

# the Council

Vol. 45, No. 3

A REPORT TO THE MEMBER TRIBES OF TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

March 2020



## 2020 Annual Convention & Full Board of Director's Meeting

The 2020 Tanana Chiefs Conference Annual Convention and Full Board of Directors Meeting will be held March 16-19 in Fairbanks, AK at the Westmark Hotel.

The meeting provides an opportunity for our tribal leaders, delegates, community partners, TCC staff, and guests to participate in a safe, positive, and open dialogue on important topics.

This year's theme is "Breaking

*Trail into the Future; in the spirit of Ch'eghwtsen'.*" The theme will focus on blazing the trail for our future generations to ensure our tribes remain healthy and strong.

We are pleased to announce that Valerie Davidson of Bethel has been selected as this year's Keynote Speaker.

This year there will be three seats up for election on our Executive

Board of Directors; the Upper Tanana Representative, the Yukon Koyukuk Representative, and the TCC Chief/Chairman position.

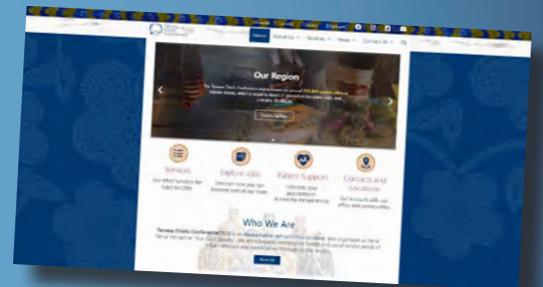
To stay updated on the agenda and to watch the convention broadcast live, visit our website at [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org).

**Learn more about our Keynote Speaker on page 4.**

### NEW! Check Out TCC's New Website!

TCC is excited to announce the launch of our updated website. The website, which officially launched this month, was completely redesigned and reorganized to increase ease of use for users, provide faster load times for our villages, and become a mobile-friendly platform. The site's design also kept in mind the culture of our region and the people we serve.

Visit [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org) to see our new and updated website.



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## MISSION STATEMENT

Tanana Chiefs Conference provides a unified voice in advancing sovereign tribal governments through the promotion of physical and mental wellness, education, socioeconomic development, and culture of the Interior Alaska Native people.

## VISION

Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes



Tanana  
Chiefs  
Conference

*Dena' Nena' Hlenash*

## TCC EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Donald Honea Sr./Ruby  
*1st Traditional Chief*

Trimble Gilbert/Arctic Village  
*2nd Traditional Chief*

Victor Joseph/ Tanana  
*Chief/Chairman*

Charlene Stern/Arctic Village  
*Vice President*

Jerry Isaac/Tanacross  
*Secretary/Treasurer*

William "Chaaiy" Albert/Northway  
*Upper Tanana*

Nick Alexia Sr./Nikolai  
*Upper Kuskokwim*

Nancy James/Fort Yukon  
*Yukon Flats*

Eugene Paul/Holy Cross  
*Lower Yukon*

Frank Thompson/ Evansville  
*Yukon Tanana*

Norman 'Carl' Burgett/ Huslia  
*Yukon Koyukuk*

Peter Demoski/Nulato  
*Elder Advisor*

Jolie Murray/Beaver  
*Youth Advisor*

## CHIEF'S REPORT

Dear Tribes and Tribal Members,

To start off, I would like to congratulate our soon-to-be elected Chief/Chairman, who will be taking the reins later this month. I wish you the very best of luck as you take on the most satisfying and challenging job you'll ever have.



As my time here as the Chief/Chairman comes to an end I'm both excited and a little unsettled. I'm excited because of all the opportunities that are open to our tribes, TCC and myself. Yet I'm unsettled thinking about the projects I'm leaving undone, there just wasn't enough time to complete all that I wanted to accomplish. However, I've taken time to reflect back on all that we accomplished during the past six years. TCC has completed 95% of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan goals that we set in 2014 – great job team! A full report on our accomplishments will be available during our annual convention, and will be released onto our website at [www.tanachiefs.org](http://www.tanachiefs.org).

Over the past month most of my time has been preparing for the change of leadership here at TCC. In order to make sure there's a smooth transition for the newly elected Chief/Chairman, the Executive Board and I agreed that I will be available for a month after Convention to assist in any way needed. We also agreed prior to my leaving I would revise the Health organizational chart, finalizing our budget for the expansion and creating a work force development plan.

This year will be a huge transition for Tanana Chiefs Conference and I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve as your Chief/Chairman. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me over the past six years. As I look towards the future of our organization, I have confidence that our employees, tribes, and our new leadership will continue striving towards our vision of Healthy, Strong, Unified Tribes.

*Ana Bassee,*  
**Victor Joseph**  
Chief/Chairman

*Arts & Crafts Bazaar*

March 18 & 19 • Westmark Hotel

A great opportunity to shop local while attending the 2020 Annual  
Convention & Full Board of Director's Meeting!

# WILLOW HOUSE PATIENT HOTEL

## *First Guests*

"It's good to be home," says Heather Matumeak, Willow House Front Desk Receptionist, who has been working at Bertha Moses Patient Hostel during renovations.

After six months of planning and construction, the Willow House opened their doors to house the first five guests in the newly renovated Willow House patient hostel.

All guest rooms have new paint, flooring, light fixtures, exhaust fans, A/C units, furniture and linens, and hotel-grade TV and phone systems.

Joyce Sommer, Willow House Manager adds a special touch to each room with her hand-folded flower made of towels.

On the main floor, one room has been designed to accommodate person who is at end-of-life, with a connecting room for the family of that loved one. Across the hall is the community gathering area with kitchen accommodations in order to support family gatherings and meal

preparation, as well as laundry and vending machines for hotel guests to use.

