribal Council Liaison*

**Policies, Ordinances and
Procedures Workgroup**

*Diana L. Zirul, Chair
Mary Ann Mills
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Bernadine Atchison
Liisia Blizzard
Sharon Isaak*

Education Committee

*Bernadine Atchison, Chair
Mary Ann Mills
Rita Smagge
Sondra Stuart
Jennifer Showalter Yeoman
Nadia Walluk, Tribal Member Youth*

Report from the Chair:

Yagheli du Kahtnuht'ana! This year has brought unprecedented challenges before us with COVID-19. The Council and Administration are expecting this will be at our table for the next several months. We have made it a priority to look for new opportunities on how we change and adapt to better serve

our people, protect our culture and continue business as normal. Through this planning process our committee members help guide the Council in their decision making.

We have created a blended learning tool that can be used at home or on site with Tribal staff, following the social distancing guidelines. The new learning model will be implemented this fall.

Our Educational campus has moved forward with the ground breaking in July and the first concrete was poured in August, establishing a landmark in the construction phase. The committee and Education staff are working hard at being ready for when the doors open.

Finance Committee

*Clinton Lageson, Chair
Ben Baldwin
Diana L. Zirul
Sharon Isaak
Ronette Stanton
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Linda Ross*

Title IV-E Committee

*Mary Ann Mills, Chair
Bernadine Atchison
Bernice Crandall
Clinton Lageson
Liisia Blizzard
Samantha Singleton*

Report from the Chair:

The Committee has completed a draft of needs for the Title IV-E project, which will provide support to foster families when complete. We are in the process of creating procedural manuals and tools that integrate the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's values and culture into our practice and to support compliance with Title IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act. Areas of focus

include: establishing a data system; foster care, guardianship and adoption; legal procedures; and administrative and finance.

Behavioral Health Committee

*Mary Ann Mills, Chair
Diana L. Zirul
Evelyn Boulette
Harriet Seibert
Maria Sweppy*

Report from the Chair:

The Behavioral Health Committee has been working to support the move of Behavioral Health staff into the newly remodeled building that formerly housed Na'ini Family and Social Services.

The move will support growth of services, including additional chemical dependency and Medically Assisted Treatment support, and add additional clinicians to include a clinician dedicated to serving Tribal Members. The new services will strengthen the bridge between Behavioral Health and Primary Care in support of the Tribe's Dene' Philosophy of Care.

Ad Hoc Tribal Council Orientation Committee

*Sharon Isaak, Chair
Wayne D. Wilson Jr.
Diana L. Zirul*

Report from the Chair:

This Committee was established to provide information to the new Tribal Council members that are elected to the Kenaitze Tribal Council. Information including a list of acronym definitions, meeting minutes, code of conduct, committee charters, travel policy and ordinances are some of the items being included in this orientation binder.



Facilities and Maintenance employees work to deep clean the Tribe's administration building during one of many similar cleanings across Tribal facilities this year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tribal departments closely followed the guidance and mandates of Federal, Tribal, State and public safety agencies to keep Tribal Members, employees and people served by the Tribe healthy.

Tribal Services

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 receive access to medical, dental, behavioral health, chemical dependency, wellness, physical therapy, pharmacy support, optometry and traditional healing. The building also features a gym and classroom space.

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 Dena'ina Wellness Center opened in 2014 on the site of an early Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina village in Old Town Kenai. The campus continues to grow, with behavioral health services moving into a newly remodeled building in 2020.

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.

In response to the COVID-19

pandemic, Tyotkas transitioned to home delivery of meals.

Family and Social Services

At our Toyon building adjacent to the Dena'ina Wellness Center, we serve some of the most vulnerable members of the community. Our social services include child care support, 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, family preservation and Indian Child Welfare Act services.

Educational Fishery

We operate an educational fishery through a permit issued by the State of Alaska. Tribal Members wishing to fish can schedule time at the net, and many fish are shared with Elders and others who can no longer fish for themselves. Members of the Salamatof Tribe also fish the net.

This year, fishing was done almost exclusively by educational fishery staff to ensure the health and safety of Tribal Members, employees and the community. Staff harvested and processed fish, and arranged for safe delivery to those who had signed up to fish.

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.

Education and Training

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe provides education and career training opportunities from birth to adulthood.

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.

The Yaghanen Youth Program is where youth come to develop life skills, learn culture, make friends and stay on track academically. Yaghanen, meaning "safe space," is 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.

