Kodiak, Alaska

Kodiak Island - the “emerald isle” and home of the Alutiiq culture - is the second largest island in America. It is a region steeped in history and opportunities for adventure.
The Rural Providers’ Conference (RPC) is an annual gathering designed by rural Alaskans to share information, gain skills and participate in training to address substance abuse in culturally significant ways. The RPC is conducted in a style compatible with Alaska Native lifestyles and ways of communicating and includes ceremonies, talking circles and cultural events. Participants include substance abuse service providers, youth, Elders and family members interested in gaining new energy and celebrating their own sobriety.

The Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. (RurAL CAP), Kodiak Area Native Association, State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Elihu Foundation Charitable Trust, First Alaskans Institute, Koniag, Inc. and Wells Fargo Bank Alaska sponsored the conference, with core funding provided by the State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development.

The conference theme for 2009 was “Lighting the Lamp for Strength in Unity - Laampaaq Kwarluku, Allrilurmi Tukningcarluta” (Alutiiq Translation). The RPC rotates to a different rural community every 2 years, and 2009 was the first time in Kodiak.
HISTORY OF THE GATHERING

About the Rural Providers’ Conference | 1983-2009

From its humble beginnings in 1983, the Rural Providers’ Conference (RPC), also known as the “Gathering,” has become a significant force behind Alaska’s growing statewide sobriety movement. In the early 1980s, people began to recognize the need for those involved with the fledgling sobriety movement in Alaska Native communities to come together to share information and resources. The RPC was created as an annual gathering of rural providers of substance abuse prevention and intervention services. During the first RPC held in Anchorage and sponsored by the Alaska State Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Anna Frank realized providers were not involved in the creative process. She stood up and said, “Wait a minute. We are talking about what people in rural Alaska need. Who knows better than those people your programs serve? They are the ones who need to design the conference.”

Since then the “Gathering” has been planned and facilitated by conference participants with logistical support provided by RurAL CAP, the co-hosting Alaska Native regional organization and other sponsors. Over the years the conference has grown both size and scope, with speakers and workshops covering a variety of substance abuse prevention, support and wellness topics. The conference now includes service providers, those in recovery, family members and other participants who come to learn new skills and celebrate their own sobriety. Yet it still holds firm to its original goal of providing a forum through which rural providers can share information relevant to the culture of rural Alaska and Alaska Native people.

Participants share ideas through cultural events, interactive workshops and talking circles and other approaches compatible with Alaska Native lifestyles and ways of communicating. Over the years, other activities have included fiddle dancing, traditional storytelling and a traditional potluck. Youth tracks focused on prevention messages and teens voice their concerns about substance abuse issues.

The RPC provides an opportunity to renew energy, connect with service providers from other parts of Alaska and learn about approaches that are working well in other communities. Although each of the 25 annual conferences has been a unique event with its own theme and special flavor, the value of the RPC can only be truly appreciated when considering its cumulative effect on Alaska’s sobriety movement. Over the years the conference has become a networking center and training ground for community leaders, future trainers and service providers eager to practice and refine their skills and focus their creative solutions on reducing substance abuse and promoting wellness.
ALASKA NATIVE SOBRIETY MOVEMENT

