Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing

Kijik: Gathering Place

Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing is pleased to announce a new name for our newsletter series: Kijik, or “Gathering Place.”

Kijik (or Qizhjeh) was a well-populated Dena’ina settlement. The Dena’ina abandoned Kijik as a settlement in 1909 due to concern over a measles outbreak, but still gather at the site to collect subsistence foods; foods necessary for healthy life. This continues the long tradition of Kijik being a gathering place where people care for each other.

RRANN wishes to offer its deepest respect and gratitude to James Hobson as well as his mother, Aggie, for their gift of this name capturing the dream of its students and staff: Native people joining in community to build a healthy future.

We invite you to join us in these pages as a community celebrating news and accomplishments of our people.

Throughout this newsletter, we invite you to see several traditional values of Alaska that inspire and support each piece of our Kijik newsletter content. We hope you enjoy seeing traditional values alongside our articles and photos!

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Group photo from the January 2014 RRANN meeting where students, RRANN staff, and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium representatives shared financial aid resources and knowledge.
“RRANN helped me by showing me the importance of tutoring. They also provided a time to meet with other students facing the same challenges of nursing school.”

-Josh Boyd

Josh received a Fall 2013 Director’s Award for stellar academic achievement and dedication in the classroom. We honor Josh for earning this special award.

Josh is Tlingit and originally from Ketchikan, Alaska.

Anchorage Campus:*  
Josh Boyd  
Dolly Eskilida  
Jennifer McKissik  
Halena White

“RRANN has given me an outlet to congregate with fellow students who share my same values and interests. It has given me the opportunity to be part of an exciting and informative group.”

-Halena White

Halena is Tlingit-Haida and is a Cook Inlet Regional Corporation shareholder.

“My Native Culture has become increasingly important to me since I reached adulthood. I think many people begin, at some time, to wonder about their roots and to take steps to uncovering their ancestry.”

-Londa Larson

Londa is Tlingit-Haida and is a Cook Inlet Regional Corporation shareholder.
Graduates who earned their Associates of Science in Nursing:

Anchorage Campus:  
- Renee Kochuten  
- Londa Larson  
- Kerston Welsh  
- Michelle Wilson

Fairbanks Campus:  
- Alexandra Faris

Ketchikan Campus:  
- Marylee Scudero

“I’ve been motivated to pursue the profession of nursing because I am passionate about the medical field, and I look forward to working hands-on with patients.”  
-Renee Kochuten

Renee is Aleut and originally from False Pass, Alaska. She is an Aleut Corporation shareholder.

“RRANN has influenced me by increasing my understanding of Alaska Native rural cultures and their nursing needs. RRANN has also helped me by providing information about potential scholarships that have helped me a great deal financially.”  
-Michelle Wilson

Michelle is a Doyon and Cook Inlet Regional Corporation shareholder and was raised in Anchorage, Alaska.

Were you a RRANN graduate? Would you like to reconnect?

Greetings to all our RRANN alumni! We’d like to hear what you are doing now in your careers and families, and we’d love to feature that information in an alumni updates section we would like to add to future RRANN Kijik newsletters.

If you have news to share with our Kijik newsletter audience, please contact Stephanie by phone at 786-6944 or email: smsanderlin@uaa.alaska.edu.
Northern Outreach: RRANN Staff Visits Nome and Savoonga

This spring, Rebecca Dreier, RRANN Student Success Facilitator, traveled to Alaska’s arctic region to visit the communities of Nome, Savoonga, and Stebbins. Though weathered out of Stebbins, Rebecca proceeded to have good visits in Nome and Savoonga. She toured the UAF Northwest Campus and the Norton Sound Regional Hospital where RRANN nursing students complete some of their clinical experiences. Then it was off to Savoonga to serve as a presenter to the students at the Bering Strait Career and College Fair. Please enjoy this selection of photos from Rebecca’s northern travels!
The Health Professions scholarship provides financial aid to qualified American Indian and Alaska Native undergraduate- and graduate-level students. Recipients must be members of federally recognized Tribes and enrolled in an eligible health profession degree program.

The IHS Scholarship Program provides financial aid to all scholarship recipients covering tuition, required fees and other educational and living expenses. In exchange for financial aid, scholarship recipients agree to fulfill a service commitment in full-time clinical practice upon completion of their academic or post-graduate clinical training.

Visit the Indian Health Service Scholarship program online!
http://www.ihs.gov/scholarship/index.cfm

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Partners: Working to Support Students in Many Ways

Gloria Rhodes works as a Senior Professional Recruiter (Nurse Recruiter) with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). She has been with ANTHC for 6 1/2 years, focusing on recruiting Registered Nurses (RNs) to work at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC). She has attended some of the biggest nursing conventions in the country recruiting RNs to work at ANMC. Gloria has an Associates degree in Liberal Arts from UAA, and is currently taking management courses at APU, and she enjoys traveling and meeting people.

RRANN staff and students appreciate Gloria’s continued dedication to helping students find employment at ANMC. She is always willing to make time in her days to meet personally with students to provide information and discuss concerns. She also serves RRANN by participating in many of our gatherings as both a guest and presenter. We are so happy to have her as a partner helping to support students in many ways!

If you would like to contact Glora to discuss working as a nurse at ANMC, her phone number is 907-729-1319 or she can be reached by email at glrhodes@anthc.org.

Have respect for knowledge.

Work Hard.

Be caring and careful.

Have you applied for the IHS Scholarship?

Have respect for knowledge.

Work Hard.