Our Education and Career Training program supports the traditional Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina value of education. The program assists



Wanda Reams, a Russian River Fish Technician employed by the Tribe, tells sports angler Brandon Yankovic about a brown bear spotted nearby. The technicians work along the bank of the Russian River at its confluence with the Kenai River to ensure fish carcasses left behind by sports anglers are properly returned to the river, where they can provide nutrients for future generations of fish. The technicians have many opportunities to educate the public as they support Stream Watch volunteers and park rangers from Chugach National Forest and the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

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 Member Services

Tribal Member Services is available to promote the well-being of Tribal Members and their families through various Tribal benefits, including the Tribal Member Enrichment Program, burial assistance, and funeral assistance. Tribal Member Services staff assist Tribal Members with the educational fishery and other programs.

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. 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.

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, which serves people facing legal trouble stemming from substance use.

Ts'ilq'u Circle

The Ts'ilq'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 Courthouse.

Health Systems

Primary Care and Behavioral Health integration enhanced



A drive-through COVID-19 test sample collection site for sped service and enhanced safety.

A person's behavioral health, including their emotional and mental health, are important parts of their well-being. In fact, a whole-person approach to wellness, which addresses physical, spiritual, emotional and social health, is the guiding principle of the Tribe's Dene' Philosophy of Health.

Moving a behavioral health care provider into the Primary Care department at the Dena'ina Wellness Center has made it easier for un'ina, those who come to us, to access Behavioral Health services.

A number of other changes have been made at the Dena'ina Wellness Center as the Tribe responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many visits are now conducted using telehealth technology. Un'ina are able to meet with Primary Care and Behavioral Health providers

using their smart phone or home computer.

The Tribe also purchased a COVID-19 rapid test machine, and has erected a drive-through testing site on the Dena'ina Wellness Center campus.

The Behavioral Health care provider working within Primary Care is available to un'ina for what Dr. Robert Mitchell, Clinical Medical Director at the Dena'ina Wellness Center, describes as acute issues. Those issues might include grief, depression or anxiety.

Dr. Mitchell said the new process works well for people who would benefit from a few weeks of working with a provider, but might not need long-term counseling. Un'ina just need a referral from their Primary Care provider, and the Behavioral Health provider

is able to see them very quickly. Because they are assisting un'ina with short-term treatment, the Behavioral Health provider is able to see more un'ina than providers in the Behavioral Health department who are providing long-term counseling.

Having access to a Behavioral Health provider in Primary Care can also provide a bridge to longer-term counseling. The provider in Primary Care can help an un'ina address an immediate crisis, and then help to make a smooth transition to a provider in the Behavioral Health department.

Dr. Mitchell noted the need for Behavior Health counseling, and said a second Behavioral Health provider is being added to Primary Care.

"We can help even more people – the need is so great," Dr. Mitchell said.



A lab technician demonstrates the Dena'ina Wellness Center's new Abbott Labs ID NOW COVID-19 rapid test machine in April. The device takes 20 minutes to process a COVID-19 test.

Tyotkas Elder Center

Tribe adds meal delivery service; a building expansion is underway

Access to Tyotkas Elder Center may be restricted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but access to the Tribe's Elders program has actually expanded.

When the Tribal Council and administration made the decision in March to close facilities, including Tyotkas, to the public, Elders program staff developed a plan to deliver the hot meals so many Elders come to the center to enjoy.

Coby Wilson, a regular at Tyotkas before the pandemic, said he appreciated the option of having hot meals brought to his door, though he misses the social aspect of visiting with friends each day.

"I think all the meals have been delicious, and well-prepared," Wilson said. "I like to sit at home and get my lunch delivered."

Many other Elders feel the same way. On March 13, the first day of home delivery, Elders provided 20 meals to-go and delivered 48. Just three weeks later, Elders staff, assisted by employees from other Tribal programs, were delivering 150 meals each day. By September, an average of 230 meals were being delivered to Elders each day.

The meals are supplemented with fresh produce from the Ch'k'denlyah yuyeh Greenhouse. Newsletters and other materials, such as word puzzles, have been included with the home deliveries. The Elders program also provided two food box deliveries over the summer.

While Tyotkas has been closed to the public, an update and ex-



The Tribe rapidly transitioned its Elder meal service to home delivery in response to health mandates associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. A building expansion now underway will allow for continued home delivery and will support social distancing guidelines for in-building service.

pansion of the facility has been planned. The dining area will be expanded to allow visitors to spread out and practice social distancing. A permanent salad bar will be added, allowing for better cleaning than the portable salad bar.

Changes at Tyotkas will allow the Elders program to continue

home delivery of meals after the facility reopens. The kitchen will be expanded to accommodate preparation of meals for home delivery. The Tribe also has purchased a machine that will package meals to-go, as well as new trucks equipped to transport hot and cold food.



Transportation Driver Allen Wisner delivers hot meals to Coby Wilson. The Tribe rapidly developed procedures to start home delivery in March and is now serving more than 230 Elders daily.



