



# THE Aleutian Wave

Spring 2025



## Nikolski School reopens after 15 years!



Dear Community Members,

I hope APICDA's spring newsletter finds you all well. As you are aware, the start of this year has been one of rapidly shifting federal priorities, some of which have created considerable uncertainty for funding resources that have long supported economic development in our communities. These federal dollars have often been leveraged by APICDA grants and have been instrumental in creating long-lasting, critically important infrastructure in our region. As the new administration signals changes in funding priorities, APICDA remains committed to continuing to support our communities' priorities with our ongoing programs and helping to promote stability through uncertain times.



Despite these recent challenges, our communities have also seen many successes. One of the most significant milestones was the reopening of Nikolski's school. Closed since 2009 due to low enrollment, the school was restarted through the efforts of the Native Village of Nikolski, local families, and the Aleutian Region School District, and now serves 10 students from kindergarten through 11th grade. To support this effort, APICDA is currently partnering with the Tribe to help develop a new community center, as the former facility now houses the school. We are anticipating construction of the building to be completed this year.

With the changes in the seafood industry, our board recognizes the importance of expanding strategic partnerships to support the regional fishing economy and achieve common goals for the long-term benefit of our member communities. To that end, strengthening our regional fisheries remained a priority in 2024 with APICDA assuming ownership of False Pass Seafoods and the local fuel operations, and partnering with Silver Bay Seafoods which is leasing and managing the operations of both facilities. We entered into this strategic partnership to help support seafood processing stability in the region during a time of change in the shoreside sector.

Silver Bay Seafoods and APICDA have a history of successfully partnering to support fishermen in the region. Last spring, following the closure of the Port Moller plant which served as the local market for Nelson Lagoon fishermen, we worked closely to provide a market and services for Nelson Lagoon fishermen. APICDA partnered with the Tribe to operate the Nelson Lagoon icehouse and supported a Silver Bay tender operation to deliver quality salmon to the False Pass facility.

I'm also pleased to share that the Gear Reimbursement Grant (GRG) program continues to grow in popularity each year. In 2024, APICDA awarded \$119,273 to 41 participants, including 30 grants to help increase access to subsistence harvesting and 14 for commercial fishing.

As we navigate 2025, APICDA remains committed to its mission amidst the challenges posed by the changes in the fishing industry, federal funding cuts, and the accompanying uncertainty. Addressing these obstacles will require clear focus, strategic determination, and strong collaboration. Our staff and board look forward to working with all of you to ensure continued progress on key community priorities and to promoting economic stability in our region.

Sincerely,  
Luke Fanning, CEO





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ATKA, Chair

**Nikki Hoblet**

FALSE PASS, Vice Chair

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Cover photo: Nikolski students with APICDA back-to-school backpacks by Lorraine DeLeon. Additional images are from the KUCB story "As Alaska schools close, one Aleutian village bucks the trend," by Sofia Stuart-Rasi, December 23, 2024.

Photos to the left: 2023 Community Conference

SAVE THE  
DATE!



APICDA'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH CONFERENCE

MAY 6-7, 2025

ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN MARRIOTT

FOR QUESTIONS: 907-602-0059 / CMIERZEJEK@APICDA.COM

APICDA is planning to hold the Community Outreach Conference this spring on **May 6-7, 2025**, at the Downtown Anchorage Marriott. Our last conference was held in 2023, and in 2024 the board chose to visit each of our member communities instead of hosting a gathering in Anchorage. APICDA is now following a biennial schedule, holding the conference in odd years and focusing on board community visits in even years. We look forward to welcoming you back for this in-person gathering!



# 2024 Community

During the 2024 Community Development Grant Program's (CDGP) funding cycle, APICDA funded 13 projects. Each community fully utilized their funding, and collectively applied for the \$1.8 million allocated for this program. Project details are listed and describe below. This was the sixth year APICDA has offered the CDGP, and there are currently about 40 active projects across our six member communities.

