

# Ninilchik Traditional Council December 2021 & January 2022



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**Upcoming Closure Dates**

All NTC Offices will be closed on:

Thursday, December 23

Friday, December 24

Friday, December 31

**Council Meeting Schedule**

The next Regular Council Meeting is scheduled for:

Thursday, December 16 at 10:00 a.m.

*The NTC Regular Council Meeting will take place at the Administration Office at 15910 Sterling Highway. The meetings are open for tribal members to attend and participate in the visitors' comments and question session.*

*There are*

**THREE \$100.00 DOOR PRIZE DRAWINGS**

*for visiting tribal members at each meeting!*

***Front cover and back photo provided by Butch Leman.***

We would like to invite your photo submissions for possible use as future newsletter adornments. You can email us at [ntc@niniichiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:ntc@niniichiktribe-nsn.gov)

**Who We Are**

*The Ninilchik Village Tribe is made up of approximately 1,000 members who trace their roots to the Ninilchik tribal lands as well as other Bureau of Indian Affairs-recognized Alaskan Natives and American Indians who have settled in the tribal boundaries and have applied, and been accepted for membership. The governing body of the Ninilchik Village Tribe, the Ninilchik Traditional Council, is presided over by a board of directors of 5 council members elected by the voting tribal membership to 3 year terms. The Council directs executive staff using the Ninilchik Village Tribe’s Organic Documents, which are set by the voting tribal membership to exercise tribal operations and tribal sovereignty, as guidelines.*

**NTC Board of Directors**

**Richard “Greg” Encelewski**  
President/  
Chairman



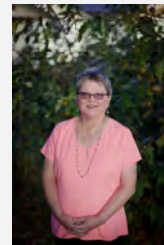
**William “Dean” Kvasnikoff**  
Vice President



**Whitney Schollenberg**  
Secretary  
& Treasurer



**Jamie Leman**  
Director



**Eric Kvasnikoff**  
Director



**Ivan Z. Encelewski**  
NTC Executive Director

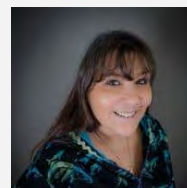


**NTC Department Directors**

**Bob Crosby**, Housing Director



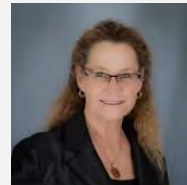
**Christina Pinnow**, Tribal Services Director



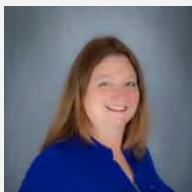
**Maria Goins**, Chief Financial Officer



**Shelley Self**, Deputy CEO



**Janet Mullen**, Tribal Health Director



**Darrel Williams**, Resource & Environmental Director



## NTC Staff

# Ninilchik Traditional Council Staff

## Administration

**Sebastian Appelhans**, Administrative Assistant  
**Darla Bradley**, Administrative Assistant  
**Stormy Walkoff**, Secretary/Receptionist

## Finance

**Kelly Emerson**, Procurement/Contracting Officer  
**Kristen Gould**, Procurement/Contracting Assistant  
**Melissa Lancaster**, Financial Assistant  
**Natalia Taeschner**, Procurement/Contracting Assistant

## Tribal Services

**Alicia Morris**, Social Services Specialist  
**Jamie Oskolkoff**, Education Coordinator  
**Mikylah Pinnow**, Tribal Services Assistant

## Housing

**Kristen Gould**, Housing Assistant

## Resource

**Jayke Cooper**, Resource Technician  
**Joseph Cooper**, Resource Technician/CDL Driver  
**Beth Piltz**, Bus Driver  
**Jeff Rickard**, Resource Technician  
**Robert Self**, Resource Technician  
**Gina Wiste**, Environmental Technician

## Maintenance

**Hunter Cooper**, Assistant Maintenance Laborer  
**Eric Hanson**, Facilities Manager  
**David Nordeen**, Maintenance Laborer  
**Michael Pinnow**, Assistant Maintenance Laborer  
**Nancy Pulliam**, Assistant Maintenance Laborer  
**Cynthia Schnabl**, Assistant Maintenance Laborer

## The Cheeky Moose

**Alia Bales**, Barista/Laundry Attendant  
**Amanda Bright**, Barista/Laundry Attendant  
**Ashley Devaney**, Barista/Laundry Attendant  
**Robin Jamie**, Manager  
**Gina Kent**, Deli Worker/Barista  
**Laura Ryerson**, Deli Worker/Barista

