

The Counting Cord



Team Jolene

Group effort helps un'ina get back to independent living

Illustrating in Dena'ina

First impressions

Staff, learners, parents appreciate Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus

Fall 2022

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Ch'anikna, love for children, plays a central role in our vision, "To assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever." We pass down our values, knowledge, and traditions, so our children may grow up while grounded in their culture. We support families, so they can support our children's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being. We protect our community and environment, so that our children will be able to enjoy all that Yaghanen, the Good Land, provides.



Tammy Grimes laughs with Charlotte Bedford in an infant and toddler learning class during the first day of classes at Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.



Yaghali du?

It is my honor to write to you as Tribal Council Chair. Chiqinik, thank you, to all who participated in our Tribal Council elections and Annual General Membership Meeting. Our elections are an important part of exercising our Tribe's sovereignty and self-determination, and an opportunity for you to make your voices heard on Tribal governance.

This year, Tribal Members elected two new Tribal Council Members. I want to congratulate Brenda Smith and Gabe Juliussen Jr. for their election to the Tribal Council. Brenda and Gabe join Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Bernadine Atchison, Liisia Blizzard, Mary Ann Mills and myself on the Council. Wayne will serve as Vice Chair, Brenda as Secretary, and Gabe as Treasurer for the coming year.

I would also like to thank Diana Zirul and Virginia Wolf for all of the hard work that they put in as Tribal Council Members. Their dedication during challenging times is appreciated.

Our new Council Members bring new ideas to the table. With its current makeup, the Tribal Council has a good mix of experience and fresh perspectives. As we move forward, we'll have the opportunity to take a look at what we do well, as well as things we should change.

I am grateful for all that our Tribe is able to provide. My family has appreciated the programs and services offered, as well as the opportunities to start a first job or continue in interesting and fulfilling careers.

I am also grateful for the connection to our Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina culture. I appreciate coming to Tribal facilities and seeing our traditional values put into action, whether it's Ch'anikna, our love for children, at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdel-diht Campus; Nadesnaqa, respect for our Elders, at Tytokas Elder Center; Daggeyi, hard work with others and cooperation, at our educational fishery; or Ada, care, concern and tenderness, at the Dena'ina Wellness Center.

The Tribal Council will continue to look for ways to expand and improve the programs and services the Tribe provides, with our traditional values as our guide.

I look forward to hearing from you, and continuing to work to fulfill our vision, "To assure Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina thrive forever."

Duk'idli, respectfully,
Ronette Stanton
Tribal Council Chair



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Above: In August, Cook Inlet Region Inc. made a contribution of \$50,000 to the Tribe for construction of the Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina Community Hall and Harvest Pavilion at the Tribe's Waterfront. Pictured are Kenaitze Indian Tribe Executive Director of Tribal Administration Peter Evon, CIRI Chief Strategy Officer Sarah Lukin, Tribal Council Chair Bernadine Atchison, Tribal Council Member Virginia Wolf, Tribal Council Member Liisia Blizzard, Tribal Council Treasurer Diana Zirul (holding a photo of Tribal Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Mills), CIRI President and Chief Executive Officer Sophie Minich, Tribal Council Secretary Ronette Stanton, and Tribal Council Member Wayne D. Wilson Jr.

Right: Council Members Mary Ann Mills, left, and Bernadine Atchison, right, laugh with U. S. Rep. Mary Peltola at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in Anchorage. Council Members attending AFN had the opportunity to share Tribal priorities with the state's congressional delegation during the event.



Two new Council Members elected at Annual Meeting



Election Board Chair Katheryn Rogers, right, swears in newly elected Mary Ann Mills, Gabe Juliussen Jr. and Brenda Smith.

Tribal Members re-elected one Tribal Council Member and elected two new ones during the Annual General Membership Meeting, held in the Gathering Space at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

Tribal Members also approved 115 new enrollees, honored four Tribal Members for their contributions to the Alaska Native community, and paused to remember those who have passed away in the past year.

Three two-year seats on the

seven-member Tribal Council were up for election at this year's Annual Meeting. Mary Ann Mills was re-elected to the Council. Gabe Juliussen Jr. and Brenda (Blankenship) Smith also were elected to seats on the Council.

They join Bernadine Atchison, Liisia Blizzard, Ronette Stanton and Wayne D. Wilson Jr. on the Council.

Following the Annual Meeting, the new Council met to determine officers for the coming year. Stanton was selected to serve as

Tribal Council Chair; Wilson as Vice Chair; Smith as Secretary; and Juliussen as Treasurer.

Juliussen received the most votes with 133, followed by Mills with 132 and Smith with 118.

Other candidates on the ballot were incumbent Council Members Virginia Wolf (113 votes) and Diana Zirul (102 votes), and Jimmy Coveyou (56 votes).

Write-in votes were cast for Miranda Boehmler (62 votes), Mike Juliussen (3 votes), Paul Lorenzo

(1 vote), and David Showalter (1 vote). Stanton, who was not up for re-election, also received a write-in vote.

Votes were tabulated by Coghill Group PC.

In their candidate speeches from the floor, Juliussen and Smith emphasized the need for education and career training, as well as employment opportunities for Tribal Members.

Juliussen said he has a passion for education, especially the STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“The Tribe needs to do what we can do to make sure the next generation is ready,” Juliussen said.

Juliussen also expressed concerns about relying on the federal government for funding, and said the Tribe should look for ways to generate more business opportunities.

“The bottom line is, for us to thrive forever, we need to stand on our own,” Juliussen said.

Smith pointed to the Tribe’s Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance, and questioned why it had to be enforced, rather than being embraced as part of the Tribe’s hiring practices. She said she would like to see expanded workforce development opportunities.

“The real investment is in us, our people,” Smith said.

During her floor speech, Mills noted the Tribe’s progress and accomplishments during her time on the Council. She said that she is passionate about the Tribal Court in particular.

“I have helped our Tribe to provide meaningful services,” Mills



Jon Ross presents an opening prayer titled, “Nahenu’a Duch’idatqeni - Our Work Prayer” in both Dena’ina and English.



This year’s meeting was held in person and broadcast live on Zoom.



The Election Board and representatives from Bill Coghill Group PC count ballots in the campus library. Pictured are Katheryn Rogers, Bernice Crandall, Maria Sweppy, Ramona Trujillo, Bill Coghill and Krista Holloway.



The Annual General Membership Meeting began with the Tribal Council entering the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus Gathering Area singing "Potlatch Song of a Lonely Man." Pictured from left are Yvonne Flynn, Council Member Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Council Secretary Ronette Stanton, Council Member Liisia Blizzard, Council Treasurer Diana Zirul, Council Chair Bernadine Atchison, Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Mills, Council Member Virginia Wolf, Dena'ina Language Institute Director Jennifer Williams and Logan Wik.

said of her time on the Council and committees.

During the Tribal Member Recognition portion of the meeting, Atchison described those receiving awards as "our silent heroes" – people who work hard behind the scenes to ensure the Tribe's success and preserve and promote Alaska Native culture.

Samuel Schimmel received a Tribal Member Achievement Award for his advocacy on behalf of Alaska Native and American Indian communities. Schimmel currently attends Stanford University in California, where he is focusing on Earth Systems and Public Policy. He has

served with a wide range of regional and national organizations.

"Sam is a huge advocate for Alaska Native and American Indian people across the United States, and continues to be involved in many aspects through the state of Alaska and at the national level to support and resolve issues that directly affect Native communities, including but not limited to, suicide, drug abuse, and cultural erosion," said Mills, who presented the award. "We are very proud of the accomplishments that Sam has done in his life, and continues to do, in order to protect Native communities, and preserve our culture and traditions."

Most recently, Schimmel played a large role in "Operation Fish Drop," working with Cook Inlet Tribal Council to distribute wild Alaska salmon to families and Elders in the Anchorage area to enhance food security during the pandemic.

Bernice Crandall received an Elder of the Year Award for her longtime service to the Tribe and the community.

Crandall has served on many Kenaitze Indian Tribe committees, including Tribal Enrollment, Court Code, and the Election Board. She has also served as a Salamatof Native Association officer and member of the board of directors for more than 30 years.



Among other contributions, Crandall has participated in youth fish camp, where she and other Elders teach youth how to put up fish in the Cook Inlet tradition.

"Bernice was nominated based on her community participation and the role she plays as a respected role model for the Native community," said Liisia Blizard, who presented the award.

James O. Segura Sr. received a Tribal Member Legacy Award. Segura spent more than 30 years serving on the Kenaitze Tribal Council, as Chair of the Hunting, Fishing, and Gathering Commission, and on various other committees. He was Executive

Director of Salamatof Native Association for 20 years, helping to build the organization after it was first recognized as a tribe. Segura was also a founding board member for the South-central Foundation, where he served for 40 years.

