

Sharing Our Pathways

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A newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative

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

Russian Unangaġ Kasakam Unangaa

By Moses L. Dirks

In July 2004 Dr. Anna Berge from the Alaska Native Language Center and I had the opportunity to visit Russia to document the language of Unangam Tunuu on the Commander Islands.

I have always wanted to go there. My Grandfather, during his evening story telling, used to talk about Unangaġ people who had been forcibly taken from their islands by the Russian Promeshlenniki to harvest fur seals for the Russians in the Commander Islands.

My dad also knew about Unangas living on the Commander Islands from another source. He used to tell a story of a man named Makary from Atka who was taken to the Commander Islands for an official business trip. There he saw people who looked Native. He wanted to speak to them but



Moses Dirks in Lenin Square, Bering Island, Russia

Contents

Russian Unangaġ Kasakam Unangaa . 1	Athabascan Region: A Fresh Voice to Schools in the Yukon Flats 9
Thirty Years Later: The Molly Hootch Case 3	Alaska RSI Regional Contacts 9
WIPO Publishes Cases Studies on Use of Intellectual Property 4	Yup'ik Region: Incorporating Elders Into the School Curriculum 10
Talking to Your Children's Teachers About Cultural Relevance 5	Southeast Region: Preparing Indigenous Teachers For Alaska Schools 11
Book Review: <i>Julie of the Wolves</i> 6	2004 Southeast Native Education Forums 13
ANKN Announces New Poster Publications Catalog 7	Alaska Digital Archive an Online Treasure 14
Exercising Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights 8	

was never allowed to. When Makary came back to Atka he swore that he heard a man speak in Unangaġ. The topic was something about how he was treated in comparison to the people on the other islands. Before Makary could answer, the Unangaġ man was gone.

I still remember my first contact with a Russian Unangaġ speaker who spoke Niiguġ while at the University of Alaska Fairbanks during the summer of 1990. I finally met this person again at their home on Bering Island, part of the Commander Islands. She had gotten my letter and wanted to write back but was afraid. She showed

(continued on next page)



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me the letter that she still keeps.

Today there are 700 people living on Bering Island, 300 of which are Unangaꝯ decent. In 1967 the people from Medny Island (Kanuuyam Tanaa) or Copper Island were moved to Bering Island. They have been living with each other since.

We were not the first American visitors. In the 1980s and 1990s, both the Qawalangis or the Fox Islanders (Eastern Aleuts) and the Niiḡuꝯis or the Andreanof Islanders (Western Aleuts) from the Alaskan Aleutian Islands visited the Unangas on Bering Island.

Dr. Berge and I met with Elders and spoke to them about what we had planned in terms of language documentation. The Museum Director, Valentina Shushkova, arranged for us to meet and interview the Elders. During the interviews I could determine which dialect of Unangaꝯ each person spoke. We were expecting just 4 speakers. When we arrived in Russia the Aleut Museum had identified 12 speakers. To my surprise most of the speakers were of Attuan decent. I quickly discovered that the Attuan spoke Unangaꝯ with Russian verb endings. I could follow along in Attuan until a Russian verb was thrown in and then I lost parts of the conversation. The average age of the speakers was in the 60–70 year range.

The Commander Island Unangas are rich with a wealth of cultural knowledge but they were never given the opportunity to use their language. There was a Unangaꝯ named Gennady Iakovlev in his 50's. He is a song composer and he performed Unangaꝯ songs for us one night. It was inspirational. This man had relearned Unangaꝯ from the Unangam Tunuu dictionary. Although he said that his primary language was Attuan, he

spoke very good Niiḡuꝯ. He became my Unangaꝯ interpreter there on Bering Island.

The Russian Unangas are not economically well off. Since the fall of Communism the community has been experiencing changes. There is a severe shortage of employment opportunities in the Commander Islands. As a result, the young Unangas are leaving for large cities where they can find jobs. Russian Elders there expressed concern about this.



Elders Lelena and Kyril Golodova, Attuan Speakers, Bering Island, Russia.

The Elders were grateful that we came from America to share our language with them. They said that it was important we continue writing and sharing ideas and language. The Elders also wanted to hear more from people in the Aleutians. Although they are losing their language, they are culturally and linguistically aware and they promise to continue the Unangam Tunuu revitalization process.

The visit to the Commander Islands was personally very fulfilling and educational for me. I was happy that I was able to meet with the speakers of Unangaꝯ and to share our language with them. I hope to someday return and help with their Unangam Tunuu Language revitalization. ✨

Thirty Years Later: The Molly Hootch Case

© 2004 by Chris Cooke, Attorney, Anchorage, Alaska

Speech to Alaska Teaching Justice Network Conference, March 2004

When I met Molly Hootch in 1971, I was an attorney with Alaska Legal Services Corporation. She was about 16 and lived in Emmonak at the mouth of the Yukon River.

Like thousands of other young Alaska Natives in over a hundred villages in rural Alaska, each fall she and her family had to make a difficult, almost unbearable choice between living at home and going to high school. They had to make this choice because the public high schools open to Molly were hundreds of miles away.

Molly and her family and her community and others like it, thought this system was wrong and asked me to help them change it. As a result, Alaska Legal Services, with the help of national experts in education law, filed the Molly Hootch case in 1972. We said the State's school system violated the requirement of the Alaska Constitution that there be public schools open to all children in the state. We also said the high school system illegally discriminated against Alaska Natives.

Molly's experience was typical. Even though Alaska had been a state for more than a decade, the school in her village was run by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. Molly wanted to go to high school, but the BIA school stopped in the eighth grade. To go to high school, the State said, she had to leave home.