Samantha Singleton helps her children Leanna, 3, and Denali, 8, as they work through a lesson in the Education division's new Family Lunch Box program. The program is an introduction to a new blended learning curriculum the Tribe is introducing to support families in the classroom and at home.

Education

Blended learning delivers education at home or in class

The COVID-19 pandemic may have changed the way the Tribe is able to deliver services, but it hasn't stopped the learning.

The Tribe's education programs continue to evolve to provide learning opportunities for the families we serve. Education staff are using a blended learning model, combining in-person and online learning.

Over the summer, the Education division launched the Family Lunch Box program as the start of its Culinary Wellness curriculum. The program's goal is to introduce families to distance learning, and to ensure each family has the learning tools they need to prepare meals together.

Samantha and Rusty Singleton have been participating in the lunchbox learning program with their two oldest daughters, Denali, 8, and Leanna, 3.

Samantha Singleton said she appreciates how the program incorporates lots of subject matter into the lessons. "I was surprised by all the different aspects of it," Singleton said. "It was neat that they integrated art into the learning and last time we picked up a box, they taught us a Dena'ina word, which I thought was really cool."

Each week, as part of the 10-week pilot program, families explored different lunch themes that teach our children about huch'ulyeshi, the Dena'ina way of living. Because that way of living was in the outdoors, lunch themes included a hiking lunch, a picnic

lunch, and a harvest lunch. Ninety-four families participated in the program. Education program staff created online videos with instructions for preparing a meal, and families were also encouraged to innovate with the ingredients provided.

The whole family is involved in the learning process. When children and families are able to come together in person, they will be able to build on the concepts they learned together at home.

Participating families report enjoying the program, and 84 percent say they are preparing more meals as a family.

"We've always put their lunch together for them. For them to be able to piece together their own lunches is a real accomplishment. They've tried new foods, which is great," Samantha Singleton said.

As part of the next phase of the Tribe's blended learning initiative, participating families will receive a tablet computer to access Dena'ina culture and language resources. Families will be able to learn to read and write the Dena'ina language together and explore Dena'ina ways of thinking and living.

Blended learning allows education to continue when health mandates prevent in-person contact.

When conditions are safe, children and their families will be able to come together to experience language and cultural learning in classroom settings and through field trips, day camps and extended camps.

\$153,700

Amount distributed in
scholarships in
2020

79 of 81

scholarships
awarded to
Tribal Members

\$30,000

Increase
to scholarship funding
for **2020**

Construction

New construction will support expanded and improved services



Anthony Liberty, of Bucho Building, completes exterior work on the building that will house Behavioral Health.

Plans are becoming concrete – literally – as the Tribe's infrastructure continues to grow.

In July, construction work started on the new education campus, located on a five-acre parcel at the corner of Forest Drive and the Kenai Spur Highway. Crews began excavation and foundation work for the 65,000-square-foot facility, which will house the Tribe's education programs.

The design for the facility includes a three-story education wing to house classrooms, meeting rooms and administrative offices. A second wing will feature a large multi-purpose room which will function like a school gym, with plenty of room for indoor cultural and recreational activities. The two wings will be connected by an annex that will include a reception

area and commercial kitchen.

Just as construction on the education campus is ramping up, work on the Behavioral Health building on the Dena'ina Wellness Center campus was wrapping up. Na'ini Family and Social Services moved across campus into new office space in the Toyon building last fall, which opened the building for Behavioral Health services. Behavioral Health's move alleviates crowded workspace in the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

Renovations also began on the Dena'ina Wellness Center. Changes are underway throughout the building that will allow the Tribe to continue to improve and expand programs for those we serve. Plans include an expanded Optometry suite; space for complementary medicine such as Roling and

massage therapy; dedicated space for Physical Therapy; and a suite of negative pressure exam rooms that can be sealed off to prevent the spread of pathogens. The Primary Care workspace will be reconfigured.

Expansion also is on the menu at Tyotkas Elder Center. An addition in the kitchen will allow staff to continue to prepare meals for home delivery. The dining area also will be expanded to allow for social distancing. A new patio will provide an area for outdoor seating.

Renovations are wrapping up in the Toyon building office space. Changes will provide more space in the visitation room and additional storage space for the Food Cache. Offices will also be created for Transportation, Security, Medical Billing and Quality Assurance staff.



Work is underway at the Tribe's new education campus at the corner of the Kenai Spur Highway and Forest Drive. Construction began in July and is expected to be complete in late 2021.

Tribal Fishery

Fishery staff works the tides to support permit holders



The Tribe purchased an Ashbreez Boatworks Resurrection 32, a 32-by11-foot power catamaran, to support Tribal Member subsistence activities.

While the Tribe's 2020 Educational Fishery opened on time this year, coping with the COVID-19 pandemic added a new challenge to fishing Cook Inlet.

