

# First Alaskans Institute



Progress for the Next 10,000 Years



## 2007 Summer Intern Program a Success

Many of emotions filled the air at the Aug. 9, 2007, closing reception for the First Alaskans Institute Summer Intern Program held at the Alaska Railroad Depot located at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. Students, their families, mentors and representatives from several of the participating companies shared laughter, tears and stories at the afternoon event that recognized the interns' accomplishments and the employers who provided the intern opportunities. Twenty-nine interns participated this year, bringing the total number of Alaska Native college students who have participated in the program since its inception to nearly 100.

One of the unique aspects of the First Alaskans Summer Intern Program is the Friday discussion sessions. Each Friday Alaska Native Elders, leaders or other professionals share their history, culture, and the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for Alaska Natives and Alaska. The discussions that follow, often lively, challenge the students to embrace their heritage, the past and the future as they finish their education and move into the workforce.

In addition to working throughout the summer and participating in the Friday leadership sessions and other group activities, each student prepared a statement for the closing reception that described briefly their experience, in addition to recognizing their employers, mentors and the organizations and people that assisted them along the way. Students were well prepared and poised in the delivery of their remarks.



(Top) Amber Jenkins, Iris Currey, Hans Hansen, (bottom) Jesse Morris and Catherine Fields were some of the 2007 summer interns who volunteered at WEIO.

This year's students were placed in a variety of

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## First Alaskans Institute Awards \$500,000 to 18 Community Projects

First Alaskans Institute has awarded \$500,000 to 18 projects around the state that demonstrate collaborative efforts to plan and implement innovative, lasting programs that contribute to healthy and thriving communities – specifically addressing early childhood education activities to prepare children for success in school, increase high school graduation rates, connect Elders and youth in cultural learning, and promote youth leadership.

The Community Engagement Awards, a pilot funding initiative of First Alaskans Institute, is the result of the Alaska Native community's feedback and recommendations that came from participation in many of First Alaskan Institute's initiatives, including the Education Summits, Leadership Development's Elders & Youth Conference and Summer Internship Program and the Alaska Native Policy Center's research projects and discussion series.

"The Community Engagement Initiative is another way for First Alaskans Institute to serve as a catalyst for positive change within our Alaska communities by enhancing opportunities for Alaska Native youth through education, leadership and cultural learning activities," said Janie Leask, First Alaskans Institute president and CEO.

Two committees, consisting of representatives from the ANCSA Education Consortium, Rose Urban Rural Exchange, Denali Commission, RurAL CAP, and Cook Inlet Tribal Council, reviewed the proposals and provided funding recommendations to the First Alaskans Institute Board of Trustees for final approval.

"We received an enthusiastic response – 48 proposals requesting more than \$1.5 million – confirming the need for projects and programs that deal with education, cultural learning and youth leadership development at the local level," said Sarah Scanlan, First Alaskans Institute deputy director.

- The \$500,000 awarded will support the following 18 projects:**
- \$30,000 to Kuskokwim Native Association** to organize a Kuskokwim Elders-Youth Summer
  - \$31,000 to Maniilaq Association** for "Project Life," a youth suicide prevention program
  - \$24,000 to the Tribal Government of St. Paul Island** for a series of forums to increase knowledge and awareness of cultural traditions, provide practical information to parents and adults regarding parenting and education, and increase community collaborations that support youth success and leadership
  - \$27,000 to the Native Village of Kalskag** to fund instructional lessons lead by local Alaska Native Elders
  - \$13,000 to Pelican School District** to fund the Pelican Culture Camp, to unplug youth from the electronic age and plug them into the traditional values

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## First Alaskans Institute Expands Board to 11 Members

The Board of Trustees of First Alaskans Institute has expanded from five to 11 directors. The governing body of the Institute revised its bylaws to expand its board beyond just current and former presidents and chairs of the Alaska Federation of Natives so that other qualified Alaska Natives can serve as well. Al Adams, Valerie Davidson, Sven Haakanson Jr., Sylvia Lange, Georgianna Lincoln, and Marie Nash were officially seated on Sept. 6. Nash was also appointed secretary/treasurer.

