

2020

# Annual Report

Association of Village Council Presidents



[avcp.org](http://avcp.org)

**Waaqa.** When we were last together at the 2019 Annual Convention, we had no idea what 2020 held in store. The coronavirus pandemic has changed the way we conduct business – both here at AVCP and in your tribal councils and communities. Despite the constant changes that we have experienced – and continue to experience – I am proud to say that AVCP and the villages we serve have risen to the challenge.

At AVCP staff have continued to provide high quality services to our tribes and tribal members under the new and constantly shifting COVID-19 guidelines, while also advocating for our Region to receive its share of CARES Act funding, assisting our tribes with applying for these funds, and responding to requests for assistance. At the same time, we continue to be the Voice of our Region in advocating for the public safety resources that all tribes in Rural Alaska need.

I have also been pleased by the quick and decisive response from tribal governments across our region to implement best practices in response to COVID-19 and encourage their tribal members to do the same.

The Executive Board is confident in the leadership of AVCP and our tribes to be a leading model for coronavirus response in Rural Alaska. I speak for the entire Executive Board when I say we support you and we are always here to listen to your concerns and advocate for a strong AVCP and a strong Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

Sincerely,



Thaddeus Tikiun, Jr.  
AVCP Chairperson/Member-At-Large

# 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 Qigcikliki 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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Chief Executive Officer  
Vivian Korthuis

The past year has been full of challenges! We have a lot to report.

First, I must address the issue that is continually on our minds and in the news: the coronavirus pandemic. In March 2020, I told my staff to lean into this crisis, and to come out the other side standing up. Thankfully, our status as a Tiwahe demonstration site prepared us to pivot our programs to a virtual environment. In a little less than two weeks, we transitioned over 90% of our staff to remote work, without any interruption in services.

The purpose of Tiwahe to increase collaboration and coordination fits our vision to define our service delivery model of providing services at the village, sub-regional, regional, and beyond region levels. Tiwahe, through our on-going Quality Improvement Process (QIP), has allowed us to create enhancements to our backbone support of service delivery (technology and communications). Over the past three years we implemented the technological tools we need to stay connected and continue to make progress toward our QIP goals. These changes were critical to addressing how we work during the pandemic. This is new to all of us. However, we have proven the ability to respond quickly when the unexpected happens, and we are stronger for it. In the past three years, through our QIP, we have learned to find solutions we apply organization-wide. It is very gratifying to see the benefits of our hard work, making us adaptable to this public health crisis.

Even as we begin a gradual return to an in-office setting, retrofitted to allow for more social distancing, many employees will remain remote for some period of time – at least through the end of the year – due to the unpredictability of the pandemic. We are also pursuing opportunities to further enhance our telecommunications infrastructure. The health and safety of our employees, clients, and communities is our first priority. I am pleased that we were prepared to protect one another and to be part of establishing a new standard in delivering services to our region at the beginning of the pandemic.

As part of defining our service delivery model (village, sub-regional, the entire region, and beyond), we have begun the work of decentralizing our previous model, which primarily provided services out of our three office locations in our headquarters in Bethel. This year, we have successfully combined similar services into two new divisions: the Community Development Division and the Lands and Cultural Resources Division. These two divisions, in addition to the Benefits Division (formed in 2017) and the Tribal Workforce Development Division (2019), help us better structure our services in a way that makes sense to the individuals we serve, instead of organizing ourselves solely based on funding sources. By the end of this year, AVCP will be organized by the types of services we provide to the region, in a way that is clearer to our clients. As I have said before, no one wakes up in the morning and thinks, “I need 477 today.” When our tribal citizens need help, we are ready with full knowledge of all the benefits they might be eligible for through AVCP. This restructuring process does not happen overnight. It takes several years and we are moving along despite the challenges of the pandemic.

In appreciation, I must note that our Tribal Services Department has done exceptional work this year, in providing timely support to tribal councils in submitting the requested information to the U.S. Department of Treasury portal, to ensure every tribe in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta receives their allocated CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund funding. I also want to thank the Realty Department for doing an outstanding job supporting our region’s tribes in this process as well. We know these funds will go a long way in helping our tribes prevent, prepare for, and respond to the Coronavirus.

Last but not least, despite the unpredictability of the first half of this year, AVCP has continued to advocate for public safety – the Region’s number one priority. You can find a timeline of advocacy efforts by clicking [here](#). You will also notice a public safety theme in the convention resolutions sponsored by our Executive Board.

In closing, I would like to thank the AVCP staff for all the hard work and innovation we have come up with in the past year to take on every challenge AVCP has faced as we continue to improve the quality of life for all of us. Thank you.

Sincerely,



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.

## Proudly Serving 56 Tribes since 1964

- |                                    |                   |                  |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Akiachak                        | 15. Crooked Creek | 29. Kwethluk     | 43. Oscarville    |
| 2. Akiak                           | 16. Eek           | 30. Kwigillingok | 44. Paimute       |
| 3. Alakanuk                        | 17. Emmonak       | 31. Lime Village | 45. Pilot Station |
| 4. Algaaciq                        | 18. Georgetown    | 32. Marshall     | 46. Pitka's Point |
| 5. Andreefski                      | 19. Goodnews Bay  | 33. Mekoryuk     | 47. Platinum      |
| 6. Aniak                           | 20. Hamilton      | 34. Napaimute    | 48. Quinhagak     |
| 7. Asa'carsarmiut                  | 21. Hooper Bay    | 35. Napakiak     | 49. Red Devil     |
| 8. Atmautluak                      | 22. Iqugmiut      | 36. Napaskiak    | 50. Scammon Bay   |
| 9. Orutsararmiut<br>Native Council | 23. Lower Kalskag | 37. Newtok       | 51. Sleetmute     |
| 10. Bill Moore's Slough            | 24. Upper Kalskag | 38. Nightmute    | 52. Stony River   |
| 11. Chefornek                      | 25. Kasigluk      | 39. Nunakauyak   | 53. Tuluksak      |
| 12. Chevak                         | 26. Kipnuk        | 40. Nunam Iqua   | 54. Tuntutuliak   |
| 13. Chuathbaluk                    | 27. Kongiganak    | 41. Nunapitchuk  | 55. Tununak       |
| 14. Chuloonawick                   | 28. Kotlik        | 42. Ohogamiut    | 56. Umkumiut      |

[avcp.org](http://avcp.org)



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1-800-478-3521



@AVCPAlaska



Photos Courtesy of Yuiya Ella Guest and Tina Stickman

# Executive Board



PETER MOORE  
LATE TRADITIONAL CHIEF



EDWARD ADAMS SR.  
TRADITIONAL CHIEF

**UNIT 1**



THADDEUS TIKIUN JR.  
At-Large / **CHAIRPERSON**



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

**UNIT 2**



SCOTT HESS, **SECRETARY**  
Asa'carsarmiut, Pitka's Point, Andreafski, Algaaciaq

**UNIT 3**



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

**UNIT 4**



MARTIN ANDREW  
Akiachak, Akiak, Kwethluk, Tuluksak



**UNIT 5**



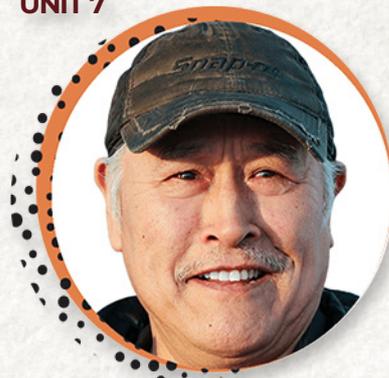
**JAMES PAUL VICE-CHAIR**  
Napakiak,  
Napaskiak, Oscarville

