

RURAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

University of Alaska
Department of Alaska Native & Rural Development



Elders and Scientists Address Global Warming at Rural Development Seminar



MORE THAN 75 RURAL DEVELOPMENT STUDENTS and presenters converged on Barrow Alaska this spring for a memorable learning experience. The seminar, 'Traditional Knowledge, Environmental Change, & Development in the Arctic' was sponsored by The Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development, University of Alaska Fairbanks, The National Park Service, The Barrow Arctic Science Consortium (BASC), Ilisagvik College, and The National Science Foundation.

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Ulric Ulroan is RD Outstanding Student of the Year

By MIRANDA WRIGHT

AS A SENIOR IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT program, with an emphasis on Small Business Mangement, Ulric Ulroan epitomizes the heart and spirit of the Rural Development program.

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Miranda Wright,
Academic Program Head

Graduation 2006

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2006 RD Graduates

BA Graduates

Anishia Elbie
South Naknek

Shirley Holmberg
Fairbanks

James Tikiun
Bethel

Duke Ogata
Sand Point

Pearl Mikulski
Nome

Charles Pullock
Nome

Ulric Ulroan
Chevak

MA Graduates

Andria Agli
Anchorage/ South Naknek

Angelina Santa Ana
Anchorage/ Mekoryuk

Steven Sumida
Anchorage

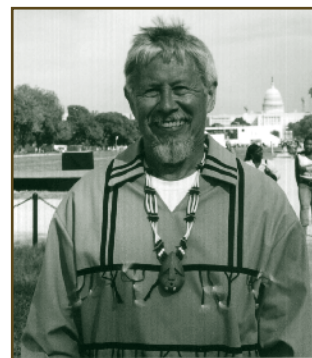
Eric Josh Weiser
Sedona, Arizona
Minto

April Laktonen
Counciller (Dec. 2005)
Kodiak

Steven Angasan
Naknek

Message from the Director

BY GORDON L. PULLAR



GREETINGS! SPRING IS HERE and with it our annual graduations. We are very proud of the Rural Development students graduating this year. Graduation is an important benchmark in the lives of most people. It represents the completion of a difficult task representing dedication and determination. In the case of almost all RD students it took an extra effort as they are usually holding down fulltime jobs, raising families, and serving as active members of their communities while they studied for their degrees.

This year saw seven BA and six MA graduates. I offer my sincerest congratulations to BA graduates Anishia Elbie, Shirley Holmberg, Duke Ogata, Pearl Mikulski, Charles Pullock, James Tikiun, and Ulric Ulroan. A special congratulations to Ulric for being named the RD Outstanding Student of the Year by the RD faculty. Ulric was also honored by winning a \$25,000 prize in the Alaska Marketplace Competition.

Congratulations also to the MA graduates. They are Andria Agli, Steven Angasan, April Laktonen Counciller, Angie Santa Ana, Steven Sumida, and Eric "Josh" Weiser. April actually graduated in December but is celebrating this spring.

Faculty, staff, students, and colleagues coordinated a very successful seminar in Barrow the first week in April. Once again, our partnership with the National Park Service allowed the program to arrange educational experiences that would otherwise not been possible. The seminar was also co-hosted by Ilisagvik College and the Barrow Arctic Science Consortium and had funding from the National Science Foundation. The seminar, titled, "Traditional Knowledge, Environmental Change and Development in the Arctic," drew about 30 students and some outstanding presenters. The seminar also had an unexpected visit from CNN who was filming for a series on global warming.

The RD program continues to be a "work in progress." The faculty meets every Monday morning to review and discuss current program issues and plan for the future. We feel it is crucial that the program be both current and relevant. Needs and desires of students and employers often change which in turn may point to a need for adjustments to the program. We will be reviewing our curriculum over the coming months to identify areas that need changing in order to maintain an effective program.

I wish all a great summer and look forward to seeing everyone again in the fall.

A Whale of a Time

By TED BIRKEDAL



Frances Bedel, Inez Webb, Patricia Phillips and Rick Knecht

THE TIME: 3:00 pm., April 5, 2006.

THE PLACE: Barrow, Alaska.

THE LOCATION: The Traditional Room of the Inupiat Heritage Center (the National Park Service's northernmost unit).

THE TEMPERATURE: Between 7 and 10 below outside with a slight brisk wind.

The room exudes the strong pungent smell of wet, oily seal skins, what Inupiat Elder Kenneth Toovak calls "the smell of spring". Though Barrow is still bathed in white; snow and frozen ocean for as far as one can see, it is nonetheless "Springtime in Barrow". In two to three weeks leads will open in the hard-frozen ocean ice and the bowhead whales will pass by Barrow in their annual migration into the Beaufort Sea. For at least a thousand years the people of the Barrow area have focused both their subsistence and social lives on the harvest of the bowhead whale. It is no different today.

Five women wearing full-body, yellow hazardous waste suits surround the five slippery seal skins; they are busily sewing the skins together in careful unison. Beside the women are chunks of seal meat in bowls; these are used to rub the seams between the skins and thus tighten the completed seam. Seeing that a bevy of visiting college students and faculty have arrived, many of whom are Alaska Natives, the head seamstress leaps to her feet and rushes to a black plastic bag and pulls out the skinned hand-like flipper of a large seal (ugruk). With quick flicks of her ulu knife she cuts small pieces to share. Professor Theresa John, who is Yupik, rolls her eyes in pleasure as she relishes her first bite of oily fermented flipper. Many of the students similarly enjoy this chewy morsel of strange looking meat. Some do not, yet also roll their eyes, but not in pleasure.

These busy women are sewing the outer skin cover of an umiak, a traditional whaling boat. Beside the women two men are putting the finishing touches on the wood frame of a new boat. Soon the completed skin cover will be tied over the frame and set out to dry in the cold and dry weather of Barrow. By the time the whales come the boat will be ready for its whaling crew and it will be towed to the ice edge. These light and highly maneuverable traditional boats are the tools of the trade in the spring whaling season in Barrow and they can be seen all over town where they wait the start of the season—upside down and drying. The students and faculty are not here for whaling, but nonetheless they will still have a "whale of a time" in Barrow.

ONE OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S longest and most successful partnerships is with the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development, University of Alaska Fairbanks. Each year the National Park co-sponsors a major spring seminar in cooperation with the department which is also known as the "Rural Development Program." This year, by invitation of the North Slope Borough's Barrow Arctic Science Consortium (BASC) and Ilisagvik College, the seminar was held in Barrow, Alaska.