“Each of these new directors brings a great deal of enthusiasm and unique experience to First Alaskans Institute. They will help us to further our mission and help us position the organization as a real contributor in the Alaska Native communities,” said Willie Hensley, chairman of the First Alaskans Institute Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees defines and oversees the mission of the Institute and provides strategic direction; approves and monitors the annual budget and assists in fundraising; and helps to positively position the organization.

### Meet Our New Trustees



#### **Al Adams, Inupiaq**

Al Adams was born in Kotzebue, Alaska. He graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe and attended RCA Technical Institute and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Over the years he has served in both the Alaska State House of Representatives and the Alaska State Senate. He is president of Adams Management Services. He is also past president of Kikiktagrak Inupiat Corporation; past executive vice president of NANA Regional Corporation; past member of the Alaska Native Claims Appeals Board; and past director of Rural Development, Department of Community and Regional Affairs. He enjoys spending time with his family, fishing, hunting, basketball, reading and cooking.



#### **Valerie Davidson, Yup'ik Eskimo**

Valerie Davidson was born in a small village outside of Bethel, Alaska. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Alaska Southeast and a Juris Doctor with Certificate in Indian Law from the University of New Mexico School of Law. She is the senior director of legal and intergovernmental affairs for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. She currently serves as a non-voting member of the Medicaid Commission; chair of the Tribal Technical Advisory Group to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; member of the Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services/Tribal Medical Task Force; and member of the Foraker Group Governance Board. In 1984, she was president of the Alaska Federation of Natives Youth Council.

#### **Sven Haakanson, Jr., Alutiiq/Sugpiat**



Sven Haakanson, Jr., from Kodiak, Alaska, is the executive director of the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository in Kodiak. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, his master's degree from Harvard University, and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Harvard. Prior to joining the Alutiiq Museum in 2000, he served as manager of Dig Afognak. He has worked on a number of exhibits and research projects as well as lectured locally, nationally, and internationally. He also enjoys traveling and working with and sharing Alutiiq crafts with youth in villages on Kodiak Island.



Janie Leask, President & CEO

## Message from the President

Recently, we've made a number of major changes at First Alaskans Institute, which I'd like to share with you.

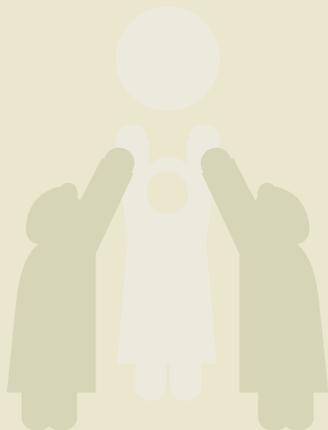
We've added six new members to our governing Board of Trustees and I'd like to welcome them to the Board. These six individuals – Sylvia Lange, Valerie Davidson, Georgianna Lincoln, Sven Haakanson Jr., Al Adams and Marie Nash have years of experience in the Native community and bring their own unique perspective. I know their addition will only strengthen the Board and the Institute. See this issue to learn more about our new board members.

We've changed our mission statement to more accurately reflect the work we do as an organization. This new mission – *First Alaskans advances Alaska Natives through community engagement, research and information, collaboration, and leadership development* – is what keeps us focused in the work we do on a daily basis and through our initiatives and programs.

We recently made a small change to our First Alaskans Institute logo by incorporating the icon representing Alaska Natives – together – reaching for the future.

In closing, I want to personally thank Greta Goto, director of the Policy Center, who is leaving the organization Sept. 28th to spend more time with her family. Greta's led the Alaska Native Policy Center for almost five years and has brought creative ideas, research, innovative programs, increased collaboration, and passion to our organization. We'll miss her immensely and wish her all the best!

Janie Leask, President & CEO





2006 AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference

## Don't Miss Out! Register Today for the 2007 Elders & Youth Conference

The theme for the 2007 AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference slated for Oct. 22-23 at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks is ***Living Cultures in the North: Respecting Alaska Native People.***

"Excitement is building as the date draws near," said Memry Dahl, director Leadership Development at First Alaskans Institute. "Elders and youth registrations are just starting to come in and we're encouraging everyone to register to take advantage of the Early Bird registration. Information can quickly be accessed online from the Home Page at [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org)."