## 2024 Community Development Grant Program (CDGP) Award Table

| Awardee                      | Project Title                          | Amount      |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| Akutan Corporation           | Akun Island Development                | \$100,000   |
| Akutan Corporation           | Corporation Apartment Repairs          | \$200,000   |
| Native Village of Atka       | Community Improvement Project 2024     | \$200,000   |
| Axtam Corporation            | Heavy Equipment & Construction         | \$100,000   |
| City of False Pass           | Emergency Preparedness                 | \$75,000    |
| False Pass Tribal Council    | Home Renovation Project                | \$200,000   |
| Isanotski Corporation        | Electric Assistance Program            | \$25,000    |
| Nelson Lagoon Tribal Council | 2024 Salmon Fishing Operations         | \$53,252    |
| Nelson Lagoon Tribal Council | Equipment and Job Continuation         | \$105,748   |
| Nelson Lagoon Tribal Council | Community Assistance 2025              | \$141,000   |
| Native Village of Nikolski   | Community Center Construction          | \$300,000   |
| City of St. George           | Harbor Project Geotech & Survey        | \$215,000   |
| City of St. George           | Municipal Equipment & Utility Upgrades | \$85,000    |
| Award Total                  |                                        | \$1,800,000 |

### Akutan

**Akun Island Development:** The Akutan Corporation is continuing the work on the Akun Island Development project. The funding was directed to help pay for labor cost, road materials such as culverts, and additional equipment needed to support the project.

**AC Apartment Repair Project:** The Akutan Corporation will be purchasing siding, windows, and roofing materials to repair an apartment complex.

### Atka

**Heavy Equipment & Construction:** The Axtam Corporation will be purchasing heavy equipment to help build up the capacity needed for upcoming projects. This initiative will also provide local workforce development and training opportunities, which will help offset the costs of future projects.

**General Community Improvement:** The Native Village of Atka will create job opportunities through construction projects that include the continuation of repairs to community homes and remodeling the Nazan Bay Inn\* to accommodate participants in the Tribe's language immersion program.

\* APICDA Joint Ventures owns the Nazan Bay Inn and will be donating it to the Tribe and transferring the land lease back to the city for the Tribe to acquire. Photos: CDGP funds supplemented a grant from Volkswagen to bring a much-needed vacuum truck to St. George for solid waste services; Atka/Akutan Culture Camp, CDGP-funded Korovin Bay cultural facility, interior with campers, submitted by Marii Swetzof.



# Projects Funded



## False Pass

**Home Renovation Project:** The False Pass Tribal Council will work on improving community housing by making repairs to ensure that they are safe, energy-efficient, and remain livable to help contribute to the long-term sustainability of the False Pass community.

**Emergency Preparedness:** The City of False Pass is working towards becoming tsunami certified, and making sure the community is prepared for a natural disaster by establishing a shelter with short-term equipment such as generators, water, food supply, and go-bags for all households.

**Electrical Assistance Program:** The Isanotski Corporation will be working on upgrading/renovating appliances that use a significant amount of electricity in a newly acquired duplex that is providing housing for residents. Until these upgrades can be completed, the Corporation is using the funding to help offset the high cost of electricity for the current families that live in the building.

## Nelson Lagoon (NLG)

**Community Assistance:** The Tribe will be helping to provide greater food security for local families through the purchase of meat and dry goods. In addition, CDGP funding will be allocated to travel for the instructors to teach at the Lagoon's annual culture camp, as well as travel scholarships for people who want to attend but no longer live in the village.

**Equipment and Job Continuation:** The Tribe will continue providing funding for their grant writer and grant writer assistant positions, purchasing a tribal vehicle, and ordering new fuel tanks for all the households.

**2024 Salmon Fishing Operations:** A unique partnership with Silver Bay Seafoods, APICDA, and the Nelson Lagoon Tribe formed last summer to support ice production by recruiting a contractor that ensured the ice house was fully operational to provide fishermen reliable access to good quality ice with the Port Moller plant closed. To further assist the local fishing fleet, APICDA and the Tribe collaborated to restore the dock crane, bringing it back to operational status to facilitate vessel servicing and community freight offloading. The Tribe directed a portion of their CDGP funds to support this initiative.