There will be on-site staff members to assist with travel, bill, and case management needs. As well as a shuttle service, to transport patients to and from appointments, airports, and shopping as needed.

To make reservations, call Willow House at 907-459-2500.



## Welcome Edith Hildebrand, *Grants & Special Project Manager*

My name is Edith Hildebrand. I am the daughter of the late Hughey and the late Eleanor Kriska of Koyukuk. I grew up on the Yukon participating in subsistence activities with my family. I am married to Darrell Hildebrand, and together we raised our two children, Shawna and Eddie Hildebrand. We have 4 lovely grand girls whom we cherish. I received my Bachelor's in Business Management in 1989 and

my Master's Degree in Rural Development in 2005. Due to my husband's career, I have lived in multiple places around the state, giving me the opportunity to work with many types of local, state and federal funding sources. I have almost 15 years in school business finance and



extensive experience with Human Resources. I recently made the move back to Fairbanks, AK, where I accepted a position at TCC as the Grants & Special Projects Manager. I am excited to work for the tribes in the TCC Region again, and most excited to be back in the Fairbanks area where my family resides.



# RAMPART Culture & Wellness Camp

The Rampart Culture Camp was held September 11-16. The Rampart Village Council to establish a culture camp six miles above Rampart on the Yukon River. A beautiful camp site was created with five canvas tent frames set up, to be used in future years. The camp had 72 participants with 30 youth, 40 adults and 2 elders; ranging in age from 1-70+.

Cultural camp activities included berry picking, and with a really

blustery (windy) day campers learned how to use the wind to clean berries; climbing the bluffs, beading, how to skin and gut a lush fish, how to make a fish hook out of a spruce branch, did traditional singing and dancing, and learning the Denaakk'e language with Susan Paskavan the Yukon Koyukuk School District language coordinator; as well as family trees. Some of the older youth were also able to go out "looking around" with some of the

adults. Wellness and Prevention topics were provided by TCC staff, and Tobacco/Drug/Suicide Prevention, as well as Making Good Choices and Bullying were presented. At each camp, the youth each received a survival bag that includes a poncho, heat-reflective blanket, water bottle, mirror, whistle, flashlight, and pocket knife/multi-tool and learned how each device could save their life.

For more information on previous and upcoming camps, visit our website at [www.tananachiefs.org/culture-and-wellness-camps](http://www.tananachiefs.org/culture-and-wellness-camps)





# How Can I Prevent my Teen from *Vaping?*

Submitted By  
Wellness & Prevention, TCC

One of the most important things you can do as a parent or caregiver to prevent your teen from vaping is to have a conversation about it. Start the conversation by asking how prevalent vaping is at school? How many teens in their grade vape? Many teen vapers are unaware that vaping contains nicotine, so a good first step would be to share with them the dangers of nicotine. Be cautious: saying something like, "It's bad for you, don't do it," simply ends the conversation. Clearly state the dangers, but take a softer approach to the subject of vaping. Here are some "Talk Tips:"

- Know the facts about vaping before you start.
- Be patient and listen, the goal

is to have a conversation - not a lecture.

- Find a good moment to start the conversation. Let it come naturally as you pass a vape store, see someone using a vape or see a vape advertisement.
- Set a positive example by being nicotine free.
- If you need more information, talk to your health care provider or reach out to TCC Tobacco Prevention about the dangers of vaping.
- Answer your teens questions honestly. If there is something you don't know, reach out together to TCC Tobacco Prevention and set a meeting to review the dangers of tobacco together

## VAPING FACTS

- Vaping contains nicotine - a highly addictive chemical found in tobacco.
- Nicotine changes a young person's brain placing them at a risk for other addictions.
- Using nicotine may make it harder to pay attention, learn to make good decisions.
- Long-term health risks of vaping are unknown.
- Vapor has tiny particles that can lead to lung damage.
- The flavoring and other chemicals found in vape juice are unregulated and are potentially dangerous.
- Teens who vape are 4 times more likely to start smoking cigarettes.



## DON STEVENS, STEVENS VILLAGE

Don Stevens was born on December 27, 1951 in the village of Stevens Village. His traditional name is Dit'zete. "Because I was always right there when my mother need me," explains Stevens, "Dit'zete [it means] just there. Always be there."

One of Stevens's earliest memories is when his father was sent to Bethel, where he passed away from tuberculosis. His father's death left Stevens to be raised by his mother. When he was a young child, they moved to Fort Yukon.

Stevens began attending school in 1955. "You wouldn't believe who my teacher was [...] Representative Don Young," he says laughing. "He was a teacher in Fort Yukon. He was a tough teacher."

One of the sports available for the students to participate in was football. Stevens had never played football and when he was told to go put on some gear and get out on the field he felt lost. "They didn't even help me. I didn't know about football gear!" says Stevens. "'Just put it on and come on out there.' I couldn't walk and it was just too awkward for me. So, I just went back into the gym, took all of that off, and I just joined cross country."

In the early 60s there used to be a good fishing area 30 miles above Stevens," remembers Stevens. "There used to be a whirlpool area, where we would set up our camp in a good area where we could watch the net."

Stevens emphasizes the need to respect the land and waterways, "Everyone, take good care of yourself. You always respect the river. It gives us water to drink, it gives us the fish. So it's really powerful."

To hear Don's full story, visit [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)

TCC's Legacy of our Elders series documents the lives and stories of Athabascan elders throughout the TCC region.

Their interviews are compiled into volumes that include a DVD movie as well as an accompanying book. The books and DVDs highlight the elders and the stories that they want to share. These videos are available on our website at [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)

Funding for Legacy Project made possible by TCC & The National Park Service.

