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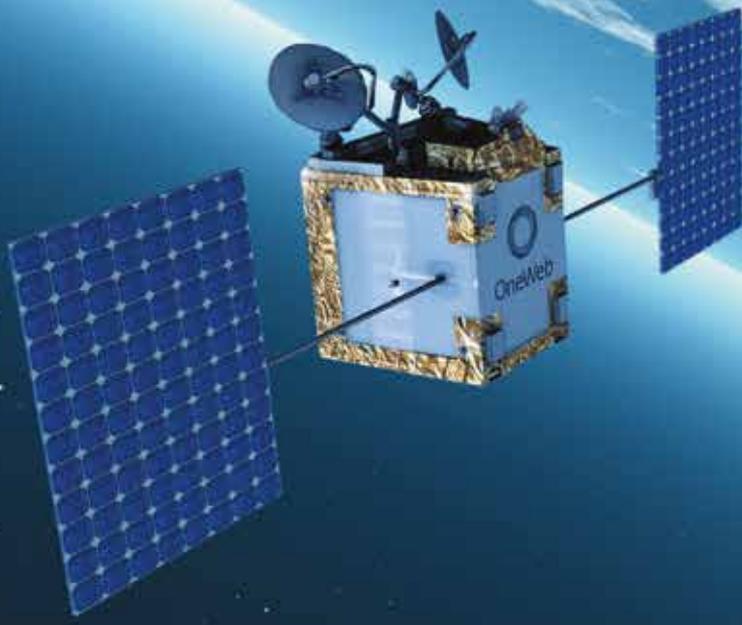
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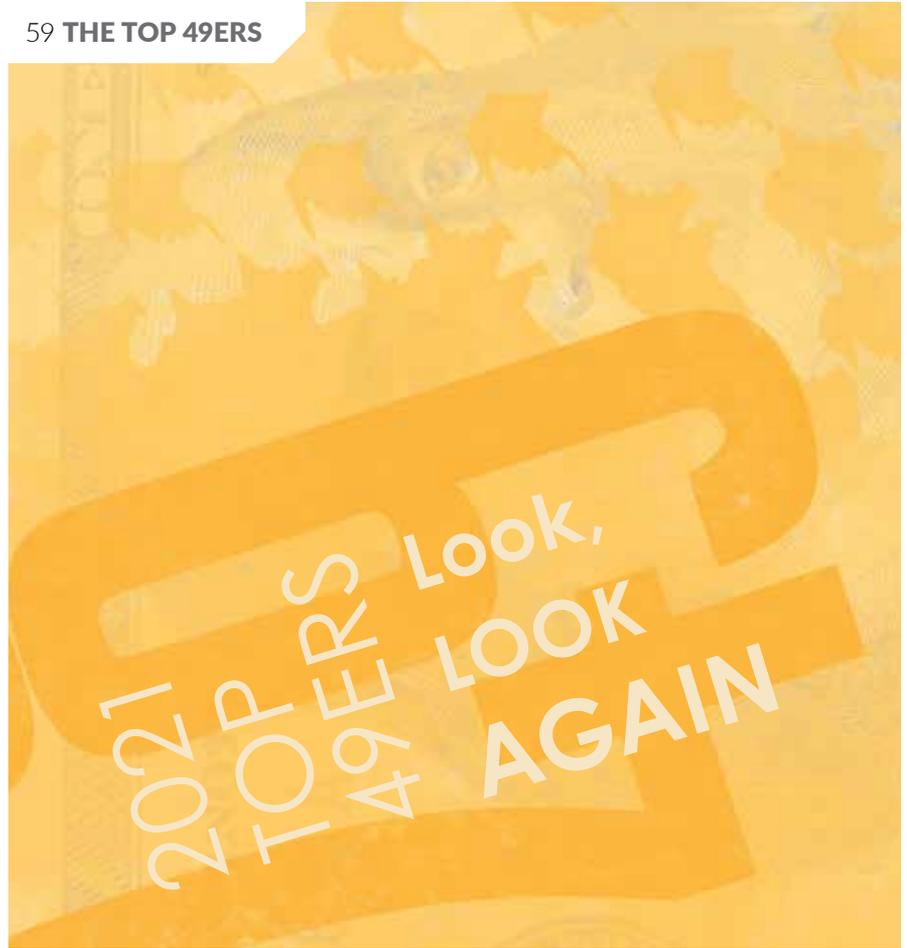


86 THE '50TH 49ER'
Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group
By Tracy Barbour

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Corrections to September 2021: On page 30, we misspelled the name of one of RSA's principals: the correct spelling is Channing Lillo. On page 96, we errantly stated that the Biden Administration "intervened" in a lawsuit that aimed to halt construction at ConocoPhillips' Willow development; to clarify, the US Department of Justice argued that the BLM and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, defendants in the lawsuit, properly followed environmental laws leading up to the project's initial federal approval. On page 98, it reads, "The passage of Ballot Measure 1 was an important step in that process." Alaskans voted against Ballot Measure 1; its failure to pass was an important step in building fiscal stability for the oil and gas industry to operate.

59 THE TOP 49ERS



ABOUT THE COVER

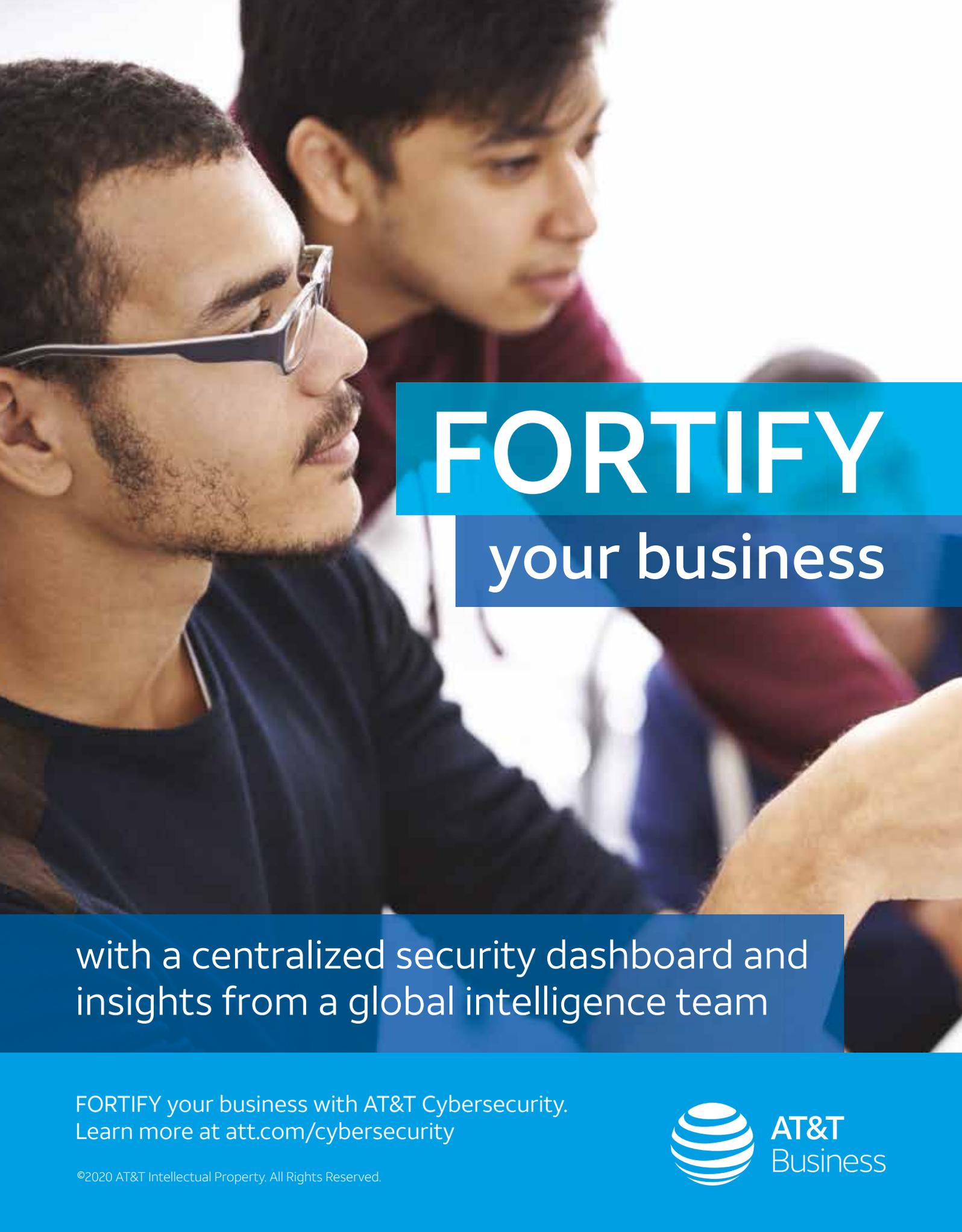
"Look, look again." The words from our cover story speak to the narrative of the 2021 Top 49ers. Last year threw a lot at the world, and as it became evident that our definition of "normal" would require some reimagination, *Alaska Business* decided it was time to call for a shift in perspective.

The 2020 Top 49ers theme explored the triumphant journeys of the companies that made the list. It was a celebration of Alaska businesses who weathered an unprecedented upheaval. Now that journey has brought us back to a place that looks a little less familiar than before. But one small change of perspective is all it takes for things to look surprisingly sunnier.

Sometimes we find success by looking at the same problems through a different lens, which is exactly what it took to be a 2021 Top 49er. It also makes for a fun artistic challenge—we hope you take one more look at our cover and agree.

Cover by Monica Sterchi-Lowman

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FROM THE EDITOR

Alaska Business Art Director Monica Sterchi-Lowman and I have both started buying more cut flowers. Today I bought one small bouquet of carnations and another of mums (I thought they were daisies until I saw the receipt), and I was “arranging” them and making a complete mess on my desk when Monica stepped into my office.

Mopping up water and sweeping leaves into my trash can, I told her that, in recent weeks, if I see a bunch of flowers for \$10 or less—and it catches my eye—I just buy it. I used to need a justification to buy flowers, cheap or not, especially for myself.

But on the grand scale of things I spend money on, \$10 or so once a week to brighten my morning is worth it. I am worth it. I’m not sure why I ever thought differently. And so is Monica, who it turns out has fallen into the same mindset.

It’s also undoubtedly worth it to the rest of the *Alaska Business* staff, who reap the benefits of a managing editor and an art director who start their days with a smile.

What brought on the change? I don’t know. I just know, standing in the Carrs floral department one morning on my way to the office, that my perception of value, worth, and how often I should support the cut flower industry shifted.

For some time, we’ve been interested in the idea of shifting perceptions here at *Alaska Business*, to the point that we were all on the same page when it came to adopting the theme for our annual Top 49ers special section. We’ve been intrigued and impressed by how businesses in Alaska have worked their way through the pandemic to land not back where they were but, in many cases, further ahead by reexamining their options and rethinking possible solutions.

In fact, as we compiled the data for the Top 49ers ranks this year, we fully anticipated an overall drop in revenue and a much lower bottom line than we’ve seen; we were pleasantly surprised to be wrong. Our idea of what the pandemic should have produced was incorrect, and we’re glad to shift our ideas of just how capable Alaskans are of meeting any challenge head-on.

COVID-19 has accelerated the move of many physical activities from the real world to a digital one, from shopping to healthcare. We’re no exception, developing a digital edition that has numerous options for additional, exciting content. But as we inexorably climb onto the digital bandwagon, I think our decision for the October 2021 cover and special section will remain one of my favorites for years to come—it shows off the power of print media, its ongoing strength in expressing and encapsulating a unique voice.

For this month and many beyond, we invite you to look anew at all the potential around us. **AB**



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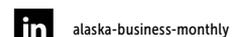
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How to choose the best replacement window company?

"Only the rich can afford poor windows," says Chris Dunn, the local owner of Renewal by Andersen. Dunn quoted Hans Andersen, founder of Andersen Windows in 1903. Renewal by Andersen is the full-service replacement window division of Andersen Windows.

"You can replace your windows and patio doors once with a highly engineered product and likely never have to do it again, or you can replace them several times with a low-end product and end up paying more in the long run," Dunn says.

The quality of the Renewal by Andersen window starts with its Fibrex® composite material.

"There is a misconception that vinyl is a good choice for windows, but we won't ever sell a vinyl window," Dunn says. "Our window material, called Fibrex, is a composite that's two times stronger than vinyl."

Andersen researched and developed its Fibrex material for 30 years before it was installed in one home. Fibrex is a wood and polymer composite that expands and contracts very little and is warranted not to warp, peel or corrode.²

"Fibrex has the strength, durability and beauty of wood windows combined with the low maintenance aspects of vinyl," Dunn says.

"The process starts with a free Window and Patio Door Diagnosis," Dunn says. "We'll assess your current windows; answer all questions; review your style, color and hardware options; and then we'll give you a down-to-the-penny



exact price that we'll honor for a whole year."

Four questions to ask a replacement window and patio door company:

1. What does your warranty cover?

Many replacement window companies will warrant their windows and patio doors – but not their installations. Renewal by Andersen has comprehensive protection with the Nation's best warranty³ coverage which includes installation coverage in easy-to-understand terms. If an issue comes up, you only have one call to make.

2. What is your window made of and can it withstand Alaskan weather?

Many vinyl replacement windows can warp, leak and cause drafts in just a few years. Renewal by Andersen uses their own exclusive Fibrex composite material in all their windows. Fibrex is two times stronger than vinyl and infinitely more beautiful and durable.

3. How will your company's window make my home or business more comfortable?

Many replacement windows will make your home more comfortable at first, but when their seals break and their energy efficiency is lost, you could be back to feeling too hot or cold in no



Eagle River, AK | July 2021

time. Renewal by Andersen's High-Performance, Low E-4® SmartSun™ Glass helps to make homes more comfortable in every season.

4. How much will your windows cost?

Many replacement window companies will give you a window estimate, but then the final bill ends up being more than the original quote. As part of its free Window and Patio Door Diagnosis, Renewal by Andersen provides an exact, down-to-the-penny price quote within 48 hours of your call, and the quote is good for one whole year.

For more information on how Renewal by Andersen can help solve your window and patio door problems, call 907-885-2720 or visit AlaskaWindowPros.com.



¹Renewal by Andersen of Alaska is a locally owned and operated company. This Renewal by Andersen location is an independently owned and operated retailer License #1015195. "Renewal by Andersen" and all other marks where denoted are marks of Andersen Corporation. ©2021 Andersen Corporation. All rights reserved. ©2021 Lead Surge LLC. All rights reserved. ²See Renewal by Andersen® Products and Installation Transferable Limited Warranty for details. ³It is the only warranty among top selling window companies that meets all of the following requirements: easy to understand terms, unrestricted transferability, installation coverage, labor coverage, geographically unrestricted, coverage for exterior color, insect screens and hardware, and no maintenance requirement. Visit renewalbyandersen.com/nationsbest for details.

Mile by Mile

Arctic mine projects gradually moving toward feasibility stage

By Vanessa Orr

For more than forty years, the development of the Ambler Mining District in the southern Brooks Range has been discussed as a way to bring jobs and revenue to the residents of the Northwest Arctic Borough, surrounding villages and landowners, and the state of Alaska. Located 168 miles east of Kotzebue, 22 miles northeast of Kobuk, and 162 miles west of the Dalton Highway, this remote area is considered a prime target for mineral exploration and production.

While there are many challenges facing the establishment of the mining district, including delays caused by COVID-19, perhaps the largest—and currently the most controversial—is the construction of a 211-mile controlled industrial access road that would provide permitted access to the district.

The proposed route would begin at milepost 161 of the Dalton Highway and stretch westward to the Ambler Mining District, covering 125 miles of state-owned property, 51 miles of federally owned and managed property, and 3.6 miles of land owned by the Northwest Arctic Borough. The remainder of the route is owned by private landowners, including ANCSA (Alaska Native



Claims Settlement Act) corporations Doyon, Limited and NANA.

Once the road is completed, Ambler Metals, a joint venture between Trilogy Metals of Canada and South 32 of Australia, would prospectively develop a mine to access a large copper-zinc mineral belt that also contains deposits of gold and silver. Not only would the mine benefit Alaska, it would serve as a domestic resource for the critical minerals required by the nation's tech-focused and developing green economy.

Current Road Status

According to Alan Weitzner, CEO and executive director of Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA), a full route survey is currently underway, which includes the surveying of forty-eight bridge sites and eleven future materials sites along the route, as well as surveying the 3.6 miles of land owned by the Northwest Arctic Borough. Specific geotechnical and ground surveys are also included in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) work plan, including work at the Wild, John, and Koyukuk River crossings.

"In addition to the route survey, our cultural resources contractor and field workers are focusing on fifty-nine specific areas identified on a cultural resources survey," says Weitzner. That project, which focuses on identifying and documenting archeological and historical cultural items, is expected to be completed in October 2021.

"We had originally scheduled more work than that, but we scaled it back during COVID to be sensitive to the fact that we'd be bringing in external contractors to areas where native villages and local stakeholders could be impacted," says Weitzner. "We reduced the workload quite a bit based on our interactions with the BLM and local stakeholders and their input on what we had planned."

Looking to build a consensus of support for the road, Weitzner says that AIDEA has been actively engaging with Doyon and NANA as well as individuals and villages along the route.

"We've shared our field season plan and our annual work plan and are fully engaging with these communities to understand their needs on a subsistence level as well as on the cultural resource

According to Weitzner, a University of Alaska Center for Economic Development study estimates that construction of the Ambler Access Road will provide 360 direct jobs. The mining district itself, which could contain up to four principal mines, could provide more than 2,700 direct jobs and an additional 2,000 indirect jobs.



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studies we're doing," he says, adding that a tribal liaison program was created to keep people along the route aware of their work. "We want to be good partners in this process."

Despite this, two lawsuits have already been filed against the federal government and the BLM's record of decision to stop the road project, including one by Tanana Chiefs Conference, which represents forty-two tribes in Interior Alaska, and the tribal governments of Alatna, Allakaket, Evansville, Huslia, and Tanana. The National Parks Conservation Association, joined by the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, Alaska Wildlife Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Earthworks, the National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, and Winter Wildlands Alliance, also filed suit to prevent the project, which would cut through the Gates of the Arctic National Preserve and cross the Kobuk River.

"These lawsuits are ongoing; the public record was recently submitted to the court by the defendant federal agencies and a briefing schedule will happen next—that usually takes about

six months," says Ambler Metals CEO Ramzi Fawaz, adding that AIDEA, the state of Alaska, NANA, and Ambler Metals are all intervenors in the case.

"There's no need for the road if there's no mine, and there's no mine if there's no access," he says. "These projects can only happen if you have the social license to get them built. That's why we're working hard to communicate with communities and to listen to them; we hope to get their support and endorsement.

"We've been traveling around the region talking about the project and sharing our plans and hearing communities' questions and concerns because it is of paramount importance to get the social license to build the road," he adds.

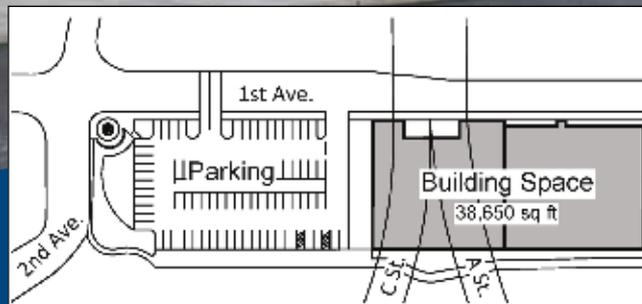
A Subsistence Advisory Committee Working Group has also been established among regional stakeholders to preserve and protect the rights of subsistence users along the route. The group will help identify road crossing locations used for subsistence and other local travel, in addition to providing input into road operations to minimize

The Ambler Metals Bornite Camp.

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the potential for adverse effects on subsistence access.

What Will the Road Cost?

According to Weitzner, preliminary costs for the road are estimated at \$500 million.

While the initial record of decision and original permitting for the route was undertaken with general funds provided by the state of Alaska, AIDEA and Ambler Metals are financing the current field season.

"AIDEA entered into an agreement with Ambler Metals for final feasibility and permitting activities to take place from 2021 to 2024," says Weitzner. "At that point, we hope to reach a final investment decision about building the road."

The \$70 million development agreement covers feasibility studies, permitting, and groundwork, and every year a new budget is approved. In 2021, AIDEA and Ambler Metals approved using \$13 million for work at the access road site, which includes the cultural survey and archeological site survey.

"When that is completed at all of the locations along the access route,

the information will be submitted to the BLM," says Fawaz, adding that the \$13 million also includes engineering and environmental work happening this year, as well as community outreach efforts.

In the meantime, AIDEA is looking to establish public-private partnerships to raise capital to fund the road's construction and operation. "In addition to moving toward final feasibility and permitting, our work activities right now include putting contract structures in place for construction and operating agreements and determining who our partners will be," says Weitzner.

The project is being designed along the lines of the DeLong Mountain Transportation System in northwestern Alaska, which services the Red Dog Mine. "The DeLong project was the state's first public-private partnership where road and storage port facilities were owned and financed by AIDEA and included a user agreement with Cominco and NANA for the operation of the road and usage fees," explains Weitzner.

"This is a similar model on a larger scale. While it's a 211-mile road

instead of a 52-mile road, the project is a little simpler because it doesn't involve storage or port facilities. However, the longer road is a little more complicated to develop," he adds.

The road would have user fees in place for larger volume users, and National Park Service and BLM permits would be required to use the controlled industrial access-only road. As plans are currently defined, there is no public access. Mines would pay tolls and mineral royalty fees that escalate as traffic or the price of minerals increase, which will be used to pay back the full cost of the road.

AIDEA will continue to collect tolls and mineral royalties after the debt is paid off, which will be used to support additional economic development and provide dividends to the state's general funds.

Construction of the road is expected to take approximately four years, which will run concurrently with Ambler Metals' development of the Arctic mine. "The full road will take four years, but there will be earlier access to the

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mine, depending on what is required," says Weitzner.

Arctic Project Progress

According to Fawaz, Ambler Metals is currently making progress on the pre-feasibility study and preparing the Arctic project for 404 permitting, which it would initiate with the US Army Corps of Engineers, the lead federal agency for the mine permit. The 404 permit authorizes placement of fill material into wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and requires selecting project alternatives that have the least impact on the environment.

"We are also doing drilling in the Arctic deposit, taking samples for metallurgical testing and other tests in order to prove resource confidence in the deposit," says Fawaz. "We didn't do this last year because of COVID, so this year we started in early June and will finish in September."

Over the summer, Ambler Metals will also explore other areas in the region, including drilling at Sunshine, Snow, and east of the Arctic deposit at a number of locations to establish if there

"There's no need for the road if there's no mine, and there's no mine if there's no access. These projects can only happen if you have the social license to get them built. That's why we're working hard to communicate with communities and to listen to them; we hope to get their support and endorsement. We've been traveling around the region talking about the project and sharing our plans and hearing communities' questions and concerns because it is of paramount importance to get the social license to build the road."

Ramzi Fawaz, CEO, Ambler Metals

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ANCSA at 50



Ambler Metals drill crew at the Arctic deposit, 2021 summer field season.

Brian Adams

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1980's



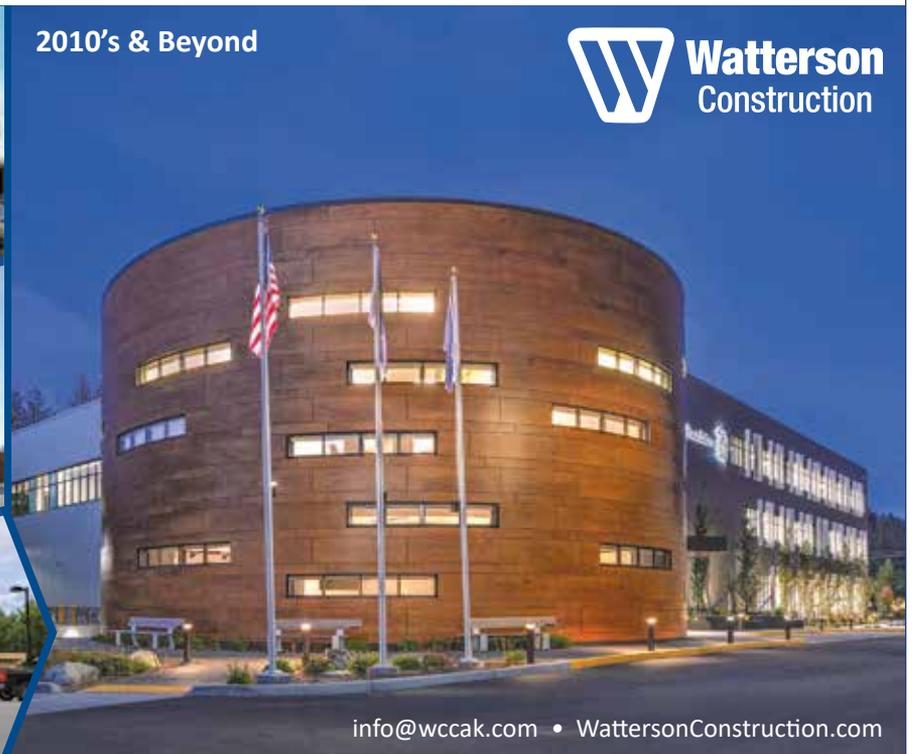
1990's



2000's



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are additional viable deposits that could extend the life of the Arctic project once it's underway.

"We're just exploring; we're not there yet," says Fawaz. "The Ambler District is a very prospective area."

As the Arctic project nears a final investment decision, Fawaz expects that the road decision will parallel its progress. "We expect that these things will happen around the same time because the projects really go hand-in-hand," he says. "About the same time the road gets its permitting and feasibility studies done, we will have finished with the mine study and permitting, which usually takes about three years. Then we hope to be able to make the decision on building the mine and building the road."

In terms of benefits, the mine will produce copper, zinc, lead, and some precious metals. Fawaz notes that copper is an essential metal used in renewable energy projects.

"We see ourselves as contributing to the new US economy, which includes renewable energy sources like electric vehicles and solar and wind turbine power generation," says Fawaz. "We

also see the mine as an instrument of growth and a way to improve the quality of life in the region and in the villages around it."

Ambler Metals has had a partnership agreement in place with NANA since 2011 with the objective of advancing the Ambler Mining District while also ensuring that the project benefits the region and villages in ways including improved infrastructure and providing direct and indirect jobs.

"For every direct job, there are potentially four, if not more, indirect jobs that will be provided in the surrounding communities," says Fawaz.

According to Weitzner, a University of Alaska Center for Economic Development study estimates that construction of the Ambler Access Road will provide 360 direct jobs. The mining district itself, which could contain up to four principal mines, could provide more than 2,700 direct jobs and an additional 2,000 indirect jobs.

"And these are really well-paying jobs, which not only helps the individuals working but their families and communities," says Weitzner.

The state is expected to earn roughly \$400 million in tax revenues, as well as \$524 million in corporate revenues and \$214 million in production tax royalties from the open pit mine, which is estimated to operate for approximately twelve years. Over the lifetime of the mine, it is expected to contribute roughly \$1.3 billion to state and local coffers.

"By enabling access to the Ambler Mining District, we are creating greater access to Alaska resources, including base minerals, metals, and strategic minerals," says Weitzner. "Alaska is an excellent resource for providing the cobalt, germanium, and gallium used in smartphones, electric vehicles, electric storage, and aircraft turbines, among other things, and it can be mined in a responsible manner.

"Opening this mining district will allow Alaska to benefit from its resources and will also broadly benefit the United States and the broader economy," he adds. "The state will become a key supplier to the nation's growth by providing a secure supply of critical minerals." **AB**

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OneWeb's LEO network and wholesale capacity to telecoms, schools, health clinics, and tribal organizations. "We're in the process of signing up customers for beta trial opportunities," says Alexander Schumann, Microcom's director of satellite broadband. "We're preparing for full service to launch in November."

New Geostationary (GEO) Satellite

Pacific Dataport is also preparing to launch its own Aurora GEO high-throughput satellite broadband service in 2022. Built by San Francisco-based Astranis, the micro-GEO satellite features the latest technology. Scaled down to the size of a washing machine, it will hover 36,000 kilometers in space directly in line with Alaska to allow optimal connectivity.

The satellite, Aurora 4A, will deliver up to 10 Gbps of broadband service—tripling the satellite capacity currently available in Alaska. It will also usher in more economical internet at a universal price point. "No longer will different regions have to pay for varying levels of service at different prices; the same service plan will be offered statewide for the same price," Schumann explains.

Finally, Broadband for All

Microcom established Pacific Dataport to solve a specific problem: a lack of affordable broadband in rural Alaska, where many residents are grossly underserved. As an experienced company with tens of thousands of satellite installations under its belt, Microcom is well equipped to solve the state's "digital divide." While traditional satellite operators constructed satellites to focus on other parts of the world, Microcom is prioritizing internet service in Alaska.

The impending LEO/GEO satellite broadband from Pacific Dataport and Microcom will provide new and redundant connectivity to help Alaskans capitalize on telehealth, remote work, business expansion, and myriad other opportunities. "We also see ourselves as a complement to any terrestrial services by providing redundancy and additional



Alexander Schumann, Microcom Director of Satellite Broadband.

capacity," Schumann says. "We're offering alternatives to rural Alaskans to help lower prices across the board."

Additionally, Microcom is progressing its plans to launch a second satellite, Aurora IV, in 2023. The Aurora Network will ultimately bring more than 100 Gbps to the market—finally facilitating ubiquitous, cost-effective internet access throughout Alaska. "We will be able to provide minimum 25X3 broadband service for \$99 a month," Schumann says. "For rural customers who are currently paying hundreds of dollars per month for service, or have no service at all, this will be a significant change. We're trying to help people in our state."



For more information, contact:

Alexander Schumann, Director of
Satellite Broadband
126 W International Airport Rd.
Anchorage, Alaska 99518
(907) 264-0006
www.microcom.tv



Chuck Schumann, Microcom Founder.

Anchorage-based Microcom has been leading the way in satellite communications in Alaska since 1984. Microcom pioneered many of the industry's "firsts" in the state: the first direct-broadcast satellite reception system, first 24-hour live broadcast television reception, first rural cable modem installation, and first Ku-Band satellite communications system. So it's only fitting that the innovator spearhead efforts to bring ubiquitous broadband to Alaska.

