Our Land, Our Culture

Our Iñupiat culture, like any other Alaska Native cultures, is primarily characterized by the natural surroundings of our land. Behaviors and beliefs of the Iñupiat have evolved over centuries of living in their surroundings. For instance, cultures encompassing the coastal areas in Northwest Alaska live and thrive from the fruits of the sea where tenaciousness and skill are essential in landing marine mammal, as far as Siberia to share dances and celebration with natural resources such as the Red Dog Mine which provides a means for livelihood for many of our people. These alone, however, cannot sustain us as we face the many challenges not only of keeping our way of life as it was in the past, but meeting the demands of a changing society. Just in the last decade, our world has changed immensely.

I am grateful to those who honor the traditions of the past, such as Qat'utuq, previously known as the Northwest Native Trade Fair. Our region has a rich oral history of people gathering together from as far as Siberia to share dances and celebration as well as trading goods and foodstuff. The NANA message, “Doing Business in Alaska for 10,000 years” came from our tradition of trading where partnerships were valued for exchanging goods. NANA core values – honesty, integrity, commitment, dignity, and respect – also reflect the value of “a good trade.” NANA also participates in the Arctic Economic Development Summit sponsored by North Slope Borough and Northwest Arctic Borough every two years. This forum allows for an exchange of ideas for the future of the two boroughs. The summit was held in Point Hope last month.

Thanks also to the vision of our Elders in the early 70’s when leading our company in selecting lands for our corporation. Their main concern was subsistence; it is still a priority. We also know that profitability is absolutely necessary in helping us meet the socio-economic needs of our people. Today, our struggle is not only surviving the winter or meeting the challenges of a business world, but in addressing the immense social and economic needs within our region. Therefore, I urge each and every one of us to honor the advice of our Elders to “unite in loves great power and redirect the present conditions we are facing in our lives.” (Suuyuk) Taikuu, and God bless!

NRC President’s Message

Honoring Traditions in a Changing Society

Marie Kasañaaluk Greene

“From time immemorial” is a common phrase for describing the significance of cultural connections with our heritage. Our heritage of living off the land perseveres today as people continue to harvest what they can to carry them through the winter. We also have been blessed with evolved over time through the process of hunting, and child rearing methods to fit a unique environment. Ultimately, it is our belief in God and a respect for all His creation. These are our cultural values passed from generation to generation that help shape our unique culture.

Our culture is defined and exists because of where we live. Culture is a combination of the things that make a group of people unique. These can generally be categorized as either behavior or beliefs. Iñupiat behaviors and beliefs have evolved to make sense of living in this part of the world. Today, our culture is intertwined with the western culture that is foreign to most of us. In order to continue our cultural heritage, we must work together and build cohesive families and communities that govern our villages in a way that strengthens our tribes. The land and its environment help shape the way we live. Our ancestors with all their wisdom and ingenuity designed clothing, tools, hunting, and child rearing methods to fit a unique environment.

But culture goes far beyond responding to a unique environment. Ultimately, it is our belief system that helps make us cohesive as a people. Our understanding of what is right and wrong and doing what is right results in common good of our people. Our values set us apart from other cultures. Our beliefs help define our culture. We are unique people, but it is our connection to our land – our ancestral home – that not only gave distinction to our culture, but also allows us to continue to be who we are.
Returning to school is not an easy decision to make. Can I afford it? How will I do in my classes? Who’s going to take care of my kids so I can attend class? How am I going to balance school, work, family expectations, and provide quality time devoted to my kids enrichment, let alone sleep?

Over the course of the past year, NANA Shareholder Development started noting the number of parents in vocational schools, colleges, and universities. “I didn’t realize there were so many,” stated Shareholder Development Coordinator Stefanie Armstrong.

Termed “non-traditional” students, parents in school have expenses just like everyone else, except now they have tuition, books and fees, and extended childcare costs for evening classes. So why are so many parents returning to school for trade certificates, occupational endorsements, and associate, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees?