To make the Tribe's beach site as safe as possible, access was restricted to staff only for most of the summer. Fisheries staff followed health and social distancing mandates, and arrangements were made to safely deliver fish to those who had signed up to fish the net.

Adding to the challenge, this year's sockeye salmon run was inconsistent. Some tides saw a good

number of fish come to the net, while others saw hardly any at all.

That kept the educational fishery staff busy as they had the net in the water for every tide, and ended up processing most of the fish that came to the net.

Fishing began on May 1. As of Sept. 8, 7,629 salmon had come to the net. Fishery staff will continue to fish the net through the fall as silver salmon return to Cook Inlet.

Jake Kooly, the Tribal Harvest Program Supervisor, said that while many people like to process their own fish, they might not

have the set up to be able to do it at home. Instead, many rely on the facilities at the Tribe's beach site to clean and preserve their fish.

The Tribe made several improvements at the beach site over the summer. The Harvest program got a new vacuum sealer, and a new walkway was installed.

The Tribe also purchased a 30-foot boat, which will be used for subsistence harvest activities.

Despite the challenges, Kooly called the 2020 season a success, as everyone was happy to receive fish for their dinner tables and freezers.



Kalvin Kooly packages red salmon for the freezer. Fishery staff caught fish and prepared it for Tribal Members in response to COVID-19 health mandates.

Educational Fishery Productivity

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Kings	20	10	22	3	1	4
Reds	8,109	6,709	9,311	6,155	8,572	7,217
Pinks	4	203	90	259	168	118
Silvers	63	502	222	945	24	290
Totals	8,196	7,424	9,645	7,362	8,765	7,629

*As of Sept. 8, 2020

Financials and Demographics

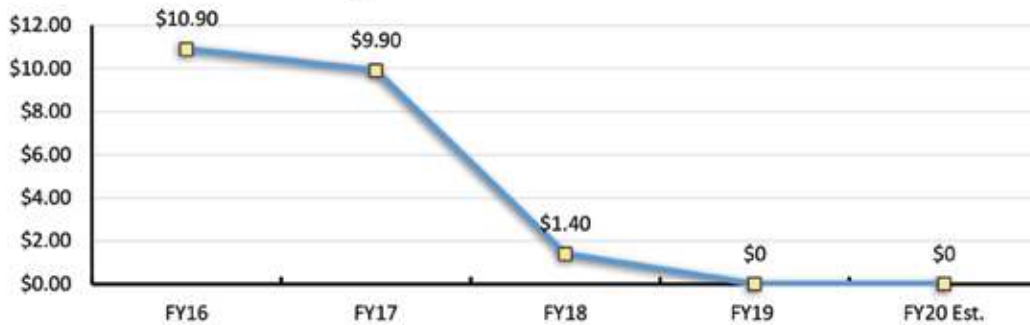
Total Assets in Millions



TOTAL ASSETS

The Tribe's assets have increased over the last 5 years to \$94 million. In the next year the Tribe is on pace to surpass \$100 million in assets.

Long Term Debt in Millions



LONG TERM DEBT

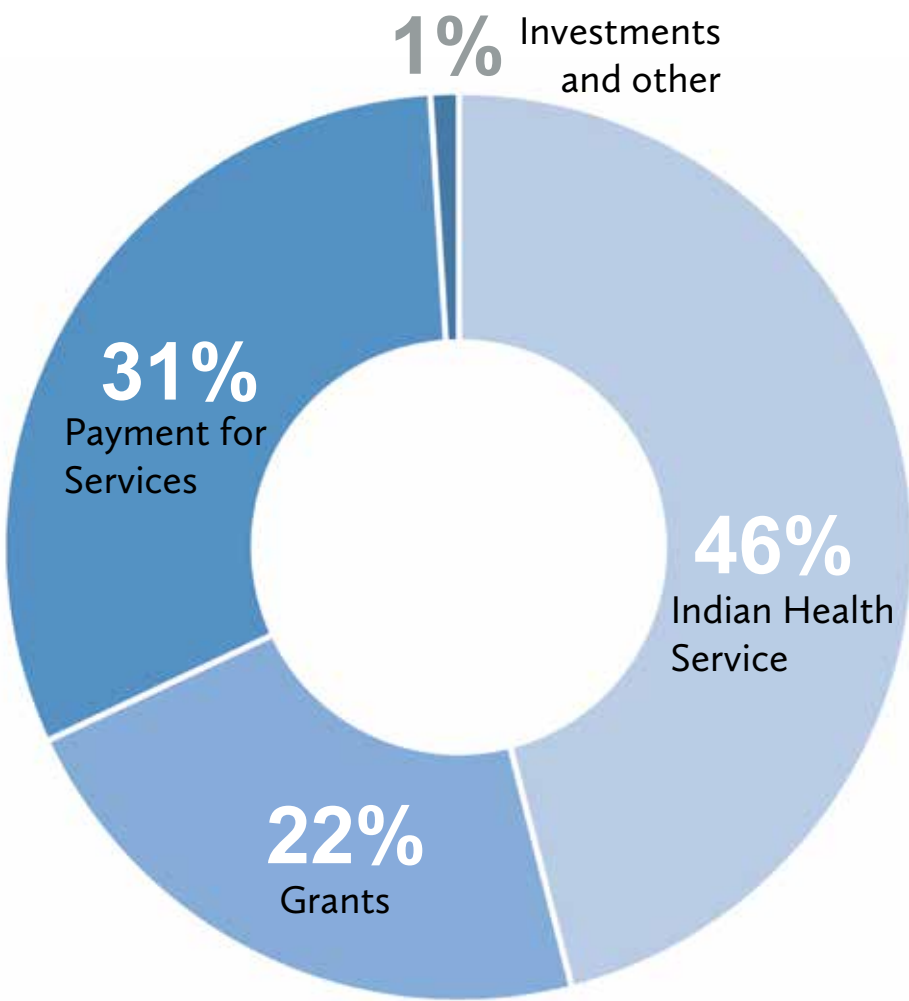
In FY20, the Tribe has no long term debt.