Sobriety Movement | Over the Years

1972  Alaska Native Commission on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ANCADA) was formed
1981  Alaska Village Alcohol Information League (AVAIL) was created to maintain a statewide network of mutual support for villagers concerned with alcohol and other drug abuse
1982  Spirit Camps began
1983  First Rural Providers’ Conference, a conference dedicated to sobriety
1983  Napaskiak “tough love experience”
1985  Staking Ceremony introduced to Alaska at RPC by Phil Lane of Alberta, Canada
1986  Alkali Lake people visit Alaska and provide inspiration
1986  Rural CAP Board passes resolution - no alcohol at events, spurring other organizations and companies to create similar policies
1987  Tanana Chiefs Conference declares war on alcohol
1988  “Spirit of the family” trainings begin
1989  Ft. Yukon Youth Survivors program begins
1990  Kwethluk first youth spirit camp
1992  Alaska Federation of Natives’ Sobriety Movement begins
1992  Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation celebrates National Alcohol Awareness Month
1992  Mike Williams’ Kusko 300 race for sobriety, gathered 300 sobriety pledges
1993  Mike Williams’ Iditarod race for sobriety, gathered over 3,000 sobriety pledges
1994  Native Village of Eyak’s Annual Sobriety Celebration begins
1999  Phil Lane revisits Alaska and estimates there to be more than 30,000 sobriety stakeholders in North America (see page 6 for more information)
2008  RPC’s 25th Anniversary Celebration in Glennallen, AK

Sobriety Leaders | What is the solution for sobriety?

Prohibiting alcohol. Or have stronger controls of alcohol. – Mike Williams, Akiak (pictured above)

Leadership is key. Community healing...someone needs to empower the community to have a discussion about alcohol and drugs. There needs to be a holistic approach. Do these leadership things as a counter to all those messages that kids see on the TV. – Jim LaBelle, Sr., Anchorage

Find the spirituality that works for you, could be Christianity, Buddhism, find that higher power that works for you. A higher power will help. – Ed Peele, Sitka

I think the culture component is key. We have a lot of cultural activities and components. The continuum of care is very important – SBIRT [Screening & Brief Intervention], detox, outpatient, relapse prevention planning, case management – it all ties together. – Becky Ling, Anchorage

I think it goes back to that original principle, that you need a life enhancing and life preserving vision that supports personal responsibility. – Doug Modig
Lydia Olson of Kodiak remembers attending the RPC in Tyonek in 1984. Lydia did not want to attend a sobriety conference, but was encouraged by her mother to attend. When they were leaving Tyonek, an old airplane had trouble lifting off the ground. Lydia has gone to many of the Rural Providers’ Conferences over the years. This year, Lydia was happy to see the RPC come to Kodiak for the first time and served on the local planning committee. Lydia Olson was one of the keynote speakers at the 2009 RPC, and spoke of her personal and professional triumphs over substance abuse.

Lydia grew up in a Christian home, but was made fun of as an Alaska Native. In 1978, Lydia was married with two children to look after and was living in Adak. She spiraled into the darkest part of her life. Lydia felt she wanted to end her life. Three friends sat down with her and encouraged her to become sober. Lydia now has 31 years of sobriety. After she decided to become sober, she said, “I joined a 12-step program and went faithfully.” The first 15 years of her sobriety were the most difficult. After 15 years of sobriety, Lydia no longer felt like she wanted to end her life, but she wanted to quit hurting.

Lydia spoke of the importance of unity and said, “I don’t believe that we can recover in isolation. We can find health and wellness in relationships.”

Lydia spoke of the many milestones she reached since she has been sober:

- At the age of 45, she entered her first year of college. In May of 1997 she received her Bachelor Degree in Behavioral Science. In her senior year she was nominated to “Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.”
- In 1994, Lydia quit smoking tobacco.
- At 50 years of age, Lydia went skydiving.
- At 51 years of age, Lydia went white water rafting.
- At 52 years of age, Lydia ran in a marathon.
- She is currently enrolled in the Trail Blazer Associate Degree Program, from The Sure Foundation and desires to become a licensed and ordained minister.

As an Alaska Native, her greatest desire is to see her people go from leading the nation in alcohol and drug abuse, suicide and other maladies to becoming number one in “overcoming” them. Lydia encourages others to overcome obstacles and fears. There were many times when Lydia felt like quitting and giving up. As she climbed a mountain in Kodiak, she froze on the way up. Lydia was close to the top but felt she could not finish. Someone encouraged her, and she overcame her fear and went on to reach the top. Lydia said, “Don’t quit five minutes before the miracle happens.”
KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Presenters | Doug Modig, Jim Miller and Lydia Olsen

Stories about personal and professional triumphs over substance abuse often have a positive impact on attendees. The 2009 keynote presenters were Doug Modig of Anchorage, Jim Miller of Port Graham and Lydia Olsen of Kodiak. The keynote addresses are available online at www.ruralcap.com.

