

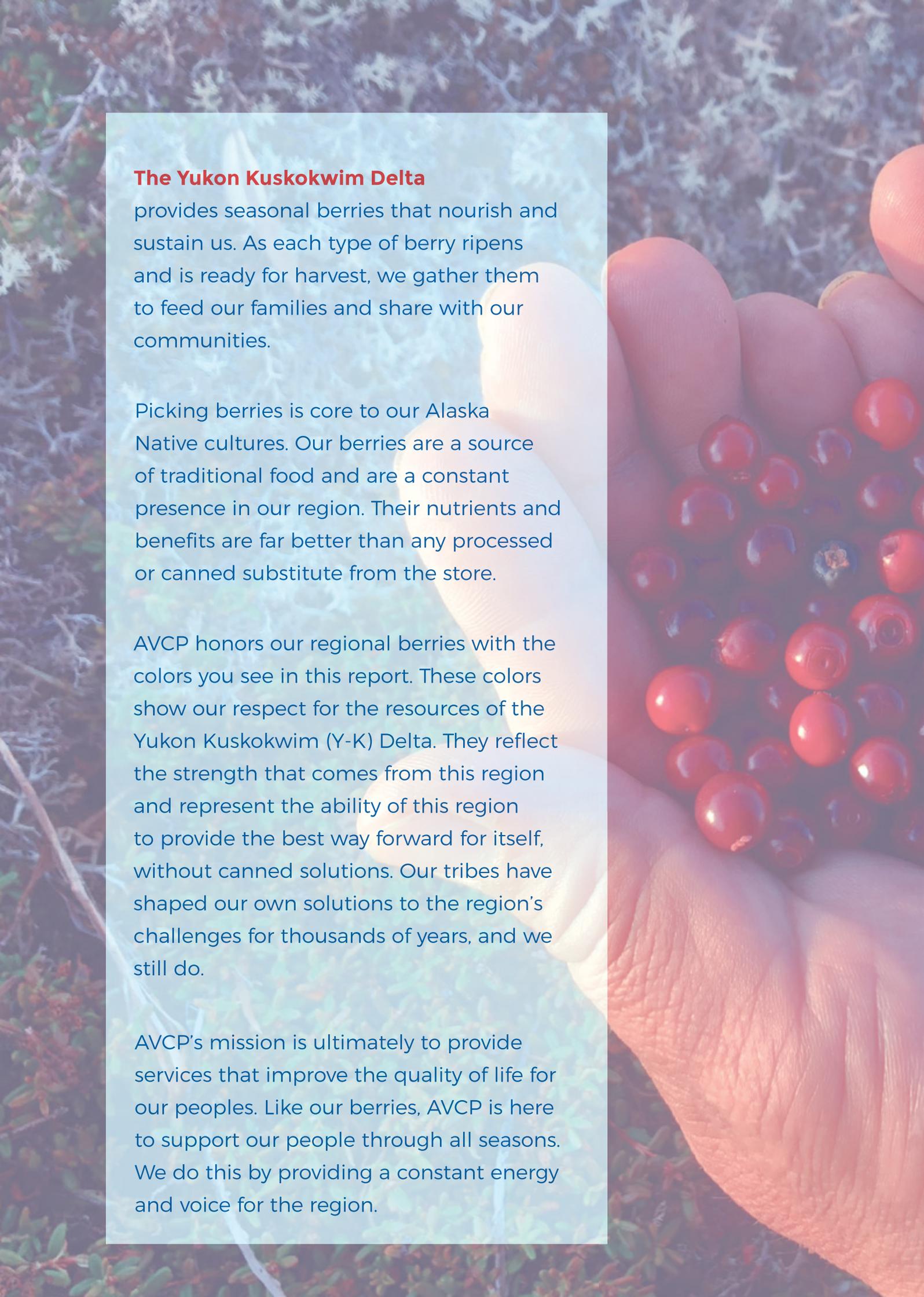
2019

Annual Report

Association of Village Council Presidents



www.avcp.org

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a handful of vibrant red and blue berries. The background is a soft-focus view of a berry bush with green leaves and small white flowers. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the skin and the berries.

The Yukon Kuskokwim Delta

provides seasonal berries that nourish and sustain us. As each type of berry ripens and is ready for harvest, we gather them to feed our families and share with our communities.

Picking berries is core to our Alaska Native cultures. Our berries are a source of traditional food and are a constant presence in our region. Their nutrients and benefits are far better than any processed or canned substitute from the store.

AVCP honors our regional berries with the colors you see in this report. These colors show our respect for the resources of the Yukon Kuskokwim (Y-K) Delta. They reflect the strength that comes from this region and represent the ability of this region to provide the best way forward for itself, without canned solutions. Our tribes have shaped our own solutions to the region's challenges for thousands of years, and we still do.

AVCP's mission is ultimately to provide services that improve the quality of life for our peoples. Like our berries, AVCP is here to support our people through all seasons. We do this by providing a constant energy and voice for the region.

OUR MISSION

Calillgutekluta nunaput kitugiluki, elicariluta,
ikayuriluta, makut piciryarat aturluki
picirkiurluta, aellmeggnek pingnaquralriit,
qaunqiluki, cali assirikanirluki makut nutemllat
piciryaraput maani nunamteni.

AVCP works in partnership to provide community development, education, social services, culturally relevant programs and advocacy for the people and tribes of the AVCP Region, to promote self-determination, protection and enhancement of our cultural and traditional values.

Nunaput Umyuallgutkut
Pinirluteng-Ilu
Tegganerput Qigcikluki Pirpakluki-Ilu
Ayagyuaput-Ilu Ciuliqagcimaut
Yuuyarakun

Our Tribes are united and strong,
Our Elders are respected and valued,
Our Youth are guided by Yuuyaraq

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Photos Courtesy of:

Cover: Mary Alexie, AVCP Child Care Specialist

"Here are two pictures of my daughter Leyton, my little helper & berry picker! I always try to include her in everything I do, especially with subsistence. This summer she helped us put fish away, she always made sure I checked on the fish and the smoke house. She would help bring fish down to the cutting table. When the berries were ready, she picked berries and filled her tiny bucket. She would ask everyday to go berry picking. She is my tiny big helper!"

Inside Front Cover (Page 1): Petra Harpak, AVCP On-Call Receptionist



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Chief Executive Officer
Vivian Korthuis

Waqaa!

We are coming together once again for AVCP's Annual Convention, and we welcome all the regional participants to Bethel to meet and talk. The theme of this year's convention is **Commitment to Change: Tribal Safety and Wellness Leads to Economic Development**. The top priorities of our tribes - Public Safety, Community Wellness, and Economic Development - weave together to create thriving communities. The following pages tell you more about AVCP's progress in each area, in alignment with the priorities of our tribes and the strategic direction of AVCP's Executive Board.