Health System Billing in Millions



HEALTH SYSTEM BILLING

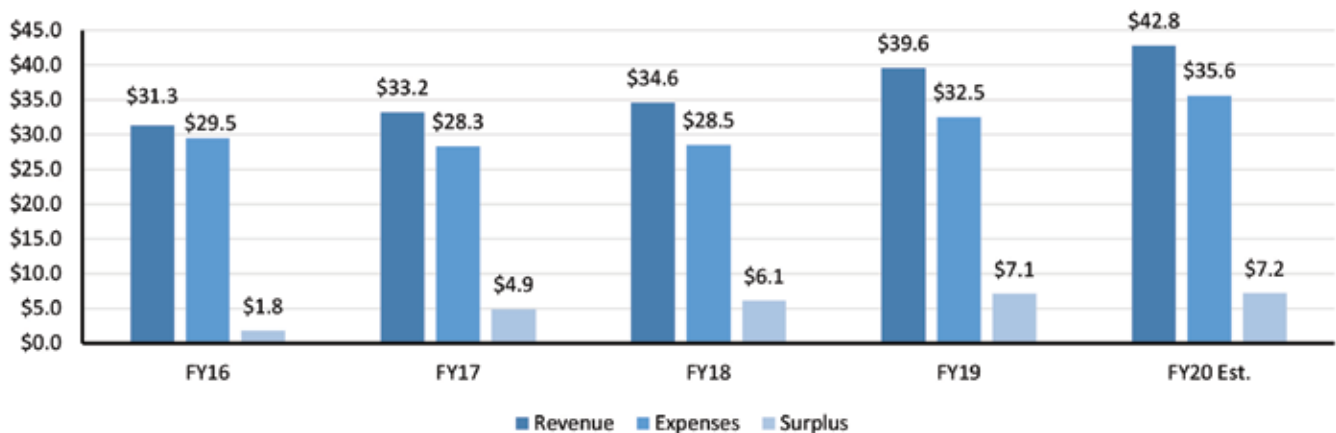
In FY20, the Tribe became a Federally Qualified Health Center. This allows the Tribe to increase services in several areas, especially outreach and preventive care. With the designation, the reimbursement rates are higher, and more services are covered. Even with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase of \$1.37 million over the previous year.