Molly attended ninth grade in Anchorage through the boarding home program. In her boarding home she was treated as an unpaid servant and babysitter. On the school bus and at school, she was teased and picked on because of who she was and where she came from. The next year, with a better

boarding home and a different school, Molly completed the tenth grade in Anchorage. But after these two years, she had had enough. She quit high school and stayed home to help her family. Her family needed her. Her dad was a subsistence hunter and fisherman, and a single parent with no cash income. Molly was needed to help with the household and several siblings. She also worked at the village store to bring in some money for the family.

The system that forced Molly to make that awful, impossible choice of either family or school was wrong. Although the first Alaska Supreme Court decision in 1975 said the system did not on its face violate the Alaska Constitution, the Court promised a different result if we proved racial discrimination. As the case went on, the evidence of discrimination was overwhelming.

Alaska, like the Deep South, had a long history of segregation and separate schools for natives. Local high schools were provided for virtually all non-native children. Many non-native towns much smaller than Molly's village had their own high school. Over 95% of the children who had to leave home to go to high school were Alaska Natives. There was even evidence showing that the whole boarding school system was an intentional attack on Native families and culture so they would leave their villages. As the evidence piled up, the State decided to settle. The result was a sweeping con-

sent decree, which led to the opening of over 120 high schools all over Alaska at an initial cost of more than \$150 million dollars, one of the largest, if not the largest, settlements in an education case in history.

And, as for Molly, she got more high school education in her village through correspondence study supervised by a certified teacher, provided by the State, in Emmonak while the lawsuit was pending. She continued to work at the village store and help her family in Emmonak, and she got her GED. She persevered, and she reached her goals. Later, in Emmonak, she met Alvin Hymes, and they have been happily married for 25 years, living in Minnesota and coming back often to Alaska. They have two grown sons. She has continued to work and currently holds a responsible position with Wells Fargo Bank. And, she's one of the nicest, most cheerful persons I know—just like she was when I met her in 1971.

Emmonak finally got its high school. In 1977, Emmonak High School dedicated its first yearbook to Molly. I'm proud that Molly Hootch was my client, to have her as a friend and what her lawsuit accomplished. ✂

Editor's Note

In the last issue of *Sharing Our Pathways* (Volume 9 Issue 4), we printed a speech entitled "Thirty Years later: The Molly Hootch Case" given by Attorney Stephen E. Cotton at the February 2004 educational symposium, *Thirty Years Later: A Look Back at the Molly Hootch Case and Forward to The Future of Rural Schooling in Alaska*, held in Anchorage. Attorneys Stephen Cotton and Chris Cooke worked together on litigating the Molly Hootch case. To further highlight the history of the case, included in this issue of *Sharing Our Pathways* is an abridged version of a speech given by Chris Cooke to the Alaska Teaching Justice Network Conference in March 2004.

WIPO Publishes Cases Studies on Use of Intellectual Property

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In March 2004 the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) published a collection of practical case studies on the use of the intellectual property system by indigenous communities in Australia.

The publication, entitled, 'Minding Culture: Case Studies on Intellectual Property and Traditional Cultural Expressions', was written for WIPO by Ms. Terri Janke, an Australian lawyer and a descendant of the Meriam people of the Torres Strait Islands, Australia.

The publication was planned to guide the work of WIPO on how the intellectual property system can respond to the needs and expectations of the custodians of traditional cultures and knowledge. It therefore contributes to a process of exploration, dialogue and policy development aimed at enhancing the protection, promotion and preservation of traditional creativity and expressions of traditional cultures (or 'expressions of folklore'). The case studies provide traditional communities, as well as policymakers, legislators and other stakeholders, with realistic, empirically-based options and new ideas for future policy development.

WIPO's work in this area goes back several decades, but received fresh impetus in 1998 when a series of fact-finding missions met with many indigenous communities and other stakeholders to learn from them about their needs and expectations in relation to the intellectual property system. Many indigenous communities called for more practical information, based on actual cases, on the usefulness and the limitations of intellectual property in relation to traditional

knowledge and cultural expressions/expressions of folklore, particularly information reflecting the perspectives and experiences of indigenous peoples. This publication responds directly to that request.

'Minding Culture' gives actual examples of how industrial designs, copyright and trademarks have been used by indigenous Australian communities to protect and promote their artworks, cultures and identities, as well as their economic interests. The case studies point out where traditional communities found existing systems useful and where they were found inadequate. The studies convey the suggestions of these communities for policy and practical measures that could improve the protection of traditional cultural expressions by intellectual property. For example, many communally owned traditional artistic productions are not protected under copyright law, and the limited period of protection under most forms of intellectual property poses a problem for indigenous communities, since the customary conception of custodianship is not time-bound.

Yet the case studies show that current intellectual property laws can operate to meet the needs of indigenous communities and individuals, and shows how legal concepts have been adapted and extended to respond to these needs. For instance, trademark and unfair competition laws have been used by indigenous

communities to safeguard the authenticity of arts and crafts; copyright protection is available for contemporary tradition-based art; indigenous designers have received industrial design protection; and the courts have accommodated claims for the recognition of communal rights and cultural interests, the application of customary laws and the development of culturally-sensitive remedies. The studies point out that non-intellectual property measures (such as customary laws, contracts and protocols, cultural heritage preservation programs and marketing and trade practices laws) also play a role in securing comprehensive and effective protection, so that the intellectual property system need not operate in isolation.

The publication feeds directly into the ongoing deliberations of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), which held its sixth session in March 2004. Along with the experience of many other countries and communities, the practical examples, options and suggestions it contains have already begun to be integrated into the working documents on legal and policy options for the protection of traditional cultural expressions/expressions of folklore prepared for the IGC's consideration. The case studies provide a solid, empirical platform for the IGC's further policy development.