## Other

**Matthew Hamilton**, General Manager of Tuyan  
**Jeffrey Organek**, Engineer  
**John Russo**, Plumber

## NTC Community Clinic

**Tina Banner**, COVID-19 Clinic Receptionist  
**Ajiel Basmayor**, Medical Assistant  
**Karen Bennett**, COVID-19 Clinic Receptionist  
**Renae Blanton**, RN Consultant Educator  
**Mattie Cobb**, Community Health Aide/Medical Assistant  
**Jenn Day**, Tribal Health Support Manager  
**Olivia Delgado**, RN, Case Manager  
**Aubrey Duncan**, Community Health Aide  
**Sarah Duncan**, Community Health Aide/Medical Assistant  
**LaBri Estrada**, Community Health Aide/Medical Assistant  
**Kristina Finkenbinder**, Family Nurse Practitioner  
**Jamie Fleury**, COVID-19 Clinic Receptionist  
**Maricel Folkert**, Community Health Aide/Medical Assistant  
**Dr. Robin Holmes**, Medical Provider  
**Dr. Tamar Marcotte**, Family Practice Doctor  
**Jennifer Miller**, Clinical Medical Biller  
**Dr. Sarah Spencer**, Medical Provider  
**Kimberly Steik**, Clinic Front Desk Receptionist  
**Anna Sutton**, Clinic Information Coordinator  
**Brenda Trefon**, Health Programs Admin Liaison  
**Margaret Westner**, Family Nurse Practitioner

## NTC Behavioral Health

**Kathleen Eagle**, Behavioral Health Services  
**Susan Fallon**, Chemical Dependency Counselor I/BHP  
**Lukas Ficklin**, Clinical Supervisor/MAT Counselor  
**Annette Hubbard**, BHA/MAT Specialist  
**Leslie McCombs**, Behavioral Health Receptionist  
**Christine Prokop**, Behavioral Health Services Counselor  
**Bettyann Steciw**, MAT Behavioral Health Care Case Manager  
**Kathleen Totemoff**, MAT Grant Manager  
**Laura Ullmann**, Patient Advocate/Case Manager

## Elders Outreach Program

**Jessica Haddock**, Elders Outreach Program Assistant  
**Tiffany Stonecipher**, Elders Outreach Program Coordinator

## Youth Outreach Program

**Richard Dunaway**, Native Connections Program Manager  
**Katie Matthews**, Outreach Specialist  
**Danielle Self**, Native Connections Program Assistant

## Health & Wellness Club

**Kayci Hanson**, Yoga Instructor  
**Terri Leman**, Health Club Attendant  
**Elizabeth Spofford**, Yoga Instructor  
**Savanna Stark**, Health Club Attendant  
**Brie Wallace**, Health Club Manager  
**Tammy Zweiacher**, Personal Trainer

**Executive Director's Address**



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

As 2021 comes to an end, we can once again report that the tribe had another fantastic year in terms of growth and expansion. We recently held our Annual Meeting in person and via Zoom. It was so exciting to see many of you there. If you were able to attend, you received a report on many of our accomplishments this past year. For those of you who missed it, the 2021 Annual Report was mailed to each tribal household. I hope that you take a chance to look through the document and let us know if you have any questions or concerns. There is a lot of wonderful information in the book about the Tribe. Congratulations to Jamie Leman on her reelection to the Council as well!

As we reflect on the past year, we faced similar challenges with the pandemic, much like last year, yet we managed to bring in even more resources and support to expand and prosper. The Tribe utilized new monies to build out infrastructure, programs, and services. We completed the addition to the Administrative offices and the Health and Wellness Club. Our clinical facility in Anchor Point is now open! The new medical clinic project in Homer was awarded almost two million dollars in grant funding, with engineering and design underway. Having previously purchased the property next to the hospital made this project a reality. While we experienced a three month delay with the supply chain situation, our new Childcare and Tribal Services Buildings should be finished by the end of February 2022. The purchase of the amazing property and facility in Kasilof that will support our Federal Communication Commission (FCC) 2.5 GHz broadband spectrum project is nothing short of amazing. When you couple all this with our new staffing, such as hiring two new doctors this past year, the Tribe can be proud of what we've achieved.

We were also pleased to be a part of the annual virtual friendship potlatch that was held by Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI). Greg and I spent some time assisting in highlighting Ninilchik and our history. As CIRI notes, you can "Log on from anywhere in the world to enjoy Alaska Native culture, a village visit to Ninilchik, a recipe demonstration and more!" You can view it through the CIRI website or just visit the following for the tech savvy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsZ2POs2GIs>

As part of the continued partnerships with other organizations, we were able to obtain equipment to address our peoples' food security needs. As subsistence is integral to who we are as Indigenous Peoples, I am happy to report that with the support of CIRI and Cook Inlet Tribal Council we obtained a Fecon brush cutting machine to help clear the lands for subsistence food access during the pandemic. Thank you! We are also working with Ninilchik Native Association, Inc. (NNAI) on their equipment acquisition and the use of it in this partnership, as well as with their new loader and cutting attachment.