WHAT MOTIVATES THEM TO SUCCEED?
23 mothers were surveyed and here’s what they said:

- Want their children to see they can do it: 5
- Grandparent/parent graduated: 3
- Desire to improve oneself/learn: 5
- Want to earn more to provide more for their children: 7
- Parents stated, “It’s not if you’re going, but where you’re going!” 3

Parents Can Also Further Their Education

CHILDCARE
Parents returning to school utilize the resources available to them. Extended family and friends are important resources often helping with picking up, taking home, and caring for children so the parent can study. “Play dates” allow for homework time or neglected housework.

CHOOSING A SCHOOL
This is just as important as finding the funding to pay for school. Some schools provide family housing and some have on campus day care facilities. Online universities, local community colleges, or distance-delivered programs provide a unique way of getting general education courses completed if you decide to transfer to a larger university later on, which may save some time and money in the end.

FUNDING
Many resources are available for working parents that want to return to school. Often times an employer will reimburse tuition costs of an employee if the course falls within the employee’s career pathway and they meet employment policies.

Some colleges provide reduced tuition rates for Alaska Native students; Fort Lewis College and Haskell University are two examples. Student loans can come in handy. Scholarships can be found online; NANA Shareholders can seek a scholarship from Aqqaluk Trust or one of the many other scholarship organizations out there. Single parents may qualify for grants they don’t have to pay back.

For very successful students graduating high school, low-income families can apply to Princeton, Stanford, Harvard, and Yale and if accepted see if they qualify for low-income financial assistance, which would require the student to pay only for housing, books, and fees.

TIME MANAGEMENT
Time management is absolutely essential. Learning to juggle homework due dates, class time, workload, children’s recreational activities, shuttling kids around, making dinner, etc., can get pretty overwhelming. Use your best judgment and know your limit. Selecting classes using a degree sequence sheet can be useful and help prevent unnecessary course completion.

KNOW YOUR LIMIT
Taking too many credits per semester while juggling work and family life can be hazardous to your health both mentally and physically. Dropping a class will put you on academic probation with the school and scholarship probation with the Scholarship Organization, making financial aid assistance difficult to receive.

IN MEMORY
NANA Board of Directors and staff extend their condolences to the family and friends of the following shareholders who have recently passed away.

Harry Ballot, Selawik
Evelyn Barr, Noorvik
Ruth Carter, Noorvik
Lizzie Cleveland, Selawik
Reggie Cleveland, Shungnak

Edwin Cobbin, Buckland
Lilly Curtis, Kotzebue
Stanley Custer, Sr., Shungnak
Martha Downey, Kiana
Joseph Ferreira, Kotzebue

Klarissa Jackson, Shungnak
Robert L. Jackson, Kiana
Gary Lee Anderson, At Large
Mamie Mouse, Noorvik
Carrie K. Uhl, Kotzebue

BELOW: Mothers going back to school: Braedyn, Dawson, and Sonja Schaeffer; Cadell, Braden, and Angie Washington; and Kaila Short, Lucy Lambert, and Mylee McConnell.
A Daughter’s Sacrifice: Natasha Kanuaq Shively’s Journey

One bright morning in May 2008, 17-year-old Natasha Shively and her parents climbed into their car and left Alaska.

Tears spilled onto her cheeks as they drove into the rising sun and she thought about friends she was leaving behind. “It’s always darkest before the dawn,” her mother gently told her. The young woman felt encouraged by her words, because she knew they were leaving Alaska for a very good reason: Mom had been diagnosed with the debilitating illness Multiple Sclerosis and doctors advised that an active lifestyle in a warmer climate could ease symptoms. Natasha talked her mother into moving to a farm where she had family: Nebraska.

The Great Plains. No mountains. No ocean. No salmon. Definitely no Eskimos. Her new home could not be more different from Alaska. But Natasha adapted quickly. Natasha finished high school with good grades and was admitted to the University of Nebraska.

“It was a difficult thing to do,” says her mother, “leave home and start her senior year in a new school. But she’s done quite well here.”

Natasha takes pride in being Iñupiaq.

Her adoptive parents, John and Alexandra McClanahan Shively, raised Natasha with a keen awareness of her heritage. She was a regular at Camp Sivunniyík, where she listened to Elders tell stories and learned how to clean salmon. These days, she practices her markmanship on rabbits and helps her mom work the farm.