# March is National COLORECTAL CANCER Awareness Month

March is dedicated to bringing awareness to colorectal cancer and all of us here at Tanana Chiefs Conference want to provide you with educational materials that could **save your life**. Every year, about **140,000 Americans** get colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 people die from it. The risk for 30% of cancers can be reduced by changing your diet and lifestyle. Alaska Natives have the highest reported rates of colorectal cancer in the world. In 2018, 50% of the patients screened at the Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center had at least 1 precancerous polyp removed. Screening SAVES lives. Alaska Natives are encouraged to begin screening at age 40. Use this month to raise awareness and encourage others to make small changes in their every day lives.

## FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER PREVENTION

### 1. Live a healthy lifestyle

Eat a healthy, plant-based diet that is low in red or processed meat.  
Exercise at least 150 minutes a week.

### 2. Eat nuts and drink coffee

Eating 1oz. of nuts 5 or more times per week has been found to reduce death from all causes by 20%.  
Coffee may lower risk and help reduce risk of recurrence in survivors.

### 3. Consider taking aspirin and vitamin D supplements\*

Studies show low-dose aspirin can reduce

risk up to 40%.

Vitamin D helps the body regulate calcium levels and maintain healthy bones.

*\*Speak with your doctor before taking supplements or starting an aspirin regimen.*

### 4. Follow screening recommendations

Screening should begin at age 40.  
Fecal occult blood tests done yearly.  
Colonoscopies every 8-10 years.  
Sigmoidoscopies every 5 years.  
Family history of colorectal cancer? Speak with your provider about when to begin screening.

### 5. Know your family history

One of the biggest risk factors for colorectal cancer is having a family history of the disease or polyps.

15% of colorectal cancer patients have a family history of the disease.

People with Lynch syndrome make up 5% of colorectal cancer patients.

Those with the syndrome tend to develop the disease at a younger age.

If you think you have an elevated risk, speak with your provider about starting screening at an earlier age.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR COLONOSCOPY

One of the most important parts about getting screened, is making sure that you properly prepare for your colonoscopy. Following your provider's instructions is important in ensuring that your test results come back accurate.

It's important to remember not to eat or drink after midnight the night before

your colonoscopy.

It's also important to stick to a clear liquid diet, which means no solid foods whatsoever. Eating or drinking liquids that you can't see through, could result in inaccurate test results, which means



Darlene Huntington  
Pharmacist, CAIHC

you will have to re-schedule your procedure.

If, at any time, you are unsure about what you can and can not eat during your preparation, we encourage you to contact your provider to clarify any questions you may have.

### What You CAN Have:

- Water
- Gatorade, Powerade, Pedialyte
- Jell-o or Popsicles
- Clear Broth (Beef or Chicken)
- Coffee or Tea (No cream or sugar)
- 7-Up, Crystal Light, Ginger Ale
- Clear Fruit Juices



### What You CAN'T Have:

- Red or orange liquids of any kind
- Cream, Milk or dairy products
- Liquid you can't see through
- Noodles or vegetables in soups
- Alcohol
- Juice with Pulp



Watch our Medical Minute video on Preparing For Your Colonoscopy featuring Darlene Huntington.  
[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/TANANACHIEFSCONFERENCE](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/TANANACHIEFSCONFERENCE)

# Thinking About Starting a Peony Farm?

By Heidi Rader  
Tribes Extension Educator, TCC

Many have seen the news about the growing peony industry in Alaska and been captivated by the flowers and thought, "I should start a peony farm!"

But it's more complicated than a lot of people think. Carolyn Chapin started one of the first peony farms in Alaska (and in Fairbanks) in 2003 with Jan Hanscom. She explained, "There's all these complex moving pieces, it's like a jet engine. . . . but people are looking at it like it's a bicycle."



Naomi Brodersen (1,400 roots) had a romantic notion of peony farming. Although parts of it are like that, she said there were a lot of hard aspects, particularly the business side of things (including marketing) that she hadn't considered.

Before you take the plunge, make sure you know what you're getting into. Lease or work at a peony farm. Go behind the scenes to appreciate the time commitment, physical demands, stress, frequency and toxicity of commonly-used pesticides (this was a deal-breaker for some of the farmers I talked to), start-up and annual costs, post-harvest requirements, the marketing rigmarole, and, of course, the joys, too. For some, working outside in a field of flowers and making people smile is reward enough.

Brodersen said would-be peony farmers should think about their goals — is it going to be a hobby or sole occupation? "And then I would really try to get across how much work it was," she said. "It's a product people expect to be perfect. Just having a product that's perishable and delicate, there's a lot that goes into it."

"There's a checklist — the stem has to be straight, the side buds have

to be removed," she said. "Flower management — getting them in the chiller quick enough. A little bit of mold can grow while they're in the chiller. All the things that factor into dealing with something perishable that people are paying a high price for. I didn't consider those things. Making sure people understand that and the hours and hours of work that go into it. You kind of need to have all the skills. You need to be a solid farmer, a business person, and (do the) shipping and boxing, and marketing."

David Russell, a Fairbanks peony farmer and president of the Alaska Peony Growers Association, reminds people that you have to wait at least five years for your plants to mature, then after that, "You are going gangbusters all summer every summer. Unless you go into this with a long-term business mindset, you will begin to resent the long summer hours spent in the field and not dip-netting, fishing in Valdez or hiking in the mountains — all the other reasons people live in Alaska. This is not an endeavor that allows you to take a summer off. On the other hand, there is nothing more special than watching your, and your family's, hard work turn into a thriving, blossoming business."