As we look towards 2022 and the future, the Tribe has some big endeavors that we would like to accomplish. The completion of our new clinic in Homer and the partnership with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe to develop broadband access across the Kenai Peninsula are just a couple of the major ventures moving forward. A really exciting initiative also includes the Q'eschił Heritage Center design, development, and construction, which is part of strengthening our connections, spirituality, and cultural identity. In addition to a recent booklet that was mailed out regarding the project, a short video was developed that included the Council and Tribal Members thoughts on this opportunity moving forward. This will be deployed shortly. Thanks Argent! Our goal is to have this operational by 2025, and it's planned to be amazing! In closing, have a wonderful holiday season and we look forward to a successful 2022 ahead.

Sincerely,

Ivan Z. Encelewski  
NTC Executive Director



Tribal Services

# 2021 Annual Meeting

The 2021 NTC Annual Meeting was held on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the NTC Community Center. Tribal members had the option of attending in person or via zoom. It was very nice to see some of our membership in person. A total of 61 people were in attendance this year. A nice luncheon was served, the Board of Directors reflected upon the past year and continual growth the tribe is experiencing. The Department Directors gave updates on their programs, and the Election Committee announced the final 2021 Annual Election Results.



## Ninilchik Traditional Council

P.O. Box 39070  
 Ninilchik, Alaska 99639  
 Ph: 907 567-3313 / Fx: 907 567-3308  
 E-mail: [cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)  
 Web Site: [www.ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](http://www.ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)

**NINILCHIK TRADITIONAL COUNCIL  
 NOVEMBER 8, 2021 NTC ANNUAL ELECTION  
 PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS**

NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS	<u>116</u>
**NUMBER OF <u>VALID</u> BALLOTS RETURNED	<u>71</u>
NUMBER OF BALLOTS NULLIFIED/INVALIDATED	<u>3</u>
NUMBER OF BALLOTS RETURNED UNDELIVERABLE	<u>3</u>

77 TOTAL # OF BALLOTS RETURNED

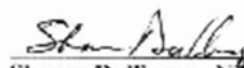
**Election Results (Number Of Valid Votes For Each Candidate):**

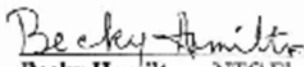
**Ninilchik Traditional Council Seat:**

Elaine Halloran	<u>8</u>
Gary Jackinsky	<u>12</u>
Jamie Loman	<u>51</u>

**CERTIFIED BY THE NTC ELECTION COMMITTEE ON NOVEMBER 9, 2021:**

  
 Robert Welch - NTC Election Committee

  
 Sharon Dullinger - NTC Election Committee

  
 Becky Hamilton - NTC Election Committee

*Posted at NTC Office 11/10/20, Election Committee Meeting - Copy to NTC  
 If no contest to the election is filed, this shall be the final certification of results of the  
 November 9, 2020 NTC Election.*

**Tribal Services**

Construction continues with both the Tribal Services Building and the childcare facility. The past couple weeks have been busy for the crew as siding, insulation, natural gas installation and electrical work have been underway. Seeing progress each week has been exciting!

During these times, certain materials or supplies are hard to find. There seems to be quite a few back orders from manufacturers, which cause delays as well as the challenge to get items shipped to Alaska.

We have a great team here at NTC and we are all working together to get the job done. Stay tuned for future updates!



**For more information regarding Tribal Services, please contact Chris at 567-3313 or [cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)**

## Tribal Services



The NTC Tribal Services Department is looking for childcare providers as we prepare to open our new childcare facility, *It Takes A Village*, this coming year!

Providers must be able to complete the following prior to hire, as safety is our highest priority.

- First Aid & CPR Training (in person, online course will not be accepted)
- State Mandatory Reporter Training
- Better Kid Care Health and Safety Bundle
- Food Handlers Card
- Fingerprinting
- Criminal Background Check

Reference Check & Character Reference Check

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Christina Pinnow or Alicia Morris at the NTC Administration building for more information, 907-567-3313.



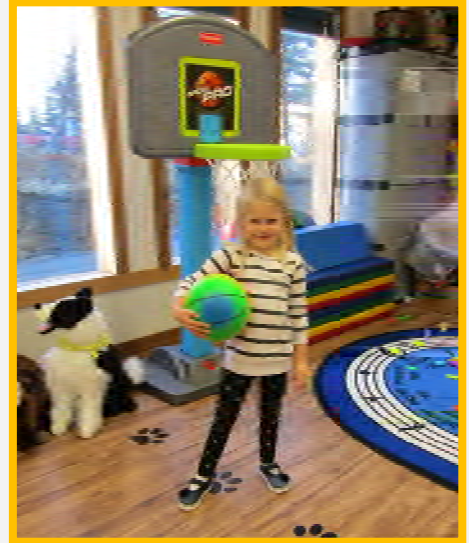
# Early Learning Program



The Early Learning Program started classes in October. This year we have ten Preschoolers and we extend a warm welcome to all our families and little ones joining us. Students have already learned the routine and are now learning to recognize their names, colors, letters, and numbers. Many other classroom skills are taught throughout the year such as... sharing, manners, lining up, taking turns and participating in group activities. Students will be enjoying winter vacation soon and ELP will be closed December 20th thru the 30th. Class will resume January 4th, 2022. We are very pleased with the student's progress and look forward to a very exciting year!