Our people have spent the last many months gathering the foods from our lands that feed our families. We do lots of preparation to be ready for when the time comes to boat, fish, gather and hunt. When we are prepared for opportunity, we have a good result. The same is true at AVCP.

AVCP has been focused on the public safety crisis for the past two years, to address this top priority of the region's tribes. AVCP's efforts included a Public Safety Summit for the region, the Statewide VPSO Strategic Plan, a Public Safety Task Force, and a Public Safety Facilities Assessment. AVCP's energetic focus on public safety met with a rising awareness around missing and murdered indigenous women, and the stark law enforcement needs of rural Alaska, which created more federal attention to this issue. A unique opportunity came when U.S. Attorney General William Barr visited Alaska with Senator Lisa Murkowski, including a trip to Bethel and Napaskiak. When the Department of Justice (DOJ) asked AVCP to meet with AG Barr, AVCP was ready.

We led the conversation with solutions because we know our communities and our people best. We stood up for ourselves, as a team and as the voice of the region. The resulting declaration by the DOJ of a law enforcement emergency in rural Alaska under the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Program created new funding opportunities for tribes. The Assistant Secretary of the Office of Indian Affairs Tara Sweeney came to Bethel in August 2019 for a listening session with tribes on public safety.

More is yet to come.

The Y-K Delta is emerging as a leader in creating solutions that will work. AVCP has a service delivery model that understands the needs of our tribal citizens at different levels: in our villages, in sub-regional hub communities, in the Bethel region, and even beyond our region. This four-tier service delivery model works. The Community Health Aide Program runs on the same model, and it works. It's a program that was created by the Y-K Delta. Innovations in public safety, community wellness, and economic development continue to emerge from our region.

Our Executive Board made a clear "Commitment to Change" with a strategic plan for AVCP that started three years ago with a Quality Improvement Plan, or QIP. AVCP's QIP is a long-term plan to continuously improve service delivery and allow AVCP to maintain a constant, consistent energy that our region can count on.

During Q1 from 2016-2018, we built up our financial and grant compliance. Now we are in Q2 from 2019-2021, and we are reinforcing our policies, procedures, our technology tools, and building staff skills and capacity. AVCP is focused on systemic solutions to systemic challenges. When we have leveled our foundation, we will transition to Q3 from 2022-2024. This will be a renewed period of growth in our grants, programs, and partnerships.

Three years after this commitment to change, AVCP has a Family Service Center that offers client-based services, or to say it another way, benefits that go directly to individuals. AVCP has a Tribal Resource Center that provides community-based programs and resources that flow to our tribes. We have a Healthy Families program supporting community wellness. We partner in the Y-K Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The results of AVCP's hard work with our tribes, our board, our staff has been amazing to experience!

You have so many ways to keep up with AVCP through our expanded communications. Find our quarterly newsletters on www.avcp.org, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Our Facebook reach keeps growing by the month! We had a photo contest through Facebook this summer to gather pictures of our beautiful region, and you can see the winning photo on the inside back cover of this report. We even launched a conference app for attendees to follow the 2019 Annual Convention. AVCP's outreach jumped to new heights this past year, and that means our unified voice is reaching farther than ever.

AVCP is the result of the wisdom of our elders and the power of our culture. It has transformed to meet the current needs of our communities. Our energy is high and it will carry us forward in our mission to protect our cultural and traditional values and promote tribal self-determination. Together we are stronger, and together we will do great things!

Quyana,



Vivian Korthuis
Chief Executive Officer

ABOUT US

The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) is a regional non-profit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum, and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Southwest Alaska.

www.avcp.org

Proudly Serving 56 Tribes since 1964

Akiachak	Chuloonawick	Kongiganak	Nightmute	Russian Mission
Akiak	Crooked Creek	Kotlik	Nunakauyak	Scammon Bay
Alakanuk	Eek	Kwethluk	Nunam Iqua	Sleetmute
Andreafski	Emmonak	Kwigillingok	Nunapitchuk	Algaaciq
Aniak	Georgetown	Lime Village	Ohogamiut	Stony River
Atmautluak	Goodnews Bay	Marshall	Oscarville	Tuluksak
Bethel	Hamilton	Mekoryuk	Paimute	Tuntutuliak
Bill Moore's Slough	Hooper Bay	Asa'carsarmiut	Pilot Station	Tununak
Chefornak	Lower Kalskag	Napaimute	Pitka's Point	Umkumiut
Chevak	Upper Kalskag	Napakiak	Platinum	
Chuathbaluk	Kasigluk	Napaskiak	Quinhagak	
	Kipnuk	Newtok	Red Devil	

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Photos Courtesy of: Jessica Petersen & Paige Jones

Executive Board



PETER MOORE
TRADITIONAL CHIEF



EDWARD ADAMS SR.
SECOND TRADITIONAL CHIEF

UNIT 1



RAYMOND WATSON
CHAIRPERSON



MARY ANN MIKE
Kotlik, Hamilton, Bill Moore's Slough

UNIT 2



RUTH RILEY
Asa'carsarniut, Pitka's Point, Andreadski, Algaaciq

UNIT 3



JULIA DORRIS
SECRETARY
Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek, Georgetown, Lime Village, Upper Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Red Devil, Napaimute, Sleetmute, Stony River

UNIT 4



PETER J. ANDREW
Akiachak, Akiak, Kwethluk, Tuluksak

UNIT 5



**JAMES PAUL
VICE-CHAIR**

Napakiak,
Napaskiak, Oscarville

UNIT 6



WASSILLIE PLEASANT

Atmautluak,
Kasigluk, Nunapitchuk

UNIT 7



JOSEPH JOSEPH

Kipnuk, Kongiganak,
Kwigillingok, Tuntutuliak

UNIT 8



MARCELLA WHITE

Chefornak, Mekoryuk, Newtok,
Nightmute, Toksook Bay, Tununak,
Umkumiut

UNIT 9



**ROY J. ATCHAK
TREASURER**

Chevak, Hooper Bay, Paimiut,
Scammon Bay

UNIT 10



JOSHUA CLEVELAND

Eek, Goodnews Bay, Platinum,
Quinhagak

UNIT 11



ROBERT HOFFMAN

Orutsarmiut Native Council

UNIT 12



CHRISTINA CHANGSAK

Pilot Station, Marshall, Ohogamiut,
Russian Mission

UNIT 13



MARTHA KELLY

Alakanuk, Chuloonawick,
Emmonak, Nunam Iqua

AVCP SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The Executive Board of AVCP is made up of representatives from 13 Units and Orutsararmiut Native Council, in the Yukon Kuskokwim Region. In 2017, AVCP's Executive Board underwent a comprehensive strategic planning session. They came up with seven main strategic objectives to guide the work of AVCP. All programs and administrative support functions at AVCP work to fulfill these objectives.

