

Our Choices, Our Future: Analysis of the Status of Alaska Natives Report 2004

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First Alaskans Institute is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization dedicated to developing the capacities of Alaska Native people and communities to meet social, economic, and educational challenges of the future. Its priorities are: improving Native education, developing future Native leaders and increasing Native impact on public policy.

Alaska Native Policy Center is a project of First Alaskans Institute. The purpose of the Alaska Native Policy Center is to enable Alaska Natives to become informed about, actively involved in - and to have impact on - the education, economic and social policy issues that will determine our futures as 21st century indigenous peoples.



Alaska Native Elders knew long ago that times were changing, that the pace of change would increase, and that new ways of learning would be required to meet new challenges. They knew that we would have to be able to read different kinds of signs along the trail ahead in order to understand what was coming.

Our Elders were right. Times continue to change, and the speed of change accelerates. But even so, we know that our Elders want us to keep our eyes focused on the trail, to be strengthened by our Native cultures and traditions, such as sharing and working together. That is the foundation of this report: sharing what we have learned in order to strengthen our ability to work together and to shape the world ahead.

The recently published *Status of Alaska Natives 2004* is a data report prepared by UAA's Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) for the Alaska Federation of Natives. It presents data on Alaska Native population, health, economic condition and education and is compiled from many sources, including the U.S. Census.

This document, prepared by the First Alaskans Institute's Alaska Native Policy Center, is an analysis of ISER's *Status of Alaska Natives 2004*. Its purpose is to give us all an understanding of what the data mean based on analysis by Native people. Its perspective rests on input from the very people whom the numbers describe. We tried to capture interpretations of the data that reflect what Alaska Natives see every day and that they intuitively understand. In seeing the data compiled in a whole piece, we may gain insights and new perspectives that serve to make the trail ahead brighter.

We know that there are many initiatives and dedicated work that good people all across the State of Alaska, Native and non-Native, are doing to address the issues raised by the data in the *Natives 2004* report. We also know that there is much more that needs to be done. We hope that this analysis provides helpful perspective and prompts meaningful initiative as Native people shape their futures.

The Alaska Native Policy Center views this analysis of the *Natives 2004* report as the beginning of a knowledge development effort to understand Alaska Native population, health, economy and education data and to share that information. The Policy Center asks for your comments on the data presented in this report (using the attached comment card or our website, www.firstalaskans.org). Did the data surprise you? What are the root causes of the issues the data raise? What actions must be taken to improve the situation?

Native Elders were right. Change has come and is coming faster still. To keep on the clear, bright trail, we must understand clearly our present status and use that knowledge to have our footsteps firmly follow in theirs.

Sincerely,

Byron I. Mallott
President and CEO
First Alaskans Institute

Greta L. Goto
Director
Alaska Native Policy Center

Background

Fifteen years ago, the Alaska Federation of Natives published its *AFN Report on the Status of Alaska Natives: A Call for Action*. That study, prepared by the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Alaska Anchorage, summarized population, health, economics and education statistics about modern Natives. In August, 2003, AFN asked UAA's ISER to update and expand the 1989 Report. AFN wanted to know how the landscape of Alaska Native well-being had changed in the intervening years.

ISER recently completed its work, entitled the *Status of Alaska Natives Report 2004* (hereafter referred to as *Natives 2004*). AFN also wanted the updated statistics to be shared with the Alaska Native Community, and it wanted to know what the Native Community thinks about the data. Accordingly, AFN contracted with the First Alaskans Institute's Alaska Native Policy Center in a knowledge development effort to:

- bring ISER's updated statistics back to the Native community in order to get feedback from Native people on what the data mean and what actions can be taken to improve the statistics; and
- write and publish an analysis of the 2004 statistics from a Native point of view, for a Native audience.

The Policy Center made 20 formal presentations of data to over 1400 participants in meetings held in seven regions. The following facts and findings are based on the data, discussions and feedback from these meetings.