Doug Modig, Anchorage

Doug Modig is a Tsimshian of the Eagle Clan and was born and raised in Ketchikan, Alaska. Doug is trained nationally in the drug courts initiatives and for Moral Reconation Therapy. He and his wife, Amy, are the co-authors of *Nation Building: An Alaska Native Guide to Personal and Community Empowerment*. They have been RPC Stakeholders since 1986, and have advocated for the Alaska Native Sobriety Movement. Doug reminded the audience to continually ask “What do we need to do to take care of ourselves?” He said, “As our children are developing, we need to teach them what they need to know to take care of themselves.”

Jim Miller, Port Graham

Jim Miller is a village-based alcohol program coordinator and counselor with over twenty years experience. He has designed and directs Llangcarwik, a residential family treatment program for Alaska Natives in Port Graham. Jim is active as a men’s advocate and is known for his work as a traditional woodcarver and instructor. He attended the first RPC in Tyonek. He spoke of a poem about two men looking through prison bars: “One sees mud and one sees stars. Today I can see the stars and light.” Jim talked about the need to heal from sexual abuse. He said, “There are some deep wounds from sexual abuse. You can’t be healed if you can’t do the work. You cannot be sober without doing the work.”

Lydia Olsen, Kodiak

Lydia is of Alutiiq and Danish descent. She was born and raised in the City of Kodiak where she now resides. Lydia holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Behavioral Science. She is currently enrolled in the Trail Blazer Associate Degree Program, from The Sure Foundation and desires to become a licensed and ordained minister. In March 2009, Lydia celebrated 31 years of sobriety. She is an advocate for the Family Wellness Warriors Initiatives and the Kodiak Women’s Resource and Crisis Center.
STAKING CEREMONY

A Tradition Continues in Kodiak

The Staking Ceremony was introduced to the Rural Providers’ Conference (RPC) in 1986 to signify the commitment to sobriety. The stakes used for the Staking Ceremony symbolize the young man’s spear. The involvement in the ceremony is a public declaration of one’s intention for sobriety, because it is made in public with those one respects or honors.

The first ceremony had one couple represent each Alaskan culture, and included an original bundle of stakes. The first holders of the bundle were Doug Modig of Ketchikan and Amy Lohr of Tanacross. They passed the bundle to John and Teresa Pingayak of Chevak in June 1991 at Kenai and other Stakeholders since then. Ed and Priscilla Peele of Sitka held the bundle from 2003-2009. This year, the bundle was passed to Fred and Irene Coyle of Kodiak.

The Stakeholders plan and facilitate the Staking Ceremony at the end of the RPC, and conference attendees may participate if they choose. They have prayer ceremonies each month during the full moon. Stakeholders made a commitment to sobriety and work toward it in personal and professional capacities. They often help people by counseling them or listening to them. Stakeholders often serve on the RPC planning committees, speak at the RPC, and serve as ambassadors in their region to promote the Sobriety Movement.

After six years, Ed and Priscilla Peele and Amanda Peele passed on the original bundle this year to a new couple. Priscilla had a difficult year, suffering a stroke and the loss of her mother, Stella Sobeloff. Despite a loss in mobility and speech, Priscilla’s goal was to recover enough to attend the RPC which she reached successfully. Ed and Priscilla brought herring eggs from Sitka as a gift to conference attendees.