**UNIT 6**



**MARY ALBRITE**  
Atmautluak,  
Kasigluk, Nunapitchuk

**UNIT 7**



**JOSEPH JOSEPH**  
Kipnuk, Kongiganak,  
Kwigillingok, Tuntutuliak

**UNIT 8**



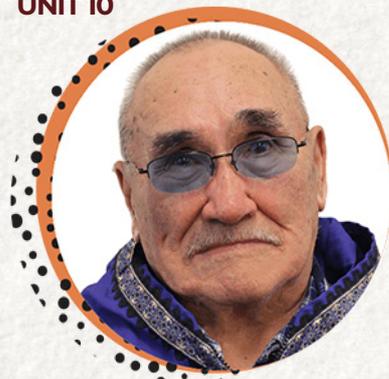
**MARCELLA WHITE**  
Chefornak, Mekoryuk, Newtok,  
Nightmute, Toksook Bay,  
Tununak, Umkumiut

**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**  
Orutsararmiut Native  
Council

**UNIT 12**



**CHRISTINA CHANGSAK**  
Pilot Station, Marshall,  
Ohogamiut, Iqugmiut

**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 in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region. In 2017, AVCP's Executive Board underwent a comprehensive strategic planning session. They identified seven 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 established three top priorities to be addressed, region-wide. 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. Economic Development

3. Community Wellness

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, to fit our region's needs. 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 communities, at the sub-regional level in hub communities, through AVCP headquarter locations in Bethel, and beyond the region.

Photo Courtesy of Arlene Billy



# Regional Priorities

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

## Priority #1: Public Safety

AVCP initiated several Public Safety achievements in 2019 and 2020. Through AVCP's committed efforts, three important events helped to continue to grow awareness about our public safety needs.

**Resolution in Support for the Alaska State Legislature Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Working Group** AVCP sponsored Resolution 19-19-03 to the 2019 AFN Annual Convention, which passed October 19, 2019.

AVCP Resolution Included in Report to Legislature

- AVCP forwarded this resolution to the Alaska Legislature VPSO Working Group, and the resolution was included in the Working Group's final report.

AVCP Meets with VPSO Working Group

- AVCP and other members of the statewide VPSO Tribal Caucus met with the VPSO Working Group to give recommendations strengthening and enhancing the VPSO Program, several of which were included in the final report.

**Resolution for Fully Funded Public Safety Infrastructure in the AVCP-Region**

AVCP sponsored Resolution 19-09-04 to the 2019 AFN Annual Convention, which passed October 19, 2019.

AVCP Applies for EFLEA Grant for Public Safety Infrastructure

- AVCP applied for the 2019 Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance (EFLEA) grant through the State of Alaska for public safety infrastructure needs in the YK Delta.

Testimony to Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice

- CEO, Vivian Korthuis, includes public safety infrastructure needs as key component to public safety in rural Alaska during her testimony to the Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice May 27, 2020.

## Priority #2: 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 2020. The 2019 Annual update was released in May of 2020, and can be found on our website.

One important source of funding for our region includes the rate of return of 2020 Census questionnaires. AVCP encourages each household in the YK Delta region to complete the Census questionnaire. The Census count of the population directly impacts the amount of federal funding that comes to the region. This funding helps drive development of our infrastructure, education, and communities. Complete your questionnaire before the deadline: September 30, 2020.

## Priority #3: Community Wellness

### Resolution of Continued Support for the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact

AVCP sponsored Resolution 19-19-05 to the 2019 AFN Annual Convention, which passed October 19, 2019.

- AVCP continues to be an active member of the Tribal Caucus, with representatives serving on both the Legal and Services workgroups.
- The Compact's available scopes of work have expanded into additional services, including: initial and ongoing diligent relative search, licensing assistance, family contact, and safety walk throughs.
- AVCP compacts for four services which we provide to our ICWA Compact tribes.

*Photo Courtesy of Mary Alexie*

# Administrative Support

The Administrative Support Department supports every function of AVCP to ensure our organization is accessible to clients and the community; our departments can collaborate and communicate efficiently and effectively; and AVCP's voice of the Region is heard. Our Department provides receptionists, facilitates events logistics and books event space, and provides executive support to the Executive Board, Chief Executive Officer, and Management Team.

## Live Chat Feature

Our team plays a critical role in connecting clients or community members with the appropriate department or program within AVCP. With this year's website re-design, our team is now using a new live chat function found in the bottom right corner of our website. Visitors to avcp.org can chat with a receptionist for assistance in locating information on our website or be directed to the best point of contact for further information.

## COVID-19 Support

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, we have ordered personal protective equipment (PPE), including hand sanitizer and face masks, for staff; recorded and distributed notes for AVCP's COVID-19 task force, all-staff meetings, and tribal teleconferences; and assisted in evaluating work spaces and identifying needs to meet social distancing guidelines.

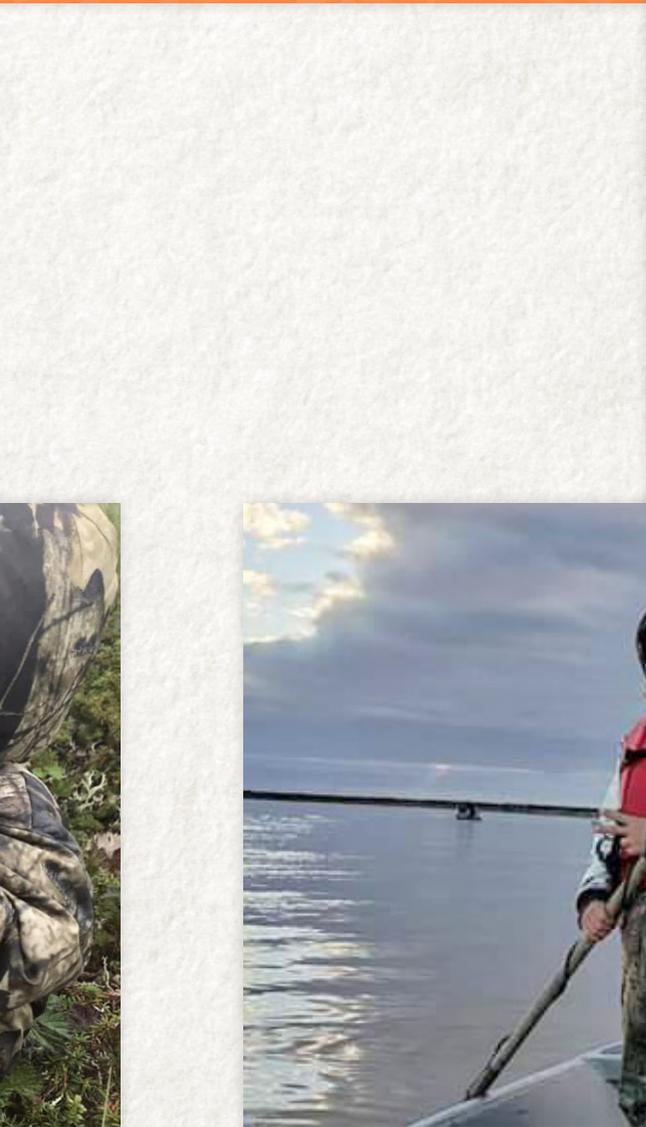
## Policies for Better Communication

Our director spearheaded new company policies and procedures for corporate cell phone usage that reduces staff time and expenses for administrative oversight; enables staff to be reimbursed for using their personal cell phones; and provides a secure method of communication for employee positions with privacy concerns.



Photos Courtesy of (from left to right):

1. Cara Otto    2. Jared Yupanik, courtesy of his mother, June Yupanik    3. Michael Nick



# Facilities, Fleet and Safety

The Facilities, Fleet and Safety Department has reduced its capacity this year, in line with the efficiency goals of AVCP. Over the past few years our department had accomplished significant and much needed work to improve our facilities. From major renovation projects to preserving our properties, improving the use of space and refreshing our facilities, our Facilities staff completed many projects highlighted in previous reports.