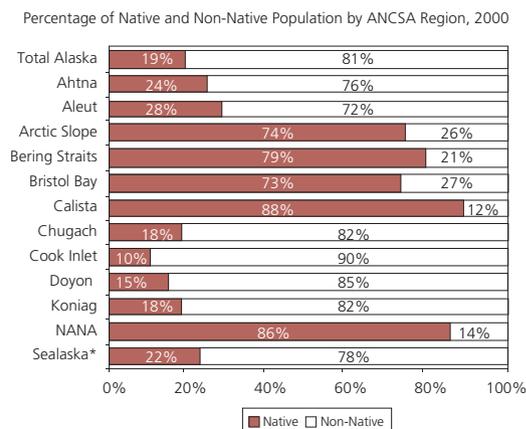
Alaska Native Population

The Facts

The majority of the Alaska Native population (58%) still lives in rural and remote Alaska, and the urban Alaska Native population (42%) is increasing. Both rural and urban Native populations are young, living longer, and experiencing a changing household composition.

- Census 2000 shows a total statewide Alaska Native population of 119,241 people (19% of the total state population of 626,932).
- 82% of the population living in remote rural areas are Alaska Natives.
- Alaska Natives are comparatively young, with a median age of 24 years.
- More than 44% of all Natives in Alaska are 19 years of age or younger.
- The Native population is statistically balanced between males and females, 50.2% male, and 49.8% female.
- 42% of all Alaska Natives live in urban Alaska, and 58% live in rural areas of the state. There is great geographical mobility among Native people, and the 2000 Census shows a trend of people moving from rural villages to regional centers and to urban areas of Alaska.
- The life expectancy of the Native population is increasing, and more people now survive to old age than in prior decades.
- If the Native population continues to grow at the rates by which it increased during the 1990's, it is predicted to number 140,000 people in the year 2010 and 165,000 in 2020.

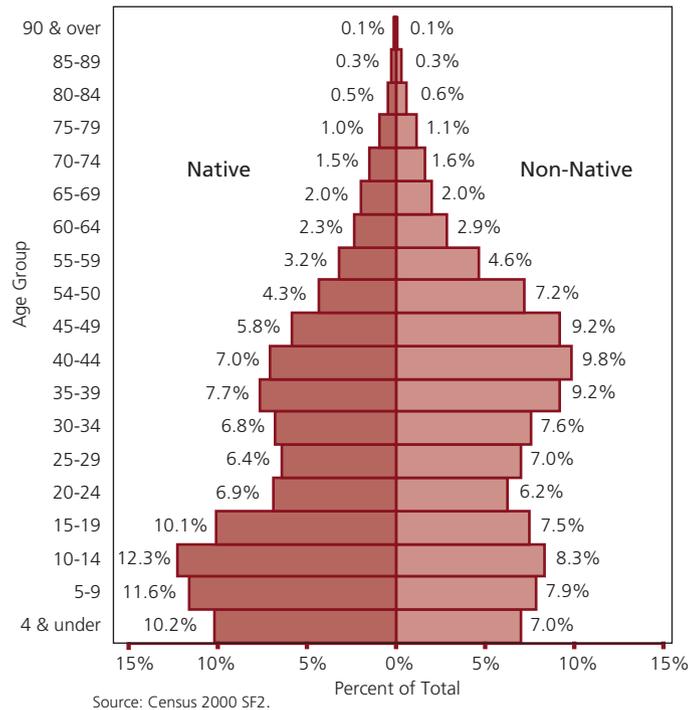
Figure ES-1. Percentage of Native and non-Native Population by ANCSA Region, 2000



*Includes Annette Island Reserve.

Source: U.S. Census 2000 (SF 2) 100-Percent Data

Figure ES-2. Alaska Statewide Native and non-Native Population by Age Group, 2000



The Findings

When the Policy Center presented these data in meetings and discussions, it found that participants wanted to see population numbers both on a statewide level and for their respective regions. Participants wanted to see population forecasts for each of the regions for planning and decision-making. It was clear that there is a need for consistent and periodic updates of population data that regions can use for planning purposes.

Three themes emerged from the discussion on population: youth, Elders, and migration from villages to urban areas.

- **Youth.** Young Native people are going to need economic opportunities to take them into their adult lives and careers. There needs to be an understanding of how young people can enter existing jobs – and jobs that might be created through economic development. Healthy

behaviors need to be encouraged and supported so young Native adults can get and keep jobs. The public education system must teach the skills needed in a modern workforce.