She misses the mountains and her friends, but Natasha, now 18, is happy because Nebraska has been good for her mother.

Natasha Kanuaq Marie Hensley Shively is an inspiration to our Iñupiat youth because she embodies our Iñupiat Iltusiqiat values. In moving to another state, she put the health of her mother ahead of her own interests. We can all take pride in knowing that she is an outstanding ambassador for our people in a distant land and hope that, one day, her journey brings her back to Alaska. And we can take to heart Natasha’s words: “Native by birth, proud by choice.”

Helen Tuuqpak Bolen Returns To NANA

NANA is very pleased to announce that Helen Tuuqpak Bolen has rejoined our family as the projects manager for the Village Economic Development Department (VEDD). Helen worked for NANA as a Lands Specialist, as she puts it, “many, many years ago.”

Helen was born in a tent just outside of Kotzebue during an autumn storm. She has been working since she was first hired for a summer job as a 14-year-old student. After school, she worked for the City of Kotzebue for seven years, NANA for three, Mark Air for one, and then she settled into a 21-year career with Maniilaq Association. Luckily for us, she decided to come back to work for NANA.

In her new position, Helen will provide management and support services to the VEDD and will be working with the villages and others on economic development projects.

Shareholder Education: Shareholder Applications

NANA takes pride in its more than 12,000 shareholders from around the world, and is one of a few Alaska Native Corporations that allow those born after December 18, 1971 to enroll for Class D stock. In order to be processed in time for this year’s dividend cycle, your application must be completed by August 31, 2009. To be eligible, you must meet the following requirements:

1. A birth certificate
2. A social security card or signed IRS Form W-9
3. A BAC/CIB card for proof of blood quantum if one parent is Alaska Native but not a NANA shareholder
4. And you must not own or have never been issued any stock in any other regional corporation or village corporation outside of the NANA Region other than by gift or inheritance.

Completed applications will contain the following:

1. A birth certificate
2. A social security card or signed IRS Form W-9
3. A BAC/CIB card for proof of blood quantum if one parent is Alaska Native but not a NANA shareholder
4. A notarized application and agreement to serve as custodian form

More information for adoptive parents, grandparents, and guardians applying for children as well as Enrollment Applications can be found on the web at www.nana.com.

Iñupiat Iltuqsiat

Every Iñupiaq is responsible to all other Iñupiaq for the survival of our cultural spirit and the values and traditions through which it survives. Through our extended family, we retain, teach, and live our Iłtusiqiat way. With guidance and support from Elders, we must teach our children these Iłtusiqiat values:

Knowledge of Language
Knowledge of Family Tree
Sharing
Humility
Respect for Others
Love for Children
Cooperation
Hard Work
Respect for Elders
Respect for Nature
Avoid Conflict
Family Roles
Humor
Spirituality
Domestic Skills
Hunter Success
Responsibility to Tribe

Our understanding of our universe and our place in it is a belief in God and a respect for all His creation.

NANA VISION

NANA will be a respected, profitable, multibillion-dollar corporation.

NANA MISSION

We improve the quality of life for our people by maximizing economic growth, protecting and enhancing our lands, and promoting healthy communities with decisions, actions, and behaviors inspired by our Iñupiat Iltusiqiat and consistent with our Core Principles.

NANA CORE PRINCIPLES

Honesty and integrity will govern our activities. Commitments made will be fulfilled. Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect.
Congress should be pleased that the intent of the SBA program they designed is being fulfilled. As a result of this success, many Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian Organizations, all of whom are subject to the same opportunities under this program, have been able to expand their capacity to serve their people and communities.

The SBA 8(a) program has been an important vehicle to assist us in delivering on our objectives. We recognize it is a privilege to serve our country and NANA works hard to ensure we have operated within the guidelines of the program.

Many people have questions about what the program entails and I encourage you to learn more by visiting www.nana-dev.com; www.nativecontractors.com and www.native8aworks.com.