Based on the feedback from previous year's conferences and through guidance from the local Fairbanks planning team, this year will feature more hands-on activities for youth, as well as sessions to address Elders' concerns and issues. In addition to workshops, educational sessions and general sessions, there will be numerous opportunities to connect or reconnect with participants from around the state.

More than 30 exhibitors representing everything from colleges and universities to health care and prevention organizations are slated to take part in the conference. Exhibitor hours will be generous to allow conference attendees time to explore.

The city of Fairbanks enthusiastically embraces the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention and the AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference. A citywide lodging reservations system is available to assist delegates in securing rooms. Reservations can easily be made online at [www.explorefairbanks.com/afn](http://www.explorefairbanks.com/afn) or toll-free at 1-888-768-3282 Monday – Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Several special events are planned for the week, including a special reception for Elders, hosted by the University of Alaska Museum of the North.

To secure more information or to download registration forms on the AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference, visit [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org) or contact First Alaskans at 1-907-677-1700 or [info@firstalaskans.org](mailto:info@firstalaskans.org).

## Alaska Native Policy Center to Launch New Census Information Center Data Online

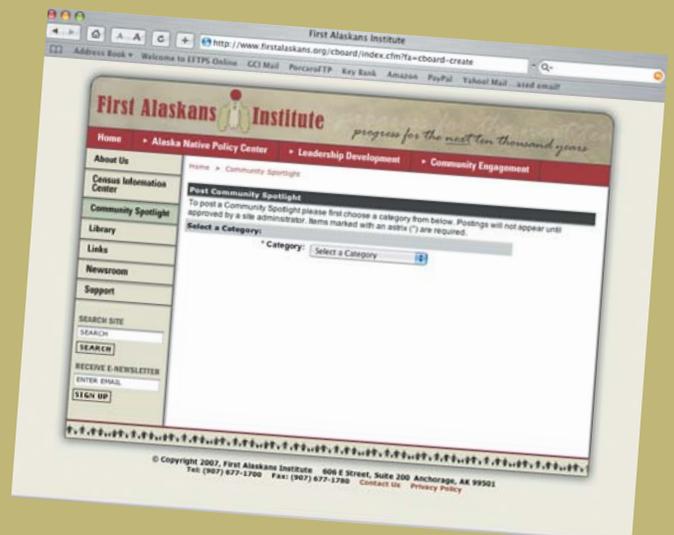
More than 600 demographic data tables from the 2000 U.S. Census will be available in the Census Information Center section of the First Alaskans Institute web site, [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org) in September 2007.

The searchable Excel tables are accessible through a comprehensive table of contents, allowing the user to download only tables of interest. Dr. Michael Levin, a Census Bureau statistician, organized the 2000 Census data for each Census category to include general, ANCSA regional area, total population, Alaska Native alone, and Alaska Native alone or in combination.

"The Alaska Native Policy Center at First Alaskans Institute is home to Alaska's only Census Information Center. Our goal is to make it easy to access Census information pertaining to Alaska Natives and American Indians," said Greta Goto, director of the Alaska Native Policy Center.

Training sessions on how to utilize Census Bureau data are conducted periodically. To learn more, contact Adrienne Fleek, Alaska Native Policy Center research projects manager at (907) 677-1707 or [adriennefleek@firstalaskans.org](mailto:adriennefleek@firstalaskans.org).

## Access and Post Opportunities in Online Community Spotlight



Do you have education, scholarship, job, or grant opportunities, to share with the Alaska Native community? Are you looking for a relevant event, research, policy, leadership or internship opportunity? If so, bookmark the Community Spotlight page at [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org).

First Alaskans Institute is pleased to provide an easy venue to announce and view community events, grants, internships, jobs, education and leadership, research and policy, scholarship and fellowship opportunities online.

Opportunities are viewable on the Home Page, with a complete list available by clicking on Community Spotlight in the left navigational column. The Community Spotlight page is where organizations can post their information.



## Where Are They Now: Maniksaq Baumgartner

Maniksaq Baumgartner, an Inupiaq originally from Barrow, was one of 32 Alaska Native college students who participated in First Alaskans Institute's 2005 Summer Internship Program. He was one of only two interns interested in being placed in a position with a focus in public relations or communications.