"I've known Jim for as long as I can remember, and me and him were always battling it out over tribal politics, and he taught me a lot about how to be a tribal leader, even though we had our differences," said Wilson, who presented the award. "He is a good man and he fought hard for his people for the majority of his life, and is somebody I respect."

A Tribal Member Legacy Award also went to Bonnie Juliussen, who passed away in 2021. Diana Zirul said it was an honor to present the award.

"Bonnie dedicated well over 25 years of her life to the Tribe and she retired in a position at Tyotkas, our Elder center, in 2014," Zirul said. "During her time with the Tribe, she served on Tribal Council, and diligently worked to lay the foundation for the Tribe's Elders program. Her true passion was our Tribal Elders, and it showed in her work, and the relationship she had with each Elder. We are very proud of the work, growth and success that Bonnie helped build to help make our Elders program what it is today."



Moses Jordan, the Tribe's Environmental Programs Manager, totes a recycling bin full of cardboard to a Tribal vehicle for a trip to Kenai's waste transfer facility.

Program puts focus on the environment

Environmental stewardship is reflected in the Tribe's traditional values and the Dena'ina way of living.

Moses Jordan, the Tribe's Environmental Programs Manager, says it is also a rewarding career path.

"In environmental work, you get a sense of fulfillment. You feel like you've done something of service," said Jordan, who came to the Tribe about a year ago from a similar position with his own tribe in Bethel.

"We're all stewards of this Earth. We've all got to take care of it."

Between a clean-up of contaminated material at the Kenai Natives Association's Wildwood property, getting recycling restarted at Tribal facilities, and reaching out to other community organizations, Jordan had a busy summer for the Tribe.

The Wildwood property was the site of a former military base and was transferred to the Kenai Natives Association in the early 1970s. Clean-up efforts there are funded through the Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation Program, a Department of Defense pro-

gram to address issues from past military activities.

During the summer, a contractor cleaned up the site of a burn pit, removing 90 tons of contaminated soil.

Jordan said the soil contained dioxins, highly toxic pollutants that, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, can cause cancer, reproductive and developmental problems, damage to the immune system, and can interfere with hormones.

Once in the environment, dioxins are slow to break down,



The Tribe has recently resumed recycling cardboard, plastic and aluminum.

and can accumulate in the food chain. Jordan noted that many Tribal Members access the Wildwood property for hunting and gathering activities.

Future plans for the site include continued soil testing to see how bad the contamination is, and how much it has spread. The Tribe was recently awarded a \$1.8 million grant to continue mitigation efforts at the site.

Jordan said he and Environmental Programs Intern Nick Jacuk also spent time removing trash and garbage dumped at the site.

Jordan has also been working to expand the Tribe's recycling efforts. Recycling bins for plastics and cardboard have been placed in the Administration building conference room, the Dena'ina Wellness Center employee break room, and at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus. Jordan is looking for other places to encourage recycling as well.

The Environmental program has purchased two metal detectors, which Jordan has been using in clean-up efforts on the Kenai beaches. He said he's found lots of lead, aluminum, and plenty of nails. He's also pulled a lot of lead out of the ground at the Wildwood site. As the fishing season winds down, he'll be sweeping for fishing hooks and tackle as well.

Jordan said he's working on ways to monitor bluff erosion, especially at the Kalifornsky Village site. One idea he has is to use a drone to get an aerial perspective.

Jordan has also been working with other community environmental organizations. For example, he has been learning about the Kenai Watershed Forum's water quality monitoring work.

This year, the Tribe also established an Environmental Protection Committee to ensure that the air, land and water of the Kenai Peninsula is protected. The

**'We're all stewards
of this Earth.**

**We've all got to
take care of it.'**

Moses Jordan,

Environmental

Programs Manager

committee has been studying local issues and meeting with other user groups to see where the Tribe can make a difference.

"We've been figuring out what we want to accomplish, and how we can make a difference in our community," said Wayne D. Wilson Jr., Tribal Council Vice Chair and Chair of the Environmental Protection Committee.

One issue identified by the committee is Anchorage's wastewater treatment and discharge into Cook Inlet. Currently, the city's wastewater treatment facility receives a waiver from some Clean Water Act discharge requirements. The committee would like to see more stringent requirements for the wastewater discharged into the inlet.

Wilson said the committee will continue to meet with other community user groups to identify other issues and areas of concern.

Unhghenesditnu

Board on Geographic Names approves Dena'ina stream name

A stream at the site of Kalifornsky Village once again has a Dena'ina name.

In July, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved a proposal to make official the name Unhghenesditnu for the stream that enters Tikahtnu, Cook Inlet, at Kalifornsky Village.

Unhghenesditnu means "farthest creek over" in Dena'ina, and was the original name for Kalifornsky Village. The stream is 4.3 miles long with its headwaters northwest of Reflection Lake, between the Sterling Highway and Kalifornsky Beach Road.

The name has been entered into the Geographic Names Information System, the nation's official geographic names repository.

Kalifornsky Village was abandoned in the 1920s, following the influenza epidemic of 1918. However, the village remains an important cultural and spiritual site for Kahtnuht'ana Dena'ina.





Illustrating in Dena'ina

'Ever since I was just a little kid, (I've enjoyed working with) whatever I could get my hands on.'

Mariah Mills

Mariah Mills said she is a lifelong artist. Now, the high school senior and Kenaitze Tribal Member is about to see her artwork published in a Dena'ina language book.

"Ever since I was just a little kid, (I've enjoyed working with) whatever I could get my hands on," Mills said.

Mills said her current preference is to create art digitally using a tablet computer.

Over the summer, Mills started work as one of the Tribe's Daggeyi Interns. She said she was encouraged to pursue the opportunity by her grandmother, Mary Ann Mills.

After sharing a selection of her artwork with Dena'ina Language Institute Director Jennifer Williams and Dena'ina Language Coordinator Anna Eason, Mills was given the task of illustrating books and other materials for the Dena'ina Language Institute.

Mills recently completed work on a children's counting book, creating illustrations that represent Alaska and Dena'ina culture. She's also working on animal flip cards.



Mariah Mills uses a computer tablet to create a drawing that will be used in a future Dena'ina Language Institute publication.

Mills said she's excited to see her work published, and plans to include art in her future endeavors.

Williams said the Dena'ina Language Institute continues to look for Kenaitze Tribal Members to illustrate the institute's publications and "broaden our Dena'ina literature base."

Artists who are selected will work with the Dena'ina Language Institute staff on a variety of projects. Books include traditional Dena'ina stories as well as "Annie" stories, a series of fictional stories developed with Dena'ina Elder Helen Dick, a first language speaker. The stories are about a Dena'ina girl growing up in the area, and her cultural experiences.

The projects are intended to be easy to intermediate reading, and the illustrations will be important to help convey the meaning of the Dena'ina text.

Artists interested in participating are encouraged to share their portfolio, or five to 10 pieces of their work, with Williams. Work in all mediums is welcome. Williams can be emailed at jwilliams@kenaitze.org. Artists who are selected will be compensated for their work.

The Dena'ina Language Institute is in the process of printing two Dena'ina language baby board books. The Institute has recently published "Kut' Dena'ina Qenaga Galeq – Helen's Dena'ina Language Pocket Dictionary." Copies have been distributed at Tribal gatherings, and Tribal Members interested in receiving a copy may contact Williams.

Entries in the Pocket Dictionary have corresponding audio files, which may be found on the Dena'ina Language Institute webpage on the Tribe's website, <https://www.kenaitze.org/education/dena'ina-language-institute/>.



Addiction counselor shares knowledge with Kenaitze staff, community



Carl Dawson, a nationally recognized expert in the field of substance use disorders, speaks to an audience during a training at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus.

In August, Carl Dawson, a nationally recognized expert in the field of substance use disorders, provided a three-day training for Kenaitze staff and some of the Tribe's community partners. He came away from his first trip to Kenai impressed by the Tribe's commitment to its people.

"To have people sincerely looking out for each other – that's something I don't think we see a lot of in the Lower 48," Dawson said. "That's something I think is so awesome here, such sincerity, care, and willingness to look out for somebody."

Dawson holds a Master of Science degree in Community Mental Health Clinical Psychology from Pittsburg State University. He is licensed as a Professional Counselor in the state of Missouri and is certified as a Counselor and a Master Addiction Counselor. His presentations focus on the psychology of the brain and how drugs work in the body. He believes it is necessary to understand the biology of addiction before treating the psychology of addiction.

Dawson has worked with the Tribe on several occasions

in recent years, including conferences in Anchorage and virtual training sessions. While he's been working and lecturing in the field of substance use disorders and treatment for more than 40 years, he said he's started working with Alaska Native and American Indian organizations in the past five years.