We have scaled back our projects to address those that are most immediately necessary, while maintaining our core functions: general maintenance with a proactive approach. With less staff, we do what we can with what we have, while maintaining the highest level of service possible. In spite of a reduced budget and COVID-19 restrictions, some of our accomplishments include:

## General Maintenance and Preservation

- Continuation of the Family Service Center paint and preservation project. This year Building A (200) has been painted. Building B (500) is receiving new siding and paint where needed.
- The hanger which housed the former Yuut Yaqungviat Flight School is receiving much needed preservation work including roof repair and repair of some interior water damage.
- Heating system repair and upgrades at the Joe Lomack Building and the Family Service Center, including replacing and upgrading the heating system by installing modern and efficient glycol pumps.

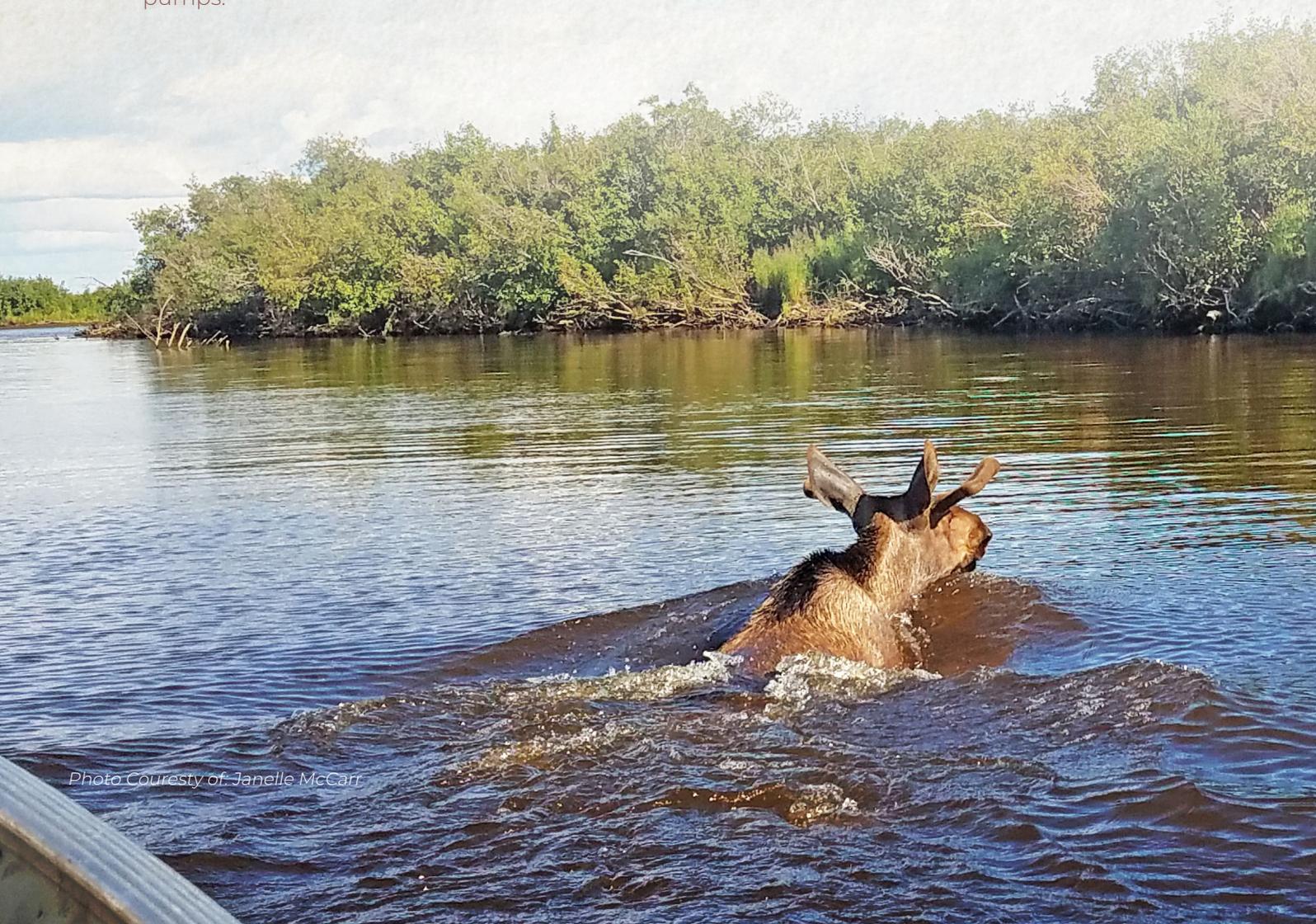


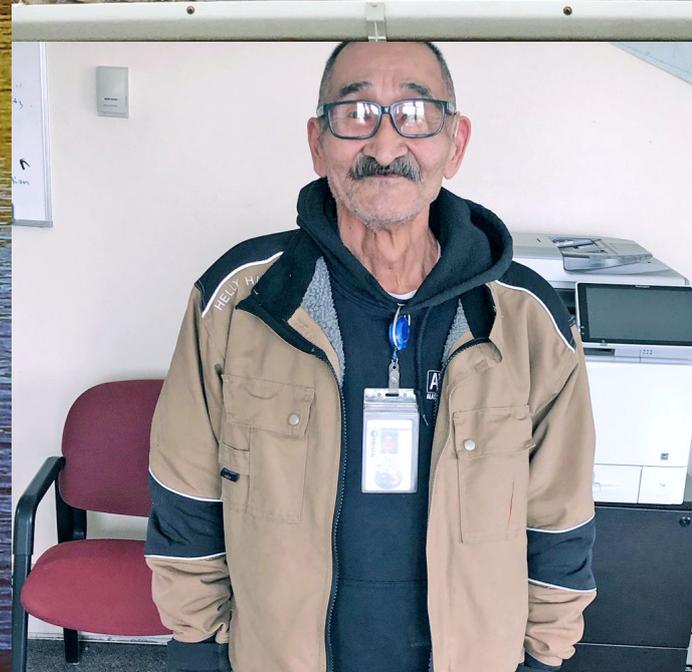
Photo Courtesy of: Janelle McCarr

## COVID-19 Response

- Procurement and distribution of supplies including: cleaning supplies, disinfectants, masks, and hand sanitizer
- Re-arrangement of office space and construction of physical barriers
- Enhanced routine cleaning and disinfecting of facilities

## Improve the Use of Space

With the organizational restructure of programs and divisions, we have been working to consolidate similar service departments into divisions across our three main buildings in Bethel: the Family Services Center, the Tribal Resource Center, and the Joe Lomack Building.



*Over 50 years of  
combined service  
at AVCP*

# Communications

The Communications Department focuses on increasing transparency and access to AVCP services through the development of multimedia and dissemination of information across the following platforms: avcp.org, social media, newsletters, and more.

In 2020, Communications also supported AVCP's role in providing information on COVID-19 to the region, and in helping our programs transition to digital delivery of some services.