- Be Resilient
- Be the Leading Model
- Ensure our Stability
- Grow Our Own
- Improve Regional Unity
- Strengthen Regional Voice & Programs
- Support Tribal Self-Determination

The tribes of the region have also set three top priorities for the region. When AVCP delivers services to the region, the focus is on these priorities. Learn more about our priorities on the following page.

1. Public Safety

2. Community Wellness

3. Economic Development

Combined, these strategic objectives and priorities set the course for AVCP's programs and services. We work hard to effectively deliver the resources that improve the quality of life for our people.

AVCP's service delivery model has been developed by us, for us. It works on a framework that is familiar to our tribes and has proven to be effective by directing services to four levels: in the villages, at the sub-regional level in hub communities, through AVCP headquarter locations in Bethel, and beyond the region.



Regional Priorities

The Y-K Delta region tribes caucused by Unit at the 2016 AVCP Annual Convention. There they identified their top three priorities for the region: public safety, community wellness, and economic development. These priorities give focus to AVCP's operations in fulfilling its mission and strategic plan.

Priority #1: Public Safety

AVCP initiated several remarkable Public Safety achievements in 2018 and 2019. Through AVCP's committed efforts, three important events helped capture the baseline for the need in our region.

The reports mentioned below can all be found on AVCP's website under News and Media:

- **Statewide VPSO Strategic Plan, May 2018**

In the spring of 2018, a strategic planning session was held over three days for the 10 program partners to listen and refocus the program's challenges and future goals. They emerged with a report containing details of the discussion and five strategies to strengthen the VPSO program.

- **AVCP Public Safety Facilities Assessment, May to June 2018**

AVCP sent a team to 46 villages to evaluate the current state of public safety facilities in the Y-K Delta. Our team assessed current public safety building structure and IT infrastructure. The final report identified maintenance and construction needs for public safety buildings in villages across the AVCP region.

- **AVCP Public Safety Summit, August 2018**

AVCP hosted a summit of stakeholders to discuss challenges and craft solutions that are right for the region. There were more than 100 attendees who identified 7 categories of historic and persistent challenges and shaped 9 categories of solutions. AVCP created a summary findings report.

AVCP's readiness on public safety met with a unique opportunity when United States Attorney General William Barr made a visit to Alaska in May 2019 to learn about the disparities in safety in rural Alaska.

AG Barr met with AVCP and other tribal leaders and partners during visits to Anchorage, Fairbanks and Bethel. AVCP brought AG Barr to the village of Napaskiak to hear from and talk with members of their community. Barr also heard from AVCP on a solution for the region in the form of Tribal Wellness and Public Safety Centers located in seven sub-regional hub communities.

Within 30 days of AG Barr's visit to Alaska, he declared a state of emergency for law enforcement in rural Alaska. This declaration brought needed attention and some immediate funding to Alaska tribes to apply to public safety efforts. Discussions are continuing for additional future funding, to the AVCP region and Alaska.

Priority #2: Community Wellness

AVCP is a demonstration site for a landmark federal program called Tiwahe, which is a Lakota word for family. The Tiwahe project goal is to braid services of a region together in a way that makes client interaction easier, and program delivery to tribes more efficient.

Through Tiwahe, AVCP was able to stand up the Family Service Center (FSC) in Bethel. The FSC combines like services for a single point of entry into the family-based programs and resources available to AVCP region clients. The FSC contains programs like ICWA, Child Advocacy, Workforce Development, Head Start, Benefits, and Healthy Families. These programs provide client-based services.

The programs of the FSC contribute to community wellness by starting with the family. These services use a framework that shows the importance of a traditional life-cycle including practices, values and beliefs to promote wellness for the person and for the community.

AVCP's service delivery model is to make resources available at four levels: at the village, in sub-regional hub communities, based in Bethel, and for tribal citizens beyond Bethel. Delivery through this model, of several resources woven together for strength and efficiency, are making improvements to community wellness across the region.

Priority #3: Economic Development

AVCP works in partnership with tribes and with local, state and federal agencies to address the economic challenges and opportunities in the AVCP region.

We have an active role in the Economic Development Program, which facilitates the development and implementation of the Y-K Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The most recent regional Economic Summit took place in Bethel in August 2019.

We are working toward the same braided service delivery through the programs focused on tribal support with AVCP's Tribal Resource Center (TRC). The TRC will provide resources that are community-based. This included Tribal Services, Tribal Justice, the Village Public Safety Program, Transportation, Natural Resources, Cultural & Environmental Services, the Museum, and Realty Services.

AVCP took a strong stand against the budget cuts proposed by the Governor of the State of Alaska in February 2019. We sent a letter to the Governor and issued statements against the devastating impact the cuts would have on rural Alaska. Economic development in the region would have been dramatically slowed, if not reversed, due to proposed cuts in programs like Power Cost Equalization, Head Start and Elder services.

Administrative Support

The achievements of our departments throughout the year show the benefits of AVCPs Quality Improvement Plan. We are improving processes, becoming more efficient, and streamlining our programs.

AVCP is a learning organization, building our processes and policies and making them systemic. Where early quality improvement worked with effectiveness of our individual departments, our current phase emphasizes organization-wide improvements and the braiding of similar services.

Together, our Administrative departments support the programs and service delivery model of AVCP. Their efforts are aligned with the strategic objectives of the Executive Board and the priorities of the region.

Improved Use of Calendars

AVCP started use of travel calendars and training schedules in this past year. This gives the Receptionists the most up to date information on the villages that AVCP is traveling to for its programs and services, and where to direct visitors and employees for scheduled trainings across our facilities.



Executive Support

These duties include supporting the work of AVCP's CEO Vivian Korthuis, assisting with scheduling the high number of requests for testimony, comments, and speaking engagements of AVCP; and delivering information and materials for Executive Board meetings and All Unit teleconferences and sessions.

Events such as the annual conventions and recent All Staff Meeting, require the collaboration of several administrative functions. Executive support includes the facilitation of event logistics, coordinating several departments in order to secure travel, lodging, per diem, food and more.



Facilities, Fleet and Safety

The Facilities, Fleet and Safety department reflects the streamlining of AVCP. Similar functions were combined and reviewed through this department to look for more timely and cost-effective support of AVCP and its programs and staff.

Accomplishments in this past year centered on three primary efforts:

Sustainable Work Environment

- Daily Work Orders and Requests

Facilities, Fleet, and Safety gets multiple work orders daily and hundreds monthly. We are working with IT to establish a system to receive emails, create work orders, assign those orders, and track through completion.

- Vehicle Fleet Project

A new Vehicle Use Policy was developed and implemented on May 1, 2019 to make AVCP vehicles available for checkout. Employees are thankful for fair and equal use of vehicles and we have reduced our fuel costs by half!