The difference in working with Alaska Native and American Indian organizations, he said, is that the audience is much more appreciative of the knowledge and experience he shares, which in turn makes him more excited to share it.



Dawson's training reached a cross section of Kenaitze departments, along with representatives from the Tribe's community partners.

"The issues are still the same, but the willingness to hear what I have to say is profoundly better," Dawson said. "They are extremely appreciative of what somebody taught me, and I can give to them."

Dawson noted that many of those organizations operate in underserved communities that don't get the level of care they need.

In his work, Dawson brings together the physiological, psychological, and social elements to treat people with substance use disorders, as well as the impacts of trauma.

Maria Guerra, Na'ini Family and Social Services Director, said she hoped that people who attended the training are able to better understand how each of those elements affect a person's mental health.

"If you understand the components, you are better able to empathize and use a trauma-informed care approach to help those who are struggling get connected to the most appropriate resources," Guerra said.

Guerra said she has extensive training and experience in brain science and behavioral health, and appreciates the way in which

'To have people sincerely looking out for each other – that's something I don't think we see a lot of in the Lower 48. That's something I think is so awesome here, such sincerity, care, and willingness to look out for somebody.'

Carl Dawson

Dawson is able to bring so many concepts together in a short period of time.

"I've had to take decades' worth of training to understand what he puts together in three days," Guerra said.

Dawson said the training conference in Kenai, held at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus, was productive.

"It's all very personal, down to earth, and very real," Dawson said. "Everyone asks questions directly from their heart, and from their experiences."



First impressions

Staff, learners, parents appreciate Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus



Above Left: Mylee Yeoman, pictured in the library, was surprised by the building's architectural design. "When I first saw it getting built, I didn't think it would be this interesting," Yeoman said.

Above Right: The Heartbeat of Mother Earth Drum group leads staff and visitors participating in a circle dance during the grand opening of the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus on Sept. 1.

Below: Tribal Council members cut the ribbon marking the grand opening. Pictured with scissors are Council Member Virginia Wolf, Council Secretary Ronette Stanton, Council Treasurer Diana Zirul, Council Chair Bernadine Atchison, Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Mills, Council Member Liisia Blizzard and Executive Director of Tribal Administration Peter Evon.





When the Tribe celebrated the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeliht Campus Grand Opening on Sept. 1, Tribal Members, employees of the Tribe, and invited guests and dignitaries were able to explore the new building and learn about its features.

In the weeks since, those who are in the building every day – Education staff and learners of all ages – have been putting those features to use.

Perhaps the most notable feature is that the building is big enough to house all of the Tribe's Education programs.

"The energy in the building – because of the number of people here, it's easy to feed on in a positive way," said Tami Johnson, a Teacher in the Early Learning program.

Johnson said that having all the programs in the same building allows staff to share ideas across programs.

For Early Learning Teacher Kirsten Huntsman, that means access to more people who can share traditional knowledge.

"I feel more exposed to Dena'ina language and culture," Huntsman said. "It's nice to be able to hear it from people who know it."

Cultural touches are integrated throughout the campus. Campus landscaping includes plants and trees important to Dena'ina culture, such as birch and spruce. The interior includes colors that reflect the Kenai River. Room names are posted in English and Dena'ina. Reclaimed wood from the Libby, McNeil and Libby cannery, where many Tribal Members worked over the years, is used throughout.

"When I first saw it getting built, I didn't think it would be this interesting," said Mylee Yeoman.

Yeoman, who is 14, said her favorite part of the new building is the Gathering Space, the large multi-purpose room. She said she

likes that the wide-open space is less confining than a classroom.

"It's a place where you can do whatever you want and not worry about breaking anything," Yeoman said.

Trixie Spicer, an Early Learning Teacher, said the Gathering Space is popular with the pre-schoolers, too.

"The Gathering Space is nice to have – just to have an area to get the wiggles out," Spicer said.

Aiden Mills, also 14, agreed. He started participating in Yaghanen Youth Language and Culture programs last year. At the time, programming was taking place in classrooms and school hallways while the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeliht Campus was under construction, and COVID-19 protocols discouraged gathering in large groups.

"This is a lot better," Mills said.

Mills said he appreciated the building's aesthetics.



Sonja Ivanoff works on a touch-screen computer monitor as other participants in the Yaghanen Language and Cultural Program warm up for Native Youth Olympics.

"The design and the architecture – how everything is put together," Mills said.

In the building's commercial-grade kitchen, staff are appreciating the functionality.

"I like having the space to do what I have to do to get things done," said Valerie Anderson, who was the Cook at the Early Childhood Center and moved with the preschool program to the new campus.

Anderson helped to design the new kitchen and pick out the appliances, and said she loves the way it has turned out. One of her favorite new features is the convection ovens. Kitchen staff also appreciate the new commercial dishwasher.

"There's two-and-a-half times more dishes, but they get done faster," Anderson said.

With multiple Education programs now in the same building, the kitchen staff is serving more meals, including lunch for the preschool classrooms, and an after-school meal to Yaghanen participants.

Just as the kitchen and dining area can be the center of a home, it has become a popular spot in the new campus.

"It's nice to have the kids in the dining area, sitting down," said Marjorie Weeks, Food Service Coordinator. "Adults model table manners, and encourage kids to try things that maybe they haven't tried before."

Kya Ahlers, a Culture Instructor, said that it's nice to be able to share the table and touch base with program participants.

"Having adults be able to eat (with the kids) is nice," Ahlers said. "I sit at different tables so I can speak with all the kids."

Culture Instructor Judah Eason said regular meals with Yaghanen participants is a highlight of the day for him. He also appreciates knowing that between a school lunch and the meal served at the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus, young people who might be concerned with food security are getting at least two good meals each day.



Valerie Anderson helped to design the new kitchen and pick out the appliances, and said she loves the way it has turned out. One of her favorite new features is the convection ovens.

Education staff have also been able to incorporate the campus's features into everyday learning. Eason finds the signs which identify the English and Dena'ina names for each room to be helpful.

"I'm always using Dena'ina language, so having it visually integrated into the building makes it easier," Eason said.

Ahlers said that when participants arrive after school, she likes to gather by the large windows by the walking track, which circles the second floor of the Gathering Space, to start working on homework. The traditional values wheel embedded in the Gathering Space floor is also functional.

"We use the traditional values wheel as a circle-up spot, so we have a perfect teaching tool built in," Ahlers said.

Kimberly Curren said her four children, Peighton, age 14, Jameson, 12, Hezekiah, 10, and Angelica, 7, have enjoyed being in the new facility. She said her two youngest really enjoy the playground, while her older two have enjoyed the Native Youth Olympics activities in the Gathering Space. They all like snack time, too.

"It's super nice," Curren said of the campus. They all have their own cubbies, and the Gathering Space is super nice. They have all the space to do whatever they need to do."

Curren said picking up her children from the building also is a smooth process.

"The check-out system is really good, and the security is top-notch, too," Curren said.

Early Learning staff also appreciate the having Security staff in

'It's nice to have the kids in the dining area, sitting down. Adults model table manners, and encourage kids to try things that maybe they haven't tried before.'

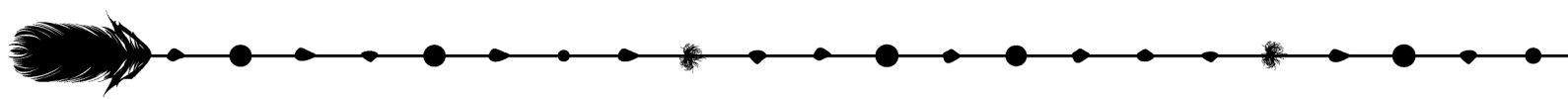
Marjorie Weeks,

Food Service Coordinator

the building, as well as the safety of having everything contained in one space. At the former location in the Family House, classes had to cross the parking lot. At the Kahtnuht'ana Duhdel-diht Campus, the playground is fenced in.