## Increased Engagement

### Social Media Audience Growth



35%



16%



41%

### Events

- Improved online registration process
- Created Tribal Court Master Series Training online learning resources library, to increase access to information provided by the AVCP Tribal Justice Department training series
- Improved Facebook reach by joining and sharing posts directly to 22 private, community-based Facebook groups
- Established consistent information outreach posts including #MeetYourNavigator on Mondays, and #WellnessWednesday on alternating Wednesdays, in addition to #QaspeqFriday

## Growing Our Own

- Hosted one Kuskokwim Learning Academy high school intern early this year, using established lesson plans based on the progress of the past 7 interns, to better enable youth to develop their communications and multimedia skills
- Established the AVCP Creators' Studio, an interdepartmental group of social media content developers to better source information by leveraging boots-on-the-ground expertise, from within AVCP departments
- Website Redesign
  - In-depth content audit of avcp.org to better communicate information about AVCP services, with the addition of frequently asked questions and impact statements from former service recipients
  - Added a live chat feature managed by AVCP receptionists in order to help visitors better navigate the site and better respond to inquiries made outside office hours
  - Updated applications and contact information in uniform, easily discoverable locations on each webpage relating to an AVCP service
  - Improved the online employment application user experience with the addition of an informational page title "Join the AVCP Family"
  - New webpage outlining the efforts of our public safety advocacy over the past three years, within the 'About AVCP' menu item
  - Increased the security of avcp.org
  - Added graphic elements, developed in consultation with the AVCP Museum
  - Reduced the size of webpages to allow for faster loading times
  - Implemented one-click calling for mobile devices

# Finance

The Finance Division supports all programs within AVCP expanding across the YK Delta. It is comprised of several administrative departments such as Payroll, Accounting, Purchasing, Procurement, Shipping & Receiving, Accounts Payable, and Travel support.

As a part of our strategy to increase efficiency, we have focused on advancements to meet our operational objectives and strategic-wide initiatives. The visibility and accessibility of data for our users helps us to understand and control costs where possible. This has a direct impact on filing timely audits, providing budget-to-actual data and compliance with grantors and lenders.

Finance successfully launched a new travel and expense software, SAP Concur, on May 1, 2020. Automating the entire travel and expense process from both a web and mobile standpoint allows AVCP to:

- Drive travel and expense policy compliance
- Gain better visibility of travel and expense spending
- Unify the travel and expense processes
- Eliminate the need to collect, manage and store paper receipts

Employees are experiencing:

- A reduction in the time spent making travel reservations
- A reduction in the hassle of completing the expense process
- On-the-go capabilities through user friendly mobile applications
- Pre-populated expense reports saving time on filling out forms
- A simplified experience for requesting reimbursement

To date, the 2019 Financial Audit is moving forward as scheduled and expected to be completed by our annual AVCP convention. Our audit findings have continued to decrease as improvements have been implemented through the Quality Improvement Process.

In response to COVID-19, AVCP transitioned most of its workforce to remote work for the safety of its employees, clients and communities. The staff of the AVCP Finance Division kept up their daily, weekly, and monthly transaction work without a missed beat. Processing the transactions of an organization as complex and active in the region as AVCP, requires rigorous attention. Through careful planning to prioritize safety, the Finance employees continue to support the vital programs and functions that AVCP delivers to our tribes.



Photo Courtesy of Chelsea Alexi

## Grants & Compliance

The Grants & Compliance Department is a clear sign of AVCP's growth and progress under the Quality Improvement Process. It was created in 2016 to support AVCP's 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 programs with budget to actuals and the budgeting process, supports internal controls procedures and the Finance Department in preparing for annual audits, and assists with required reporting to grantors.

Grants & Compliance contributes to the steps AVCP is taking to meet compliance of our many grants while employees are working remotely.

This department monitors allowable expenses and program deliverables for our many services to clients and to tribes.

Grants & Compliance created tracking codes for COVID-19 related expenses to help AVCP monitor the impact of this pandemic to operations.



Photo Courtesy of Jon Lewis

# Human Resources

AVCP supports between 350 - 400 employees at any time. Over half of our employees work and live in our 47 surrounding communities, and 97% are Alaska Native. AVCP contributes about \$6 million per year in payroll to the YK Delta economy.

Human Resources (HR) takes very seriously the strategic objective, established by our Executive Board in 2017, to Grow Our Own. HR assists the organization in recruiting, onboarding and retaining skilled and qualified employees to support the mission of AVCP. Our efforts can be divided into three focus areas: (1) employee support, (2) benefits management, and (3) staff development.

## Employee Support

- By moving our dental, vision and life insurance benefits from Aetna to MetLife, we were able to offer our employees better care from more providers in the provider network as well as adding the access to voluntary supplemental life insurance and short-term disability. AVCP gained cost savings from this transition.
- Supporting the Finance Department in accurately reporting on AVCP transactions to prepare for an on-time audit of FY2019 to conclude by the 2020 Annual Convention.

## Staff Development

- With the hiring of a full-time staff development and trainer, we are able to improve on 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 in their community.
- We offered an intense two-day training to supervisors on conflict resolution and communication.
- We offered a hot topic supervisor training every quarter.

## Benefits Management

HR is making expanded use of our support vendor, Automatic Data Processing Inc. (ADP). We have worked very hard on a process to make sure all the benefit information is accurate and running smoothly in the program.



*Photo Courtesy of Donna Pleasant*

# Information Technology

Information Technology is the backbone of AVCP daily operations. We provide and maintain computers, other electronic office tools, and the AVCP Local Area Network to support AVCP operations and efficiency.

- Completed department reorganization, resulting in a reduction in staff from 9 to 7 team members
- Established internet security firewalls to protect the small office village networks
- Deployed the Bethel telephone system general voice menu system
- Upgraded network infrastructure in Bethel to meet latest technology to support the telephone system and AVCP servers

## Continued client management tracking system (RiteTrack) implementation

- Completed RiteTrack and MIP Financial Application Integration to expedite benefit payments to clients
- Social Services and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) are complete
- Project plan in place, to complete Phase II Departments: Tribal Workforce Development & Benefits Division, village-based staff access, Human Resources Department, Tribal Services Department ID printing, Realty Department records, and Education Employment Training & Child Care

## AVCP Paperless Processes

- ITSM (new IT tracking system) is being configured and built to better serve AVCP
- Fax to Email is still undergoing research to find the best software to accommodate the AVCP VoIP Telephone System
- Several of AVCP's regular use paper forms were converted to digital versions this year

## COVID-19 Response

Remote work preparation and completion, allowing AVCP Staff to work remotely **including:** network and virtual private network (VPN) access, laptop and workstation preparation, documentation instructions, call forwarding from desk phones to cell phones, Remote Desktop access, AT&T testing in Bethel, online conferencing software, and remote

## New Projects to address network connectivity concerns

- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to address connectivity slowness to AVCP resources. Applies to all staff, including village-based Staff. This project will be complete by end of 2020.
- Bethel Infrastructure Services – WiFi services may be deployed to Essential staff for quicker connectivity to AVCP network resources.
- OKTA Single Sign On Project – to provide more efficiencies for users and logins on cloud applications as well as manage and secure AVCP Internet resources.

## 2020 IT Strategic Plan Initiatives completed items

- Verification of greater than 95% uptime for remote access services – VPN access and AVCP applications
- IT Systems - firewalls, network equipment, servers and workstations kept up to date for better protection of AVCP data
- Office 365 verification of department usage – completed ahead of schedule due to COVID-19.

# Legal and Child Advocacy

The Legal team supports all 23 AVCP departments, as well as management, and the Executive Board of Directors. We are responsible for: contract negotiations, review, and approval; supporting the programmatic and compliance work of AVCP departments; advising management and the Executive Board on governance and corporate liability matters; and advancing advocacy initiatives both in our region and beyond. The Child Advocacy Department represents the best interests of YK Delta children in state child welfare proceedings.

## Advocacy

- Hosted follow-up Tribal Law and Order Act consultation with AVCP tribes and the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Tribal Justice;
- Provided testimony in support of Alaska Legislature House Bill No. 221 (Tribal Recognition bill);
- Monitored CARES Act legislation; prepared consultation testimony; and helped provide updates and information to tribes;
- Partnered with the Tribal Justice Department to increase AVCP's support of the national Missing and Murdered Indigenous People's Movement;
- Prepared report with public safety recommendations for the Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice; and
- Provided legal support to the tribal caucus for the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact.