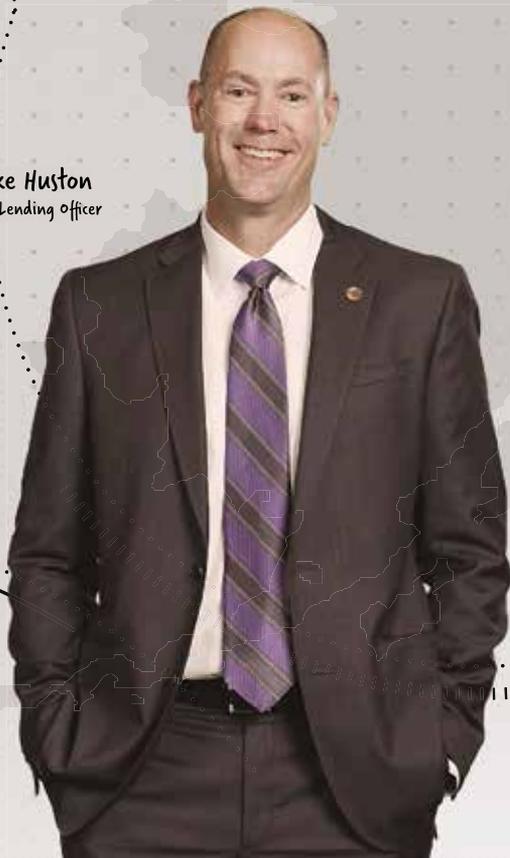
In Q4 2021, Microcom is launching OneWeb's low-earth-orbit (LEO) statewide commercial broadband service through its sister company Pacific Dataport. LEO satellites, which normally orbit less than 1,400 kilometers above the earth, can deliver dependable, less-expensive, low-latency, high-speed internet access to Alaska—even to the most remote and treacherous terrain. Pacific Dataport will connect to

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North Slope Truckers

Character, camaraderie, and
community

By Nancy Erickson

Long haul truck drivers are a unique breed. But those navigating the northernmost highway in the United States transporting supplies to the Prudhoe Bay oil fields occupy a much loftier position.

The adventure begins when truckers start their trek up the 414-mile road from Livengood (2020 census population 11 residents) 84 miles north of Fairbanks—and ends a few miles short of the Arctic Ocean in Deadhorse and Prudhoe Bay.

Maps refer to it as the Dalton Highway or Alaska Route 11. Truckers call it the North Slope Haul Road.



Construction began on the mostly gravel road in 1974 during construction of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System. Completed in just five months, the road runs parallel to the northernmost section of pipe and includes seven pump stations. The highway was named after James William Dalton, an arctic engineer involved in early oil exploration on the North Slope.

The primitive road's twists, turns, and potholes in summer, and ice, drifting snow, and temperatures dipping to -60°F in winter provides challenging driving conditions for the most seasoned drivers. Add to the mix numerous steep grades, a climb to 4,800 feet over Atigun Pass in the Brooks Range, tourists, hunters, and the proverbial summer road construction.

The road opened to the public in 1994, but the adventure ends for casual travelers at Deadhorse as they are not allowed to enter the oil fields.

Road-side services are limited or non-existent, with fuel available only at the E.L. Patton Yukon River Bridge, Coldfoot at about the halfway point, and Deadhorse.

Despite the remoteness and treacherous driving conditions, the highway supports a group of experienced die-hard truckers working for a vast array of companies and conforming to a range of safety standards who staunchly look out for one another.

"Everybody looks out for each other," says William Burke, vice president of operations for US Foods Alaska, a foodservice distributor supplying North Slope businesses. "There is a sense of camaraderie with all of the drivers who drive the road. Our drivers have told me countless stories where they have helped other drivers from other companies, as well as had other company drivers help them."

And that assistance can lift drivers out of some nasty situations.

"There are two types of truck drivers on the Haul Road: Those who have been in the ditch and those who are going," says retired trucker Kenny Seipel, who ran the Haul Road for thirty years.

"It's not if, it's when," says Del Shagen, who drives for Alaska West Express pulling five axle tankers typically filled with 10,000 gallons of fuel or chemicals used in drilling.

"We have a relatively short ice road season when a lot of freight moves to the North Slope. Once the roads start thawing, usually sometime between March and June, weight restrictions are put in place that can reduce the allowable weight by up to 50 percent."

Eric Badger, President, Alaska West Express

Those incidents by no means makes one a bad driver.

Shagen recalls being run off the road several years ago by a tractor-trailer driver who lost control on the icy roads.

"I was very fortunate," says Shagen. "Took it to the shop with a little minor body damage and [I was] on the road the next day."

Shagen owns his truck and leases it to Alaska West Express as an owner/operator, in contrast to being a company driver.

"I basically own my own business," Shagen says. "I pull their trailer, their loads. I'm more independent and make a bit more money and have more expenses."

Shagen's week typically starts in Anchorage where he hooks onto his load that has arrived at the port by tanker from the Lower 48. Other shipments go to Fairbanks by railcar where Shagen

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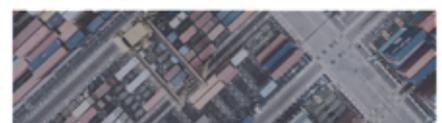
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picks up his second or third load after delivering to Prudhoe Bay and returning down the Haul Road.

The 51-year-old Anchorage resident says he enjoys his job and relishes the freedom that comes with it.

"You're on the road two days out of Fairbanks and you come back and you can do it again if you want," Shagen adds.

Alaska West Express is part of the Lynden family of companies, which employs approximately 200 drivers and mechanics in central Alaska with roughly half of those employees supporting freight movement north of Fairbanks, according to Alaska West Express President Eric Badger.

The Lynden family of companies has a long history of supporting the oil and gas industry on the North Slope.

"We regularly truck heavy haul and oversized loads such as camp modules, process modules, drill rigs, pipe, bulk liquids, and bulk dry product to the North Slope from locations around the world," Badger says.

To help support operations on the North Slope, Lynden has a terminal in Deadhorse where their drivers drop

their loads and on-site staff delivers it to the appropriate customer location. "We have both the equipment and experienced on-site staff to ensure logistics—including last mile services—are completed efficiently and according to plan," he says.

Rules and Regulations

For Alaska, truck drivers are regulated by law to fifteen hours of straight driving time. Not having to go the additional miles within the oil fields saves hours.

The regulation further states truckers must take ten hours off after each fifteen-hour haul, so time is money.

Gone are the days of paper logbooks that relied on what information the driver recorded. Now electronic logbooks attached to the truck's engine document exactly how long that driver has been traveling—or not.

Gary Healy is a company driver for Alaska West Express based out of Fairbanks who normally starts his trips in the wee hours of the morning while his family is still asleep.

Drivers with heavy-haul and oversize loads aren't always able to make the trip



Lynden companies provide transportation and logistics support for energy projects on the North Slope.

Lynden



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“Everybody looks out for each other. There is a sense of camaraderie with all of the drivers who drive the road. Our drivers have told me countless stories where they have helped other drivers from other companies as well as had other company drivers help them.”

William Burke, VP of Operations, US Foods Alaska

between Fairbanks and Prudhoe Bay in fifteen hours, while Healy can usually make a chemical load haul in eleven or thirteen hours.

“Then, however much time is on my electronic clock, I’ll drive south,” Healy says. “You have to have seven consecutive hours of sleep and the other three hours is up to you.”

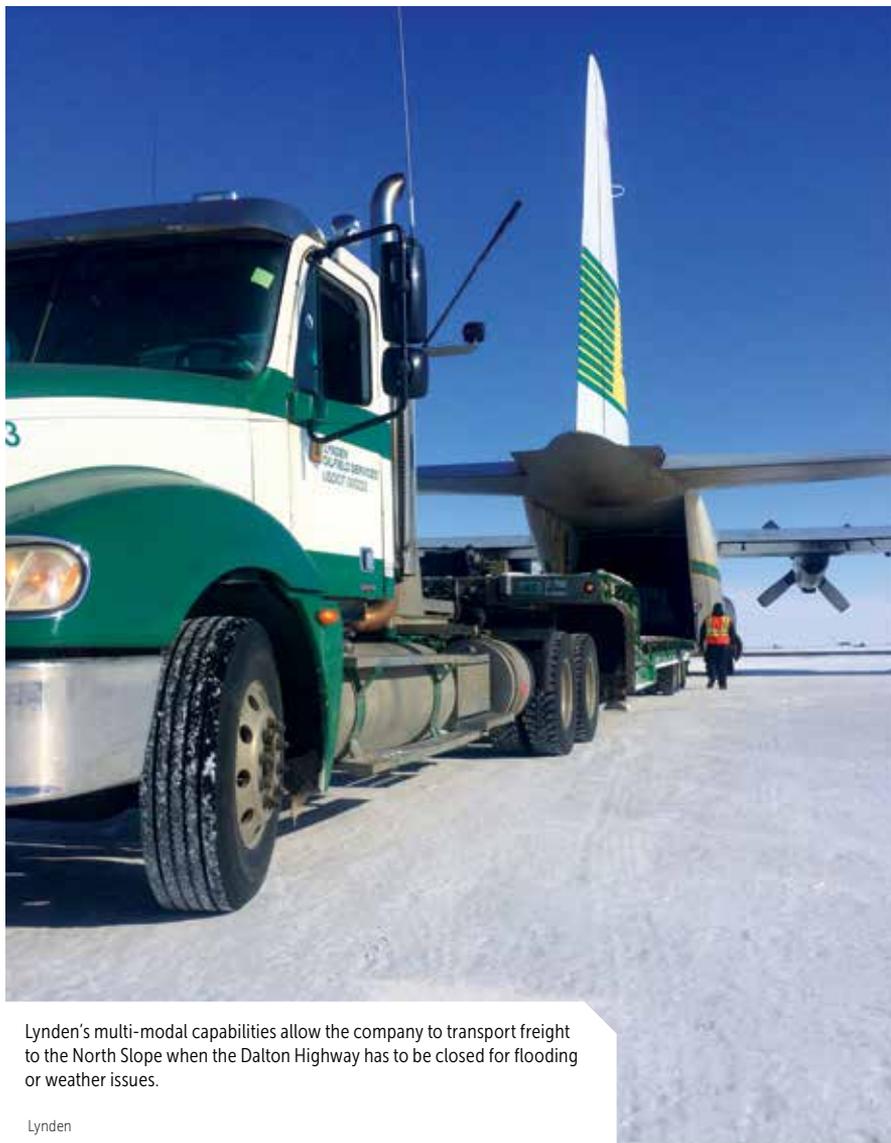
Drivers do their ten hours resting in their truck’s sleeper either in the company yard at Prudhoe Bay or in many of the pullouts along the Haul Road.

In addition to commercial vehicle licenses and endorsements for hazardous material or the ability to pull double and triple trailers, new drivers also receive Haul Road training.

Depending on how green they are, new drivers can be required to do ten trips with an experienced hand, Tate says.

“We might keep them local for a few runs to see how they’re doing and their performance in the truck,” says Tate.

“Driving the Dalton Highway requires extensive experience to ensure everything is done safely,” emphasizes Badger. “Drivers must have all of



Lynden’s multi-modal capabilities allow the company to transport freight to the North Slope when the Dalton Highway has to be closed for flooding or weather issues.

Lynden

Truckers on the Haul Road rely on communication with authorities and each other avoid accidents, learn up-to-date road conditions, and address any issues that do arise.

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We will keep creating, keep adapting, keep innovating, keep building, keep growing, keep bringing Alaskans together and keep moving forward.





“We’re a tight knit group. We just want to make sure everybody gets home safe.”

Gary Healy, Company Driver, Alaska West Express

the required training by regulations, as well as the North Slope training requirements. We don’t hire new drivers and turn them loose to go North, unless they are a known Dalton Highway driver, and even then, we still require them to convoy with our other experienced drivers for a period of time.”

Long Trips, Long Hours

Information on the clock is downloaded to the driver’s company headquarters at the end of the fifteen hours and the clock is reset.

Faith Meeker, a dispatcher for Carlile Transportation based in Fairbanks, uses that information to keep track of

her drivers and how many trips they’ve done so she knows who is available for the next haul.

“I try to create some sort of work/life balance for the drivers,” Meeker says.

But things don’t always turn out as planned.

Drivers who find themselves sitting on the side of the road because of accidents, breakdowns, or weather events don’t have to see their fifteen hours eaten away, says Alaska West Express dispatcher Cody Tate.

Tate says there are several electronic logbook options where drivers are able to change their duty status, such as “on duty and not driving.”

Drivers aren’t the only ones working long hours: dispatchers have their own vital work to do.

Scheduling all the trucks, making sure the workload is continuous and nothing gets delayed—especially during ice road season—and prioritizing freight are some big challenges, Tate says.

“We have a relatively short ice road season when a lot of freight moves to the North Slope, so we spend a lot of time focused on logistical planning

to ensure we make the most of that window,” says Badger. “Once the roads start thawing, usually sometime between March and June, weight restrictions are put in place that can reduce the allowable weight by up to 50 percent.”

Safety Is Communication

Haul Road truckers stay in touch via citizens band (CB) and satellite radio and what cell phone coverage is available.

Carlile trucks are equipped with a device called PeopleNet, according to Vice President of Operations Jeremy Miller.

“This device is connected to the truck and supported with satellite connectivity,” he says. “It allows our drivers to contact us if they have any issues. Cell phone coverage has also improved greatly over the past few years, and there are far less locations along the Haul Road that don’t have cellular coverage.”

Truckers keep close track on CB Channel 19 for state maintenance equipment that might be operating on the road, especially in winter.

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State crews water down the highway in winter to make it smoother and keep finer parts of gravel from getting blown into the ditches, Healy says.

"Road maintenance operators are often looking down, and you don't want to go by them too fast," he adds. "Everybody knows where the equipment is. You don't want to go around a corner and get surprised or drop off a hill and get surprised."

Losing that chain of communication can instill fear in the toughest of drivers.

Shagen was running with several other truckers during a blizzard with 50 mile-per-hour winds and 15-foot visibility when his alternator died and he lost all electrical power. Stalled in the middle of the road, he knew his chances were high of either getting hit or freezing, and if his fuel gelled, he would be unable to start his truck.

It took him 45 minutes to change out the alternator: getting his truck hood up in the howling wind took the greatest amount of time. And it was a struggle getting his truck started, but it fired.

No Easy Ride

Most truckers would agree staying on the road during Alaska's drastic seasonal upheavals is a huge challenge.

Summers bring dust
and

mud, with freezing rain and hurricane-force winds in winter, Healy says.

State maintenance crews put calcium chloride on the roads in the summer to control dust, but rains make it super muddy—sometimes worse than ice and snow, he adds.

"I've had to chain up for mud and it's still hard to steer, so I have had to also put chains on the front axle," Healy says.

Weather patterns seem to be changing, bringing more freezing rain in winter, he says.

Truckers hauling anything that catches a side wind on icy roads with no traction could find themselves in the wrong lane and their trailer in the other lane, trying to maneuver down the road without getting shoved into the ditch.

Meeker recalls a bad winter storm and avalanche a couple years ago on New Year's Eve that had drivers sitting at Atigun Pass for three days because the blow was so hard and maintenance crews couldn't get the road cleared.

But drivers come prepared.

Most trucks have very large fuel tanks that will get them to Prudhoe Bay and back with enough reserve to keep their trucks running in the event they get stuck for a few days, Meeker says.

"All [Carlile] sleeper cabs have auxiliary power units that run on less fuel to keep drivers warm in winter or cool in summer if they're stuck somewhere," she adds.

According to Badger, "All of our drivers, including our independent contractors, stay in the sleeper cabs of their trucks: it's their home away from home. And all of our drivers pack with them the necessary cold weather gear and safety supplies for arctic conditions."

And even in ideal conditions, the road isn't easy. Some loads are so oversized and so overweight, they need several push trucks to help them up a steep grade.

In those instances, Meeker says Carlile's heavy haul team gets called in to gauge the load and determine what kind of equipment is going to be needed.

"If it's super wide and super heavy, they'll do the math to figure out how many push trucks will be needed," says Meeker. "A lot of times we will have loads that will have three or four push trucks behind it pushing up hills."

No matter who is working or what they're hauling, everyone works together on the Haul Road.

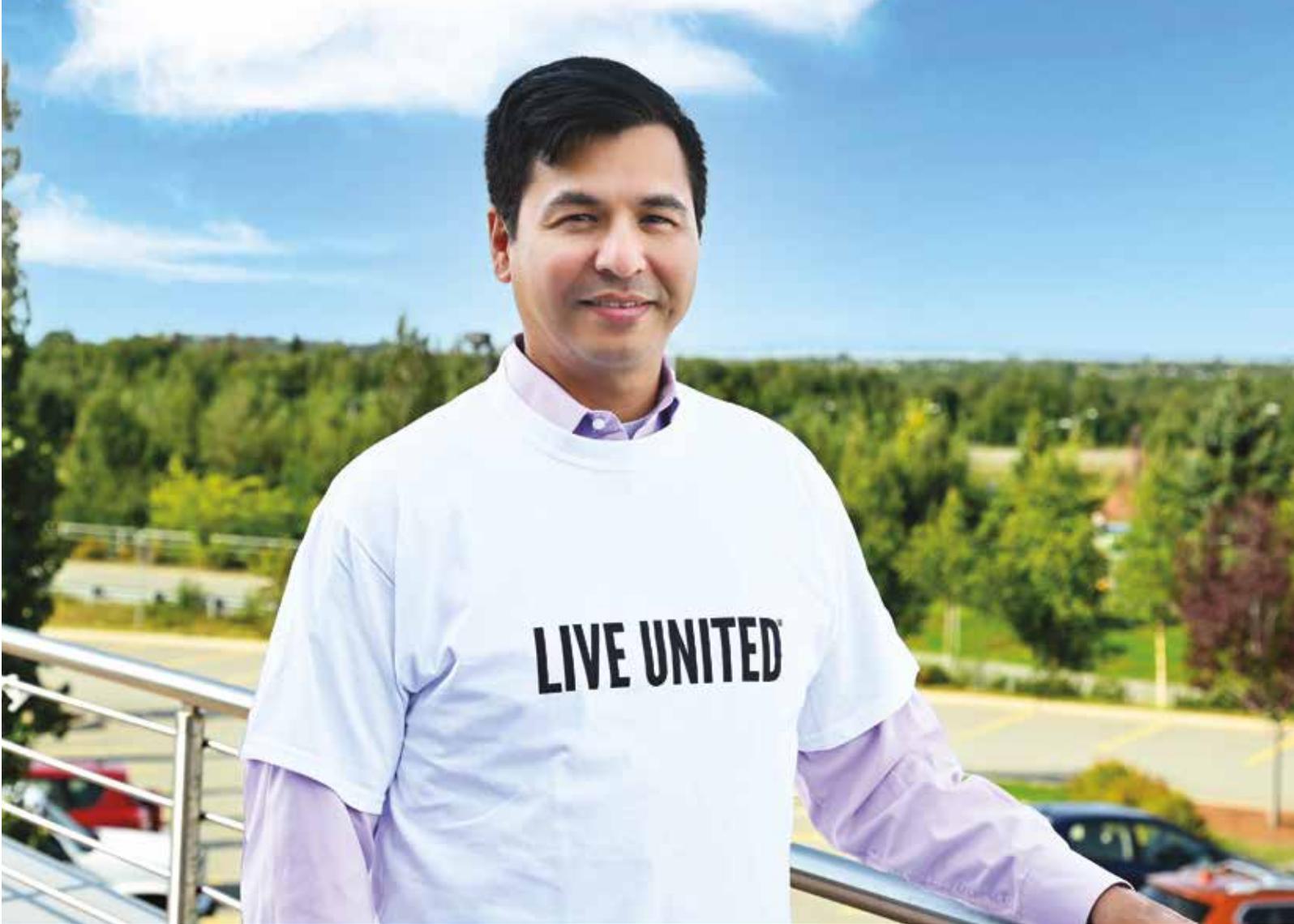
Alaska West Express' Badger says, "All of the drivers and the companies operating on the Dalton are part of a big family, and we all look out for each other and provide support if there is an issue."

"We're a tight knit group," Healy says of his fellow truckers. "We just want to make sure everybody gets home safe."

As Tate says, "The oil field never stops. That means we don't stop."

AB





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Celebrating Club 49

The 10th anniversary of
Alaska Airlines' Alaskan-
exclusive benefits
program

By Tasha Anderson

Alaska Airlines continues to soar far beyond its humble beginnings in the Last Frontier. In just 2021, and among other endeavors, Alaska Airlines:

- Announced plans to expand its fleet, adding seventeen new Embraer 175 jets in 2022 and 2023 and exercising an option to accept thirteen Boeing 737-9 MAX deliveries in 2023 and 2024.
- Partnered with Airspace Intelligence for the use of Flyways AI, which uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to assist dispatchers in making flight operations more efficient and sustainable.
- Announced a commitment and plan to reduce the company's carbon emissions to net-zero by 2040, with additional commitments to reduce carbon, waste, and water impacts by 2025.
- Joined oneworld, an alliance of airlines that provides members a global network of flights to as many as 1,000 destinations in more than 170 countries and territories.

But even as the airline finds new heights in Lower 48 and international markets, it has never lost sight of the Alaskans who, in its early days, helped build the foundation for its current growth.

So it was ten years ago that Alaska Airlines launched Club 49, a program developed for and offered exclusively to Alaskans that saves them approximately \$22 million to \$24 million per year. Even with the plummet in 2020 in airline traffic due to the global pandemic, the program has still saved Alaskans more than \$200 million since its inception.



The Club 49 Program

"On my very first day [at Alaska Airlines] there was a meeting to talk about a loyalty program exclusive to Alaskans," says Alaska Airlines Regional Vice President Marilyn Romano. "We wanted to have something that was special to those that call Alaska home. We have the name of our state on the side of every airplane, and it was a way to celebrate our culture, celebrate our history and the people in this state, and say thank you to them."

Alaskans have a special relationship with aviation because it's critical throughout the state, even for those in urban areas and on the road system. "The sky is the highway for the state," Romano says. "It's important, and just by its nature—whether it's us or any other carrier—can be more expensive than being able to load up the family car and going from point A to point B."

For all of those reasons, a decade ago on October 18 (which many will recognize as Alaska Day) Alaska Airlines launched Club 49, a benefits and rewards program for Alaska residents.

According to Romano, the program has four pillars.

- Two free checked bags, up to 50 pounds each. "It was around that time [ten years ago] that airlines were starting to charge for bags," Romano says. "That can get very expensive, especially for a family: everyone checks one or two bags, and what does that cost?"
- Weekly fare sales. "Every Tuesday, Club 49 members get an email with a special fare sale for that particular week."
- Last minute travel. "Using myself as an example, I have family in the Lower 48: I grew up in Texas," Romano says. "When my mother was ill and I got that call, I had to get on a plane quickly. Everybody knows that when you're going last minute, travel can be more expensive." To help Alaskans needing to get out of the state, Alaska Airlines offers Club 49 members two one-way 30 percent discount codes for travel within four days. "Some people will say it's an emergency for them to go to Hawai'i," Romano laughs. "We don't monitor how people use it. If that's your emergency, you can do that as well."

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- Freight for Less. This program allows Club 49 members to ship up to 100 pounds in two, 35-gallon totes or sturdy shipping containers 20x30x15 inches or smaller for \$49, plus an applicable tax.

Freight for Less

The Freight for Less program was introduced on October 18 in 2017 and was incredibly well received, Romano says; however, in 2019 the program was paused. “We have three dedicated 737-700 aircraft that do most of their flying in the state of Alaska,” Romano explains. “We discovered an issue with the bulkhead that the freight goes behind that needed to be fixed.” For the safety of those on any of the aircraft, the Freight for Less program was put on pause until the issue could be corrected.

“It took longer than we expected, and then COVID-19 happened,” she says. “And the freighters then came back into service one at a time.”

Early this year, the third 737-700 arrived back in Alaska; before relaunching Freight for Less, Alaska Airlines took advantage of the pause to make the program even better. “We took the opportunity to reinvent the flow of Freight for Less for our guests and our employees,” says Director of Sales and Community Marketing Scott Habberstad. “We originally introduced it pretty quickly, and while everybody knew it’d be great, nobody thought it would be as well received as it was.”

He says that under the original design, the check-in and receiving processes were “a little clunky.”

“We [now] have a dedicated check-in area for Freight for Less in Anchorage and we believe that has incredibly improved the process,” Habberstad explains. “The neat thing about Alaska Airlines is that we think about what we’re doing. If we find a way to improve a product, we’re going to continue to evolve it.”

Freight for Less is available for any Club 49 member, but it was designed with rural Alaska in mind. “It’s difficult to live in rural Alaska out of a grocery store,” Habberstad says. “When people do come to town, whether it be for a medical appointment or a meeting, they want to buy stuff in town and bring it home to save money where they

The Freight For Less program was designed to help Alaskans live the lifestyle they choose to live, especially if that’s in remote or rural areas.

Alaska Airlines



can... not everybody lives in Anchorage or Fairbanks or in a metropolitan area where they have a Target at their fingertips.”

Much like Alaska Airlines recognized the cost of baggage would be prohibitive for many flying, the cost of shipping freight to rural parts of Alaska can be astronomical. “[Freight for Less] is a way to help rural Alaskans continue to live the lifestyle they choose to live in Alaska,” he says.

Individuals don’t even need to be flying on the plane to take advantage of the program. “If your relatives or friends in town want to ship you some stuff, they can do that, anytime, one shipment per day of up to 100 pounds.”

Those taking advantage of the program are asked to use a standard plastic 20x30x15-inch tote (or sturdy cardboard box of like dimensions), which are available at many retail locations, preferably one with holes so it can be secured with zip ties. These containers have become a de facto standard for this kind of cargo movement, and they’re also sturdy and protect the contents within, Habberstad says.

“We’re also asking folks to pack their stuff before they get to the counter and make sure each tote is at 50 pounds or less, because there’s limited space at the airport to repack them.”

Why Do It?

For Romano and Habberstad, the close connection they’re able to form with the airline’s guests is answer enough.

“When we ask, ‘Where do you want to go?’ or ‘Tell us about something you want to do?’ and they post pictures of kids saying, ‘I want to go to Disneyland’ or they hold up a sign saying, ‘See Grandma!’—it makes it very personal. That we are able to have those close-knit conversations with Alaskans everywhere is one of the most rewarding things,” Romano says.

“Realistically, there’s zero degrees of separation in the state of Alaska,” Habberstad adds. “We talk and listen daily with our guests on social media, on the phone, in an airport, or even the grocery store. We get more ‘thank you’s than we get complaints.” He continues, “Even complaints are really more constructive criticism nine times out of ten, and it gives us the opportunity to learn, grow and improve.”

Throughout the month of October, Alaska Airlines is celebrating its relationships with Alaska and with Alaskans, “and we’re inviting our guests to celebrate right along with us,” Romano says.

Information on those celebrations can be found at club49hub.com. **AB**



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A New Coatings 'Champion'

Champion Painting Specialty Services is getting to work in Alaska

By Tasha Anderson

Champion Painting Specialty Services Corporation is a specialty coatings applicator; since its founding in 2006, the company has covered a range of projects and industries: terminals, power infrastructure, tanks, theme parks, cranes, cruise ships, and stadiums, as well as projects related to road and bridge construction, energy, pharmaceutical and chemical/petro chemical industries, water and wastewater, food and beverage, pulp and paper, the defense sector—and more.

Entering Alaska

Approximately two years ago, at the outset of the pandemic, Champion established its first Alaska office. According to Military Programs Coordinator Zack Beehner, Alaska was the perfect next location (to add to its offices in Florida, New York, Indiana, Georgia, and Guam).

He explains: "There's been a refocus by the Department of Defense on the Western Pacific and the Arctic in the last ten years, which has surged defense infrastructure support initiatives, in both new build, rehabilitation, and remediation."

In early 2019 Champion focused on targeting that market and has found success with military projects in Guam and Hawaii. "This coincided with our footprint expansion into the Pacific Northwest, where we work primarily in the defense sector and state-level road and bridge," Beehner says.

"We needed to find a centralized location to manage those projects, and with the opportunities here in municipal, state, and federal organizations; the private energy sectors; and with the Department of Defense, Alaska was the perfect choice."

While the location was perfect, the pandemic made the timing challenging. At the time, "We had to focus on our existing and emerging initiatives,"

Beehner says. "But now that things have stabilized, we want to get the word out that we are in-state and ready to partner on Alaska-based projects."

Champion is seeking out what growth opportunities Alaska can offer, but Beehner says he sees three significant benefits for the state, as well.

1. Champion's work is conducted in strict accordance with environmental laws, policies and guidelines, and the company has a culture of respect for the environment.
2. All of Champion's branches seek out locally owned partners and vendors; it searches out new opportunities to develop working relationships with companies that provide quality options for procurement of materials, services, equipment, and manpower.
3. Champion wants to provide opportunities to the people of Alaska, and as its work in Alaska grows, it will create a need for personnel at all levels of operation.

"We have a track record of developing skilled and certified coatings craftworkers at each of our regional hubs," Beehner says.

"A person can start out as a craft worker, and they can continue to be a craft worker for the rest of their life... or they can take a different route. We've had people who started out as blasters who now are heavy hitters in our estimation team and others who are senior project managers. Our executive VP started out as a blaster at a different company and eventually grew to start Champion."

And Champion isn't necessarily looking to start with skilled workers. "We can take someone without experience and move them through the process: start out with the online courses all the way through to getting them to be a certified blaster. Once you get those certifications, the sky is the limit."



Champion employees work inside a tank in Guam.

Champion

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Champion's approach to finding the right people and training them up has benefited the company over the long term as it's developed a team of experts that can handle the challenges and unique considerations of any job thrown at them. "In terms of experience in the industry, if you add up the number of years our team has, we're going into the hundreds," Beehner says.

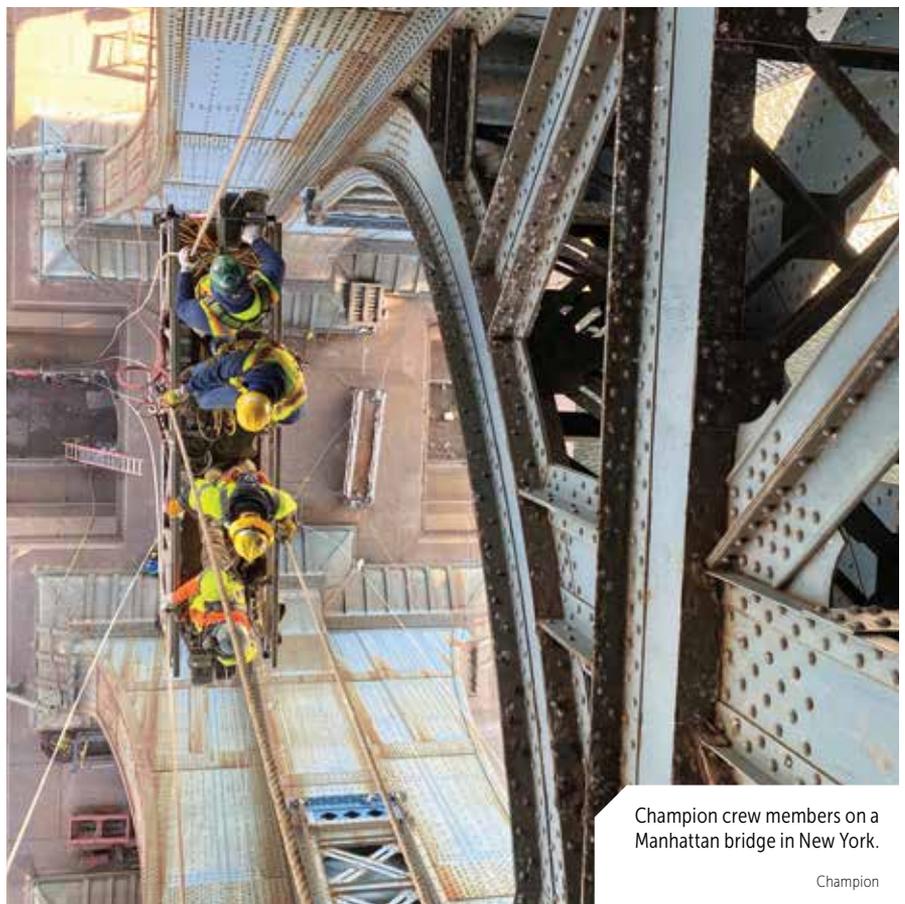
Primarily, Beehner says, Champion is looking for motivated, focused personnel who are eligible for access to work at security facilities—and are looking to join a team for the long haul. "A career in the coatings industry for a certified craft worker can be a very rewarding profession and provide a lifetime of financial stability."