Stakeholders
Amanda Peele of Sitka
Carol Rose of Fairbanks
Doug & Amy Modig of Chugiak
Ed & Priscilla Peele of Sitka
Fred & Irene Coyle of Kodiak
John & Teresa Pingayak of Chevak
Randy Mayo and Violet Hunt of Stevens Village
Reggie & Linda Joule of Kotzebue
Shirley Holmberg of Fairbanks
Tom & Jennifer Young of Sitka

Stakeholders and supporters prepare for the staking ceremony.
Photo courtesy of the Sun’aq Tribe of Kodiak
HEALING HEART TOTEM

Special Movie Viewing and Discussion | Stanley Marsden

Doug Modig of Anchorage introduces Stanley Marsden of Craig. RPC conference participants attended a special movie viewing and discussion with Marsden during the conference.
Photo by Nick Gonzales

Stanley Marsden (Tsimshian) shared his story on how he carved the Healing Heart Totem in his son’s memory. Marsden introduced a movie about the Totem to a room full of conference and youth track attendees. Marsden was a keynote speaker at the RPC in 1998, where he first shared his story. Marsden lost his son, Jimmy, to a drug overdose. Marsden dedicates the movie to all of the youth in Alaska.

Marsden said the community of Craig really came together and supported him by volunteering and donating to the creating of the totem pole. People of many ages, races and backgrounds supported him. Marsen said, “This is about people working together.” Carvers from Ketchikan and Hydaburg came to help.

Stan Marsden talks to the crowd about the movie.
Photo by Nick Gonzalez

The Healing Hearts Totem Pole stands in Craig today.
Photo courtesy of Doug and Amy Modig

“It is dedicated to all of the youth in Alaska.”
- Stan Marsden of Craig, Alaska
CONFEREE HIGHLIGHTS

RPC Attendees Enjoy Meaningful Activities

Evening events included Opening Ceremonies, a Potluck, Culture Share Talent Show and a DJ Dance. Many RPC speakers talked about the need to have fun in the quest for sobriety.

Students of the St. Innocent’s Academy made signs to welcome conference attendees. Photo by Shannon Johnson

Nancy Nelson of the Kodiak Island Native Association and Julie Knagin, a Kodiak Elder, light the oil lamp during the opening ceremonies. Photo by Nick Gonzales

RurAL CAP Board Members, Olga Malutin and Andrew Ebona, welcome attendees at the RPC Opening Ceremonies. Photo by Nick Gonzales

RurAL CAP Board Chairman, Andrew Ebona of Juneau, cooks herring eggs for the RPC Potluck. Photo by Cathie Clements

Conference attendees participate in Circle Talks during the RPC. Photo by Cathie Clements

Left: Iver Malutin of the Kodiak Area Native Corporation welcomes conference attendees to Kodiak. Photo by Nick Gonzales

Right: During the RPC Culture Share talent show, an impromptu group was formed for Yupik dancers. Photo by Amy Flaherty

Photo by Amy Flaherty
CONFEREE HIGHLIGHTS

RPC Attendees Enjoy Meaningful Activities

The St. Innocent’s Academy students perform traditional Russian songs and dances. Photo by Angela Gonzalez

RPC attendees enjoy visiting during a break. Photo by Janice Berry

The Coyle family perform folk music during the RPC Culture Share night. Attendees shared their singing, dancing and other talents. Photo by Angela Gonzalez

Above: Adrianne Neketa of New Stuyahok

Left: Kayak field trip for Youth Track. Photos courtesy of the Alaska Wilderness Adventures
WORKSHOPS

Attendees Receive Education Credits

Rural CAP recognizes the need for attendees seeking professional development in the provider field. Professionals and paraprofessionals had the opportunity to receive certification through the Alaska Commission for Behavioral Health Certification (ACBHC). Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for licensed social workers and counselors were available, as well as a university credit from Kodiak College, UAA.

Pepsi Thomas signs CEU forms for RPC attendees.
Photo by Angela Gonzalez

About the Workshops

RPC workshops are chosen as a result of Statewide and Local Planning Committee meetings. They begin with a review of the past year’s RPC evaluations where participants list the topics they would most like to learn more about. Concurrently, the local planners circulate a community needs survey to determine what the local residents and providers want to learn more about. From there, workshop proposals are circulated to potential presenters. Ultimately, it is left up to the local planning committee as to the final workshops that will be chosen.