- Water Filter Station Installation

Facilities Staff installed water filter stations at locations at all Bethel Facilities, using the building's water and eliminating the cost of ordering water bottles and renting cooler stations.

- LED Light Upgrade

Facilities Staff continue to retrofit and upgrade our interior and exterior lighting to LED and look forward to the cost saving this provides in our electric bill.

Photos Courtesy of: Babi Brown, Jessica Petersen, and Paige Jones



Efficient Use of Space

- Records Storage Building Remodel

Facilities Staff renovated the old grey storage building that sits behind our Central Storage Warehouse and prepared it as a heated and secure place to store AVCP records.

- Records Retention Project

We transferred our most vital records to the new records storage building. We continued records destruction as approved by Legal. This project helped to clean up AVCP records from every department, saving on storage space and costs.

- Finance Office Rearrangement

This project consolidated all Finance Staff to be able to work together in one area in the Lomack building and established a new file room to consolidate all Finance files in a single location.

- Lomack Building Office Addition/Remodel

Facilities Staff remodeled IT space in the Lomack Building and added three new offices. This remodel allowed for the expansion of staff and provided a safe and comfortable workspace.

- Tugkar Building/Tribal Resource Center Renovation

With a home-grown AVCP team of Carpenters, an Electrician, a Plumber, a Drywall Specialist/Painter, and a couple of Laborers, we have completed the two-year, four-phase renovation to provide a brighter, larger and more environmentally green work space for AVCP Tribal Resource Center staff.

Pride in our AVCP Campus in Bethel

- All AVCP Facilities Cleanup and Refresh

We have cleaned up and refreshed around the exterior of all AVCP Facilities with paint, brush clearing, signage, and grading/compacting the parking lots. Although cleanup is a continual task, we made a significant effort to improve the aesthetics and image of our AVCP Facilities.



Communications

Communications in this past year focused strongly on training and staff development, improving the experience of participants in the Annual Convention, and increasing engagement of visitors to our media sites.

Grow Our Own

- Staff attended a total of 3 in-person trainings, several webinars, and 5 online tutorial courses. This expands the knowledge of AVCP employees to stay aware of leading trends in outreach and education, as well as innovative communications platforms.
- Hosted one Kuskokwim Learning Academy high school intern this year and established lesson plans based on the progress of the past 6 interns, to better enable future youth to develop their communications and media skills.

Increased Engagement

Events

- Created online registration through AVCP's website at www.avcp.org.
- Provided an event Mobile App, which will allow convention participants to see event agenda, presenter background information, comment on their experience, and share photos.
- Added Annual Convention webpage and sponsorship options to expand financial resources available for this important regional event.

Multimedia Platforms

- Launched a redesign of AVCP's website for easier navigation and higher visual impact and visit times on site pages, including the implementation of AVCP branding.
- The Event Calendar on AVCP's website was improved and expanded to encourage more visitors and increase awareness of important events, conferences, and sessions in the region.
- Increased social media audiences over the year on these platforms:

Oct. 2018



2,281



Aug. 2019



3,642

Oct. 2018



50



Aug. 2019



187

Oct. 2018



400



Aug. 2019



635

Finance

The Finance Department has a crucial role in the work done at AVCP and around Y-K Delta. We support every program and administrative department of AVCP – from processing payroll for employees and hundreds of assistance benefit payments for clients each month, to arranging travel for clients and employees, and preparing for our annual audit.

During the past 12 months, the Finance Department has reached a major milestone – AVCP has fully transitioned from finance software that was unable to meet our needs to a robust and highly rated not-for-profit finance software, called MIP/Abila. This was a long and arduous process, but with the dedication of our staff and partners it is now complete.

We look forward to increased efficiency, improved audits, and an all-around upgraded experience for our staff, fellow departments, tribes, and clients. In the past 12 months we have focused on advancement in three targeted areas:

Closing the FY2018 Audit

The Finance team has proactively worked to achieve Financial Quarterly Closes by utilizing a checklist and updating regularly. They have been identifying perceived barriers and proposing solutions to prevent future delays. Finance has partnered with Accounting professionals to help prepare financials and organize the FY18 audit. This has proven to be a successful effort as deadlines and deliverables are being met timelier than years before.

Enhancing our Travel Process

Yes, AVCP's travel process will go paperless in 2019! Automating the entire travel and expense process from both a web and mobile standpoint is an important step in meeting AVCP's objectives. As part of AVCP's ongoing Quality Improvement Plan, the Travel Task Force identified SAP Concur for employee online travel booking for air, car, hotel, and expense management. The switch to SAP Concur will improve expense management and allows for enhanced travel functionality.

Grow Our Own through Expansion and Development

The Finance Department hired a full time Staff Accountant this year. We are focusing on staff development by improving processes and policies in our desk manuals. The Finance division worked to create a Centralized Library and a spreadsheet template that tracks and organizes the desk references.

Under the Quality Improvement Plan, Finance has increased the use of our support vendor, ADP, in many payroll transactions in the department. This transferred more daily processing work and compliance filing to ADP, allowing Finance to focus on internal policies, skill development, and process improvement.

Also as part of AVCP's Quality Improvement Plan, the team has started to implement the LEAN method in several areas to eliminate extra steps and streamline work. This initiative will continue to be monitored and supported in the future.

Grants & Compliance

The Grants & Compliance Department is a clear sign of AVCP's growth and progress under the Quality Improvement Plan. It was created in 2016 to support AVCP's grant programs, the audit process, and assist AVCP's administrative departments.

As the lead for financial reporting of AVCP's many grants, Grants & Compliance supports accuracy and accountability in grant reporting to funders, supports internal controls and the Finance Department in preparing for annual audits, and assists with on-site visits with grantors.

AVCP is a learning organization, and our department plays a critical role in offering training to our staff and developing appropriate policies and procedures. Here are some highlights from the past year:

- Training with program managers on the requirements and materials for compliant Grant Binders.
- Training on planning and creating comprehensive program budgets for grants.
- Partnering assigned grant accountants to program directors for regular review of budgetary matters throughout the year.

Human Resources

AVCP has between 350-400 employees in the region at any time. Over half of our employees work and live in our 56 villages, and 97% are Alaska Native. AVCP contributes about \$6 million per year in payroll to the Y-K Delta.

Human Resources (HR) takes very seriously the strategic objective to Grow Our Own, and assists the organization in recruiting, onboarding and retaining skilled and qualified employees to support AVCP in its mission. Our work has three focus areas of Employee Support, Benefits Management, and Staff Development. This past year we've made significant improvements in the following ways:

Employee Support

- By moving our Dental, Vision and Life from Aetna to MetLife, we were able to offer our employees better care from more providers in the Network as well as adding Voluntary Supplemental Life Insurance and Short Term Disability.
- AVCP gained cost savings from this move as well.