Writing a realistic business plan and pinning down your break-even price per stem is an essential first step. RightRisk ([alaska.erighrisk.com/](http://alaska.erighrisk.com/)) developed the Enterprise Risk Analyzer Tool to help you identify your break-even price.

Ko Klaver, the president of Botanical Trading Company and advisor for the cut flower industry, thinks Alaska farmers' break-even price averages around \$2.22 per stem and most would be happy to be paid \$2.75-\$3.25 or more, wholesale. Klaver thought

the break-even price for European farmers was about 55 cents a stem and said, "they would be tickled pink to get more than a euro a stem (USD \$1.11)". In a translated article from the Royal Flower Holland Auction, Klaver noted that in July 2019 (July is when availability overlaps with Interior Alaska), the average price was 46 cents per stem.

Chapin, who used to teach the growers school for the Alaska Peony Growers Association, said you should figure on getting \$2 a stem. Hanscom said you should plan on only \$1 per stem if you don't do everything yourself. Brodersen thought that they would be happy with \$3 per stem, if they could've just dropped the stems off at the co-op (and not done the boxing and shipping). You also need to factor in that you won't sell 100% of your stems, a co-op or packhouse could take a 20-60% cut and wholesalers sometimes require you to pay shipping.

In Alaska, peonies do sell for higher prices than elsewhere.

The Census of Agriculture reports detailed data on peony farms with sales of \$100,000 or more, and in 2018 there was one in Alaska. Half of its stems (25,000) were sold at an average wholesale price of \$3.25 per stem. Gross sales for this farm were calculated to be \$163,000. This seems like a good indication that this farm is not only profiting but prospering. This stem price was more than twice as high as any other state. Colorado saw the lowest wholesale price at 64 cents per stem while California had the highest at \$1.61 per stem. Statewide, in 2017, total cut flower and cut florist greens sales from 100 farms (probably mostly peony farms) was \$940,683.

David Russell wouldn't discourage new peony farmers. He said, "For new farmers, there is a tremendous



opportunity in peonies. You have to look at it realistically. What level do I need to get into it? What level do I want to invest? If you want to have 500 plants and you have a couple boutiques in New York that will give you \$6 a stem, that's perfect."

But it's not uncommon for buyers to back out, even at the last minute. Ron Illingworth who was president of Arctic Alaska Peonies co-op, said he anticipated a big sale to grocery stores. "We Well he (the buyer) changed his mind in late June and we'd already purchased everything we needed and were harvesting at the time, and we ended up not being able to sell about 10,000 stems." This figured into why the co-op dissolved this fall.

Klaver said that ideally, you want to lock in 80% of your sales contracts before the season starts. But he said when supply is high, buyers tend to be looser on their contracts and it can be hard to lock them in. Klaver showed that from 2014 to 2018, the number of stems produced in Holland more than doubled from 70 to 166 million—a massive supply increase. If availability overlaps, like it does in July, then there is direct competition with the Dutch-grown peonies in Alaska.

Marketing is a challenge for many. Brodersen said, "The marketing is the big hard one. Just putting yourself out there and talking to hundreds of florists and trying to sell yourself. That's not something that comes naturally to me."

In "The Lean Farm," Ben Hartman encourages growers to test the market thoroughly and not to push a product on customers. He says "the customer alone defines value" and that, just because a farmer wants to produce something, doesn't mean the customer wants to buy it. Klaver said high quality standards must be maintained and to remember, "You

are only as good as your last delivery."

Hanscom thinks that this statewide problem needs a statewide solution. "What Alaska needs is a brokerage that will sell every single stem we have," she said. "And we don't have that."

Kim Herning (5,000 roots), who helped market for the now dissolved Arctic Alaska Peony co-op, thinks there needs to be a statewide marketing effort comparable to the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute. She doubts that will happen with the current budget pressures.

Adding peonies to an existing farm also could be a great strategy. It provides diversification and the initial investment is lower if you already own arable land. This worked well for Mary Ver Hoef, who added peonies to her diversified (mostly organic but not certified) farm.

She took advantage of the less stringent demands of the farmers market to sell short-stemmed peonies, which she can harvest more of without sacrificing the future vigor and productivity of her plants. Other markets require straight, 24-inch stems, which take a bigger toll on plants. She also sells at the Co-op Market Grocery & Deli, provides flowers for local weddings and offers a subscription service.

Ver Hoef sees peonies as a wonderful opportunity and just wishes that she had started younger. At one point Ver Hoef had as many as 500 plants. Now she's down to 84 peonies after selling quite a few plants at the farmers market for a profit. Even so, she'd like to spend less time farming and more time on her family's boat and enjoying Alaska summers. She's

looking for someone who might be interested in leasing her field.

In addition to selling the stems, there are lots of side hustles to consider. You could offer agritourism and workshops, provide a wedding and event venue or conduct research on your farm. Floret Flower Farm in Washington does many of these things well and there are also great examples in Alaska. But these activities are an additional time commitment during the busy summer season.



Kim Herning has been thinking about doing workshops and events, "But then I think I'm already so busy in the summer and I'm exhausted, how am I going to have the energy to develop other things? Do I really want to overextend myself?"

Peony farmers in Interior Alaska have had a spectrum of experiences and the reasons for starting and stopping are numerous. Many farms are still new and have yet to realize their full potential. If you do start a peony farm, you stand to benefit tremendously from the substantial amount of research done and lessons learned by those who took the plunge first.

This is a continuation of an article I wrote earlier about peony farming in Interior Alaska (<https://bit.ly/2RS60NA> and in the News-Miner: <https://bit.ly/37TDxfH>). Both of these articles are Interior-centric as I only interviewed peony farmers from the Fairbanks area. Other regions have some of the same, but also very different challenges and opportunities.