Added and welcome financial support to host 28 students and an assortment of faculty and presenters in North America's northernmost community came from the National Science Foundation.

Both undergraduate and graduate students participated in the week-long seminar; most of them of Alaska Native heritage. Irrespective of ethnic background, all share some degree of connection to rural Alaska. They are adult

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Whale of a Time continued

students, many on a leadership track or already serving as leaders in their communities, Alaska Native corporations, or other organizations.

The theme was "Traditional Knowledge, Environmental Change, and Development in the Arctic". The seminar examined the mutual benefits of Western science in combination with traditional knowledge, the pros and cons of development, and the implications of climate change in the far north. The emphasis on climate



Professor Dixie Dayo with her brother, Robert Thompson of Kaktovik.

change in Barrow was particularly timely; for that same week Time Magazine put out a climate change issue and featured a beleaguered polar bear on its cover.

Luckily we did not meet any polar bears up close; but they

were seen cavorting on the sea ice 10 miles out of town. We did learn in the seminar from a noted researcher that the polar bears of the North Slope Region are doing well and are not under immediate threat as are their counterparts near Churchill, Canada. From the National Park Service side we heard from Ralph Tingey, Associate Regional Director for Resources and Education, Alaska Region, who spoke about how the National Park Service has learned from its past mistakes in dealing with rural Alaska. We also heard from Bruce Greenwood, Superintendent, Alaska's Affiliated Areas, who spoke about the Inupiat Heritage Center, the Aleutian World War II Historic Area, and the Shared Beringian Heritage Program. Don Callaway, our Senior Anthropologist, covered co-management, subsistence, science, traditional knowledge

and climate change in two separate sessions. Herbert Anungazuk and Rachel Mason, both cultural anthropologists with the National Park each spoke about subsistence and traditional knowledge.

Charles Wohlforth, the author of *The Whale and the Supercomputer*, and Karen Brewster, the author of *The Whales They Give Themselves*, both generously shared their research and writing secrets. And we had a host of scientists present their findings on everything from thaw lake formation to the threat of avian flu. But what the students most enjoyed and profited from was the participation and words of the mighty Inupiat leaders and elders that have transformed the North Slope Borough into an economic, political, and scientific powerhouse over the past 30 years. One of Alaska's most famous Inupiat leaders and elders, Arnold Brower, told of how the Inupiat made an early alliance with scientists that has served to protect their subsistence focus on the bowhead whale from international attack.



Arnold Brower

Kenneth Toovak, another elder of great stature also spoke of the virtues this unusual alliance and all the benefits that it has brought to the people of the North Slope.

The students also very much enjoyed hearing from the younger leaders who also have played and continue playing an important role in shaping the economic and political fortunes of Barrow. These leaders invariably gave energized talks to the students about traditional lifeways, development, and the threat of climate change and patiently answered many questions. They included Jake Adams and Oliver Leavitt, both leaders in the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation; George Ahmaogak, Shell Oil Corporation; Maggie Ahmaogak,

continued →

Elders and Scientists, continued

The Seminar was held at Ilisagvik College and the Inupiat Heritage Center from April 1–8. There were about 75 participants. Presenters included Inupiat elders, educators, Whaling Captains, community leaders, and corporation executives. We also heard from a wide range of technical experts from the National Park Service, BASC personnel, and scientists working on the North Slope. Also in the mix were book authors Charles Wohlforth and Karen Brewster.

The Seminar addressed climate change, traditional knowledge, community leadership, long-term cooperation between the community and scientists in Barrow, and other challenges and opportunities presented by life on the North Slope. Proceedings of the conference including student work are being prepared for publication by the RD department. RD students Bob Bulger and Beverly Grinage played major organizational roles in this highly successful seminar.

Executive Director, Alaska Whaling Commission; Richard Glenn, President of the Barrow Arctic Science Consortium; Mayor Edward Itta, North Slope Borough, and Mayor Nathaniel Olemaun Jr., City of Barrow, and many more of Barrow's most important people. Interestingly, all these leaders were also respected whaling captains, or in the case of Maggie Ahmaogak married to one. No one with political ambition on the North Slope can hope for a high position without first building a reputation as a successful whaling captain. As mentioned earlier in this piece, whaling is still central to the lives of Barrow residents. Barrow is sort of the Chicago of the North, but here it is not ward politics that prevail, but whale politics. Like Chicago, Barrow does not shy away from opportunity nor the wise application of political muscle. Like Chicago, Barrow is a windy city and like Chicago it thrives on innovation: Barrow's innovation is to have married the old with the new; but their way, on their own terms, and to their benefit.

Global Warming and Traditional Knowledge Highlights: Barrow RD Leadership Seminar

By STEVE WILLIAMS

While climate change is still an abstract idea to most Americans, for Inupiat on Alaska's North Slope the impacts of the world warming are being felt hard right now. The challenges ahead for the people of the North was the theme of this year's Rural Development Leadership Seminar, held April 1–8 at Ilisagvik College in Barrow. Students, RD faculty and presenters shared information and opinions on climate change, subsistence lifeways, and the relationship of Inupiat traditional knowledge about the arctic.

Scientists from the University of Cincinnati, the North Slope Borough's Department of Wildlife Management, and various federal agencies talked about their findings regarding wildlife, the land and the sea. National Park Service presenters Ted Birkedal, Rachel Mason, Herbert Anungazuk, and Don Callaway talked about the Park Service's efforts to preserve cultural and funerary objects found on federal land.

Callaway's talk was particularly well received. The concept that nature is too complex for scientists to understand fully led to a good discussion about the value and shortcomings of science in managing wildlife, and opened the door to a new understanding, and new questions, about the way Inupiat use and value their subsistence resources.

Presenters from Barrow, who spoke of everything from oil development to traditional subsistence, had the most impact on the group. We heard about the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission from executive director Maggie Ahmaogak, and about hunting bowhead from long-time whaling captain Oliver Leavitt. Maggie's husband George Ahmaogak told about how his company will approach future development on the North Slope, with respect for Native lifeways and respect for the land. Ron Brower, Barrow representative to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, spoke about how climate change affects all people of the North, and the means Natives have to insure that their future is protected. Whaling captain Johnny Brower was on hand through most of the seminar to answer questions about subsistence hunting, and each morning was started with a prayer from Elder Dr. Kenneth Toovak.