## Child Advocacy

Our Guardians ad Litem (GALs) continue to represent the best interests of two-thirds of the children in the YK Delta who are in the custody of the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services (OCS). Through a contract with the Alaska Office of Public Advocacy, our GALs represent approximately 200 children in Child in Need of Aid (CINA) cases through court hearings, treatment team meetings, and by visiting children and families. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our GALs have adapted to new ways of connecting with children through the use of technology.

## Programmatic and Compliance Support

During Phase Two of AVCP's Quality Improvement Process (QIP), the whole organization has focused on implementing the new division structure at AVCP. The legal team is an integral partner in that process, working with multiple departments to develop funding strategies and streamline management to increase efficiencies and support program compliance.

The arrival of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic brought many new challenges for the Legal team who worked closely with AVCP's programs and administrative departments to ensure compliance with changing grantor agency guidance and best practices for operating in a COVID-19 world. This included drafting a pandemic contingency plan and safety plan for the Community Development Division's Tribal Transportation Program, drafting Emergency MOAs to assist our compacted Tribes to use BIA CARES Act funding, assisting Tribal Services in providing the most up to date information to our Tribes, and advising departments on new coronavirus funding regulations.

*Disclaimer: The Legal Department does not provide direct legal assistance to tribes or individuals. Legal guidance to tribal courts is provided through the AVCP Tribal Justice Department and representation in CINA cases to AVCP ICWA Department compact tribes is provided 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 member tribes. This agreement provides the authority to consolidate and redesign programs and reallocate funds between 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 partial services, 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.

This Compact enables AVCP working through and with participating Tribes to redesign programs, activities, functions, or services according to Tribal priorities to enhance the effectiveness and long-term financial stability of tribal governments. The Compact enables AVCP to plan, conduct, consolidate, and administer Compact Programs or portions thereof, administered by the Department of Interior other than through BIA to the extent as provided in the annual funding agreement applicable to Non-BIA Compact Programs and to reduce the federal bureaucracy.

This Compact enables the United States to maintain and improve its unique and continuing relationship and responsibility to AVCP and its member Tribes through Tribal Self-Governance, which will allow Tribes to:

- Remove federal obstacles to effective self-governance
- Reorganize Tribal Government programs and services
- Achieve efficiencies in service delivery
- Provide a documented example of the future Federal Indian Policy.

This policy of Tribal Self-Governance permits an orderly transition from federal domination of programs and services to allow Indian Tribes meaningful authority to plan, conduct, and administer those programs and services to meet the needs of their people.



Photo Courtesy of Chelsea Alexie

# SERVICES OVERVIEW

AVCP's transformation has been driven by a Quality Improvement Process (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 2019 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 (FSC) 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 the Tribal Workforce Development; Vocational Rehabilitation; and Education, Employment, and Training. The final division under the FSC will be Family Service Community Service, 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 Process in the coming year.



Photo Courtesy of George Bright Sr.

# Benefits Division

## Social Services Department

Consisting of the following programs provided to 42 tribes:

1. Energy Assistance Program (EAP)
2. Crisis Heating Assistance Program (CHAP)
3. Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) funded by the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The following social service programs, provided through the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs Welfare Assistance Program are provided to 40 compacted tribes:

1. General Assistance (GA)
2. Burial Assistance (BA).

The two remaining Social Services programs are provided through three school districts, which includes 12 communities in the YK Delta:

1. Title VI Older Americans Act (OAA)
2. Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) (providing Elder meals)



Photo Courtesy of Geraldine Brink-Andrew

## Quality Improvement

This year, we combined the EAP and CHAP applications to reduce the time it takes to process applications and assist households as quickly as possible.

## Distributions

- LIHEAP assisted 1,832 households in FY 2019 with \$2,410,756.79 in assistance payments from our LIHEAP grant.
- EAP assisted 1,756 households in FY 2019 with a budget of \$1,550,863.91
- CHAP assisted 6 households in FY 2019 with a budget of \$195,774.05
- WAP assisted 29 households in FY 2019 with Toyo stoves, wood stoves, and doors. WAP's total budget was \$286,295
- Unspent sub-program funds were re-allocated, and a supplemental award was sent to all FY19 eligible EAP clients at the end of the program year.
- AVCP provided Burial Assistance to 38 families in calendar year 2019
- AVCP provided General Assistance to 0 persons in calendar year 2019

## Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Department

The goal of our TANF Program is to provide comprehensive services that meet the basic needs of the families in our region, while enabling families to become self-sufficient by strengthening families. The primary goals of the AVCP TANF Program are the four purposes of the federal TANF program, as described in section 401 of the Social Security Act:

1. To assist needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes
2. To reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
3. To prevent out of wedlock pregnancies
4. To encourage the formation and maintaining of two-parent families

AVCP TANF is a temporary assistance program that assists needy families with dependent children under the age of 18, or families with children under the age of 19, who are still enrolled in school, as full-time students. AVCP TANF also assists pregnant women in their last trimester of pregnancy that have no other children. AVCP TANF is a program that provides services to all qualified clients, regardless of nationality, and to all eligible clients who qualify for services under the four purposes of TANF.

### Youth

- AVCP TANF provided funding to Campfire Alaska that served youth in the communities of: Akiak, Alakanuk, Aniak, Atmoutluk, Chevak, Chuathbaluk, Hooper Bay, Kongiganak, Kotlik, Kwigillingok, Lower Kalskag, Marshall, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, and Upper Kalskag
- AVCP TANF provided funding to the Workforce Development Division, to connect TANF clients and young adult tribal members under age 25, with employment, training, and educational opportunities
- AVCP TANF provided funding to the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP), for youth from the AVCP region, to access resources to better prepare them for success in future learning opportunities and receive education needed to prepare for college and careers
- AVCP TANF provided funding to the ICWA Structured Decision Making (SDM) project to keep children safe at home, and to provide direct support prior to outside agencies getting involved.

### Distributions

- In FY 2019 AVCP TANF served 5,164 families, with an average of 430 families per month
- In FY 2019 AVCP TANF provided \$3,065,152.00 in cash benefits to families in the AVCP region
- AVCP TANF provides funding to the Healthy Families Program, to provide a culturally relevant program, for families who are working towards self-sufficiency

# Head Start

AVCP Head Start Program nurtures children in their culture through the incorporation of Yup'ik language and providing opportunities for children to explore a variety of cultural activities that are relevant in their community, with an emphasis on parent involvement.

AVCP Head Start receives a large portion of its funding from the Office of Head Start (OHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), a component of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), who administers the Head Start Program.

The objective of the Head Start program is to promote school readiness of low-income children by enhancing children's cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Comprehensive center-based or home-based services are provided to children and their families. These include health, nutrition, social, and other services, determined to be necessary by the Family Needs Assessment, in addition to education and cognitive development services. Services are designed to be responsive to each child's and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.

AVCP Head Start is funded to serve 221 children and families in the following communities:

- |              |                |             |                |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Akiachak  | 4. Kotlik      | 7. Iqugmiut | 9. Tuntutuliak |
| 2. Bethel    | 5. Quinhagak   | 8. Tuluksak | 10. Tununak.   |
| 3. Chefornak | 6. Scammon Bay |             |                |

We employ 52 full-time employees across our 11 sites, and approximately 20-25 part-time substitutes.

**Growing our own:** we encourage our staff to continue their education to become more academically prepared to teach our children and work with families. We work continuously with the University of Alaska, Kuskokwim University Campus (KuC) and the AVCP Workforce Development Division to provide scholarships, to guide our staff in higher education.