SOURCES OF REVENUE

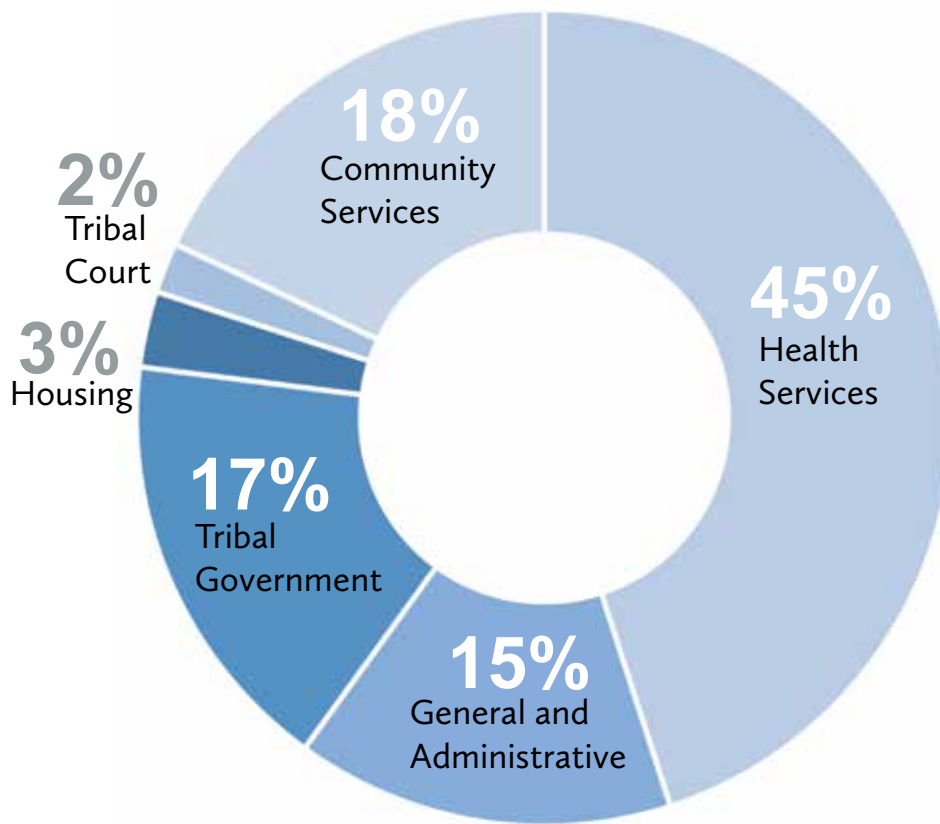
In FY20, about \$29.1 million of the total operating revenues were from federal, state, and private grants. Reimbursements for health services paid by Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance generated about \$13.15 million. The remainder came from program user fees, donations, interest income, contributions, and investment income.

Financial Performance from Operations in Millions



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FROM OPERATIONS

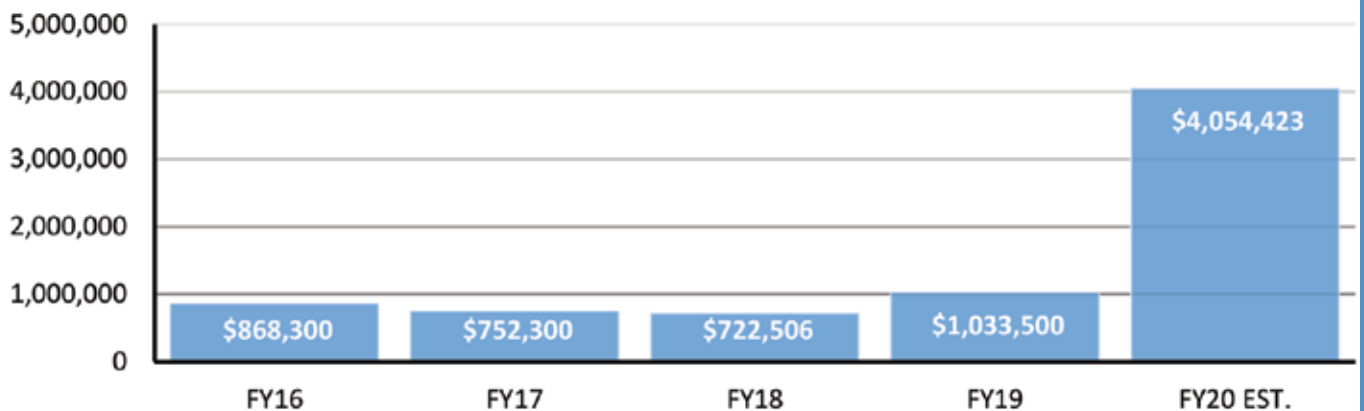
In FY20, the Tribe earned \$42.8 million in revenues and spent \$35.6 million on Tribal operations to provide programs and services. Operations had a surplus of \$7.2 million. Surplus funds are used for future capital projects, debt payment and Tribal development activities.