**Facts about the SBA 8(a) program:**

**What’s the purpose of the 8(a) program?**

Congress established the Small Business Administration’s 8(a) program to help small disadvantaged businesses compete in the American economy and access the Federal procurement market. The program is aimed at businesses “owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.” The 8(a) program makes it possible for small businesses to seek government contracts on a negotiated or limited competition basis, allowing SBA 8(a)-certified companies to gain entry into the marketplace. After nine years, businesses "graduate" from the program. So do businesses whose success enables them to outgrow the size limits.

**How many NANA businesses have 8(a) status?**

Nineteen NANA companies currently have 8(a) status. Three NANA companies have graduated from the program over the years. Our companies perform a range of services from food service and facility management to logistics, natural gas sales, construction, information technology, and engineering. Learn more about our businesses by visiting www.nana-dev.com.

**Why do Alaska Native Corporations have SBA 8(a) status?**

Opportunities to do business with the Federal Government are made available through the 8(a) program to help disadvantaged businesses owned by Federally recognized Native American groups:

- Native American tribes
- Alaskan Native Corporations (ANCs)
- Organizations of Native Hawaiians

Congress has extended special procurement advantages to 8(a) Native America groups including the following provisions:

- Native American groups can negotiate contracts without restriction on the size of the contract.
- Native American groups can own more than one 8(a) business.

**Why did Congress put in place these special provisions?**

Most 8(a) business owners are individuals or families. For these companies, the 8(a) program offers mentoring and other assistance. The program limits the size of negotiated Federal contracts to $3 million.

The extended procurement advantages awarded to Native American tribes, Native Hawaiians and ANCs were made because our benefits need to be spread in NANA’s case, among 12,000 shareholders. We do not have a contract size limitation because again, we serve a large number of people rather than an individual.

- The program is graduating a number of substantial, well-financed and well managed Native companies that continue to contribute to the economic development of their disadvantaged populations and communities.
- Native American owners benefit from their businesses’ participation in the program. Their 8(a)-assisted businesses are contributing profits, jobs, and much-needed business knowledge to disadvantaged communities.
- For disadvantaged Native populations, increased economic self-sufficiency reduces dependency on the Federal Government for welfare-type assistance.
Leadership And Development, A New NMS Program

NMS’ focus on employing NANA shareholders continues to expand. The increased number of NANA shareholders at NMS is a strong testimonial to this effort. Since January of 2006, the number of NANA shareholders actively employed with NMS increased by 123%, growing to 285 shareholders in August 2008.

In early 2009, NMS began the Shareholder Development Program, which launched the NMS companywide Leadership Development program. The focus of the Leadership & Education for NANA Shareholders (LENS) program is to equip NANA Shareholders with the skills to work in the corporate world and advance into executive and senior level positions. The first course in LENS is the Ready for Management (RFM) course. RFM is designed to develop our internal employees who express interest in future leadership opportunities. We know that many of our employees aspire to move into leadership roles and this program is designed to help them.

“NMS seeks to ensure that every shareholder who is interested in leadership has the opportunity to succeed,” said LENS program developer Bill Fremel, NMS Vice President of Human Resources.

NANA Shareholder Protects Slope Workers

Workforce Spotlight: George Nunasraq Hadley

NANA Shareholder Name: George Nunasraq Hadley

After a 2006 NMS recruiting trip in Buckland, George Nunasraq Hadley was hired. Initially hired on as a pipeline observer, he got to know a number of retired law enforcement officials working at Prudhoe Bay. When he heard about the NMS Security Internship, he asked around and everyone told him that this was a great opportunity. Only a few NANA shareholders each year earn the opportunity to attend the UAF Tanana Chiefs Conference Law Enforcement Academy and George was one of them.

George began a rigorous training program that was like a full time job. Thirteen weeks, eight hours a day, with classes in traffic accident investigation, firearms training, emergency vehicle operation, protecting crime scenes, and defensive tactics. He also participated in “Ride-A-Longs” with the Fairbanks Police Department. Staying in a dorm with all the other law enforcement students, George said he missed home but coped with it by buying an airline ticket home one weekend.