Experience, Qualified, and Safe

It's not just individual employees at Champion who are certified at all levels: the company itself has sought out and earned an impressive array. "Champion is certified as an SSPC [Society for Protective Coatings] QP 1, QP 2, and QS 1 lead abatement and coatings applicator, and an NQA1 certified nuclear specialty services provider. The QP and QS certifications are required for application of coatings on exterior steel as well as coating the interiors of fuel tanks for the Department of Defense," Beehner explains.

The QP certifications mark the ability of applicators to apply coatings consistently in an approved manner, and the QS certification "attests to the level of diligence that we have within our quality control program," Beehner says. "Only forty US companies that are registered with SSPC have the QS 1 qualification—and none of them have a physical location in Alaska."

Champion's care for the quality of their work extends beyond just the coatings and includes the quality and safety of the experience for the client, employees, and those in the immediate area of the project. "There's a term, VOC, or volatile organic compounds—what you smell when you use spray paint," Beehner says. "That's what people think of when they think of a coating project." Champion may erect physical barriers around a project to ensure that dust, debris, odors, and other nuisances or dangers are contained or mitigated—to everyone's



Champion crew members on a Manhattan bridge in New York.

Champion

benefit. "We aim to have minimal to no impact wherever we are."

Beehner emphasizes that Champion does not perform any sandblasting, only abrasive blasting. This is important because silica sand can cause silicosis, lung cancer, and breathing problems in workers who are exposed to it. "We always meet or exceed safety, performance, and specification requirements for every client and project," he says, pointing to the company's Experience Modification Rate of 0.53, significantly lower than the 1.0 rating that may disqualify a company from bidding on government projects in certain circumstances.

The scope and scale of projects Champion takes on are as varied as the industries it works in and the clients it works for. Beehner describes a job coating 2,000 square feet of piping in Washington near Seattle as "small." The scope of work includes blasting the surface back to "white steel," followed by three coats: primer, intermediate, and a finish coat of zinc, epoxy, and urethane. "That will take a crew of four to five guys, and they'll knock that out—I'm hoping—in three weeks."

He describes another project that Champion worked on in Poland for the US Army Corps of Engineers: a large potable water tank. "The area there in Poland happened to be cold, wet, and rainy," he says, describing less-than-ideal conditions for applying coatings. To complicate the project further, the area was rural, making the logistics of getting supplies and personnel to the project more difficult, though Champion successfully completed the task.

"That was one of the driving forces of the company to bring in some more people like me, who are used to dealing with remote logistics and remote team management," he says.

Specifically in Alaska, Champion is currently working on proposals supporting petroleum and Department of Defense projects in Alaska, and it's on the lookout for projects at the city and state level. Beehner is clearly enthusiastic about how Champion can partner with entities across the state to provide the quality work that Alaska's projects need: "Our team brings innovative specialty services, international reach, and world class service to every project." **AB**

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Big Changes in Cook Inlet

Hendrix and HEX reinject life into Furie

By Alexandra Kay



When John Hendrix's company, HEX, acquired Furie Operating Alaska in July of last year, after much negotiating and an almost dead deal, the longtime Alaska resident had a lot to contend with. Furie had filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy after a few years of losses, and Hendrix planned to revive it by cutting costs and hiring an Alaskan workforce. Furie owed lenders about \$440 million, but was owed about \$103 million in refundable Alaska tax credits.

Hendrix had already bought Furie Operating Alaska's Cook Inlet Kitchen Lights Unit at a December 2019 bankruptcy auction with a winning bid of \$15 million, financed in part by money from Hendrix's own retirement savings in addition to a \$7.5 million loan from the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, though the deal almost fell through because of a dispute over the structure of the sale.

Why is Hendrix making such a significant investment? In 2011 after international assignments in the UK and Egypt, Hendrix had an opportunity to return to Alaska and work for Apache. When Apache exited Alaska, he felt like there was some business he still had left to do. "Picking up this company makes me feel like I'm giving back," he says.

Making Furie Alaskan Again

At the time of the acquisition in July 2020, Furie was employing mostly contract workers originating from outside of Alaska, their transportation costs, insurance that the company didn't need, and other inflated costs. In addition, three of the company's four wells weren't producing as much gas as they should—a fourth wasn't open at all.

The past year has been a busy one for Furie, as Hendrix and his team have completely rebuilt the company. From creation of a Health, Safety, and Environmental manual to the crystallization of data—the work has paid off. All four wells are now up and running, and the company has experienced a 15 percent increase in production in the year since the purchase. "Right now, our production is down because we're trying to clean up some messes left from our

“It's a very complicated process when you're looking to take a company out of bankruptcy, and HEX and the team have done an outstanding job in a very complicated situation.”

Alan Weitzner, Executive Director, AIDEA

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One of John Hendrix's first priorities for Furie was to focus on hiring Alaskans instead of out-of-state contractors.

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predecessors and we'll be down for a few weeks, but hopefully what we've done will extract more reserves over time," says Hendrix.

Upon taking ownership of the company, the first thing Hendrix did was to fulfill his promise to hire Alaskans to work at the now Alaskan-owned company.

In August 2020, Hendrix brought on Kevin Smith, a long-time resident of the Kenai Peninsula Borough, as operations superintendent of the Kitchen Lights Unit onshore processing facility and the offshore Julius R production platform. Smith was just the start of the Alaskan team Hendrix would hire. The workforce on the peninsula is now made of primarily of Alaskan employees. "This company had only one Alaskan employee, and now we have twenty-three," says Hendrix.

HEX also spent significant time and effort over the last year cutting operating costs. "We had a reality check," he says. Where the company had previously been paying \$1.9 million a year for insurance, it's now paying \$800,000. The company had been paying for oil-

spill insurance but doesn't currently have oil production. "We had to make everyone understand that we're not an oil company, so we shouldn't be saddled with insurance made for oil," says Hendrix. "If you're a gas company, there's no spill, but we were paying \$380,000 for spill response, and now we don't." Hendrix was also able to reduce the company's helicopter expenses by \$282,000 and cut other costs and fees as well.

HEX also worked on improving efficiency at the company's four wells. Workers established a hydrate flow envelope to prevent restriction in gas flow. They reconfigured compressors to extend the life of the wells and boost production output. They completed a pipeline survey. And they pigged the gas lines.

"Pipelines should be pigged to push any debris out," says Hendrix. "Up until we took over, the pipeline had never been pigged. We do it all the time now to keep it clear and running."

In 2020, Furie applied for a wastewater permit from the Alaska Department of Environmental



John Hendrix
Hex | Furie

Conservation to treat produced water at the platform and discharge it to the surrounding Cook Inlet receiving waters. Given space constraints, Furie found a unique treatment system that could fit tight confines and produce exceptional quality effluent. The system includes a separator to remove free-phase oil and sediment followed by a two-stage filtration process. The

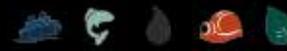


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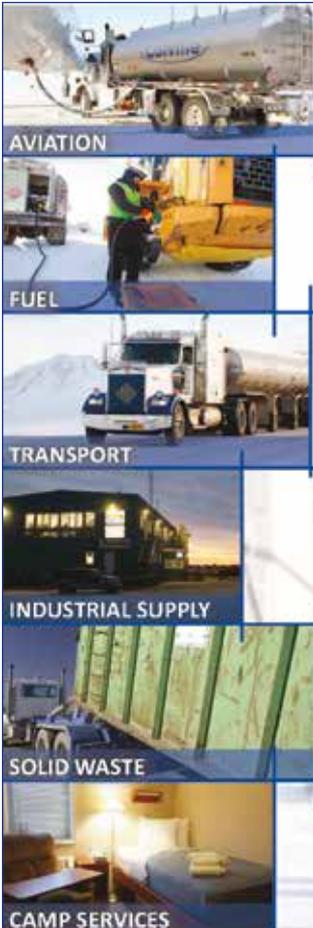
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The Railbelt, like many communities globally, is increasingly using natural gas for power; Hex is currently only producing natural gas.

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Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation 's issuance of the permit has allowed the facility to maintain sustainable production rates while minimizing the risk of a repeat of the 2019 hydrate blockage.

Hendrix also worked on changing the view of Furie in Alaska. Unable to change the name, instead he focused on changing the culture at the company. "We call ourselves the blue Furie: we've committed ourselves to the state," says Hendrix, noting the company's previous color was red. "Now, we have people who don't allow the word 'no' to take place."

Pandemics and Taxes

HEX's acquisition of Furie hasn't been without its challenges. Royalties and overrides eat up 25 percent of Furie's profits right off the top, with the state getting 12.5 percent and predecessor owners getting another 12.5 percent. And with only four wells, it's crucial to keep them all operating and in good condition, says Hendrix.

COVID-19 also proved to be an issue, though more so in 2020 than 2021. In addition to the pandemic impacting the

ability to get supplies last year, Hendrix had several workers contract the virus. Luckily, the symptoms remained flu-like and the workers were able to isolate together at the site.

Another unexpected challenge had to do with the property tax bill the company received. The \$1.6 million bill Hendrix received was much larger than what he had been expecting. "The state taxed on the original cost of the company less depreciation. There were no adjustments for the sale," says Hendrix, who is contesting the assessment. "I believe the property tax bill should be no more than \$400,000. As the owner of a company, I want to make sure we have enough money to put back into the company so we don't die. So when we have money for capital improvements and the state makes us pay unfair taxes with it, that's wrong. Behaving like that will kill the company and eliminate jobs and reduce royalty payments to the state."

The most recent challenge Hendrix and the company have faced is a \$100 million lawsuit filed against Furie in mid-August. The lawsuit

alleges that the prior officers of Furie diverted money out of the company into their own businesses, drilling for gas that didn't exist and selling gas the company did have at a loss, which caused the company to go into bankruptcy and be sold for far less than they claim it was worth. Hendrix believes the company's previously inflated value was a result of the prior operators' attempt to make the company look better to investors. "That's one reason we were paying so much in property taxes," he says. "I'm suffering the consequences of that."

This recent development is causing Hendrix to reevaluate the decision not to change the name of the company, even though it could trigger more taxes. Hendrix is now thinking of changing the company to HEX Operating Alaska in order to gain distance from the lawsuit against the predecessor owners.

What's Next?

While Hendrix is focused on the Kitchen Lights Unit, he still has his eye on other future growth opportunities. "I've always liked challenges," he says, "but I

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Production platforms in Cook Inlet.

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“We call ourselves the blue Furie: we’ve committed ourselves to the state. Now, we have people who don’t allow the word ‘no’ to take place.”

John Hendrix, President/CEO, HEX

wouldn’t have bought the company if I didn’t see room for growth.”

Furie and HEX have acquired onshore leases as well as additional offshore ones, totaling 19,800 acres among five new leases. Four of the leases are offshore, adjacent to the Kitchen Lights Unit, and the fifth is onshore on the Kenai Peninsula. If they pan out, production would be significantly increased over the 5.2 billion cubic feet currently produced. “Now we have both offshore and onshore leases, which helps with our development strategy,” says Hendrix. “I saw an opportunity, and we tried to get into where we could do something we can build from, good positioning in the Inlet.”

And even though the company is currently focusing on its gas assets, that doesn’t mean oil isn’t a possibility for the future. “Right now, this year, all we’re focused on is getting the basics right and building a company that will last,” says Hendrix. “But we have to continue to save our money and build our war chest to invest and develop

places. Doing this provides stability and sustainability to the company and the state. Oil might be in vogue next year. Who knows?”

One thing is for sure: Hendrix’s purchase of Furie benefits Alaska and, more specifically, Cook Inlet.

“They came in and basically saved a company from bankruptcy,” says AIDEA Executive Director Alan Weitzner. HEX was able to create an Alaskan-centered company in the Cook Inlet, so there are multiple people supplying gas in the area, and diversity of supply benefits everyone. Also, moving the company out of bankruptcy allows the state to continue to receive the royalties that benefit all Alaskans, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough continues to receive tax revenue from the company.

Weitzner says, “It’s a very complicated process when you’re looking to take a company out of bankruptcy, and HEX and the team have done an outstanding job in a very complicated situation.” **AB**

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Using next-gen, 3D laser scanning to modify a barge

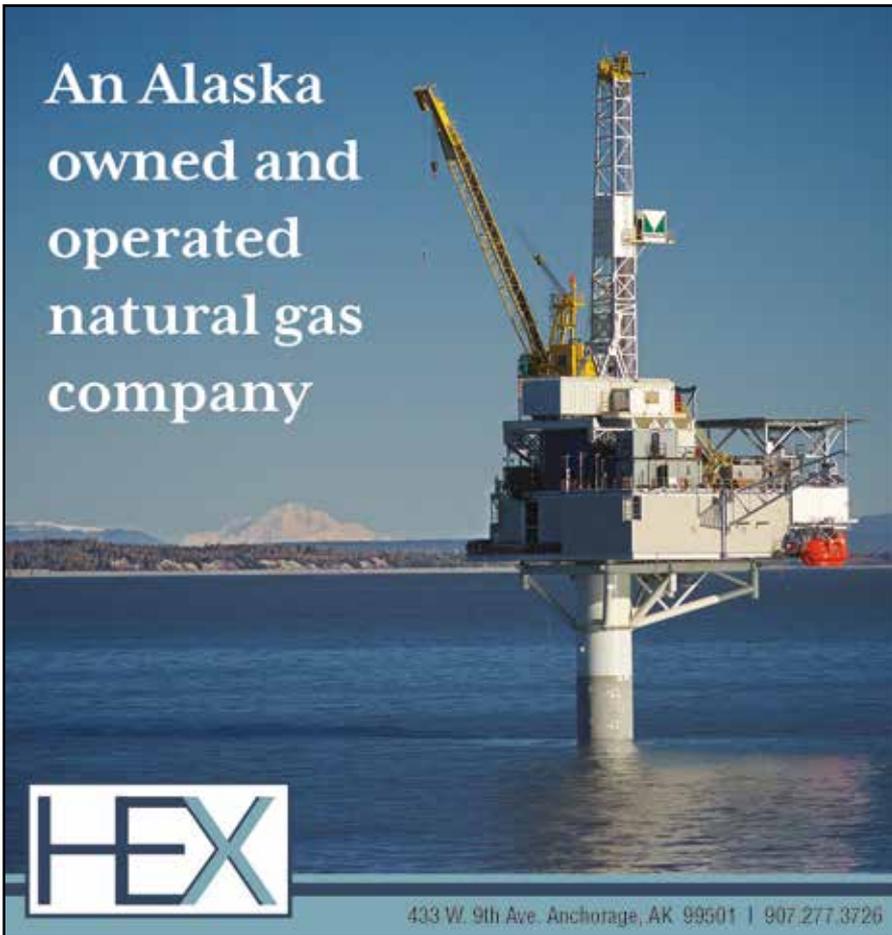
By Mikel Insalaco

Conditions in arctic and sub-arctic regions are often prohibitive, which results in tight timelines for engineering projects. This also applies to the maritime industry in the state, but a recent project completed by Stillwater Marine Service (SMS) demonstrated how to tackle some of these challenges utilizing the latest engineering technology.





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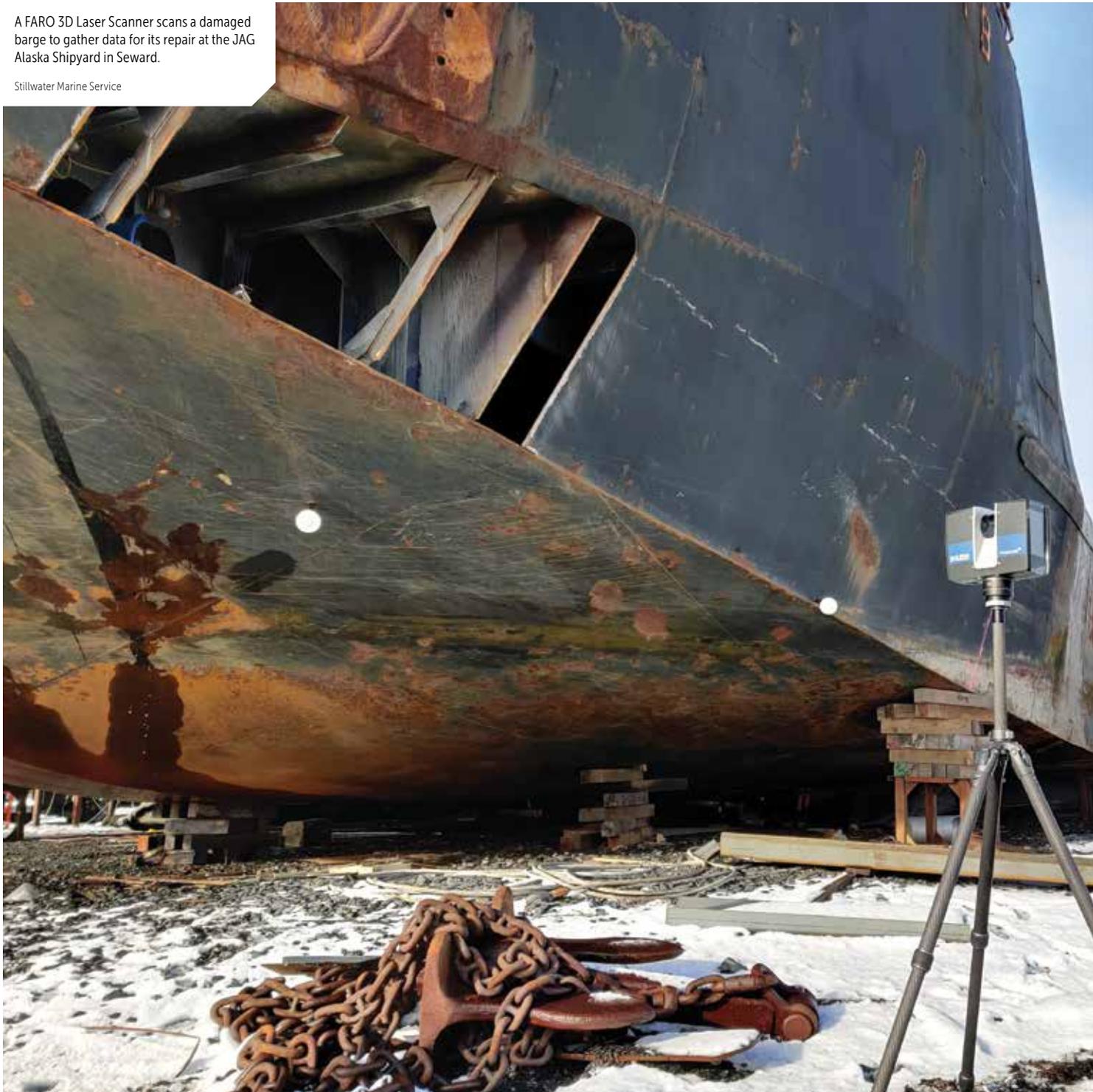
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Stillwater Marine Service

A FARO 3D Laser Scanner scans a damaged barge to gather data for its repair at the JAG Alaska Shipyard in Seward.

Stillwater Marine Service



SMS was approached by Brice Marine to improve cargo operations for one of their articulated tug-barges. With a lack of port infrastructure throughout Western Alaska, vessels do not have the ability to moor to dock or cargo handling facilities. During cargo operations, the barge draft changes require the tug to retract the pins. As a solution to maintain control, a raised bulwark can be created to allow the tug to push on the barge as a nonarticulated unit.

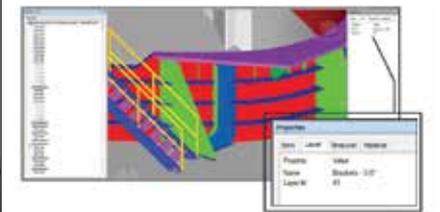
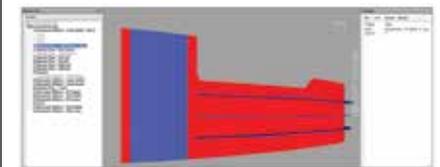
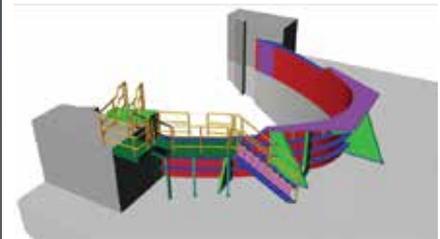
Various considerations must be made when servicing a vessel at sea: the ice season creates a narrow window of time in which the work can be completed, accessing areas of the ship to assess them can be difficult, and existing blueprints are often outdated. Due to these factors, projects requiring fabrication typically required field fitment, costing more in time and resources. To complete this project within the client's required timeline, SMS partnered with Eagle

Harbor Engineering and Catalyst Marine Engineering.

With this collaboration, SMS was able to utilize various technologies to find solutions for project. This included using a FARO Focus S 70 3D Laser Scanner for scanning and creating a current as-built 3D model of the vessel, software applications including CAD for creating a workable cut-file, and Catalyst Marine Engineering's Flow Mach 500 five axis ultra-high-pressure waterjet for a precise cut.

“Under typical methods, installation of the bulwark would have taken twenty-one days. Using each company's technology—CAD, scanning, water jet—the installation of the bulwarks took eight days.”

Rick Ferroni, Manager, Stillwater Marine Service



Virtual models of Brice Marine's barge, showing as-built from scan data (grey area) and modifications that were to be installed, as designed by John Van Buskirk, a naval engineer at Eagle Harbor Engineering.

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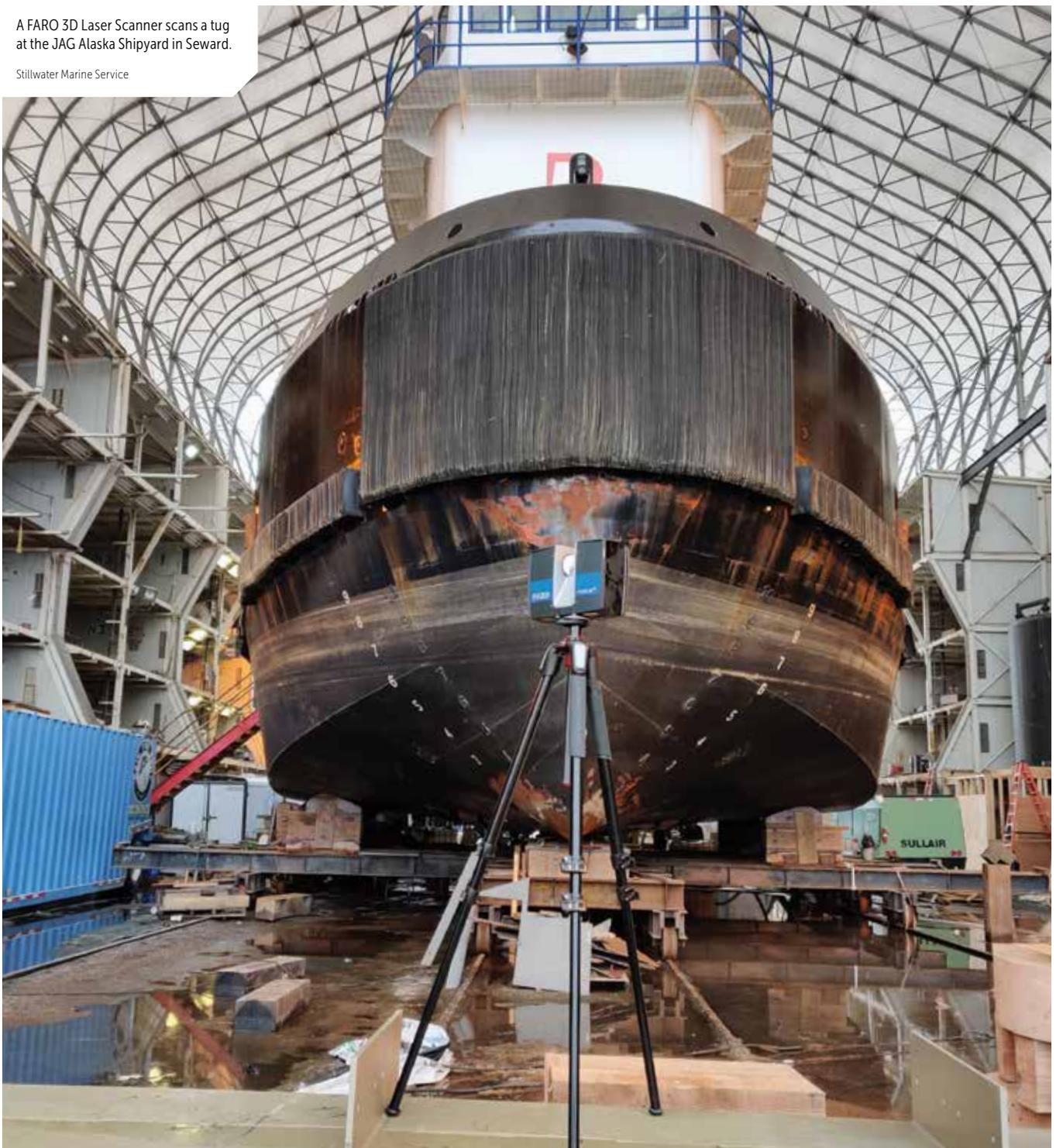
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“Stillwater Marine Service did an excellent job explaining how their use of technology would translate into lowered cost on execution,” says Drew McIntyre, Marine Superintendent for Brice Marine. “We were impressed with both their operational judgment and technical ability in connecting evolutions for our business model. Our final product was done faster and cheaper than I would have thought possible before working with Stillwater Marine. My

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A FARO 3D Laser Scanner scans a tug at the JAG Alaska Shipyard in Seward.

Stillwater Marine Service



only regret is missing the opportunity to have the entire barge scanned into a model during its last drydock."

The FARO Focus S 70 3D Laser Scanner is outfitted with a high-definition camera, alongside a scanning laser capable of capturing more than 976,000 points per second. Using this data, structures can be captured and converted to a 3D model. This model can be exported into a variety of formats including high-resolution virtual walkthroughs, as well as 2D and 3D

files for architectural and engineering purposes. While popularized in the commercial and residential real estate sector, SMS saw the potential for maritime usage.

SMS licensed software to explore the data captured by the scanner in 3D space to determine the current state of the vessel in preparation for the modification. As the device can capture up to 1mm accuracy, naval architect John Van Buskirk of Eagle Harbor Engineering was able to create

a workable cut-file for Catalyst Marine Engineering to use with their waterjet.

"As-built scans give data on the current condition of the vessel. This reflects changes, construction deviations, and damages which are not going to be reflected in even a good set of engineering drawings," says Van Buskirk. "Because of this, the parts can be cut without trimming margins, or with limited trimming margins. This greatly simplifies the production process."

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“As-built scans give data on the current condition of the vessel. This reflects changes, construction deviations, and damages which are not going to be reflected in even a good set of engineering drawings. Because of this, the parts can be cut without trimming margins, or with limited trimming margins. This greatly simplifies the production process.”

John Van Buskirk, Naval Architect
Eagle Harbor Engineering

Due to the accuracy of the cut-file, Catalyst Marine Engineering was able to prepare the materials necessary for the modification with minimal waste or manual trimming. This reduced the labor cost, resources, and time needed to complete the project.

“When Brice reached out to us about the project, we utilized technology to execute the project to reduce the installation time. Under typical methods, installation of the bulwark would have taken twenty-one days,” says Rick Ferroni, a manager at SMS. “Using each company’s technology—CAD, scanning, water jet—the installation of

Catalyst Marine modifies Brice
Marine’s barge in Seward.

Stillwater Marine Service



the bulwarks took eight days.”

The benefits of the process were not limited to the modifications—it also streamlined regulatory approval through using the American Bureau of Shipping’s (ABS) new 3D model-based class process. Before work began, the modification design was submitted to ABS’ New Orleans Engineering office in an as-built, 3D model format. Once the work was complete, ABS’ Seattle Office surveyed the vessel and approved the modification without issue.

Roy Bleiberg, ABS Vice President of North America Business Development, says: “This was a powerful

demonstration of the ABS 3D model-based class process in action. Not only did we deliver efficiencies in plan review and survey without compromising safety but we learned valuable lessons for future applications.” **AB**

Guest Author Mikel Insalaco is a communications professional and founder of Egoforge, a small communications firm in Anchorage, Alaska. He works with companies throughout the state, such as Stillwater Marine Service, to help define a brand’s identity through crafting messaging and developing strategy.

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The 2021 Top 49ers

A Brief Study in Shifting Perspectives

By Arie Henry

Recall Rubin's vase, an exercise in optical illusion: when presented with a specific image, some see a vase while others see two faces. Something viewed from one perspective can look radically different from another. And when a shift in perspective leads to a shift in perception, it often yields surprising results.

After all, a grizzly and a sockeye may share the same stream—but hardly the same view.

"Look. Now look again."

These words aptly describe the economic landscape of the Last Frontier as seen through the eyes of the *Alaska Business* editorial team, which selected the theme for this year's Top 49ers Special Section in which we explore changing perspectives.

The way our perceptions have been drastically shifted, reshaped, and shared

have come to characterize Alaska's world of commerce. For individuals and organizations alike, disruptive experiences like the pandemic have compelled everyone to develop new ways of looking at the economic landscape.

Entire industries have been subjected to new perceptions and realizations. For example, the lost tourism season of 2020 compelled industry advocates to answer the question, "What do we do without our visitors?" Without visitor dollars, seasonal income was pursued in novel ways: Alaskans themselves played the role of visitors to tourism communities and businesses found ways to virtually bring the Last Frontier to would-be visitors. One could argue that the tumult was enough for Alaskans to never again take for granted the friendly faces from Outside.

The spotlight on Alaska's healthcare workforce was also cause for renewed appreciation and empathy. Entire organizations stepped up to the plate with stakes that have never been higher. Heroism in healthcare underscored how important these employees are. With their challenges and achievements continuously chronicled, what will that mean for the industry as a whole, particularly in Alaska?

