

Native Village of Kotzebue 2021 Annual Report



NATIVE VILLAGE OF KOTZEBUE COUNCIL

Tarruq Pete Schaeffer, Chair — 2021-2024
Maqik Toni Raye Bergan, Vice Chair — 2021-2024
Agnik Paula Octuck, Secretary — 2018-2022
Nauyaq Wanda Baltazar, Member — 2018-2022
Niulana Cindy Fields, Member — 2021-2024
Naunqaq Cyrus Harris, Member — 2019-2023
Qimatchuq Gia Hanna, Member — 2019-2023
Ataᅇaiyiq Pearl Greist, Elder Representative — 2022

KOTZEBUE ELDERS COUNCIL

Tarruq Pete Schaeffer, Chairman
Mamaaq Linda Joule, Vice Chair
Suuyuk Lena Hanna, Secretary/Treasurer
Naunqaq Cyrus Harris
Ataᅇaiyiq Pearl Greist
Quakaliquaq Raymond Coppock
Agnik Polly Schaeffer

COMMITTEES & ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Finance

All Members

Policy

All Members

Education

Paula Octuck
Gia Hanna
Wanda Baltazar
Contact: Paeton Schaeffer

Housing

All Members
Contact: Judy Huss

Enrollment

Paula Octuck
Pearl Greist
Cyrus Harris
Contact: Connie Hunnicutt

Social Services

Pete Schaeffer
Gia Hanna
Pearl Greist
Contact: Bibiana Scott

Maniilaq Association

Gia Hanna
Toni Raye Bergan (Alt.)

NIHA

Cyrus Harris

Chukchi Advisory

Paula Octuck

AK Tribal-Interior Budget Council

Paula Octuck
Gia Hanna (Alt.)



Siikauraq Whiting: Executive Director & Tarruq Schaeffer: Council Chair

The past 2 years have been challenging with the onset of the Covid pandemic but with mandated safety measures, teamwork, and commitment to our Tribe, our Council and Administration will continue to serve our People.



The Native Village of Kotzebue's Mission is : ***The Qikiqtagruṅmiut, Forever Sovereign, will Live our Iñupiaq way of Life for all Generations.*** Iñupiat Iḷitqusiāt will continue to guide our decisions with our programs and projects. It is imperative that we continue to live, learn and teach the Inupiaq way of life.

With guidance from our Council, the Administration lead by Siikauraq Whiting are reviewing

programs and projects to update and maximize efficiencies. We recently separated the Education/Nikaitchuat position so that the Education Specialist will utilize their time to assist our Higher Education services as well as to support local cultural programs such as the Kotzebue Elders Council, Camp Sisualik and more. The Nikaitchuat Tribal School Director can now focus 100% of her time on delivering quality Inupiaq Language services to our future leaders. Another change this year was hiring a Deputy Director to help support administrative services. As the Tribe grows, we will work on strategic planning to provide a road map for Administration to make improvement with services.

There has been an influx of federal funding because of the Covid pandemic. While these federal funding sources have assisted in helping our Tribal Members, the funding will not last forever. We are in the process of maximizing our efficiencies to maintain and grow services we provide for our Members.

We are humbled to serve our Tribal members with the services we offer. Quyanna to all the Staff and ARPA Team at the Native Village of Kotzebue for going out of your way to assist each other to better serve our People. Taikuulapiaq to the Kotzebue Elders Council as well as the NVOK Council for their leadership, hard work and determination to let our Qikiqtagruṅmiut be happy, healthy Inupiaq People!

Tarruq Schaeffer, NVOK Chair

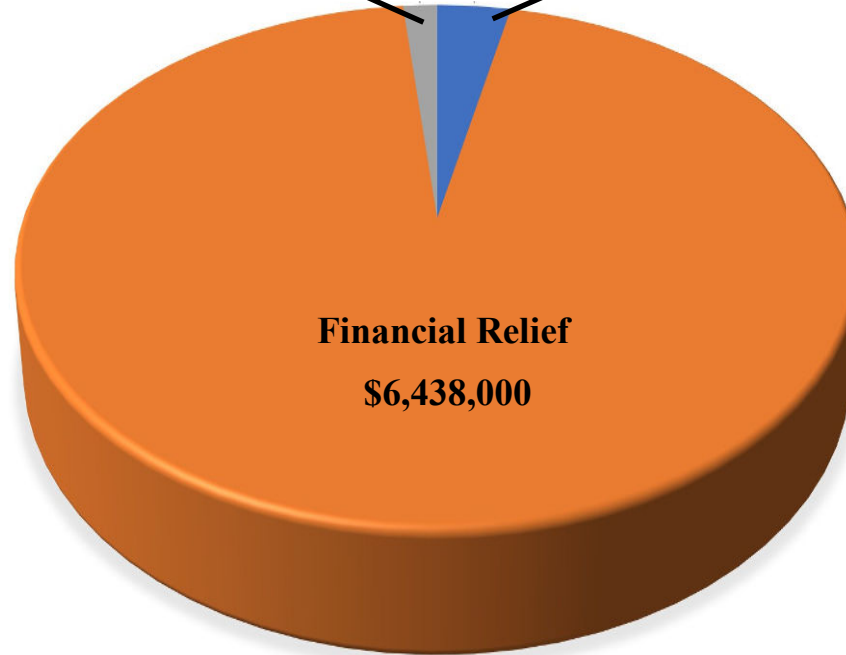
Siikauraq Whiting, Executive Director

Finance Department — Qiputaq Judith Hassinger: Finance Director, Maqik Catherine Greene: Accounting Manager