Questions about gardening or farming? Contact Heidi at [hbrader@alaska.edu](mailto:hbrader@alaska.edu) or 474-6620.

This project was supported by the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA Grant # 2017-41580-26928. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author (s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

# 'Give Kids A Smile'

By Nicolette Haskin, DMD  
Staff Dentist/Dental Rural Services Coordinator, TCC

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. On February 7th, TCC participated for the first time in the American Dental Association's (ADA) 'Give Kids A Smile' event. This program was begun in 2003 by the ADA with a goal to provide

dental care to children as well as to increase prevention and education into communities around the country. TCC Dental developed a modified version of their pre-existing "Children's Dental Clinic" which typically involves completing routine exams, cleanings

and other preventive treatment. As part of the festivities for the event, children were additionally able to participate in games, coloring and face painting along with their dental care.

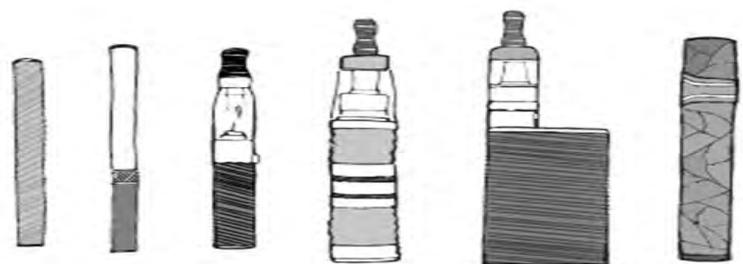


## What are E-Cigarettes?

- E-Cigarettes are electronic devices that heat a liquid and produce an aerosol, or mix of small particles in the air.
- E-Cigarettes come in many shapes and sizes. Most have a battery, a heating element, and a place to hold a liquid.
- Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items. Larger devices such as tank systems, or "mods," do not look like other tobacco products.
- E-cigarettes are known by many different names. They are sometimes called "e-cigs," "e-hookahs," "mods," "vape pens," "vapes," "tank systems," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)."
- Using an e-cigarette is sometimes called "vaping" or "JUULing".

## Risks of E-Cigarettes for Youth, Teens, and Young Adults

- Volatile Organic Compounds
- Nicotine
- **Ultrafine Particles**
- Cancer-Causing Chemicals
- Heavy Metals (Nickel, tin, lead)
- Flavoring (diacetyl - a chemical linked to a serious lung disease)



# Patient Experience *vs* Patient Satisfaction

## What is the Difference?

By Leilani Sauer  
Patient Experience Manager, TCC

We collect data through many avenues in the Patient Experience Program at Tanana Chief Conference. Patients call, send e-mails, send letters, meet with us in person, fill out comment cards, or complete the e-mail/text patient surveys through a company called Medstatix. Our goal is to collect the information, involve the department leads and staff on both positive and negative feedback, and then make improvements as needed. We want our customers to be more than just satisfied. We want every interaction throughout the experience to be infused with Ch'eghwtsen.'

Patient Experience and Patient Satisfaction are terms that are often used interchangeably, but do have differences.

According to the Beryl Institute, **Patient Experience** is:

"The sum of all interactions, shaped by an organization's culture, that influence patient perceptions across the continuum of care."

In health care, we measure Patient Experience by how often something happens during the experience.

For example, sample survey questions may include:

- How often did staff treat you with courtesy and respect? Never, Sometimes, Usually, Always
- How often were you involved

in care decisions? Never, Sometimes, Usually, Always

- How often did the care team listen carefully to you? Never, Sometimes, Usually, Always

The goal, of course, is for our customers to be able to answer 'Always' on these types of questions.

**Patient Satisfaction** is more of a subjective thought by the patient, "Yes, I'm satisfied" or "No, I'm not satisfied." One patient may have an experience at CAIHC or a Village Clinic and walk away very satisfied; where another patient may have the same interaction and walk away very dissatisfied.

A great example of measuring Patient Satisfaction is through our *Happy or Not* stands. The current question is, "How

happy were you with the care you received today? You can choose from four faces. This doesn't necessarily help us to measure the entire patient experience, but it helps us to see how many patients left feeling satisfied or not satisfied.

An excellent way to share your *experience* with us is by filling out comment cards. We read and document each and every card. In 2019, we received roughly 400 kudos about our staff in various departments! The negative

comments are read, documented, and brought through our Patient Grievance process which involves leaders investigating concerns (talking with staff involved, reviewing patient records) and responding to patients by phone and letter. We have managed to decrease our response times to grievances, over the past year, from well over 30 days down to 7-14 days.

The Patient Experience Team enjoys meeting with people in person too. We want to be proactive instead of reactive to concerns, so please bring things to our attention right away. It is very discouraging to see negative comments on Social Media such as Facebook from our patients. You can ask to speak with me or one of my Patient Navigators, Shayla or Shawna. Kristy Supsook is our Patient Advocate on the ANMC campus and is available too.