OPERATING EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

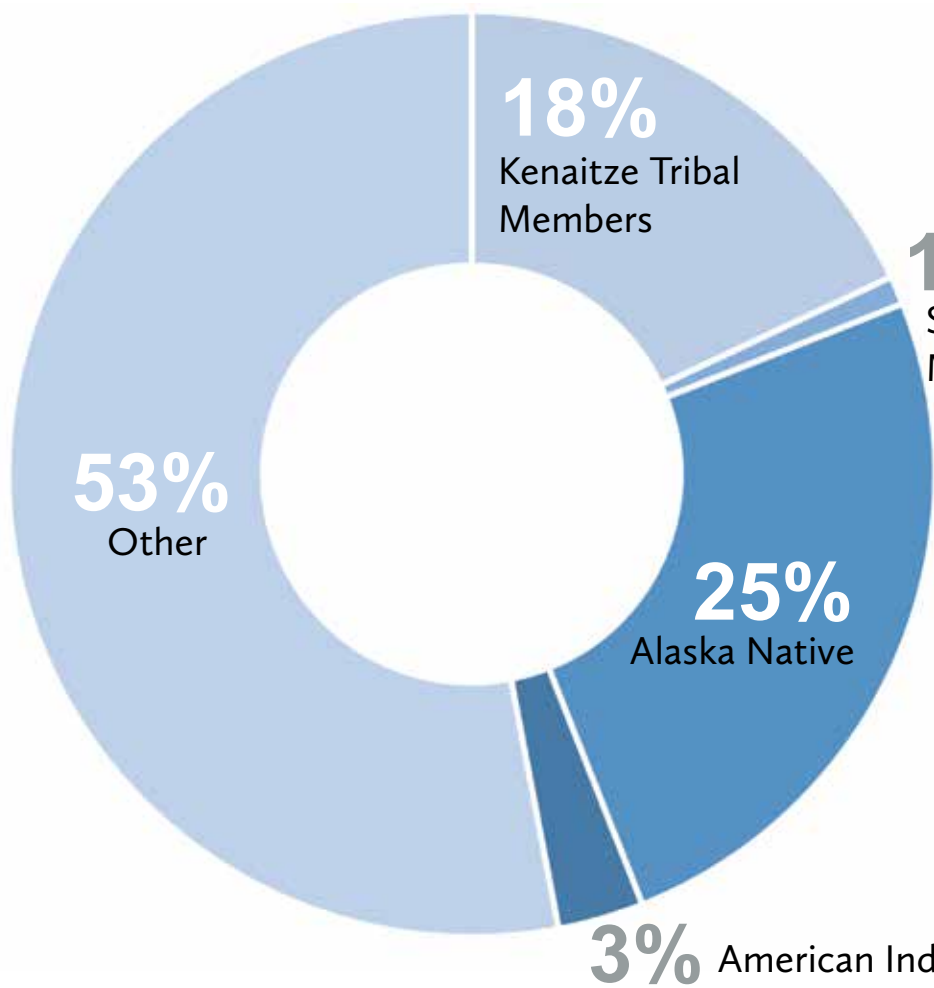
In FY20, the Tribe spent \$35.6 million on Tribal operations. Of the total, \$16.0 million was spent on health services; \$5.3 million on general and administrative; \$6.4 million in community services; \$6.0 million on Tribal government, including assistance to Tribal Members; \$1.1 million on Housing; and \$712,000 on Tribal Court.

Financial Assistance Payments



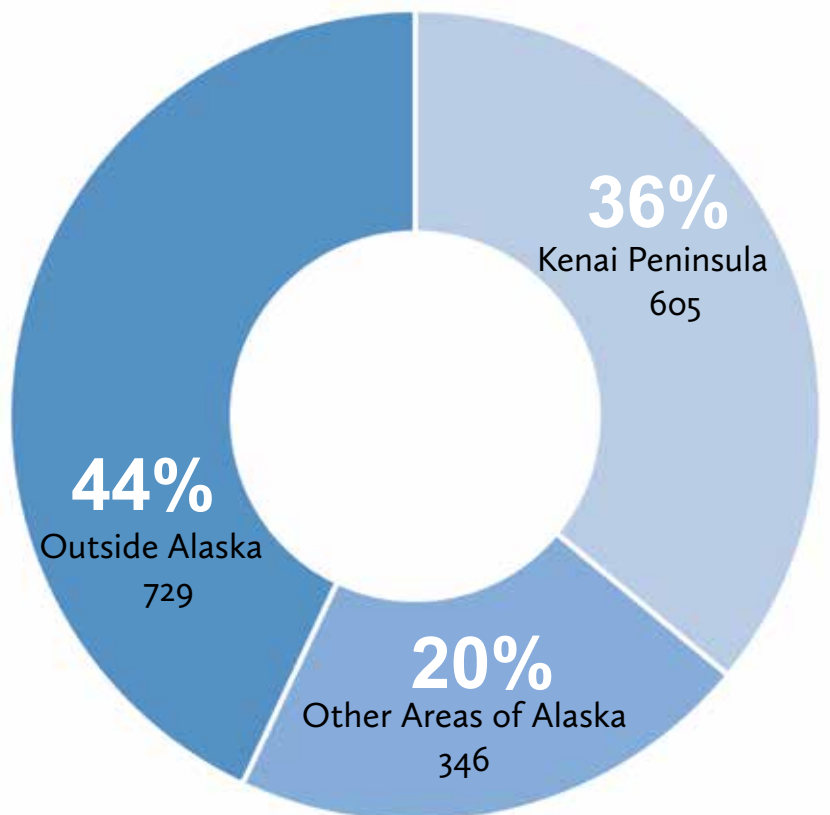
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS

For FY20 the Tribe will spend about \$4 million on direct payments to those we serve to assist with housing, education, training, transportation and emergency needs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the direct assistance needed for Tribal Members was greatly increased. The federal COVID-19 relief bill enabled the Tribe to respond to the pandemic and provide essential needs.