For further information, please contact the Media Relations and Public Affairs Section at WIPO:

<http://www.wipo.int/> ✂

Talking to Your Children's Teachers About Cultural Relevance

From <http://www.kporterfield.com/aicwtw/articles/talking.html>
Adapted for Alaska Native parents by Teri Schneider, Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative

Lack of cultural relevance in the classroom concerns many parents whose children attend public schools. Often Alaska Native education is limited to a single unit that is taught during Alutiiq Culture week or multicultural celebrations. Many times at the high school level it is confined to the history classroom. Sometimes it is offered as an elective class or as an after school activity.

Individual parents have the power to move Alaska Native education from the margins to the mainstream - one teacher at a time. Starting now, here's what you can do.

Question Assumptions Including Your Own

Many people assume that educators have in-depth training about the subjects they teach. After all, they went through four years of teacher training and passed licensing tests. The truth is that Alaska Native culture and contributions were probably not included in their course of study.

Teachers don't know what they weren't taught. They can't teach what they don't know.

Educate the Educators

Be proactive. Take teacher education into your own hands by providing your children's teachers information about your Alaska Native culture, history and achievements. Since many teachers feel overwhelmed by stacks of papers, faculty meetings and lesson plans, make plans of your own to present the facts in small doses throughout the year.

Act as an Ally

Introduce yourself to your children's teachers. Express your concerns about the need for Alaska Native education in the classroom. Explain how culturally relevant material motivates our Native students to learn and succeed. Assure teachers that content standards and cultural relevance aren't mutually exclusive. Tell them that you want to help them make sure that the educational needs of all children in the classroom are met.

Check Out the Curriculum

Look through your children's textbooks. Scan them for stereotypes. Notice the critical places where American Indians and Alaska Natives should be mentioned, but aren't. Make a list of misinformation and omissions. Find out when those chapters will be taught. Time your suggestions to the teacher about a month before the material will be covered.

Position Yourself as an Expert

Offer to serve as a resource person in the classroom. Some things you can volunteer to do are:

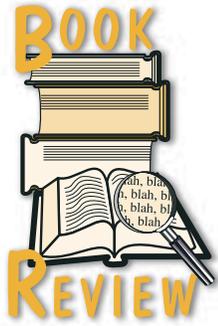
- Be a classroom speaker.
- Help the teacher arrange for other speakers from the Native community.
- Suggest culturally relevant classroom activities.
- Help arrange a field trip.
- Provide the teacher with copies of relevant articles from books.
- Give the teacher a list of Alaska Native-friendly videos and books that can be used in the classroom.
- Donate a book or a video for the classroom.

Tie the Culture to the Curriculum

Understand that state content standards force teachers to stick to the curriculum. Work within that framework. Suggest that high school government students compare the Great Law of Peace and the U.S. Constitution, or that they study the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Compile a list of Alaska Native inventions that the science teacher can use as a handout. The possibilities to weave culture with curriculum are endless.

Take it One Step at a Time

Doing just one of the things suggested above can create positive change that will last a child's lifetime. Investing even an hour or two in your children's classroom is the smart thing to do. ✨



Book Review: Julie of the Wolves

Author: Jean Craighead George

by Martha Stackhouse

Author Jean Craighead George lives in the eastern part of United States; however, she has family that has lived in Barrow for years. At least once a year, she visits Barrow. During her stay, she makes a point to visit her grandson's classrooms. Last school year, I browsed through our middle school book fair. There were a number of her books for sale. In one of her more recent books, I noticed the Inupiaq word for wolf *amaguq* was still misspelled as "amaroq."

Her book *Julie of the Wolves* was printed in 1972 and it won a Newberry Award in 1973. It is often listed as part of the Battle of the Books throughout the nation. The main character is a 13-year-old Inupiaq girl, named Miyax, who is trekking from Barrow to Pt. Hope in order to catch the ship called the *North Star*. The Inupiaq alphabet does not have the letter "x" so Miyax is definitely not an Inupiaq name. I wondered why she bothered to walk to Pt. Hope to catch the *North Star* when the ship also went to Barrow. She had hopes of catching a ride in the ship to San Francisco, where her pen pal lived. She had grown up on Nunivak Island (in Yup'ik country) where she was forced to leave her father in order to get educated. This was a prime example of a forced education. She lived with her mean aunt while she was being educated. To get away from her aunt, she married the son of her father's friends, whom she later found out was simple minded. She decided to leave Barrow and started walking to Pt. Hope, roughly 400 miles away.

During this trek, Miyax began to starve. She ate lemmings, which is very misleading. Inupiaq people do not eat lemmings; however, she feasted on eighty of them. She also doesn't begin snaring ptarmigan until the very end of her journey, when she is quite close to Pt. Hope, and never fishes in the numerous lakes and rivers along

the way. She befriends the wolves, which eventually give her their "cuds," like they give their young until they are old enough to eat meat. And once, with the use of antlers for protection, she is able to take food away from a wolverine. This is inaccurate information, as wolverines are quite strong and will not permit any animal, much less a young girl, from taking their food away. They are known to hunt down animals much larger than themselves. Nevertheless, Miyax was able to do it.

There are other misleading references throughout the book. The author talks about lemmings going crazy because of the build-up of the antifreeze in their systems and they commit mass suicide in the middle of December. I have never heard of mass suicides of lemmings in the middle of the winter. I witnessed them coming through Barrow once in the 1950's in the middle of summer. Summer is the time when lemmings become numerous. They are almost never seen during the winter, although they may be seen once in a while. There may be antifreeze in their systems, but I have never heard of it being the cause of a mass suicide.

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Martha Stackhouse was born and raised in Barrow, Alaska. She graduated from UAF with a major in History and a double Minor in Secondary Education and Alaska Native Studies. She has taught for 21 years as a Social Studies teacher in the North Slope Borough School District and the last seven of those years as an Inupiaq Immersion teacher at the elementary level.