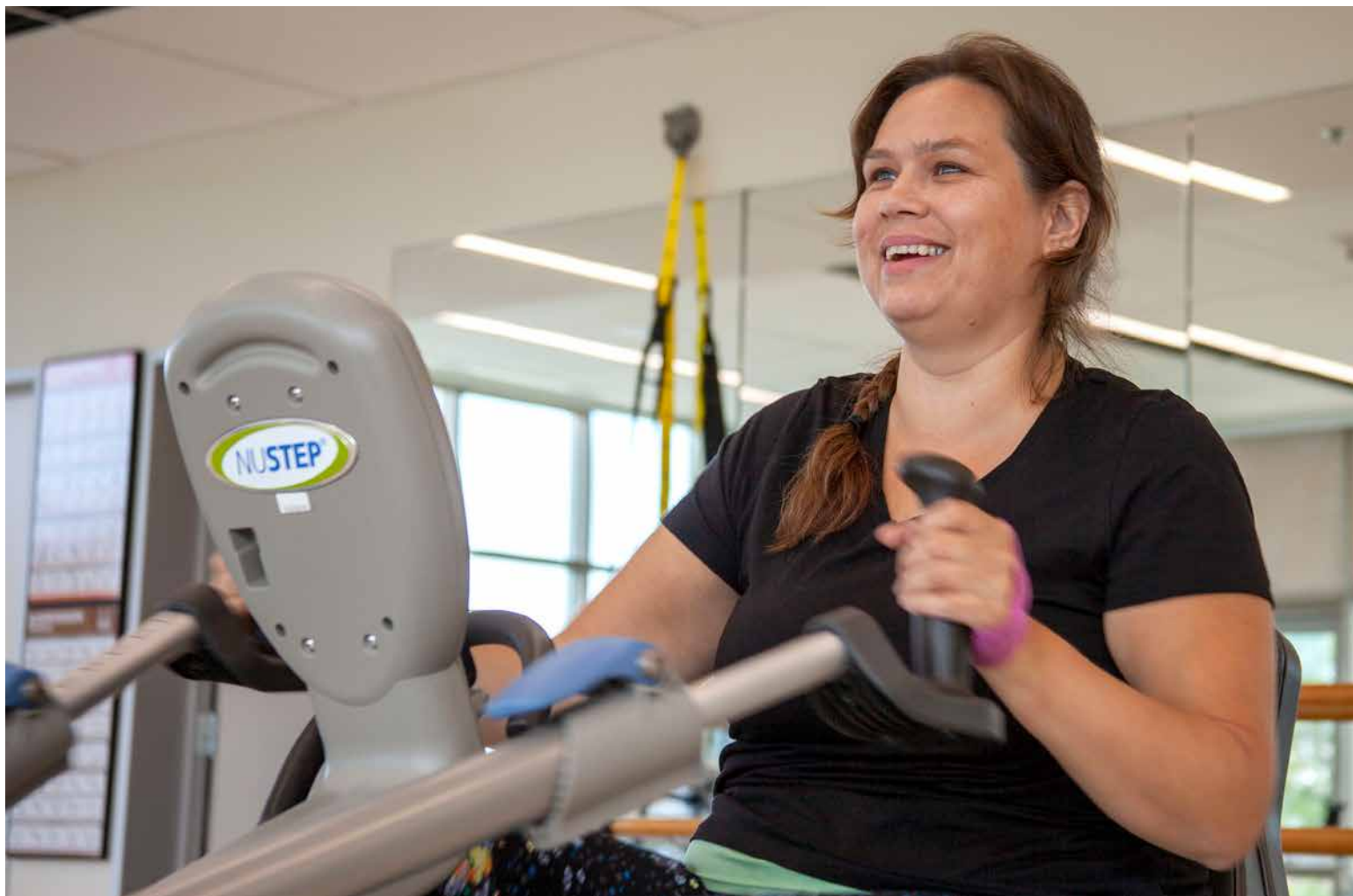
Curren said she and her husband are grateful for the opportunities that Kahtnuht'ana Duhdel-diht Campus provides.

"We appreciate our kids being able to learn about their culture. All the time and energy being funneled into our kids is awesome," Curren said.



Team Jolene

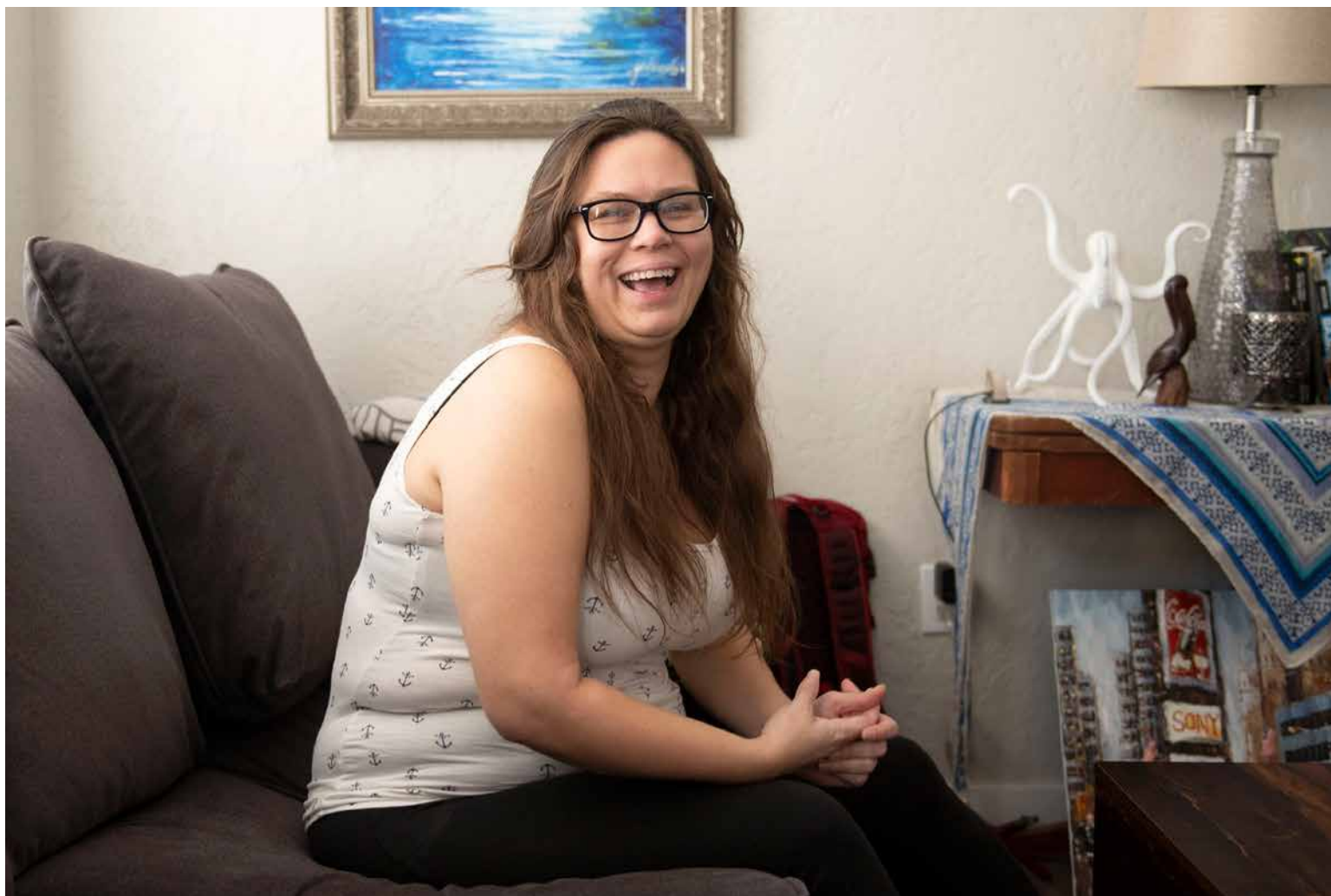
Group effort helps un'ina get back to independent living



Jolene Foree' works out at the Dena'ina Wellness Center gym in July. After a severe stroke in January 2021, Foree' has been able to move back to her Anchorage apartment and resume living independently. A team of care providers at the Dena'ina Wellness Center supported her each step along the way.

**'There's so many things with my right leg and right arm, when
something new happens, I'll think, 'Oh look, I can do that,' and
add it to the other things I can do,'**

Jolene Foree'



Jolene Foree', pictured in the living room of her Anchorage apartment, is working hard to heal from her stroke.

As she was recovering from a severe stroke, Jolene Foree' didn't always see the progress she was making.

Fortunately, she had a team of care providers at the Dena'ina Wellness Center who did.

"Everyone's been saying, 'You can do it,'" said Foree' during a workout at the Dena'ina Wellness Center gym over the summer. "I feel like I'm getting my strength back. I don't always see it, but everybody else does."

In January of 2021, Foree' was in her Anchorage apartment preparing to fly out for her job with Grant Aviation the next day. Instead, she suffered a stroke and was rushed to the hospital. She was 40 years old at the time.

Complicating the situation, Foree' tested positive for COVID-19 during her first week in the hospital, limiting her contact with people other than hospital staff.

Her mother, Scharlott Thomas, said that a very small percentage of people recover from the type of stroke Foree' had. Thomas said that hospital staff tried to prepare her for the worst.

However, Thomas said Foree' had already survived two life-threatening situations in her life, and felt certain she would survive this one, too.