Staff Development

- With the hiring of a full time Staff Development and Trainer, we were able to offer New Employee Orientation to all employees before they start work. This is especially helpful for new employees located in our villages, who come to Bethel for this two day orientation before returning to work at their community.
- We offered an intense 2-day training to supervisors on Conflict Resolution and Communication. HR also started offering a hot topic supervisor training every quarter.

- Supporting the Finance Department in accurately reporting on AVCP transactions to prepare for an on-time audit of FY 2018 to conclude by the 2019 Annual Convention.

Photos Courtesy of: Charlene Strinling



Benefits Management

HR is making expanded use of our support vendor, ADP. We have worked very hard on a process to make sure all the benefit information is correct and running smoothly in the program. For the coming year we will be completely trained on how to fully utilize the HR functions within ADP.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) Department supports the daily operations of AVCP by providing the best possible technology services and support. To that end, this past year IT focused on the equipment and connectivity of our services and work locations, supporting AVCP's Quality Improvement Plan by working to keep people linked across the organization.

- IT Department crafted a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to define how the IT Department supports AVCP through our new Incident Management platform Ivanti. For Quarter 1 and 2, the IT Department has reached its strategic goal of completing greater than 90% of Work Orders on time as reported through Ivanti.
- Printer Refresh, to replace all printers at AVCP in Bethel, and village-based sites. Bethel sites are expected to be complete in Q3 of 2019, with village-based sites scheduled next.
- PC (personal computer) Refresh Year 2 completed in Quarter 2 of 2019 for Bethel locations. The village-based delivery was also completed during the same time as the Printer Refresh for the villages for cost efficiencies.
- AVCP Paperless Processes - Electronic Scanning has been realized throughout 2019 Printer Refresh. A New Server has been created and deployment for AVCP Bethel Based Departments has been completed, including Realty for the Realty Records Project. Digital forms will be explored through support vendor ADP.
- Upgrade existing security measures of AVCP networks, including firewalls to all AVCP village sites. Building on the success of the 2018 Connectivity Project, the Firewalls are being deployed in conjunction with the Printer and PC Refresh Projects, to streamline project expenses. Firewalls in each village will be complete by the end of 2019.
- The Client Management System - Ivanti (which also stores our Incident Management and IT Projects) is currently in the testing phase of keeping all computers up to date across all AVCP locations.



Photo Courtesy of:
Mary Atcherian in Chevak

Legal & Child Advocacy Department

The Legal and Child Advocacy Departments support the work of AVCP in many ways – here are a few of our highlights from the last twelve months:

Contracting Support

The Legal Department negotiated, drafted, reviewed, and/or processed over 450 contracts. These contracts covered a broad range of services and activities – everything from ensuring interpreters are hired for AVCP events and energy assistance vendor agreements to bringing Campfire to AVCP villages and completing major construction projects. Whether the project is big or small, we work with AVCP departments to effectively and efficiently provide services.

Guardians ad Litem

AVCP contracts with the Alaska Office of Public Advocacy to provide guardians ad litem (GALs) in 2/3rds of all Child in Need of Aid cases in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. We advocate for the best interests of approximately 150 tribal member children by attending court hearings, team meetings, and traveling to visit children, families, and foster parents throughout the Y-K Delta and Anchorage and surrounding areas.

Advocacy

This has been another year focused on public safety, our Region's number one priority. Early this year we worked with 43 tribes to submit requests for the United States assumption of concurrent federal criminal jurisdiction – these requests helped elevate our region's needs on the national level. We are currently in the process of scheduling a consultation for these tribes and the Department of Justice this fall. This is only one of several public safety initiatives in the works – we can't wait to share more!

Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact

We continue to provide legal support as a member of the Tribal Caucus Legal Team. In addition to representing AVCP at each negotiation, we also draft scopes of work and provide legal analyses that benefit all child welfare compact members, including smaller tribes that do not have independent legal counsel present at negotiations.



*Note:
The Legal Department does not give direct legal assistance to individuals or tribes. The only exception is the guidance to tribal courts through AVCP's Tribal Justice Center, and ICWA representation through AVCP's partnership with Alaska Legal Services Corporation.*

Office of Self Governance & Compacting

The Office of Self-Governance (OSG) provides funding for essential operations of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) programs that tribes elect to Compact under the Self-Governance agreement with the United States of America and AVCP. The OSG Compact provides AVCP with enhanced flexibility and control to negotiate the provisions and terms that aim to improve service delivery to the member tribes. This agreement provides the authority to consolidate and redesign programs and reallocate funds between programs.

AVCP collaborates with OSG and BIA to maintain the financial integrity and timely and accurate delivery and reporting of funds negotiated in the Self-Governance annual funding agreements; and to provide information to AVCP tribes regarding Self-Governance and other self-determination issues. The OSG agreement provides flexibility for receiving funding from other agencies and deferred revenue sources. AVCP continues work to clearly define the service delivery of OSG and its programs.

The tribes in the AVCP region can also elect to contract for these programs directly with the BIA under P.L. 93-638 or tribes may elect to have select programs provided by the BIA directly. Some tribes currently provide services, or portions thereof, through a contract with the BIA. Contract Support costs are provided to the entity responsible for providing the service for administrative costs associated with operations of the program.

Self-Governance tribes and Tribal Organizations have a record of being some of the most innovative and creative entities because of their experience operating successful Self-Governance programs. Under Self-Governance, Tribal capacity expands, knowledge and recognition of local issues increases, and greater community engagement results. Self-Governance encourages tribal governments to exercise greater control over their planning and budgeting processes to meet community needs.

Photos Courtesy of
(Left) Kayleen N. Oscar, taken in Mekoryuk
(Right) Karla Agimuk, in Chevak



SERVICES OVERVIEW

AVCP's transformation has been driven by a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). In our current phase, called Q2, AVCP is grouping similar programs to achieve better collaboration and leverage. This lets us put intentional design to our divisions, for more efficiency and a better service delivery experience for clients at all four levels of our service delivery model. The result is two main centers that flow AVCP's grants, programs and services to our tribes and citizens.

FAMILY SERVICE CENTER

AVCP stood up our Family Service Center in 2016 under the Tiwahe Demonstration Project. The federally funded Tiwahe project named AVCP as a demonstration site for bundling revenue streams and tribal services for greater effectiveness. The Family Service Center houses several AVCP programs that offer numerous resources directly to clients, so they are **Client-Based** services.

The Family Service Center includes the Benefits Division, which has recently combined our Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Social Services programs. FSC also includes the newly forming Workforce Development Division, which is finding ways to streamline Tribal Workforce Development; Vocational Rehabilitation; and Education, Employment, Training and Child Care. The final division under the FSC will be Family Services, which will be created in 2020 at the soonest.