Martha Stackhouse has been involved in Honoring Alaska's Indigenous Literature (HAIL), which has enhanced her interest in Alaska Indigenous children's literature. Literature impacts our school children. The children need books that verify their existence, which goes hand in hand with their self-esteem. She believes it is of utmost importance to review books that document the lives of Alaska Indigenous people accurately. Unfortunately, there are far too many books written by those who have not lived in Alaska very long who misrepresent our lifestyles and environment. One way to insure that books are accurate is for Alaska Indigenous people to write about their own people, lifestyles and environment. Someday, she hopes to start writing children's books.

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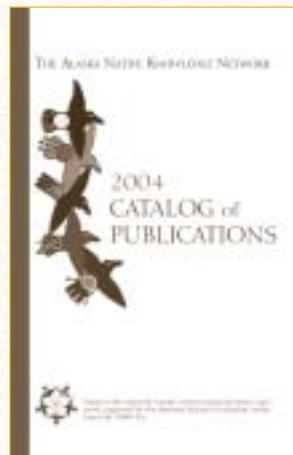
I especially do not appreciate the mixing of the Yupik words and culture, since she was writing about the Inupiaq region. The author uses the word *kuspuk* when we use *atikæuk* for the outer covering of a parka. She also uses *gussak*, which is a Yupik word for a white man, derived from the Russian *cosacks*. Our Inupiaq name for white man is *tanik*. She talks about the bladder festival, which again, is derived from a Yupik celebration, not Inupiaq.

The stereotypical Inupiaq image was projected when Miyax happened to look into the water to see her reflection. She was starving and had become quite lean. Seeing herself, she is overjoyed that her face had become thin, like the pictures she had seen in the magazines and movies of the *gussak* girls. I wondered what impact such a message would have on our Inupiaq adolescent girls. Would they start to dislike their healthy round faces? My hope is that they would respect themselves enough to know they are beautiful, just the way they are.

Another misrepresentation occurs when Miyax gets close to Pt. Hope. She starts seeing willows that are close to ground level. She is very excited about seeing them once again, as Barrow did not have willows. As long as I have lived in Barrow, there have always been willows near here. Elders have stories about using it as traditional medicine. They also picked it and dipped it in seal oil.

Several other misconceptions are included in the book. One is about the tundra making geometric shapes. The author points out that it is caused from freezing in the winter and popping; when in fact, it is caused from constant freezing in the winter and thawing in the summer, year after year. This event is a part of Arctic science that is studied by our school children. Another misconception is about the midnight sun. It is described as being as bright as the noon sun.

ANKN Announces a Revised Yup'ik/Cup'ik Values Poster



In addition, our new Catalog of Publications is now available. Contact our offices at 474-5086 for ordering information.

The noon sun is very high, but the midnight sun is red and orange like any other setting sun. It starts to go down, but it never quite goes below the horizon and makes its way up again after midnight. There is a definite difference between the noon and midnight sun.

The book is at a 5.8 reading level. There are not many illustrations but those included are pretty accurate. They looked like pencil drawings.

With due respect for Jean Craighead George, I humbly would not recommend the book to be put on school shelves. I know it is hard work to write books, but when there is extensive misinformation about the Arctic, one must say something about the book. When something is written down, it is often believed to be true by the readers. Especially by the many children who have read this book. ✨

Exercising Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights

by Marie Olson, Tlingit Elder & Instructor, Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights;
UAF MA CCS Graduate Students Alex Ketzler, Jeff Gayman and Denise Wartes



Earlier this year a pharmaceutical company signed a contract with a local Alaskan village corporation to explore medicinal plant use. This may be the first of such contracts signed within our state. Exploitation of local indigenous knowledge in the form of bio-prospecting, or bio-piracy, in which indigenous plants, insects or animals, or knowledge about them by locals are used in pharmaceutical or agricultural research to develop new products, has increased alarmingly in the past decade.

Bio-prospecting or bio-piracy is estimated to be a huge worldwide industry in which a questionable return goes to the local indigenous communities from whom the resources or knowledge are taken.

Making contracts is a way to safeguard the interests of the local community. Nonetheless, it is prudent for Native Alaskans to know as much as they can before entering any contract. What's more, there is a strong possibility that representatives of these companies are making their way unannounced into local lands to exploit resources without informed consent. It is, therefore, important to inform community members to practice discretion before disclosing information.

Other forms of exploitation include the misrepresentation of Alaskan Natives in theater and the copyright of stories by foreign or non-Native authors who neither give contributing individuals or the representative cultures credit for authorship or share royalties with them. Interestingly, universities and pharmaceutical com-

panies are the largest holders of patents in the United States, and there are over 600 research activities by university researchers registered in the state of Alaska today.

Alaska Native cultures and heritage manifest profound wisdom and uncommon insight into nature and the role of people in the universe. This wisdom, insight and knowledge deserve to be shared with the world on terms defined and agreed upon by the affected people and communities. It is not our wish to demean Alaska Native cultures by measuring them to the standards of Western society, or to dampen the uninhibited hospitality of Alaska Native peoples with undue paranoia about the encroachment of the Western legal system, but being forewarned and well informed is being forearmed and aware. As communities and individual Native people you can best contribute to such a system by knowing your potential role and impact in it.

As the global world increasingly reaches into our lives and land, we encourage you to learn, share and

inform each other about cultural and intellectual property rights issues, especially Alaska Native leaders and those in positions of authority.

You may find related resources in the *Guidelines for Respecting Cultural Knowledge*, which is published by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, and lists websites, declarations and books. ✨

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Athabaskan Region: A Fresh Voice to Schools in the Yukon Flats

by Pat McDonald, Alaska Statewide Mentor Project

Yukon Flats School District has a new superintendent this year. She is someone with a clear perspective on being a student, paraprofessional and educator. An Athabaskan with family ties to the communities of Rampart and Tanana, Linda Evans has raised a family of four children—two girls and two boys—and is blessed with one grandson who, in her own words says is “a joy beyond words”. She has been married to Paul Evans Sr., for 34 years. This fall she relocated to Ft. Yukon to take her new position.

