



OCTOBER 2006

A REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

## Attend the Elders & Youth Conference

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual AFN/First Alaskans Elders & Youth Conference will be held at the William A. Egan Civic & Convention Center in Anchorage on Monday and Tuesday, October 23 and 24. Through Native speakers, cultural performances and workshops, the conference strengthens the knowledge and self-confidence of Elders and youth to speak out and create change within themselves and their communities.

This year's theme is **RESPECT FOR NATIVE LIFE: RESTORING BALANCE & A SENSE OF BELONGING**, which speaks to the importance of respecting our history, our people and ourselves, as we seek to create healthy and thriving communities across the state.

It is our Elders who teach us how to

give back to our communities, showing us that we have a rich heritage and that it's important for us to know our languages and values. That is what this conference is all about: inspiring a sense of pride in knowing who we are and from where we come.

In addition, there will be the opportunity to learn and discuss issues facing Alaska Natives: education and what makes students successful, Native theater, the survival of our languages, and much more. The conference is designed to send participants home with action plans that motivate them to take active roles in addressing major issues such as health, education, culture and language.

First Alaskans is proud to host this

remarkable event, and we look forward to your participation this month.

Turn to Page 3 for conference highlights. For more information on the Elders & Youth Conference, visit [www.firstalaskans.org/630.cfm](http://www.firstalaskans.org/630.cfm).



Egan Civic & Convention Center  
Anchorage, Alaska  
October 23 & 24, 2006

## Voices invited to participate in Oct. 25 education discussion

First Alaskans is hosting *Native Voices on the Potential of Education in Alaska*, an interactive discussion to identify current education priorities, on Wednesday, Oct. 25 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Egan Civic and Convention Center. Alaska Native youth and Elders, AFN convention delegates, school board members, parents, education policy leaders, business leaders, and community, regional and statewide leaders are encouraged to attend this half-day session.

The goal of the session is to help define the potential of education (what can it do for your child, your community, our state?) and what it will take to reach that potential (what needs to happen and what can we each do to reach that potential?)

The discussion will be modeled loosely after the World Café model—which is designed to engage people by creating conversations between participants to generate input, share knowledge, stimulate innovative thinking, identify current priorities, and explore actions around education issues and questions.

The results of the discussion will be shared with the Native community and in a series of planned gatherings designed to inform and solicit recommended policy actions to present to policy makers, legislators and the new Administration.

To RSVP, contact Tammy Keith, First Alaskans Institute, at [tammykeith@firstalaskans.org](mailto:tammykeith@firstalaskans.org) or (907) 677-1700.

## Message from the President

October is an exciting month and this month's newsletter focuses on two major activities First Alaskans is sponsoring – the October 23-24 Elders & Youth Conference and the October 25<sup>th</sup> Education Discussion.

2006 is the third year that AFN has asked us to plan and implement the Elders & Youth Conference. It fits well with our emphasis on developing the next generation of Native leaders, and I'd like to thank our staff and the many volunteers for their hard work leading up to this event.

We are also sponsoring *Native Voices on the Potential of Education in Alaska*. During this unique discussion, we look forward to hearing what you think is the potential of education – what it means for the

future of your children, your community and our state and how we can work together to reach that potential. This is an opportunity for you to give us your thoughts so that we might pass them on to the new Administration and legislature.

The AFN Convention is a time when we see old friends, meet new ones and enjoy each other's company. First Alaskans and AFN have worked closely with a variety of Anchorage organizations to present what we all hope is an enjoyable experience!

I hope you're able to attend these two events and that you enjoy your time during the convention!



Janie Leask  
President



## Policy Center designated as Census Information Center

The Alaska Native Policy Center at First Alaskans Institute was recently designated by the Census Bureau as a Census Information Center (CIC). CICs are official sources of demographic, economic and social statistics produced by the Census Bureau. The Census Bureau established the Census Information Center program in 1988 for the purpose of providing efficient access to Census Bureau data products through a network of organizations. Fifty-nine organizations across the United States participate in the CIC program.

The ANPC/FAI Census Information Center will create additional access to Census products. The first phase of this new program will be to develop web site access for the Census information as well as a library space in the ANPC/First Alaskans offices.

An example of the kind of reports that CICs provide access to is *The U.S. Census Bureau 2005 ACS Housing Estimates – changes in housing values*. To access a copy of this report, visit [www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/american\\_community\\_survey\\_acs/007577.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/american_community_survey_acs/007577.html).