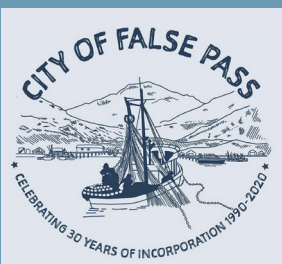
## Nikolski

**Community Center Construction:** The Nikolski Tribe will be building a local community center. This will give the community members a place to gather for events, meetings, and a place to host and serve the Elder luncheons/meals, now that the newly opened school is using the current facility.

## St. George

**Municipal Equipment and Utility Upgrades:** The City of St. George will be repairing municipal equipment and infrastructure to ensure that the community can make it through the winter safely by having operational equipment to remove snow and make fuel transfers. CDGP funding will also ensure that St. George will have an operational community center that can accommodate the whole village in case of an emergency. The community center will also be a place to host events, meetings, and office space.

**Harbor Project Geotech Work & Geomatics Survey:** The City of St. George is allocating CDGP funding to its ongoing harbor project to perform the required geotech work and surveys.



## APICDA Infrastructure Grant (AIG)

The City of False Pass was awarded \$312,500 to install a marine hydrokinetic device, which will help reduce the cost of energy and decrease the community's dependency on diesel fuel.

# Internships

APICDA's internship program experienced remarkable growth in 2024, with 22 interns placed, a 69% increase from 13 interns in 2023! This included 17 in-region positions and five based in Anchorage, contributing over \$125,772 in wages and payroll taxes. Through strategic planning and strengthened business partnerships, APICDA expanded opportunities and successfully recruited new interns, including resident students from Mt. Edgecumbe High School after a Program team visit in the spring of 2024.

## Intern Perspectives

*"I was proud to show up every day and learn something new from the great team of archaeologists at the Museum of the Aleutians. I will always remember rediscovering my first artifacts and recognizing the skill and craftsmanship in their creation. I felt proud to be Unangax and receive glimpses of some of the material history of our past. It was an honor to contribute to the care of these items. That connection and feeling is something that I'll never forget." Taytum Robinson, Museum of the Aleutians Intern*

*"Arctic Chiropractic Rehab & PT of Dutch Harbor treated me just like family, which helped me feel very comfortable. I was able to help the staff member I was shadowing with patient's exercises and home-visits. Not only was I able to gain experience and knowledge from them, but was also able to create new relationships with community members and health care professionals. I am glad I was able to work with their great team, and would definitely come back to work with them again." Aldrin Tan, Arctic Chiropractic, Rehab & PT Intern*

*"We had just spent the whole day setting up for the 4th of July fireworks display and then at 11:30 pm, we got a call out for a structure fire. We ended up staying out until around 5 a.m., and I witnessed how hard everyone worked and how I played a small role in the important work they do." Aleutia Peters, Unalaska Fire Department Intern*

*"The staff at APICDA really carries out the motto "Helping to Grow" by showing care, support, and help whenever it was needed. During my internship, I realized just how important the programs and operations at APICDA are for the region, which resulted in a better understanding of the organization's culture & mission." Eldred Paradeza, APICDA Intern*



Apply for an  
APICDA summer  
internship today!