He was placed in the public relations department of Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI), one of the 12 Alaska Native regional corporations, and was hired by CIRI to continue his internship through May 2006, which turned into a full-time position as the corporation's public relations coordinator. Today, he serves as the strategic media producer and is responsible for the monthly shareholder newsletter and the CIRI web site.

"I am excited to be working at CIRI. I wanted to work for an Alaska Native corporation – a unique experiment for Native American peoples. The corporations are reversing the historic trend of companies from outside of Alaska exporting capital and resources out of state. I think these corporations are only beginning to realize their potential in this regard," said Baumgartner.

How did Baumgartner learn about the Institute's Summer Internship Program? "A couple of people at Arctic Slope Regional Corporation called me to let me know about it. I'm an ASRC shareholder and was also receiving Arctic Education Foundation funding at the time, so they must have known I was going into my senior year of college and was eligible for the intern program. I'm grateful to them for taking the time to let me know about it," said Baumgartner, who graduated from the University of Alaska Anchorage in May 2006 with a bachelor's degree in journalism and public communications. Today, he also volunteers for various Alaska Native and community events, including the KNBA 90.3 FM Annual Art Auction, Bean's Café, and the AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference. Additionally, he is active in the Baha'i Faith and serving in a volunteer capacity for the Alaska

Baha'i community.

When asked how the Summer Internship Program helped him, Baumgartner responded by saying he had always wanted to focus his career and efforts on contributing to the Alaska Native communities in some way.

"I had the desire, but not the perspective; I didn't know enough about the story of our people in recent times. The FAI intern program gave me the opportunity to listen to and talk with people who were some of the chief protagonists of that story, who had fought for Alaska Native land rights, who had struggled to preserve Alaska Native cultures and languages, who had helped set up and build Alaska Native corporations, who had grappled with tribal sovereignty issues, and who strove to improve the social, economic and educational conditions in our communities. Just as a young hunter would be foolish to ignore the advice of and refuse to learn from the example of older, more experienced hunters, so I found the experience of these leaders invaluable. I think leadership requires a strong vision and a sense of purpose. What I learned in the intern program helped give me both," Baumgartner shared.

So what's in his future? To earn a master's degree in the next five years and continue gaining experience at Alaska Native corporations and organizations. On the personal side, he hopes to gain enough wisdom and humility along the way to use that knowledge and expertise for the betterment of our peoples and communities.

"I also plan on re-learning my Inupiaq language – I have forgotten most of it from when I was a kid – so I can eventually pass it on to my own children. Along this line, my wife and I will be having our first child, a boy, in late November," Baumgartner beams.



Maniksaq Baumgartner

## Funder's Spotlight: Local Resources Companies Support First Alaskans Institute

Leadership development is paramount to ensuring a vital future for Alaska and Alaskans. First Alaskans Institute recognizes three companies that continue to invest in the development of Alaska Native leaders through support of First Alaskans and its programs, including the AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference.

### Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

In addition to financial support for First Alaskans and its initiatives, Alyeska Pipeline Service Company is always quick to provide a team of dedicated volunteers during the First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference and AFN Convention, and this year is no exception.

"Our recent multi-year contribution to the AFN convention demonstrates the enriching partnership we have with the Alaska Native community and sustains that commitment into the future," said Kristi Acuff, Senior Vice President, Employee and External Relations for Alyeska Pipeline Services Company. "The AFN Convention, the AFN/First Alaskans Institute Elders & Youth Conference, and the Economic Marketplace program touch the lives of many Alaskans; we are proud to be a part of these efforts."

### BP Exploration (Alaska)

Providing jobs for Alaskans and opportunities to local businesses is important to BP, but its commitment to Alaska does not end there. Last year, the company invested \$10.2 million to support more than 200 Alaska nonprofit and educational organizations and programs, ranging from science and math education programs and college

scholarships to youth programs and efforts aimed at developing civic leadership. First Alaskans Institute, including the Summer Internship Program and Elders & Youth Conference, has been a recipient of BP's support.

"We want young Alaskans to be ready, capable and qualified leaders, both in and outside of our industry. Supporting education is critical to that effort," said Carla Beam, BP's director of community affairs. "We support AFN and, more specifically, the AFN/First Alaskan Institute Elders & Youth Conference, because we know that this event provides an important forum for dialogue and sharing between generations."

### ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.

It is important to ConocoPhillips that its business and social investments in Alaska make the state a better place to live and work. Education and youth represent the foundation of the company's philanthropic support, and as such, ConocoPhillips continues to invest in First Alaskans Institute programs, including the Elders & Youth Conference.

"ConocoPhillips and First Alaskans Institute share the values of leadership development and community engagement," said Jim Bowles, president of ConocoPhillips Alaska. "That's why we've been a long-time partner of the First Alaskans Institute through investing in their endowment fund and supporting programs such as the Elders & Youth Conference. Our investment in First Alaskans and other Alaska Native programs helps ensure that the social, economic and education challenges of the future will be met."

## First Alaskans Institute Awards \$500,000 to 18 Community Projects continued from page 1

**\$30,000 to Aniak Traditional Council** to connect Alaska Native Elders and youth in cultural learning and promoting youth leadership development opportunities

**\$30,000 to the Native Village of Kwigillingok** to build, and instruct the safe use, of 10 traditional Yup'ik kayaks to promote youth and Elder connections

**\$30,000 to Hydaburg Cooperative Association** to implement a Haida language and culture program and curriculum developed by Alaska Native Elders

**\$30,000 to the Native Village of Marshall** to create teaching components with the Takchak dancers to increase community participation in the revitalization of the Yup'ik dancing traditions

**\$35,000 to the Alaska Native Heritage Center** for Anchorage School District high school students to receive academic credit for cultural activities, leadership skills, and employment training by connecting these urban youth with Alaska Native Elders

**\$23,000 to Sleetmute Traditional Council** to develop a pilot project to counteract school dropout, substance abuse, and feelings of negativity and hopelessness

**\$35,000 to the Native Village of Tanacross** to repair the local community building to hold weekly cultural activities and events focusing on the traditional culture

**\$28,000 to Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska** to enhance the Bridges for Native Middle-School Youth with an after-school program

**\$19,000 to Cape Fox Heritage Foundation** for the creation of the "weLEAD" project to provide Elder and youth connections for cultural learning and develop leadership skills

**\$23,000 to Denakanaaga** to train youth in all aspects of stage production, set creation, and performance in plays by producing a play based on Sydney Huntington's "Shadows of the Koyukuk"

**\$30,000 to the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association** to develop a screening tool and standardized teaching modules in the Unangam Tunuu (the Aleut language) for pre-kindergarten use

**\$22,000 to the Native Village of Kotzebue** to produce three CDs and three booklets to help the community learn to use everyday Inupiaq phrases and traditional and contemporary songs

**\$40,000 to RurAL CAP** to host an Early Childhood Summit highlighting best practices in early childhood education for parents of children ages zero to five, educators, and partners from 26 rural communities

For a complete description of each of the awarded projects, visit the First Alaskans Institute web site at [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org).

## First Alaskans Institute Expands Board to 11 Members continued from page 2



### Sylvia Lange, Tlingit and Aleut

Sylvia Lange, from Cordova, was born and raised in Katalla, Alaska. She grew up spending summers aboard her parents' salmon fishing vessels in the gill net and seine fisheries. She attended a variety of colleges, including Peninsula College in Port Angeles, Wash.; University of New Mexico; Western Washington State, and the University of Washington. She and her husband currently own and operate the Reluctant Fisherman Hotel in Cordova. She also serves as a director and secretary of The Eyak Corporation, and is a past board member of Chugach Alaska Corporation and the Alaska Federation of Natives. Her passions are family, community, travel and art.



### Georgianna Lincoln, Athabascan

Georgianna Lincoln, resides in Anchorage, Alaska and has been a Doyon, Ltd. board member since 1976. She was elected as chairwoman in March 2005 and also serves as chairwoman of Doyon Communications, Inc., Doyon Development Corp., Doyon Drilling, Inc, Doyon Properties, Inc., Doyon Services Corp. and Doyon Tourism, Inc. She retired in 2005 from the Alaska State Senate, having served 14 years in the legislature. She has also served on numerous state boards and commissions. Lincoln is a lifelong commercial and subsistence fisherwoman.