Patient Experience and Patient Satisfaction have differences. Our goal is for the entire experience to be positive. It takes two-way communication between the CAIHC and Rural staff and patients/families. Of course we want people leaving feeling a sense of satisfaction, but we are going for more than satisfaction. We are going for a **Ch'eghwtsen' Always Experience!**



## Are You Traveling to ANMC? Confirm your Housing!

**All guests are required to confirm their housing location prior to arrival!**

Follow this checklist to confirm your stay:

- Call **1(866) 824-8140** to make and confirm your reservation
  - Request your **preferred lodging location**
  - **Check in** to your confirmed location when you arrive
- Pick up **meal cards** at Patient Housing if staying on campus and at an off campus location who does not provide meals

For more information, contact Kristy Supsook, TCC Patient Advocate at ANMC  
907-687-9193

Toll Free 1-800-478-6682 ext. 3604  
kristy.supsook@tananachiefs.org





# Valerie Davidson

2020 Annual Convention *Keynote Speaker*

Valerie Nurr'araaluk Davidson, a Yup'ik and enrolled tribal member of the Orutsaramiut Traditional Native Council of Bethel, was appointed by Governor Walker as Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services in 2014. During her tenure, Davidson implemented

Medicaid Expansion, Medicaid Reform and the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact. Davidson served as Alaska's first Alaska Native female Lieutenant Governor in the final weeks of the Walker Administration. Davidson previously served as Senior Director of Legal & Intergovernmental

Affairs for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and as Chair of the Tribal Technical Advisory Group to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Davidson considers her brilliant, funny, and kind children to be her greatest accomplishment.

## Important Meeting Dates

WEDNESDAY

March 11

**Executive Board Meeting**  
Chief Peter John Tribal Building  
6th Floor Boardroom  
1:30pm

THURSDAY

March 12

**Executive Board Meeting**  
Chief Peter John Tribal Building  
6th Floor Boardroom  
8:30am

FRIDAY

March 13

**Subregional Meetings**  
**Blessing the Chief Andrew**  
Isaac Health Center Expansion  
& Willow House

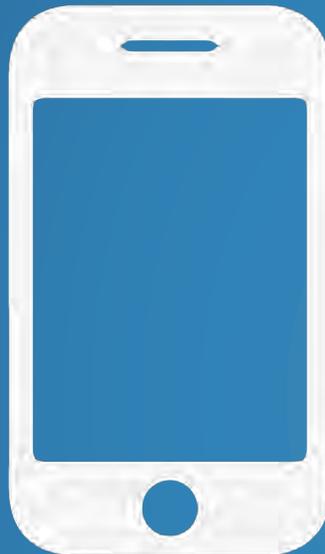
SATURDAY

March 14

**Subregional Meetings**  
**Honoring Dinner**  
Westmark  
6:00pm  
Dinner Provided

## DON'T FORGET TO DOWNLOAD THE APP!

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# Agenda at-a-Glance

## 2020 Annual Convention & Full Board of Director Meeting

### MONDAY

March 16

**Elections and Credentials Committee Meeting** - Westmark Red Lantern Restaurant

Call to Order

Invocation

Funding Opportunities for Housing

Importance of Site Control

Agencies/Funding

Water and Sewer

Best Practices

IRHA & TCC Chief/Chairman Candidate Speeches

*Recess*

### TUESDAY

March 17

Reconvene

Invocation

Welcome Addresses

Presentation of Colors Alaska Native Veterans

Association

In Memoriam

Committee Assignments

Welcome Addresses

Elder Addresses

Introduction of Youth

Introduction of Theme and Keynote Speaker

Keynote Address

IRHA & TCC Chief/Chairman Candidate Question & Answer

*Adjourn*

### WEDNESDAY

March 18

Call to Order

Invocation

Credentials Committee Report

Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Adoption of Agenda

Adoption of March 2019 Convention and November 14, 2019 Special Full Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Executive Session - At any point in time if required

TCC Chief's Report

*ACTION ITEM: Ratify Behavioral Health Plan/Strategy & Hunting and Fishing Task Force Plan/Strategy from the November 2019 Summit*

TCC Finance Report

Rasmuson Foundation

The Honorable Senator Dan Sullivan - U.S. Senate  
The Honorable Congressman Don Young - U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Senator Lisa Murkowski - U.S. Senate

Public Safety

*Recess*

### THURSDAY

March 19

Reconvene and Call to Order

Invocation

Resolutions Committee Report

Consideration of Resolutions

Election Committee Report

Elections

Swearing in Ceremony

*Adjourn*

**Greater Chamber Welcome Reception**

5:30 p.m.

Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall



LEGACY  
OF OUR  
ELDERS

6:00 p.m.

Westmark Fairbanks

**Denakkanaaga Fundraiser**

5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall



Auction - Live Music - Elder Storytelling

**TCC Annual Potlatch**

6:00 p.m.

Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall



# Election Criteria: 2020 TCC Full Board of Directors Meeting

## SUBREGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD ELECTIONS

### TCC Executive Board of Directors

Subregional Positions:

- Upper Tanana Subregion .....3 Year Term 2020-2023  
Currently Chaaiy Albert, Northway
- Yukon Koyukuk Subregion .....3 Year Term 2020-2023  
Currently Norman "Carl" Burgett, Huslia

#### Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be a current village director, as authorized by tribal/village resolution. (Article 7, Section 4)
- Must be residents of the State of Alaska and Alaska Native Members of member villages of the corporation. (Article 4, Section 1)
- Full Time employees of the corporation shall not be eligible to serve as Directors or officers of the corporation with exception of the President. E-Board Members may serve as temporary or seasonal TCC employees. (Article 4, Section 2)
- Must successfully pass an ICPA and Alaska Barrier Crimes Act Background check. (See also Executive Board Policy 50-5003).
- Compliance with the TCC Board of Directors' Drug and Alcohol Free Policy #50-5001 applies to all TCC Executive and Health Board of Directors, with the exception of the Chief/Chair of the Board who is an employee who follows the employee policy. To be eligible as a candidate, individuals must pass the background check the week before their election

### TCC Advisory Boards

The three TCC Advisory Boards make recommendations to the TCC Executive Board and President. The Regional Health board is selected by each respective subregion. (Article 7, Section 2). The President has the authority to appoint all individuals to the other advisory boards, (Article 7, Section 3), but the most recent process has been for the subregions to democratically select representatives to each advisory board. All candidates must be Alaska Native.