Despite the upheaval, there's reason for optimism. As the old saying goes, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and Alaska's business community found ways to forge a new vision while making positive leaps forward. Operations are getting leaner, procedures are becoming safer, and innovation is being welcomed at every level.

From tourism to healthcare to retail to transportation, every participant in Alaska's economy faces the challenge of how to thrive in a "new normal." In the midst of

strange circumstances and unprecedented challenges, those in the 49th State—especially the Top 49ers—continue to seek out unbroken trails to success thanks to re-imagined perspectives.

Picking Up Where 2020 Left Off

To better elaborate this year's Top 49ers theme, consider our narrative of the 2020 Top 49ers. A year ago, *Alaska Business* highlighted the theme of migrations and triumphant journeys. In the same way that whales, birds, and caribou all manage to find their way to and from Alaska, so too did the Top 49ers display a cyclical return to success. Everything that was the year 2020 underscored this "Triumphant Journey." The 2020 Top 49ers collectively weathered a storm that continues to simmer.

A year after the triumphant journey, the path to continued success in "normal 2.0" in many ways looks more foreign and less defined. The solution: flip the script on what was considered "business as usual." Throughout the year, *Alaska Business* has chronicled numerous developments that are the result of businesses changing the lens and charting new ways forward.

New Challenges, New Solutions

In a prime example, many other organizations (including this magazine) re-imagined business events, bringing together isolated individuals to maintain a sense of community in a business world where handshakes weren't even possible. Before this previous year, it would be unheard of to conduct AEDC's Economic Outlook or the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women luncheon in a strictly digital manner. Even *Alaska Business* took a leap, taking the 2020 Top 49ers event completely virtual. Granted,

everyone misses the in-person versions of conventions and conferences. But by leveraging a little bit of modern tech and a lot of creativity, the business world showed it can pivot and push forward.

In “Designing Spaces for Masked Faces,” part of the magazine’s February 2021 edition, *Alaska Business* explored the new ways in which the workspace itself was being refreshed. With an intensified focus on health and safety—even in the most white-collar of spaces—numerous architecture and design firms introduced a new way to view the places where employees get work done. Also consider the general contractors bringing these designs to life; many just so happen to be Top 49ers.

Workspaces will continue to be the subjects of re-imagination as businesses look to leverage more technology to maintain operations. Many have found an increased value in the home office thanks to tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Slack, and others. So much so that more remote work opportunities will undoubtedly become a topic for discussion even within organizations that had previously considered it off the table.

And consider the way that the state’s healthcare and transportation leaders illustrated a new angle of solving the familiar problem of stopping disease from ravaging rural Alaska. Project Togo in the Yukon-Kuskokwim (which we covered in “46 Villages in 10 Days” in our June 2021 issue) showed the way in which effective partnerships across industries helped lead the state to one of the best vaccination rates in the country earlier this year. Not to mention the all-out heroics of nurses, doctors, and medical technicians

The nature of collaboration seen in the last year and a half has trumped the nature of competitiveness... From vaccination distribution to emergency aid in the most remote areas, Alaska continues to put people first.

throughout the healthcare system from Providence to the Alaska Native Medical Center. Alaskans’ appreciation for health workers has elevated, and deservedly so.

Then there are the many other reminders that it’s time to flip the collective script. A mix of low interest rates, lack of inventory, and more time spent at home has resulted in a real estate boom unlike any other. Real estate firms, like our honorary “50th 49er” Keller Williams, are at the forefront of this new development.

At a glance, a ranked list like the Top 49ers seems inherently competitive. However, it’s worth noting that the nature of collaboration seen in the last year and a half has trumped the nature of competitiveness. *Alaska Business* has witnessed more instances of the former than the latter. That in and of itself could be considered one of the shifts in perspective that has helped Alaska’s economy the most in recent times. From vaccination distribution to emergency aid in the most remote areas, Alaska continues to put people first.

Lastly, consider the perspectives of the emerging workforce currently taking shape in a post-pandemic setting. COVID-19 decimated workforce numbers, particularly

in the hospitality and restaurant industries. Now Alaska faces a labor shortage in the face of growing demand. Moving forward, what new insights will be gained in recruitment and retention? That remains to be seen, though much will be decided based on what perspective employers decide to take.

Fresh Takes on the Future

A perspective informs a perception, and that perception informs reality.

Applied to business, a lot can be revealed in a perspective shift that leads to positive realities not previously imagined. Now is the perfect opportunity for decision makers to think bolder, reach farther, and pursue new levels of success. Change the angle of approach and a way forward emerges. Many times, that shift is small—an easy jump for an organization to make. But small changes add up. The number of businesses looking at the world a new way compounds the possible outcomes, building a fascinating prism of possibilities. Take the Top 49ers: forty-nine companies, forty-nine perspectives, and every shift in perspective adds to the narrative of Alaska’s business ecosystem.

It’s abundantly clear that amid a mixed up, post-2020 world, shifting perspectives are found in nearly every facet of commerce. What will be the results in another year? The answer will likely be found in the data surrounding business leaders like the 2022 Top 49ers.

The Last Frontier’s economic future is not as black and white (or face and vase) as Rubin’s experiment. Alaskans will have to determine for themselves what they want to see in the future. **AB**

ARCTIC SLOPE REGIONAL CORPORATION

2

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE CORPORATION



PO Box 129, Urtqja vik, AK 99723
907-852-8633
asrc.com
ASRCExternalAffairs@asrc.com
Rex Allen Rock Sr., Pres./CEO
Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 14,030/2,905 in Alaska
Services: ASRC has six major business segments: government contract services, industrial services, petroleum refining and marketing, energy support services, construction and resource development

2020	\$3,420,602,000
2019	\$3,766,757,000
2018	\$3,396,783,000
2017	\$2,697,862,000
2016	\$2,371,164,000

Noteworthy Events: In line with our goal to find solutions for a sustainable future, ASRC Energy Services has developed a novel soil treatment technology. The proprietary mobile soil treatment system is capable of remediating large volumes of contaminated soil on-site.



2020 Rank
1

Change in Revenue from 2019
-9%



111 W. 16th Ave., Ste. 400, Anchorage, AK 99501
907-278-3602
bbnc.net
info@bbnc.net

Jason Metrokin, Pres./CEO
Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 4,043/1,507 in Alaska
Services: Industrial services, government services, construction, seafood, tourism, and natural resources.

2020	\$1,690,619,000
2019	\$1,766,967,000
2018	\$1,689,014,000
2017	\$1,659,345,000
2016	\$1,525,181,000

Noteworthy Events: BBNC announced its partnership with the NHL's newest franchise, the Seattle Kraken, which will introduce millions of hockey fans and concert-goers to the wonders and cultures of Bristol Bay by being prominently represented throughout the Climate Pledge Arena, including in 1 of 13 prime marketplaces.



2020 Rank
2

Change in Revenue from 2019
-4%

3

NANA REGIONAL CORPORATION

PO Box 49, Kotzebue, AK 99752
907-442-3301
nana.com
news@nana.com

Bill Monet, COO/Interim Pres./CEO
Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 14,831/4,832 in Alaska

Services: Resource development; land management; federal contracting; engineering and design; surveying and mapping; food and facilities management; camp services; security; industrial and commercial fabrication and installation; drilling services.



2020	\$1,536,513,873
2019	\$1,655,322,000
2018	\$1,501,302,000
2017	\$1,354,000,000
2016	\$1,300,000,000

Noteworthy Events: In FY20, NANA's federal group, Akima, became a directly held subsidiary of NANA Regional Corporation Inc., moving from under the former NANA Development Corporation (NDC). NDC was converted to an Alaska LLC and renamed Sivu, which now holds NANA's commercial group of companies.



2020 Rank
3

Change in Revenue from 2019
-7%

4

LYNDEN

6520 Kulis Dr., Anchorage, AK 99502
907-245-1544
lynden.com
information@lynden.com

Jim Jansen, Chairman
Year Established in Alaska: 1954

Employees: 2,595/1,080 in Alaska

Services: The Lynden family of companies provides transportation and logistics solutions. They serve the entire state of Alaska and offer a full range of transportation options across all modes—air, land, and sea—so customers can optimize time and money when shipping to, from, or within Alaska.



2020 Rank
4

Change in Revenue from 2019
-11%

Noteworthy Events: Despite the disruptions caused by COVID-19 over the last year, Lynden kept crucial supplies moving “without interruption” to meet the needs of Alaskans. Lynden Air Cargo celebrated 25 years of providing air cargo service to Alaska. Lynden is a winner of Logistics Management’s Quest for Quality Awards.

2020	\$960,000,000
2019	\$1,075,000,000
2018	\$1,050,000,000
2017	\$950,000,000
2016	\$925,000,000

CHENEGA CORPORATION

5

3000 C St., Ste. 301, Anchorage, AK 99503
 907-277-5706
 chenega.com
 info@chenega.com

Charles Totemoff, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1974

Employees: 6,505/188 in Alaska

Services: Chenega figures prominently in the diverse government services contracting marketplace supporting defense, intelligence, and federal civilian customers.

2020 \$949,000,000
2019 \$871,000,000
2018 \$830,000,000
2017 \$876,000,000
2016 \$927,000,000

Noteworthy Events: While 2020 was challenging with the COVID-19 pandemic, we were committed to manage it successfully and safety. Chenega helped minimize the negative impacts within the village by supporting travel restrictions and social distancing, offsetting electrical and fuel costs, and helping with food security.



2020 Rank
6

Change in Revenue from 2019
9%

CHUGACH ALASKA CORPORATION

6

3800 Centerpoint Dr., Ste. 1200, Anchorage, AK 99503
 907-563-8866
 chugach.com
 communications@chugach.com

Sheri Buretta, Chairman/Interim CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 4,900/700 in Alaska

Services: Chugach has a portfolio of complementary businesses across a range of industries including government, energy, and facilities services. Chugach also manages an investment portfolio and land and natural resource development projects in the region.

2020 \$919,000,000
2019 \$977,000,000
2018 \$949,000,000
2017 \$920,000,000
2016 \$842,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Earned highest operating profit in our history (2020); appointed President Daniel Fenza; established Chugach Natives Trust; supported region/shareholders during COVID-19 through Chugach Regional Response Group and early dividends; focusing on ANSCA land initiatives that create shareholder value.



2020 Rank
5

Change in Revenue from 2019
-6%

CALISTA CORPORATION

7



5015 Business Park Blvd., Ste. 3000,
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-275-2800
calistacorp.com
calista@calistacorp.com

Andrew Guy, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 2,600/700 in Alaska

Services: Calista Corporation is the parent company of 30+ subsidiaries in the industries of defense contracting, construction, real estate, environmental services, natural resource development, marine transportation, oil field services, and heavy equipment.

2020	\$732,937,000
2019	\$573,299,000
2018	\$574,354,000
2017	\$480,200,000
2016	\$492,200,000

Noteworthy Events: Calista's holding line Yulista is nominated as one of the "Best Places to Work" in the Huntsville, Alabama area for two years running. Yulista opened brand-new facilities including a 35,000-square-foot aviation hangar and paint facility, increasing its overall aviation capacity to 200,000 square feet.



2020 Rank
9

Change in Revenue from 2019
28%

SEALASKA

8



One Sealaska Plaza, Ste. 400, Juneau, AK 99801
907-586-1512
sealaska.com
corpcomm@sealaska.com

Anthony Mallott, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 2,000/100 in Alaska

Services: Sealaska's businesses are divided into three focus areas: natural resources and land management, environmental services, and sustainable foods.

2020	\$697,000,000
2019	\$699,627,363
2018	\$429,333,000
2017	\$293,400,000
2016	\$145,500,000

Noteworthy Events: In 2020, Sealaska added Barnacle Foods and CS Marine to its family of subsidiary companies. This past year, the company also invested \$1 million towards a COVID-19 relief and recovery package to help its shareholders and Alaska communities respond to the pandemic.



2020 Rank
7

Change in Revenue from 2019
<1%

9

AFOGNAK NATIVE CORPORATION



300 Alimaaq Dr., Kodiak, AK 99615
907-486-6014
afognak.com
malia@afognak.com

Greg Hambright, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1977

Employees: 4,299/135 in Alaska

Services: Afognak Native Corporation, Alutiiq, Afognak Commercial Group, and subsidiaries provide exceptional service in government and commercial sectors, including leasing; timber; engineering; security; logistics and warehousing; facility maintenance; retail liquor stores; and oil field services.



2020	\$658,753,000
2019	\$618,395,000
2018	\$643,686,000
2017	\$608,104,000
2016	\$474,271,000

Noteworthy Events: On July 23, 2021, Afognak Native Corporation hosted the 5th Annual Afognak Youth Charity Golf Tournament at the Anchorage Golf Course, raising a new record of over \$60,000 for Native Villages of Afognak and Port Lions youth.

2020 Rank
8

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
7%

10

UKPEAGVIK INUPIAT CORPORATION (UIC)



PO Box 890, Utqia vik, AK 99723
907-852-4460
uicalaska.com
uicmarketing@uicalaska.com

Delbert J. Rexford, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973

Employees: 4,269/496 in Alaska

Services: Diversified commercial, government services, and government contracting, technical/professional services, logistics/support services, heavy civil/vertical construction, oil field support, architectural/engineering services, marine transportation, real estate management, manufacturing, remote operations/support, and services.



2020	\$531,383,460
2019	\$480,055,281
2018	\$461,190,653
2017	\$470,425,629
2016	\$424,300,000

Noteworthy Events: UIC Commercial Services created a new heavy civil construction company, Qayaq Construction. Qayaq is set to complete about \$20 million worth of projects in 2021. The largest of these awards is the Richardson Highway Milepost #138 to #148 Rehabilitation Project for \$14 million.

2020 Rank
11

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
11%

11

**COOK INLET
REGION, INC.**



PO Box 93330, Anchorage, AK 99509
907-274-8638
CIRI.com
info@CIRI.com

Sophie Minich, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 75/75 in Alaska

Services: From energy and infrastructure to government services, real estate and private equity and venture funds, CIRI's continued growth lies in its diverse investments in a variety of industries, opportunities made successful by the hard work and ingenuity of our people and partners.

2020	\$477,990,000
2019	\$493,023,000
2018	\$513,881,000
2017	\$439,349,000
2016	\$289,048,000

Noteworthy Events: CIRI subsidiary North Wind Group (NWG) recently acquired LBYD Engineers. The addition of LBYD to the NWG of companies creates diversification of customers and geographies, along with business-development opportunities and the ability to provide valuable engineering services to mutual customers.



10

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
-3%

12

BERING STRAITS NATIVE CORPORATION



3301 C St., Ste. 100, Anchorage, AK 99503
907-563-3788
beringstraits.com
info@beringstraits.com

Gail R. Schubert, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 1,957/504 in Alaska

Services: Government contracting, logistics, base operations support services, aircraft, and airfield services, special training and security, management and consulting services, IT services, construction and renovation, communications.

2020	\$456,170,000
2019	\$378,843,000
2018	\$415,000,000
2017	\$357,900,000
2016	\$326,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Alaska Industrial Hardware (AIH) purchased the formerly vacant Sam's Club warehouse building located on Dimond Blvd. where it opened a retail storefront. This space serves as the largest hardware and safety order fulfillment and replenishment center in Alaska, supplying high-quality equipment.



12

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
20%

13

KONIAG



194 Alimaq Dr., Kodiak, AK 99615
907-486-2530
koniag.com.

Ron Unger, Chairman/CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 2,003/157 in Alaska

Services: Koniag's principal lines of business include commercial real estate investment; ANCSA natural resource management; and investments in various operating companies.

2020	\$410,730,000
2019	\$323,878,000
2018	\$267,415,000
2017	\$270,769,000
2016	\$251,588,000

Noteworthy Events: Despite the challenges seen in 2020, Koniag continued its trend of year-over-year growth. Our Government Contracting sector led company growth with years of consistent contract performance and customer relationships built on trust.



2020 Rank
13

Change in Revenue from 2019
27%

14

AHTNA, INC.



PO Box 649, Glennallen, AK 99588
907-822-3476
ahtna.com
news@ahtna.net.

Michelle Anderson, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 1,320/354 in Alaska

Services: Construction, engineering, environmental, facilities management, surveying, security, military training, janitorial, healthcare and medical records management, government contracting, land management, resource development, oil and gas pipeline services.

2020	\$336,752,052
2019	\$261,104,398
2018	\$284,400,000
2017	\$238,000,000
2016	\$217,700,000

Noteworthy Events: Ahtna has launched the HOPE (Helping Our People Excel) Shareholder Program with a primary goal of getting more shareholders employed and gaining work experience. Supporting education and professional development opportunities is an important aspect of the program.



2020 Rank
15

Change in Revenue from 2019
29%

15

**DOYON,
LIMITED**



1 Doyon Pl., Ste. 300, Fairbanks, AK 99701
888-478-4755
doyon.com
communications@doyon.com

Aaron Schutt, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 1,046/708 in Alaska

Services: Doyon, Limited operates a diverse family of companies in the areas of oil field services, utilities, construction, information technology, natural resource development, tourism, laundry, real estate, and wireless telecommunications.

2020 \$319,100,000
2019 \$322,195,000
2018 \$310,643,000
2017 \$290,548,000
2016 \$305,412,000

Noteworthy Events: Doyon recently partnered with Eighth Generation to have two custom wool blankets created using inspiration from Alaska Natives artists.



2020 Rank
14

Change in Revenue from 2019
-1%

16

**THREE
BEARS
ALASKA**



500 S. Triple B St., Wasilla, AK 99623
907-357-4311
threebearsalaska.com

David A. Weisz, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1980

Employees: 746/685 in Alaska

Services: Retail grocery; beer, wine, and spirits; general merchandise; sporting goods; pharmacy; Ace hardware; and fuel.

2020 \$278,712,835
2019 \$237,342,665
2018 \$212,185,435
2017 \$187,029,540
2016 \$173,169,699

Noteworthy Events: Now operating sixteen stores in Alaska featuring groceries; beer, wine, and spirits; general merchandise; sporting goods; pharmacy items; Ace hardware; fuel; and wholesale meat, seafood, and cheese.



2020 Rank
19

Change in Revenue from 2019
17%

17

THE ALEUT CORPORATION

4000 Old Seward Hwy., Ste. 300, Anchorage, AK 99503
907-561-4300
aleutcorp.com
info@aleutcorp.com

Year Established in Alaska: 1972
Employees: 900/90 in Alaska

Services: Government contracting; O&M; training and education; logistics; construction; IT/telcom; environmental; remediation; engineering, prototype and manufacturing; real estate; fuel and port services; oil field testing; instrumentation.

2020 **\$277,043,248**
2019 **\$258,131,652**
2018 **\$252,293,053**
2017 **\$211,837,206**
2016 **\$171,655,823**

Noteworthy Events: The acquisition of Strata-G Solutions on September 1, 2019 was a noteworthy event which contributes to and supports our mission of maximizing dividends and opportunities for our shareholders.



2020 Rank
16

Change in Revenue from 2019
7%

18

GOLDBELT, INCORPORATED

3025 Clinton Dr., Juneau, AK 99801
907-790-4990
Goldbelt.com
info@goldbelt.com

McHugh Pierre, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1974
Employees: 1,400/250 in Alaska

Services: Tourism, government contracting, facility management, IT consulting, transportation, security services, and construction.

2020 **\$272,866,942**
2019 **\$240,646,300**
2018 **\$228,728,336**
2017 **\$229,389,285**
2016 **\$236,747,520**

Noteworthy Events: Goldbelt, Incorporated continues to accomplish record-breaking profitability through our pursuit of creative business solutions. We are committed to excellence in serving both our shareholders and customers. We value investing in Alaska through partnerships with other Alaska-based organizations.



2020 Rank
18

Change in Revenue from 2019
13%

19

TYONEK NATIVE CORPORATION



1689 C St., Ste. 219, Anchorage, AK 99501
907-272-0707
tyonek.com
sdeemer@tyonek.com

Michaelene Stephan, Pres./Board of Dir.

Year Established in Alaska: 1973

Employees: 1,424/24 in Alaska

Services: Defense equipment manufacturing; 8(a) government service contractor; aviation maintenance; construction; private land and resource development; hospitality services; barge landing and port service.

2020	\$254,200,000
2019	\$218,200,000
2018	\$144,600,000
2017	\$78,000,000
2016	\$89,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Tyonek Manufacturing Group opened its newest facility to accommodate the company's growing demand for products and engineering services. The company now provides more than 47,500 square feet of manufacturing and engineering space just outside the gate of Robins AFB in Georgia.



20

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
16%

20

OLGOONIK CORPORATION



3201 C St., Ste. 700, Anchorage, AK 99503
907-562-8728
olgoonik.com

Hugh Patkotak Sr., Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973

Employees: 1,200/120 in Alaska

Services: Specializing in construction, logistics and operations, security, environmental, well site plugging and remediation, and commercial electrical projects.

2020	\$241,700,000
2019	\$241,700,000
2018	\$228,500,000
2017	\$260,200,000
2016	\$241,800,000

Noteworthy Events: In 2020, Olgoonik completed the acquisition of American Electric, a company specializing in commercial electrical construction and service contracts. We are excited to welcome this high-performing company to the Olgoonik family.



17

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
0%

21

CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION



5601 Electron Dr., Anchorage, AK 99518
907-563-7494
chugachelectric.com
prelations@chugachelectric.com
Lee Thibert, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1948
Employees: 466/466 in Alaska
Services: Through superior service, safely provide reliable and competitively priced energy.

2020	\$237,429,000
2019	\$212,517,000
2018	\$202,253,000
2017	\$224,689,000
2016	\$197,747,579

Noteworthy Events: On October 30, 2020 Chugach closed on the acquisition of Municipal Light & Power.



22

2020 Rank

12%

Change in Revenue from 2019

22

SITNASUAK NATIVE CORPORATION



PO Box 905, Nome, AK 99762
907-387-1200
snc.org
communications@snc.org
Charles Fagerstrom, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973
Employees: 1,332/100 in Alaska
Services: -

2020	\$185,519,277
2019	\$172,944,639
2018	\$133,494,517
2017	\$134,138,330
2016	\$130,210,466

Noteworthy Events: -



25

2020 Rank

7%

Change in Revenue from 2019

23

DELTA CONSTRUCTORS



351 E. 104th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99515
907-771-5800
deltaconstructors.net

Ed Gohr, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 2007
Employees: 600/200 in Alaska

Services: Delta Constructors specializes in project management, procurement, fabrication, self-perform construction, commissioning, and integrated EPF&C project delivery. We primarily focus on industrial clients in oil and gas, as well as the mining industry.

2020	\$184,738,000
2019	\$214,838,000
2018	\$175,772,000
2017	\$81,550,000
2016	\$121,228,363

Noteworthy Events: This has been a challenging year, but through hard work and sacrifices, Delta Constructors has been able to hold strong. We are continuing to deliver safe high quality results to our clients, and our employee numbers and company growth is holding steady. We are looking forward to a promising future.



2020 Rank
21

Change in Revenue from 2019
-14%

24

CHOGGIUNG LTD.



PO Box 330, Dillingham, AK 99576
907-842-5218
choggiung.com
contact@choggiung.com

Cameron Poindexter, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1972

Employees: 371/98 in Alaska

Services: Construction, federal contracting services, hotel and diner, apartments, commercial real estate.

2020	\$183,200,000
2019	\$150,189,000
2018	\$95,700,000
2017	\$8,400,000
2016	\$6,482,994

Noteworthy Events: Choggiung Limited has created a new subsidiary company brand, Wood River Federal, to support the federal government with an array of solutions built from our background and experience. Check out our website at woodriverfederal.com to learn more.



2020 Rank
26

Change in Revenue from 2019
22%

25

TDX (TANADGUSIX) CORPORATION



3601 C St., Ste. 1000, Anchorage, AK 99503
907-278-2312
tdxcorp.com
info@tanadgusix.com

Christopher Mandregan Jr., CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973
Employees: 595/223 in Alaska

Services: TDX Corporation is owned by and represents the business interests of more than 600 Aleut shareholders of St. Paul Island. TDX business groups are diversified serving technology, government contracting, hospitality, and the seafood industry.

2020	\$177,000,000
2019	\$195,000,000
2018	\$138,000,000
2017	\$111,700,000
2016	\$122,200,000

Noteworthy Events: TDX Corporation is owned by and represents the business interests of more than 600 Aleut shareholders of St Paul Island, Alaska. Incorporated with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971, as the Alaska Native Corporation for the Community of St Paul.



2020 Rank
23

Change in Revenue from 2019
-9%

26

FIRST NATIONAL BANK ALASKA



PO Box 100720, Anchorage, AK 99510
907-777-4362
FNBAAlaska.com
customer.service@FNBAAlaska.com

Betsy Lawer, Board Chair/CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1922
Employees: 619/619 in Alaska

Services: Friendly, knowledgeable Alaskans offering the convenience, service, and value of a full range of deposit, lending, wealth management services, and online and mobile banking. With 27 branches in 18 communities and assets of more than \$5.3 billion, we believe in Alaska and have since 1922.

2020	\$174,672,000
2019	\$175,467,000
2018	\$164,818,000
2017	\$152,325,000
2016	\$150,499,000

Noteworthy Events: Alaska Business readers voted First National "Best of Alaska Business" in the Best Place to Work category for the sixth year running and American Banker named the bank a "Best Bank to Work For" in the US for the third year in a row. Healy Branch's new location built to enhance customer experience.



2020 Rank
24

Change in Revenue from 2019
<1%

27

**MATANUSKA
ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION**



163 E. Industrial Way, Palmer, AK 99645
907-761-9300
mea.coop
meacontact@mea.coop

Tony Izzo, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1941

Employees: 216/216 in Alaska

Services: Alaska's oldest and second largest electric cooperative, MEA serves more than 53,500 members in communities across the entire Mat-Su Borough, Eagle River, and Chugiak with power. In 2021, MEA celebrates 80 years as a member-owned and led electric co-op.

2020	\$155,401,551
2019	\$148,343,834
2018	\$148,639,243
2017	\$148,701,932
2016	\$137,279,126

Noteworthy Events: MEA collaborates with other Railbelt utilities to provide economic power to members. This year we established power sharing with Chugach Electric and have led the formation of a planning and reliability organization for the electric system. MEA offers the lowest energy charge of any Railbelt utility.



2020 Rank
27

Change in Revenue from 2019
5%

28

**CAPE FOX
CORPORATION**



PO Box 8558, Ketchikan, AK 99901
907-225-5163

capefoxcorp.com
info@capefoxcorp.com

Chris Luchtefeld, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973

Employees: 991/153 in Alaska

Services: Cape Fox Corporation has two lines of business, one for tourism in Alaska with restaurants, a lodge, and retail, and one with government contracting with multiple subsidiaries that offer capabilities in IT and cybersecurity, healthcare, professional services, and construction.

2020	\$123,724,000
2019	\$76,800,000
2018	\$68,500,055
2017	\$60,632,693
2016	\$63,532,532

Noteworthy Events: In an effort to revitalize Alaska tourism, Cape Fox Lodge and Baranof Fishing Excursions partnered in a new marketing campaign to "Bring Back Adventure." The campaign offered tourists a unique, adventurous experience in a safe environment with deals at Baranof Fishing and Cape Fox Lodge.



2020 Rank
40

Change in Revenue from 2019
61%

CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY INDUSTRIAL

29



5400 Homer Dr., Anchorage, AK 99518
907-563-3822
cmiak.com

Ken Gerondale, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1985

Employees: 106/106 in Alaska

Services: Distributor of construction, mining, and logging equipment in Alaska. Representative for Volvo, Hitachi, Atlas Copco, Doosan, Metso, Link-Belt, and many other manufacturers.

2020	\$117,000,000
2019	\$102,000,000
2018	\$105,000,000
2017	\$98,500,000
2016	\$98,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Despite the pandemic, CMI was able to remain consistent with our ability to provide support for our customers in the field and in the office.



2020 Rank
32

Change in Revenue from 2019
15%

HOMER ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

30



3977 Lake St., Homer, AK 99603
907-235-8551
homerelectric.com

Bradley Janorschke, GM

Year Established in Alaska: 1945

Employees: 134/134 in Alaska

Services: Homer Electric is the generation, transmission, and distribution electric cooperative for the western Kenai Peninsula. The cooperative has approximately 32,000 meters on its system.

2020	\$105,595,663
2019	\$96,292,724
2018	\$97,000,000
2017	\$99,000,000
2016	\$95,000,000

Noteworthy Events: HEA will add a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at its Soldotna Generation Plant to increase grid stability, electric power stability, and system efficiency. The BESS will be capable of storing 93 MWh of power that can be delivered to the grid at a rate of 46.5 MW per hour.



2020 Rank
34

Change in Revenue from 2019
10%

31

CRUZ
CONSTRUCTION



7000 E. Palmer Wasilla Hwy.
Palmer, AK 99645
907-746-3144
cruzconstruct.com
jburnette@cruzconstruct.com

Dave Cruz, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1981
Employees: 300/300 in Alaska

Services: Oil and gas operations, ice roads, snow trails, tundra transport, heavy haul, heavy-civil, equipment, marine transportation, camps, logistics, oil field exploration, engineering and consulting.

2020 \$98,823,282
2019 \$80,884,836
2018 \$137,401,439
2017 \$120,000,000
2016 \$183,717,140

Noteworthy Events: Over the years, Cruz Construction increased its business ventures (AKA Cruz Companies) extending outside Alaska. As the market and economy shifted with the 2016 oil recession, Cruz adjusted operations to target Alaska opportunity. Cruz right sized its core business and stays dedicated to Alaska's future.



37

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
22%

32

MTA



1740 S. Chugach St., Palmer, AK 99645
304-610-9415
mtasolutions.com
jgilbert@mtasolutions.com

Michael Burke, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1953
Employees: 321/321 in Alaska

Services: MTA provides residential and business technology solutions, such as internet and cybersecurity products. MTA provides Alaska with limitless bandwidth capacity through its AICan ONE fiber line and partners with enterprise, government, and wholesale partners on scalable networking solutions.

2020 \$97,200,000
2019 \$110,307,317
2018 \$108,400,000
2017 \$116,648,000
2016 \$100,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Since completing AICan ONE in 2020, MTA has been awarded a USDA ReConnect grant and recognized by the FCC's DOER program, unveiled a new location at Wasilla's Shoppes at Sun Mountain, launched its MTA Shield cybersecurity product, and more.



31

2020 Rank

Change in Revenue from 2019
-12%

33

COLVILLE



Pouch 340012, Prudhoe Bay, AK 99734
907-659-3198
colvilleinc.com
info@colvilleinc.com

Dave Pfeifer, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1981

Employees: 139/139 in Alaska

Services: Oil and gas industry support services and supplies, solid waste utility, aviation support services, logistics and camp operations.

2020 **\$96,944,395**

2019 **\$117,558,062**

2018 **\$88,647,382**

2017 **\$87,479,056**

2016 **\$96,299,358**

Noteworthy Events: Doubled the throughput on the Colville tank farm by designing and constructing two additional off load lanes.