Linda is certified to teach elementary education, holds a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership and is currently working on her Superintendent’s endorsement through the University of Alaska Anchorage. She taught for four years as a preschool through fourth grade teacher in Rampart and one year in Fort Yukon as a preschool teacher. She completed her principal internship in Fairbanks at Howard Luke Academy under principals, Ernie Manzie and Greg Sandstrom.

Linda’s involvement in the Yukon Flats public education arena is lengthy and includes a variety of roles. Initially Linda worked four years as a special education aide. She served on the regional school board for eleven years. Eventually she entered the classroom as a multi-grade elementary teacher and a principal-teacher.

Most recently, Linda worked as the Curriculum Specialist helping to develop a set of Athabaskan curriculum through the Alaska Indigenous People’s Academy Project for the Association of Interior Native Educators.

Linda is a strong advocate for student success, promoting teamwork

among her staff and collaborating with local communities. She is working with Elders and school personnel to involve Elders more strongly in the school. She and her staff have been working hard to reinstitute a school lunch program. She is visiting all the schools in Yukon Flats area, listening to concerns and sharing ideas.

“My vision for Yukon Flats is one of prosperity and pride in our region,” states Evans. “Prosperity so our people can live their lifestyle in healthy, safe, growing communities. Pride so each person can live harmoniously in the subsistence way and the modern ways of today’s world. I want our people to have choices and the ability to make positive, healthy choices. I envision the educational system to be the ‘heart’ of the community and its people. Our children have the ability to make choices. Some are going to college away from home and some are staying and working in our communities. Each community is bustling with activity. You can feel the healthy, happy rhythm as the people



are going about their business.”

“Today, everything is a challenge. I believe everyone who works for Yukon Flats has to believe in the vision and be willing to make the changes necessary to have an educational system that advocates student success. I think the most important issue for Alaska Native educators is making education meaningful for students by using culturally relevant materials. Elders of the community are wonderful resources that should be used in our local schools. Educators need to make school interesting and fun for students.”

Joining a handful of other Alaska Native superintendents, Linda is a refreshing sight to the field of Alaska school districts and the Yukon Flats communities. Welcome to your new job, Linda. You will bring a fresh voice to schools in the Yukon Flats. ✘

Note: There are four Alaska Native superintendents in the 54 school districts across the state. *Information courtesy of Mary Francis, Executive Director for Alaska Council of School Administrators.*

Yup'ik Region: Incorporating Elders Into the School Curriculum

by Cindy Long, Kwigillingok Teacher

Four weeks into the last school year the Lower Kuskokwim School District hired me as a high school teacher for Kwigillingok School. The community of Kwigillingok, or Kwig, is roughly 11 miles from where the Kuskokwim River meets the Bering Sea. Although it was difficult arriving after the school year started, both staff and students were relieved to have a second high school teacher appear. My transition into the position was made easier by the fact that an additional teacher was needed so badly.

Over the last decade I have taught a range of subjects including French, Spanish and English composition. My first impression of Kwig was that I had stepped into a bilingual village. Whenever they had the chance, my students conversed in Yup'ik. Although I was immediately thankful for a bilingual environment, it was months before I realized how unique this was. I was familiar with teaching a second language however the difference was I was teaching the language I spoke first, rather than one I had formally studied.

In order to learn more about my school's bilingual program, I joined the Yup'ik class on Fridays when guest Elders visited. Since it was hard to sit still for an hour without understanding the Yup'ik language, I would arrive prepared to draw. I hoped to model attentive listening skills, but I also wanted to observe the interaction between students and Elders. Investing this time paid off well. It is challenging to get to know someone when you don't speak the same language. However, at the end of class I would share my drawing with each Elder. As a result, I began to gain their respect.

Even more, I got the impression that some students took their Yup'ik class more seriously because I gave up my free time to sit with them.

In October 2003, I took my art class on two field trips to Qayanek—a kayak workshop where Frank Andrew had been teaching his family how kayaks were traditionally made. My students were practicing sketching techniques in class and the trips to his workshop were a way to apply those skills in a meaningful way. Between the trips, we were fortunate enough to borrow a few Yup'ik harpoons, knives and a paddle, for students to sketch still life drawings. The drawings were laminated and later loaned to the workshop during an open house.

At the end of the semester, the art students organized their portfolios and wrote reflections. More than any other project, these sketches were selected as the most important work they completed all semester. Each student seemed to have gotten something dif-

ferent from their experience with Frank, but they all benefited from spending time with him.

In the Personal Life Skills class, I tried to incorporate village ways of knowing with the curriculum presented in the *Strengthening Family and Self* textbook. Completing a unit on Guidance and Discipline of Children, I planned for Elder Lena Atti to teach students what she knew about raising children. I asked them afterwards to compare what she said to them in Yup'ik with what we had read from the textbook. Everyone acknowledged that the book was geared to the Outside or Lower 48 states, but several were wise enough to see the similarities. She reinforced and legitimized what I had taught to them, though with a Yup'ik flavor to it.

As the school year progressed, I continued to look for ways to incorporate the Elders with what I was teaching. However, it was not always

easy. First, I was not able to strike up a conversation with local Elders because often their English was no better than my Yup'ik. I tried to avoid asking

my students to translate because it put most them in an awkward situation. Many people in the village do not address an Elder directly. At first, I assumed it was an issue of respect. Later, I realized my students lacked the vocabulary in Yup'ik to translate on the spot.

So, with these things in mind, I decided to bring three Elders into the writing class I taught. They were free

As the school year progressed, I continued to look for ways to incorporate the Elders with what I was teaching.

to discuss whatever they wished, although a few times I suggested they talk about springtime subsistence activities. After each visit, I assigned homework and class work that followed the writing process. The students produced a short essay for each Elder who visited. After that, I introduced a longer essay format and collectively we wrote a five-paragraph essay together as a class. They had already learned the content from the Elder, and in turn, I was free to focus on how it all fit together.