The State of Alaska Physical Fitness Standards Section states, “During and after periods of physical exertion, a law enforcement officer must be able to perform essential tasks with vigor, alertness, and little or no fatigue.”

“We had to be able to run three miles in 15 minutes,” George said. Scheduled exercise times were given to cadets each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Nowadays, George’s typical day of work is 11.5 hours with a half-hour lunch. He wakes up at 5:00 a.m. and is usually at work by 5:45 depending on where in Prudhoe Bay he will be working. In Prudhoe West he patrols in a truck. In the winter he has a “gear bag” he is required to carry, which holds hats, gloves, snow pants, winter boots, and a sleeping bag. All are necessary in the harsh winter conditions.

Besides patrolling and securing the multimillion-dollar oilfield in Alaska, security officers are often first on the scene for medical emergencies. George left UAF with 16 college credits, an Alaska Police Standards Council Certification, and a full-time career.

“I am drug free, I provide for my family, and I can go hunting and fishing on my time off,” boasts George.

Mile High Internship

By: Megan Jones, Ki, LLC Intern

As a NANA shareholder, I know that NANA offers internships with their companies, I qualified and am currently interning at Ki, LLC in Colorado Springs. As soon as I arrived here, I was treated as if I were part of the family. I felt at home right away.

I learned that Ki writes proposals for the military and I imagine it takes a lot of printing and organization based on the amount of copies that would have to be made. The main part of the proposal the government looks at is the past performance of the contractor, so I can imagine the difficulty of trying to get the first contract.

I’ve learned that running a business is an instinct that a person must have. Education can only take you so far. There is an intuition that a person must follow. Motivation also plays a big part in business and I believe you can accomplish anything and everything if you want to. I am very grateful for this opportunity. It made me realize the kind of benefits that NANA gives to their shareholders.
Growing up 3,000 miles from the region, I have had little knowledge of what life in Alaska for an Iñupiaq is like. My Aaka (great grandmother) was from the village of Deering, but like many others, she was sent to the Chemawa Boarding School in Oregon. That is how my family came to live in a state so far from our homeland.

Now, as a senior in college at Southern Oregon University, I have been granted the opportunity to return to my roots in Alaska as an intern for NANA Development Corp.

Being in Alaska for the first time has been quite an experience. I have learned a few Iñupiaq words, tried maktak for the first time, gone fishing, visited the region, met family and made friends; all while gaining business experience through my internship. Throughout my stay in Alaska, I have tended to be observant of my surroundings through sheer curiosity and drive to learn about my family’s Native ways. While working in the NANA office, I noticed that the NANA motto is, “Doing Business for 10,000 Years.” While becoming oriented with NANA, I learned that NANA had only been in existence for 35 years. I wondered to myself, “Why would their motto be one thing if another thing is true?”

I was able to find the answer to the question when I had the opportunity to travel to Kotzebue. Through my journey, I was able to attend Qat’ut Trade Fair, visit Sisualik and meet long lost family and friends that I’ve only known by name or seen in pictures.

I learned that Qat’ut (bringing people together) is a continuing tradition that has been happening for thousands of years. Originally held in Sisualik, located on a long and narrow spit of land about 10 miles northwest of Kotzebue, the trade fair was a time for our people and other inhabitants from outlying villages to put aside differences and celebrate, dance, trade, play games, visit, and feast. Sisualik was an opportune site for the summer festivity because it is situated at the mouths of three rivers, providing an ample amount of marine food and land accessibility for travelers. The trade fair was initially held to bring together the people of the region to garner necessary goods to survive the harsh Arctic winter.

Today, the Qat’ut Trade Fair is held in Kotzebue. It is a tradition that has been carried on since the beginning of our people’s time. This year’s Qat’ut, held July 6-7, brought many local artists displaying their handicrafts, traditional games, foods, and Eskimo dancing late into the night. The Trade Fair also brought much socialization and enjoyment for attendees and participants alike.

By witnessing Qat’ut’s history and NANA’s present day business practices conjoined, I now have a better understanding as to why NANA chooses to convey the message, “Doing Business for 10,000 Years.”