- **Elders.** Information on the aging Native population is critical to plan for services that Elders will need for quality of life so that Elders can live where they want to live, in their home communities, with their families, surrounded by familiar faces, speaking their languages, eating their foods, free of pain and stress.
- **Migration.** The Policy Center heard that many Native people are moving from the village for economic and educational opportunities and for access to health care that might not currently be available in their communities. The issue does not, or should not, stop with that simple explanation. Many participants in the discussions and regional meetings thought that the movement to regional hubs and urban areas represents deeper issues that need to be addressed, including cost of living and safety in the community.

Meeting participants were concerned with what might happen to villages if people move out. If more people from rural Alaska move into urban centers, what kinds of pressures will that place on systems of education, health, housing, transportation, public safety? Is urban Alaska prepared to deal with an influx of rural residents? How will village systems change as people move from villages?

Alaska Native Health

The Facts

Alaska Natives have witnessed major changes in the provision of health care. Recent health indicators show the progress made in health over the last four decades (1960's through 1990's):

- A new Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage was opened in 1997 and is operated by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.
- The Community Health Aide system has expanded to more than 170 villages.
- In recent years, 81% of Native children have been immunized for many of the common childhood diseases - a higher rate than for the entire United States.
- Native life expectancy increased from 46.4 years in 1950 to 69.5 years in 1997.
- Native infant mortality rates have decreased.
- Contributing to the decrease in diseases like tuberculosis and hepatitis are additions to housing units and improvements in safe water and sewer. Nearly 3700 new housing units were built in remote Alaskan communities in the late 1990's. 77% of rural homes had safe water and sewer by 2003.

Even with the progress made, the data indicate new and continuing disparities in the health condition of Alaska Natives compared to the non-Native population. Many of the health disparities seem to be related to alcohol abuse and changes in dietary patterns:

- Native rates of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) doubled, from 2.5 cases per 1,000 births

in the late 1980's to 5 cases per 1000 births in the late 1990's.

- Alcohol and other substance abuse contribute to child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, sexual assault and incarceration.
- More than one-third of all prison inmates in Alaska are Natives, almost double the percentage of Natives in the total population.
- Native teen birth rates, smoking rates and use of marijuana are higher than those of non-Natives.
- About 40% of Alaska Natives smoke cigarettes, and many use smokeless tobacco.
- Thirty percent of Natives are considered obese, up from 20% in 1990s.
- Alaska Native diabetes rates doubled between 1985 and 1999.

The Findings

The data presented in the *Natives 2004* report indicate that health improvements have been made where access to health care has improved. These improvements deal with the physical side of health care; prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease.

When the Policy Center brought selected health data to discussions and regional meetings, it found that participants were not surprised by the data. They seemed to think that the reported rates of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), suicide and smoking were low. Everyday experience indicated higher numbers than what the data showed. As the Policy Center reviewed the data and feedback, the following were identified as health-related data about which participants wanted more information:

- **Relationships among population, health and education data.** Participants wanted to see a bigger picture that connected different age groups, risk factors that might be present for each of the age groups, and how that might affect education and economic conditions. For example, one participant at the education discussion series asked, "What are the future impacts of FASD births, drug births and HIV births on the schools, the workplace and society in general?" Another

asked, “What are the economic and social costs associated with FASD (ethical diagnosis and care of children and adults, the cost of that care, the burden placed on the education system, future impacts on the workforce, and the preventability of the problem)?” Many participants recommended continued dollars for prevention programs, diagnostic programs and funding for education of children with FASD.