There were four concurrent workshops during the afternoons of the RPC, and some were extended into two parts. Another key part of the conference were Circle Talks, a form of talking circles, which took place in the mornings. Circle Talks focused on issues regarding youth and elders, men and women, and sobriety in Alaska. One participant said, “the personal opinions shared during circle talks seemed to help us all integrate into one. Even though we come from all over the state of Alaska, we share the same concerns.”

Diagnostic & Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM) IV - It’s a Pain, Part 1 & 2
Presenter: Donna Horton, Clinician III, MSW, LCSW, CSCD, Southcentral Foundation
This workshop gave participants knowledge on how to assess clients using the DSM IV for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) pain management group therapy.

Empowerment Model of Recovery from Sexual Abuse for Indigenous Men
Presenter: Jim Miller, Alcohol Program Coordinator/Director, Port Graham Recovery Services
This presentation focused on the need and benefits of recovery from childhood sexual abuse. Identification of common symptoms of sexual abuse and gender differences that correlate to recovery were introduced. Alaska Native values that differ from Western values and how they apply to recovery planning were examined.
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) 101
Presenters: Dana Diehl, Wellness Education Coordinator, RurAL CAP and Nancy Wells, FAS Team, KANA
Participants were provided with an understanding that FASD’s are brain-based conditions that challenge current ways of thinking about support and intervention. Participants learned about FASD and primary and secondary disabilities resulting from FASD, and discussed Alaska’s resources and approaches to FASD prevention.

Freedom of Choice in the Lives of People with Disabilities
Presenters: Gennifer Moreau, Director Support Services, Kodiak Region, Hope Community Resources, Vanda Patterson of the SOA Office of Public Advocacy and Robert Pulley, Attorney, SOA Office of Public Advocacy
Participants received a historical overview of the rights of people who experience disabilities in the state of Alaska with an emphasis on the effects of de-institutionalization, consumer directed supports, informed consent and the ethical issues surrounding freedom versus protection for vulnerable adults.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren - Honoring, Supporting and Empowering
Presenter: Jocelyn K. Liebig, BSW, Volunteers of America, Alaska
This workshop was an interactive, problem solving session on how to better support grandparents raising grandchildren in rural communities. This workshop also looked at available services around the state.

Grief and Healing, Part 1 & 2
Presenters: Elizabeth Sunnyboy, Rural Alaska Native Consultant and Pepsi Thomas, Health Coordinator, RurAL CAP
Participants learned to identify where in the process of the grieving cycle they may be, and learn to recognize feelings related to this process. Individuals gained knowledge on the importance of accepting losses and the healthy benefits of letting go, and what steps to take to start working towards becoming healthy individuals.

Group Therapy for Post Traumatic Syndrome Disorder (PTSD) - Strong at the Broken Places
Presenter: Donna Horton, Clinician III, MSW, LCSW, CSCD, Southcentral Foundation
This workshop gave participants knowledge on how to assess clients’ readiness for group therapy. The group therapy process and lecture series with group assignments and how to address and maintain safety and keep boundaries to prevent re-victimization of participants was also discussed.

Healing from the Trauma of Child Sexual Abuse
Presenters: Rebecca Dawn (left), RN, KANA, Judy Simeonoff (right), BHA/CDCI, KANA and Lydia Olsen, KWRCC Advocate
Participants learned about the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual affects of childhood sexual abuse. There was also an open discussion of the programs available and strategies to address this difficult issue in remote Alaskan villages.
Healthy Boundaries
**Presenter:** Christian Muntean, Executive Director, Beyond Borders
Developing healthy boundaries is one of the most important leadership skills, especially for those who are in the ‘helping profession’. Participants gained a ‘real world’ understanding of what healthy boundaries are, common ways that boundaries are violated, steps to take to develop boundaries and how to maintain them.