2020 Rank
38

Change in Revenue from 2019
-18%

34

DAVIS CONSTRUCTORS & ENGINEERS



6591 A St., Ste. 300, Anchorage, AK 99518
907-562-2336

davisconstructors.com

admin@davisconstructors.com

Luke Blomfield, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1976

Employees: 135/135 in Alaska

Services: Davis Constructors & Engineers offers complete project management services to assist with design and construction of all types of building projects. We have completed more than \$2.6 billion in Alaska projects, representing more than 76 million square feet of construction.

2020 **\$94,270,117**

2019 **\$101,243,501**

2018 **\$128,512,733**

2017 **\$120,084,328**

2016 **\$65,497,161**

Noteworthy Events: In 2007 Davis established an endowment, with the AK Community Foundation fund to support our community. To date, \$408,296 has been donated to Alaska causes through the Davis Constructors & Engineers Fund. The Davis committee is comprised of current and past Davis "10 year" employees.



2020 Rank
33

Change in Revenue from 2019
-7%

35

USIBELLI COAL MINE



100 Cushman St., Ste. 210, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 907-452-2625
 usibelli.com
 info@usibelli.com

Joseph E. Usibelli Jr., Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1943

Employees: 195/155 in Alaska

Services: Currently the only operational coal mine in Alaska, UCM is supported by the most modern mining equipment and state-of-the-art engineering. Today, UCM supplies affordable, reliable, and ultra-low sulfur coal to the five power plants located in Interior Alaska.



2020 Rank

35

Change in Revenue from 2019

6%

2020 **\$94,000,000**
 2019 **\$89,000,000**
 2018 **\$81,000,000**
 2017 **\$79,000,000**
 2016 **\$80,000,000**

Noteworthy Events: Usibelli Coal Mine is proud to boast an all-Alaska workforce. This year, we have several employees celebrating milestone anniversaries including one employee reaching forty years of service and four employees reaching thirty years. Additionally, we welcomed eleven new employees to team Usibelli.

36

WATTERSON CONSTRUCTION CO.



6500 Interstate Cir., Anchorage, AK 99518
 907-563-7441
 wattersonconstruction.com
 info@wccak.com

Jim Watterson, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1981

Employees: 83/83 in Alaska

Services: Watterson Construction Co. is a general contractor specializing in alternate delivery of commercial, medical, aviation, civic, education, warehouse, government, and military sectors. Services include design/build, CM/GC, CM@Risk, and design/bid/build.



2020 Rank

29

Change in Revenue from 2019

-27%

2020 **\$84,600,000**
 2019 **\$115,300,000**
 2018 **\$85,500,000**
 2017 **\$41,000,000**
 2016 **\$52,000,000**

Note-worthy Events: Watterson is celebrating our 40th anniversary in 2021.

37

ANCHORAGE CHRYSLER DODGE CENTER



2601 E. Fifth Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501
907-276-1331

Corey Meyers, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1963

Employees: 106/106 in Alaska

Services: Chrysler, Jeep, and Dodge new and used vehicle sales and service. Your Home town dealer for 47 years.

2020	\$84,416,000
2019	\$82,472,439
2018	\$77,738,867
2017	\$90,546,881
2016	\$79,853,962

Noteworthy Events: -



2020 Rank
36

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
2%

38

KIKIKTAGRUK INUPIAT CORP.



3201 C St., Ste. 801, Anchorage, AK 99508
907-277-7884

kikiktagruk.com

tkennedy@kikiktagruk.com

Thomas Kennedy, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1973

Employees: 305/35 in Alaska

Services: Construction, commercial, and residential rental properties and retail sales of hardware, lumber, and auto parts. Government JBOS contracts, construction contracts, and professional service contracts.

2020	\$82,858,722
2019	\$68,161,437
2018	-
2017	-
2016	-

Noteworthy Events: New contract with FDA to provide scientific personnel for virus research started in Feb of 2020.



2020 Rank
-

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
22%

39

GANNA-A' YOO, LIMITED



1001 E. Benson Blvd., Ste. 201, Anchorage, AK 99508
907-569-9599
ganaayoo.com
info@ganaayoo.com

Dena Sommer-Pedebone, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1978

Employees: 357/27 in Alaska

Services: Ganna-A'Yoo and our family of companies serves clients around the globe. From engineering and deploying Air Force training aids to feeding the Coast, we offer an array of services including construction, camp, janitorial, and professional services.

2020 **\$81,976,088**
2019 **\$61,914,317**
2018 **\$30,669,022**
2017 -
2016 -

Noteworthy Events: We experienced record growth in 2019, more than doubling our profitability. Shareholders received the largest dividend to date. The corporation contributed \$100,000 to the schools in our communities, supporting the vision of investing in our people and promoting, healthy, thriving communities.



42

2020 Rank

Change in
Revenue
from 2019

32%

40

THE KUSKOKWIM CORPORATION



4300 B St., Ste. 405, Anchorage, AK 99503
907-243-2944
kuskokwim.com
info@kuskokwim.com

Andrea Gusty, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1977

Employees: 318/24 in Alaska

Services: Construction, government services, environmental services, lighting, aerospace, aircraft maintenance and repair, real estate, and rural retail.

2020 **\$73,160,209**
2019 **\$78,672,271**
2018 **\$74,267,227**
2017 **\$104,276,146**
2016 **\$88,719,545**

Noteworthy Events: The Kuskokwim Corporation (TKC) has been focused on improving the lives of our shareholders beyond just dividends. Profits from subsidiaries in the Lower 48 are being brought home to find energy, cost of living and housing solutions for rural Alaska, and the residents of TKC's Middle Kuskokwim region.



38

2020 Rank

Change in
Revenue
from 2019

-7%

41

EVERTS AIR CARGO & EVERTS AIR ALASKA



PO Box 61680, Fairbanks, AK 99706
907-450-2300
EvertsAir.com
info@EvertsAir.com

Robert Everts, CEO/Owner

Year Established in Alaska: 1978
Employees: 353/328 in Alaska

Services: Everts Air Cargo provides scheduled and charter air freight services to domestic and international destinations using MD-80, DC-6, and C-46 aircraft. Everts Air Alaska, based in Fairbanks, provides passenger, freight, and charter service using PC12s and Caravans.

2020	\$71,700,000
2019	\$59,190,000
2018	\$67,700,000
2017	\$63,800,000
2016	\$54,135,000

Noteworthy Events: In 2020, Everts Air Cargo DC-6B, N151, made its final flight from Fairbanks to Stavanger, Norway, where it will reside in the Sola Flyhistorisk Museum. Check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHQWsPOdhn8> for a video recap of the trip.



2020 Rank
44

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
21%

42

H C CONTRACTORS



PO Box 80688, Fairbanks, AK 99708
907-488-5983
hccontractors.net
bill.hoople@hccontractors.net

Bill Hoople, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1993
Employees: 237/237 in Alaska

Services: Heavy civil construction, asphalt paving, bridge construction, aggregate production.

2020	\$70,855,438
2019	-
2018	-
2017	-
2016	-

Noteworthy Events: -



2020 Rank
-

Change in
Revenue
from 2019
-

CREDIT UNION 1

43



1941 Abbott Rd., Anchorage, AK 99507
907-339-9485
cu1.org
membermail@cu1.org

James Wileman, Pres./CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 1952
Employees: 340/318 in Alaska
Services: Credit Union 1 is a full-service financial institution known for its low-cost loans, unique rewards program, community outreach, and cutting edge money management tools. We value accessible, "people first" lending as one of our most vital community services.

2020	\$65,289,354
2019	\$69,394,584
2018	\$66,501,606
2017	\$65,811,947
2016	\$64,618,093

Noteworthy Events: We're always looking for better ways to serve our large and diverse state, while keeping in tune with our members' needs, adapting, and innovating. In fall 2021 we will be opening a brand new, "first of its kind" financial center in South Anchorage.



2020 Rank
41

Change in Revenue from 2019
-6%

SEEKINS FORD LINCOLN

44



1625 Seekins Ford Dr., Fairbanks, AK 99701
907-459-4000
seekins.com
sales@seekins.com

Ralph Seekins, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1977
Employees: 98/98 in Alaska
Services: New and used auto sales, parts, service, and body shop.

2020	\$63,227,426
2019	\$57,967,731
2018	\$56,288,865
2017	\$58,946,067
2016	\$52,554,917

Noteworthy Events: Awarded Power Stroke Diesel Volume & Growth Top 50-In recognition of achieving national Top 50 dealership status in Power Stroke Diesel parts volume and growth.



2020 Rank
45

Change in Revenue from 2019
9%

45

AIRPORT EQUIPMENT RENTALS



1285 Van Horn Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99707
907-456-2000
airportequipmentrentals.com
aer@aer-inc.net

Jerry Sadler, Owner/Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1986

Employees: 100/100 in Alaska

Services: Heavy-equipment rental/sales company providing sales, services, and rentals for the construction, mining, logging, and oil and gas industries. AER also provides a full line of products for the home owner/residential market.

2020	\$62,188,000
2019	\$59,531,000
2018	\$55,900,000
2017	\$55,100,000
2016	\$54,361,000

Noteworthy Events: AER has acquired all new semis, drop-decks, hook trucks, and triple-l trailers to better service the safe delivery and pickup of equipment across the rugged Alaska road system.



43

2020 Rank

4%

Change in Revenue from 2019

46

GREAT NORTHWEST



PO Box 74646, Fairbanks, AK 99707
907-452-5617
grtnw.com
info@grtnw.com

John Minder, CEO/Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1976

Employees: 200/200 in Alaska

Services: Earthwork excavation.

2020	\$61,400,000
2019	\$38,000,000
2018	\$58,000,000
2017	\$40,000,000
2016	\$44,350,000

Noteworthy Events: Great Northwest continues to maintain safe and efficient operations and continues to successfully navigate the varying economic climates.



49

2020 Rank

62%

Change in Revenue from 2019

47

UNIT
COMPANY



620 E. Whitney Rd., Anchorage, AK 99501
907-349-6666
unitcompany.com
info@unitcompany.com
Michael Fall, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1977

Employees: 38/38 in Alaska

Services: UNIT is a commercial general contractor, specializing in a wide variety of project delivery methods such as design-build, CM/GC, and design assist projects. We work both on and off the road system throughout Alaska and are very familiar with the various logistical challenges that exist.

2020 **\$59,807,019**

2019 -
2018 -
2017 -
2016 -

Noteworthy Events: UNIT and our partner ASRC Builders are coming to an end of construction on more than \$250 million dollars worth of work on the Clear Long Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) project that is one of our nations newest weapons. UNIT is proud to be part of this critical portion of our nations defense.

2020 Rank -
Change in Revenue from 2019 -

**UNIT
COMPANY**
General Contractors

48

GENE'S
CHRYSLER
DODGE JEEP
RAM

3400 S. Cushman St., Fairbanks, AK 99701
907-458-3200
geneschrysler.com

Lane Nichols, Pres.

Year Established in Alaska: 1945

Employees: 90/90 in Alaska

Services: Retail sales of Chrysler, Dodge, and Jeep automobiles, trucks, parts, and services.

2020 **\$59,137,643**

2019 -
2018 -
2017 -
2016 -

Noteworthy Events: Time Dealer of the year nominee.

2020 Rank -
Change in Revenue from 2019 -

49

VITUS ENERGY



5300 A St., Anchorage, AK 99518
907-278-6700

vitus-energy.com
sales@vitusmarine.com

Justin Charon, CEO

Year Established in Alaska: 2009

Employees: 140/140 in Alaska

Services: Fuel and freight sales in Alaska.

2020	\$58,900,000
2019	\$55,000,000
2018	\$64,000,000
2017	\$54,500,000
2016	\$55,000,000

Noteworthy Events: Added four new locations.



2020 Rank
47

Change in Revenue from 2019
7%



Accounting for the Double Counted

Top 49ers' dominant subsidiaries deserve recognition

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

In recognition of Alaska-grown and Alaska-owned businesses, *Alaska Business* publishes the Top 49ers. Each year it gives a rundown of Alaskan-owned industry players based on gross revenues. Most of the Top 49ers qualify for the list year after year, adapting to changes in markets, resource access, and investment opportunities. But occasionally, staple names that Alaskans have seen year after year on the list disappear.

One such company is Alaska Industrial Hardware. "We were part of the 49ers for years," Alaska Industrial Hardware President and CEO Terry Shurtleff says. "Before BSNC [Bering Straits Native Corporation] acquired us."

Had it not been brought in under the umbrella of BSNC, Alaska Industrial Hardware would have made the 2021 Top 49ers List through its own revenue alone. But its parent company already made the cut, ranking number 12.

To avoid double counting gross revenue, Alaska Industrial Hardware is ineligible to be ranked in the Top 49ers. But, like other subsidiaries that would otherwise qualify based on revenue alone, Alaska Industrial

Hardware qualified), it only didn't rank three times.

Even in a rapidly evolving retail environment, Alaska Industrial Hardware continues to draw in revenue by offering a vast array of products from hardware and hydraulics to power tools and plumbing.

"We're a company that when somebody needs something that we sell, they don't have time to wait," Shurtleff explains, noting that usually contractors and other customers can't afford to be paying employees to stand around while things are flown up from the Lower 48.

At any given time, the company has an inventory of about \$20 million on the ground in Alaska, Shurtleff says.

"It's either the summer construction season or it's the winter construction season and both are compressed and both are high stakes," Shurtleff says. "That's why I think we've been successful in this market. We understand that and so we have the materials and the product here when people and industry need them."

The stand-alone company has four locations in Anchorage, as well as stores in Wasilla, Juneau, Kenai, and Fairbanks.

While many legacy retailers have floundered in recent years, especially in the Alaska market, Shurtleff says that Alaska Industrial Hardware has succeeded for several reasons.

"We have been investing in Alaska: having the inventory here, having the appetite to put the inventory on the ground where Alaskans need it, when they need it," Shurtleff says.

As a regional company, the geographical isolation of the Last Frontier has also played a part in allowing Alaska Industrial Hardware to succeed, Shurtleff notes.

With many of its 200 employees born and raised in Alaska, the company's connection to the state runs deep, which played a significant role for why it was sold to BSNC instead of a publicly traded company that was also interested in acquiring it in 2015, Shurtleff says.

"Culturally, the acquisition has been a great fit," Shurtleff says. "BSNC is a mission-driven company. During the acquisition process, we at AIH appreciated that BSNC is Alaskan-owned with a greater purpose than your typical company. AIH is proud to serve the communities we live and work in. That's a deep part of our company culture that I think may have been lost under a publicly-traded company."

Shurtleff says that the acquisition by BSNC allowed the company to remain an Alaska brand, which was important.

"By doing it the way we did it, we were able to keep jobs in Alaska—keep Alaskans employed," Shurtleff says.

The deal has worked out well for both Alaska Industrial Hardware and BSNC, Shurtleff explains. One of the significant benefits for Alaska Industrial Hardware has been tied to the economies of scale, which has opened the door for the company to work with BSNC sister companies on government contracting opportunities.

There have been opportunities for Alaska Industrial Hardware employees, as well, including access to more reasonably priced health insurance, which were created by being part of a larger organization. BSNC is also benefiting from the acquisition, Shurtleff says.

"We've been continually profitable in terms of business within their portfolio," Shurtleff says. "BSNC, under Gail's leadership, has continued to allow us the

autonomy to move and adjust and do what we need to do in order to be relevant and competitive.”

Back to Alaskan Ownership

Liquor Stores USA North, better known as Brown Jug, is another company that under different circumstances would qualify for a spot on the Top 49er list. Though, despite its gross revenue, Brown Jug has never made it on the list. Before its acquisition by Afognak, the company was owned by Alcanna—a Canadian-owned business.

With its acquisition in 2020, Brown Jug qualified as being Alaskan-owned and met that criterion for the Top 49er List. But, because of the same issue of double-counting revenue, Brown Jug still couldn't be included. Nonetheless, it too falls in line with the spirit of the accolade.

“Brown Jug is a heritage Alaskan brand and is now owned and operated by Alaskans. Afognak management lives in the communities where we operate, shop at our stores, and are emotionally connected to the success of the business and to our staff and customers,” says Matt Thorpe, president of Brown Jug and COO of Afognak Commercial Group. “We are passionate about supporting not just local brands but also local charities. Because of this connection, Brown Jug is getting the kind of vision and commitment it deserves.”

Afognak, which ranked number 9 this year in the Top 49ers, has reorganized its corporate structure over the last year to separate subsidiary companies based on their primary operations: government and commercial.

“Afognak had already operated in the commercial sector for many years, and

“Culturally, the acquisition has been a great fit... During the acquisition process, we at AIH appreciated that BSNC is Alaskan-owned with a greater purpose than your typical company... That's a deep part of our company culture that I think may have been lost under a publicly-traded company.”

Terry Shurtleff, President/CEO, Alaska Industrial Hardware

There have also been changes made with the goal of improving the lives of Brown Jug's employees.

“Most employees were offered access to health insurance, and all employees now accrue PTO so they are less impacted when they need to take time off or can schedule vacations to create a better work/life balance,” Thorpe says.

Part of bringing Brown Jug under its umbrella, Afognak felt that it was important to ensure that their corporate values were in alignment.

“All of Afognak Native Corporation's subsidiaries share the same values. Our commitment to harmony, appreciation and respect, efficiency, communication, Elder knowledge, heritage and culture, and commitment to community are all the same,” Thorpe says. “We were thrilled to fold in the hundreds of employees of Brown Jug and welcome them to the Afognak family of companies.”

Thorpe explains that he was happy with the “incremental” changes made at Brown Jug to make it a better place to work.

“We value our customers' and employees' safety and are committed to being community conscious,” Thorpe says. “We are only getting started and will continue our mission to bring the best products, best prices, and best customer service to our patrons. This includes launching new locations in the coming years and staying committed to supporting local brands and partners.”

Thorpe credits the marriage of the staff and management team at Brown Jug—with their decades of experience in the retail industry—with the executive management style of Afognak for the continued success of Brown Jug.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to bring the heritage brand of Brown Jug under Alaskan ownership once more. Our team looks forward to continuing investing in the business and taking pride in the communities where we operate,” Thorpe says. “Dollars spent at Brown Jug stores go right back into the hands of Alaskans, and we are so grateful for our loyal customer base.”

Part of Great Whole

While for recording keeping purposes it's vital to not double-count gross revenue of important Alaska corporations and their subsidiaries, it's also important to recognize companies in the Last Frontier that support the core values of the list. Among others, Alaska Industrial Hardware and Brown Jug do exactly that by creating jobs, investing in the state, and supporting local communities.

Shurtleff says, “It was always kind of a feather in our cap to see us within the 49ers, but we still feel good about being part of a 49er and being an Alaskan brand serving Alaskans.” **AB**

The '50th 49er'

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group

By Tracy Barbour

Amphae's Stock

Alaska *Business*' annual list of Top 49ers features local companies that generate billions of dollars in revenue, employ thousands of workers, and contribute significantly to the community. Inevitably, some businesses barely miss the ranks, even after making the list in previous years. One such company is Keller Williams (ranked 49 in 2019) which achieved outstanding productivity and growth in 2020 and is a company to watch in the future—and this year is being recognized as the '50th 49er'.

"We are honored," says CEO/Team Leader Joshua Nelson, reacting to receiving this year's special designation. "We have 392 associates in Alaska, and it's a testament to the work they have put in and the amazing businesses they have built."

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group is the state's leading residential real estate firm based on agent count, market share, and sales volume. The company has fifteen employees in Alaska and offices in Anchorage, Eagle River, Wasilla, Fairbanks, and Soldotna to serve the needs of home buyers and sellers. Some

of its locations are "mega agent" offices that independent contractors with a large team have opted to broker out of their own building—and may even have associates throughout the country. Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group also has independent affiliates in Juneau and Ketchikan to further expand its reach in Alaska. "We're working on having multiple locations to create a solid statewide infrastructure," Nelson says.

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group is part of Keller Williams Realty Inc., an Austin, Texas-based technology and international real estate franchise. Founded in 1983 by Gary Keller and Joe Williams, the company has expanded from a single location in Austin to approximately 950 offices and 180,000 associates worldwide. Each Keller Williams office is independently owned and operated, making it a business entity unto itself.

Incidentally, in Alaska, a real estate salesperson is legally known as a licensee. However, the industry-accepted term for a real estate salesperson is "agent," although this word carries legal implications. This article uses agent as a general reference.

Strong, Consistent Performance

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group proudly embodies Keller Williams' corporate mission: "To build careers worth having, businesses worth owning, lives worth living, experiences worth giving, and legacies worth leaving." This mission has successfully guided the company since it established its presence in Alaska in 2006.

Since then, the real estate market has ebbed and flowed with the ups and downs of Alaska's economy. But over the past five years, the company's real estate associates have produced impressive revenue:

- \$38,841,462 in 2020
- \$33,222,455 in 2019
- \$34,840,420 in 2018
- \$35,007,889 in 2017
- \$34,000,000 in 2016

Nelson attributes this robust performance, in part, to the associates' training, vigilance, and adaptability. He explains: "One of the things we teach at Keller Williams is always preparing for market shifts and understand that on a downhill side there's an opportunity to tighten your belt and on an upshift there's an opportunity to gain market share. We're coaching the business owners to always be ready and always be looking at their leading indicators."

So far this year, business is booming for Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group. "From January to July, our business is up 41 percent from last year," says Operating Principal Barbara Huntley. "We have an increase in volume of 23.81 and 20.4 for units percentage. Part of that is the fact that prices have gone up."

She adds: "From January to the end of July, we had just over \$1 billion in sales volume and gross commissions just under

"One of the things we teach at Keller Williams is always preparing for market shifts and understand that on a downhill side there's an opportunity to tighten your belt and on an upshift there's an opportunity to gain market share. We're coaching the business owners to always be ready and always be looking at their leading indicators."

Joshua Nelson, CEO/Team Leader, Keller Williams

\$30 million for year to date. That will put us on pace to smash our \$38 million revenue."

Huntley says the focus of Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group is to help agents build their business and community—which ultimately benefits the company. "It's about our realtors and the community," she says. "If we help the realtors have the life they desire and help the community, then Keller Williams gets taken care of."

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group is an ardent supporter of worthy causes that enhance the communities it serves. This year, the company participated in its annual day of giving: RED Day, which stands for renew, energize, and donate.

On this global day of service—held on the second Thursday of May—Keller Williams agents and associates worldwide take off work to perform various service projects in the community.

In Juneau, Keller Williams volunteers provided coffee for first responders; in Soldotna, they rebuilt two stand-alone food pantries that allow people to donate and take food discreetly. And in Anchorage, they came together to spruce up the grounds at the Anchorage Pioneer Home. “We swept the parking lot, cleaned the furniture, and did anything to be a help,” Nelson says.

But the volunteers’ most ambitious project was rehabbing the gazebo at the Pioneer Home in Palmer. They completely gutted the gazebo, added new windows, and painted the fireplace to make it more enjoyable for the community. Keller Williams associates raised more than \$12,000 to provide the materials to renovate the gazebo, along with contributing their time. Although RED Day is designed to be a one-day event, Keller Williams’ work on the service projects began long before then. “We have a culture committee, and they have put in countless hours into these projects,” Nelson says.



Barbara Huntley
Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group

boom since the end of WW2, and due to COVID-19, the real estate market has become much better at being technically based. “Home buyers and sellers have grasped onto virtual home showings and meetings,” Nelson says. “And although there are still some people that have reluctance, we expect to see more and more consumers get comfortable purchasing a home digitally without ever being physically in the home. The industry has also moved in that direction, and the technology that has enabled things to move forward at such a high rate of speed is amazing.”

Nelson says Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group has always coached its agents to deal with serious clients. But the current real estate market has created a unique opportunity for agents to further refine their processes. “We swiftly entered a fast market where agents and buyers had to be much more willing to say yes than before,” he says.

The market also forced real estate agents to become proficient at doing virtual showings. A considerable number of homes were sold last year via FaceTime and Zoom, and now agents are comfortable with using these tools. “That won’t go away; we’re definitely a tech-driven world,” Nelson says.

The company’s agents—and buyers—have had to adjust to a fast-and-furious real estate market. Historically low interest rates, tremendous demand, and an incredibly low inventory all converged to create a seller’s market. Multiple offers, price wars, and fast-moving sales have become the norm. Mid-level priced homes went to being snapped up in days to hours. “We’ve seen people get really creative: buyers paying sellers’ closing costs and

waiving inspections,” Nelson says. “We don’t condone that, but we’ve seen them do it.”

During 2020, Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group adapted in a variety of ways to meet the needs of their clients and the community. The company worked with state and municipality officials to ensure that its business owners could function in the midst of the COVID-19 environment. “It was vitally important that government entities understood that home purchases are just as important as other forms of housing,” Nelson explains. “Residential real estate is an essential business.”



Joshua Nelson
Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group

Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group also extended greater flexibility and sensitivity to help clients deal with the challenges of the unprecedented pandemic. “Unfortunately, we’re living in a time where everything can be politicized,” he says. “Our clients’ comfort comes first.”

The company also initiated practices to enhance safety, including providing clients with masks and hand sanitizer. It also implemented social distancing measures by limiting the number of people allowed at open houses because of COVID-19.

Success Factors

As one of the keys to its success, Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group has been an unapologetic defender of both the realtor and consumer in the real estate transaction. A home is the largest investment most people will make, and having a true professional in the sales process makes a significant difference.

Nelson says. “We’re living at a time where we have large companies actively buying property to flip it,” he says. “We believe a well-trained individual working in the transaction is the best thing for the consumer. We are professionals at what we do, and we are going to act and move in that manner.”

The company also attributes its success to its practice of having world-renowned business training and helping people build amazing lives. It has focused on teaching realtors to be business- and relationship-based. Being an entrepreneur comes first, but being purposeful comes next, Nelson says.

He explains: “At Keller Williams, we truly want our people to come in and build an amazing life and build a business that has value. We’re not going to be measured by how much money we make at the end of the day. We’re going to be measured by the lives that we change and the leaders that we grow.”

That philosophy has served the company well, translating into a variety of awards over the years. Its team members have earned various accolades for their stellar work performance, from local awards from the Anchorage Board of Realtors to national honors for growth and leadership. “Our leadership team was 3rd place in the nation for growth for the first quarter of this year with KWRI’s Bet on Red campaign,” Nelson says.

Nelson is excited about the success that Keller Williams Realty Alaska Group is experiencing and where the company is heading. “As the industry keeps changing and Keller Williams keeps looking to unapologetically protect the consumers and professionals, we’re looking forward to growth opportunities,” he says. **AB**



Best Practices, Lessons Learned, and In-the-Moment Adaptations

Compiled By Tasha Anderson

This year's Top 49ers is all about looking at the world anew, whether that's reconsidering priorities as an individual or a business, re-thinking a five-year plan, or searching out new ways to do traditional business.

To us, there may be no better experts on how to consistently change, adapt, and grow than the Top 49ers, the top forty-nine, Alaskan-owned companies ranked by gross revenue.

This year as we surveyed the Top 49ers to update the ranks, we asked each organization the following:

After 2020 and the first half of 2021, people are eager to move beyond the pandemic and a struggling Alaska economy; but as difficult as it's been, overcoming challenges can provide a new perspective. What best practices,

lessons learned, and in-the-moment (but perhaps becoming permanent) adaptations is your organization building into a fresh paradigm as you look at where we've been—and where we're headed?

A few major themes emerged.

Communication

According to Colville's survey, "Despite the negatives, the pandemic pandemonium provided us with a new perspective and enabled us to reorganize our company and change our communication style to accommodate the fast-flowing information. The end result was a workforce that is better suited to handle new challenges, quickly and efficiently as well as disseminate critical information in a fast and fluid manner."

As Great Northwest explained, "While in-person collaboration and communication can't be replaced, the efficiency and flexibility of virtual meetings has proven to

be highly productive amongst our teams.”
And Gana-A’ Yoo pointed out, there can be far-reaching benefits to rethinking how we communicate: “Moving forward, we will be blending the traditional with progressive means of communication to best meet the needs of our shareholders, the board members, and the employees.”

Diving In

According to Kodiak-based Koniag, “At Koniag, we don’t run from adverse climates, we’re used to finding our way through the stormy seas of the Kodiak region. Koniag relied on our Alutiiq value of resilience and our ability to adapt to rapidly changing environments to move forward and find innovative ways to expand throughout the pandemic.”

“Sanitizing stations, facemasks, gloves were bought promptly and distributed to all employees, offices, and jobsites. When hand sanitizer was hard to find, we bought supplies and made our own to distribute,” said Davis Constructors and Engineers.

Responding immediately and thoroughly early in the pandemic, MTA reported, “We’ve invested time and resources in making sure MTA can operate fully remote without missing a beat in terms of customer service and continued innovation. This

includes building out state-of-the-art remote operations for our sales and customer service teams to ensuring a smart and sensible remote work policy to ensure safety remained at the forefront for both our employees and members... We will keep creating, keep adapting, keep innovating, keep building, keep growing, keep bringing Alaskans together, and keep moving forward.”

Essential Employees

As most of the Top 49ers have, Three Bears looked to their people first: “We’re continually working to support and compensate our employees who’ve done amazing work and have proven over and over just how ‘essential’ they are. We could not be prouder of our Three Bears Team. And it is this teamwork, this working together under stress, that has made Three Bears a stronger and better company over the last year and a half.”

For Olgoonik, it was critical that no employee be left behind, and the policy paid off. “One of our proudest achievements of 2020 was remaining whole as a corporation—we kept all of our employees on board and working, even through work slowdowns. And we have emerged from the pandemic with a work-ready workforce.”

Goldbelt is seizing the opportunity to be more flexible for itself—and its employees: “Goldbelt learned that talent is everywhere. Removing the requirement to hire in a specific location has allowed Goldbelt to fill specialty positions with qualified professionals.”

And for Lynden, “Managing the difficulties of this

past year was a team effort that Lynden proudly attributes to its outstanding employees. Their dedication, ingenuity, and hard work have been awe-inspiring, and Lynden’s culture of safety and innovation shone through.”

According to Chugach Alaska Corporation, “People are the heart and soul of Chugach Alaska Corporation, from our 5,000 employees to the 2,700 shareholders we serve. The pandemic blurred the line between our employees’ professional and personal lives and reminded us that as leaders, we must adopt a holistic view and consider the ‘whole person’ when it comes to supporting our people.”

Times Are Hard? Give More

Cape Fox Corporation saw a global pandemic as the perfect time to help out: “We maintained the Cape Fox Team spirit through increased communications and philanthropy. We started a philanthropy program, Cape Fox Cares, to give back to our communities in more effective, efficient ways.”

“We helped members experiencing hardship access funding for overdue bills to ease the cost burden for all,” reported Matanuska Electric Association.

Bering Straits Native Corporation expanded their workplace benefits to directly aid their employees, “Adopting paid sick leave programs available under the CARES Act to pay employees for time off to get vaccinated, recover from any vaccine side effects, pay for missed work due to COVID-19 infection within their families, and for missed work due to school and daycare closures.”