Tribal Services



For more information regarding Tribal Services, please contact Chris at 567-3313 or [cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:cpinnow@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)

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## Tribal Services

## Higher Education Grant Deadlines:

Summer Semester ~ May 10, 2022

Fall Semester ~ August 10, 2022

Completed applications must be received by the Ninilchik Traditional Council before the appropriate deadline. Mail, hand deliver, or fax your application to:

Ninilchik Traditional Council

Tribal Services - Education Department

P.O. Box 39444

Ninilchik, AK 99639

FAX: 907.567.3354

## Ninilchik Traditional Council Scholarship

The Ninilchik Traditional Council offers a \$1,500 scholarship to one selected tribal member graduating from high school or the Connections Program in Ninilchik. Applicants should demonstrate a dedication to education and pursuing their goals. The deadline for applications is May 2, 2022.

## Adult Vocational Training

The Adult Vocational Training program helps subsidize the costs of attending a vocational, technical, or other professional skills institute. Applicants must demonstrate that the field of training they will be studying will feasibly allow them to be employed in that field in order to help stem unemployment or underemployment. Alaska's economy has long been dependent on a strong workforce comprised of many individuals with a variety of honed skills and trades, and the Adult Vocational Training program helps our collective economy.

### Eligibility

- Native adults 18 or older (including graduating high school seniors 17 years of age)
- Demonstrate need for education for employment
- Must reside within Ninilchik Tribal boundaries

## Elders Outreach Program

## *Elders Outreach Program Information*



The Elders Outreach Program offers lunch at the Subsistence Building every Monday. **The luncheon is still provided on HOLIDAYS that the other NTC offices are closed for.** The luncheons served at noon coming up for the following months are;

***Monday December 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas Elders Party***

Monday January 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>

Monday February 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>

As a friendly reminder, the luncheon exists to serve as a social space for enrolled Tribal Elders to gather, share and visit. Elders are encouraged to bring a guest, family, or be accompanied by a caregiver if they'd like to. There is a suggested donation box at the back for this purpose. While it is a provided luncheon for Elders to attend, it also serves many homebound Elders who cannot drive or have other needs that prevent them from attending. This luncheon is for the enrolled Tribal Elders and we ask that you are mindful of others who are not able to attend.

Christmas is right around the corner, and we will be closed for December 27<sup>th</sup> and January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Every year we have an Elders Christmas party, this year it will be on the last Monday luncheon of December, the 20<sup>th</sup>. Wear your best interpretation of the Christmas spirit, as it could enter you into a drawing to win a prize! We also host an annual Christmas gift exchange, anyone who attends would bring a gift, valued no more than \$25 and add it to the loot to exchange from someone else. Handmade and local made edibles are highly sought after as well!

As always, my office is open. Other than providing luncheons, we help those who need prescription pickups, rides for groceries, and local rides to and from the clinic or post office. Should you need this, please call to schedule, as it is a busy holiday. Keep in mind, we have a great BUMPS service now that provides rides to Kenai/Soldotna and to Homer for a reasonable, round trip price! The service is available to the public, not just Tribal members. Fares are \$7.00 one-way, or \$10.00 round trip. Call the Ninilchik Traditional Council's Natural Resource Department at (907) 567-3815 for details.

Please come and enjoy the social atmosphere at luncheons in the New Year if you haven't attended or call and inquire about other services you may be needing. We help in so many ways and can usually get you to the right resources! We are here to serve you!



**Elders Outreach Program**

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and enjoy the New Year. 2022 is before us, please be vigilant on the roads while driving. Remember, if you engage in libations this holiday, call a friend or ask another to be your designated driver. We hope you all stay safe and warm, and should you need help, or help locating the right resource, please feel free to call anytime at 907-567-3313 ext. 2110 or my cell, 907-953-0273.



**Warm regards,  
Tiffany, Elders Outreach Program Coordinator  
Jessica, Elders Outreach Program Assistant**

***Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!***

***Stay warm and safe and enjoy the holiday spirit!***

**Elders Outreach Program Mission Statement** The Elders Outreach Program is a program of the Ninilchik Traditional Council, whose purpose is providing service to Elders 55+ in our Tribal boundaries that enhance quality of life, integrity of heritage and emblematic of respect and dignity continuously promoting independent living simultaneously capturing the history and traditions of our culture.