For the first time all year, they were enthusiastic about homework. I helped them with syntax and grammar, but at the same time I learned what had been said in Yup'ik. Each time, these young people got a heavy lecture: listen to your parents, don't be lazy, go to sleep at night so that you can do your chores in the morning, stick to the trail so that you don't get hurt out on the ocean ice. Interestingly, even though they were getting a heavy dose of dos and don'ts, they never tired having an Elder come visit. It was refreshing to see teenagers listening so intently without rolling their eyes. I was even able to remind my students later, when they were lazy or discouraged, that an Elder advised them against such behavior.

Kwigillingok School is a place where students and Elders interact regularly. I realize that in some villages, the students speak only in English to one another. I am very thankful for my experience in Kwigillingok. This school year I am able to build on all the things that my students and I learned together. Yup'ik is not going to disappear with the passing on of these Elders. I believe it will continue to be a language that is spoken to upcoming generations. I would encourage other teachers to bring Elders into the classroom as much as they can. It was worth every moment. ✨

Southeast Region: Preparing Indigenous Teachers For Alaska Schools

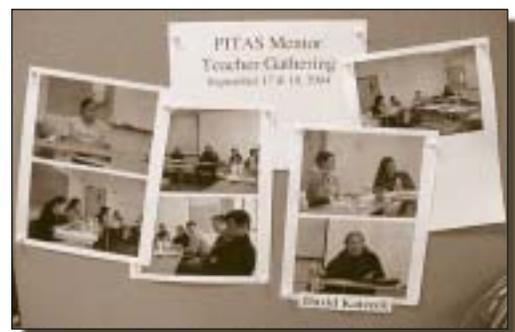
*Bernice Tetpon, Joe Nelson, Cathy Thomas & Jeffrey Lofthus
Center for Teacher Education, University of Alaska Southeast*

The Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaska Schools (PITAS) program at the University of Alaska Southeast is undergoing some staffing changes as it moves into its fifth year of operation. Joe Nelson is taking over as the project coordinator from Rhonda Hickok, who is moving over to the Juneau School District to serve as program coordinator for the Indian Studies Program. Bernice Tetpon, who joined the UAS Professional Education Center this summer as the director, assumed the role as principal investigator for the PITAS program, and Cathy Thomas serves as the program assistant.

This year, PITAS students include eighteen returning and ten new undergraduate students, three elementary Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students, and three secondary MAT students. The mentor teachers for the PITAS students met at the beginning of the school year to discuss the "Cultural Infusion" component for faculty as well as to hear a panel on "Educational Perspectives Through the Generations." Ed Thomas, President of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) also addressed the group.

The objective of the Cultural Infusion component for faculty is to integrate topics relevant to indigenous culture and language into the university courses through an infusion model for curriculum development. Faculty and staff participants have the opportunity to participate in a culture camp experience in Kake in July, as well as to join with other

participants at three follow-up meetings during the Fall/Spring semester. In July 2003, four education and two humanities faculty members plus one PITAS student and one staff member of the UAS student resource center



attended the camp. In July of 2004, two education and two natural science faculty members as well as the director of the Native and Rural Student Center attended the camp. Recently, thirteen UAS faculty members, including three from Sitka, have signed up to participate in the 2004-

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05 Cultural Infusion activities as a result of Coordinator Jeffrey Lofthus' presentation at the Fall Faculty Convocation. Those signing up represent the disciplines of natural sciences, humanities, public administration, education, early childhood education, library sciences, English and UAS Administration.

The "Educational Perspectives through the Generations" panel included Elder/anthropologist Nora Dauenhauer, graduate of Alaska Meth-



Mentor teachers for the PITAS students gather to discuss the "Cultural Infusion" component for faculty as well as to hear a panel on "Educational Perspectives Through the Generations."

odist University, Nora's daughter Leonora Florendo, a Harvard graduate, and Leonora's daughter Amelia Rivera, graduate of Fort Lewis College and current UAS MAT secondary student. The multi-generational perspectives of the higher education graduates were inspirational, motivational and educational. Seeing the three ladies together as a panel was heartwarming. More than once while one was speaking, another would chime in, "I didn't know that, she never told me." So it was educational for the panel members as well.

Nora talked about her experience growing up with her parents as they moved to different seasonal camps

throughout the year and her early years of formal schooling. Along with formal schooling, Nora talked about the Tlingit language and how that knowledge helped her through school and gain a focus on her current work. Her life has been filled with literary works, research and teaching while at the same time raising her children and enjoying her grandchildren. Leonora talked about her experience going to school in Juneau and in Boston. She gave a historical perspective on how Juneau has changed. She also spoke

about the commuting she had to do while attending school at Harvard and at the same time raising her children. She works at the Central Council as the Deputy Director for Social Services. Her heroes are her father and her grandfather.

Amelia introduced herself in Tlingit, which she is learning from her grandmother, Nora. She spoke about her early years of schooling in Juneau and her postsecondary experience. She is a 2003 graduate of Ft. Lewis College in Colorado and is a MAT candidate in the PITAS program. Many secondary MAT students attended this session, and as Amelia spoke about her experiences as an undergraduate she told the audience that she had shared them with her peers previously and that "they know what I am saying." It was a great moment of laughter and sometimes tears. Amelia will be graduating from the MAT program in June 2005. She is currently an intern at Juneau's alternative high school, Yaakooosge

Daakahídi, which means "House of Knowledge."

Vivian Kokotovich was also a panel member. She recently retired as Supervisory Accountant of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska after a twenty-five year career there. Following her retirement she began thinking about the things she did not know and realized she had the potential to learn more, so she enrolled at UAS this fall to pursue a major in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing. She has known the other panelists for many years, and her own daughter graduated from Ft. Lewis College the same year as Amelia. She appreciates all the assistance she was given through the orientation at UAS, getting to meet the rest of the freshman class and the welcoming attitude of the university.