Nimble Adaptation

“We are proud to be a well-diversified

company that is always moving, growing, adapting, and focusing on retaining a healthy cash flow. This allowed us to continue performing well and delivering for our shareholders and descendants,” stated Bristol Bay Native Corporation.

Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation didn’t just survive, it seized opportunity during the pandemic. “Despite the many challenges of 2020, UIC and its outstanding employees were able to take the COVID-19 crisis in stride and even excel. In fact, 2020 was the best year in UIC’s financial history with the company achieving record revenues and profits while also adding new companies and new business lines to its already thriving operations.”

Everts Air Cargo & Everts Air Alaska used the pandemic as an opportunity: “Everts Air’s response to the pandemic included the development of an aggressive company tracking and communication program, which also ended up including a comprehensive education guide. Ultimately, our immediate response to the pandemic ended up fulfilling the requirements of our Critical Infrastructure plan which we continue to facilitate and update regularly.”

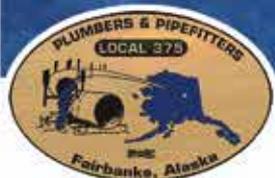
First National Bank Alaska strove to ease the disruption of COVID-19 for its clients as much as possible, and “For the vast majority of customers, the bank’s transition to teleworking was seamless, with little effect on the high-level customer service Alaskans want and expect from First National.”

The Top 49ers, including many quoted here, had even more invaluable information and insights: to read the full text, check out their responses exclusive to our October 2021 Digital Edition. **AB**



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Laying the Foundation for Education

Projects in rural Alaska make up the bulk of new
school construction

By Rachael Kvapil



Ryan Butte, Lower Kuskokwim School District

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New school construction happens on a limited basis in Alaska. It's more common for school districts to renovate existing schools or construct additions to an existing structure than to completely start from scratch. The process of applying for state funding for a

capital improvement project (CIP), designing, and building a new school is time-consuming—an option that school districts choose only when the existing building is unsafe, beyond student capacity, or absolutely unable to fulfill the requirement standards set by the state.

Tim Mearig, facilities manager for the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), says the

As projected enrollments increase in rural Alaska, school districts are applying for capital improvement project funds to build new schools in areas where existing structures have aged out, are too expensive to maintain, or facing environmental dangers from coastal erosion.

Ryan Butte | Lower Kuskokwim School District



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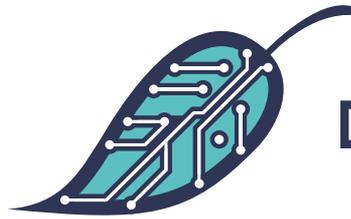


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“A lot of projects have been done through the Debt Reimbursement Program. It makes sense for large projects where it might be reasonable to spread the cost over time rather than pulling the funds out of a single budget year.”

Tim Mearig
Facilities Manager
Alaska Department of Education and
Early Development

number of new school construction projects have abated as student populations and birth rates in parts of the state have leveled off or declined. However, enrollment is only one factor that prompts a school district to apply for state funding through the CIP grant process. CIP funds are available for both renovations and new school constructions, so school districts go through a detailed evaluation process to determine whether a replacement school is absolutely necessary. This evaluation is in line with DEED's CIP application and covers age and condition of an existing facility, the number of current students and an estimate of students in seven years, relationship of project cost to annual operational cost savings, and more.

“Generally speaking, there's a higher threshold in the review process for a new or replacement school,” says Mearig. “It's uncommon that a building is evaluated bad enough to be replaced.”

Exceptions do exist. Mearig points to McQueen School in Kivalina, which received state funding for a new building because of coastal erosion concerns affecting the entire community.

The CIP process starts on September 1, which is the deadline for school districts to submit applications. According to DEED, the average number of applications is around seventy, and it takes approximately four to five weeks before the department issues an initial priority ranking list on November 5. This is when districts receive notification on ranking, modification, or ineligibility for state funding.

Districts can request a reconsideration public hearing no later than December 1. DEED then has fifteen days to issue their final decision. Once this process is complete, DEED submits two lists to the state legislature for fund allocation, one for school construction and one for major maintenance.

Different Programs

There are two different types of CIP programs, one for grant projects and another for debt projects. The main difference lies in the source of funding. Funds for grant projects are appropriated by the legislature into the School Construction Grant Fund or Major Maintenance Grant Fund and used to fund projects from DEED's

priority list. These funds come directly from the state's capital budget. Funds for debt projects are 100 percent local. All project funding for debt projects is locally available at the time a municipality or borough sells bonds and receives proceeds. Until 2015, school districts with the ability to sell bonds to finance public works projects frequently applied for state aid through the Debt Reimbursement Program on the same application as the grant program. Unlike the grant program, the debt reimbursement application doesn't have a prescribed annual cycle for legislative allocations since appropriated funds came out of the state's operating budget. In 2015, the Debt Reimbursement Program was suspended until 2020. That moratorium was recently extended to July 1, 2025.

“A lot of projects have been done through the Debt Reimbursement Program,” says Mearig. “It makes sense for large projects where it might be reasonable to spread the cost over time rather than pulling the funds out of a single budget year.”

In both programs, the school district is required to provide a participating share amount to receive state funds. The amount depends on if the applicant is a municipal district (5 percent to 35 percent participating share) or in a regional educational attendance area within unincorporated land (2 percent participating share). The participating share for debt projects has varied over time.

Once a grant project receives funding, DEED enters into a project agreement with the school district and a payment schedule is established. Mearig says the construction costs of new schools in Alaska average \$431 per square foot and can take up to five years to build. This estimate does not include land acquisition or design costs, and rural projects can quickly approach \$1,000 per square foot as contractors have to house crews in temporary camps and provide transportation to remote locations.

Payments are made to school districts based on the completion of milestone reviews that include design, contract awards, and various stages of completed construction. Procurement

requirements for school districts are also set in this agreement. The Request For Proposal process is handled locally by school districts.

An Emphasis on Rural

In recent years, many CIP grant priority lists are comprised of rural projects. Ryan Butte, project manager for capital projects for the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD), says his district has continuously applied for funds since 2007 when they began to see a rising trend in enrollment creating the need for more space. Currently, LKSD has three active CIP grant projects and another new school construction project funded by fire insurance from the Kilbuck school fire in November of 2015. Likewise, it has three additional projects for which it is seeking state funds.

"We are slowly outgrowing our schools, and we don't want to wait until they are at capacity before building a new one," says Butte. "We need to build for the population down the road."

Though LKSD projects are primarily renovation addition projects, a new K-12 school is near completion in Atmautluak. Butte says criteria for the school's design was set by LKSD Educational Specifications, a required document Alaska schools use to detail and describe the educational space needed to support the educational programs for a particular community. He explains that specifications vary from school to school due to enrollment, instructional programs, dual language, as well as school athletics.

Mearig adds that school districts sometimes create templates for school structures when they have developed an instructional program that works across a larger community or there is a need to build multiple schools in a short amount of time. Examples of school templates are found in several K-12 schools in Fairbanks. Mearig says templates are less common for middle schools and high schools.

The school design for the Joann A. Alexia Memorial K-12 School in Atmautluak is completely unique; the new 34,331-square-foot structure will house educational, instructional, shop, administration, and mechanical/utility spaces.

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“Generally speaking, there’s a higher threshold in the review process for a new or replacement school. It’s uncommon that a building is evaluated bad enough to be replaced.”

Tim Mearig
Facilities Manager
Alaska Department of Education and
Early Development

Lower Kuskokwim School District has applied for capital improvement project funds to construct a new school in Napakiak. This project made it onto the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development FY22 Capital Project Priority List.

Ryan Butte | Lower Kuskokwim School District



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When completed, the Joann A. Alexia Memorial K-12 School in Atmautluak will house ninety-eight students, though enrollment is projected to triple within the next decade. Nvision worked with the Lower Kuskokwim School District to design a school that reflects Yup'ik culture while providing a learning environment suited for different styles and evolving technology.

Ryan Butte | Lower Kuskokwim School District

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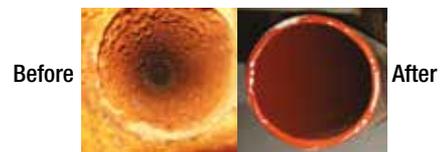
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“We are slowly outgrowing our schools and we don’t want to wait until they are at capacity before building a new one. We need to build for the population down the road.”

Ryan Butte
Project Manager
Lower Kuskokwim School District

Nvision Architecture developed the space with a play field, play deck, additional boardwalk, and utility decks. According to the Nvision website, designers worked closely with LKSD to develop a minimalist design inspired by Alaska Native Yup’ik culture that is responsive to harsh winter conditions. The school is shaped to reduce snow drift using angled walls and deliberate positioning of doorways. Likewise, they used vaulted ceilings to encourage a welcoming environment that promotes openness. Nvision included a large multi-purpose common area in the design that features a Kuskokwim River map built into the flooring.

Designing learning spaces is a unique challenge since designers are not only addressing the needs of current students but future students as well. Butte says LKSD’s Capital Projects Department coordinates with the Instructional Program Directors to continually update their Educational Specifications for different learning styles and rapidly changing technology.

In their online project summary, Nvision says they paid considerable

attention to integrating educational spaces for individual age groups along with school community interaction. Though the school focus is primarily early education and pre-school, the school can accommodate older grades. Likewise, the new school site is large enough for future expansion.

Justin Jones, general manager for Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation (UIC) says that construction crews frequently provide additional input into a school design during the construction process. He says this is a normal process that comes with manufacturing a building as large as the school in Atmautluak.

When we run into design issues we suggest solutions to the client,” says Jones.

Planning Ahead

For Jones, rural construction presents more of a logistical challenge. Though UIC has completed projects in areas more remote than Atmautluak, it does require a certain amount of preplanning to ensure construction crews meet time and budget requirements. Jones says this means frequently ordering materials in

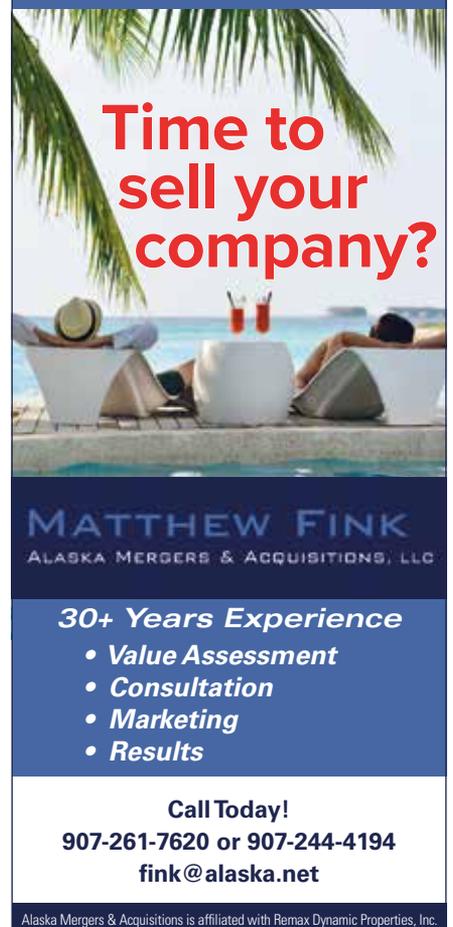


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advance so they can make it onto one of the two seasonal barges heading up the Kuskokwim River to Bethel.

"We invest heavily in our construction schedule," says Jones. "It also helps to be close to a hub like Bethel."

Yet, even the best laid plans faced further challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jones says the village went into lockdown to keep outsiders from bringing the virus into the village. Before UIC could resume construction, they were required to come up with mitigation plans that outlined their plans to conduct business in the village while keeping themselves and others safe. By mid-summer, UIC resumed work in Atmautluak.

A more minor disruption since then comes in the form of material shortages that have affected the construction industry nationwide. Jones says the pandemic has only slightly extended the duration of the project. The Joann A. Alexia Memorial K-12 School is nearing completion, and UIC plans to hand

over the new school to the community around the winter holidays. Afterwards, crews will be back to demolish older, offsite facilities.

Jones says that his company handles just as many school renovations and additions as it does new school builds. Various contractors are currently constructing CIP grant projects for new schools statewide including a K-12 school in Hollis (Southeast Island School District) and an elementary school in Aniak (Kuspuk School District). Two more LKSD new school applications ranked well on the FY22 Project Priority Lists, including a project in Napakiak where the riverbank erosion has already required the movement of the fuel tank facility in 2019. New school construction in Houston (Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District) is primarily relying on

Federal Emergency Management Agency funds to replace buildings damaged in the 2018 earthquake.

To date, there isn't a formalized process to determine the success of a new school. Mearig says that kind of evaluation is generally left up to school districts. Likewise, he doesn't foresee many changes in the Department of Education's application or funding process. At times, he sees a potential need to get a better sense of the construction needs among districts and maybe assist with identifying and prioritizing additional funding resources as they present themselves. However, he says the actual process of ranking applications and submitting lists for allocation is a robust and proven process. **AB**

The advertisement features a circular logo for Udelhoven Oilfield System Services Inc. (UOSS) at the top center. The logo is blue and white with a stylized atomic symbol in the center. Below the logo, the text "Serving the bright lights of Alaska's oil and gas industry since 1970" is written in a white, italicized font. At the bottom, the word "UDELHOVEN" is displayed in large, bold, black capital letters. The background of the advertisement is a composite image showing the aurora borealis in a dark sky above a snowy, mountainous landscape with an oilfield in the foreground.

Seafood Industry Investments

Finding new growth in traditional activities

By Richard Perry

For Alaska Native corporations (ANCs), developing seafood interests means more than merely making profit; they seek to benefit shareholders and descendants in other ways.

For Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC) and Sealaska, holdings in the seafood industry provide many benefits to their shareholders and descendants. The profits of these business lines offer opportunities for shareholders and descendants such as job search and employment placement assistance, higher education and vocational training, and leadership development/management training programs, to name a few.



The seafood industry is an essential holding for many ANCs as it is an integral part of a diverse portfolio of investments and other business ventures.

But while interests in the fishing industry have long-term potential, year over year the risks and benefits can vary significantly.

In the August 2021 *Alaska Economic Trends* article "The Pandemic and Jobs by Area," Neil Fried notes that Alaska's fishing industry is an essential economic driver, although it continues to be volatile. With the COVID-19 pandemic, rising sea levels, and rising temperatures, the fishing industry remains vigilant in adapting and appraising data as they navigate each fishing season.

Bristol Bay Native Corporation

BBNC is the largest long line Alaska cod quota owner—controlling 37.44 percent of the total freezer longline catcher processor cod allocation.

Bristol Bay Seafood Investments (BBSI) is one of BBNC's five business lines.

"BBNC acquired Blue North Fisheries and Clipper Seafoods in September 2019 and organized the two companies under the banner of Bristol Wave Seafoods," says BBSI Senior Vice President Everette Anderson. "As part of the transaction, BBNC also created BBSI to serve as a holding company for Bristol Bay Alaska Seafoods and any future seafood investments.

"Bristol Wave Seafoods is our harvesting company, fleet, and primary processor of longline caught cod in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska," Anderson says.

Bristol Wave employs up to 150 people each season for harvesting and vessel needs.

Anderson, a BBNC shareholder and previous BBNC board member (elected in 2013) was hired at BBSI in January 2020. Having decades of experience in the seafood industry, Anderson was brought in to BBSI to expand the Alaska seafood market.

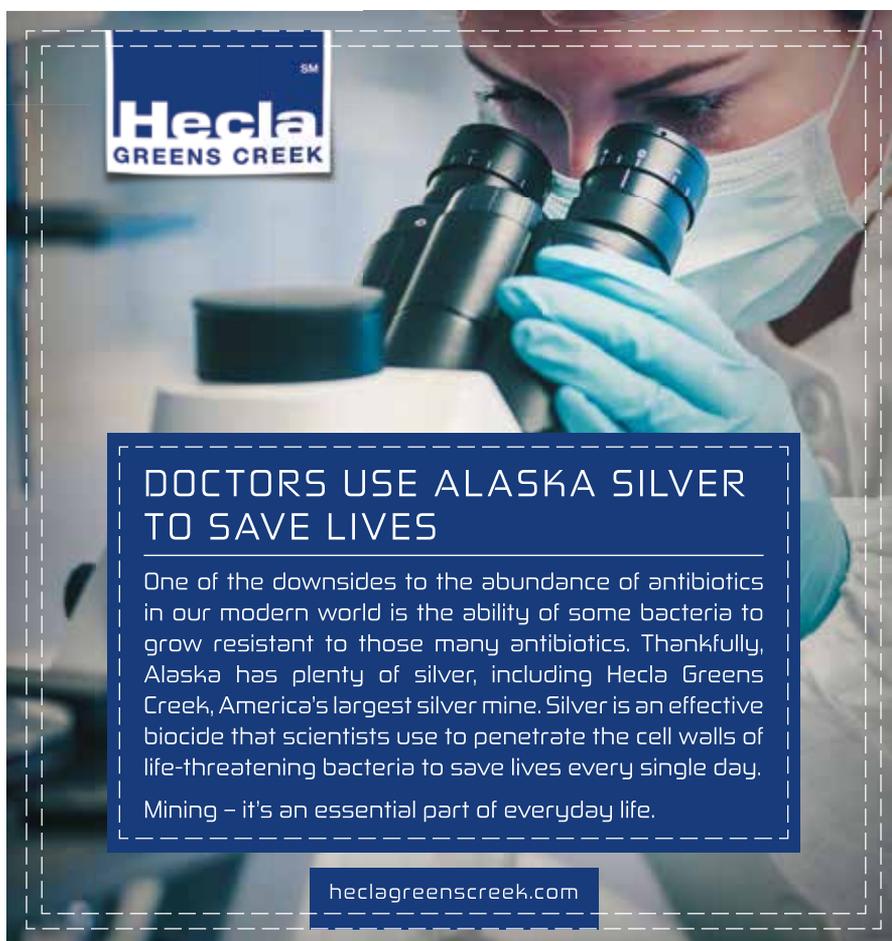
BBNC and BBSI embrace sophisticated innovations. "I expect that with the advancements in machine learning and artificial intelligence, we will be able to work toward ensuring sustainable fisheries, healthy



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“I expect that with the advancements in machine learning and artificial intelligence, we will be able to work toward ensuring sustainable fisheries, healthy ecosystems, and clean water. We’re leading in the use and implementation of advanced science to ensure that we continue to uphold our stewardship responsibilities to our land, water, and air. Just as our ancestors did thousands of years before us.”

Everette Anderson
Senior Vice President
BBSI

ecosystems, and clean water,” Anderson says. “We’re leading in the use and implementation of advanced science to ensure that we continue to uphold our stewardship responsibilities to our land, water, and air. Just as our ancestors did thousands of years before us.”

Blending Alaska Native traditions and cultural ways with science, BBNC and BBSI endeavor to identify areas of opportunity in the seafood industry to ensure that target investments remain for generations to come.

The responsibility to protect the marine environment for future generations is an enormous task. Global wild capture fisheries face challenging times, and BBSI is positioned to work on solutions to protect its interests.

“The future of BBSI is slated for growth in a methodical and calculated manner in order to ensure it is providing opportunities for its shareholders and enhancing BBNC’s financial strength,” Anderson says. “At BBNC, we convert our success into benefits to our shareholders. Since our inception in 1972, we’ve paid more than \$180 million in shareholder distributions. But our commitment to enhance the lives of our shareholders is more than financial. Through a range of employment, education, and training opportunities, BBNC’s Shareholder Development Department works to encourage personal and professional growth and success within our shareholder community.”

Looking to the future, on September 1 BBNC announced its participation in Bristol Bay Wild Market, an exclusive seafood marketplace inside the Climate Pledge Arena, which is a multi-purpose arena in Seattle, located north of the downtown area.

The Bristol Bay Wild Market is a collaboration between BBNC, Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association (BBRSDA), and Bristol Wild Seafood Company; three organizations rooted in Alaska to bring wild Alaska seafood to millions of arena visitors.

“The goal of BBRSDA is to ensure long-term success of the world’s largest and most valuable salmon fishery,” BBRSDA Executive Director Andy Wink says. “This new marketplace is not only the perfect opportunity to share the stories of our fleet and



Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association says fishermen are the best advocates for Alaska’s fish.

Wesley Evans | Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association



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“Enormous social, environmental, and economic value is possible when strong, like-minded organizations join forces across the world to make a bigger difference. Solving our most pressing problems requires working together with a global mindset.”

Terry Downes, COO, Sealaska

organization but also to give more people the chance to experience the benefits of their hard work.”

While promotion of wild Bristol Bay sockeye salmon and pacific cod connects these partners, the preservation of Alaska marine habitats and culture unites them.

BBNC and BBSI are not alone in the ANCSA corporations operating in Alaska and beyond. Innovation in the seafood industry also includes aquaculture, which has seen new ventures into aquatic plants like kelp, seaweed, and shellfish such as oysters, mussels, clams, and scallops.

Sealaska

Sealaska is in the Southeast region and is also one of the twelve regional for-profit organizations created by ANCSA. Sealaska, with 23,000 shareholders, includes Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian people with more than 10,000 years of ancestral ties to land and oceans.

Matt Carle, the senior director of corporate communications at Sealaska, provided written comments

on Sealaska's approach and plans.

“Our path forward involves investing in endeavors that contribute to health and balance for lands and oceans and address the inevitable impacts of climate change,” Carle writes. “We owe it to future generations to do this. This philosophy has inspired us to become an ocean-sciences company with growing capabilities to feed people well, clean up man-made messes, generate clean energy, and build thriving communities.”

As agriculture and aquaculture are expanding in Alaska, new opportunities driven by technologies and new harvesting methods have developed for producing food. Sealaska is focused on low-impact food production, and that includes investing in a kelp-based food company.

Barnacle Foods produces food with a zero-input crop, meaning that it requires no arable land or fresh water to grow. The company uses resources more efficiently and keeps greater value locally by manufacturing products close to where ingredients are sourced.

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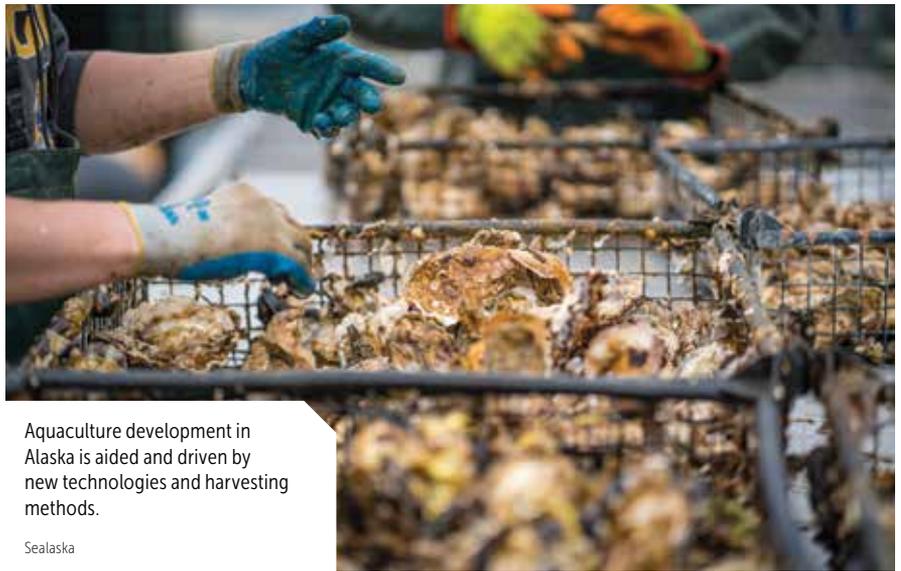
“That’s why Sealaska invested in Juneau-based [Barnacle Foods] in 2020. We believe that to save our oceans, we must depend on them.

This forces us to steward our oceans sustainably, using a fraction of the carbon and freshwater required to eat beef and other land-based proteins.”

Matt Carle
Senior Director of Corporate Communications
Sealaska

“This is a great example that aligns beautifully with Sealaska’s ideas,” Carle writes. “That’s why Sealaska invested in the Juneau-based company in 2020. We believe that to save our oceans, we must depend on them. This forces us to steward our oceans sustainably, using a fraction of the carbon and freshwater required to eat beef and other land-based proteins.”

Also in 2020, Sealaska brought New England Seafood International into its family of businesses. New England Seafood International represents the organization’s values on a global scale and enables Sealaska to influence change and affect the factors that



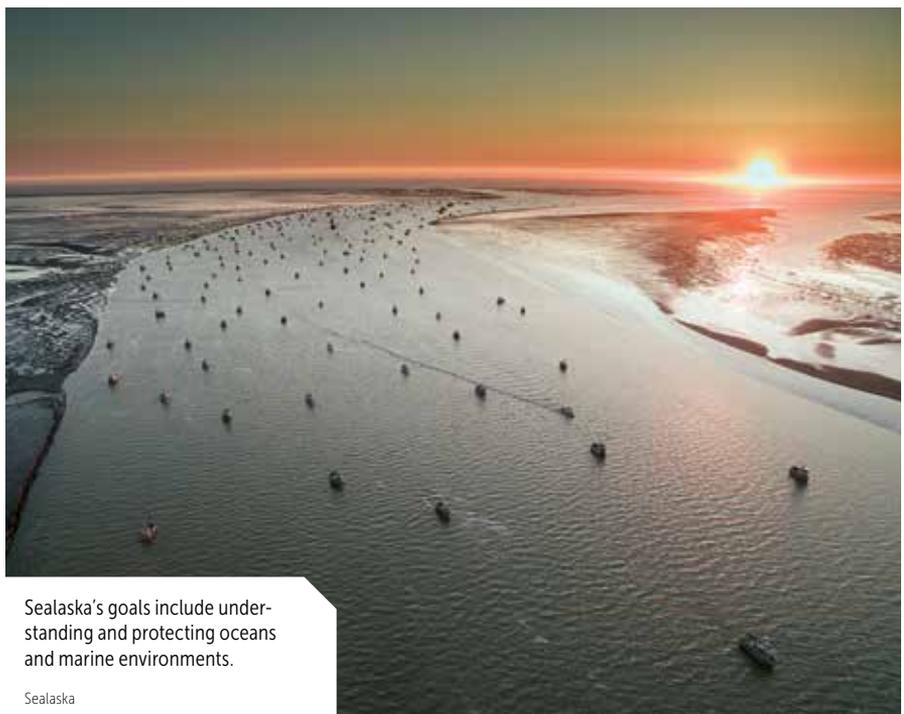
Aquaculture development in Alaska is aided and driven by new technologies and harvesting methods.

Sealaska



Aquaculture has been seeing growth in Alaska for several years, including additional production of shellfish such as oysters, mussels, clams, and scallops.

Sealaska



Sealaska’s goals include understanding and protecting oceans and marine environments.

Sealaska

Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association focuses on building a regional brand for Bristol Bay; increasing fleet-wide adoption of high-quality harvesting and handling processes; and ensuring a sustainable Bristol Bay fishery.

Bob Waldrop | Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association



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“This new marketplace is not only the perfect opportunity to share the stories of our fleet and organization but also to give more people the chance to experience the benefits of their hard work.”

Andy Wink
Executive Director
BBRSDA

matter most to the long-term health of the seafood industry and the oceans.

“Enormous social, environmental, and economic value is possible when strong, like-minded organizations join forces across the world to make a bigger difference,” Sealaska COO Terry Downes said in a statement about the acquisition last summer. “Solving our most pressing problems requires working together with a global mindset.”

Sealaska’s goals include understanding and protecting the oceans. Gregg Drilling became a part of Sealaska in 2018 and is tasked with diagnosing and addressing many of the threats to the oceans.

Gregg is a leading marine drilling and geotechnical services company headquartered in Southern California. It specializes in remote geotechnical operations, including using seafloor drills and cone-penetration testing that it pioneered to collect essential data for underwater projects such as siting anchors for wind turbines.

Gregg has a drilling rig, about the size of a shipping container, that can



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One of Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association's goals is to engage in activities that protect salmon habitats and stock production, as they are critical elements in fishery production.

Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association

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be operated from anywhere in the world. Another example of a recent innovation is synthesized hagfish slime, a sustainable alternative to standard drilling polymers.

Hagfish are primitive, eel-like creatures that live on the ocean floor. When attacked, they produce slime, which, when combined with seawater, is a powerful defense against predators.

Sealaska also aims to move to clean energy, finding ways to replace the hydrocarbon-based energy infrastructure. Two growing alternatives are offshore wind and tidal turbine energy generation.

"Sealaska has been intentionally building its capacity to support projects such as marine construction and deep-water soil sampling," Carle writes. "We are committed to keeping our water clean. This includes using emerging tools that are safer, better for the environment, and ultimately less expensive than traditional approaches. This has the potential to expand to many other parts of the country and the world."

Sealaska has also built a data management and analytics function with Cognitell, which is key to developing operational and strategic decision-making. This is done by applying data and analytic functions using the latest innovations of artificial intelligence.

ANCSA Benefits

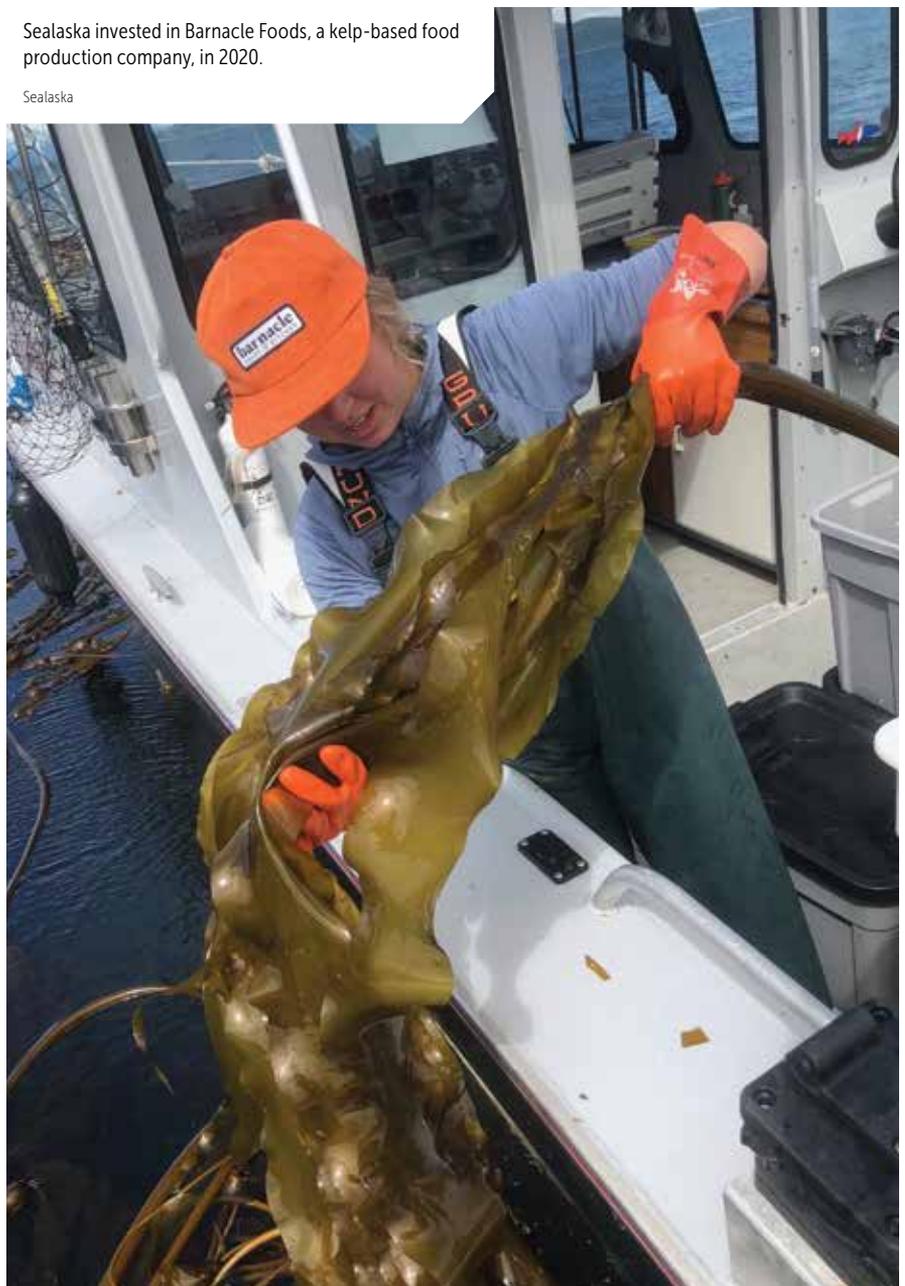
Sealaska and BBNC invest in for-profit ventures as well as culture, revitalizing indigenous languages, education, and economic opportunities for their shareholders and descendants.