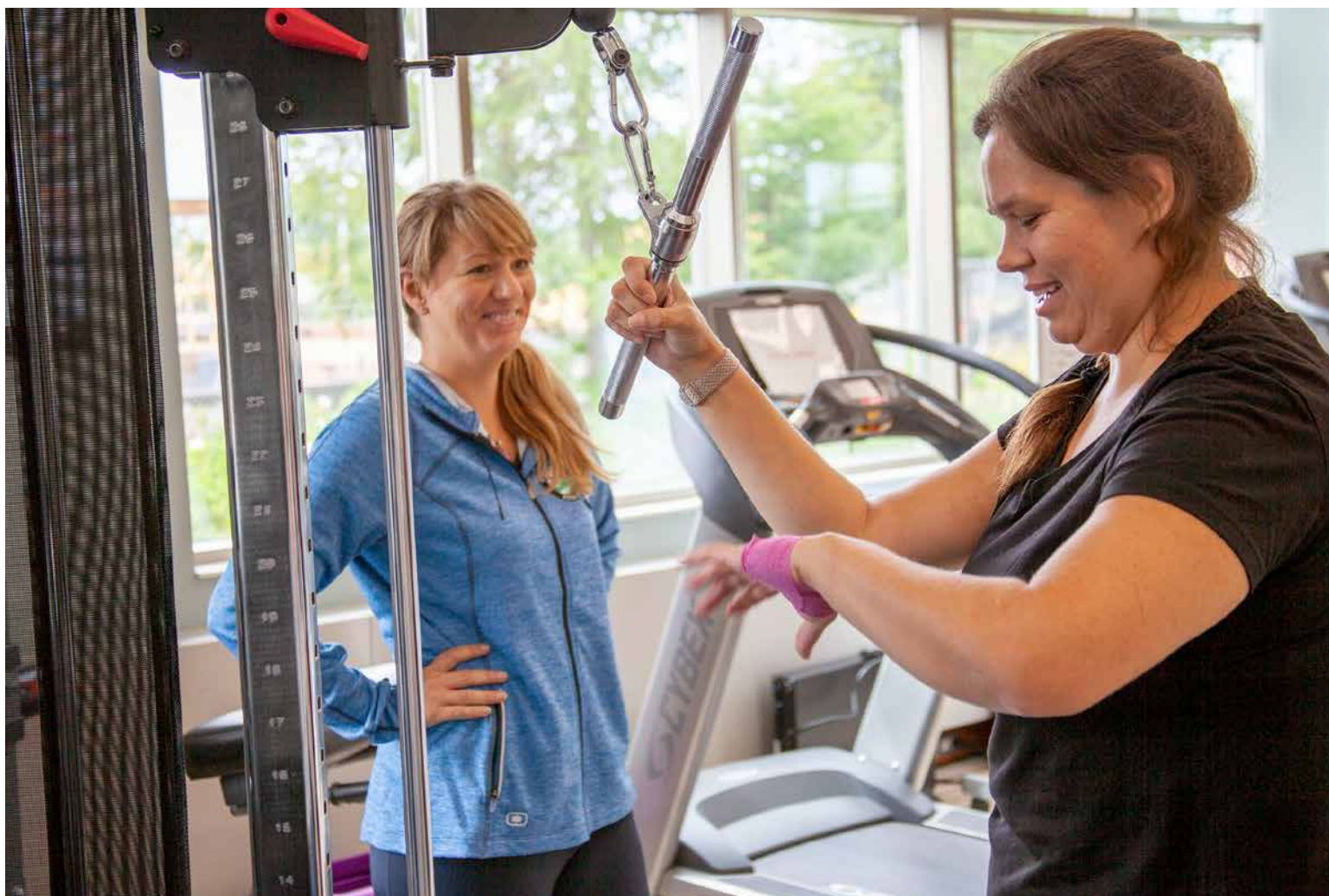
"The hospital staff tried to prepare me, but I said, 'Ain't no way, she's not ready,'" Thomas said, attributing some of her daughter's

resilience to her family being "a bunch of stubborn Athabascans."

A month and a half later, Foree' came back to Kenai to begin her recovery. At the Dena'ina Wellness Center, she had access to a team of providers to help with every aspect of her recovery – primary care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and personal trainers supporting her each step of the way as she worked toward her goal of living independently.

"She is amazing," said Sarah Huot, an Occupational Therapist at the Dena'ina Wellness Center. "After a stroke, teaching your brain and your body to work together again can take a long time."

Huot said that working with someone recovering from a stroke



Jolene Foree' does a strength-training workout with Dena'ina Wellness Center Personal Trainer Danielle Newton.

can be fun, because it takes a lot of creativity. Keeping therapy sessions fun is the best way to learn, Huot said.

"A stroke can affect so many different parts of their life," Huot said. "I meet them where they're at, and help get them where they want to be."

With occupational therapy, that might include things like figuring out how an un'ina can put their hair in a ponytail with one hand, or navigating a workplace setting or an apartment.

Huot said she also works closely with the Physical Therapy staff. Staff can bounce ideas off of each other, and goals established with one care provider can be carried

over to sessions with other providers.

Physical Therapist Collin Atkinson said as part of each evaluation, he asks an un'ina about their goals for treatment. He can then design a treatment plan around those goals.

Atkinson said it was humbling and inspiring to see Foree's hard work and progress. Atkinson said most of his experience is with orthopedic injuries, but he was able to reach out for advice from colleagues to help Foree' with her recovery.

"She pushed me. She kept me moving beyond where I was," Atkinson said of working with Foree'. "... It's inspiring to see someone

work so hard. It's infectious. It makes us all want to work hard."

Foree' said she sometimes surprised herself with her progress.

"There's so many things with my right leg and right arm, when something new happens, I'll think, 'Oh look, I can do that,' and add it to the other things I can do," Foree' said.

When she began her recovery, she was confined to a wheelchair. Now, she can walk without her cane. Her speech, which was affected by the stroke, is improving. And with her daily visits to the Dena'ina Wellness Center gym, she not only regained much of her strength, she also lost about 40 pounds.



**'It's important to let someone else know
about your intentions and plans. Advanced
planning and being prepared is important –
even if you don't expect anything to happen.'**

Scharlott Thomas

Foree' said she spent a lot of time with the gym to herself. She likes to take some of that time to see what her body can do.

"When I'm in the gym by myself, I like to sit on the bench and see how far I can lift my arm," Foree' said.

Foree' said she hasn't set a lot of goals for herself, but she would like to eventually be able to climb aboard her boyfriend's sailboat.

"I love to put the sails up, kill the engine and just go and listen to the waves," Foree' said.

The personal trainers at the gym, Danielle Newton and Katrina Pierce, have pushed her to try different exercises. She also had support and encouragement from Physical Therapy Assistant Sabrina Royster.

"Danielle, she pushes me. She got me on the bike. She said, 'You can do it,'" said Foree' referring to the NuStep Crosstrainer, which gets her moving her arms and her legs.

Foree' said all the encouragement has been good, especially when some days are challenging. She feels like she has a team be-

hind her, and isn't going through it alone.

Thomas said the support even went beyond her health care providers. Transportation staff provided encouragement along with their services, and Maintenance staff always seemed to be on hand to make sure Foree' got in and out of the Dena'ina Wellness Center safely.

"I can't say enough about the employees at the Tribe, how patient they were. All the encouragement, and I saw a protective side," Thomas said. "The involvement of the employees at the Dena'ina Wellness Center and the Tribe to take care of her – it's heartwarming."

Foree' even got to participate in the Tribe's educational fishery with her family as staff helped her get into the side-by-side ATV and took her down to the net.

Thomas said she was also amazed with the work – and patience – of Atkinson and Huot.

Thomas noted some of the issues that have come up along the way. For example, when

Foree' was first in the hospital, she wasn't able to speak for herself – but neither was anybody else. Thomas has experience caring for stroke patients and advocated as best she could, but aspects of her daughter's care couldn't move forward until Foree' was able to sign a power of attorney.

"It's important to let someone else know about your intentions and plans," Thomas said. "Advanced planning and being prepared is important – even if you don't expect anything to happen."

Thomas said her family also found limited resources and availability for home health care services.

"So we relied on family and friends, but we were not able to compensate them for their time," Thomas said.

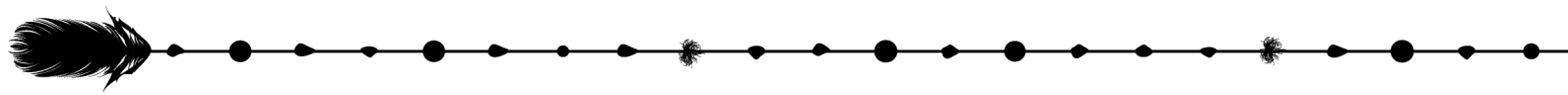
In July, Foree' was able to move back to her apartment in Anchorage. She said she even got the OK to start driving again, though she'd have to trade in her car with a manual transmission for something that can be equipped for her to drive using her left foot.