As of June 1, 2020 AVCP Head Start consists of

4 teachers with an AA in Child Development	9 teachers/staff working on AA or BA degrees	5 staff have AA Degrees	4 staff with family advocacy training	1 teacher received a BA degree in early childhood education
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New computers were purchased for all center-based and home-based sites and with the assistance of the AVCP IT staff, all AVCP Head Start sites now have internet connectivity and email access, to better enable them to access and input child data.

AVCP Head Start purchased new editions of Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold for center-based and home-based sites. We are currently working with ChildPlus to provide webinar training for our Teachers.

\$2,654,143 = Federal Award	<b>Due to COVID-19 and State mandated closures of all educational facilities, our centers closed March 16. We continued to provide remote educational services to our children and families. AVCP Head Start worked with local school districts who received a Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Waiver to provide daily breakfasts and lunches for our children.</b>
\$52,465 = Cost-of-Living Adjustment	
\$58,786 = Quality Improvement	
\$194,216 = COVID Cares Act	
<b>Total 2020 Grant Award = \$2,959,610</b>	

## 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 at a workshop or community gathering to learn from Elders and group participants through the sharing of stories and traditional knowledge.

The Healthy Families program utilizes a grassroots model for culturally based services. The department provides Healthy Families workshops for tribes and tribal members in the AVCP region. They can also be utilized as a resource for first responders and law enforcement in our villages as well as Tribal Courts.

- Hosted 5 Healthy Families Workshops in Bethel
- 17 total regional Elders participating in Qasgiq
- Successfully Hosted 2 virtual Healthy Families Workshops via Skype, in May and June 2020
- Program and partnership outreach continued through presentations for various organizations and programs.
- 6 virtual Healthy Families Workshops scheduled for July through September 2020
- Successful transition to delivering services remotely during COVID-19 pandemic
- Hosted 4 Qasgiq sessions in Bethel
- Virtual Qasgiq sessions being designed and planned for 2 sessions, August – September 2020

*Photo Courtesy of Jon Lewis*



# Indian Child Welfare Act

AVCP's ICWA Department 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. Our ICWA team works with compacted tribes to protect their interests in state court child protection cases.

Through the Quality Improvement Process 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



Sub-regional staff will be based in Aniak, St. Mary's, Toksook Bay, Hooper Bay, and Emmonak. To date, Aniak and Emmonak are staffed with CFSSIII's who have oversight to their regions CFSSII's.

- Establishment of a diligent relative search effort initiative in partnership with the State of Alaska, Office of Children's Services (OCS)
- 73% of all Native children in CINA (Child in Need of Aid) custody for 2019 reunified with their parents.
- Tribal intervention with State of Alaska cases decreased from 73% in 2018 to 69% in 2019
- Family Early Intervention and Prevention Unit team is actively working with families.

October 2019 to June 29, 2020:

- 152 family SDM screens were obtained
- High and Very High: 37 families were referred to Prevention Unit
- Families participated and serviced/ closed: 24



## Workforce Development Division

*As part of the AVCP Quality Improvement Process, we have begun restructuring similar services into divisions for improved service delivery. The new Workforce Development Division is made up of three departments that focus on preparing people for careers that allow for a self-sufficient lifestyle. These three departments include:*

- 1. Tribal Workforce Development Department*
- 2. Education, Employment, Training*
- 3. Vocational Rehabilitation Department.*



Photo Courtesy of Sam Crow

# Workforce Development Division

## Tribal Workforce Development Department (TWD)

The Tribal Workforce Development (TWD) Department’s mission is to reduce individual reliance and future dependence on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) social services benefits by offering professional development programs in our region. TWD provides job preparation and job supportive services designed to help families on TANF and tribal youth under 25 years of age.

TWD works to ensure tribal members gain and retain paid employment, which in turn, enhances self-sufficiency. The TWD team is made up of 39 Workforce and Benefits Navigator staff located in 32 Tribal Job Centers across the AVCP region. TWD Workforce & Benefits Navigators, supported by the Benefits Division, now provide TANF case management support services in our Tribal Job Centers.

TWD serves as a leading resource in our AVCP communities and strives to nurture the economic well-being of the AVCP region. Our 32 Tribal Job Centers serve as a focal point for local and regional workforce development initiatives, while preparing tribal members for jobs, training, and college.

- 73 notarizations
- 110 active general education development (GED) clients
- 48 students received application assistance and scholarship funding for vocational trainings
- 22 students received application assistance and scholarship funding for college
- 14 clients obtained driver’s permits
- 52 clients obtained employment
- 548 TWD Clients were contacted by Workforce & Benefits Navigators, while working remotely during the Covid-19 Pandemic, to ensure clients' services continued.



View more client success stories @AVCPAlaska on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn

# Workforce Development Division

## Education, Employment, Training, & Child Care (EET/CC)

The AVCP Education, Employment, Training & Child Care Department affirms the following goals for its programs:

1. To promote the economic and social development of our tribal members in order to reduce joblessness in accordance with the goals and values of the communities we serve.
2. To support education, employment, training, and economic development activities in order to more fully develop the academic, occupational and literacy skills to make such individuals more competitive in the workforce.
3. To assist our tribal members in succeeding in the workforce by encouraging self-sufficiency and helping clients to familiarize themselves with the world of paid work, and facilitating the creation of job opportunities, and services related to those activities.

- In 2019 EET/CC served a total of 778 clients, a total of 194 that had educational and training objectives. Out of the 194 students, 92 students received their degrees or certificates, 93 are continuing, and 9 did not achieve their degrees or certificates. We provided a total of \$523,000.00 in scholarships.
- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EET/CC team contacted 2,575 clients while working from home, to ensure the continuation of client services.
- We contracted with Yuut Elitnaurviat, our regional training facility, to provide funding for the following courses and career paths: Adult Basic Education – General Education Development (ABE-GED) facilitators (in 20 YK Delta communities), Airframe & Powerplant Mechanics, QuickBooks, Construction Laborer, Welding 202, Commercial Driver's License, Boiler/Toyo Maintenance, 2 Village Police Officer and Tribal Police Officer classes, and Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER). We had a total of 93 individuals from different villages that attended these trainings.
- Our Summer Youth Program contracted with 35 tribes, to provide opportunities for youth between the ages of 14 and 21-years old. We had a total of 317 youth attendees, who gained work experience in their communities through the summer of 2019. We funded a total of \$350,000.00 for this summer youth program.
- We provided child care opportunities for 138 families with a total of 321 children. We funded the childcare services while the parent worked, went to training or college, or completed subsistence activities.
- We held two Child Care Provider Trainings in Bethel, with a total of 90 providers in attendance.



# Workforce Development Division

## Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

AVCP's Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Department assists tribal members who have a physical or mental disability in entering 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, other assistive devices, transportation, basic living costs, housing assistance, training, higher education, and self-employment.

The Tribal VR Program operates under discretionary funds and is flat funded at \$473,104 annually. VR is operating in its final year of a five-year grant cycle, ending September 30, 2020 (2015-2020).

- 53 open consumer cases with case plans
- 34 new referral clients, 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.
- 29 successfully closed cases, including 24 subsistence plans
- 4 village visits conducted to meet with tribal councils, schools, and clinics to provide outreach
- Provided 16 webinar workshops by American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Training & Technical Assistance Center, for staff development and training
- Attended 2019 Annual Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation (CANAR) Conference
- Completed a pilot project in collaboration with LKSD for high school clients by establishing, operating, and managing a student store
- Completed 10 VR presentations to tribes, schools, Alaska Job Center, and ONC.