- **Preventive health services** on matters of behavioral health, particularly to reduce levels of tobacco use, abuse of alcohol and/or other drugs, huffing, obesity, and AIDS.
- A clearer statistical picture of the extent of **HIV infection** among Alaska Natives. This information must be completely anonymous, and it must be gathered with strict ethical considerations.
- A reliable **data base on adult alcohol consumption patterns** - by communities, regions, genders, age groups, and other important variables is needed to understand the behavior. Further research into the “underground economy” of drug and alcohol supply is needed, which links to the relationship between substance abuse and criminal behavior/incarceration.
- The **extent of substance abuse**, including prescription, as well as illicit, drugs.
- Information on the racial composition of local and state police forces, prosecutors, public defenders, judges and magistrates and how this might affect incarceration rates.
- Comparative **life expectancies** for Alaska Natives at different ages, by gender, and by different regions and communities.
- Specific health needs and adequacy of current services for **Native veterans**, both men and women, and especially those who have seen combat.
- The health of **Native Elders**. As Alaska Natives live longer, we need to understand which specific health disorders will require more care (for example, Alzheimer’s disease, other dementia, diabetes, various types of cancer, circulatory disease, lung conditions, restricted physical mobility, and Elder abuse).
- Alaska Native mental **health issues**, which are often related to substance abuse problems. We need better understanding of why substances are abused.

- More complete data on **Native suicide risk factors**: gender, age groups, linkages to substance abuse or mental health problems, geographic regions. Professional care-givers need detail in order to design more effective prevention programs.

Alaska Native Economy

The Facts

The economics chapter of the *Natives 2004* report provides a broad overview of rural economies, looking at individual circumstances, the structure of rural economies, and rural and urban comparisons.

Employment data indicate that Alaska Natives are increasingly participating in the cash economy; that more Alaska Native women are employed than men, particularly in urban areas; and that younger Alaska Natives are almost as likely as non-Natives to be in the labor force. Alaska Natives continue to be under-represented in professional, managerial, technical and sales occupations. Natives are also under-represented on the personnel rosters of the federal and state governments:

- 17% (76,281) of Alaska’s work force (people age 16 and older) are Native.
- 33% of unemployed Alaskans are Natives.
- Of all Alaskans with work experience in 2000, Natives are most heavily represented in the labor, service, clerical, operative (mainly fish processing) and craft occupations.¹

Income data indicate that Alaska Natives get the largest proportion of their income from wages and salaries and that income levels are at a continuing disparity with non-Natives. Native families that live in rural areas are especially likely to be unemployed, to have low incomes, and to live below the poverty line, compared to non-Natives, regardless of where they live:

- Native total cash income – the sum of all income from all sources – was \$1.5 billion in 2000, about 12% of Alaska’s total cash income.
- 71% of all income for Alaska Natives comes from wages and salaries.

- Per capita Native income from wages and salaries is \$9,113, non-Native per capita wage and salary income is \$18,819.

Cost of Living data clearly indicate that rural Alaskans continue to pay significantly higher costs for electricity and food. This disparity with urban Alaska has not improved and has actually worsened during the last few decades:

- Southwest Alaska pays an average price of \$0.44/kwh before the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) adjustment – compared to the average of \$0.11/kwh in Anchorage.
- In 2003, residents of Lime Village would pay \$0.80/kwh without the PCE program adjustment.²
- It takes 2.8 wage earners in Bethel to buy an average house, compared to 1.5 wage earners in Anchorage.
- The average residential customer in remote rural Alaska uses less electricity than do customers in urban areas of the state, while paying more for that electricity.
- In all but five of the last 20 years, the average cost of food for a family of four in Bethel has been 50% higher than for a family of four in Anchorage.
- More than 10% of Native households outside Anchorage do not have phones.

Poverty data also indicate continuing disparities between Native and non-Native households:

- About 20% of Native people have incomes below the federal poverty line, compared to only 7% of non-Native Alaskans.
- In 2000, one-quarter of Native families headed by a woman or a man without a spouse were below the poverty line.

Business data indicate that Native firms are making strides:

- Alaska Natives own 11% of all business firms in Alaska, a higher percentage than for Native Americans in any other state. These firms, many of which are very small operations, generate about 5% of Alaska’s total business revenues.
- ANCSA regional and village corporations also have a large role in Alaska’s economy, generating almost \$3 billion in annual revenues and employing 13,000 people.

- Native profit and non-profit corporations are among Alaska’s largest employers and land-holders, ten of them being among the 100 largest private firms in the state.

The Findings

Economic data indicators in the *Natives 2004* report showed both that circumstances had improved and that disparities still existed. For “economic development” to work in rural Alaska, regional leaders and policy-makers will need to obtain the input from the people who live in rural Alaska, both Native and non-Native. If economic development is going to work, the people who will be affected must be involved in the process.

