

First Alaskans Institute

News Release

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For Immediate Release

ANNOUNCING OUR 2016 PUBLIC POLICY FELLOWS TO WORK IN STATE CAPITOL

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(Anchorage, Alaska) – First Alaskans Institute (FAI) is pleased to announce our ninth cohort of Public Policy Fellows to directly engage with on-the-ground legislative and political processes within the Alaska Legislature and Alaska Executive Branch. The goals of the fellowship are to immerse Native leaders at an earlier stage in their careers and community work within the state lawmaking process, deepen their understanding of Alaska’s issues, and expand their leadership capabilities, while at the same time ensuring there are bright, dedicated fellows who bring a high capacity to learn, work hard, and share their Native and community knowledge with policy makers and other statewide leadership.

FAI President/CEO Elizabeth Medicine Crow proudly introduces our newest cohort. *“Our 2016 Public Policy Fellows exemplify strong community doers and committed leaders from throughout our state. By dedicating this time to their fellowship, we know they will not only contribute greatly to the state, but they will also leave this experience more seasoned and nimble advocates, even further prepared to continue to help their peoples and all of Alaska.”*

Susan Edwardson (Haida) will work with Representative Paul Seaton of Homer, Cordelia Kellie (Iñupiaq) will work with Senator Donnie Olson of Golovin, Mary Sherbick (Yup’ik) will work with Representative Bob Herron of Bethel, and Toby Wark (Tlingit) will work with Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott of Yakutat.



Susan Edwardson

Susan Edwardson (Haida) has family ties to Ketchikan and is a tribal citizen of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida. Her Haida name is Nang Jáadaas Gudangáay K’ínganggang. Her greatest passion in life is revitalizing and teaching her Haida Language. Susan holds a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree with an emphasis in Alaska Native languages and studies from the University of Alaska Southeast. She is very active in her community having been recognized as a ‘community doer,’ actively promoting Haida language learning to family and friends through producing and sharing digital media, as well as in the Native language circles at the FAI Elders & Youth Conference.

Cordelia Kellie

Cordelia Kellie (Iñupiaq) is originally from Wainwright, Alaska, and a tribal citizen of the Native Village of Wainwright. She also has family from Barrow and across the North Slope. Her Iñupiaq name is Qignaag and she is the daughter of John and Agnes Kellie. Cordelia holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language and Rhetoric with a minor in Communications from the University of Alaska Anchorage. Her work history includes community economic development, social investment and legislative affairs for the ASRC Family of Companies and most recently has served in Shell's External Relations team conducting stakeholder engagement and mitigating impacts to subsistence in communities across Alaska. She is very involved as a volunteer for her community and for FAI with involvements in the statewide FAI Elders & Youth Conference as well as the Howard Rock & Ted Stevens Smokehouse Gala. Cordelia also authors a blog called *Nalliq*, which is an online repository of indigenous issues and stories.



Mary Sherbick

Mary Lee Sherbick (Yup'ik) grew up primarily in the big village of Anchorage and is a tribal citizen of Twin Hills Village. Her Yup'ik name is Essaq and she is the daughter of Carrie Pauline Sherbick of Twin Hills and Leon Basil Sherbick from Trenton, NJ. Mary holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with a minor in Alaska Native Studies and Policy from the University of Alaska Anchorage. She has served in several leadership positions while a student and continues to stay involved in volunteer efforts throughout her surrounding community. She is also a 2014 FAI Summer Intern alumna.

Toby Wark

Toby Wark (Tlingit) was raised in Hoonah and is a tribal citizen of Hoonah Indian Association. He is Tlingit from the Dasheetaan clan (Raven/Beaver), his name Tux' yeil (Raven's Heart) comes from Tuuka hit (needlefish house) in Angoon. His areas of interest are in business management, particularly in operational research as well as serving in student government. He holds an Associates of Social Science from the University of Alaska Southeast and is working to complete his Bachelor of Business Management degree. He is also a 2015 FAI Summer Intern alumnus.



First Alaskans Institute is a statewide Alaska Native non-profit dedicated to the advancement of the Alaska Native community. Our vision is '*Progress for the next ten thousand years*' and our mission is '*True to identity, heritage, and values Alaska Natives are informed and engaged in leading the decisions that shape the future.*' We advance our work through work in four initiative areas: Leadership Development, Community Engagement, the Alaska Native Policy Center and Organizational Advancement. Our organizational values are: Integrity, Respect, Native Knowledge, and Responsibility. To learn more about our organization, please visit www.firstalaskans.org.

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