**For more information regarding the EOP please contact Tiffany at 567-3313 or [tstonecipher@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:tstonecipher@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)**

## Behavioral Health Services

**Federal SAMHSA Grants Supporting Behavioral Health and Recovery Services****Sue Fallon, Behavioral Health Clinician and Kathleen Totemoff, MAT Project Director**

The NTC Medically Assisted Treatment Program (MAT) is the current recipient of two grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). For individuals to receive services and supports provided through either of these grants, we are required to administer Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) intake and follow-up interviews. All information provided in the GPRA interviews is completely confidential and anonymized.

The data collected in the GPRA interviews is essential to justify the funds currently provided as well as establishing a basis for future grant funding. The GPRA interviews document the number of program participants, the services provided, the demographics of the population we serve, and measures of progress toward therapeutic goals.

**The Tribal Opioid Response Grant (TOR)**

According to SAMHSA, the Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) grant provides culturally appropriate and evidence-based practices to reduce unmet treatment needs for individuals experiencing opioid and stimulant use disorders through the provision of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Treatment of opioid use disorder includes providing FDA-approved medication-assisted treatments.

**Emergency Grant to Address Mental and Substance Use Disorders During COVID-19 (Informally referred to as the COVID Grant)**

The “COVID” grant provides services supporting the needs of individuals experiencing mental illnesses, co-occurring, and substance use disorders. The grant partially supports the operating costs of the behavioral health department including provider salaries, rent and utility expenses for our Homer office, supplies, as well as **financial support to eligible individuals** for increased access to necessary behavioral health and recovery services. For example, this grant can cover the cost of behavioral health assessments, counseling appointments, and MAT medications for eligible program participants (e.g., those without a pay source or cannot afford their co-pay) while funds remain available.

The COVID grant also provides **free** access to the following tools to support recovery from substance use to eligible individuals. Please note that some of the following supports are available by prescription only.

**• Recovery Apps (reSET and reSET-O) Prescription Only**

ReSET and reSET-O are the first FDA-approved Prescription Digital Therapeutics (PDT) software applications (apps) for alcohol and opioid use disorders. These apps provide support outside of regular office hours using short interactive lessons in cognitive behavioral therapy accessible from a smart phone or other compatible device. Successful completion of the lessons and drug tests with expected results provide the user with the opportunity to earn gift cards to reinforce positive behaviors through an evidence-based practice known as contingency management.

### ●**Soberlink Alcohol-Monitoring Breathalyzer Prescription Only**

Soberlink provides tamper-proof, remote alcohol monitoring with real-time results utilizing facial recognition. This device offers customizable testing schedules with text reminders and test results sent directly to the medical provider and other designated contacts (such as a family member or AA Sponsor). Soberlink, available by prescription, is FDA-approved and the data from the device is reportedly admissible in court in all fifty states.

### ●**Emocha**

Emocha is a remote monitoring digital medication adherence program utilizing Direct Observation Therapy (DOT) and is designed to increase medication compliance rates. For example, for oral MAT medications the use of Emocha reduces the risk of diversion (misuse of prescriptions) by providing video documentation recorded on smart phones of medication use as prescribed. The videos are sent directly to the medical provider's data dashboard with reminders automatically generated when a video submission window has been missed. With Emocha, the medical provider receives direct feedback to determine if the medication is being taken as prescribed. This objective information may prompt the provider to ask for a medication count or to modify a prescription.

### ●**Bridge Devices (Prescription Only)**

The Bridge device is an FDA-approved, nonsurgical medical device placed behind the ear providing neurostimulation for five days to support the reduction of the symptoms of opioid withdrawal. The Bridge device is available by prescription and takes approximately 15 minutes to be placed on the patient by a trained provider. The device begins to work within as little as 20 minutes with a reported 85% reduction in withdrawal symptoms typically seen in less than an hour. Studies indicate that 88% of patients who use the Bridge successfully transition into a Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program. Note: patients detoxing from methadone may need more than one device.

### ●**Coming soon: CheckUp & Choices**

We are working with CheckUp & Choices to develop a custom platform with free access to confidential self-help software for the purpose of evaluating drinking and/or drug use (CheckUp) and voluntarily participating in exercises or using tools to either moderate or abstain from substance use (Choices). Once developed, the NTC Behavioral Health CheckUp & Choices platform will provide community members a free subscription to access all resources on the website. The CheckUp & Choices platform is part of the SMART Recovery program. SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training) is an international non-profit organization utilizing evidence-based practices including cognitive behavioral therapy, rational emotive therapy, and motivational interviewing to provide support to individuals seeking recovery from addictive behaviors. This program is not limited to substance use and can be applied to many types of behaviors considered personally problematic.