VR continues to maintain partnerships with other agencies including:

- Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
- Bethel Therapeutic Court, State of Alaska
- Assistive Technology of Alaska
- Access Alaska, Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Department of Labor, Statewide
- Tribal VR's, School Districts
- Housing Authorities
- Alaska Office of Children's Services
- Yuut Elitnaurviat
- Traumatic Brain Injury Network
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Director continues her membership on the Governor's Council on Statewide Independent Living

# Cultural and Environmental Sciences

The C&ES Department pursues five distinct but interrelated missions:

1. To assure that all Realty transactions comply with federal cultural preservation law, including 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) for real estate transactions;
3. To administer the ANCSA 14(h)(1) Historic and Cemetery Sites program on behalf of Calista Corporation;
4. To provide technical and logistical assistance to tribal environmental programs with funding provided through U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP); and since 2018,
5. To initiate the reorganization and sustainable operation of the Yupiit Piciryarit Cultural Center (YPCC) Museum

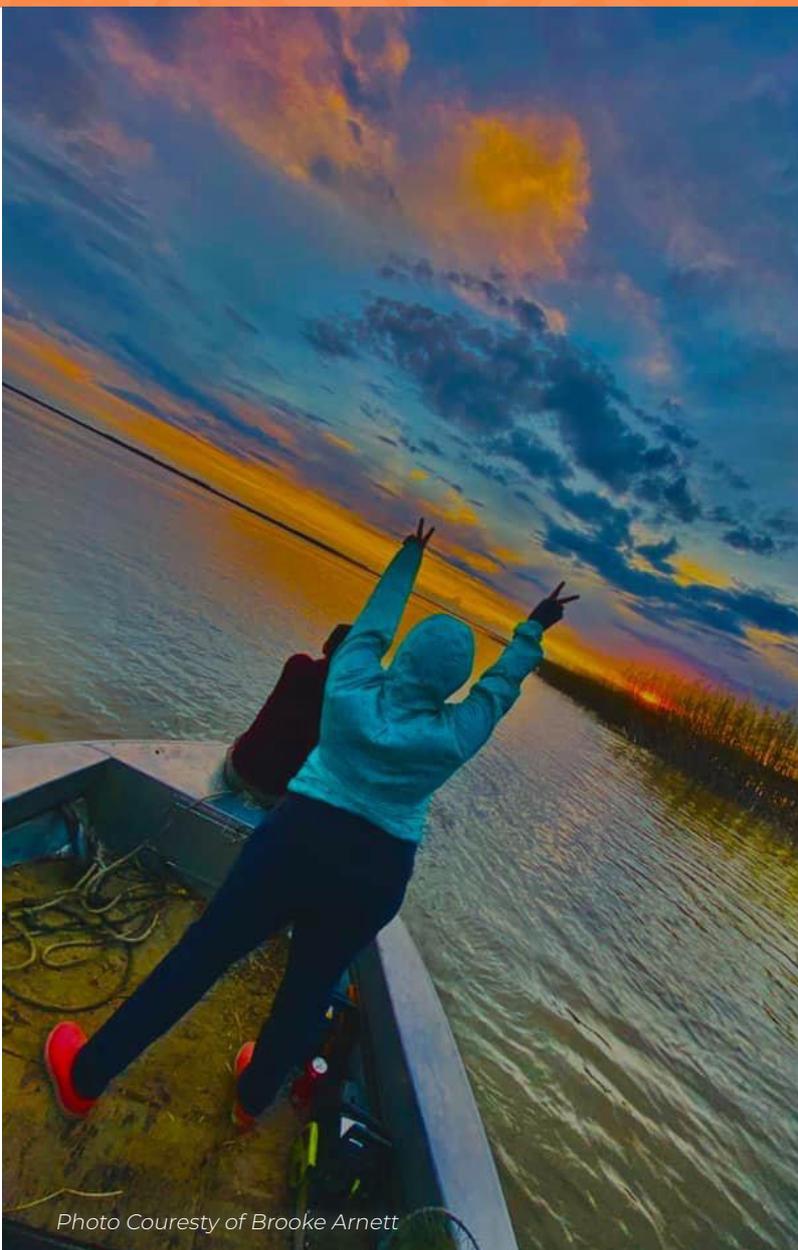


Photo Courtesy of Brooke Arnett



Photo Courtesy of Asiann John

# Cultural and Environmental Sciences

Our environmental staff continue to enhance their skills and improve their ability to help our member tribes with their environmental projects. The AVCP Environmental Coordinator and Environmental Planner both maintain HAZWOPER certifications and have practical experience with hazardous wastes, freon removal, brown fields documentation, and a variety of other environmental projects. Most of our member tribes fund their environmental programs through EPA IGAP grants each year and they often rely on AVCP to provide technical assistance in grant proposal preparation, project management and grant compliance. Though the COVID -19 pandemic delayed our preparing for this field season, we still formalized a comprehensive water quality training and testing initiative with 5 communities during September 2020. This will hopefully be a pilot project for collecting quantitative water quality data over the next several seasons.

The C&ES Department collaborated with Delta Backhaul to expand our backhauling program with AVCP member tribes. We held our most successful community backhauling drive during July 2019 and removed approximately 140,000 pounds of recyclable material from the Middle Kuskokwim villages and Bethel. Though the COVID-19 pandemic delayed planning for our 2020 backhauling projects during the spring of 2020, we continued to collect recyclables from Bethel and surrounding villages during the summer of 2020 and received significant funding and assistance from Delta Backhaul, Donlin Gold, and the Native Village of Napaimute to continue AVCP's recycling program.

The AVCP Archaeologist continues to participate with the YPCC Museum Advisory Committee established two years ago as a component of the YPCC Museum Initiative. The Advisory Committee collaborated more closely with the UAF Museum of the North and the National NAGPRA Committee during 2020 to discuss better methods for conducting tribal outreach and consultation and to facilitate repatriations of ancestral human remains to tribes within the YK Delta region. Towards the end of 2019, we successfully completed a NAGPRA protocol manual that is specific to our region and will be applied to two test cases at the Museum of the North during 2021. Because of the COVID -19 pandemic, we were not able to conduct necessary field work during the summer for several Realty transactions and may be forced to postpone some of our pending caseload until the 2021 summer season.

With an AVCP Museum Coordinator in place at the YPCC Museum for the last two years, we made substantial progress towards formalizing policies and procedures, fiscal management systems and professionalizing the museum facilities and collections. With those written instruments in place, AVCP was able to apply for several federal and private grants with the expectation of stabilizing our operating budget. Mary Woods became the Interim Museum Coordinator in January 2020. Mary had worked for several years as a museum technician at the YPCC Museum and has strong experience in managing and overseeing our collections. We are very fortunate to have Mary on board at the museum and look forward to her working with and coordinating exhibits for us in the future.



Photo Courtesy of Benjamin Maxmillion Charles

# 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 program and staff development and collaboration with partners.

## Focused Development and Staffing

- Developed and distributed a regional survey for Tribes to assist in determining priorities and focus areas for coming years.
- Hired an additional staff member to assist with department operations, focusing on Forestry and Fire Preparedness-related programs and services.
- Celebrated the rehire of our Pilot Station Sonar Fisheries Technician for his 22nd year!

## Partner Collaboration

- Staff continued commitment to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee in developing 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.
- Continued the coordination for the Chaninik Qaluyat Nunivak (CQN) Work Group, with the Alaska Seafood Cooperative and the Bering Sea Elders Group.
- With the CQN Work Group, assisted in initiating Year 2 of a temperature-sensing study of the sea floor.
- Continued work on Steering Committees for ICC Alaska Projects: Food Sovereignty & Self Governance and Food Security Initiative.
- Working with the YK CEDS Steering Committee on the 2020 update.