These organizations seek to innovate as well as perpetuate centuries of wisdom that supports Alaska Native people and communities for countless generations with these efforts. The stewardship of the land and the oceans honors the balance their ancestors realized for millennia.

The business success as well as other opportunities available with these organizations directly benefits their shareholders and descendants to ensure that generations to come may enjoy the bounty nature has to offer. **AB**

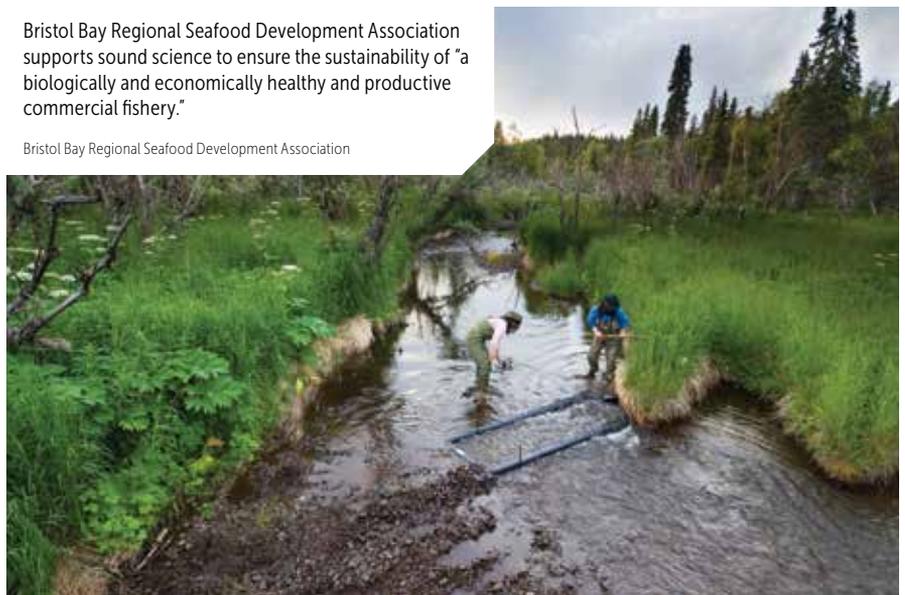
Sealaska invested in Barnacle Foods, a kelp-based food production company, in 2020.

Sealaska



Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association supports sound science to ensure the sustainability of "a biologically and economically healthy and productive commercial fishery."

Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association



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Spokes and Hubs

Two-pronged approach keeps Alaska's healthcare system rolling

By Isaac Stone Simonelli



Providing essential services for a population of about 731,000 over roughly 663,000 square miles has forced the evolution of a healthcare ecosystem in Alaska that's unlike any in the Lower 48.

"We operate on a scale here that no one else in the country, potentially the world, does," says Jared Kosin, president and CEO of Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association. "A big part of that is because of the way our beds and facilities are distributed."

Alaska's population is not connected by a continuous road system, resulting in isolated pocket markets that serve relatively small populations in rural parts of the state.

Kosin describes it as a hub-and-spoke model, with initial care for many starting in outlying rural facilities, such as critical access hospitals. Then, as patients need higher levels of care, they are moved to larger regional hospitals.

"And ultimately they end up in Anchorage. That's kind of the highest care setting we have in Alaska in terms of hospital services," Kosin says.

These hub-and-spoke healthcare services, provided by both Native and non-Native entities in Alaska, stretch across the state, with critical care hospitals in some of the most remote populated regions and highly specialized services in Anchorage and other urban hubs.

There are thirteen critical access hospitals, five sole community hospitals, three general acute care hospitals, and five specialty hospitals, including two military hospitals.

"The tribal system is extremely robust and comprehensive," Kosin says.

Alaska Tribal Health System, representing 229 tribes and serving more than 175,000 Alaska Natives, is in charge of 8 of the 26 hospitals in the state. Alaska Tribal Health System additionally runs 36 health centers and 166 village clinics—many of which are off the state's limited road system.

Maniilaq Association

In Kotzebue, the Maniilaq Health Center, run by the Maniilaq Association, is the hub for healthcare for the Northwest Arctic Borough and the village of Point Hope, serving a population of about 8,000 people. The Maniilaq Association also operates

www.akbizmag.com

"There are some things that you do that are in the best interest of the patient regardless of the economic value it adds to your bottom line. Sure, it's a business, but it's the business of caring for people."

Alan Craft, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Mat-Su Regional Medical Center

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ALASKA LONG-TERM CARE SNAPSHOT

Presented by Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association

Alaska nursing homes are small, rural, serve vulnerable elders and disabled Alaskans dependent on Medicaid, and operate on razor thin margins.

19 Total Alaska Nursing Homes



Nursing home average bed size

Total Nursing Home Beds
763

Total Swing Beds
178

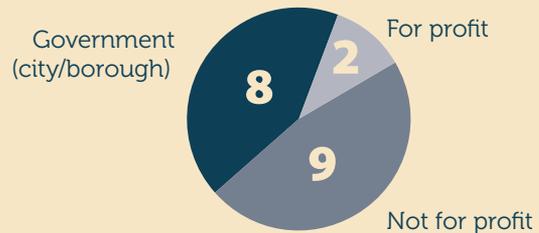


11 Critical Access Hospitals provide nursing home services
219 nursing home beds

3 Nursing homes co-located with rural hospitals
168 nursing home beds

5 Standalone nursing homes in Juneau, Anchorage, Wasilla
376 nursing home beds

Ownership



100% have Medicare and Medicaid certification
90% facility median occupancy
80-95% of residents in Alaska's long-term care facilities depend on Medicaid

eleven health clinics, one for each village under its care, explains Maniilaq Association Public Communications Manager Kelli Shroyer.

According to its website, Maniilaq Health Services' "mission is to provide comprehensive healthcare to the people in our service area while promoting prevention, fitness, wellness, holistic strategies, and local traditions."

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Maniilaq Association in providing healthcare is access.

"There isn't a road system connecting communities," Shroyer says. About 21 percent of all acute care beds in the state are inaccessible by road. "The main mode of transportation is by plane, so our travel is very dependent on the weather."

Despite this, the association provides inpatient, outpatient, and dental services, as well as physical therapy, wellness programs, and more.

A large part of the success of the Maniilaq Health Services falls on the shoulders of Community Health Aide/Practitioners (CHAPs) in remote villages, says Shroyer. The CHAP program was designed to help people in rural villages get the medical care they need. The program is unique to the State of Alaska.

"I think our CHAPs are so important to our services, and they definitely play a huge part in the health of our region," Shroyer says. "We have a lot of programs that travel to the communities to help support the work of CHAPs in the region."

As part of meeting the goals of its mission, the Maniilaq Association opened Utuqqanaat Inaat, a long-term care facility, in 2011. In line with progressive long-term care facilities elsewhere, Utuqqanaat Inaat was designed to have a homelike atmosphere for its up-to eighteen Elders.

Alaska has a dearth of nursing homes. It has the fewest nursing home beds per 1,000 persons 65 and older in the United States.

"We have significantly less long-term care services than everyone else, and that plays a factor in a lot of the work we do," Kosin explains.

Nonetheless, Shroyer pointed toward a recent success for

"We operate on a scale here that no one else in the country, potentially the world, does. A big part of that is because of the way our beds and facilities are distributed."

Jared Kosin, President/CEO, Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association

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“You think about pediatric subspecialties that take millions of people to support, and we only have about 730,000 people in the entire state. So, we subsidize those programs and that's part of our community benefit to the state. A lot of services are unique to Providence... if we didn't provide them, they wouldn't be offered in the state of Alaska.”

Preston Simmons, CEO, Providence Alaska

Utuqqanaat Inaat, which was the facility gaining approval from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to serve traditional wild game, including giving Elders access to seal oil.

“The Traditional Foods Program has received national recognition as a unique and culturally sensitive service for our Elders,” the association’s website states.

Following the “spokes” of the healthcare system from the villages to Maniilaq Health Center and then to a regional hospital allows for more specialized care for patients.

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center

Mat-Su Regional Medical Center came into being in 2006 through the dedicated effort of community members as they envisioned the expansion of Valley Hospital, a small community hospital, explains Alan Craft, the director of marketing and public relations for Mat-Su Regional Medical Center.

“Community leaders at the time saw the need for additional healthcare services,” Craft says. “And that’s what the impetus for creating this hospital was.”

To meet present and future community needs, the team at Mat-Su Regional Medical Center analyzes the market, reviews databases about what services are being accessed and how they’re being accessed, and other data points to determine what specialty services the hospital should provide, Craft explains.

“Every year we put together a strategic plan... and we come up with models that project how many specialists we will need in a given field to serve our population,” Craft says. “When they physically positioned the hospital, they



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did it in such a way that was prime for the growth of the region.”

Craft points out that though the medical center is continuing to expand, growing its roster of specialists, it makes a point of recruiting professionals from outside the Last Frontier to prevent cannibalizing other regions’ services. The hospital also helps other medical practices in the region in their recruitment efforts. “It’s a collaborative process. We work to find the best fit for our community and our community medical providers.”

“At the time, the vision was to create a regional healthcare hub,” Craft says. “I would say that over the past seven or eight years or so the hospital has really grown into its regional garments and into its name: Mat-Su Regional Medical Center.”

The hospital started with seventy-four in-patient beds. A major campus expansion in 2018 added thirty-five more medical surgical beds, while 2020 saw an additional sixteen beds added for the center’s inpatient behavioral health unit.

“We serve the fastest growing population in the state of Alaska,” Craft

says. “It is projected to continue that route into the near future.”

Though situated only about 30 minutes from Anchorage, the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center serves a regional population of about 113,000 and provided \$20 million in community benefit in 2020.

“One of the tenets of quality healthcare is to provide the care as close to a patient’s home as possible,” Craft says. “If your support network is nearby and has easier access to help you get the services that you need, it’s far better for your health.”

Within the last seven years, the medical center has opened three urgent care facilities, a heart clinic, and an OB/GYN clinic. Additionally, it has added inpatient behavioral health services, which were nonexistent in the region and are lacking throughout the state, Craft says.

The Mat-Su Regional Medical Center offers a wide range of services for the community from critical care medicine and emergency services to joint replacements and orthopedic services. The medical center provided care for more than 138,000 patients in 2020.

Staff handled nearly 28,000 ER patient visits, more than 7,000 surgeries, and assisted mothers in bringing 650 Alaskans into the world.

Certificate of Need

All Mat-Su Regional Medical Center expansions were granted a Certificate of Need. Alaska is one of thirty-five states that have Certificate of Need laws on the books, though the regulations vary widely between states.

“This has always been a hot button issue, it is everywhere else as well,” Kosin says. “Healthcare is not really a commodity. It’s not the cheapest one wins, especially depending on where you are.”

“Many of the services hospitals provide actually lose revenue, but it’s a hospital—it’s supposed to be there for the community and provide those services for our community.”

In general, hospitals lose money on essential critical care services and generate revenue to overcome those losses through imaging services and surgeries, Kosin explains.

To prevent private companies that specialize only in lucrative services

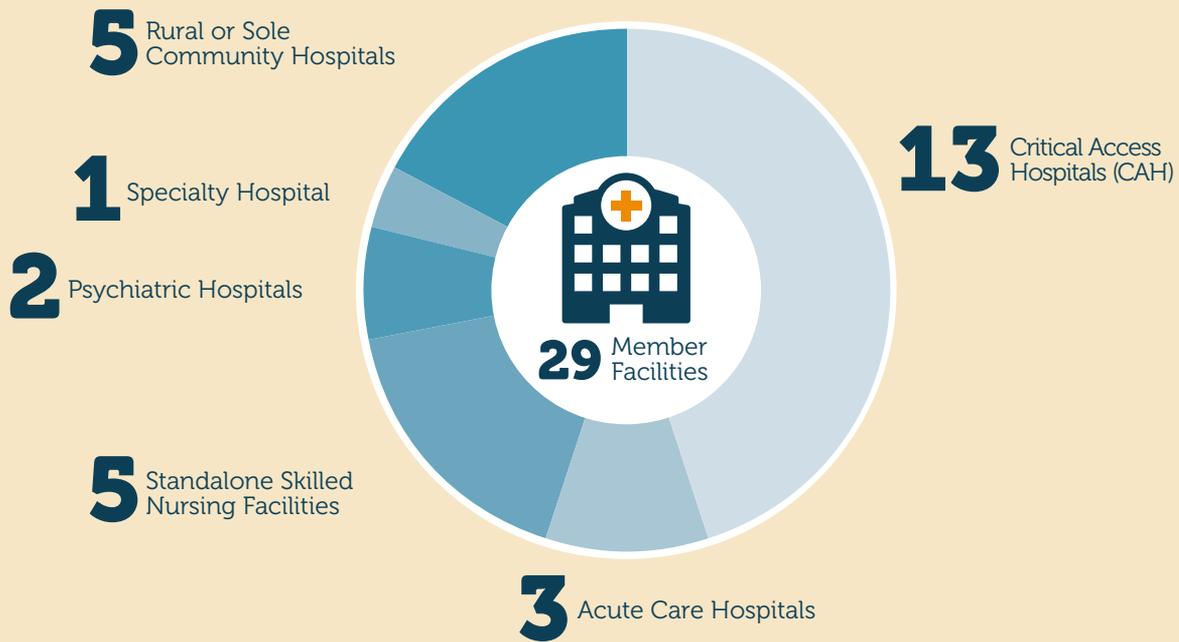


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“I think our CHAPs are so important to our services, and they definitely play a huge part in the health of our region, we have a lot of programs that travel to the communities to help support the work of CHAPs in the region.”

Kelli Shroyer
Public Communications Manager
Maniilaq Association

from saturating the market—leaving hospitals footing the bill of the unprofitable but vital community services—they must be awarded a Certificate of Need by the state.

Kosin notes that because of how heavily subsidized healthcare is by the government from Medicaid and Medicare, it's unreasonable to treat healthcare as a commodity moved solely by free market forces. But he does note that Alaska's Certificate of Need legislation needs to be updated.

By focusing on the services, supply, and market, the Certificate of Need process attempts to find the right fit for the number of providers to meet the needs of the population, Kosin explains.

“There are some things that you do that are in the best interest of the patient regardless of the economic value it adds to your bottom line,” Craft says. “Sure, it's a business, but it's the business of caring for people.”

Providence Alaska

This is particularly true for Providence Alaska, as it provides the highest level

of specialized care in the state, says Preston Simmons, chief executive for the Providence Alaska Region.

“You think about pediatric subspecialties that take millions of people to support, and we only have about 730,000 people in the entire state. So we subsidize those programs, and that's part of our community benefit to the state,” Simmons says. “A lot of services are unique to Providence... if we didn't provide them, they wouldn't be offered in the state of Alaska.”

Providence, founded more than 175 years ago, has been serving Alaska since 1902—well before statehood. Most states, as part of their healthcare infrastructure, have state hospitals and healthcare services that cover the entire continuum of care, often partnering with teaching hospitals. That backstop service in Alaska is provided by Providence as it functions as the primary “hub” for the “spokes” of Alaska's healthcare system.

In 2020, the hospital provided \$70 million of community benefit, which comprises subsidized services and uncompensated Medicaid.

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"We know it's important to grow our own positions within Alaska," Simmons says about the need to offer medical education opportunities in the state. "For example, the residency program that we run, which retains 80 to 90 percent of the graduates on average within Alaska—we subsidize that to several million dollars a year."

Providence also boasts the highest level of trauma services in the state, as well as cardiothoracic surgery, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopedics, urology, and behavioral health, as well as other specialized services.

"We have critical care hospitals in Seward, Valdez, and Kodiak," Simmons says. "We have the state's only children's hospital. We have the state's only long-term, acute-care hospital."

All in all, Providence has twenty-eight main business units running the gamut of healthcare needs in the state.

"One of the things that Providence has been doing—and it's been a multiple year journey—is going from what I would consider more of an acute-centric organization to one that is a system-of-care," Simmons says.

Simmons explains Providence has been working to change its economic model from fee-for-service, which rewards volume over quality, to value-based care, which rewards quality outcomes.

"We can serve more people at a lower cost by moving towards value-based care that works under a coordinated and system of care model," Simmons says.

By looking at care systematically and making sure there is good access at the right levels of care, it strikes at the heart of the issue of people who lack access to primary care using the emergency department of a hospital for issues that are not critical.

"And that's absolutely the wrong thing to do," Simmons says. "It's the most expensive area to receive care... what you want is for people to have good access to primary care."

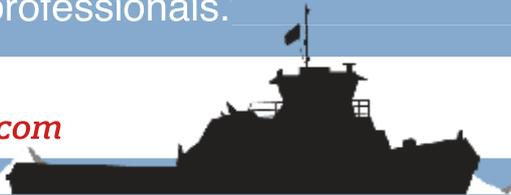
As part of its effort to provide more affordable care, Providence launched Providence Express. The service provides services and solutions for hundreds of issues or concerns for which a patient should never need access to an emergency department.




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"Express Care is available starting at \$149 per visit and \$79 for virtual," Simmons says. "And if you can't be helped and need to be referred to a higher level of care, you won't be charged."

Both patients and healthcare providers save money when patients are given access to primary care or similar alternatives instead of visiting an emergency room.

"We brought down our visit volume for those low-level visits by considerable amounts, and that came out of our economics, but it was the right thing to do," Simmons explains.

Statewide Wellness

To make larger, systematic changes in Alaska, Providence has been working closely with the state to try and build a system to create healthy communities and more affordable ways to provide care.

"It will improve the health of the population, but it also helps reduce and stabilize costs over time," Simmons says. "We're trying to be leaders in terms of that transformation. Another organization that does a really good job in terms of managing care is the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium."

Many healthcare providers agree that the key to serving such a widely dispersed population in the rugged North is focusing on community wellness in addition to acute care and long-term care.

"I think all healthcare organizations are moving towards the wellness model, and certainly that's something that we do," Craft says.

The goal of focusing on wellness programs is to alleviate the costly pressure on emergency rooms and higher levels of care situations, Kosin explains. These benefits can be compounded by increasing access to primary care, creating a more contiguous continuum of care for Alaskans.

"What's nice is [that] Alaskans work well together," Simmons says. "While there's competition, there's also a ton of collaboration... I'm very optimistic that we're gonna see some really positive changes over the next couple of years."

Simply put, the better condition the "rims" of the system are, the less strain there is on the spokes and hubs. **AB**



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LABOR SHORTAGE

By Stephanie Haydn, People AK Business Development Director

Recently our CEO Paula Bradison discussed the labor shortage in Alaska. Alongside other panelists, Paula described a variety of factors impacting Alaska's workforce. She asked if there could be additional factors causing this shortage, "Do we have an engagement issue?" She validated her question with observations that stem from years of coaching and facilitation. The truth is that our younger generation engages differently. They are not necessarily "entitled" or "lazy," rather they seek opportunities to contribute to meaningful work. Paula is not doubting the economic impact COVID-19 has had on the labor market, nor is she stating that the facts and figures are inaccurate. Honestly, none of us can deny the magnitude of pressure the state's economic challenges have placed on the labor market.

According to Jon Bittner, State Director of the Alaska Small Business Development Center, "The difficulties in the labor market are a huge problem for the state's economy. If businesses can't remain open or operate normal hours, they won't be able to take full advantage of the economic recovery and it will take us significantly longer to get back to normal. Businesses in the rest of the country have more resources and lower hurdles for their workforce such as cheaper housing and lower cost of living, and that could result in us losing more Alaskans to opportunities in the Lower 48." Paula and the other speakers discussed several factors that are contributing to the

lack of available talent. Many of these factors can be addressed immediately like engagement and uncertainty. People AK routinely works with our clients to improve engagement and develop clear expectations.

Factors that take a community effort were also discussed, "Where are young professionals suppose to live?" Paula asked. The cost of housing is so high, if even available, most recent graduates can't afford to live. People AK has facilitated several compensation and benefit assessments for our clients in the hospitality and service industry and housing is always a top concern.

Observations were further solidified by David McCarthy, founder and CEO of Northern Hospitality Group. He stated that some of his restaurants and many others have yet to fully reopen to pre COVID hours. This is in part because of housing and even more the volatility his employees felt during the multiple shutdowns the industry faced. Many returned to school or found work in industries that they feel offer greater stability.

This is just one industry that was hit hard by the pandemic. Alaska Executive Search's temporary staffing solutions witnessed a large diminish in available and qualified candidates to support our client's needs. There is a misconception that temporary staffing is for entry level or unskilled workers. Therefore, many of the displaced workers hit

by economic challenges would not think to connect with us. To the contrary, temporary employment is for all stages of the career lifecycle. It is most certainly an opportunity to learn a new industry or gain experience, but its also a great opportunity for more seasoned professionals. Leadership roles transition and often there is a gap that can be filled temporarily to maintain continuity. We have financial opportunities, service opportunities, leadership opportunities, technical specialties and more.

As Alaska Executive Search and Bradison Management Group move toward our shared vision of People AK, we are committed to supporting the full employment lifecycle for our business clients and the candidates we place. Leverage the consultants of both AES and BMG to address human capital needs, engagement, development, and retention. In conclusion I repeat that Alaska's labor shortage is much more complex and we must address a number of issues to resolve it.

Stephanie Haydn,
Business
Development
Director



For more information about People AK, please visit peopleak.com. For AES please visit akexec.com, for BMG please visit bmgak.com, or call 907-276-5707.

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\$500 Hotels, Rental Car Shortages, and The Dawn of the Independent Traveler

Lessons from a half-baked, yet somehow overcooked summer tourism season

By Danny Kreilkamp



It went nearly as fast as it came.

For Alaska's tourism industry, the summer of '21 lured in an opportunistic mix of travelers wrestling with cabin fever, a stop-start cruise schedule, and, in some cases, a simple lack of alternatives.

With the uncertainty surrounding cruise itineraries early in the year, many companies—particularly those whose operations were traditionally tied to group travel—weren't entirely sure what to expect. But this uncertainty was quickly replaced with a sense of urgency, as businesses scrambled to attract a new, less predictable type of visitor: one that didn't rely on the vertically integrated model so popularized by the Holland Americas and Princess Cruises.

"For those who catered to the independent traveler, 2021 has been an embarrassment of riches," according to Alaska's travel aficionado, Scott McMurren.

You may know him from his weekly travel column in the Anchorage Daily News or from any number of the independent tourism-related businesses McMurren's curated over the years. As the tagline of one of those businesses suggests, there is truly no questioning McMurren's status as Alaska's travel authority.

"Cruises that are running are running absolutely full, and it's hard to find hotels," he says, even with large cruise ships limiting capacity to create more open, comfortable environments.

At the time of writing, a quick Google search revealed that a one-night August stay in Anchorage ran guests no less than \$466. And that was for a 2-star hotel.

"I think this summer, if I can sum it up, it's truly been a lesson that an independent travel market exists—and it can absolutely keep us busy. It doesn't have the sheer numbers that you get with cruise tours, but independent travelers tend to stay longer and spend more money."

Though the demographics of this "new traveler" might not have changed too much (still up there in both years and net worth), it was how these individuals got around and how they were spending that had the industry taking stock. McMurren says he likes to think that the marketing efforts



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Travelers arrive at the Sheldon Chalet via helicopter and are greeted by staff.

Sheldon Chalet



“For those who catered to the independent traveler, 2021 has been an embarrassment of riches.”

Scott McMurren, Travel Columnist
Anchorage Daily News

from people who run independent travel operations—the guides, the small lodges, the people who put experiences together—have made a difference here, but he admits he can't take too much credit.

“We've been beating this drum for decades. The difference is that the spigot got turned off in March of 2020. And so the dynamics of travel changed: we shied away from the big cruise ships, and now we're more into wide open spaces. And so people who rent RVs, for example, or travel vans—they just happened to be in the right spot.”

“The national parks, they're seeing increased visitation. The state parks. I mean, even between Anchorage and Girdwood, you can't find a parking place to get onto the trails... Park visitations are way up, outdoor activities are way up, stuff that you can stay six feet away from other travelers is way up.”

Redefining Remote

As the owners of a high-end resort only a stone's throw from Denali's summit, Robert and Marne Sheldon are well-versed in way up.

Far beyond the recommended six feet of distance, the Sheldon Chalet sits at an elevation of 5,800 feet, tucked in the Don Sheldon Amphitheater of Ruth Glacier. Being the sole lodging option located on the highest peak in North America means they can charge a premium, with a similarly elevated price tag of roughly \$47,000 for an exclusive three-night stay.

And since the Chalet is only accessible by private helicopter, the independent traveler is one that the Sheldons are intimately familiar with.

“The helicopter lands right on the

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observation deck and you're greeted by staff. One private chef and one concierge manage your stay: making sure your beds are tidy, your wine is poured, your dinner is served, and your coffee is warm," Marne Sheldon describes enthusiastically.

While its business was already tailored to travelers seeking more remote experiences, the Sheldon Chalet is an example of the pandemic merely amplifying an already successful model.

"Because of how we are structured, we never had to shut down last year," says Robert Sheldon.

Quite the contrary, Marne Sheldon adds.

"The pandemic has benefited our business in a way that we didn't see coming. When we first started, we had a completely private experience at one price point, but then we offered a shared experience where we would fill the Chalet, but the guests wouldn't know each other.

"Well, when the pandemic hit, everybody was trying to figure out, 'How can we be most strategic to the

Things Are Looking UP!!



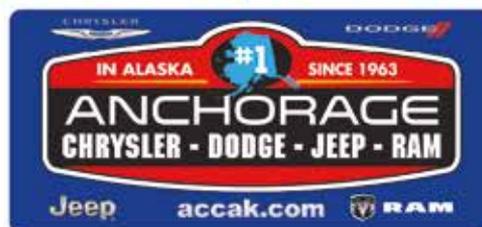
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weather this storm?’ So we made the decision to go 100 percent private. Whether it’s two people, six, eight, or ten.”

Shifting to an exclusively private model certainly helped simplify things, the Sheldons agree.

“Having it be the private, all-inclusive pot of travelers has been a huge win for us: the independent traveler is a fantastic type of traveler.”

In addition to the Chalet, the Sheldons have their hands in a few other tourism operations in and around the Talkeetna area—all of which have been thriving, as Robert Sheldon says business has increased more than 50 percent from 2019 levels. An economist in a past life, he offers his assessment: “There’s only so much inventory space available, and if you choose to put in your inventory higher-value, quality goods and services—those things are probably going to sell well to this more robustly financed independent traveler desiring real experiences and mementos.”

Chugging Along

Even for those companies who, on the surface, might seem more

In 2021, the Alaska Railroad’s direct book numbers came close to pre-pandemic levels, even without passengers from cruise vessels.

Glenn Aronwitz | Alaska Railroad



dependent on the tried-and-true promise of the cruise industry, 2021 and its influx of independent travel still proved “more than okay.”

“And okay is an understatement,” says Dale Wade, the Alaska Railroad’s

vice president of marketing and customer service.

Compared to last year, when the Alaska Railroad experienced a devastating decline in ridership of almost 95 percent, 2021 has been a breath of fresh air.

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"Back up to 2020, we were expecting a regular season," says Wade. "In fact, people were saying this is going to be one of the strongest years ever for cruises in Alaska. And moving toward March, we began hearing rumors, even late

into the April timeframe, that some of the cruise lines indicated they may be making trips to Seward. And then as the year waned on, of course that all was canceled."

"So went into 2021 very cautious," adds President and CEO Bill O'Leary.

"But I have never been more happy to be so wrong."

O'Leary says the Railroad had its bumps early on this summer, but he credits his company's strong response with its ability to remain agile. "We changed our schedule, we increased

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the number of trains that we were running from what we originally planned, and as a result, I think we've done a good job of meeting the demand out there."

It's hard not to speculate what that demand might have looked like had the usual cruise ship traffic also been a factor. Wade says the company is already coming very close to pre-pandemic numbers in direct books, despite missing the 200,000 passengers that they would usually expect from the large cruise lines' private railcars and chartered trains.

"We really managed our way through 2021," says Wade. "And while we expected some recovery in 2021, this summer has exceeded every expectation we had and has really blown the doors off of it; so we're thrilled on one hand and overwhelmed on another."

"We certainly serve a lot of the visitor industry," O'Leary notes. "But we also serve Alaskans. Some like to ride for pure transportation purposes, some for absolute leisure and recreation too. So it's been strong on all fronts."

According to Alaska Railroad Vice President of Marketing and Customer Service Dale Wade, "While we expected some recovery in 2021, this summer has exceeded every expectation we had."