## Intern

## Placement Organization

|                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nadia Dushkin          | Native Village of Atka          |
| Rheanna Esnardo        | Matson Dutch Harbor             |
| Aaliyah Hickson        | APICDA                          |
| Isabella Iparraguirre  | Atxam Corporation               |
| Tegan Joosse           | Unalaska Visitor's Bureau       |
| Bianca Lestenkof       | APICDA Joint Ventures           |
| Dennis Lestenkof-Landt | Native Village of Nikolski      |
| Tristen Merculief      | APICDA Joint Ventures           |
| Jeffrey Moore          | Unalaska Visitor's Bureau       |
| Vivian Nguyen          | APIA                            |
| Sabrien Palmer         | Qawalangin Tribe                |
| Eldred Paradeza        | APICDA                          |
| Aleutia Peters         | Unalaska Fire Department        |
| Taytum Robinson        | Museum of the Aleutians         |
| Caeley Roll            | Qawalangin Tribe                |
| Sosi Swetzof           | APICDA                          |
| Aldrin Tan             | Arctic Chiropractic, Rehab & PT |
| Karina Villamor        | APIA                            |
| Kiara Janelle Villamor | Ounalashka Corporation          |
| Kayla Villamor         | APIA                            |
| Alexandar Zaachney     | Native Village of Atka          |
| Damien Zaachney        | Native Village of Atka          |



# Programs

## Dennis Lestenkof-Landt Native Village of Nikolski Intern

Dennis completed his first internship with the Native Village of Nikolski where he worked alongside other tribal employees and assisted with the day-to-day operations of village life. His responsibilities as an intern included assisting with the greenhouse, resource management, food security projects, assisting with playground installation, community-wide cleanup, and working at the store completing tasks such as inventory, ordering, and stocking.



*Dennis' supervisor, Lily Stamm, described Dennis as "a dedicated and versatile team member who demonstrates a strong work ethic and a willingness to take on a variety of tasks. One of Dennis' key strengths is his versatility. He is comfortable performing a wide range of jobs and collaborates effectively with his colleagues. His ability to work well with others and contribute to team efforts has been a valuable asset to our organization."*

## Native Village of Atka – Nadia Dushkin, Damien Zaochney, and Alexandar Zaochney

Nadia, Damien, and Alex each had different roles working as youth interns at the Native Village of Atka.

Alex worked at the Tribe's summer snack shack and helped develop a menu, assisted with cooking, and sold snacks and meals to customers.

Nadia was a cultural program intern and assisted the Tribe's office manager and cultural preservation specialist in the development of language preservation, culturally-based victim services, collections care and preservation of cultural artifacts, culture camp planning, and online research into museum collections of cultural objects and remains for repatriation.

Damien was a construction trades intern and worked alongside the Tribe's foreman crew boss where he was introduced to various construction trades. Damien performed basic tasks associated with the construction of the Tribe's new cultural facility.

*Photos: Left, Aleutia Peters, Unalaska Fire Department; Right, Dennis Lestenkof-Landt, Native Village of Nikolski; Taytum Robinson, Museum of the Aleutians; Aldrin Tan, Arctic Chiropractic Rehab & PT of Dutch Harbor; Eldred Paradeza with Sharon Svarny-Livingston of Tugidam Ungii, APICDA; and Sosi Swetzof, APICDA*



## Supporting Education

APICDA offers comprehensive educational support, which provides numerous scholarship opportunities, school grants, and internships.

### Emil Berikoff, Sr. Memorial Scholarship

| Name                | Major                      |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Rissa Bucaneg       | Physical Therapy           |
| Thea Chesley        | Business Management        |
| Renee Fliris        | Nursing/Health Innovation  |
| Elliott Honeycutt   | Engineering                |
| Georgia Kashevarof  | Business Administration    |
| Kayla Kashevarof    | Business Management        |
| Kaylin Klotunowitch | Nursing                    |
| Brayden Leggett     | Computer Science           |
| Mia McWilliams      | Accounting                 |
| Vivian Nguyen       | Dietetics and Nutrition    |
| Eldred Paradeza     | Marketing                  |
| Aleutia Peters      | Biological Sciences        |
| Carter Price        | AK Native Governance       |
| David Ravenscroft   | Human Services/Social Work |
| Taytum Robinson     | Anthropology               |
| Caeley Roll         | Psychology                 |
| Shelby Shaishnikoff | Biological Sciences        |
| Danelle Shellikoff  | Social Work                |
| Kayla Villamor      | Nursing                    |
| Kiara Villamor      | Nursing                    |
| Karina Villamor     | Medical                    |
| Bryce Vincler       | Electrical Engineering     |