HIV Prevention, Stigma & Resilience
**Presenter:** Fransing Daisy, Health Educator, NW AIDS Education & Training Center & ANTHC and Joe Cantil, Training Coordinator, HIV Clinical Services, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
This workshop focused on assisting health care staff and communities identify personal and community strengths and assets to build a healthy approach to HIV risk behaviors and increase community resilience. An HIV speaker presented her story as a mother with HIV.

Each year HIV/AIDS educators conduct a drawing for this specially designed pendelton blanket. Joe Cantil displays the blanket before the drawing.

Innovative Treatment Interventions for Youth with FASD - Protesting the Ordinary, Part 1 & 2
**Presenter:** Shannon Cross, LCSW, Mental Health Clinician III, FASD Waiver Project, State of Alaska, Division of Behavioral Health
This presentation focused on creative treatment interventions used with children, adolescents and young adults. Innovative treatment approaches will include the 3-M model, which is “Modeling, Mentoring, and Monitoring” for the FASD Waiver and includes a Treatment Intervention Mentor (TIM); creative uses of Individual Service Agreement (ISA) funds; animal-assisted therapy; cultural activities/art; neuro feedback; and traditional healing. The audience will be presented with some of the skills needed to implement creative treatment approaches as well as how to advocate within a system that sometimes fears anything out of the ordinary.

*It’s possible to forgive. I had to forgive myself for carrying the bitterness and anger.*
-Liz Sunnyboy, Anchorage
WORKSHOPS

Meth 360—Never a First Time
**Presenter:** Dana Diehl, Wellness Education Coordinator, RurAL CAP and Terry Wilson, Alaska Meth Education Project

The threat of methamphetamine (meth) on individuals and communities and strategies to prevent it was discussed. Participants learned about: meth’s effect on the human body, interventions and treatment challenges, how to take action in your community to prevent meth use and Alaska’s meth prevention efforts.

Orthodox Village: Art & Science as Healing for Deep Addictions
**Presenter:** Father Paisius Delucia, St. Innocent’s Academy

St. Innocent’s Academy is an alternative school for youth-at-risk. The Academy uses music, dance, good work ethic, serving others, academics, Orthodox Church life, discipline and a full family life help heal the soul of its distraction and addiction to inner destructive behaviors and tendencies.

Peacemaking Skills and Perspectives for Resolving Conflict
**Presenters:** Christian Muntean, Executive Director, Beyond Borders

Participants learned what conflict is, where it comes from and common responses to conflict. Steps for addressing internal conflicts (conflicts within yourself), for healthy confrontations, admitting wrong, letting go of the past and reconciliation were also discussed.

Project Life: Youth Suicide Prevention, Holistic Wellness, and Inupiaq Ilitquisiat
**Presenters:** George Provost, Project Life Manager, E.J. Howath and Dollie Hawley, Maniilaq Association

A summary of the activities of Project Life over the last 2.6 years was presented, accompanied by Maniilaq’s approach/philosophy regarding suicide prevention. Suicide should be addressed by its causes rather than its symptoms. Participants watched a few digital stories. Youth have made about 275 digital stories as a means of self-expression and gaining a better understanding of identity.

Self-Care for Volunteers and Providers - It’s All About Balance
**Presenter:** Dr. Gary Ferguson, N.D., Director of Wellness and Prevention, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Providers and volunteers are often asked to wear the many “hats” a village or community needs in order to stay well and vital. They can easily get out of balance with self-care. This holistic talk focused on some practical tools to keep your life in balance.
WORKSHOPS

STEPS to Interfacing Schools and Community
**Presenter:** Jim Henkelman (right), MSW, LCSW, Jenny Lush-Fonkert, Case Manager, and Morgan Sicilia, Case Manager, South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services
Students and Teachers Engaged with Parents and Specialists (STEPS) is a collaborative program between South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services and schools in the Homer area and helps to reduce the stigma and stress from children with special needs. Counselors, case managers and skills trainers work within the school to allow children to receive intensive clinical support in a setting in which they feel safe and secure.