The seminar was sponsored by UAF, the National Park Service, and the National Science Foundation. The Barrow Arctic Science Consortium, which share space with Ilisagvik College, also played a big role in the event. It was a fascinating week of scientific and cultural learn-

more photos on next page



Charles Wohlforth



Left: Spring Pungowiyi, Dixie Dayo and Gordon Pullar.

Above: Ted Birkedal and Ralph Tingey of NPS.

Right: Professor Theresa John.



Rural Development Seminar

April 1-8, 2006 | Barrow Alaska



Ron Brower, Sr. and RD MA student Mike Swanson

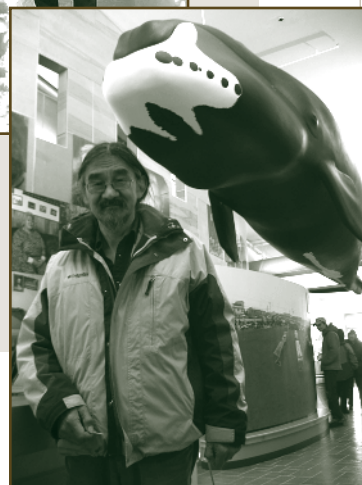


Above: Anne Jensen and Glenn Sheehan



National Park Service staff Ted Birkedal, Herb Anungazuk, and Rachel Mason

Right: National Park Service anthropologist Herb Anungazuk





*Above: Richard Glenn (standing),
Dr. Kenneth Toovak, and Jaylene Wheeler*



Mary and Joe Sage



*Right: (L to R) Anishia Elbie, Arla Johnson, Mary
Sage, Ann Fears, and Shirley Holmberg*

Traditional Knowledge, Environmental Change, & Development in the Arctic



Oliver Leavitt



*Dr. Kenneth H. Toovak with RD MA
student Steve Sumida*



Bob Bulger, RD MA student



*Professor Mike Davis with ASRC
President Jacob Adams*



Andria Agli

BA Graduates

Anishia Elbie
South Naknek

Shirley Holmberg
Fairbanks

James Tikiun
Bethel

Duke Ogata
Sand Point

Pearl Mikulski
Nome

Charles Pullock
Nome

Ulric Ulroan
Chevak

MA Graduates

Andria Agli
Anchorage/ South Naknek

Angelina Santa Ana
Anchorage/ Mekoryuk

Steven Sumida
Anchorage

Eric Josh Weiser
Sedona, Arizona
Minto

April Laktonen
Councillor (Dec. 2005)
Kodiak

Steven Angasan
Naknek

RD 2006 Graduation



*April Laktonen
Councillor*



James Tikiun



Duke Ogata



Charles Pullock



Steven Angasan



Anishia Elbie



Shirley Holmberg



*MA graduate April
Laktonen Councillor
with her advisory
committee Gordon
Pullar, Dixie
Dayo, and Sven
Haakanson, Jr.*



*Angie Santa Ana with
husband John and children.*



Pearl Mikulski



*Duke Ogata, Gordon Pullar, Ulric Ulroan, Dixie
Dayo, Andria Agli, and Shirley Holmberg.*

The RD Program Made It All Possible

By **ULRIC J. ULROAN**



Ulric Ulroan with his family

I'VE BEEN GOING TO COLLEGE since 1994 on and off juggling between work, college and raising my children. I applied to the Rural Development program in 2000 and received my AA degree in 2002. Then I went back into construction and became a foreman until last fall when I decided that was time to get my BA degree in Rural Development. I chose RD as my major because I knew that I could put what I learn in the RD program to use in Chevak. I like the way that the Rural Development program looks at real rural issues, and I am glad that the Rural Development program allows us to use our villages as examples when it comes to planning, grant writing, business plan writing or just as a topic of discussion. In every Rural Development class I was always thinking about how I could use this new information to make Chevak a better place for my children, family, and community. I am blessed that my family and the community of Chevak gave me such a wonderful childhood and I would like to return that favor to my community. Thanks to the Rural Development program I have a store of ideas about how I can improve things in Chevak. I would like to help Chevak become economically self sustainable and create more jobs for the people of Chevak. I would like to offer services to our young children by bringing back scouting programs which can help build leadership, determination, team-

work, and discipline. I would also like to coach the Chevak Comet Boys Basketball team since I am a good basketball player myself.

I am satisfied with what I have learned here at UAF through the Rural Development program. The time I spent here at UAF has surpassed my expectations. I wrote a business plan in Miranda Wright's class for a project called "Chevak Bird & Cultural Tours". During that time we were informed that the Alaska Federation of Natives was going to host the first ever Alaska Marketplace Competition held in the United States of America. Miranda encouraged us to give it a try, so I did. I ended up being one of the finalists, and later not only won the award money of \$25,000.00 but also got the people's choice award with an additional award of \$1000.00 to help start my business. I would have never won the Alaska Marketplace competition if it weren't for the Rural Development class here at UAF. The Chevak Bird & Cultural Tours would have just been a plan and not a reality. I thank all my instructors and other RD staff who have helped me while attending UAF to realize that I can make a difference in Chevak. I just wish there were more young leaders from our communities with a goal of improving life in their community that will actually go back after college and make it happen.

I am going to use everything I learned through the Rural Development as a good resource to help me when I become the Mayor of Chevak. I was told that even though I graduate and I'm back in Chevak that I should keep in touch with the Rural Development staff and ask for any kind of assistance. That is good reassurance for me knowing that I can have a university department there for me when ever I need assistance in anything from planning to grant writing to business plan writing.



RD Faculty at UAF commencement. Professors Mike Davis, Rick Knecht, Theresa John, Gordon Pullar, Miranda Wright, and Dixie Dayo.

Revitalizing the Alutiiq Language

By APRIL LAKTONEN COUNCELLER

CAMA'I FRIENDS. I would like to share a bit about my experiences in the RD masters program and how it has been relevant to my work in Alutiiq Language Revitalization. While I was an undergraduate in Anthropology and American Civilization at Brown University, I worked as an intern one summer at the Arctic Studies Center in Anchorage, working on the Looking Both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People exhibit. One of the Co-authors of the exhibit catalog was Gordon Pullar, DANRD Director. When he visited the Arctic Studies Center he showed me some information on the Rural Development Bachelors program (as at that time they did not have a Masters program). I remember thinking to myself, if I had known that a program so applicable to what I want to do was available right here in Alaska, I wouldn't have shipped myself all the way to Rhode Island for my education! Luckily a Masters program in Rural Development was offered in 2000, and I decided that this is where I would continue my education.

I was hired at the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak in 2002 to work on Alutiiq language projects, and re-entered student life in the RD Masters program the following fall with the assistance of the Truman Scholarship. There were two reasons I chose RD as my program of choice, and they also remain my favorite things about the program. The first was that I could remain here in Kodiak and continue working while also going to school. I could gain valuable work experience rather than wait for graduation to get my start in the non-profit world. I could actually start making a difference in my community from day one, not to mention that I just "needed" to be at home. The second reason I knew RD was for me was that nearly everything in my classes was directly applicable to my job at the Museum, to my life as an Alaskan Native person, or my experience as an Alaskan in changing times.

When the time came for me to pick a thesis or project, I thought about what would best fulfill a community need, that would be applicable to my studies, but also capitalize on my talents. There was community consensus that people learning Alutiiq have few resources – creating learning materials was a primary goal of all Kodiak Island communities in Shauna Hegna's "Yugnet Ang'alluki – To Keep the Words," A Report on the Status, Strategies and Goals for the Revitalization of the Alutiiq Language (also a RD masters project). With my background as an Alutiiq language Apprentice, as well as some experience in audio editing due to being a public radio volunteer, I decided that an applied community project was in order. I would create a phrasebook for Kodiak Alutiiq with an accompanying audio CD.

I wanted to design the project with as much community involvement as possible. I applied



April Laktonen Counsellor instructs students at culture camp on Kodiak Island.

for and received funding to pay participant stipends from the Endangered Language Fund. I presented my ideas to the Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit Regional Language Advisory Committee, and gathered suggestions on matters important to the communities, such as coverage of dialectical differences, and inclusion of an Alphabet lesson. I came up with preliminary words and phrases with my Masters, but also put every entry in the book before an Elders panel for approval. Masters in the Museum's Master/Apprentice project were hired to provide their voices for the audio CD's Alutiiq portion, while my voice was used for the English. As I am a novice speaker and speller in Alutiiq, I asked Dr. Jeff Leer of the Alaska Native Language Center to act as editor on the project. His involvement contributed the linguistic proficiency needed for an academic product.

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Native Corporations Donate to RD Endowed Faculty Chair

DOYON, LTD. AND KONIAG, INC. have made the first donations to the fund to establish an endowed faculty chair for retired ANCSA corporation CEOs and other Alaska Native leaders to share their wisdom and expertise with RD students. Doyon contributed \$42,000 while Koniag gave \$15,000. When the fund grows to a size that it can be self-sustaining retired Native leaders will be invited to serve a semester as a “distinguished visiting professor.”

“We are extremely grateful to Doyon and Koniag for taking the lead in establishing this important position,” said Gordon Pullar, Director of the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development. “This is a long-term

investment in the future that promises to pay big dividends in the form of maintaining effective Alaska Native leadership for our organizations.”

The distinguished visiting professors are expected to have much influence on Alaska Native students teaching them more effective community development, personal development, organizational management, leadership skills, and appropriate use of indigenous knowledge.

Based on his or her individual experiences, each will help develop seminars for undergraduate students and conduct graduate leadership seminars. They will teach courses and advise and mentor students.

Revitalizing continued

As with many projects, this one turned out to be far more work than I initially expected. The Phrasebook ended up twice as long as originally planned, the editing & feedback phase was also lengthy. One memorable challenge was when the fluent speakers and the professional linguist did not agree on a phrase in The Lord’s Prayer. The linguistic perspective was for grammatical accuracy, while the Elders wanted a phrase that sounded good to them, despite being less-grammatical. In the end, of course, I went with the Elders wishes, while acknowledging an alternative phrase in the footnotes. Dealing with different parties involved in this project was a lesson in diplomacy and tact – skills I know I will draw on greatly in my future community projects! As publication funding was not included in my first grant, I applied for, and recently received partial funding from ConcoPhillips Alaska, Inc. If all goes well, the Kodiak Alutiiq Conversational Phrasebook with Audio CD will be published within the next few months.

Looking back at this project, the research, and my studies in the RD program, I do not have a single regret about this program. I have

been promoted to manager of the Alutiiq Language Program at the Alutiiq Museum, and have brought my experience and knowledge to conferences at home and abroad. This fall, a group of representatives from Kodiak Island attended the World Indigenous Peoples’ Conference on Education in Hamilton New Zealand, to present to other Indigenous nations about Alutiiq Collaborative leadership – a hallmark of language and cultural revitalization efforts in our community. More recently I presented about the Qik’rtarmiut Alutiit Language Revitalization Program at the 2006 Alaska Anthropological Association Conference, hosted by the Alutiiq Museum right here in Kodiak. Public outreach to the Native and non-Native community has proven to be an important way to garner support for language revitalization.

People often mistake my married name for my job title. I have joked that after a certain amount of “recovery time” I would like to seek my Ph.D., and become “Dr. Counciller,” to really confuse people! In all seriousness, if RD ever offers a doctoral program, I would be among the first to sign up. *Quyanaasinaq* —Thank You Very Much!

Life is a Rural Town; Take Three

BY SHARON ANDERSON



Sharon Anderson

Sharon Anderson is the Program Director for Spruce Island Development Corporation (SIDCO) in Ouzinkie Alaska, her hometown.

MY FIRST DAY ON THE JOB was October 3rd, 2005. I am the lone employee of SIDCO. I had to put the organization together; from clearing off a desk and finding a chair to completing the needed grant paperwork to receive funds from the federal government.

I first heard "SIDCO" in March 2005 when I was living in Anchorage and was asked to assist in writing an Administration for Native American (ANA) grant. The SIDCO board kept me in mind when the ANA grant was approved in September. I am now administering and coordinating the Ouzinkie Economic Development and Integrated Business Plan project. I am planning intensive trainings on a range of topics. The project brings industry experts to Ouzinkie, instead of sending community members out of the community to learn.

Spruce Island Development Corporation (SIDCO) is an economic development non-profit corporation formed by the City of Ouzinkie, the Native Village of Ouzinkie, and the Ouzinkie Native Corporation. SIDCO's goal is to revitalize Ouzinkie's economy so that young people can stay, work, and raise families. Through an extensive community planning process, SIDCO has identified key industries that would bring capital investment and provide employment.

SIDCO was formed so that the community could collectively determine its vision and then plan how best to go forward. Justification for any proposed project needing capital financial investment would be required. We must "prove" out the vision and goals by learning about the industry and performing the necessary feasibility studies. We have identified five industry-training categories: Small fish processing and marketing, Sourcing and purchasing community quota shares, Access to current transportation systems, Tourism Entrepreneurship and Behavioral Health.

I graduated from the Rural Development Master's program in May 2005. I wrote a tribal integrated natural resource management plan as my final project. Working for SIDCO has allowed me to move back to my home community and work. It has been an interesting experience living in the big city of Anchorage and Kodiak for the past ten years and then moving back to where I grew up. Working in my home community has been fulfilling.

...the pull of small Alaska village life always stayed with me, and I ended up in the rural development bachelors program because of the love of village Alaska.

When I went to college I had the grand notion of working in the profit world, studied business for three years, but the pull of small Alaska village life always stayed with me, and I ended up in the Rural Development Bachelors program because of the love of village Alaska. To be able to work in my home community has been a great opportunity and joy. It was not a hard adjustment for me to move from Anchorage to Ouzinkie. I prepared myself mentally to live in a rural community. Some called me brave for moving to Ouzinkie to live the rural rugged life. I laughed. Some of you out there reading this have never left. It was not brave, it was just an opportunity I couldn't pass up.

Yuraqerraaq

BY JOLENE JOHN

DURING THE WEEKEND of February 10–12, 2006, the Toksook Bay Traditional Dancers held their invitational dance that hosted the visiting communities of Cheforak, Nightmute and Tununak, all from the Nelson Island area. Friday the 10th marked the day for Toksook Bay families to present children designated to stand in front of the community to perform their first dances, or Yuraqerraaq. The children included the eldest daughter and son of John and Sharon Chakuchin, the eldest son of David and Nicole Therchik, and the daughters of Randolph Evans and Jolene John. Each family presented the children with a story identifying the purpose for the special occasion.

Typically, the reason for the first dance is to commemorate the first catch or harvest the child brings to the extended family in the past harvest cycle. For example, Rachel Chakuchin's first gathering of salmon berries from the previous summer were given out to a designated Elder the family selected. This was followed by the distribution of *akutaq* (Eskimo ice cream mixed with salmon berries) and other purchased or hand-made gifts to honored elders from surrounding communities.

Jolene's daughters, Minegtuli Evelyn and Qakvalria Lisa Evans, ages 7 & 5, were presented by Jolene's father, Kangrilnguq Paul John. Their first catches of fish and berries had long taken place in Anchorage where they had

been residing the past six years. However, that was not their purpose for the celebration. Their Ap'a (grandfather) presented them to the community by stating that they were simply curious of how life is like in the community after having been raised in urban parts of Alaska (Juneau and Anchorage). Since their relocation to Toksook Bay in September 2005, the girls were ready to join the dancing community through their first dance. Paqnayuglua (I Am Curious) was the title of their first song, composed by Ap'a Paul John. Jolene and Randolph, as parents, along with the extended family, joined in on the performance.

In preparation for this first dance, families usually gather or make miscellaneous items to share as *cikiutet* (gifts) to visiting drummers and dancers. This process can take many months for some families, as this Yuraqerraaq is a very special occasion and can be compared to that of a child's first Christening, or the Bar Mitzvah for a young Jewish man. Parents and grandparents are extremely proud to share in the fact that a child is ready and able to join the community as a productive member. Their major accomplishments are celebrated not only with the community, but in the presence of the honored Elders and guests from nearby villages.

The excitement generated at the preparation stage and the positive energy created after the completion of the Yuraqerraaq seemed to carry on through the three days of dancing that took place. These first dances truly are an important part of our traditions. We need to celebrate the smallest accomplishments so that our children will continue to feel like they are making major contributions in a culture and community that is always preparing for the future ahead.

Ulric Ulroan, continued from front page

Upon graduation in May, Ulric and his family plan to return to his home in Chevak where Ulric will begin an eco-tourism business based on bird-watching and nature tours. Ulric developed the eco-tourism business plan as part of his course work in Rural Development. He has secured commitments with a national nature tour operator, contracted with several bed and breakfast operators in Chevak as well as ground transportation providers, and six-pack licensed boat operators. He then entered his

business plan in the Denali Commission, Alaska Market Place proposal competition for sustainable economic development in rural Alaska and was selected as one of fifty finalists. Ulric went on to win an award of \$25,000 in the competition as well as an additional 'peoples choice' award of \$1,000 to help start his business.

The Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development recognizes Ulric Ulroan as the outstanding student of the year, 2005–2006.

Discovering Identity Through Genealogical Research

BY PATTI CAREY

IN THE FALL OF 2005, I took RD465 with Dixie Dayo—Community Healing and Wellness. This course became much more than just an upper division elective. Through this class, I was given the opportunity to research my Cherokee background via genealogical research. The final assignment paper became my initial step to discovering my own identity. Although I am still far from mastering the art of researching ancestry, I have learned some key steps that helped me along the way.

I had few facts to go by initially and I no longer have living family members who could help solve pieces of this puzzle. What I did have were a few names of family members, dates, notes regarding boarding schools attended and pictures of my paternal great-grandmother. The Internet provided another starting point for my research. There I found the 1924 Baker Roll, which is an index of names of individuals entitled to enrollment in various tribes in the lower 48 – this is where I found my great grandmother's name. Another important site was "Access Genealogy: Indian Tribal Records" which provided me with many different sources for people of Alaska Native and American Indian descent. Through Ancestry.com I found names, birth dates and death dates for various members of my father's family. By the way, Ancestry.com offers a free 14-day subscription. I was able to link my line to those who came before me.

Basic sources included census records, records from tribal councils, and vital records. Other sources came in the form of letters from family members and notes from conversations I had with my father's family. We often hear about the importance of oral traditions in preserving our history and this was very evident when I had difficulty finding information. There is no time like the present to record the stories of our elders to help us pass this onto our children and others who come after us.

An identity search is empowering for anyone on the path of one's discovery. It is a positive healing process and a natural outcome in the search for one's identity. I hope that this research will create a sense of wholeness for others as it has for me. A positive self-im-

age and a sense of wholeness can also have a powerful impact on one's community. A great opportunity to explore your sense of wellness is the RD465 course taught by Dixie Dayo.

I have compiled a list of resources that might help my fellow RD classmates search and document their roots. I would be glad to share my resources with anyone who is interested. I can be reached at fspkc1@uaf.edu.

Rick Knecht Joins DANRD Faculty

DR. RICK KNECHT

Joined the DANRD

faculty as Assistant Professor in December of last year. Rick holds an MA and PhD in Anthropology from Bryn Mawr College and has been doing research and preservation work in rural Alaska since 1983. In 1987 he was hired by Gordon Pullar at the Kodiak Area Native Association as a Culture and Heritage Program Coordinator. Knecht helped establish the Alutiiq Culture Center and later was the founding director of the Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository. In 1995 he went to Unalaska to help establish the Museum of the Aleutians and served as director there for nine years. In 2004 Knecht took a break from Alaska and spent two years in Micronesia as the national consulting anthropologist for the Republic of Palau. His research interests focus on climate change, the prehistory of coastal Alaska, heritage tourism, museum and culture center development, and cultural preservation. This coming summer Knecht will be lead instructor for the Summer Science Field Program at Ellikarmiut on Nunivak Island, run by UAF's Kuskokwim Campus in cooperation with the NIMA Corporation of Mekoryuk.



RD Student Selected for U.S. Model House of Representatives

Program provides a chance to get out-of-class experience in public policy



Washington, DC: David J. Parks, RD MA student from Palmer, was selected to represent the state of Alaska in the U.S. Model House of Representatives. This unique and prestigious program draws one college student from each Congressional District to Capitol Hill, April 17–21, 2006 for a simulation of the U.S. House of Representatives. This program will provide David Parks and other participating college students with the foremost experience and education about the inner workings of Congress.

He will take part in events such as writing and voting on Bills and hearings in the actual

committee rooms of the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill. Events will also be hosted by the Republican National Committee, Democratic National Committee and other prominent organizations.

Parks is a member of the Leadership Anchorage program for 2006. He holds a BA in Political Science with a minor in Alaska Native Studies from UAA. A former student body president of UAA, Parks served as the student representative to the University of Alaska Board of Regents while an undergraduate. He was also named as one of "Alaska's Top 40 Under 40" for 2005.

Student and Graduate Notes

Dianne Okleasik and Ukallaysaaq Tom got married in Nome on January 21, 2006. Family and friends from all over came to Nome to celebrate our wedding. Diane is now the Acting Program Director for the Eskimo Heritage Program for Kawerak.

Lauri O'Brien is the new Executive Director of the Area Health Education Center at the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation in Bethel. She is promoting health career education and health students and professional staff in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

Sarah Lukin is now working as Corporate Communications Manager for Alutiiq, a subsidiary of Afognak Native Corporation. She directs of public and media relations and external corporate communications for that organization.

Bil Aldrich has graduated with a Master of Science degree in Environmental Monitoring from the University of Wisconsin Madison, Institute of Environmental Studies. Environmental Monitoring employs remote sensing from aerial and satellite platforms. As Project Assistant with a joint UAF/UW-Madison/Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys venture, Bill will develop education outreach curricula for rural Alaska in geospatial IT, traditional

knowledge and geomorphology.

Chris Kiana works for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium as Utility Support Business Specialist, working primarily with Alaska Native communities on indicators of finance, accounting, operation of utility, organization management and IRS issues. Chris also serves on the 13th Regional Corporation Board of Directors where he serves on the Land Committee and chairs the Strategic Initiatives Planning Committee. He will be giving a financial analysis of the 13th Regional Corporation for the last five years at the next Board meeting in May.

April (Issik) Laktonen Counciller has been nominated for a 2006 HAIL Award for her culturally-based curriculum materials, including a Kodiak Alutiiq Language Conversational Phasebook with audio CD published in 2005. April is the Alutiiq Language Manager for the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak and coordinates the Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit Language Revitalization Program. She has spearheaded the translation of numerous children's books and songs in Alutiiq.



Dianne Okleasik and Ukallaysaaq Tom at their wedding

The Master's Degree in Rural Development

BY MIRANDA WRIGHT

THE DEPARTMENT OF ALASKA NATIVE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DANRD)

M.A. program is designed to educate leaders who gain: a) a broader theoretical understanding of development processes in Alaska and their relationship to the global economy, and b) professional skills in areas of leadership, business development, administration and conflict management. Graduate students complete a thesis or applied community development project, and have opportunities for international study and research. Students can earn the M.A. degree either on the Fairbanks campus or through distance delivery.

The MA Program has four major objectives: (1) Educate leaders for indigenous and other rural Alaska communities who understand the dynamic interrelationship of those communities with the global economy and who are competent to fill community leadership and management positions. (2) Provide a quality program of advanced study for place-committed students in rural communities, combining face-to-face seminars and the development of a statewide network of rural leaders with cutting-edge distance delivery of instruction. (3) Build strong ties to business and community leaders in rural Alaska, including creation of professional development plans for indigenous employees seeking career advancement. (4) Create a model for innovation and flexibility in circumpolar graduate study that attracts international indigenous students and prominent national and international indigenous leaders and others as visiting scholars and affiliate faculty.

The first graduating class for the Rural Development master's program was in 2002 with two graduates. In 2003 and 2004, the number of graduates increased to four each year. By 2005 the number jumped to eleven. In total, the Rural Development master's degree program has graduated 21 students.

Thirty-three percent articulated from the Rural Development baccalaureate program. Nineteen of the graduates (90%) reside in Alaska and are employed with organizations serving rural Alaska communities. Ten (48%) reside in rural Alaska. One graduate relocated to Minnesota and works as an administrator for

The DANRD master's degree program is an excellent, exciting, innovative, and successful program. Our overall recommendation for the MA program is "continue without change".

UAF Program Review Committee

a tribal organization.

Twenty (95%) of the graduates are Alaska Native. Eighty-five percent are female.

The graduates are making a positive impact in rural Alaska in leadership positions ranging from village tribal administrators to village and regional corporation presidents and CEOs. Other graduates have entered government service and serve in state and federal positions. The following are examples of the positions held by graduates of the Rural Development M.A. program:

Anastasia Cooke Hoffman, President/CEO
Bethel Native Corporation, Bethel, Alaska

Mary Jane Nielsen, General Manager/CEO,
Alaska Peninsula Corporation, South Nanknek, Alaska

Melanie Edwards, Executive Vice President,
Kawerak, Inc., Nome, Alaska

Alan Sorum, Harbormaster, Port of Valdez,
Valdez, Alaska

Dawn Salesky, VP for the Education, Employment and Training Division, Kawerak, Inc.,
Nome, Alaska

Lauri Weston-O'Brien, Director of Training,
Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation,
Bethel, Alaska.

Shauna Hegna, Deputy Director, Rural Alaska
Community Action Program, Anchorage

Sarah L. Lukin, Corporate Communications
Manager, Alutiiq, LLC

Esther M. Combs, Supplemental Housing
Program Manager, Alaska Housing Finance
Corporation, Anchorage, AK

April Laktonen Counciller, Alutiiq Language
Manager, Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological
Repository, Kodiak, Alaska

Research Opportunities for Rural Development Students

By RALPH GABRIELLI

Undergraduate Students

The University of Alaska Fairbanks takes pride in showcasing the opportunities it provides undergraduate students in the natural and physical sciences to join outstanding, nationally and internationally recognized faculty in carrying out research projects, and in participating in those projects at levels usually reserved for graduate assistants, research associates or, for that matter, junior faculty. In the liberal arts and social sciences, however, equivalent opportunities are much rarer, and "research assignments" typically involve students in computer searches and library visits. Nevertheless, the College of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development students are involved in research and term projects that encourage them to apply and test their learnings in real-life laboratories: their term assignments often include the results of surveys they have developed and implemented themselves and of interviews with Native elders and other leaders.

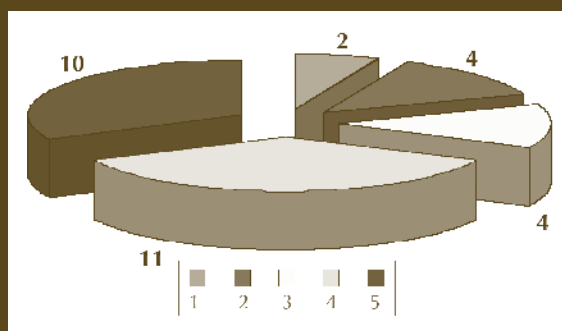
This approach to research comes about in part because of faculty guidance, in part because of the focus of the program's content on events and issues that are emerging and developing in the present moment, and in part because of the students themselves. With respect to guidance, faculty believe in a three-pronged instructional model that simultaneously presents content, provides students with opportunities to develop as persons (e.g. through team assignments), and involves students in learning to develop and apply useful tools (e.g. survey research, evaluation measures, etc.).

With regard to content, the Rural Development program focuses on areas such as community strengthening, cultural preservation, and economic development, and on issues such as contracting, compacting, and sovereignty which, though rooted in history, are moving and changing and appearing in newspapers every day and transforming both the state and the way we live in it. As such, student learning tends to draw very heavily on those people who are making news and creating current events and, incidentally, making themselves incredibly accessible as guest speakers. (Recent guests include present and past commissioners and legislators, Native elders and corporation presidents, and the chancellor of UAF and the president of the University of Alaska. Here, a parallel could be drawn between these guests and the internationally renowned researchers available to UAF's science students.)

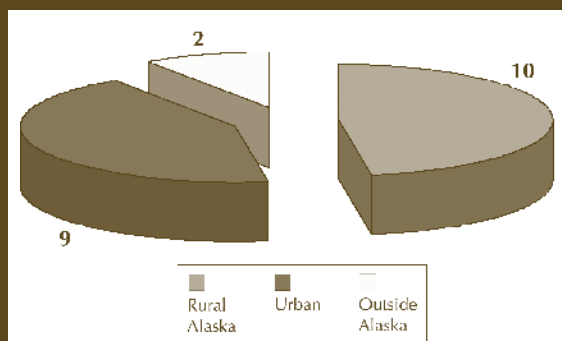
Finally, regarding the students themselves, most are non-traditional in the sense that they are older and employed and experienced in the world and its workings. Of these, many hold positions of considerable responsibility in which they display expertise and have access to resources beyond those commonly available to students (e.g. staff assistance, relationships with other executives, editorial authority over newsletters, etc.) and which permit those RD students to carry out class assignments in ways that are different, unusual, and sometimes exciting.

So in general, class research and related assignments for rural development students tend to be more like the research experience

MA GRADUATES 2002–2006



RESIDENCY OF MA GRADUATES



for science majors than what is undertaken by most non-science students at UAF.

But where the rural development program exceeds itself in providing opportunities for students to engage in research-based learning is in three of the required courses: RD 350 Indigenous Knowledge and Community Research, RD 400 Internship, and RD 475 Senior Project. In the first, students are introduced to specific research approaches and, more importantly, encouraged to develop an orientation for scientific inquiry. In the internship experience, students are required to identify problems and to work with their internship mentor and their university instructor towards solutions. And in completing a senior project, students work closely with a faculty member and with a community and/or organization to develop and implement a project that synthesizes their learning while making a contribution to the general good. In especially the last two courses, students work with exceptional mentors, engage in inquiry and in the process of discovery and, not unimportantly, make a contribution to learning while providing a service to the state. Students serve internships, for example, with Native organizations, with village and regional corporations, with the state legislature, with divisions and bureaus within state government and, occasionally, with private organizations. Senior projects are carried out in similar venues and recent projects have included a creative plan and program for marketing Copper River salmon, a planning and visioning approach for small villages (which was implemented), a business development and marketing plan (also implemented) which drew on Native traditional medicines and curatives, and the development of an internet company formed by single mothers.

The rural development program also supports students in developing their skills and conducting research by offering a section of English 414 Research Writing just for students who are involved in major writing projects. Typically, undergraduate students working on their senior projects and graduate students developing their theses register for this course which holds publication of student research as one of its objectives.

Graduate Students

At the graduate level, the department's predispositions toward action-based and community-based research pervade both course work and, obviously, the research project/thesis requirement. And, since most of the graduate

students have come through the department's baccalaureate program, they arrive with a research orientation that is built in—not much skill-building is required. At this level, the department is not so particularly focused on the provision of research opportunities as it is on the creation and maintenance of a climate which nurtures research through the encouragement and support of students' efforts. For example, the first course in the M.A. sequence is RD600 Circumpolar Indigenous Leadership. It is a week-long seminar which is held in a retreat setting and which embeds an orientation to the graduate program and how to be successful in it. Students bring a draft of their graduate study plan (GSP) which includes a detailed outline of their proposed thesis or research project. Since the thesis/project typically proves difficult for students, an entire day is dedicated to research and other topics which closely relate. The day begins with a talk by Dr. John Blake who directs UAF's Office of Research Integrity. Dr. Blake addresses topics such as the Belmont Report (ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects) and the function of the institutional review board (IRB). Next, noted researchers speak about their work in indigenous communities especially addressing issues such as cultural sensitivity and the importance or involving people less as "human subjects" and more as co-investigators. Following that, recent M.A. graduates talk about challenges they met and obstacles they had to overcome in completing their research/projects ("what we wish we had known when we were in your shoes") and, finally, each RD600 student outlines his/her proposed topic and receives suggestions on design and implementation from the assembled researchers, graduates and faculty.

Beyond Opportunity: A Research Orientation

The research orientation of the rural development department is consistent with its values and beliefs. Alaska is a young state with opportunity everywhere one looks. But no opportunity exists without crises, problems, obstacles and difficulties all in proportion. With a population so small and problems so many, true rural development must be built on the empowerment and increased capacity of the people. The department sees in its students and graduates a great force that can be applied to solve the problems of the state. The path is direct: through action-based research, our students get to test their learnings against real-

ity ... get to put their program content to use. As leaders, they become the means by which their communities use their own, internal resources in dealing with problems and thus empower themselves. As a department, rural development gets to participate in the building of capacity so that the problems of communities will be solved by the people who live in

those communities. This is a fundamental and most important shift from a model in which problems are identified and solved by external entities, paid consultants, and the like, to one of self reliance and of building one's own future. In making this shift, the value of research and the importance of providing research opportunities for students comes clear.

Rural Development Distance Classes

Fall 2006

Course	Course Title	Instructor	CRN	Date/Time	Additional Info
RD F268 DD1 (3 cr.)	Rural Tourism and Principles	Rick Knecht	CRN: 77677	M,W 3:30pm-5:00pm 9/6-12/13	(Also available on Fairbanks campus as RD F268 F01, CRN: 76062)
RD F300 DB1 (3 cr.)	Rural Development in a Global Perspective	Mike Davis	CRN: 77678	M, W 7:00pm-8:30pm 9/6-12/13	(Also available on Fairbanks campus as RDF300 FE1, CRN: 72587)
RD F350 DK1 (3 cr.)	Indigenous Knowledge and Community Research	Theresa John	CRN: 77679	T, TH 6:50pm-8:20pm 9/5-12/14	
RD F400 DD1 (3 cr.)	Rural Development Internship	Dixie Dayo	CRN: 77417	Days and times to be arranged	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only
RD F401 DK1 (3 cr.)	Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders	Theresa John	CRN: 77680	M 5:10pm-8:10pm 9/11-12/11	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Taught in Yupik only.
RD F401 DK2 (3 cr.)	Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders	Theresa John	CRN: 77681	W 5:10pm-8:10pm 9/6 – 12/13	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Taught in English only.
RD F465 DD1 (3 cr.)	Community Healing and Wellness	Dixie Dayo	CRN: 77419	T, TH 5:10pm-8:10pm 9/5 – 12/14	(Also available on Fairbanks campus as RDF465 FE1, CRN: 72591)
RD F475 DD1 (3 cr.)	Rural Development Senior Project	Ralph Gabrielli	CRN: 77420	Days and times to be arranged	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only
RD F492 DD1 (3 cr.)	Rural Development Leadership Seminar	Ralph Gabrielli/ Gordon Pullar/ Miranda Wright	CRN: 77421	Audios 9/7, 9/14, 9/21, and 10/05 Seminar to be held in Anchorage 9/23 to 9/30	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only
RD F600 DD1 (3 cr.)	Circumpolar Indigenous Leadership Symposium	Gordon Pullar/ Ralph Gabrielli/ Miranda Wright	CRN: 77422	Audios 9/7, 9/14, 9/21, and 10/05 Seminar to be held in Anchorage 9/23 to 9/30	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only
RD F601 DD1 (3 cr.)	Political Economy of the Circumpolar North	Rick Knecht	CRN: 77423	M, W 5:10pm-6:40pm 9/6-12/13	SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: VCR
RD F625 DD1 (3 cr.)	Community Development Strategies: Principles/ Practices	Miranda Wright/ Gordon Pullar	CRN: 77424	T, TH 6:50pm-8:20pm 9/5 – 12/14	
RD F698 DD1 (3 cr.)	Project	Miranda Wright	CRN: 77425		SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only
RD F699 DD1 (3 cr.)	Thesis	Miranda Wright	CRN: 77426		SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Instructor permission only

Rural Development Faculty and Staff

GORDON L. PULLAR

Director & Assistant Professor
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Ste. 213
Anchorage, AK 99508-4143
(907) 279-2706 or (800) 770-9531
(907) 279-2716 fax
g.pullar@uaf.edu

FRANCES BEDEL

Administrative Assistant
P. O. Box 756500
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6500
(907) 474-6528
(907) 474-6325 fax
fnfdb@uaf.edu

MICHAEL E. DAVIS

Assistant Professor, Bristol Bay Campus
P. O. Box 1070
Dillingham, AK 99576
(907) 842-4687
(907) 842-3503 fax
ftmed@uaf.edu

DIXIE MASAK DAYO

Assistant Professor, Fairbanks Campus
P.O. Box 756500
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6500
(907) 474-5293
(907) 474-6325 fax
dixie.dayo@uaf.edu

RICK KNECHT

Assistant Professor, Anchorage
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Ste. 213
Anchorage, AK 99508
(907) 279-2705
(907) 279-2716 fax
r.knecht@uaf.edu

RALPH GABRIELLI

Associate Professor, Fairbanks Campus
P. O. Box 756500
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6500
(907) 474-5808
(907) 474-6325 fax
nfrbg@uaf.edu

THERESA AREVGAQ JOHN

Assistant Professor, Kuskokwim Campus
P. O. Box 368
Bethel, AK 99559
(907) 543-4582
(907) 543-7896 fax
theresa_john@bethel.alaska.edu

BERNICE JOSEPH

Assistant Professor &
currently Executive Dean, CRA
P. O. Box 756500
Fairbanks, AK 99775-6500
(907) 474-7143 / (907) 474-8524 fax
fnbmj@uaf.edu

GAIL A. STAUDINGER

Administrative Coordinator
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Ste. 213
Anchorage, AK 99508-4143
(907) 279-2713 or (800) 770-9531
(907) 279-2716 fax
angas@uaa.alaska.edu

MIRANDA WRIGHT

Assistant Professor and
Academic Program Head,
Fairbanks Campus
P. O. Box 756500
Fairbanks, AK 99775
(907) 474-6433
(907) 474-6325 fax
m.wright@uaf.edu

Department of Alaska Native & Rural Development
College of Rural Alaska
University of Alaska Fairbanks
PO Box 756500
Fairbanks AK 99775-6500

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