"It was happy tears when she left," Huot said. "Our end goal was getting her back to Anchorage, back to work, and living independently."

Foree' has continued to make progress with care providers in Anchorage.

Foree' said she was grateful for the support she received from the Tribe, but was also looking forward to getting back her independence.

"Kenaitze, they've been really good to me," Foree' said, "but I've got to try to be on my own."



Tribe approved for Title IV-E

Program helps protect welfare of Tribal children

**'The more we
learned about Title
IV-E, the more we
learned about how
this would be a
means for the Tribe
to provide support
for our families, so
that our children
could stay home or
be with relatives.'**

Bernadine Atchison,

Tribal Council Member



Nadia Nijim, from the Office of Child Welfare, Region X Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Tribal Council Chair Bernadine Atchison prepare to sign the Title IV-E agreement in a ceremony on Aug. 17.


After years of planning, the Tribe has a new resource to help protect the welfare of children in need of foster care.

In August, the Tribe's Title IV-E plan was approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families.

"It affords us to go forward with exercising and implementing our goals of self-determination," said Mary Ann Mills, Tribal Council Vice Chair and Chair of the Title IV-E committee, during a celebration for the plan's approval.

Title IV-E is a federal law, part of the Social Security Act, that provides partial reimbursement for foster care maintenance, adoption assistance, and guardianship assistance payments for children who meet specific eligibility requirements.

During a celebration of the Tribe's Title IV-E plan approval, Bernadine Atchison, Tribal Council Chair and also a member of the Title IV-E committee, said the process has been very personal for her. Several years ago, four of her grandchildren were in need of



foster care. Limited resources, including family financial resources, posed a barrier to the Tribe finding homes for them, so they were taken into the Office of Children's Services system.

That experience led her to becoming a representative for the Tribe in negotiations for the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact, which was signed in 2017 and recently became state law.

"It was during that time, we were having presentations about different things we could do to help provide support for our families and children, and one of them was Title IV-E," Atchison said. "... The more we learned about Title IV-E, the more we learned about how this would be a means for the Tribe to provide support for our families, so that our children could stay home or be with relatives."

Maria Guerra, Director of the Tribe's Na'ini Family and Social Services, said that when it came to developing a Title IV-E plan, the Tribe had two options. The state has a Title IV-E agreement with the federal government, and the Tribe had the option to work through the state, with reimbursement based on what the state negotiated.

"The other option was to go ahead and negotiate directly with the federal government," Guerra said. "That gave freedom for the Tribe to negotiate reimbursement rates the Tribe thinks are appropriate. Through these efforts, the Tribe is able to exercise its sovereignty. And, the Tribe did not have to align with the state's IV-E plan, but we could write our own plan, including cultural components."

In the state court system, Guerra explained, the process is very rigid. For example, in state courts, after a certain period of time, there is typically a termination of parental rights.

The Tribal Court, on the other hand, is able to take a more flexible and nuanced approach, and exercise the option not to terminate parental rights, such as in a situation where the parent is in rehab and working toward sobriety.

The Tribe also can take steps to try to prevent a child from being removed from a home, such as developing a safety plan for the family. For the state, Guerra said, the protocol is frequently to either remove the child, or do nothing.

"In the Tribal system, judges are not forced to rule based on the financial requirements of Title IV-E," Guerra said. "... The Tribe has the opportunity to intervene and use different pathways to ensure less trauma. With different pathways available, judges in Tribal Court can use their cultural knowledge and apply it to cases."

Traditional values have also been incorporated into the plan for foster care licensing and training.

"There is culture in all of it," Guerra said. "Every part of the Title IV-E plan was written with, reviewed with and approved through the Title IV-E committee, which is made up of Tribal Members, Council Members and professionals. Many hands with cultural knowledge had the opportunity to provide ideas, feedback and comments."

The Tribe spent the past two years developing its Title IV-E plan. While there is a 170-page template of Title IV-E requirements, the Tribe had to build out all of the supporting documentation, such as a Child Welfare Manual and a database to track cases.

"That's where the work is," said Kimberly Kirchner, who started with the Tribe as the Title IV-E Coordinator. She is now the Child Welfare Coordinator.

The Title IV-E team worked with the Tribal Court and the Tribal Council to ensure that policies, procedures and codes met Title IV-E requirements.

"Everybody had to fully buy into doing this, and doing it right," Guerra said. "It would have been simple to just pull language from the federal website, but we wanted to make sure we had a plan that could be implemented, is culturally appropriate, and thoughtful of the people we serve."

Much of the documentation covered things the Tribe was already doing, it just hadn't been compiled into one place, Kirchner said.

"Title IV-E supplements and weaves into the work we're doing," Kirchner said.

Throughout the planning process, the Title IV-E team relied on support from the Qiz'unch' Tribal Court, the Finance department, and Information Technology to develop and implement the plan's many components, as well as from outside agencies, including the Indian Child Welfare Program at Casey Family Programs, and the Capacity Building Center for Tribes.

Prior to Title IV-E approval, a limited amount of Tribal funding was available to support children in foster care. Foster families for Kenaitze children could receive a stipend of up to \$500 per month for up to three children.

With a Title IV-E plan in place, when an eligible child comes into the Tribe's care, reimbursement is available at a much higher rate, and there isn't a limit on the number of children receiving a stipend. Individual needs also may be taken into account when determining a stipend amount.

For a child to be eligible, a number of findings are required from the Tribal Court, including a finding that the Tribe has made "active efforts" to prevent removal, and that it would be best for the child not to return to the home initially, or close to the removal date.

The placement home also must meet some eligibility requirements.

In addition to foster care assistance, Title IV-E also provides adoption and guardianship assistance. Adoption assistance was not previously available.

"Help is out there for families that need it," Kirchner said.

Guerra said that she is hoping that one of the impacts of the Tribe's Title IV-E plan will be to increase the availability of Tribal foster homes.

"We are hoping this encourages more Tribal community members to consider becoming foster care-licensed, so we have more capacity for Tribally licensed homes. We can provide



A Title IV-E plan will provide means for the Tribe to provide support for families, so that children in need of foster care can stay home or be with relatives.

adequate stipends, comparable to those the state provides," Guerra said. "We know it's critical for children to be surrounded by their culture, traditions, people they know, and their

community when they cannot remain in their home with their parents."

For more information about the foster care licensing process, call Na'ini at 907-335-7600.



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**For medication refills
or questions, please call
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**508 Upland Street
Kenai, AK 99611
Phone: 907-335-7500
Medication Refill and
Help Line: 907-335-7545**

Internships provide a good place to start



Deidre Lamping is working as an intern to gain the job skills she needs to start her career.

Some people seeking internships have a good idea of the career path they want to follow, and are looking for experience in the field. Others aren't quite sure what career they want to pursue, and are interested in exploring a variety of fields.

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has intern programs that accommodate them both.

"Some interns coming in after they graduate from high school might know a little more, 'This is what I want to do,' and they're looking for on-the-job training," said Krista Pitsch, the Tribe's Community Education Coordinator.

"Those still in high school, they're still figuring out, 'This is what I want to do.' So we give them the tools to thrive on that pathway."

The Community Education program provides a number of services to assist people pursuing education and career goals, including Daggeyi Youth Internships.

Deidre Lamping said she learned about the Daggeyi program when she wanted to apply for a job in the Housing department, but didn't have the needed qualifications. She saw an internship as an opportunity to build her skills and start a career.

"The Daggeyi internships came up, and I thought it would be a really good idea to get my foot in the door," Lamping said.

Lamping started as an intern in January. After her initial orientation and training, she was placed in the Housing department to learn the ropes there. In September, she moved over to Na'ini Family and Social Services.

Daggeyi internships are open to Alaska Native and American Indian people ages 14 to 24. The program places interns in different departments around the Tribe, as well as with outside organizations such as the Kenai National Wildlife Ref-

uge and Kenai Watershed Forum. Interns have regular check-ins to see how things are going, as well as to learn about goal-setting and other employment skills. The Intern Coordinator also checks in with supervisors for feedback on a regular basis.

Lamping said she's been amazed to learn about the programs and services provided by the Tribe. And while she was initially interested in Housing, she is also excited to learn about the Tribe's other departments.

"I've been fortunate being placed with such amazing and talented people," Lamping said. "... The more I'm figuring out what different departments here have to offer, the more I'm interested in each of them."

Pitsch said the Daggeyi internships can be a good option for high school students who are balancing their academics, co-curricular activities, and a job. Many times, a job can take away from time they might spend participating in cultural activities.