TRIBAL RESOURCE CENTER

AVCP also established a Tribal Resource Center, which exists to deliver programs and services that are **Community-Based**. The Tribal Resource Center houses many existing AVCP grant and compacted services focused on growth and development through resources delivered to tribes and communities.

Under Q2, AVCP will look for the same efficiencies and streamlining across these programs. We will eventually group these programs into a Lands & Cultural Resources Division, Community Development Division, and a Community Services Division. Look for those division creations under AVCP's continuing Quality Improvement Plan in the coming year.



FAMILY SERVICE CENTER

Benefits

The AVCP Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Social Services Department have been joined to create the Benefits Division. The restructuring of these departments is an example of our ongoing, organization-wide Quality Improvement Process, in an effort to better deliver services to our member tribes.

Highlights from this year include:

- With reorganization and restructuring of TANF, we have processed applications faster and generated benefits sooner.
- Unifying roles in TANF and Tribal Workforce Development to cut down spending and duplication of programmatic work.
- Restructured and Reorganized TANF and Social Services for the Benefits Division Implementation to begin Fall of 2019.
- Received increase funding in LIHEAP with hopes to help more homes in the Y-K Delta.
- With the help of AVCP's Grants & Compliance Department, we started utilizing 2018 State of Alaska funds sooner, which increased programmatic efficiencies and spending.
- Implemented the client management platform Rite Tracks for our LIHEAP program.
- Ordered 100 bed bug home kits consisting of: diatomaceous earth powder, mattress protectors and cleaning supplies to help our TANF families in need.



Head Start

Photos Courtesy of
 (Left) Jessica Petersen & Paige Jones
 (Middle) Chelsea Hoffman
 (Right) Mary Alexie

The Head Start Program at AVCP nurtures children in their culture by speaking the Yup'ik language and having the children explore a variety of cultural activities that are relevant in their community, with several opportunities for parental involvement.

AVCP Head Start serves 221 children and families in the following communities: Akiachak, Bethel, Chefornek, Kipnuk, Kotlik, Quinhagak, Scammon Bay, Russian Mission, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, and Tununak. The Program has 53 employees across these 11 locations, and AVCP estimates this program alone contributes \$3.4 million in wages and economic impact to the Y-K Delta.

This year, completing our 5-Year Baseline Application, due October 1, 2019, is a priority for the department. We also received funding to conduct health inspections at our sites and make repairs to all center-based facilities.

One major component we have implemented in instruction of our children is to teach in the Yup'ik language and the use of culturally based activities in the educational program. We invited a representative from the Creative Curriculum Program to our August Pre-Service to demonstrate a model lesson and how to implement the curriculum materials in child-based and home-based instruction.



AVCP's delivery of the Head Start Program this past year resulted in:

- Opening a new location in Kipnuk.
- Increased average attendance by 2% to the program.
- Hiring a new Head Start Program Manager.
- Hiring a new Data Entry Clerk.
- One Lead Teacher receiving her B.A. in Early Childhood Education.

Healthy Families

With guidance and support from our Elders, the Healthy Families program provides culturally appropriate services to the AVCP region, to promote and support 'whole health' through the sharing, teaching and practice of our traditional values. The program creates a culturally appropriate time and place for people to come together to talk about forms of healing, wellness, prevention, intervention, and postvention.

The Healthy Families program utilizes a grassroots model for culturally-based therapeutic services. The department provides Healthy Families workshops for AVCP's tribes and is a resource for first responders and law enforcement in our villages.

- Hosted 10 Healthy Families Workshops in Bethel.
- Hosted Healthy Families Workshops in Toksook Bay, Kotlik, Kongiganak.
- 6 invitations are pending with approved dates from tribes in Hooper Bay, Alakanak, Yupiit of Andreafski, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, and Napakiak.
- Hosted 5 Qasgiq Sessions in Bethel.
- Successfully completed June Healthy Families Workshop incorporating local plant knowledge from Qasgiq Elders.
- Recruitment of 4 new Qasgiq Elders with 2 more invited to the August Workshop.
- Incorporated evening activities into Healthy Families Workshop and Community Activities to promote whole health through our culture.
- Program and partnership outreach continued through presentations for various organizations and programs.



Photos Courtesy of Maryilyn Martin



Indian Child Welfare Act

AVCP's ICWA Program acts in the best interest of Alaska Native children by meeting the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act, with a focus on protecting the tribes' rights under ICWA by keeping children safe, keeping families as intact as possible, and preserving children's connections to their tribes and Alaska Native culture. The AVCP ICWA Program works with compacted tribes to protect their interests in state court child protection cases.

Through the Quality Improvement Plan and following AVCP's service delivery model, the ICWA Program made significant progress in protecting Native children this past year:



- Implementation of a sub-regional service delivery model to follow AVCP's model

• **Village** ➡ **Sub-Regional Hub** ➡ **Bethel** ➡ **Beyond**

- 78% of all Native children in custody for 2018 reunified with their parents.
- 39 AVCP region tribes are now compacted with AVCP ICWA.
- Tribal intervention with State of Alaska cases went up to 66% in 2017, and to 73% for 2018.
- Sub-regional staff will be based in Aniak, St. Mary's, Tooksook Bay, Hooper Bay, and Emmonak.
- Establishment of a Family Early Intervention and Prevention Unit.
- Establishment of a diligent relative search effort initiative in partnership with the State of Alaska, Office of Child Services (OCS).

Workforce Development Division

Tribal Workforce Development

The Tribal Workforce Development (TWD) mission is to reduce individual reliance and future dependence on TANF benefits through tribal workforce development. TWD provides job preparation and job supportive services designed to help families on TANF and tribal youth under 25 years of age in our region, gain and retain paid employment, which in turn enhances self-sufficiency. The TWD currently has 26 staffed Tribal Job Centers located in Bethel and in villages in the AVCP region.

- 103 TWD Clients obtained employment
- 26 Clients received TWD Scholarships for Higher Education
- 17 TWD Clients obtained driver's permits
- 16 TWD Clients attended 8 contract trainings with Yuut Elitnaurviat
- 13 TWD Clients obtained their GED

Education, Employment, Training & Child Care

Training & Education Opportunities	Tribal Members Attended & Supported
A&P mechanics	6
VPO/TPO academy	10
CDL Training	4
Construction & Welding	17
RFMT	14
GED	17



EET/CC helps our Tribal members succeed in the workforce by encouraging self-sufficiency and helping to familiarize them with the world of work. We facilitate the creation of job opportunities and services related to those activities. EET/CC supports education, employment, training and economic development activities to fully develop the academic, occupational and literacy skills to make such individuals more competitive in the workforce.