The Policy Center found that local and regional leaders want a practical, on-the-ground understanding of the structure of local and regional economies so that they can better plan for the future. The process of how cash enters, circulates and leaves a village is an economic fact that needs to be understood. As the Policy Center reviewed the data and feedback, the following were identified as economy-related data about which participants wanted more information:

- **Energy economies** in rural communities (for home heating, electricity and transportation) are a subset of the economy that needs to be understood. What does it cost the average family household, with and without Power Cost Equalization, for electricity? What happens to village families if PCE is reduced or eliminated? What types of home heating fuel are used, and how much does the fuel cost in villages in Alaska? People need to understand how the whole energy system in rural Alaska compares with the urban situation.
- **Food economies**, including various mixes of cash and subsistence in different villages, affect cost of living. The amount of cash needed to buy equipment and supplies used in subsistence harvesting is not fully understood.
- **Jobs** currently exist in various villages, but research is needed on how much these jobs pay, whether or not these are living wages, what levels of education and skills are required to hold the jobs,

and what job placement programs exist. What development opportunities (for new job creation) exist in villages and regions, and how will local and regional residents prepare for those jobs? How much of current local employment is dependent on public appropriations vs. private investment? How do we involve that large demographic bubble of Native children and teenagers in their own futures and economic choices?

- The economy of Alaska has been dependent on two **revenue sources**: State and federal funds. The decline of public funds will affect all Alaskans, but it will continue to hit Natives and other minorities hardest.
- For **effective planning**, linkages across data (e.g. income and education levels) must be understood by business and civic leaders and policy-makers. The world's economy is increasingly based on knowledge and communication of information. More traditional jobs, in which people manufacture things, have been decreasing. The best-paid employees in modern society work with their minds, and this requires good education and job skills from both traditional learning and from high school, technical training and college.

Alaska Native Education

The Facts

Alaska Native education has seen some improvements over the last thirty years: access to local high schools and educational attainment are the most notable.

- Since 1974, 155 new high schools have been built in Alaska, mainly in villages.
- 71% of rural Alaska Natives, age 20 and over, have high school diplomas, up from 48% in 1980.
- The number of Natives who have gone on to four-year college degrees more than tripled between 1980 and 2000.
- In 2000, 73% of all Alaska Natives over the age of 18 held high school diplomas; and 25% of the same age group held bachelor degrees. Also in 2000, almost 40% of Native high school graduates had completed at least one year of college.
- There is a growing cadre of second-generation Native college graduates - those whose parents had received their own degrees.

But disparities in educational achievement continue to worry Alaska Native parents and educators:

- In 2002, only 5% of all teachers certified *and* teaching in Alaska's statewide public education system were Alaska Native.
- Native high school dropout rates almost doubled in just three school years (1998-2001).
- Between fall, 2001, and spring, 2003, only 49% of Native third-grade students passed Alaska's benchmark reading test. During the same three school years, only 14.3% of Native 11th and 12th graders passed the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam's reading test.
- In 2000, 3,138 Alaska Natives were enrolled in either college or graduate school; 1071 (34%) were men, while 2067 (66%) were women.
- Less than 3% of the University of Alaska's statewide faculty was Native in the fall of 2003, and more than one-half of those were instructors, not professors.

The Findings

The data indicate improvements in Native access to education and in Native educational attainment. They also point out severe disparities that will continue if not addressed by Alaska Natives. The quality of education, its relevancy to the skills needed in the modern world, and the safety of the educational facilities are continuing disparities that must be corrected. Additional issues of educational disparity include low test scores, comparatively few Native educators, and increasing dropout rates that if unchecked will prevent many Native students from achieving their hopes and dreams.