Ed Thomas reminded the PITAS students and mentors that their current educational goals and objectives fit well within the list of traditional values that a group of Tlingit Elders recently adopted in a workshop sponsored by the Central Council. He also stressed that "It is not the names I am called, but the name I answer to that matters," and encouraged the PITAS scholars to "stay the course, dropping out is not an option, your communities and families are proud of you. We are all counting on you to stick it out so that you become a teacher and make a difference in your community."

PITAS will continue to serve as a strong support structure for the students enrolled in the program as well as a force for improving educational opportunities for all students in the participating communities, schools and university. We look forward to an exciting and stimulating new year. ✨

2004 Southeast Native Education Forums

by Andy Hope

During the summer of 2004 I organized a series of Native Education Forums in Juneau. Outlined are the goals, objectives and recommendations that forum participants developed.

The forums were to bring together people who believe that modifications to the education system are insufficient to keep our young men and women in school and out of prison, and inadequate to help parents and families prevent teen pregnancy, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, and the many other problems that are linked, at least in part, to disconnects between schools, communities, families and students. Forum participants explored ways the Native community can work with mainstream institutions to transform education so that it works for Native students.

Key facilitators included, Dr. Bill Demmert from Western Washington University, Emma Widmark from Alaska Native Sisterhood Camp #2, Dionne Cadiente-Laiti from Sealaska Heritage Institute and Dr. Ted Wright from Antioch University. Kai Hendrickson, a recent University of Alaska Southeast Master of Arts in Teaching graduate, served as recorder for the first two forums.

Alaska Native Brotherhood Camp #2 and Tlingit and Haida Indians of the City and Borough of Juneau served as primary sponsors. They provided meeting and dining facilities rent-free. Margie Medeiros provided lunches for the first three forums. Steve Nelson, from the Initiative for Community Engagement with the Association of Alaska School Boards, video taped the forums. My thanks to all of these volunteer Native education advocates.

The mission adopted by the forum

working groups is: *To transform education access and achievement for Southeast Alaska Native students by engaging Southeast Alaska school systems in meaningful ways.*

The following work groups adopted goals and objectives to address specific educational areas.

Native Charter School/Early College High School

Goals: To establish a charter school by the fall of 2006 in Juneau. The school should start with grades 6-7 and eventually expand to grade 14. Initial enrollment targets were set at 200 students in Juneau by 2010, 1000 students in Southeast by 2012, 1500 students in Southeast by 2014 and a high school Tlingit immersion program by 2012. The group adopted the following objectives: place-based Native curriculum, specially trained Native and non-Native teachers, community ownership, Elder participation and high achievement.

Transform Higher Education Access and Retention

Goals: To establish an Early College Program with the charter school in 2008, Vice Provost level position at UAS by 2008, Native Studies AA and BS Degree programs by 2008, a Native Studies MA, and 70% of "local" students attend UAS/SJC by 2010. **Objectives adopted include:** increasing Native recruitment, enrollment and retention in higher education, seamless transition to college, Native par-

ticipation in college administration, Native programs of study and Native youth staying in the region.

Language Immersion Schools (like Maori 'language nests')

Goals: The transformation of learning through language and culture and to establish elementary immersion schools (even as schools-within-schools) in the following communities: Juneau in 2008; Sitka in 2010 and Ketchikan in 2012.

The following objectives were adopted: our children will speak Tlingit or Haida; they and their families will be fully invested in an educational system that has meaning and purpose for their lives and the Native community will participate wholly in the transformation of education.

Current Issues and Systems Change

This group has not developed goals and objectives as of early October.

Protocol for Decisions

Representatives from participating organizations include: Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association, Juneau Native Education Commission, Juneau School District, University of Alaska Southeast, Sealaska Heritage Institute, Native Scholarship providers and forum sponsors. Representatives will communicate with leaders in their organizations for follow-up and report back to the Native Education Forum. The Juneau Native Education Commission and the Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association will take the lead in implementing the goals, objectives and recommendations developed by the Native Education Forum participants.

The reports and documents produced by participants can be found at: www.sealaskaheritage.org/news/ under the "Links to Documents from Native Education Forums." ✨

Alaska Digital Archive an Online Treasure

by Malinda Chase

The best thing about Internet access in a state of the size of Alaska, with over 200 remote communities and its long, cold dark winter days, is the ability to explore and engage with the world as an antidote to feeling disconnected and isolate, or as a springboard to satisfying curiosity about some unknown fact. Where Internet is accessible, it provides a window with a never-ending source of changing scenery. That window now has one more view, providing a fascinating glimpse into Alaska's history.



Inupiaq home of a whaling captain (half under ground) showing much of his household gear and tools stored on roof or nearby cache.

Alaska's Digital Archive is an online visual treasure chest of Alaska's vibrant past. It is a resource for communities, families and, of course, educators and researchers. The archive makes accessible historical photographs, oral histories, moving images, documents and other materials. The Rasmuson Library at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Consortium Library at the University of Alaska

Anchorage, and the Alaska State Library in Juneau have worked collaboratively to identify, scan, index and place thousands of historical images into an online searchable database.

With the overall goal of "providing citizens access to the incredible wealth of historic resources held throughout Alaska's libraries, museums and other institutions," a project

advisory board was assembled to guide and wrestle with how to organize and present materials.

"We wanted specific suggestions from board members on being culturally responsive," says Bill Schneider, Oral History Curator at Rasmuson Library's Alaska and Polar Regions Collections. "We wanted to know how Native people wanted to be called or wished to be represented." Designing a database reflective of the local references and names of a Native group, region or community, as well as names that may have been formerly used by anthropologists, academics or others, allows a user to perform a wide search for material.