"The Tribe's internships are tied into the culture, so they don't have to lose that piece of it if they get a job," Pitsch said. "If they are grounded in their culture, it's going to benefit all areas of their life."

The internship program has had the added benefit of allowing the Tribe to develop its own workforce. Over the past couple of years, many of the Tribe's interns have moved into permanent positions with the Tribe.

Some of the Tribe's other programs also provide internships. Nick Jacuk worked as an Environmental Program Intern this past summer. Jacuk is currently

working on a master's degree in fisheries at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Jacuk, a Tribal Member, said that working for the Tribe helped him with the focus of his thesis on tribal participation and representation in fisheries management in upper Cook Inlet and the Kenai River.

"It helped me get connected with a lot of people in the Tribe," Jacuk said.

Jacuk was able to meet with members of the Tribe's Environmental Protection Committee, the Tribal Council, and the Research Review Board.

"I had a good experience, and I learned a lot about fisheries in Alaska. Every tribe has a story to tell," Jacuk said. "Being here for the summer helped me feel more grounded in the work I want to do."

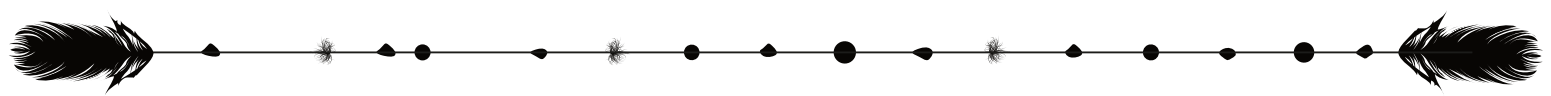
Open intern positions are posted on the careers page, <https://www.kenaitze.org/careers/>.

**'I've been fortunate
being placed with
such amazing and
talented people. The
more I'm figuring
out what different
departments here
have to offer, the
more I'm interested
in each of them.'**

Deidre Lamping



Nick Jacuk, an Environmental Intern at right, and Moses Jordan, Environmental Programs Manager, clean trash - including a refrigerator - from Kenai Natives Association land this fall.



Kenaitze Indian Tribe joins amicus brief in support of Indian Child Welfare Act

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe has joined with other Tribes and Tribal Organizations around the country in an amicus brief in support of the Indian Child Welfare Act and the law's focus on the best interests of American Indian and Alaska Native children.

The brief was filed with the United States Supreme Court on Aug. 19 in the case of *Haaland v. Brackeen* on behalf of 497 Tribes and 62 Tribal and Native Organizations.

"It's critical for the Tribal Court. It's critical for the Tribe. The case involves our sovereignty and the protection of our children and families," Tribal Council Vice Chair Mary Ann Mills said. "If this case is lost, it could affect the sovereignty of tribal nations."

According to the Native American Rights Fund, it is likely the most Tribal signatories to have ever joined together on a single Supreme Court brief and highlights the united effort to protect American Indian and Alaska Native children and families, and tribal sovereignty.

The plaintiffs in the case are challenging requirements in the Indian Child Welfare Act that in any custody proceeding involving an "Indian child," preference be given to placing the child with a member of the child's extended family, other members of the child's tribe, or with other Indian families, rather than with non-Indian adoptive parents. Plaintiffs also argue that the U.S. Congress exceeded its authority in enacting those preferences in the law.

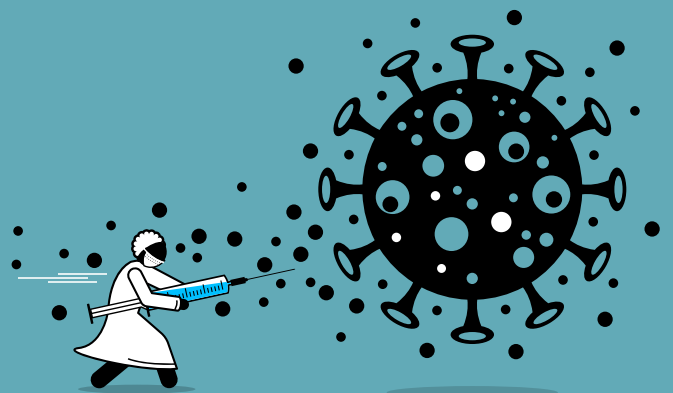
Defendants in the lawsuit are the Cherokee Nation and Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. Defendants argue that Congress was well within its authority to enact the Indian Child Welfare Act, and that law supports tribal sovereignty, self-government, and the best interests of Alaska Native and American Indian children.

The amicus brief, in support of the defendants, argues that "Congress carefully crafted ICWA to protect the legal rights of Indian children and parents and to incorporate important jurisdictional and political interests of Tribes in decisions concerning the welfare and placement of their children."

Oral arguments in the case were scheduled for Nov. 9.

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Bequsilna, 'those who are gone'

Denise Jay (Harman) Cox



Soldotna resident Denise Jay (Harman) Cox, 64, passed away unexpectedly at home on July 31, 2022.

Denise was born July 31, 1958, in Fairbanks to Irene Jane Albayalde-Robinson and David John Harman. Denise was Tlingit Kaagwaantaan clan, Filipino and English. Denise lived in Fairbanks up to the age of 9 years when the family moved to Anchorage, where she lived until 1975. She moved to Clam Gulch with her family in 1975 and soon thereafter, met the love of her life, Sid Cox. Denise and Sid were married in May of 1982 and together raised a family of four boys in Clam Gulch and Soldotna.

Denise is survived by her husband of 40 years Sid Cox; her four sons Sidney Darius Cox (Laura), Geoffrey (with a "G") Tyler Cox, David Alexander Cox, and Andrew Steward Cox; parents Irene Albayalde-Robinson and Arthur "Chuck" Robinson; step-mother Eloise Pricilla Harman; aunties Janet Fagan and Patrice

Thatcher; sisters Theresa Claire Harman-Carroll (Buck), Kathleen Louise Harman, Jacqueline Carol Tagaban (Alfonso), Theresa Kessler, Cecile Cruz (Edwin), Delana Haag (Derik), and Karen Aguirre (Rey); brothers David Jeffrey Harman (Vickie), Richard Austin Harman (Angeline), Thomas Joseph Harman (Elena), Sean Robinson, and Aaron Robinson; numerous cousins and 26 nieces and nephews, too many to name but all dearly loved by their Auntie Denise.

Denise was preceded in death by her grandmother Ann Keener; grandmother Rosemary Thatcher; father David John Harman; uncles Joseph Johnson, Peter Johnson and Joe Albayalde; and sister Laura Roseann Harman.

A Celebration of Life took place on Aug. 8, 2022, at the Fireweed Hall of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Soldotna.

Read her full obituary at <https://legacy.co/3LfY4EI>.

Ian Lee Dell

On August 11, 2022, the love of our lives, Ian Lee Dell, finished his tour here on Earth and returned to a place where only love, peace, and happiness exists.

Ian was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 10, 2005. The joy, laughter, and untold number of memories he helped create will be forever cherished.

Ian was preceded in death by his maternal grandmother Sandra Hallstead, his maternal uncle Dalton, his cat Buddy, and the spider the neighbor killed that one time.



Ian is survived by his Momma Nicole Dell (Bateman); stepfather Marcus Stanley; father Dillard Dell Jr.; stepmother Stacy Dell; big sister Zoey Bateman; his love Hailey; maternal grandparents David and Victoria Frazier; Uncle Biff; Auntie Jennifer; Auntie Alicia; cousins Jade, Derrick, Maddox, Olivia, Seth, Sierra and Bailey; and many friends; his stepbrothers Derrick Heyer and Ray Maestas and stepsister Haylee Jonston; paternal grandparents Dillard Lockhart and Kim Graham; aunts and uncles Aric and Michelle Dell, Dustin and Shannon Lockhart, Tricia Lockhart and Victoria Graham; cousins Madison, Isabella, Brett, Matthew (Matthew's daughter Melody) Jaxon and Harper.

A visitation for Ian was held Aug. 20, 2022, at the McGilley & Sheil Funeral Home in Kansas City, Missouri.

Read his full obituary at <https://bit.ly/IanLeeDell>.

Patricia Ellen Mann



July 15, 1943-Sept. 8, 2022

Patricia Ellen "Patty" Mann, or Trish to many, was a loving mother, honored auntie, caring "grandma" and cherished friend.

Trish was born on July 15, 1943, in Kenai, Alaska, the second oldest daughter of Harry and Julia Mann. She grew up Russian Orthodox in Old Town Kenai and went to Kenai High School. She spent her life on the peninsula on boats as a fisherman, worked at the cannery with her mother, and operated a cleaning service with her family for many years.