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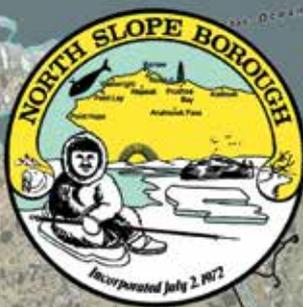


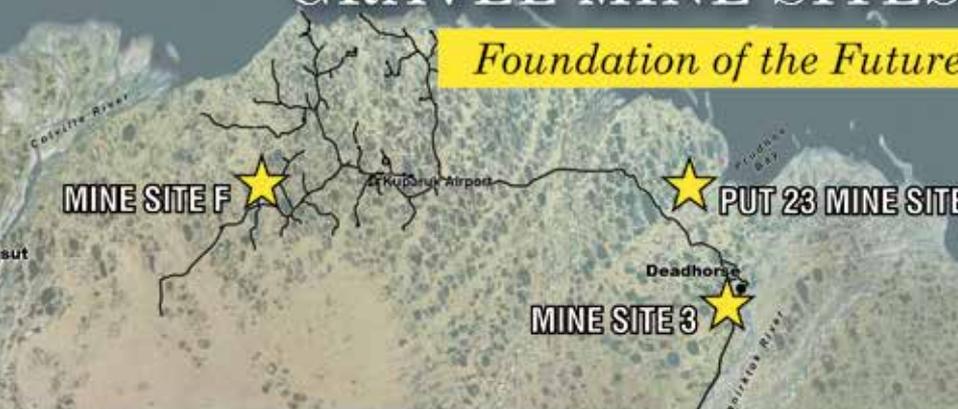
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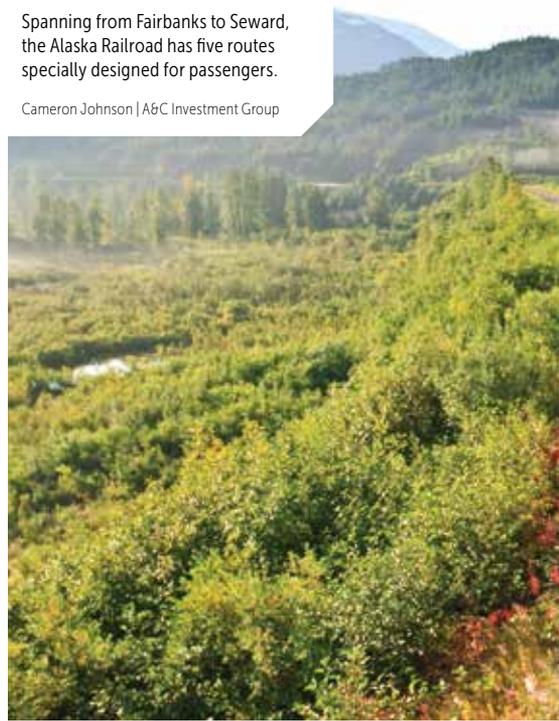
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A Sign of What's to Come?

What was initially thought to be a half-baked summer season was somehow overcooked, served with a few interesting implications for the industry moving forward. And with those, some concerns regarding the ability of Alaska's existing infrastructure to support this increased demand.

"Just look at the car rental shortage," says McMurren. "I mean, even if there was a full complement of rental cars like we usually have, the increased pressure of onesies-and-twosies—the independent traveler—meant there would be a shortage anyway.

"Regardless of the ship shortage, regardless of the fact that everybody sold out their fleets, and regardless of the manufacturing shortage—there still would have been one. It's hard to build a church for Easter Sunday."

And with international border closures limiting the number of J-1 visas available to those foreign workers that have traditionally assumed many of Alaska's seasonal tourism roles, McMurren isn't surprised businesses are having a hard time finding help.

"There have been a few J-1s, but not enough," he says. "General Managers are changing out rooms. I know of a hotel in Homer where their kitchen staff simply walked out."



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And are \$500 hotels necessarily a good thing? Depends on who you ask.

Robert Sheldon offers an alternative perspective: Alaska has been selling itself short.

He believes there's a mismatch in Alaska's current growth stage of its economy versus how that growth is being managed from a bureaucracy standpoint.

"The conversation here in Talkeetna has been, 'Increase your prices to fund increasing your wages.' We know that can be considered inflationary, but in this case there was a reset that needed to happen and COVID has allowed that reset in pricing to be worked into the system," he explains.

"I think the cruise ships that are starting their presale for 2023 at these entry level prices are in for quite a bit of shock. They may have prices locked in for the next year for hotel rooms and those sorts of things, but they're going to have to scale their own prices to accommodate what local communities need. Again, not as an inflationary consequence, but as a pricing reset for Alaska. Independent travelers have clearly discovered it; they see that this is an exceptional land.

"Extraordinary Alaska has been inappropriately priced." **AB**

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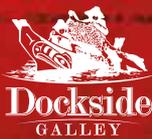
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Santos and Oil Search reached an agreement on the merger ratio under a proposed merger and additional terms. Under the Revised Merger Proposal, Oil Search shareholders will receive 0.6275 new Santos shares for each Oil Search share held via a Scheme of Arrangement. Following approval of the Scheme, Oil Search shareholders will own approximately 38.5 percent of the merged group and Santos shareholders will own approximately 61.5 percent. The Board of Oil Search has confirmed that, subject to the completion of confirmatory due diligence and the agreement of a binding Merger Implementation Agreement, their intention is to unanimously recommend the Revised Merger Proposal, in the absence of a superior proposal and subject to an independent expert concluding that the Scheme of Arrangement is in the best interests of Oil Search shareholders.

santos.com | oilsearch.com

Alaska USA

Alaska USA Federal Credit opened its newest, fully redesigned, digitally focused branch located in North Pole. The new facility was the latest opening in a series of branches created in collaboration with a design company. The new space is an environment that completely reimagines what it means for members to engage with their credit union—and for the credit union to engage with members. “As part of our efforts to improve the member experience we are

evaluating our branch presence and delivery service models in each of the communities we serve,” says Shannon Conley, executive director of Retail Financial Services. “Relocating the North Pole branch to the mall and updating its look will assist in our efforts to cast our branches as places where people can go to receive financial education, advice, and complete their transactions.”

alaskausa.org

Ucore

Ucore Rare Metals recently joined the National Mining Association (NMA) as the company prepares to construct the Alaska Strategic Metals Complex rare earth element processing facility by the end of 2023 and seeks to accelerate the long-term development of the Bokan-Dotson Ridge Rare Earth Element Project. Ucore’s membership in the NMA coincides with the Biden Administration’s continued efforts to strengthen the domestic supply chain by positioning America to drive the electric vehicle future forward, outcompete China, and tackle the climate crisis.

ucore.com

AEDC

Focused on attracting and retaining businesses and workforce in state, the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation has launched a tool to support the needs of both employers and job seekers: a new, free website that collects all the online job

postings across Anchorage in an organized, easy-to-navigate location. Anchoragejobfinder.com pulls existing job listings into a database that allows job seekers to filter and search by employer, occupation/job title, industry, skill, certification, and more. Because the tool scrapes the web for postings that are already active, employers get more visibility on the jobs they post online with no additional steps—their listings automatically show up on anchoragejobfinder.com. There are no fees to use the site, it’s free for job seekers and employers. Additionally, anchoragejobfinder.com links directly to the original postings, ensuring that applications go right to the source.

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AKPM

The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) recently announced the recipients of the 2021 National Edward R. Murrow Awards, recognizing Alaska News Nightly, a radio newscast created by Alaska Public Media (AKPM) in collaboration with partner stations throughout Alaska. The award, which AKPM received for Alaska News Nightly, is in the Small Market Radio category for Newscast. This recognition follows a 2020 win for Excellence in Video for the short film “The Legacy of Maryann Sundown and Agnes Aguchak,” which was co-produced with partner station KYUK. Among the most prestigious recognition in journalism, RTDNA has been honoring recipients with the Edward R. Murrow Awards since 1971.

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ECONOMIC INDICATORS

ANS Crude Oil Production

▲ 459,930 barrels
▲ 13% change from previous month

9/2/21

Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources

ANS West Coast Crude Oil Prices

▼ \$72.36 per barrel
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9/7/21

Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources

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Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



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RIGHT MOVES

Vitus Energy

Vitus Energy has welcomed four new members to their team.



Seegers

■ Clint Seegers began his career with Vitus Energy in 2016 as a receivables and customer service professional. He was responsible for invoicing and accounts receivable records for Vitus' Bethel location. From there he was promoted to account administrator for the Bethel location and is now the Customer Service Manager responsible for coordinating communication, marketing, and sales with potential customers in new service areas throughout Alaska. Seegers has a bachelor's in business management from Ottawa University and has more than fifteen years' related experience.



Porcelli

■ James Porcelli, Systems Manager, has more than twenty years of experience in data communications and enterprise level networking. He is a Microsoft Certified System Engineer and has a bachelor's in occupational education with an emphasis in information technology and management. Porcelli comes to Vitus Energy from an Alaska Native corporation where he implemented network security and established IT standards for hardware, software, and network infrastructure.

■ Kenneth Eickhoff, Controller, is a Certified Fraud Examiner with a bachelor's of science and more than twenty years of experience in the financial industry. Most recently, he served as the controller for a local transportation company where



Eickhoff

he oversaw all accounting functions for multiple locations, conducted financial forecasting and budget monitoring, and completed regulatory reporting for federal, state, and local agencies. Eickhoff is responsible to lead the invoicing, vendor payment, general ledger accounting, payroll processing, closing processes, and tax and audit preparation for Vitus Energy.



Abbott

■ Tara Abbott, Billing Manager, originally hails from Ohio where she owned a business for fourteen years. She recently moved to Anchorage from Kodiak, where she worked for the City of Kodiak, Harbor Department. At the Harbor, she was the fiscal specialist in charge of the Harbor office and was responsible for the monthly invoice billing, record management, and budgeting. She has a bachelor's of computer information systems with a concentration in business administration. Abbott is responsible for Vitus Energy's billing department processes, including invoice production, cash collection, posting, and sales tax submission activities.

Cornerstone



Seymour

■ Cornerstone expanded their project management and estimating team by hiring Nate Seymour to focus on private sector business development and projects. Seymour brings invaluable experience to

the project management department and deeply understands project development and execution. He has more than eleven years of construction experience, including working key positions for general contractors, mechanical subcontractors, real estate investing companies, and most recently owning his own construction and real estate consulting firm. Seymour earned a bachelor's in construction management from UAA and is currently studying for the Project Management Professional Certification exam.

Coffman Engineers



Stielstra

■ Coffman Engineers announced the promotion of Matt Stielstra to Principal and Structural Department Manager at the Anchorage Office. Stielstra received his bachelor's in architecture from Oklahoma State University and his master's from Penn State University. He worked at an A/E firm in Springfield, Missouri his first year after graduate school before moving back to his home state of Alaska and joining Coffman in the fall of 2008. Stielstra is a licensed civil engineer in Alaska, a licensed structural engineer in Alaska and Hawaii, and a licensed architectural engineer in Washington. Stielstra has worked on an array of building and nonbuilding structures for industrial, oil and gas, commercial, and government clients. Project types have varied from steel framed modules on Alaska's North Slope to wood framed rural schools and concrete warehouses in Guam.

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ANTHC



Davidson

■The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Board of Directors named Valerie Nurr'araaluk Davidson as President, removing interim

from the title. Davidson has been serving as Interim President since mid-March. With this change, Davidson is stepping down from her role as President of Alaska Pacific University, from which she has been on a leave of absence. Davidson is Yup'ik and an enrolled Tribal citizen of the Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council. In 2018, she became the first Alaska Native woman to serve as Alaska's Lieutenant Governor, after previously serving as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services. In that role, her visionary leadership and ability to manage difficult dialogues, diverse leaders, and expansive teams prepared her for this new chapter in her career.

UAF

UAF appointed fisheries scientist Andy Seitz as the university's first Frank and Marjorie Meek Endowed Chair in Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.



Seitz

■Seitz is an internationally recognized expert in fish migration and behavior and a professor in the UAF College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences. Seitz's

research focuses on understanding large-scale oceanic migrations of fish and their interactions with tidal and wave energy systems. Since his appointment as UAF assistant professor of fisheries in 2009, Seitz has advised numerous undergraduate and graduate students,

many of whom are part of Alaska's workforce in agencies and the private sector.

PGS



Cason

■Professional Growth Systems is pleased to welcome Drew Cason to its planning and process improvement consulting bench. Cason is a third generation Alaskan

who is excited to bring his passion for high-functioning systems to bear for PGS clients. After graduating from UAA in 2013 with bachelors in environment and society and philosophy, he spent two years as a lobbyist in Washington DC as the Associate in Jack Ferguson Associates. Eager to return to Alaska, Cason worked for Denali Daniels Associates (DDA) for a year supporting the Department of Energy in Alaska and getting his first taste of being a professional facilitator, helping the Alaska Children's Trust work with stakeholders to leverage data to maximize the positive impact on Alaska youth. Following his time with DDA, he pursued his interest in Alaska's fiscal situation and was hired by the newly formed bipartisan House Majority Coalition as Deputy Press Secretary for two years and aide to Speaker of the House Bryce Edgmon for one. In the legislature, Cason worked with legislators on public speaking, press releases, and internal caucus strategy, as well as carrying legislation and responding to constituent issues in Southwest Alaska.

FNBA

■First National Bank Alaska's Board of Directors recently announced Steven Patin has joined the state's largest locally owned

community bank as Human Resources Director and Senior Vice President. In



Patin

his new role, Patin provides strategic human resources leadership and directs talent management, compensation and benefits, employee relations, and policies at

the bank. He leverages two decades as a former US Army officer and more than ten years of executive experience to continue building the values of innovation, engagement, and agility that have made First National the Best Place to Work in Alaska since 2016. Patin graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point concentrating in behavioral science and systems engineering before earning a master's in human resources management and another in administration and supervision.

UACED



Jernstrom

■Katherine Jernstrom is joining the University of Alaska Center for Economic Development (UA CED) for her second year as the Entrepreneur-in-Residence.

In this role, Jernstrom applies her years of experience as an entrepreneur and investor to entrepreneur development programming, coaching and mentoring, and broader entrepreneurial ecosystem building. Jernstrom grew up internationally, has a bachelor's from the University of Washington, an MPA from UAA, and is a graduate of Leadership Anchorage, a Pew Charitable Trusts program. She serves on both private and charitable boards including Spawn Ideas, Heather's Choice, and the Anchorage Downtown Partnership. She is a member of the Alaska Investor Network and is a Rotarian. **AB**

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NAC

Even before the pandemic, working from home was a growing trend. Publications including Forbes, The New York Times, Insight, Inc., Marketplace, and countless others have all written about younger generations, namely Millennials, demanding changes to the nature and culture of the workplace to find a better balance between work and life.

According to the Forbes article "Millennials Want A Healthy Work-Life Balance. Here's What Bosses Can Do." by Franziska Alesso-Bendisch, approximately 50 percent of workers are now considered Millennials, and their sheer numbers are having an effect.

She writes, "It is best to view work-life balance more as integration, rather than equilibrium. Millennials seek flexibility in their roles that allows them to thrive outside of work." And for many, the option to work remotely is key.

COVID-19 took that growing trend and exploded it.

Much of the workforce picked up and went home to work for most of 2020, finding solutions to whatever problems arose. So now many are looking at their traditional office and thinking: why go back? And employers are examining their workspace footprints and wondering: would a smaller office make more sense for everyone?

This month in *Alaska Trends* we present data (from the *State of Alaska [SOA] Teleworking Experience Survey* and the August 2021 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends*) and questions. Both are important as Alaskans make long-term decisions about how—and where—we're going to work and live.

SOURCE: "Telework's Popularity on the Rise" by Liz Brooks; August 2021 Alaska Economic Trends, Vol. 41, #8
 SOURCE: "SOA Teleworking Experience Survey Results" <http://doa.alaska.gov/dop/fileadmin/DirectorsOffice/pdf/SOA-DOATEleworkingSurveyResults.pdf>

Who's WFH (Working From Home)?



Pre-pandemic 9% of Alaskans were self-employed from 2015 to 2019 and they represented nearly half of at-home workers.

Self-Employed	48%
Private Business/ Nonprofit	40%
State Gov	5%
Federal Gov	4%
Local Gov	3%

Do you wear pants for Zoom meetings?



Let's be honest: we've all had no-pants days working from home. How often do you "dress for the camera" when teleworking?

6,000+ Employees Started

6,000+ State of Alaska employees transitioned to teleworking in the spring of 2020. As of May 2021, **5,956 employees continued** teleworking at least part of the time.



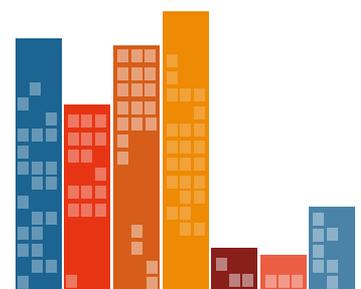
35% Alaska Households

During the last quarter of 2020, 35% of Alaska households had at least one adult who teleworked because of the pandemic.

Non-Teleworkers

At the time of the survey 31.66% SOA employees were not teleworking. The survey responses were spread somewhat evenly.

Work can not be done remotely	22.3%
Supervisory preference	16.5%
Personal preference	21.7%
Other	24.7%
No suitable workspace	3.9%
Inadequate resources	3.3%
Field work	7.5%



WFH IS HERE TO STAY

According to the SOA survey, 60% of state employees wanted to continue to work remote. Employees specifically mentioned the following benefits: **reduced commute time, healthier eating options, lower fuel costs, less stress, better quality of life, higher productivity, and greater efficiency.** Nationwide, employers cited continuity of operations during emergencies, reduced over-head costs, and employee satisfaction as benefits.

- Continue remote work 61%
- Hybrid Arrangement 36%
- Return to worksite 3%



Teleworking Challenges

Those who selected "other", were asked to specify other challenges they faced. Answers included technology, resources (printers, etc.), cost, ergonomics, and uncertainty.

- Other 51%
- Social isolation 38%
- Physical workspace 27%
- Communication with co-Workers 23%
- Internet connection 22%
- Lack of internet 10%
- Keeping regular hours 6%
- Too many distractions 6%

Do you have security concerns around using personal cell phones for business calls?

Teleworking has blurred the line between personal and business communication. Does the blurring of lines concern you as an employee? As an employer, does it concern you?



How do you define reimbursable WFH office expenses?

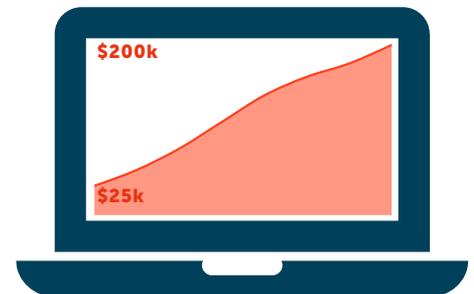
Expenses can range from laptops and printers to routine office supplies, such as WiFi, ink cartridges and paper.



Teleworking Pays

In 2019, employees teleworking were paid an averaged \$35.22/hr. For work that couldn't be done at home, it was \$20.31.

- \$200,000+ 64%
- \$150,000-\$199,999 57%
- \$100,000-\$149,999 52%
- \$75,000-\$99,999 45%
- \$74,999-\$50,000 35%
- \$35,000-\$49,999 25%
- \$25,000-\$34,999 17%
- Less than \$25,000 11%



Should teleworking salaries match the industry standard of the employee or the employer?



Ease of Teleworking

SOA employees specifically mentioned the following: reduced commute time, healthier eating options, lower fuel costs, less stress, better quality of life, higher productivity, and greater efficiency as benefits of teleworking.

- Very Easy 60%
- Easy 22%
- Somewhat Easy 8%
- Neither Easy or Difficult 7%
- Somewhat Difficult 3%
- Very Difficult less than 1%





AT A GLANCE

What book is currently on your nightstand?

Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong by James W. Loewen.

What charity or cause are you passionate about?

The Nature Conservancy, Alaska.

What's the first thing you do when you get home after a long day at work?

To be honest, it's let my dog out. And not long after that I'm grabbing a glass of wine *[she laughs]*.

What vacation spot is on your bucket list?

Argentina.

If you could domesticate a wild animal, what animal would it be?

I wouldn't. Let 'em be wild.

Karen King

Karen King could've been whoever she wanted to be.

Though a high school aptitude test accurately predicted her career in advertising, she just as easily could have ended up a successful food entrepreneur with a line of artisan chutneys, or perhaps an interior designer tasked with outfitting a hot new art gallery.

Spawn Ideas' President and CEO has worked on ground-breaking campaigns on a national scale for companies like Coca-Cola and General Mills and locally for the likes of GCI and the Alaska Railroad.

But she doesn't just produce award-winning marketing. King, understandably, consumes it: likely alongside her favorite vintage of South American wine and her Australian Shepherd, Stormcloud.

Alaska Business: *What do you do in your free time?*

Karen King: I'm a news junkie. I listen to a lot of podcasts: The Daily; This American Life; Smartless. I also love to travel. Wine galleries, art galleries. I love architectural design.

AB: *Is there a skill you're currently developing or have always wanted to learn?*

King: I really like to write and edit. I know people who write [for a living] that send me their work to edit, and I'd sure like to be as helpful as I can be. And then I really like all kinds of design.

AB: *What's the most daring thing you've ever done?*

King: Moving to Alaska. I did it during a crisis point in my life and it was a brave move—I didn't think I would leave Minnesota. And I have zero regrets; I've experienced so many things that I never would have experienced in my life if I hadn't made that bold move. And I really found out, too, that I kind of belong in the Pacific Northwest.

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AB: *Is there anything you're superstitious about?*

King: I am not a superstitious person. I don't get it, honestly.

AB: *What's your favorite local restaurant?*

King: Crush. I love the people and food at Crush, and think they do a really nice job—and have throughout the course of their chefs and history here in Anchorage.

AB: *Dead or alive, who would you like to see perform live in concert?*

King: Prince. I'm from Minnesota and I never saw Prince live.

AB: *What's your greatest extravagance?*

King: One of them is travel... but I also really like clothes.

AB: *What's your best attribute and worst attribute?*

King: I'll start with my worst so I can leave on a high note: I'm impatient. I think my best attribute is being quick witted. And that's not about being funny, it's about being able to put seemingly disparate things together really quickly and think, act, or decide on your feet. **AB**



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Anchor Your Advertising with the 2022 POWER LIST

By Janis J. Plume, Senior Account Manager

If your 2022 marketing plan includes advertising in *Alaska Business* (and it should), you will need a powerful starting point. Consider kicking it off with an ad in the 2022 Power List.

The Power List, published in January, is the state's most comprehensive business directory targeted to business owners and C-Suite executives who need a resource for well organized information on businesses in all sectors. The Power List leads readers and decision makers to details on potential clients, vendors, and future business associates.

Our editorial and design teams work hard throughout the year curating directories of all of Alaska's major industries (from Accounting through Utilities) and then present them annually in this highly functional business directory issue. *Alaska Business* has been publishing the Power List for

nineteen years, and each year it just gets better and better.

I often suggest to my clients to think of their Power List ad as the "anchor point" of their campaign, and I urge them to keep in mind that their Power List ad will deliver numerous repeat impressions since it is referenced throughout the year. Power List advertising will also aid the recall of your ads in the monthly editions of *Alaska Business*.

Advertising positions in the Power List are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. We do an excellent job of positioning ads where they make the best sense and get optimal visibility. Full-page ads come with a guaranteed position in the directory of your choice.

If you want to learn more about an effective anchor point for your advertising in the 2022 Power List, give us a call! We'll work together to achieve the most effective solution to reach your target.



Before joining *Alaska Business*, Janis was a "jack of all trades" in Alaskan advertising for over two decades, working at some of Alaska's best ad agencies. While he is pretty capable with a camera

and loves photography and graphic art, he's quick to say, "I'm not a graphic designer, and I don't play one on TV." He is, however, pretty handy at working one on one with clients seeking advertising solutions in *Alaska Business*. Janis is a product of the UAA JPC program and believes the pursuit of knowledge and professionalism are lifelong endeavors. When not helping advertisers, Janis celebrates his love for fish and music with a guitar in one hand and a fly rod in the other.

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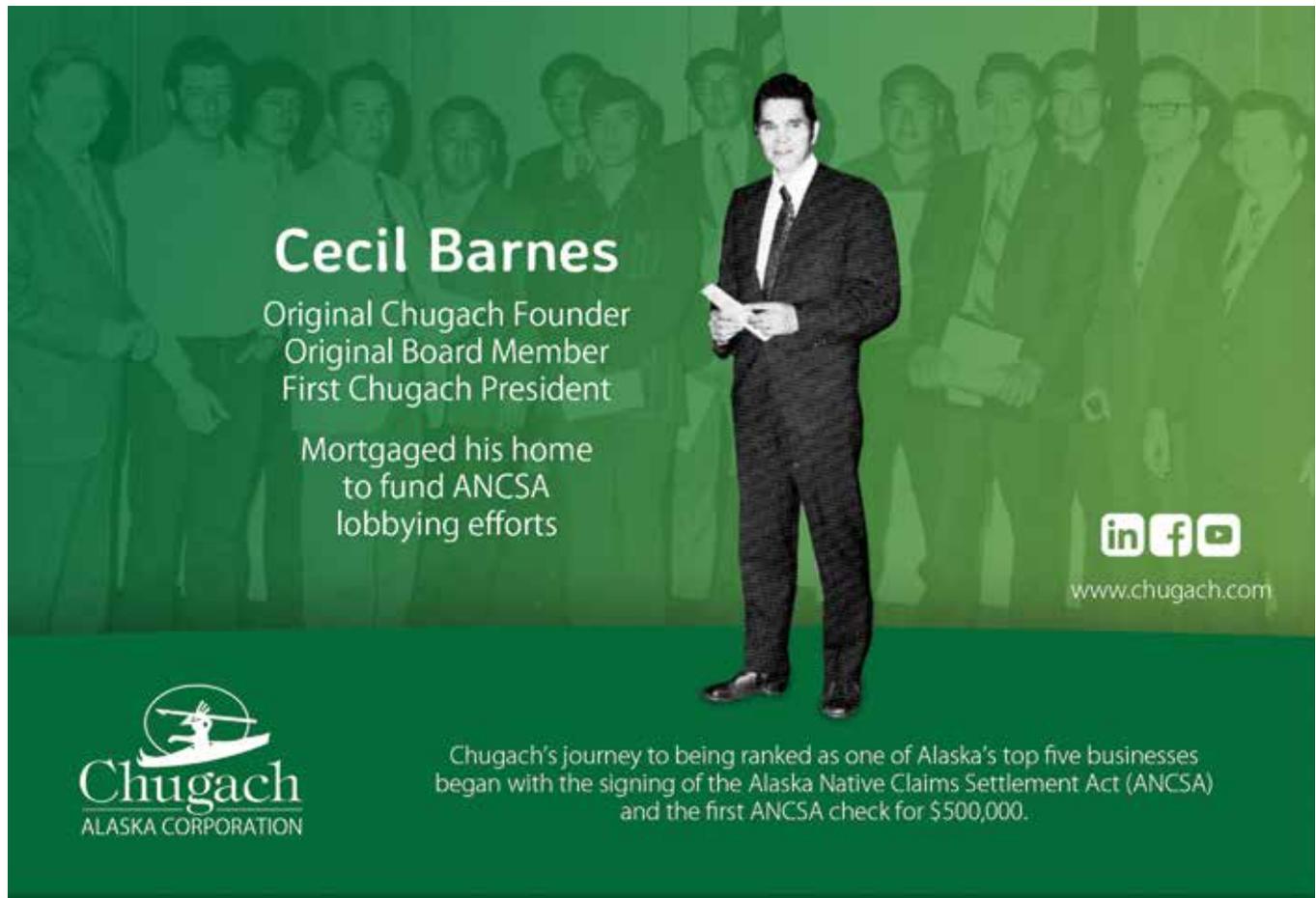
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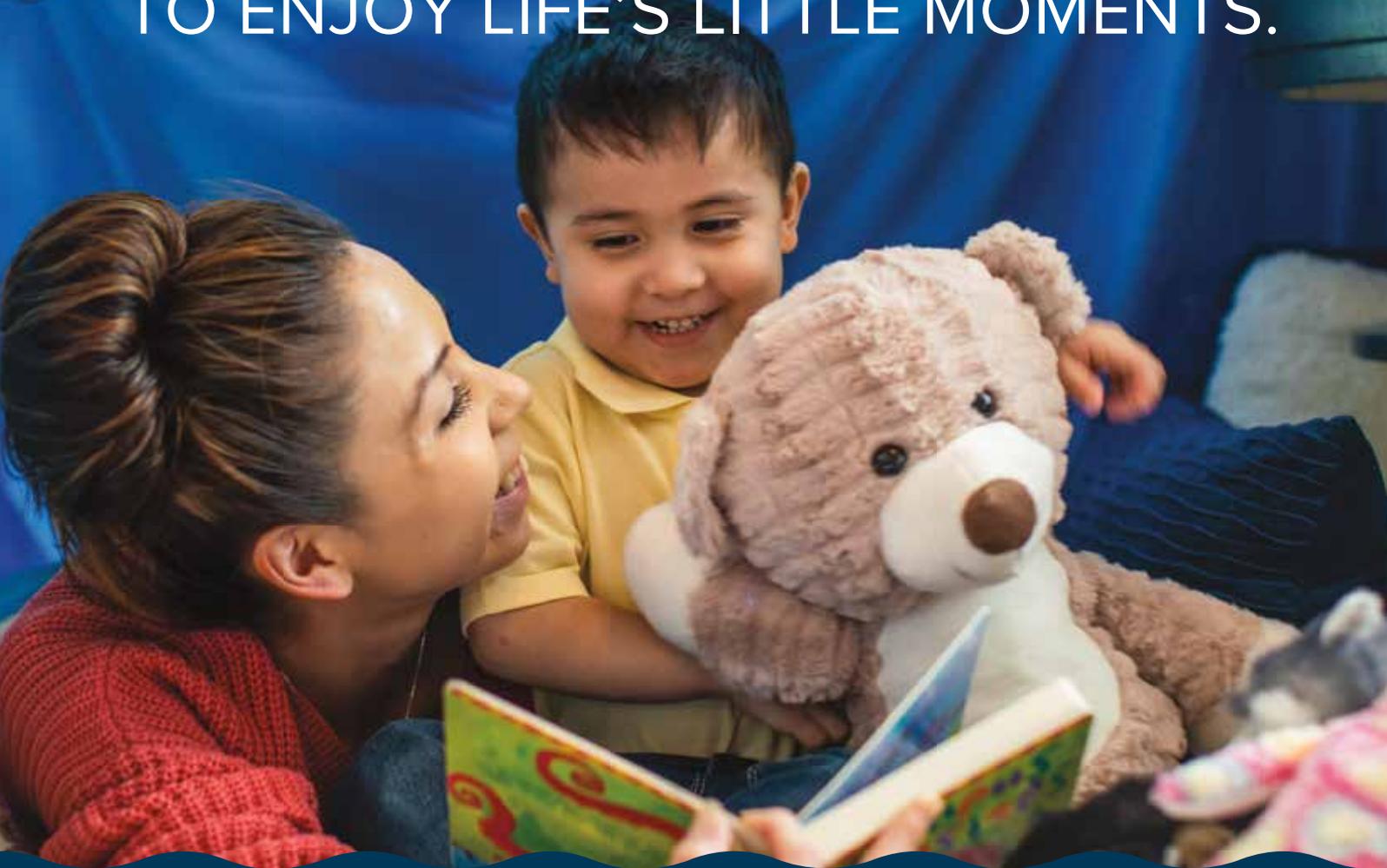
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