### Marie Nash, Aleut

Marie Nash is originally from the Bristol Bay region and graduated from the University of Alaska with a bachelor's degree in sociology. She retired in 2006 as state director for United States Senator Ted Stevens after serving 29 years. Prior to that, she served as deputy commissioner for the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs as well as a staff assistant for Boards and Commissions under Gov. Jay Hammond. Nash is a current director of Ugashik Tribal Village Council and served for 11 years as a director of Bristol Bay Native Corp., six years as president and chair of Bristol Bay Native Corp. Education Foundation, and served on the University of Alaska Anchorage Native Studies Program advisory committee. She has one son and enjoys reading, sewing, gardening, and her dogs.

## 2007 Summer Intern Program a Success continued from page 1

organizations across the state, including: The Municipality of Anchorage Mayor's Office, First Alaskans Institute Alaska Native Policy Center, USDA Forest Service, Alaska Region, Rasmuson Foundation, UAA Institute of Social Economic Research, New Stuyahok Traditional Council, Kootznoowoo, Inc., Calista Corporation, UAA – Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program, Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, Alaska Spine Institute, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Metlakatla Indian Community, Bering Straits Native Corporation, Providence Alaska Medical Center – Physical Therapy, Smithsonian Institute – Arctic Studies Center, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Financial, Inc. Fairbanks Native Association, Tanana Chiefs Council – Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, Fairbanks North Star Borough – Pioneer Park, USDA Chugach Forest Service – Begich Boggs Visitor Center, CIRI, NANA/Colt Engineering, Eastern Aleutian Tribes, Kiana Health Clinic – Dental, State of Alaska – Department of Labor and Unalakleet Valley Electric Cooperative.

First Alaskans thanks the businesses and non-profits for providing opportunities for the interns, as well as the Denali Commission for their financial support. For more information on the Summer Internship Program, visit [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org) or call (907) 677-1700.



2007 First Alaskans Institute Summer Interns

## Meet Our Team

**Janie Leask** (*Haida-Tsimshian*)  
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**Amber Jenkins** (*Alutiiq*)  
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**Allison Knox** (*Athabaskan*)  
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## Vision

*Progress for the next ten thousand years*  
True to Heritage and Values, Alaska Natives are informed and engaged in leading the decisions that shape the future.

## Mission

Advance Alaska Natives through community engagement, information and research, collaboration and leadership development.

## Values

Integrity  
Collaboration  
Knowledge  
Responsibility  
Excellence

## Meet Our Board of Trustees

**Willie "Iggiagruk" Hensley - Chairman** (*Inupiaq*)  
Alyeska Pipeline Service Company

**Sam Kito, Jr., Vice Chair** (*Tlingit*)  
Kito, Inc.

**Al Adams** (*Inupiaq*)  
Adams Management Services  
Former State Senator

**Valerie Davidson** (*Yup'ik Eskimo*)  
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

**Sven Haakanson, Jr.** (*Alutiiq/Sugpiat*)  
Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak

**Albert Kookesh** (*Tlingit*)  
Alaska State Senator  
Co-Chair, Alaska Federation of Natives  
Chairman, Sealaska Corporation

**Sylvia Lange** (*Tlingit and Aleut*)  
Owner, Cordova's Reluctant Fisherman Hotel  
Director, Eyak Corporation

**Oliver Leavitt** (*Inupiaq*)  
Arctic Slope Regional Corporation

**Georgianna Lincoln** (*Athabaskan*)  
Chairwoman, Doyon Ltd. Board of Directors  
Former State Senator

**Byron I. Mallott** (*Tlingit*)  
Senior Fellow, Alaska Native Policy Center  
Director, Sealaska Corporation

**Marie Nash** (*Aleut*)  
Director, Ugashik Tribal Village Council  
Retired Staff to Senator Ted Stevens

In Memoriam:  
**Morris Thompson** (*Athabaskan*)  
Our Friend and Colleague

V i s i t u s a t w w w . f i r s t a l a s k a n s . o r g

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We invite you to tell us what you think of the work we are doing and the content of this newsletter. We value your feedback and advice. If you have comments, please contact [allisonknox@firstalaskans.org](mailto:allisonknox@firstalaskans.org).

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the newsletter, please contact [info@firstalaskans.org](mailto:info@firstalaskans.org).