Trish was preceded in death by her parents; sisters Laura Mistler and Harriet Siebert; and brother Walter Chulin. Trish was widowed three times from the passing of her partners Al Boldini, Donald "Toot" Hallstead, and Gerald-Levi: McQueen.

She is survived by son Don (Darlene) Hallstead; her sisters

Eleanor (Norm) Wood, Linda (Alan) Ross, and Bernice (Dennis, deceased) Crandall; and by multiple nieces and nephews and their children, some of whom thought of her as Grandma.

Her son Don Hallstead was the true love of her life and he was always nearby enjoying the beauty of their place together at Ggasilat Dekaq', the mouth of the Kasilof River, where they both lived for over 50 years.

Patricia was laid to rest Sept. 14, 2022, at the Holy Assumption of the Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox Church in Old Town Kenai. A potluck repast at Tyotkas Elder Center followed interment at the Russian Orthodox Cemetery.

Condolences may be sent to Donald Harry Hallstead, Box 1004 Kasilof, AK 99610.

Read her full obituary at <https://bit.ly/PatriciaMann>.

Nick Leon Sacaloff

Nick Leon Sacaloff was born on Sept. 5, 1984, in Soldotna to Cora Ann Sacaloff. He passed away at 38 years of age on Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, in Fairbanks.

Nick was an enrolled citizen of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, as well as a shareholder of Salamatof Native Association and Cook Inlet Region, Inc. He grew up on the Kenai Peninsula, where he spent the bulk of his life.

Nick was humble, and no matter what he had going on in his own life he would be there for you if you were a person he loved and trusted. His ability to rise and overcome obstacles, especially in the last year and a

half of his life, are a true testament to his internal strength.

Nick was preceded in death by his mother, Cora Ann Sacaloff, his grandparents, Nick and Fedosia Sacaloff, uncles, Alex, Mike, Leon, Nick, Paul and Billy Sacaloff, as well as his aunties, Nancy Stroman and Bertha Sanders.

He is survived by his brother, Jon Matthew Sacaloff, as well as his other siblings, Jesse, Rosie and Lilly Babcock. Nick is also survived by a long list of cousins, as well as a long list of friends that were impacted by him. He will be deeply loved and missed by many.

There was a celebration of Nick's life on Oct. 8, 2022, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Tyotkas Elders Center, 1000 Mission Ave. on the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Dena'ina Wellness Center Campus.

Read his full obituary at <https://legcy.co/3SzMZMQ>.



James Oliver Segura Sr.



James O. Segura Sr., 82, of Kenai, beloved husband, father, brother, grandfather to 41 and great-grandfather to 45, passed away at Alaska Native Medical Center on Oct. 1, 2022. James was born in Kenai where he lived his entire life.

James graduated high school in Kenai and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1959 where he served as a logistics specialist onboard the USS Ranger aircraft carrier. He returned to Kenai in 1963 after his discharge.

James worked a few years with the state and national Forestry divisions. He then went to work with the Kenai Natives Association, directing the Indian Action Program. He then served as executive director for the Salamatof Native Association for 20 years.

During this time, James was committed to quality and accessible health care for the Alaska Native and American Indian community. He has served on many boards and commissions over the last 40 years, including the Kenai-

tze Tribal Council; Tribal Housing; Hunting, Fishing and Gathering; and many others. He also served on the Southcentral Foundation board as a member and then chair. He also served as a member on the Alaska Native Health Board.

James was preceded in death by his parents, Victor A. Segura and Matrona Darien Segura; his brothers, Edward, Victor, and David Segura; and sisters, Gert Frostad and Rita Smagge.

A celebration of life was held Oct. 16 at the Kenaitze Indian Tribe's Tyotkas Elder Center, followed by a potluck.

Read his full obituary at <https://legcy.co/3Ve738Y>.

Robert Carl Wilson



Alaska Native and Kenai resident Robert Carl Wilson, 73, passed away Aug. 18, 2022, at his home in Kenai.

Funeral services were held on Aug. 30, at the Holy Assumption of the Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox

Church in Kenai, with burial in the church cemetery. A celebration of life followed at Tyotkas Elder Center in Old Town Kenai.

Robert was born Nov. 2, 1948, in Anchorage. He graduated from high school in Kenai and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1967. He was honorably discharged in 1969.

Robert worked in the Educational Fisheries with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and also as the Landfill Attendant at the Kenai Transfer Site.

Robert was preceded in death by his parents, Paul G. and Elizabeth Wilson, brothers Rudy and Paul Jr., and sisters, Doris Haskell, Esther Segura and Katherine "Dolly" Horning.

He is survived by his sisters, Julia Wilson of Kenai and Dorthy "Dottie" Leccordon of New York; brother-in-law William Segura Sr.; and nieces, nephews and cousins too numerous to mention, from Kenai across the Lower 48 all the way to New York.

Read his full obituary at <https://bit.ly/RobertCWilson>.

Share your news

Email news@kenaitze.org to be considered for inclusion in a future edition of the Counting Cord.

Have you lost a loved one?

For information about services and support provided by the Kenaitze Indian Tribe, please contact Jessica Crump, Tribal Member Services Supervisor, by phone at 907-335-7204 or by email at jcrump@kenaitze.org.



Cooking with Kenaitze



Dutch Oven Grouse and Eggplant



Dutch Oven Grouse and Eggplant

This month, blend the flavors of Alaska with the Mediterranean. This hearty dish includes spruce grouse or ptarmigan combined with readily available ingredients such as eggplant, chickpeas and spices. Cooked in a Dutch oven, this dish is both familiar and exotic.

Yields: 4
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 45 minutes
Calories: 467 per serving

Ingredients

15 ounces of spruce grouse or ptarmigan (about three birds)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon coconut oil
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 large eggplant, large cubes
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon paprika
¼ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
1 cup tomatoes, canned diced
½ teaspoon dried thyme
1 cup chickpeas, canned/cooked
⅛ cup lemon juice (1/2 lemon)
⅔ cup low sodium vegetable broth
½ teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees.
2. Heat the Dutch oven on the stove top at low heat. Once the base has warmed up, increase the heat to medium-high.
3. Add the olive oil and coconut oil. Once the coconut oil is melted and simmers, add the cumin and cinnamon to the oil.
4. Sauté the spices for 1-2 minutes to allow the flavors to come out.

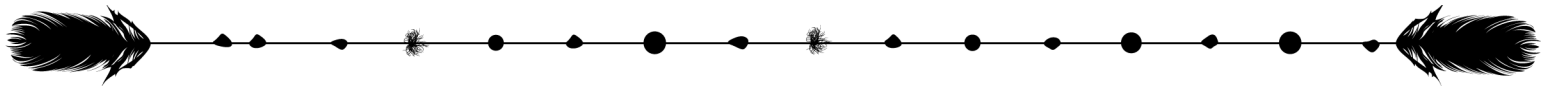
5. Toss the grouse into the Dutch oven and brown each side.
6. Once the grouse is browned, move it to the side. Add the paprika, cayenne, and the eggplant. Stir the eggplant to coat in the meat juices and oil then cover the Dutch oven.
7. In a small bowl add the tomatoes, garlic, thyme, black pepper, and salt. Stir.
8. Once the eggplant is slightly soft, add the tomato mixture and chickpeas. Stir, then place the chicken pieces on top.
9. Pour the vegetable broth into the mixture on the side so as to not wash out the meat. Cover the Dutch oven and bake on the lowest rack in the pre-heated oven for 30 minutes.
10. Once finished baking, remove from the oven. Lift the lid from the Dutch oven, add the lemon juice and stir. Serve over couscous, brown rice, or with fresh bread.

Tips:

To reduce prep/cook work, place all ingredients in a Crockpot, stir, and heat on low for 6-8 hours or on high for 3-4 hours.

You can substitute chicken for grouse; one or two dried chilies for the paprika and cayenne pepper; butter for coconut oil; and low-sodium chicken broth for vegetable broth.

Registered Dietician Stephen Kronlage assists un'ina at the Dena'ina Wellness Center with medical nutrition therapy, which includes managing weight loss, diabetes, IBS, weight gain, Celiac disease, and other conditions through an individualized nutrition plan.
To make an appointment, call 907-335-7500.



Dena'ina **naqenaga**



Heyi na'a htazdla *Winter is coming*

Dena'ina naqenaga is "our Dena'ina language." Find more Dena'ina language resources online at www.kenaitze.org/education/denaina-language-institute/, including an interactive audio dictionary with this and many more Dena'ina words and phrases.



Addresses and Phone Numbers



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907-335-7200



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



Dena'ina Wellness Center
508 Upland St., Kenai
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Tyotkas Elder Center
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Kahtnuht'ana Duhdeldiht Campus
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907-335-7667



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



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



**Kenaitze/Salamatof Tribally
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