Alaska Native leaders, school board members, parents, teachers, community leaders and policy makers need the kind of data provided in this analysis in order to have a clear understanding of Native education issues and to work together to improve the whole picture. The Policy Center Project Team and participants in the discussions and meetings identified the following data needs:

- Research shows that **preschool child development programs** (nursery school, pre-kindergarten, Montessori, Head Start, etc.) are beneficial to early learning. We need to know which communities still lack early childhood learning programs, including **literacy programs**. Many Native students entering elementary school are at a significant disadvantage in the numbers of words they know, compared to non-Native students. This vocabulary disparity must be addressed in order for Native students to succeed in school.
- Mt. Edgecumbe High School and the Rural Alaska Honors Institute (UAF) have **successful records of high school preparation**. Cook Inlet Tribal Council has had success in working with Native students to improve their studies and bring up their test scores. What are these programs doing that is helping Native students succeed? The underlying philosophies of these programs, teaching materials and methods may be transferable to other areas of the state.
- The performance record of schools using **immersion programs** that put Native cultures, languages and Elders back into the classroom must be better understood because such programs appear to be helping student achievement as well as galvanizing community support. Participants wanted to know what effect this has on learning.
- Support for **growing teachers and administrators** is needed. How many Native people are studying to become educators and what kind of support do they receive from the Native community? Teacher training must prepare teachers in what students need to know in order to function in today's knowledge-based society. Better information about the impacts of teacher turnover and whether or not teachers from a local community are more inclined to stay in the community and support the educational program is also needed.
- **Local school boards and their policies** are a critical part of the school and learning process. In a survey conducted by the McDowell Group,³ parents identified school boards and school districts as the most responsible entities for addressing issues of education. How can school boards better respond to what needs to be done to improve education for Alaska Natives?
- **High school drop out rates** must be better documented and understood. Students, as well as teachers, parents, school board members, local

Native leaders and community members, need to be involved in this effort. Students know why they are dropping out and how we can help them stay in school.

- **GED numbers** need to be understood. Additionally, what are the differences in post-secondary attainment or training opportunities between those who earn GED's and those who earn high school diplomas?
- **Computer skills** are critical to success in the modern workforce. Do Alaska's schools have the necessary access to computers, the internet and methods to teach proficiency in computer skills?
- The data identified improvements in educational attainment, but a continuing gap exists, particularly in **higher education**. Strategies for how to close the gap of access to post-secondary education are needed.
- The dynamics of the Native **"brain drain,"** whether it moves Native students from rural to urban Alaska or from Alaska to other states or countries, needs to be understood. Who are the students who move, why do they go, and how can we utilize their skills and training to address the issues raised in the *Natives 2004* report?

Conclusions

The *Status of Alaska Natives Report 2004*, prepared by ISER, is a compilation of data on population, health, economy and education. It is a lineal timeline that depicts trends over the last thirty years, and it also provides a snapshot of the current Alaska Native population, health, economic condition and education. The data indicate a seeming paradox: that many of the changes have been for the better, and yet, there are disparities and new challenges. There is no single answer to addressing the issues raised by the data in the *Natives 2004* report. But there are at least three areas on which we must work simultaneously: improving public education, continuing to address the health issues (especially behavioral health), and creating jobs and lowering the cost of living in rural Alaska.

Based on feedback from Policy Center discussions and regional meetings, participants

identified the need for additional data in different formats because it is critical to understanding the status of populations and communities, and to decision-making and allocating resources:

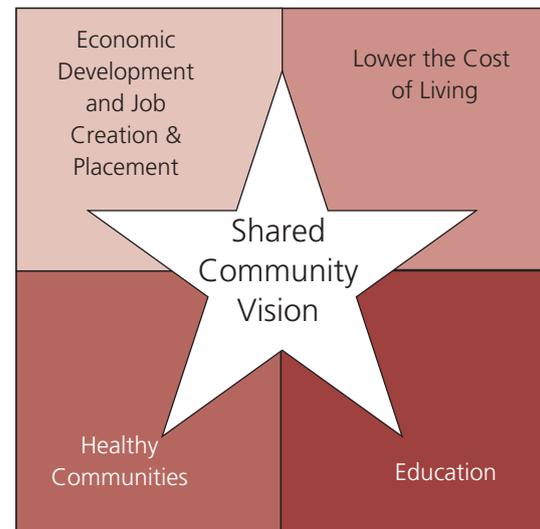
- Make data available by the 12 regions, as well as in urban-and-rural formats, in order to allow regional and local entities to develop scenarios based on current and potential economic development projects. This should include numbers of Alaska Natives in urban centers. If current rural-to-urban migration patterns continue, there will be continued pressures on urban service providers for employment, education, housing and health services.
- Provide data on the numbers and types of jobs that currently exist in the public and private sectors, by ANCSA region, including local industries/employers (fisheries, tourism, education, health, etc.), and Native profit and non-profit entities. People need to know what jobs they should be preparing for and how to link our educational systems to this process.
- Provide data on telecommunication, energy and transportation infrastructures, by region, for planning purposes. *(Note: some of this information is available from state agencies like the Department of Transportation.)*
- Provide data on food and energy costs by region, and show the relationship of costs to household income in order to see where income goes and if there is any left for discretionary items.
- Provide forecasts of population by region, in order to plan for potential economic development activities and educational needs.
- Provide accurate data on how many people are actually unemployed. The number of people (of 16 years and older) not in the workforce may be more useful than are current state and federal unemployment statistics.