Suicide Prevention - What Kids Need So Suicide is Not an Option
**Presenter:** Jim Henkelman, MSW, LCSW, South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services
Rather than waiting until a youth is in crisis, participants were encouraged to work with the parents, schools, churches and communities to build healthy youth, with self-esteem and a sense of hope that will essentially eliminate most of the problems faced by teens today. Participants were given ideas on how to build and reinforce positive characteristics into children and the developing youth.

Tobacco Policy: How it Relates to your Community
**Presenters:** Betty MacTavish, Tobacco Education Coordinator, KANA and Anna Sappah, Smokefree Alaska Project
Presenters discussed how tobacco policy related to rural community. Participants learned about the background of tobacco policy, current health information and the effects of second-hand smoke. The clean indoor air policy information and documented results was presented.

Wellness Through The Arts
**Presenter:** Carol Loftfield, RurAL CAP BIRCH AmeriCorps Member from Nondalton
Through music, inspiring text, artwork, video, and interactive, hands-on activities, participants are taught techniques for shifting perspective: techniques that foster relaxation, stress reduction, cooperative problem solving, anger management, and personal growth.

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I try to have fun being sober. I am trying to show those people who want to be sober that they can be fun. We are here to reduce the suffering in the world. We need to take care of ourselves.
-Jim Miller, Port Graham
YOUTH TRACK

The RPC provides education and opportunities for teens across Alaska through its Youth Track. Hosted within RPC’s positive, supportive and informative environment, the Youth Track strengthens protective factors within youth for their return home as leaders and resilient, healthy individuals in the community. Local teens connect with other teens from rural areas, and a small group of youth even plans the agenda. Youth Track participants engage in constructive and educational activities or sessions during the Conference week, and is a worthwhile alternative for youth whose family members attend the full RPC.

A planning committee of 16 youth from Kodiak and around Alaska volunteered beginning in April to plan the youth track, along with RurAL CAP and Sun’aq Tribe staff. The youth are Members of RurAL CAP’s new AmeriCorps Youth Program. Over 30 youth participated in three afternoons of activities during the RPC, with mornings spent in general RPC sessions and talking circles.

Arts & Crafts
Presenter: Sun’aq Tribe of Kodiak
Youth had the opportunity to bead and work on other traditional crafts at this fun workshop.

Pamela Oney of Marshall and Nina Gronn of Kodiak enjoy arts and crafts time.
Photo courtesy of the Sun’aq Tribe

Beach Outing to White Sands Beach
Presenters: Loren Anderson, Public Programs Manager of the Alaska Native Heritage Center, Sun’aq Tribe and RurAL CAP Staff
The youth made smores, participated in group team-building games, practiced singing and drumming, and helped clean litter off the beach.
Youth participate in a team-building exercise on the beach in Kodiak.
Photo by Cathie Clements
Canoe Journey Share  
**Presenters:** Matthew Faubion, Ian Ston-Wahl, Charley Modig, Henry Loeffler and Jacob Campobello  
Young men talked about their experience of building a canoe and rowing it around the Sitka Island. They spoke about the reason to build it, the challenges doing so, and the reward for taking their creation on a significant adventure.

Kodiak Coast Guard Base Field Trip & Tour  
**Presenter:** Kodiak Coast Guard  
Youth toured the Kodiak Coast Guard base, played team-building games and discussed career opportunities.

Kayak Field Trip  
**Presenter:** Andy Schroeder of OrcaS Unlimited and Wendy Close Eskew of Alaskan Wilderness Adventures  
Youth experienced a traditional Kodiak activity in the modern way by going on a kayak field trip around the harbor.