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:

- Planning for Records Archiving is near completion and implementation. This project will allow Realty to archive 50 years of records.
  - Hired Data Entry Clerk to begin archiving to create more office space for more personnel to tackle backlog of Probate and Transactions.
- Reduced IIM Accounts from \$124,670.00 to \$14,620.00 with pending requests at BIA to refund and reduce \$7,400.00 more that will reduce amount in outstanding IIM Accounts to \$7,220.00.
- Thirty Nine (39) Probate cases prepared and submitted to BIA for review since last convention.
- Two (2) business leases, Two (2) Negotiated Sales, completed and approved by Alaska Regional Director.
- Exhaustive Search, Right of Way and Been Verified Policies completed.

# Community Development Division

AVCP established the Community Development Division (CDD) through its Quality Improvement Process in October 2019. The CDD is comprised of the following programs: Tribal Transportation (TTP), Housing Improvement Program (HIP), Economic Development (ED), and Construction.

## Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)

AVCP entered into an agreement with the Federal Highways 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 in villages = \$9,550
- Fuel purchased locally in villages = \$7,879
- Force account salaries paid to tribal members = \$102,103
- Amount spent on local barging/shipping vendors = \$39,100
- Amount spent with local businesses = \$17,112
- Kuskokwim Ice Road support = \$6,000 + in-kind maintenance



## 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).

- Successful completion of Stage III Technical Memo
- Successful update of the YK Corridor Plan

## Housing Improvement Program (HIP)

AVCP receives BIA HIP funds through the OSG self-governance compact agreement. HIP is a home repair, renovation, replacement, and new housing grant program for eligible American Indian and Alaska Native individuals and families who have no immediate resources for standard housing.

## Economic Development (ED)

Develop regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that will encompass current and future potential projects.

## 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 assisted Compacting tribes through these activities:

- Memorandum of Agreement (funding agreement) continued between AVCP and compacted ATG tribes.
  - Provided 18 two-drawer fireproof file cabinets to ATG tribes
- Hosted in partnership with UAF-KuC Occupational Endorsement Tribal

Management courses for 2 credits each:

- QuickBooks training- December 9-11, 2019
- Collaborated with KUC in acquiring USDA grant for virtual courses
- Partnered with AVCP Tribal Justice for 2 trainings- October 2019 and February 2020
- Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) Consultation for AVCP Tribes February 2020
- Issued Tribal IDs at the tribe's request for Compact and non-Compact tribes
  - Resolution authorizing AVCP to issue ID for their tribal members 18/56 recieved
  - Real ID Act deadline pushed back to 2021
  - AVCP Tribal ID printer upgraded to print Enhanced IDs
- Provided approximately 500 Tribal IDs to tribal members at the Joe Lomack Building from October 2019 to June 2020.
- Developed policies and procedures to guide the work of the department
  - Remote Tribal ID Policy
- Collaborate with BIA in reorganizing Village of Red Devil Council with the election process
- COVID-19 Response
  - Remote Workplan/ Employee Form/ Weekly Log templates/information of tele-work capabilities- sent to all tribes
  - Collected COVID-19 mandates/public notices from tribes to share on website
  - US Treasury CARES Act - provided technical support and assisted 55 of 56 tribes to successfully meet submission deadline of April 17, 2020
  - 2020 ATG Emergency COVID-19 Memorandum of Agreement between AVCP and compacted ATG Tribes
  - Provided technical support, assistance and shared information to all tribes.
  - Hosted 3 CARES Act teleconferences and took part in one KYUK Coffee Talk
  - Hosted United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) teleconference regarding CARES Act
  - Collaborated with Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on Kuskokwim River breakup

# Tribal Justice

The Tribal Justice Department assists AVCP Member Tribes by enhancing, developing, implementing, and re-establishing tribal court systems. We work closely with member tribal court systems by providing guidance, support, and training.

Tribal Justice 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 2019 and 2020 focusing on funding, hosting trainings, expanding our department’s resources on avcp.org, and providing technical assistance and in-person strategic meetings with tribal courts of the AVCP region.

The 2020 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 FY2020 for the Tribal Justice Department totaled over \$1.2 million dollars.

Distributed P.L. 280 funding:

- FY2016 (40 Tribes) completed
- FY2017 (34 Tribes) 80% completed
- FY2018 (36 Tribes) 50% completed

Tribal Justice held four Tribal Court Master Series Trainings and made training material publicly available on avcp.org. Presenters included AVCP Tribal Justice Department partners from: Paimiut Tribal Court, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Tlingit & Haida Tribal Court, Alaska Legal Services Corporation, and the Alaska Court System.

We successfully transitioned to virtual trainings, holding one telephonic training and one Tribal Justice Summit.

- Instituted audio and video recordings of Tribal Justice Department trainings with editing of audio and 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 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.
- Tribal Justice Department is now fully staffed once again with the hiring of a Tribal Justice Manager and a Tribal Justice Assistant Manager.



*Photo Courtesy of Mildred Lupie, April 2020, Kongiganak, Alaska*

# Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO)

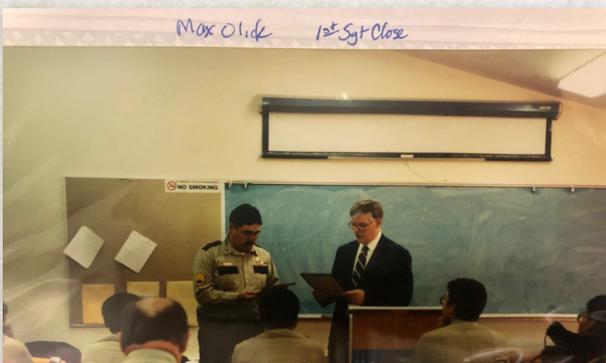
VPSO Program serves all 56 tribes within our region. All tribes can utilize the VPSO Program to enhance public safety in their communities. The presence of VPSOs significantly improves the quality of life in participating villages.

AVCP VPSO Program trains and employs residents of the 48 communities in our region as first responders to public safety emergencies such as search and rescue, fire protection, emergency medical assistance, crime prevention, and basic law enforcement.

The Alaska State Legislatures appropriates VPSO funding through the Alaska Department of Public Safety (DPS), Alaska State Troopers (AST) Program, through a yearly grant beginning from 1st of July to end of June, the following year.

In FY 2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) the Alaska Department of Public Safety did away with VPSO travel (known as temporary duty yonder or TDY) in other villages because it determined it did not align with the statutes of the VPSO statewide program. Despite this action, we pushed forward with progress which are:

- We continue to strive to reduce site visit findings from Department of Public Safety from previous years. We had one finding for this fiscal year and we are working to make corrections to the finding.
- Recruitment continues to be the highest priority in our region. We have implemented a new process of conducting thorough background investigation for VPSO Applicants which our grantor, DPS/AST has been conducting in previous years. This has greatly reduced the hiring time of new VPSOs.
- In last fiscal year (2019) U. S. Attorney General Barr visited Bethel in May and met with AVCP's Public Safety Task Force to learn about solutions to improve public safety, which resulted in a declaration of a rural public safety crisis in Alaska. As a result, in this fiscal year, regional tribes were provided more opportunities to receive various federal public safety to increase local law enforcement staff.
- Continued providing public safety service despite COVID-19. We established protocol and procedures for the safety of each officer and community member.
- Sgt. Daniel Max Olick Sr. of Kwethluk retired as of May 2020. He was the longest serving VPSO, not just in our region, but in the entire history of the VPSO Program across the State of Alaska. Max will be greatly missed but we gained other VPSOs in his place.
- We currently have 5 VPSOs and have potential VPSOs that are in the background process. We will continue to accept VPSO applicants who are interested in this adventure.
- Establish a new Memorandum of Agreement which includes a more full explanation of the process of obtaining a VPSO in the given community.





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