The Policy Center also heard about the many examples of how people and organizations are addressing issues raised by the data. The work that the Cook Inlet Tribal Council is undertaking with Alaska Native high school students in the Anchorage School District, the immersion programs in Southeast schools and in Bethel, the Spirit Camps' teaching of culture and language, the Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program at the University of Alaska,

the Community Development Quota program, the economic force of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act corporations, and the diabetes awareness programs in Norton Sound are all examples of how people and organizations can and do respond.

The Policy Center also heard concern for how Alaska Natives can maintain their own cultures in a modern world of different values. For example, in the discussion of economic development, there is a cultural need to protect subsistence; it is tied to Native values and lifestyles and yet economic development is needed to provide jobs. Some communities and regions are promoting economic development because it is needed. Some communities want to maintain a predominantly subsistence lifestyle. Some individuals in each type of community want to be able to do both. How do Alaska Natives maintain and preserve cultures given these pressures. Another example - with an increasingly urban Native population, how will the various cultures of Alaska's Natives be carried on?

Each of the data presentations by the Policy Center closed with the graphic illustration shown below.



Source: Adapted from "Alaska's Jobs for Alaska's People" by Commonwealth North, June 2003

It is a small jigsaw puzzle, and its centerpiece - "shared community vision" - links together four complex challenges that face Alaska Natives:

- the need for **economic development and job creation and placement**, which will provide family cash income, in combination with subsistence harvesting, in order to strengthen the "mixed" economic base of Native communities;
- the need to **lower the cash cost-of-living** for basic necessities in rural villages (e.g., electricity, fuel oil and food), in order that people can afford to live where they want to live;
- the need for **healthy communities**, whether in villages or urban areas, with emphasis on behavioral health, individual wellness and disease prevention; and
- the need to **make public schools effective** community institutions that teach Native, as well as non-Native, students the basic academic skills from a culturally relevant context that is needed in a knowledge-based society.

Although there are many other issues facing Alaska Natives, these four are critical. If they can be made better, the whole level of Native life will improve.

But none of these issues can be addressed unless Native individuals and communities take the lead. What is needed is a shared community vision that gives our people a perspective on where we have come from, where we are now, and where we are going - ***signs along the trail***. Without such vision, little can change; but with it, wonderful things are possible.

Endnotes

¹ Institute of Social and Economic Research. (2004, May). *The status of Alaska Natives report 2004*. (Vols. I-III). Anchorage, AK. Pages 4-10 to 5-16.

² Alaska Energy Authority. (2004, January). *Statistical report of the power cost equalization program fiscal year 2003*. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Energy Authority.

³ Note: See "A Survey of Native Perspectives on Alaska Issues", prepared for the Alaska Humanities Forum and the First Alaskans Institute, June 2003.



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“Our Choices, Our Future” Project Team

Seven individuals came together as the Project Team to advise, guide and assist with disseminating data and developing the “Our Choices – Our Future” analysis:

- Dr. George Charles, UAF College of Rural Alaska
- Linda Joule, Kotzebue IRA
- Susan Labelle, Chugachmiut, Inc.
- Will Mayo, Vine Ministries
- Dr. Gordon Pullar, UAF College of Rural Alaska
- Ricardo Worl, Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority
- Miranda Wright, UAF College of Rural Alaska

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- Kim Williams, Bristol Bay Campus, College of Rural Alaska
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