Advisory board member Sam Demientieff emphasized the board's role. "We wanted to tell the complete picture of Alaska; to have the interest of everyone involved in the state be represented. We debated what should we include and asked ourselves what was most important. Some of the things we talked about included having a variety of cultural history, statehood, the gold discovery, Native language and beliefs, and the presence of Russia and other countries in the archive."

To assist users, the materials are categorized into two major themes: Alaska Native History & Cultures and the Movement to Statehood. Within each of these themes there are specific pathways to view the holdings. Traditional Ways of Learning, Native Organizations, Education, and Traditional Spiritual Practices are a few of the pathways available within Alaska Native History and Culture. Some of The Movement to Statehood sections highlight Government, Natural Resources, Transportation, Society and Daily Life. Each category can also be browsed through a regional or timeline approach.

The beauty of the archive is that it disseminates a vast amount of knowledge and makes it easily assessable to individuals, families and communi-

GERRUDE LISK WHALING ALBUM, CA. 1905, ACCESSION NUMBER UAF-195987523, ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS, ALASKA AND POLAR REGIONS DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS.

ties. “There are a lot of families in Alaska doing research on their families, village or culture. You can now do a lot of that research right from your home or office,” says Demientieff. “Having old pictures [and other information] available quickly cuts down on a lot of time.”

Visiting the archives at UAF or other institutions in the state takes time and effort. “There’s checking out microfilm, parking, the time to do research,” acknowledges Demientieff. Such an effort can be a chore or just not happen for rural residents whose visits to urban areas, where historical archives are typically housed, are infrequent or intermittent. However, it’s easy to find a digital photo or document in the online Digital Archive, which can demonstrate how the community has changed, impart knowledge, make a connection to a great grandmother and validate connection to place—all threads of a meaningful education in or outside of a classroom.

Here are a few of examples on how Alaska’s Digital Archive can be a resource for a number of areas:

Assisting Students And Parents In Homework Projects

When your daughter comes home with a major homework project, assigning her to build a shelter used by a particular Native group, you can search the Digital Archive for “houses or sod houses” and find many revealing photos. These pictures can visu-



Photograph of a man butchering a walrus as others look on. The head of the walrus has been removed and sits at the far right of the image.

ally convey to your child how much living conditions have changed in Alaska. While viewing a photo of a semi-subterranean house, your daughter may surprisingly remark, “Gee, it must have been dark in there. Where are the windows? How did they light it?” And you, as the parent, are well on your way to a teachable moment and family interaction.

Providing Community Planning Documents

The federal-state Denali Commission, charged with providing needed utilities, infrastructure and economic support throughout Alaska, requires a comprehensive community plan be completed by communities pursuing

infrastructure projects. A community plan seeks to address community development questions on current land ownership, future land use, construction of housing and community facilities and transportation needs. Researching background information for the plan includes identifying high flood levels, suitable ground for building, shifts in population and profiling the economy. Entering your community’s name in the Digital Archive may produce photos that show changes in a river channel, population characteristics and subsistence or gardening practices. Adding these photos, by ordering them from individual institutions, your planning document will visually portray significant change in your community.

Aiding Classroom Teachers As A Resource For Alaska History Curriculum

Although a number of Alaskan high schools already offer an Alaska History elective, the proposed Alaska History requirement for high school graduation may be effective by January 2009. Use of the Digital Archive could make a dramatic difference

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MARY COX PHOTOGRAPHS, 1953-1958. ACCESSION NUMBER UAF-2001-129-98. ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS, ALASKA AND POLAR REGIONS DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, FAIRBANKS.

Educators cannot address student needs without knowledge

about their cultures, community background, and the resources available to them. Educators must also have a deep understanding of the impact that educational reform activities may have on students’ roles in their communities, as well in the communities themselves. Systemic Initiatives must identify the means of generating and disseminating the types of knowledge that allow all participants in the educational process to be included in meaningful ways (p.22 Infusing Equity In Systemic Reform: An Implementation Scheme, National Science Foundation).

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in the creativity and instruction approach of the requirement. Students may find a particular photo, say about a leader or an event, fascinating and want to investigate it further. Teachers may want to visually enhance and provide some context to prominent points in Alaska's history like the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, the use of dog teams or the 1964 earthquake.

In the *Guidelines for Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers for Alaska's Schools*, under Alaska Teacher Standard Five on Instruction and Assessment, "teachers facilitate, monitor and assess student learning."

Item "h" of the Guidelines states:

"Culturally responsive teachers who meet this standard will possess the skills to utilize technology as a tool to enhance educational opportunities and to facilitate appropriate documentation and communication of cultural knowledge while honoring cultural and intellectual property rights."

Having available Alaska's Digital Archive, classroom teachers have a tool that will enhance their instructional capabilities, encourage students to research and be made aware of the



Stevens Village school garden. Narrative in photo album read: "Part of my school and myself, breaking up new ground for our school garden. This was part of the regular school work and was done during school hours. Each had his own plot and products. All common vegetables grew well and with a flavor I have never seen equaled. Such lettuce, peas, cabbage, kale, beets, carrots and turnips, also radishes I have not eaten elsewhere." — Lawyer Rivenburg

resources in our Alaskan learning institutions. They are assured, thanks to the foresight of contributing institutions and the establishment the project advisory board, the information and material in the Digital Archives has been reviewed and presented in a culturally responsive manner, thereby assisting in systemic change.

You can find the Alaska Digital Archive at:

<http://vilda.alaska.edu/>

To learn more about the use of the Alaska Digital Archive in the classroom, read the feature story *Rural teachers tap into digital archive* at: <http://www.uaf.edu/news/>. ✨

LAWYER AND CORA RIVENBURG PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, 1910-1912, ACCESSION NUMBER UAF-1994-70-49, ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS, ALASKA AND POLAR REGIONS DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS.

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