Vocational Rehabilitation

AVCP's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program assists its tribal members who have a physical or mental disability with entering into the workforce or maintaining employment. This also includes becoming productive in the subsistence lifestyle. The following services and appropriate accommodations are provided, but are not limited to: guidance and counseling, equipment, supplies, hearing devices, assistive devices, transportation, basic living costs, housing assistance, training, higher education, self-employment and more.

The VR Program operates under discretionary funds and is flat funded at \$473,104 annually. This program is operating in year 4 ending September 30, 2019 of its 5-year cycle (2015-2020).

We are excited to share the accomplishments of the VR Program and the successes of the tribal member clients we serve:

- 62 open consumer cases with plans.
- 32 new referrals in the process of eligibility determination.
- 20 special education students got drivers permit training through a partnership with Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) Special Education Department.
- 6 trainings successfully completed in the areas of assessments, grant management, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services took kit, and transition service.
- 5 village visits conducted to meet with tribes, schools, and clinics to promote consumer services.
- 9 successfully closed plans, 5 of which were subsistence plans.
- Created a pilot project in collaboration with LKSD for high school consumers by establishing, running, and managing a student store.
- Hired VR Transition Specialist to be a liaison between VR and school districts and to serve high school consumers.
- Identified VR specific protocols and procedures to cross train client related service programs including outside agencies.
- Met with SOA Division of VR Director to develop strategies to improve our Memorandum of Agreement.
- Introduced assistive technology at an informational booth at the Y-KHC Hospital with ATLA.



VR Maintained partnerships with other agencies including Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (Y-KHC), Bethel Therapeutic Court, State of Alaska (SOA), Assistive Technology of Alaska (ATLA), Access Alaska, Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Department of Labor, Statewide Tribal VR's, School Districts, Housing Authorities, Office of Children Services, AVCP Programs, Yuut Elitnaurviat, Traumatic Brain Injury Network, and Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

Cultural & Environmental Sciences, and Museum

The C&ES Department has four closely-related but differing functions:

1. To assure that all Realty transactions comply with federal cultural preservation law, specifically the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), among others;
2. To coordinate compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA);
3. To administer the ANCSA 14(h)(1) Historic and Cemetery Sites program on behalf of Calista Corporation; and
4. To provide technical and logistical assistance to tribal environmental programs with funding provided through U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (IGAP).

This past year the C&ES Department had many achievements to share:

- The Yupiit Piciryarit Museum Reorganization Initiative made significant progress during 2018-19. With the successful completion of a new strategic plan, operations model, and preliminary operating budget, the museum received approval to apply for new sources of funding early in 2019. The Museum continues to collaborate with the AVCP Healthy Families program and the LKSD Quyurramta Project. The first of several grant applications was submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities early in July.
- The C&ES Department entered into a collaboration with Delta Backhaul during 2018 to expand our backhauling program with AVCP member tribes. During 2019, this partnership focused on removing solid wastes from villages on the Middle Kuskokwim, Bethel, Napakiak, Napaskiak, and coastal communities at unprecedented levels. AVCP held a community solid waste drive in Bethel during the last week of July. To our knowledge, this collaborative effort is the first successful implementation of a region-wide backhauling program.
- Our department focused on establishing better safety practices during 2019. To that end, our three environmental staff are now all HAZWOPER certified. We are reviewing our various field work requirements to document what hazards staff members routinely encounter during their assigned duties. This review will be the basis of new practices instituted during 2020.
- The AVCP Archaeologist collaborated with the BIA Alaska Regional Office on a joint helicopter field reconnaissance to perform field surveys on approximately 15 Native Allotment parcels. Additionally, AVCP and BIA Archaeologists conducted a field survey in Tununak to assess water/sewer right-of-ways and the effect of construction during the 1980s on significant historic sites. Many older projects did not have completed right-of-ways in place before construction was initiated. The goal of this work was to complete several pending realty transactions and older caseload.



Photos Courtesy of Tina Stanislaus

Natural Resources

The mission of the Natural Resources Department is to protect and maintain the integrity of our region's natural resources and the unique subsistence way of life through the promotion of self-determination of our tribes and our people. Our vision constitutes protection of these resources and our way of life for both present and future generations in the face of a changing climate and an evolving and expanding technological society. We strive to provide beneficial services and rights protection to our region's members and landowners.

The Department supported the strategic objectives of AVCP this past year through intentional staff development and collaboration with partners.

Photo Courtesy of Marie K Anthony



Staffing

- Completed strategic planning with Administration, Realty and C&ES that will evolve into a clear and direct process for determining annual priorities and focus for the department.
- Hired a second staff member to assist with department operations, focusing on issues critical to Bering Sea ecosystems, fisheries, vessel traffic and others.

Partner Collaboration

- Staff appointed to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee to provide recommendations to the Council on how to improve engagement and access by rural and Native communities to their regulatory processes.
- Continued support of the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.
- Strengthened our partnership with the Chaninik Qaluyat Nunivak (CQN) Work Group and the Bering Sea Elders Group and assumed the coordination role for the working group.
- With the CQN Work Group, assisted in initiating a temperature-sensing study of the sea floor.
- Worked to finalize the Adapt Y-K Climate Adaptation project action plan and introduced it to regional leadership to help in identifying potential resources to assist communities.

We work with many different agencies and organizations across the state. We also have formal memberships with many of them - they include:

Indigenous People's Council for Marine Mammals

ICC Alaska Project Steering Committees

Alaska Beluga Whale Committee

Western Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Ice Seal Committee

Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative

Chaninik Qaluyat Nunivak Working Group

Yukon River Panel

AVCP Waterfowl Conservation Committee

Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council

Yukon River Panel Joint Technical Committee

Realty

The Realty Program provides services to individual restricted landowners in accordance with legal principles and standards governing the performance of trust functions. Realty staff provide counseling to individual landowners of federally restricted property, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their land.

The Probate and Estate Planning staff's primary responsibility is to administer and manage the estates of deceased restricted landowners, which includes preparation of probate packages containing family information and legal documentation to determine heirs. The probate packages are forwarded to the United States Department of the Interior (DOI) Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) for decisions determining heirs.

This past year the Realty Department had many achievements to share:

- After 20+ years, 2 subdivided parcels of Native Allotments for Kwigillingok Airport Project were sold to the State of Alaska Department of Transportation to begin much needed improvements for the village airport.
- Planning for Records Archiving is near completion and implementation. Additional hire planned for Data Entry Clerk to begin archiving to create more office space for more personnel to tackle backlog of Probate and Transactions. This project will allow Realty to archive 50 years of records.
- Reduced IIM Accounts from \$124,670.00 to \$15,820.00 with pending requests at BIA to refund and reduce \$8,400,00 more that will reduce amount in outstanding IIM Accounts to \$7,420.00.
- Trespass compensation for landowners after years of negotiation in the amount of \$38,400.00.
- Twenty Nine (29) Probate cases prepared and submitted to BIA for review since last convention.
- Two (2) business leases, Two (2) Negotiated Sales, One (1) Invalid Conveyances competed and approved by Alaska Regional Director.
- Exhaustive Search, Right of Way and BeenVerified Policies completed.