Be caring and careful.
Rebecca Dreier  
UAA/UAF RRANN Student Success Facilitator  
rrdreier@alaska.edu  
907-786-4714

Rebecca Dreier comes from a long line of educators and holds a B.A. in Elementary Education from the UAF. Her professional background includes many years of work with at-risk student populations and Alaska Native students in elementary and high schools. She has over 25 years of experience in coaching/mentoring in many different areas, including sports, performing arts, and community service groups. Rebecca also has many years of community involvement with the many diverse cultural groups and individuals in our state including her membership in Pav’va Inupiaq Dancers, a dance group based in Fairbanks.

Rebecca works with RRANN students all around Alaska. She truly enjoys connecting with the wide variety of communities and cultures in our state.

Jaclyn Huston serves the RRANN program as Tutor Coordinator. Our tutoring program runs smoothly due to her dedication, positive attitude, hard work, and organizational skills. As a nursing student herself, she understands the academic challenges students face.

We asked Jaclyn to give some insights on why tutoring is so important in nursing school and why she is so uniquely connected to it. Here are her thoughts:

“The importance of tutoring became very clear to me when, as a student, I didn’t understand material myself despite the lecture, book, and materials. There is something special about learning from your peers or someone who has recently been through what you’re going through. Even if you have the best instructor, book, or study guide, I still believe every student can benefit from tutoring because of the unique way a peer presents concepts.”

“I knew I was going to be a nurse since high school. I have always had a passion for the sciences, and it all seemed to click when I realized it went hand in hand with my joy for serving others. My favorite thing about nursing is the versatility of the profession. There is literally no way to be bored or become stagnant. My dream is to one day become an intensive care nurse and later a certified registered nurse anesthetist.”

Meet the RRANN Staff!

Jackie Pflaum  
RRANN Project Coordinator  
Jspflaum@uaa.alaska.edu  
907-786-4527

An itinerant public health nurse in the Yukon Kuskokwim region before joining the University of Alaska Anchorage faculty in 1979, Jackie Pflaum is now the Associate Vice Provost for Health Programs Development. Her research in nursing history includes a biography of Elinor Gregg, first Nursing Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Jaclyn Huston  
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With 25 years of experience educating the youth of Alaska, Robert (Bob) Love has served our state as a principal, teacher, and counselor for Craig City Schools and Mt. Edgecumbe High School, located in Sitka, Alaska serving a student body of mainly Alaska Natives and students from rural Alaska. Currently housed at the University of Alaska Sitka campus, Bob works with the students of Southeast Alaska in Sitka, Juneau, and Ketchikan. He also works within the Career Education Department as a Recruitment Specialist.

Stephanie Sanderlin

Stephanie Sanderlin is of Yup'ik, Aleut, Russian, and German heritage and is originally from Dillingham, Alaska. Her parents, Jim and Jeanie Timmerman, raised Stephanie along with her three younger siblings in a subsistence and commercial fishing family. After graduating from Dillingham High School, Stephanie attended Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa and received her B.A. in English Teaching. She spent 15 years in secondary education before moving to the UAA School of Nursing to work for the Anchorage RRANN program.

Shelly Leary

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Interested in supporting RRANN?

The goal of Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives in Nursing (RRANN) is to increase the percentage of Alaska Native and American Indians in nursing to equal their percentage of Alaska’s population (16%).

Through recruiting Alaska Native students into nursing and providing both group and individual support through their studies, the program has helped over 120 Alaska Native and American Indian students graduate from UAA’s nursing programs.

RRANN is one of UAA’s most successful initiatives with a 96% graduation rate.

RRANN matters!

“Providing culturally relevant health care is not a matter of political correctness; it is often a matter of life and death. When cultural competency is missing from health care, important information is not communicated, symptoms of illness are overlooked or misinterpreted and patient outcome suffers.”

—RRANN Founder, Tina DeLapp, EdD, R.N.

RRANN helped me a lot when I was going through the nursing program. Now I have the income to give back, and I feel that’s important because believe in RRANN with all my heart.

—RRANN Graduate and Donor, Flora Sapp, R.N.

For more information about making a gift, contact Anecia O’Carroll at (907) 786-1944 or anecia@uaa.alaska.edu.
Yes, I want to make a gift to support the RRANN Program.

Please direct my contribution of $________ to:
☐ RRANN (20150)
☐ Other:______________________________

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone   Email

Payment information

☐ Enclosed is my check to the UA Foundation.

☐ Please charge my: Visa    MasterCard

Card #________ - ________ - ________ - ________

Exp. Date: _______ / _______

☐ I wish this gift to be anonymous.

Return form to:
UAA c/o UA Foundation
1315 Bragaw Street, Suite 203
Anchorage, AK 99506

Want to help RRANN students in a tangible way?
Please consider donating something from our Amazon Wish List!
You can find the list at the following address:
http://tinyurl.com/6z8w7co

or, use this QR code to visit on your smart phone!
Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing is vital, enriching, and valuable to both the University of Alaska system and Alaska’s diverse and varied communities. RRANN began in 1998 with federal grant funds to recruit and mentor Alaska Native and American Indian students in the pursuit of nursing degrees. In 2006, UAA ranked 7th in the nation for Alaska Native and American Indian students earning Bachelor degrees in various health-related programs. Sixty percent of these graduates were RRANN students.

RRANN employs student success facilitators around the state to support our students in the day-to-day challenges of school and life. The program also helps students connect with on-campus housing, career and academic advising, job placement, and academic and financial aid resources, including a scholarship program open only to RRANN students. RRANN students have access to the free loan of tools like lab coats, stethoscopes, SmartPens, and scrubs. RRANN, in partnership with community and other UAA agencies, also works to provide enriching gatherings and speakers who offer guidance and wisdom to students as they continue in their pathways to nursing careers.

Since 1998, RRANN has proudly seen Alaska Native and American Indian students graduate from the School of Nursing. Approximately eighty percent of RRANN graduates remain in Alaska to serve our population with excellent and culturally relevant health care.