### TCC Regional Health Board

- Yukon Flats Subregion.....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently Patricia Salmon, Chalkyitsik
- Upper Kuskokwim Subregion .....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently VACANT

### TCC Education Council

- Lower Yukon Subregion.....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently Nathan Elswick, Anvik
- Yukon Tanana Subregion.....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently Phyllis Erhart, Tanana

### Interior Athabaskan Tribal College Board of Trustees

- Upper Kuskokwim Subregion.....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently VACANT
- Upper Tanana Subregion.....3 year term 2020-2023)  
Currently Gerald Albert, Northway

## FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

### IRHA Board of Commissioners

- Seat E.....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently Marvin Deacon, Grayling

\* Must be eligible to serve on TCC Board of Directors

- Employees of TCC or IRHA are not eligible to serve as IRHA Commissioners (Article 7, Section 7)

\* IRHA candidates must submit their declaration of candidacy as required by other candidates.

## FULL BOARD OF DIRECTIONS ELECTIONS

### Officer Positions

- TCC Chief/Chairman .....3 year term (2020-2023)  
Currently Victor Joseph, North Pole/Tanana

#### Eligibility Criteria:

Officers must be Alaska Native members of a member village of the corporation and eligible to be selected as a Director of a member village. (Article 5, Section 1) All employees including the President must pass Personnel Policy 10-107, "Applicant and Employee Background and Character Investigations." Per Executive Board Policy 50-5003, Executive and Health Board candidates must also pass background checks. Presidential, Executive and Health board candidates must turn in a completed and correct background check application to Heather Rogers in Human Resources by February 14th to guarantee background checks will be completed by March 6th. Individuals contemplating running for a board position should turn in a background check application immediately to ensure the ability to make corrections to mistakes in the lengthy application. All background check applications will be confidential and only Human Resources will have access to the application and the names of individuals. Those individuals that do not submit complete paperwork or fail to pass a background check will not be eligible candidates for the TCC President, Executive Board or Health Board positions.

## DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

Individuals who want to declare themselves a candidate for any of the above seats must submit a written, signed and dated letter of intent between 8:00 AM-Feb 6, 2020 and 5:00 PM-March 6, 2020. We recommend that you confirm receipt of your letter of intent with the TCC Executive Secretary prior to March 6th. Candidates often wait until the last hour to submit which has caused miscommunication in the past leading to ineligible candidates

Letter of intent (see example on next page) must be received by fax, mail or delivered in person no later than 5:00 PM on March 6, 2020 to:

Tanana Chiefs Conference  
ATTN: Norma Dahl, Executive Secretary  
122 First Avenue, Suite 600  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
1-800-478-6822 ext.3118 FAX # (907) 459-3884

2020 TCC Full Board elections process follows the TCC Elections Rules; the elections rules are posted on the TCC website at [www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org) under the 2020 TCC Annual Convention information and is also enclosed with the First and Official Call to Convention mailed to TCC member tribes. A copy of the elections rules can be requested by contacting Natasha Singh, General Counsel.

## Important Dates for the 2020 TCC Elections

#### Submit between now and February 14th:

The last day TCC is able to guarantee a background check will be completed in time for the required 10 day announcement of candidates before the meeting.

#### February 6th at 8:00am

The open period in which a candidate may declare written candidacy begins. Please confirm receipt of your letter of intent.

#### March 6th at 5:00pm:

The open period in which a candidate may declare candidacy ends. Candidates must declare their candidacy in writing. TCC must provide a list of eligible candidates to member tribes.

#### March 19th:

TCC elections held at the TCC Full Board of Directors Annual Meeting at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks.

# Background Checks and TCC's Full Board of Directors Election

## ICPA BACKGROUND CHECK INFORMATION:

The Indian Child Protection Act (ICPA), requires TCC Executive and Health Board of Directors to pass a federal ICPA background check, and the Alaska Barrier Crimes Act background check.

The TCC Executive Board has made the commitment to both comply with current laws, Board policies and advocate for reasonable changes in background check requirements. As part of compliance, TCC Executive Board and Health Board candidates must submit their complete background check application which includes fingerprints by February 14th submitted to Heather Rogers, Human Resources Director. This allows enough time for the check to be complete. Only those candidates that pass the background check will be eligible to continue as official candidates for the respective elections. This process was mandated since the 2014 Presidential Election as well.

## 2020 TCC ELECTIONS: ELECTION RULES RULE 10. MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED

To be elected to a position, nominees are required to receive a majority vote from the votes cast by the TCC Board of Delegates. If no nominee receives a majority vote on a ballot, the Election Committee shall conduct a subsequent ballot provided by these Election Rules until a nominee receives a majority vote.

## RULE 11. FAILURE TO ACHIEVE MAJORITY

1. In the event of a tie occurring for a Subregional seat after the third ballot, a coin toss will occur to determine the outcome of the election.

2. Ballots where there are four (4) nominees or more. If no nominee receives a majority vote on the first ballot the following rules will apply with the intent to eliminate candidates to achieve a majority:

The Election Committee will eliminate all nominees except for the three (3) nominees receiving the highest number of votes and conduct a subsequent ballot.

If there are three (3) or more candidates that receive the second highest number of votes, all those with the second highest number of votes will proceed to the next ballot including the candidate with the most votes. The remaining candidates will

be eliminated.

If there is a tie for candidates with the third highest vote and there are two

(2) or more candidates that receive the first and/or second highest number of votes, only the two (2) or more candidates that receive the highest number of votes will proceed to the next ballot. The rest will be eliminated.