### Haginaa Kidul (Helping to Grow) College Scholarship

| Name                 | Major                      |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Dakota Walker        | Human Services             |
| David Ravenscroft    | Social Work                |
| Graydon Severian     | Power Technology           |
| Joseph Mack, Jr.     | English                    |
| William Dushkin, III | Fisheries/Marine Science   |
| Raietta Kuzakin      | Medical Laboratory Science |
| Kiara Villamor       | Nursing                    |
| Vivian Nguyen        | Dietetics and Nutrition    |
| Carter Uttecht       | Business Administration    |

### School Grants

**Akutan School** - High school students went on a school trip to explore the Alaska SeaLife Center, tour AVTEC, and visit Alaska Pacific University. For participating student Bryce Vincler, the tour of AVTEC's electrical engineering department piqued an interest and left such a strong impression on him that he decided to change his major as a first-year college student from construction to electrical engineering.

**Yakov E. Netsvetov School** - Students traveled to Unalaska to participate in swimming lessons and learn basic water safety skills. They also toured Dusty Dickerson's F/V Raven Bay, where they learned about potential career options in the commercial fishing industry.

**False Pass School** - Students participated in swimming lessons and learned basic water safety skills in Unalaska. They toured a fish processing plant (UniSea), a local welding shop, and the Unalaska City School District's salmon hatchery facility. The tours exposed the students to jobs directly and indirectly serving the commercial fishing industry and taught the students about salmon life cycles and how hatcheries support healthy fish stocks.

**St. George School** - The Seabird Youth Network delivered remote lessons to students covering topics ranging from salmon life cycles, conservation, watersheds, and fishing methods (commercial, subsistence, and sport). Students also learned about the anatomy of different fish species, which they illustrated creatively through ceramic art.

**Unalaska City School District** - Grant funds were used to purchase materials for Unalaska City School District's long-standing fisheries science program and salmon hatchery, including modern technology for testing

water quality and updated curriculum for a more thorough study of marine science. Mr. Kyle Holloway, UCS's high school science/biology teacher, and his class led the tour of the salmon hatchery facility for visiting False Pass students and APICDA staff and board members last spring.

*Photos: False Pass students in Unalaska; Atka students touring the F/V Raven Bay in Unalaska.*



## Workforce Development Training Highlights

### Heavy Equipment Training

Five residents, the majority employed by the Nelson Lagoon Tribe, participated in Northern Industrial Training's heavy equipment operator training in September 2024. Residents were trained and received certification to operate an excavator, dump truck, and loader. The training they received provided the knowledge and skills needed to operate the equipment and work on various community projects such as road grading, digging pits at the landfill, fire hydrant removal/replacement, moving abandoned vehicles to the dump, and more.



NIT Instructor: Robert Davidson. Participants: Merle Brandell, Nathan Nelson, Samantha McNeley, Trevor Edwards, and Tyler Livingston.

### Akutan QuickBooks Training

In partnership with the Akutan Traditional Council, APICDA provided in-person QuickBooks training in May 2024. Five residents participated in the course and learned how to set up and maintain company files, track and manage revenues and expenses, set up payroll and process adjustments, create reports, graphs and budgets, review best practices for year-end procedures, and more.



Raemie Garner, Anesia Kudrin, Tatiana Petticrew, Lenard Shellikoff, and Carmen Bereskin.

### AVTEC Fuel Operator Training

Billy Shellikoff attended Alaska Energy Authority's Bulk Fuel Operator training at AVTEC in June to further develop his skill set in his role as Public Works Assistant/Backup Water Operator at the City of False Pass. The training and certification Billy received will also help lower the cost of insurance for the City of False Pass.



Billy Shellikoff

### Media Traineeship

Eldred Paradeza, a 2024 intern from Unalaska, has begun a traineeship with APICDA's Tourism department, where he will help market their offerings, focus on website creation, film production, and social media to enhance outreach and engagement. This structured traineeship program combines hands-on training and work experience to prepare him for a career in the field of marketing.