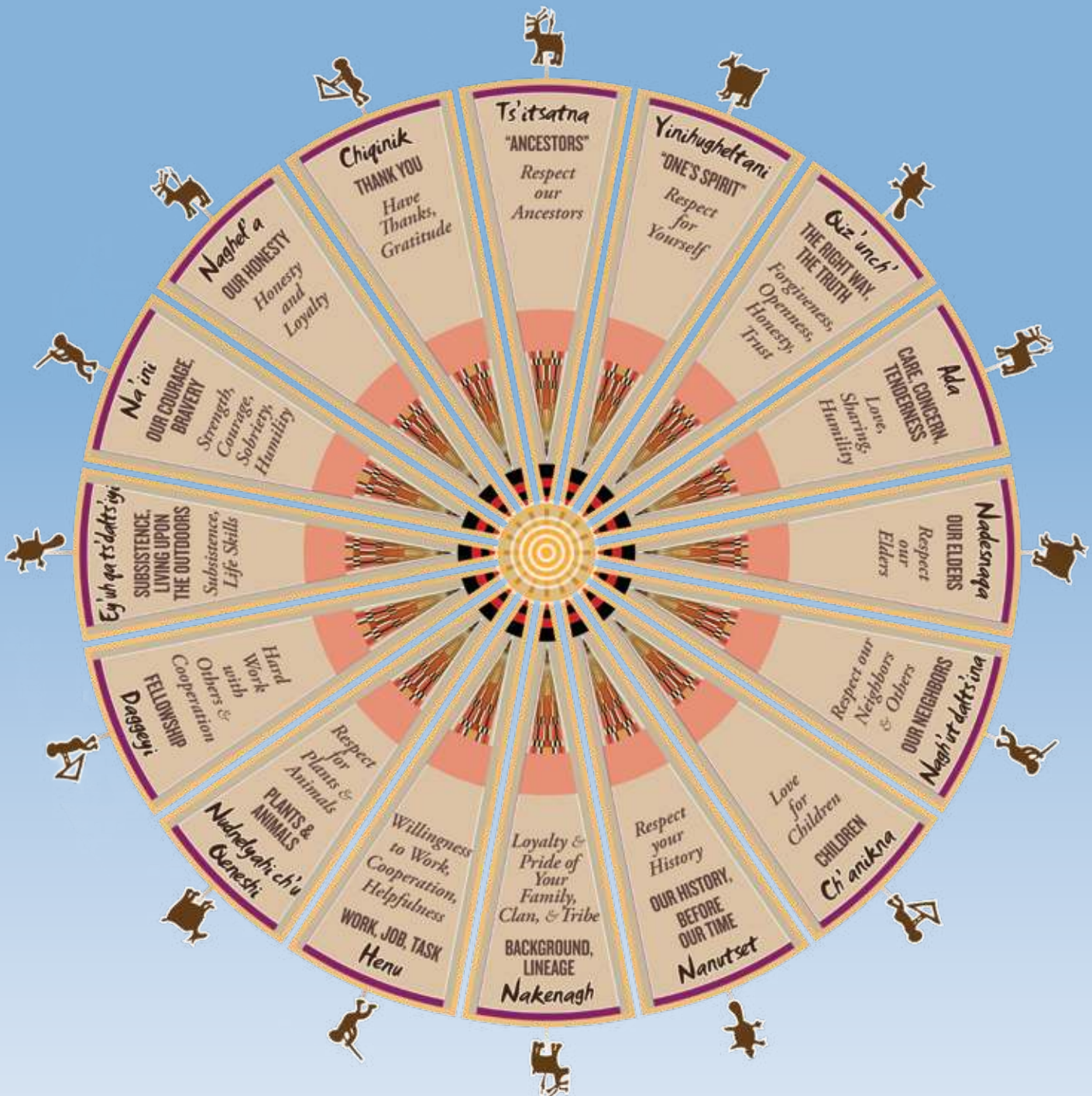


Staff Diversity
Total number of employees: 248

Tribal Member Enrollment
Total Kenaitze Indian Tribe Members: 1,678



Kenaitze Indian Tribe Traditional Values



Kenaitze Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 988
150 N. Willow St.
Kenai, Alaska 99611

907-335-7200
www.kenaitze.org
www.facebook.com/kenaitze