The Northwest Arctic and North Slope Boroughs hosted the sixth Arctic Economic Development Summit, held in Point Hope July 15 through 17. The summit is held every other year and has traditionally been hosted in Kotzebue for the Northwest Arctic Borough and in Barrow for the North Slope Borough, alternating every other meeting. For the first time, the summit was hosted in Point Hope at the Tikigaq School, where the City of Point Hope, the Native Village of Point Hope, the Tikigaq Corporation, the Point Hope Elders Council, and the North Slope Borough welcomed nearly 250 participants.

This was an outstanding summit and an excellent opportunity to improve communications and explore the business and resource potential that exists in the Northwest Arctic and North Slope Boroughs. The Northwest Arctic Borough will be hosting the next summit in 2011. For more detailed information about the 2009 Arctic Economic Development Summit, please visit www.nana.com.
Cabin Could Save Your Life

Storm Coming? A Marked Trail Or Shelter Cabin Could Save Your Life

Noatak Search and Rescue maintains the trail system and improves the shelter cabins. Everyone who uses the trails is very grateful to the modern trail system originated in 1971, when the land claims settlement was negotiated, Borough leaders wanted to make sure public easements were guaranteed, so they clearly marked the traditional dog-sledding trail system. Today, the Borough is making a concerted effort to preserve the trail system by increasing funding to pay for staking trails and encouraging people who have traveled them to volunteer to do the work of staking. Both U.S. Park Service and Fish and Game support the preservation project with funds and materials.

The trail system and shelter cabins are very important to the NANA Region because they guarantee our ability to travel safely and freely around our lands. These trails are part of our property rights. If you ever notice a stake that has fallen over, please take a moment to drive it back into the ground. NANA, NWA Borough, and everyone who uses the trails are very grateful to the people who have worked so hard to protect our trail system and improve the shelter cabins.

If you have questions about shelter cabins or trail staking efforts, please contact Bobby Schaeffer at the Northwest Arctic Borough at (907) 442-2500.

UPDATE US:

If you, your friends, or your family members have recently relocated, please send us the following information to keep our database up-to-date and effective!

Please print the following information and include your signature to ensure validity.

All changes must be in writing. Please do not leave your change of address on voicemail. Thank you.

Name __________________________

Address ________________________

________________________________

________________________________

Phone Number ____________________

Social Security Number _____________

Birth Date _________________________

Signature _________________________

Mail this information to:

NANA Regional Corporation, Inc.
Attn: Joanne Harris
Shareholder Records Manager
P.O. Box 49, Kotzebue, Alaska 99572

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NANA Shareholder Shoots
TIME Magazine Cover

We should all be proud of NANA shareholder, Brian Adams, son of Ron and Virginia Adams. On July 7, TIME Magazine set up a photo shoot with Brian and Governor Sarah Palin, after she officially announced her resignation July 3. What Brian did not expect was that TIME would decide to use a photo from the shoot on the cover.

“I was excited and happy but I needed to see it for it to hit me. It felt a lot more real when TIME posted the cover on their Web site,” he said.

Brian had worked his way up from a photographer’s assistant after graduating high school to a freelance photographer who has had work submitted to popular magazines like Runner’s World, People and TIME Magazine.

“It’s my art—my favorite thing to do to make me feel good,” Brian said.

Participating In The U.S. Census
Gives Inupiat A Voice

Every 10 years since 1790, the United States Census Bureau has counted how many people are living in our country. The last census was conducted in the year 2000. The next is scheduled for April 1, 2010. It is very important for our people to participate in the Census because accurate information about our community gives the Inupiat a voice in setting federal and state government policies.

Results from the U.S. Census are used to assess the needs of communities and can help our villages obtain federal and state funding for schools, medical facilities, road work, and other publicly funded services. Census results are also used to determine how Congressional seats, electoral votes, and election districts are assigned.

When you participate in the U.S. Census, your privacy is thoroughly protected. You are not required to give your name and, in fact, the 2010 Census will not even be publicly available for inspection until the year 2082.

So when the U.S. Census is conducted next April, do your part. Answer for the Inupiat.