Eldred Paradeza

Time to  
Apply!



## APICDA Programs 4U

Phone: (907) 929-5273  
Toll Free: 1 (888) 927-4232  
[programs@apicda.com](mailto:programs@apicda.com)

For more information  
or to apply online:



# College Scholarships

APICDA prioritizes investing in community residents through education and workforce development programs by providing opportunities to advance education, training, and career development to help strengthen the region and support healthy, sustainable communities.

Students living in the CDQ Communities and Unalaska are eligible for both of APICDA's college scholarships, but please be advised to carefully read requirements and verify the deadlines for each program.

## Important Details

|                      | <b>Emil Berikoff, Sr.<br/>Memorial<br/>Scholarship (EBMS)</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Haginaa Kidul<br/>(Helping to Grow)<br/>Scholarship</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scholarship Amount   | Determined by financial need and CDQ residency status.                                                                                                                                                                                | \$2,000 per school year<br>Competitive program with a limited number of awards                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Eligibility Criteria | Register for a minimum of 6 credits per semester or 4 credits per quarter.<br><br>Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA for each term funded.<br><br>Residents from: Akutan, Atka, False Pass, Nelson Lagoon, Nikolski, St. George and Unalaska. | Register for a minimum of 12 credits per semester or 10 credits per quarter.<br><br>Maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA.<br><br>Residents from: Akutan, Atka, False Pass, Nelson Lagoon, Nikolski, St. George and Adak, Cold Bay, King Cove, Sand Point, and Unalaska. |
| Application Deadline | <b>July 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>June 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Student Spotlight

Julieanne Berikoff, a resident of Unalaska, received both the Haginaa Kidul and the Emil Berikoff Sr. Memorial Scholarships (EBMS) to attend Northwest Nazarene University and major in nursing. The EBMS is particularly meaningful as it is named in honor of her late grandfather, Emil Berikoff Sr.





# Vocational Training Scholarships

APICDA offers two vocational training scholarships: the Career and Technical Training (CTT) Scholarship and the Haginaa Kidul (Helping to Grow) Vocational Training Scholarship. These scholarships support residents in gaining the skills and certifications needed to advance their careers. To help you explore potential training options, here are some upcoming opportunities provided by Northern Industrial Training.



WE CAN CUSTOMIZE BOOTCAMPS TO YOUR TRAINING NEEDS!



### Microsoft Office

Students will learn the basics to the Microsoft Office programs, Outlook, Word, Excel, Teams & Powerpoint. Course teaches the basic skills for word processing, for creating excel spreadsheets and building presentations.



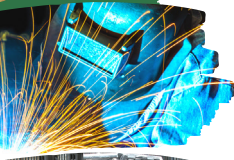
### Safety

Students will be certified in the following safety class's: First Aid/CPR/AED, Confined Space, Fall Protection, Energy Isolation & Flagger.



### ATV & Snowmachine

Students will learn how power snow machines, including engines, transmission, drive train and electrical and repair and maintenance procedures. Students use measurement tools such as calipers and torque wrenches while performing hands on maintenance skills.



### Intro to Welding

Students are introduced to basic welding principles, tools, gases and filler metals and learn code quality welding on plate in all positions for SMAW and Base Welds.



### Light Equipment

Students will be certified in the operation of Forklift, Aerial Manlift, Rough Terrain Forklift & Skidsteer.

CONTACT US TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION!