### **References**

The Bridge Device

<https://www.masimo.com/products/Therapy/>

CheckUp & Choices

<https://www.smartrecovery.org/checkup-and-choices/>

Reset and Reset-O

<https://peartherapeutics.com/products/reset-reset-o/>

Emocha

<https://emocha.com/>

Soberlink

<https://www.soberlink.com/>



## Behavioral Health Services



We are approaching the season of thanks, gratitude and giving. It's so easy to get caught up in the stress of the season, with expectations communicated by social media and advertisements that often cause stress and comparison to others. It's beneficial to take a moment and think about what the spirit of the season—thankfulness, gratitude, and the true spirit of giving. Perhaps we are happy to see people we haven't seen, enjoy food, and have a warm fuzzy feeling of thanks. Gratitude is a deeper feeling, one of a sense of appreciation that comes from deep within. It brings a feeling of being at peace with the world. Gratitude may start with feelings of thankfulness, but it's more of an ongoing state of being that comes with awareness of the appreciation we have for everything, experienced on an ongoing basis. It includes feelings of appreciation for others, nature, our earth, as they are and results in a feeling of being connected to it all. One does not need to have everything going right to be grateful. Gratitude can be cultivated despite negative things happening to you. This takes some effort, which is why gratitude is often described as a practice of gratitude.

Feelings of gratitude can bring many health benefits and is thought to even change your brain in a positive way. Ackerman (Positive Psychology) lists 28 benefits including increased psychological wellbeing, enhanced positive emotions, increased self-esteem, improved relationships, increased social supports, improved overall physical health, reduced blood pressure, decreased depression, and improved success in recovery from substance misuse. In addition, Morin (in Psychology Today) notes that in addition to the above, feelings of gratitude, rather than focusing on self-pity, enhances empathy, reduces aggression, and increases mental strength (resilience). Gratitude, according to Young (Hey Sigmund), involves noticing the goodness in the world, but doesn't mean you have to ignore negative things. It means that in the midst of all that can and does go wrong, we take time to remember the good.

Why is gratitude so beneficial? Research shows that when the brain feels gratitude, parts of the brain that activate are the areas that are involved in feeling reward, morality, interpersonal bonding, positive social interactions, and the ability to understand what other people are thinking or feeling (empathy). Gratitude increases the level of the feel-good neurochemicals such as dopamine, oxytocin, and serotonin. These help bring feelings of closeness, connection, and happiness (Young. Hey Sigmund).

How do we cultivate these feelings of gratitude? According to Young (Hey Sigmund), gratitude is built by practice. Brain changes happen with experience and repetition, and so too with gratitude. Humans are built to respond to and remember negative things, as a way of protection and safety for the future. Our positive experiences are not so easily cemented in our memories. This is called negativity bias. So, to develop feelings of gratitude we need to more consciously try to experience the good and focus on it, which Rick Hanson calls "taking in the good." He encourages holding good experiences in the mind for at least 20 seconds and then gratitude can expand this to allow for re-experiencing the good.

## Behavioral Health Services

## Practicing Gratitude

## 3 things a day for 21 days

Write three things that you are grateful for, that happened in your day. These can be as big or small as you want. They can be simple things like the breeze on your skin, a warm bed to sleep in, or the smell of coffee. Doing this for 21 days trains your brain to look at things differently. Try to find new things each day and try to be specific. Instead of thinking about how you are grateful for your friend, think of a specific reason you are grateful, such as that friend patiently listening to you that day.

## Take one positive experience...

Pick one positive experience and write down every detail about it. Write those in list form and then do this for 21 days. This helps imprint the positive experience in your brain. As you visualize the experience, you get to experience it again and get positive feelings again.

## Write Letters

Spend 20 minutes each week writing a letter to someone you are thankful for. You don't need to send it. Researchers say that this can have a profound effect on us that is long lasting. If you become more adept at noticing the good now, it will be easier to notice the good later. As you notice more good, your happiness will increase.

## Do a "Savor Walk"

Set aside 20 minutes to walk each day and while walking, try to notice as many things as you can with all your senses. Notice tiny details or other perspectives that you don't usually see such as looking up at the sky. As you notice positive things, acknowledge each in your mind and savor what makes that thing pleasurable. If you can, try to walk different routes each day or walk randomly through an area, going where you are drawn to go (as long as you don't get lost).

## Giving back—Reciprocity

Feeling grateful to the earth and the beings we share it with can help us develop a real relationship to nature and to our place, developing strong connections. Connection to place can help us feel grounded and give a sense of belonging. Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, of Potawatomi ancestry, explains how many cultures once understood (and many still do) the way of living in reciprocity that kept the earth in balance. For gifts from the earth to continue to flow, she writes, "we must give back in equal measure for what we take." She explains, "Reciprocity—returning the gift—is not just good manners; it is how the biophysical world works." So how can we reciprocate the gifts from the Earth? Robin suggests, "Gratitude is our first, but not our only gift. We are storytellers, music makers, devisers of ingenious machines, healers, scientists, and lovers of an Earth who asks that we give our own unique gifts on behalf of life."  
-- Let us live in a way that Earth will be grateful for us."