*Photo Courtesy of
Connie Ulroan,
TANF Case Manager
in Chevak*

Transportation

AVCP entered into an agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the assumption of the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP).

The success of the AVCP Transportation Program is dependent upon pooling and leveraging funds from the TTP with much larger sources of funding opportunities.

The Transportation Department's purpose is to promote the economic development of villages through planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining priority projects in the AVCP region.

The more we invest in local labor, the more likely that money will be spent and continue to circulate within our region (at local businesses) to help strengthen our economy.

- Rental payments = \$11,700
- Fuel purchased locally = \$22,000
- Force Account Salaries paid = \$612,000



Yukon-Kuskokwim Corridor

Our goal is to develop a practical link between the Yukon and Kuskokwim River systems that will enhance connectivity among communities in the region.

The proposed corridor will allow for travel, trade, and access to public facilities and other modes of transportation within the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta (Y-K Delta).

- Completed the stage III technical memo
- Successful public outreach meetings with stakeholders that helped identify future work objectives

Tribal Services

Tribal Services assists Aid to Tribal Government (ATG) Compacting tribes by providing technical assistance to develop their capacity to function as tribal governments.

Tribal Services offers financial management and reporting support for ATG funds and offers tools to strengthen tribes' self-determination and help build local capacity to guide and manage the tribal government. Training is made available to help council members and staff successfully perform their respective duties. Services include issuing enrollment cards, access to email, computer assistance and maintenance.

In this past year Tribal Services assisting Compacting tribes through these activities:



Photo Courtesy of Connie Ulroan, TANF Case Manager in Chevak

- Memorandum of Agreement (funding agreement) continued between AVCP and compacted ATG tribes.
- Hosted in partnership with UAF-KUC three Occupational Endorsement Tribal Management courses for 2 credits each:
 - Tribal Elections and Indirect Rate Cost - October 2018
 - Public Law 93-638 Contracting-Essentials of Tribal Government - May 2019
 - Tribal Enrollment - October 2019
- Hosted Advanced QuickBooks training in collaboration with DCRA-RUBA - December 2018.
- Provided Employee Orientation for Tribal Administrators, Bookkeepers and Assistants and/or Clerks - December 2018.
- Partnered with AVCP Tribal Justice for 4 trainings - November 2018, and April, May, September 2019.
- Co-hosted with Nunapitchuk tribe to bring in Native American Resources for Governance as Leadership training - June 2019.
- Issued Tribal IDs at the tribes request for five Compact and non-Compact tribes.
- Provided approximately 700 Tribal IDs to tribal members at the Joe Lomack Building from October 2018 to July 2019.
- Developed policies and procedures to guide the work of the department.

Tribal Justice

AVCP's Tribal Justice Department assists AVCP Member Tribes by enhancing, developing, implementing, and re-establishing Tribal Court systems. Tribal Justice works closely with Member Tribal Court systems by providing guidance, support, and training.

The Department also acts as the liaison between individual Tribes and the U.S. Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice Assistance and with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Tribal Justice Support.

Tribal Justice made great strides in 2018-2019 and put focused attention on funding, hosting trainings, staffing, and expanding our Department's information on AVCP's website.

- The 2019 Tribal Justice Department Master Series Trainings funding proposals were approved and fully funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Tribal Justice Support with no reduction in proposed funding amounts requested. The funding received in FY2019 for the Tribal Justice Department totaled over \$1.2 million dollars.
- AVCP Member Tribe PL280 funding distribution: FY2016 (40 Tribes) – completed; FY2017 (34 Tribes) – 75% completed; FY2018 (36 Tribes) – 15% completed.
- Tribal Justice Master Series Trainings – April and May 2019; September and October 2019.
 - Coordination of travel, lodging, and training of over 300 AVCP stakeholders.
 - Stakeholders include: AVCP Member Tribal Court Judges, Tribal Court Staff, Tribal Court Administrators, Tribal Council Members, Tribal Administrators.
 - Presenters included AVCP Tribal Justice Department partners from: Kongiganak Tribal Court, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Tlingit & Haida Tribal Court, Alaska Legal Services Corporation, and the Alaska Court System.
- Instituted audio/video recordings of Tribal Justice Department trainings with editing of audio/video recordings by AVCP Communications department.
- Strategic Action Planning (SAP) assistance has been provided/is scheduled with 6 AVCP Member Tribal Courts for FY2019. SAP services include in-person technical assistance to AVCP Member Tribes in implementing the recommendations of the Tribal Court Assessment conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. SAP in-person technical assistance is provided by all members of the Tribal Justice Department team and is provided at no-cost to the AVCP Member Tribe.
- Tribal Justice Department is now fully staffed with the hiring of a Program Coordinator and a Tribal Justice Attorney.





Village Public Safety Officer

AVCP's Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program trains and employs residents of the 48 communities in the AVCP region as first responders to public safety emergencies such as: search and rescue, fire protection, emergency medical assistance, crime prevention, and basic law enforcement. As a result, the Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs) are generally the first to respond to many calls for help from community members.

The VPSO Program serves all 56 tribes within our region. All tribes can utilize the VPSO Program to enhance public safety in their communities. The presence of these officers has a significant impact on improving the quality of life in the participating villages.

In this past year, the VPSO Program faced cuts from the State of Alaska Governor's Budget. Despite threats to the program, we pushed forward with progress:

- Placed 3 additional VPSOs into the region.
- Drafted and implemented a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs) with governing bodies that work with the VPSO program. We established 39 MOAs within our region out of 48 villages.
- Reduced site visit findings from the Department of Public Safety by more than 50%. These site visits are conducted annually.
- Implemented necessary policies and procedures to provide additional support for current VPSOs.
- Completed background checks and requested to hire an additional four VPSOs. Recruitment is the number one goal of the VPSO department and we will continue to advocate and hire as many VPSOs as allowed by our funding source.
- Served on the AVCP Public Safety Task Force. The public safety task force provided a time and space for AVCP departments with direct impacts on public safety in the AVCP region to discuss collaborative goals and identify solutions to improve public safety. This resulted in a one-page proposal for the VPSO program that served as back-up for the larger proposal to the U.S. Attorney General during his visit to Bethel in May 2019.

2019 Photo Contest

All the photos in this report (aside from a few group photos of staff) have been sourced through our region-wide photo contest. The winner was chosen by our regional community, through Facebook likes. Our winner, Lydia Tucker won with 115 likes in a 24 hour period.



**Congratulations
Lydia Tucker!**



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