If there are more than three (3) candidates tied for first highest vote, all of those receiving the first highest will proceed to the next ballot. The rest will be eliminated.

If all but one candidate ties for second, the Election Committee will distribute an "elimination ballot" that includes only the nominees who tied for second. The Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes on the "elimination ballot" and resume the balloting between all remaining nominees.

3. Ballots where there are three (3) nominees. If no nominee receives a majority vote on a ballot having three (3) nominees, the Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes, and conduct a subsequent ballot. If all three (3) nominees tie for the votes cast, the Election Committee shall conduct a subsequent ballot including all nominees. If two nominees tie for the fewest votes cast, the Committee will distribute an "elimination ballot" that includes only the two nominees who tied for the fewest votes cast on the prior ballot. The Election Committee will eliminate the one nominee receiving the lowest number of votes on the "elimination ballot" and resume the balloting between all remaining nominees.

4. Ballots with two (2) nominees. The nominee receiving a majority vote shall be elected. If neither nominee receives a majority vote, the Election Committee will prepare another ballot without elimination of the nominee receiving the fewer votes. This Election Committee will repeat this process as necessary until one nominee receives a majority vote.

*\*\* Majority is based on the number of Directors present for the 2020 Full Board of Director's roll call.*

DATE (Must be between 8 a.m. February 6, 2020 and 5 p.m. March 6, 2020).

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ declare my intent to run for the Tanana Chiefs Conference  
(Name) (Village/Enrolled to)

position of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert seat you intend to run as a candidate for. Example: Chief/Chairman, Subregional Executive Board, TCC Health Board, TCC Education Council or IATC)

Signature

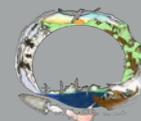
City, State, Zip Code

Print Name

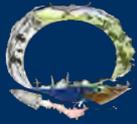
Phone Number

## LETTER OF INTENT

Tanana Chiefs Conference  
ATTN: Norma Dahl, Executive Secretary  
122 First Ave, Suite 600  
Fairbanks, AK 99701 | Fax (907) 459-3884



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## THE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

122 First Avenue, Suite 600  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Phone: (907) 452-8251 ext. 3424

Fax: (907) 459-3884

communications\_dept@tananachiefs.org

[www.tananachiefs.org](http://www.tananachiefs.org)

Letters to the Editor, other written contributions and photo submissions are welcome. However, space is limited and program-oriented news has priority. We reserve the right to edit or reject material. Letters and opinions are not necessarily the opinions of Tanana Chiefs Conference.

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## JOIN THE TCC FAMILY

[WWW.TANANACHIEFS.ORG](http://WWW.TANANACHIEFS.ORG)

### Village Vacancies

- Community Health Aide/Practitioner (Alatna, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Dot Lake, Healy Lake, Kaltag, Stevens Village)
- Family Visitor (Allakaket, McGrath, Shageluk, Tanacross)
- Behavioral Health Aide (Anaktuvuk Pass, Chalkyitsik, Dot Lake, Northway, Rampart, Ruby)
- Substitute Elder Nutrition Cook (Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik, Huslia, McGrath, Rampart, Venetie)
- Home Care Provider (Beaver, Galena, McGrath)
- Elder Nutrition Cook (Chalkyitsik, Evansville, Hughes, McGrath)
- Lead Teacher (Fort Yukon)
- Edgar Nollner Health Center Director (Galena)
- Infant/Toddler Teacher (Galena)
- Village Public Safety Officer (Grayling, Huslia, McGrath, Nulato, Tetlin, Venetie)

### Fairbanks Vacancies

- Energy Assistance Program Assistant
- Certified Medical Assistant
- Sobering Center Technician
- Patient Navigator II
- Dental Assistant I
- Dental Assistant I - Temporary
- Phlebotomist
- Housing First Behavioral Health Clinician
- Education and Disabilities Coordinator
- Eligibility Specialist
- Developmental Specialist I/II/III
- Housekeeper
- Hospitality Support Staff
- Billing Technician II
- Cafe Manager
- Employment and Training Youth Coordinator
- Addictions Behavioral Health Clinician
- CHOP Home Care Manager
- Coding Manager
- Security Officer

### Region- Wide Vacancies

- Medical Coder II
- Community Health Aide/Practitioner – Itinerant

JOB LISTED WERE OPEN AS OF February 14, 2020

## UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Subregional Meetings  
March 12-14 • TBA

Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center & Willow House Blessings  
March 13 • 6:00pm Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center • 7:00pm Willow House

Honoring/Awards Dinner  
March 14 • Westmark Hotel • 6:00pm

2020 Convention & Full Board of Director's Meeting  
March 16-19 • Fairbanks, AK • Westmark Hotel

Greater Chamber of Commerce Welcome  
March 16 • Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall • 5:30pm

**Legacy of Our Elders Premiere**  
March 17 • Westmark Hotel • 6:00pm

Annual Denakkanaaga Fundraiser  
March 18 • Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall • 5:30pm

Gwich'in Athabascan Fiddle Dance  
March 20-21 • Morris Thompson Cultural & Visitors Center • 6:30pm

**TCC Annual Potlatch**  
March 19 • Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall • 6:00pm

Doyon Annual Meeting of Shareholders  
March 19 • Westmark Hotel • 8:00am

TCC Closed - Traditional Chief's Day  
March 20

Mount Edgecumbe Alumni/Athabascan Fiddlers Association Dance  
March 20-21 • Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall • 7:00pm • \$10 Admission



**FRIDAY, MARCH 20**  
Westmark Fairbanks Hotel  
8 a.m.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**  
DOYON ORIGINAL INCORPORATORS

**2020 ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS**