

IMPACT

UAF Cooperative Extension Service

MAPTS mine training program offers skills, work experience to Alaska's rural residents

Issue

Alaska's rural regions are mineral-rich and home to several production mines that employ thousands of people in well-paying jobs. Too often, the people living in or near these mines have not benefited from their stable and long-term employment. At the same time, the production mines experience high and costly turn-over rates, especially in entry-level positions.

Response

Since 2015, the Mining and Petroleum Training Service (MAPTS) has been creating opportunities for Alaska's rural residents to gain employment by preparing them for work in mining and related industries. MAPTS operates a mine training camp outside of Delta Junction that prepares new employees for the rigors of mining work. It is a residential training facility where students live and train with instructors who have over 130 years of mining experience between them. Students train 10-12 hours per day, seven days a week. They earn mine safety certifications, practice safe operation of heavy equipment — on a simulator, on the surface and then in the underground environment. They also practice installation of underground utilities and drilling. Students are taught how it is done, are shown how it is done, then do it themselves.

The environment mirrors the experience of working at production mines in Alaska. Students learn how to prepare their home life and families for the time they are away. They learn interpersonal communication, teamwork, personal finance, and how to create a healthy work/homelife balance.



Nikola Maccabee, left, and Clinton Howard perform a pre-operation equipment inspection at the MAPTS training facility.

Results

The MAPTS training program averages 60 graduates a year and 85% of them have jobs within one year. Its graduates have earned \$21 million in salaries since 2015, contributing to Alaska's economy. Fifty-four percent of the mine training students are Alaska Native. More important than all the statistics is the personal side of each student's experience. The students build confidence in their abilities, and that confidence and security goes on to benefit their families, their communities and their workplace.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

William H. Bieber

Executive Director

Mining and Petroleum Training Service

Website: uaf.edu/mapts

Email: mapts@alaska.edu

907-262-0231

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Agriculture,
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