*I would like to acknowledge and show gratitude for living and working on the traditional lands of the Dena'ina Athabascans. For thousands of years the Dena'ina have been and continue to be the stewards of this land. It is with gratefulness and respect that I recognize the contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspectives of the Cook Inlet Dena'ina.*

## Sources

- Ackerman, C. E. 28 Benefits of Gratitude & Most Significant Research Findings. *Positive Psychology*, 10/09/2021. <https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-gratitude-research-questions/>
- Hanson, R. Just One Thing- Take in the Good. Rick Hanson, Blog. <https://www.rickhanson.net/just-one-thing-take-in-the-good/>
- Kimmerer, R. W. Returning the Gift. Center for Humans & Nature: What does the Earth Ask of Us? <https://www.humansandnature.org/earth-ethic-robin-kimmerer>
- Morin, A. 7 Scientifically Proven Benefits of Gratitude. *Psychology Today*. 4/3/2015. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201504/7-scientifically-proven-benefits-gratitude>
- Young, K. The Science of Gratitude – How it Changes People, Relationships (and Brains!) and How to Make it Work For You. Hey Sigmund, <https://www.heysigmund.com/the-science-of-gratitude/>

## Resource

**New 2022 Ninilchik Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan**

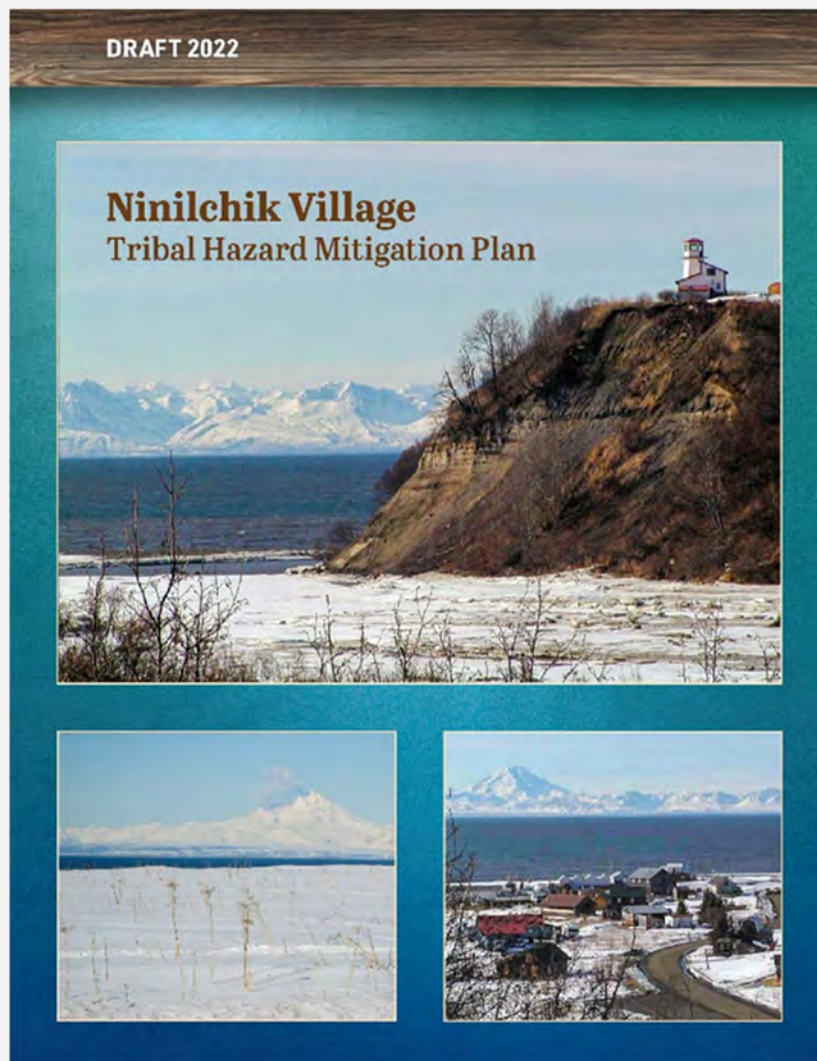
Our community is launching an effort known as the New 2022 Ninilchik Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan. Over the next few months, we will work with a consultant to assess risks posed by natural disasters and develop strategies to protect life and property in Ninilchik from future hazard events.

Hazards addressed in our plan include the following: earthquake, climate change, erosion, extreme weather, floods, ground failure, tsunami, and wildfire.