INDUSTRY  
CERTIFICATIONS & QUALIFICATIONS

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40 HOUR HAZWOPER  
8 HOUR HAZWOPER REFRESHER  
AERIAL MANLIFT  
ATSSA TRAFFIC CONTROL FLAGGING  
CONFINED SPACE ENTRY  
ENERGY ISOLATION/LOCKOUT/TAG OUT  
FALL PROTECTION AUTHORIZED  
FALL PROTECTION COMPETENT PERSON  
FIRST AID/CPR/AED  
FORKLIFT  
FRONT END LOADER WITH FORKS  
HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNICIAN  
OSHA 10 HOUR CONSTRUCTION  
OSHA 10 HOUR GENERAL INDUSTRY  
OSHA 30 HOUR CONSTRUCTION  
OSHA 30 HOUR GENERAL INDUSTRY  
OVERHEAD CRANE  
RESPIRATORY PROTECTION  
ROUGH TERRAIN FORKLIFT  
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TRENCHING & SHORING  
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# Atka Culture

**A**PICDA is pleased to support culture camps in our member communities, as well as APIA's Anchorage-based camp. Providing social benefits is a key tenet of the CDQ program, and this principle guides our contributions. From general donations and miscellaneous grants to transportation, lodging, and instructor stipends we are proud to contribute to these cultural initiatives. For the first time, Nelson Lagoon utilized funding from the Community Development Grant Program (CDGP) to support its camp in 2024.

During the summer, Nikka Dirks worked with APICDA and attended the Atka/Akutan Culture Camp, with her travel funded by the Native Village of Atka. While at the camp, she took the opportunity to interview instructors and participants, which we are excited to share with you.

## **Barbara Dirks Shangin**

Barbara recalls her childhood in Atka as a time of simplicity and close-knit community life. Living with her parents, grandparents, and seven siblings, she was unaware of the world beyond their village. The children spent their days outdoors, playing games like follow-the-leader, house, "aunty-aunty over", and racing each other. On nice days, her mom would take them for walks with snacks, and they'd enjoy the hillside together. Her grandpa would take them fishing in the bay and on camping and berry-picking trips. Barbara fondly remembers playing baseball, Fourth of July parades, and jumping across river banks. She spent entire days outdoors, returning home only when hungry, to enjoy a slice of bread with butter and jam. Back then, this was a treat.

Celebrations were frequent. Barbara attended the Atka school, which transitioned from a BIA school to a state-operated institution and then into a school district by the time she graduated. Barbara often felt seasick traveling between Adak and Atka for high school by tugboat. Post-graduation, she returned to Atka and joined the school board. Teachers were flown into the village to teach.

Barbara appreciated village life for its emphasis on independence, problem-solving, and communal support, contrasting sharply with city life, which she found a cultural shock.

Barbara's favorite pastime is teaching basket weaving, which she finds fulfilling. It makes her feel really good when someone takes an interest in learning to weave.

Barbara values camp for its role in teaching children about their heritage, traditional food processing, and subsistence skills. She believes that those skilled in living off the land and ocean will continue to thrive.

## **Teresa Prokopeuff**

Teresa was born in Atka at the main clinic. Growing up without running water or oil stoves, her family used buckets for cooking and bathing. In the late 60s and early 70s, her home got a sink with cold running water. Initially, they used a wood stove and later switched to oil stoves for heat and cooking. It wasn't until the mid-70s that Atka received electricity, and houses eventually got electric stoves, phones, and treated water.

Teresa attended high school in Wrangell in 1963/64 at age fifteen, and later graduated in Oregon. She lived briefly in Seattle and Anchorage before returning to Atka, where she worked as a community health aide from 1976 to 2005. In 1983, she moved to the new side of Atka, which had closer access to the school and later received modern amenities like electric stoves and Starlink WiFi.

Growing up, Teresa only spoke Unangam Tunuu. She remembers her mother smoking fish to distribute to the community and walking between the old side and Korovin Bay several times a day to deliver it. In the 70s, ATVs began to appear, followed by cars and trucks in the 80s and 90s. With the construction of the school, airport, and airstrip, transportation improved, though initially, residents traveled to Adak by tugboat. They would go to Adak for high school or to receive mail.

*The children spent their days outdoors, playing games like follow-the-leader, house, aunty-aunty over, and racing each other.*

# Camp Interviews



Teresa fondly recalls her mother, Olean Prokopeuff, weaving grass baskets and picking alugax (wild rice), which was sun-dried until sweet and sometimes eaten with seal oil. Olean also picked wild parsley and wild celery to eat raw.

Atka Culture Camp, started in 2013, holds great importance for Teresa. It connects younger generations with traditional ways of life, including how their ancestors lived, ate, and relied on the land.

## **Agnes Thompson**

Agnes recalls growing up in Atka, where she and other girls made mud pies and played with paper dolls, dishes, cups, and tables. They also enjoyed games like kick-the-can, tag, and baseball, and swam in the lake at the old village. The boys often disrupted their play, and the men played a beach game involving cans and a bat.

During Easter, the community would wash walls and prepare their homes. Agnes' family had a camp in Korovin Bay, and walking there and back with fish was a routine part of life.

At around 24, while pregnant with her first child, Jeff, Agnes learned basket weaving from visiting teachers in Atka. She spent a month camping in Korovin Bay to complete her first basket, then practiced further in Anchorage. By her third basket, she was able to complete one all by herself. Since then, she has continued weaving.

Agnes believes culture camp is crucial for preserving cultural traditions and teaching the preparation of traditional foods, ensuring they are not forgotten.

## **Sosi Swetzof**

Sosi Swetzof was eager to reconnect with everyone at culture camp, as she hadn't seen them in a long time. She was excited to prepare isux<sup>â</sup> (seal) to make her favorite dish: kidney stuffed with seal blubber. Culture camp is significant to Sosi because it allows her to deepen her understanding of her culture. Her favorite activity at camp is making beaded earrings and enjoying bonfires with friends.



*Nikka Dirks with Teresa Prokopeuff*



*Barbara Dirks Shangin*



*Agnes Thompson with Evelina Snigaroff*



## New Staff!

We're delighted to welcome our new team members to APICDA's Anchorage office! Both bring valuable regional knowledge, Jessie Conner previously worked with the Akutan Traditional Council and lived in Akutan, while Breeze Anderson has strong tribal ties to False Pass. Jessie is a member of our program team administering APICDA's Community Development Grants and select fisheries programs. Breeze is providing essential support for APICDA's Tourism, Operations, Administration, Programs, and Communications.



Breeze Anderson



Jessie Conner



## Community Activities

**Akutan** community activities hosted by CLO April Pelkey included movie nights, an Easter egg hunt, two trout tournaments, and distributing Halloween pumpkins for interested households.



Events coordinated by CLO Oleana Matamata in **Atka** included berry picking with kids in the community and hosting a Halloween Carnival at the school where youth and adults participated in a pumpkin carving contest.



**False Pass** activities hosted by CLO Melanie Hoblet included movie nights, sledding with kids in the community, and craft making for Father's Day.





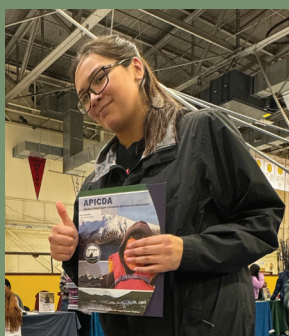
Events in **Nelson Lagoon** arranged by CLO Katie Johnson included multiple community potluck dinners and lunches for holidays throughout the year, game nights, and a summer community picnic.



Activities in **Nikolski** organized by Lorraine DeLeon included a slumber party for the kids at the community center, and holiday parties throughout the year; the 4th of July is featured in the photo below.



Activities hosted in **St. George** by Sarah Mercurief included movie nights, game nights, various winter activities with Tristen and Bianca (pictured below at MEHS), baking activities, and providing meals and baked goods to elders and community members.



## *Memory Eternal*



Fiona (Fanny) Kashevarof  
Dennis Lekanof  
Lucy Shabolin  
Ron Snigaroff



APICDA  
302 Gold Street, Suite 202  
Juneau, AK 99801

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Deadline Dec. 1

An APICDA Program

[grg@apicda.com](mailto:grg@apicda.com)