Tour & Presentation of Alutiiq Museum  
**Presenter:** Sven Haakanson, Jr., Ph.D., Executive Director, Alutiiq Museum  
Youth received a tour of the museum and learned more about the Alutiiq culture, traditions and history.

What is Culture?  
**Presenter:** Loren Anderson, Public Programs Manager of the Alaska Native Heritage Center  
Anderson engaged youth in a discussion about culture and talked about different forms of cross-cultural communications. Youth learned about speech tempo and how it differs between cultures.

Youth Track Planning Coordinators  
Amy Flaherty of Rural CAP, Emily Capjohn of Kodiak and Stacey Simmons of Kodiak

Youth Track Planning Committee  
Adrianne Neketa, New Stuyahok  
Brandon Richter, Naukati  
Elias Patten, Sterling  
Harley Williams, Klukwan  
Jacob Alirkar, Toksook Bay  
Justin Sakar, Crooked Creek  
Katie Meier, Kodiak  
Katrina Fraker, Yakutat  
Lindsey Scarzella, Kodiak  
Maria Santillana, Kodiak  
Melody Gust, Togiak  
Michael Boston, Slana  
Nina Gronn, Kodiak  
Pamela Oney, Marshall  
Raeann Christopherson, Kodiak  
Robin Atcherian, Chevak
THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

STATEWIDE CONFERENCE COORDINATOR | Janice Berry of RurAL CAP

KODIAK LOCAL COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS | Margie Bezona and Linda Resoff of KANA

STATEWIDE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dee Dee Bennis, Bristol Bay Native Association
Joseph Cantil, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Nick Gonzales, Akeela, Inc.
Randy Madigan, State of Alaska Div. of Behavioral Health
Iver Malutin, Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA)
Linda McLaughlin, Alaska Native Justice Center
Jim Miller, Port Graham Recovery Services
Doug and Amy Modig, Gathering of Eagles
Priscilla Peele, Sitka

LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Margene Andrus, KANA
Margie Bezona, KANA
Emily Capjohn, Sun’aq Tribal Council
Amy Griffith, KANA
Tammy Hansen, KANA
Cindy Harrington, KANA
Rachel Kane, Native Village of Afognak
Iver Malutin, KANA
Sandra Muller, KANA
Melanie Nelson, Providence Kodiak Island Counseling Center
Lydia Olsen, Kodiak Women’s Resource Crisis Center
Frank Peterson, Sun’aq Tribal Council
Lureta Porter, Providence Kodiak Island Counseling Center
Linda Resoff, KANA
Maggie Rocheleau, Woody Island Tribal Council
Gwen Sargent, Native Village of Afognak
Stacey Simmons, Sun’aq Tribal Council

RurAL CAP STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Catherine Clements
Wanda Conley
Margaret David
Dana Diehl
Charlie Ess
Amy Flaherty
Angela Gonzalez
Shannon Johnson
Kristin Schmidt
Molly “Pepsi” Thomas
James Tombleson

DOOR PRIZE DONORS

Channel Side Chowder House
Chart Room Restaurant
Coastal Creations
Cy’s Sporting Goods
Henry’s Great Alaskan Restaurant
Kodiak Ports & Gifts
Lisa’s Island Hair & Tans
Mack’s Sport Shop
Mill Bay Coffee
Native American Bank, NA
North Pacific Fuel
Precious Flowers and Gifts
Servant Air
Sutliff’s True Value Hardware
The Treasury
Viva Mexico Imports
Vizhunz Salon
Wells Fargo
26th Annual Rural Providers’ Conference

Sponsors and Partners:

Stake for Sobriety

Core funding for this conference was provided by the State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

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Department of Health and Social Services

PARTNERS

First Alaskans Institute

KIHA

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Native Village of Afognak

Sun’aq Tribe of Kodiak

St. Innocent’s Academy

Woody Island Tribal Council

The next Rural Providers’ Conference will be held in Kodiak, June 7-11, 2010.

For more information:
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