Once our plan is completed and approved by FEMA, our community will be eligible to apply for and receive certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects identified in our plan.

To learn more about hazard mitigation planning, please visit: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/hazard-mitigation-planning>

To learn more about our plan, please contact Darrel Williams at [dwilliams@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:dwilliams@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov) or (907) 567-3815. We will give an update when a draft plan is developed.



**For more information regarding Resource please call 567-3815 or [dwilliams@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:dwilliams@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)**

# Vacancy Announcements

## ●Indian Child Welfare Act Program Specialist

The NTC ICWA Specialist is an integrated position within the Ninilchik Traditional Council assigned with the duties and responsibilities associated with developing, managing and implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Program. Broad authority is given to the program managers within the Ninilchik Traditional Council to implement their specific programs according to their job duties and responsibilities.

## ●Clinic Medical Coder

The purpose of this position is to provide the coding of the encounters and procedures, including Medicaid, Medicare, VA Benefits, private insurance, and self-pay patients for the Ninilchik Traditional Council Community Clinic (NTCCC).

## ●Registered Nurse

This position provides professional nursing services to accomplish the individual patient plan of care; independently and consistently using the nursing process to safely, therapeutically, and efficiently care for patients with subtle and sometimes unidentified needs. Supports the operations of the NTCCC.

## ●Traveling Clinic Receptionist

The Traveling Clinic Receptionist will deal directly with the NTCCC patients/clients. Therefore, confidentiality will be the highest priority and the Clinic Traveling Receptionist will follow the NTCCC HIPAA policies and procedures.

## ●Behavioral Health Services Clinician

This position will provide direct counseling and support services to the adult/pediatric population in the Ninilchik Tribal area, providing assistance to those affected by alcohol/substance abuse and behavioral health issues.

More information about Ninilchik Traditional Council vacancies can be found at [https://www.ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov/our-people/#employment\\_and\\_volunteers](https://www.ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov/our-people/#employment_and_volunteers). If you are interested in applying, you have the option to request an online fillable application to be done electronically, or to download and print an application. From there, you can email, fax, mail, or drop off the application at our Administration office. Be sure to include a resume! Please call our office with any other questions.

Phone: 907-567-3313

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Email: [ntc@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:ntc@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)

Mail: P.O. Box 39070 Ninilchik, AK 99639

Location: 15910 Sterling Hwy Ninilchik, AK 99639

The Cheeky Moose

# *The Cheeky Moose*

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**For more information regarding The Cheeky Moose please contact Robin at 235-5900  
or [robin@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:robin@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)**

## Calendar

## December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15pm Yoga (Slow Flow)	2 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative)	3 12:00-5:00 p.m. Teen Center	4
5	6 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12 p.m. Elders Luncheon	7 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	8 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow)	9 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative)	10 2:00 p.m. Tahyiga Book Club 12:00-5:00 p.m. Teen Center	11
12	13 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12 p.m. Elders Luncheon	14 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	15 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow)	16 10:00a.m. RCM 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative)	17 3:30-8:30 p.m. Teen Center	18
19	20 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12 p.m. Elders Luncheon 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	21 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	22 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow) 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	23 All NTC Offices Closed	24 All NTC Offices Closed	25 
26	27 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	28 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	29 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	30 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. Teen Center	31 All NTC Offices Closed	

Calendar

# January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 
2	3 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore)	4 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	5 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow)	6 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.-12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	7 2:00 p.m. Tahyiga Book Club 3:30-8:30 p.m. Teen Center	8
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16	17 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12 p.m. Elders Luncheon	18 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	19 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow)	20 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.-12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	21 3:30-8:30 p.m. Teen Center	22
23/30	24/31 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Renew and Restore) 12 p.m. Elders Luncheon	25 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Vinyasa) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	26 9:30-10:00 a.m. Yoga (Chair) 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Twist Twist Untwist) 5:15-6:15p.m. Yoga (Slow Flow)	27 10:15 –11:15 a.m. Yoga (Hatha) 11:30a.m.-12:30p.m. Yoga (Restorative) 3:30-5:30 p.m. Study Hall	28	29

Ninilchik Traditional Council

P.O. Box 39070

Ninilchik, AK 99639



Phone: (907)567-3313

Fax: (907)567-3308

Email: [ntc@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov](mailto:ntc@ninilchiktribe-nsn.gov)

**Are you planning to move or change your contact information:**

**Let Us Know!**

Tribal Members are encouraged to contact NTC Enrollment Officer Christina Pinnow at the NTC Administrative Office to keep their information up to date.

Those on the general public mailing list may contact the NTC Administrative Office front desk.

Please call (907) 567-3313 to make sure we can stay in touch.

Thank you!