## Intern highlight: Raina Thiele • DENA'INA ATHABASCAN & YUP'IK • Intern, Elders & Youth Conference



Raina Thiele  
Intern, Elders & Youth  
Conference

First Alaskans intern Raina Thiele is assisting with coordinating this year's Elders & Youth Conference. She graduated from Yale University in spring of 2005, earning a bachelor's degree in political science and an emphasis on ethnic studies. She will continue her education in fall of 2007, seeking a law degree and a master's degree in public policy.

Raina, Dena'ina Athabascan & Yup'ik, comes from Pedro Bay on Lake Iliamna and Alexander Creek near Mt. Susitna. Her knowledge and commitment to the preservation and well-being of her cultural heritage motivate her to pursue her education and career goals.

"The conference is a powerful tool for empowering participants to create positive change in their communities and for the entire Native community. I look forward to helping make this year's Elders & Youth Conference a great success," Thiele said.

For more information on the Elders & Youth Conference, or the Summer Internship Program, visit our web site at [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org).

## 2006 Elders & Youth Conference keynote speakers



Mayor Edward Itta, of the North Slope Borough, and Debra Dommek, an Inupiaq student originally from Kotzebue, will *stimulate*, *empower*, and *mobilize* the audience during their keynote address at the upcoming Elders & Youth Conference. As positive role models in the Alaska Native community, both presenters will share perspectives on healthy communities and lifestyles to contribute to the Conference theme **RESPECT FOR NATIVE LIFE: RESTORING BALANCE & A SENSE OF BELONGING**. Together, the keynoters are an inspiration to all participants in the conference.

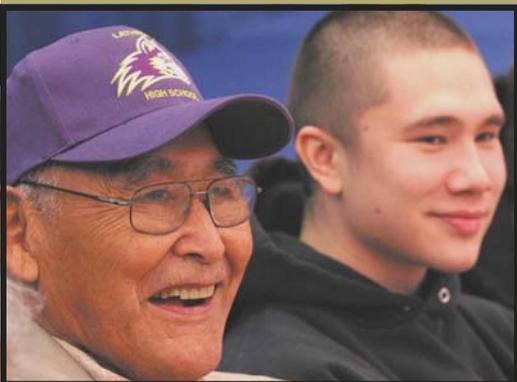
## Native youth discuss student success

A group of Native middle school and high school students from Anchorage will perform a skit of a village council meeting at this year's Elders & Youth Conference plenary session on Monday, Oct. 23, to create awareness and support of Native student achievement, and to increase participation from Anchorage Elders and students. A key to healthy and thriving communities is education, and this enactment will discuss Native student success – what it is and how to achieve it. The discussion will close with a plan of action to improve student success in the community.

Come show support for Native youth!



## Engaging workshops for positive change



This year's Elders & Youth Conference workshops focus on **RESPECT FOR NATIVE LIFE: RESTORING BALANCE & A SENSE OF BELONGING**. Workshop sessions take place Monday and Tuesday, October 23 and 24 and are designed to engage Elder and youth participants to foster dialogue and develop action plans to apply what they have learned to their own communities. The intended outcome of the workshops is to encourage participants to make positive changes and choices in their regions and communities. The call for presentations, issued in August 2006, created an exciting line-up of workshops on the conference agenda. Selection of proposals was conducted by the conference planning committee. Thank you for all proposal submissions!

**AFN/First Alaskans**  
Elders & Youth Conference  
October 23 & 24, 2006  
Egan Civic & Convention Center  
Registration & conference information available at [www.firstalaskans.org](http://www.firstalaskans.org)

**Native Voices on the Potential of Education in Alaska**  
October 25, 2006  
Egan Civic & Convention Center  
Doors open at 1 p.m.  
For more information or to RSVP, e-mail [tammykeith@firstalaskans.org](mailto:tammykeith@firstalaskans.org) or call (907) 677-1700.

SAVE THE DATE!



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Alaska Native Policy Center

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

### *In the photo.*

*First row, left to right:* Paneen Petersen, Helena Batman (Intern) and Sarah Scanlan

*Second row, left to right:* Nancy Wesson, Trina Landlord and Memry Dahl

*Third row, left to right:* Sarah Sherry and Krista Anderson

*Fourth row, left to right:* Janie Leask, George Irvin, Greta Goto and Chris Kolerok

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).

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