Native Village of Kotzebue 2021 American Rescue Plan expenditures through December 31, 2021

<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Remaining Budget</u>
\$20,222,426	\$6,773,099	\$13,449,327

Quarantine Support — \$105,974 Administration — \$229,125



Native Village of Kotzebue 2021 Program expenditures through December 31, 2021 — Total: \$2,868,505

General Fund - \$292,687

Aide to Tribal Government - \$184,670

Social Services — \$182,012

Iglut - \$195,865

Housing - \$756,401

Realty — \$135,360

Environmental - \$203,993

Transportation/Roads - \$239,396

Hunter Support - \$76,627

OSG Cares - \$253,371

Education & Nikaitchuat - \$348,123

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the *American Rescue Plan Act* of 2021 (H.R. 1319) into law. The Native Village of Kotzebue received \$20,222,426 from the Department of Treasury to assist with the economic and related impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Tribal Council has so far dedicated funds to financial relief and cleaning supplies for the membership. The Administration created an ARPA Team to assist with implementing these activities. The ARPA Team also assisted with NANA and NIHA food distribution box program. The team includes: Clara Walker, Muk Viveiros, Beverly Hensley, Erleen Morris and Bessie Lane.



Enrollment — Aqamak Connie Hunnicutt: Enrollment Director

Four Hundred and Twenty-five (425) new tribal members were enrolled to the Native Village of Kotzebue during 2021. Thirteen (13) tribal members relinquished their tribal membership to enroll into tribes of their residence or lineal descent. Heartfelt condolences are shared with families and friends of tribal members that perished this past year.

Tribal Membership is available to individuals who meet the following membership eligibility requirements:

Tribal Membership is automatic for the individuals who signed the petition of incorporation on May 1, 1936 which is known as the base roll.

Individuals are direct lineal descendants of a base roll member.

Individuals that are of Native American descent and whom is at least eighteen (18) years of age and has been a resident of Kotzebue for sixty (60) days or more and intends to live in Kotzebue.

Individuals that are of Native American descent that is not enrolled to any other tribe, band or community and has relinquished their membership from the tribe, band or community in which they were enrolled and has been a resident of Kotzebue for sixty (60) days or more and intends to live in Kotzebue.

With the exception of base roll members, no person shall be enrolled to the Native Village of Kotzebue/Kotzebue IRA who has not applied for membership; therefore, incomplete applications will not be processed until all requirements are met.

Required documents that must be submitted with an application for enrollment are as follows:

- Ancestor Chart/Family Tree
- Certificate of Indian Blood Request Form
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Copy of Social Security Number
- Copy of Adoption decree (if person(s) being enrolled is/are adopted)
- Copy of Membership Relinquishment (if applicant was enrolled into another Tribe)
- Copy of Regional Corporation Shareholder Verification (i.e. ASRC, NANA, etc.)

Please direct questions regarding tribal enrollment to the Native Village of Kotzebue's Tribal Enrollment office at 442-3467 or 1 800 442-3467 extension 210.



Tribal Family Services - Kuuqisaana Bibianna Scott: TFS Director, Iriguurak Alice Melton Barr: TFS Specialist

The Native Village of Kotzebue (NVOK) Tribal/Family Services (TFS) focus is to ensure that our Tribal members have their essential needs met. TFS strives to promote stability, safety, wellness, cultural preservation, and also provides a wide range of services to our Tribal member children/families, while adhering to state and federal regulations. Programs within the TFS Department include:

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)/Child in Need of Aid (CINA):

TFS provides confidential advocacy and intervention services on behalf of tribal member/eligible member children who are at risk of being taken into protective custody by the State of Alaska, or who have already entered protective custody. TFS also advocates on behalf of immediate and extended member families who are impacted when Protective Services Reports (PSRs) are received by the Office of Children's Services (OCS). During calendar year 2021, TFS responded to 50 ICWA notices and had 70 active open CINA cases where the Tribe intervened. These open active CINA cases span from Kotzebue, throughout Alaska and the lower-48 states.

General Assistance (GA):

The GA program provides financial assistance payment to eligible Tribal members for essential needs of food, clothing, shelter and utilities. The goal of the GA program is to increase self-sufficiency. This is accomplished through specific steps an individual will have to take to increase independence. To be eligible for GA, all applicants must apply concurrently for financial assistance from other state, tribal, local or other Federal agency program for which they might be eligible. During the 2021 calendar year, 64 applications were received, of which 25 were approved.

Burial Assistance (BA):

The BA program provides funds to assist with the burial expenses of Tribal members who have resided in the Kotzebue Service Area for the last consecutive six months of their life. During calendar year 2021, a total of 19 applications met the criteria for approval. It is important to note that this program follows BIA regulations and is a secondary payer for burial expenses.

Emergency Assistance (EA):

This program can provide directly assistance to Tribal members whose homes suffered from personal property damage as a result of fire, flood or other catastrophes. Eligible Tribal members can use funds for essential needs of food, shelter, and utilities when other resources are not available. During calendar year 2021, no applications were received.



Housing — Agnatchaiq Judy Huss: Housing Director, Aullaqsruaq Kristen Walker: Housing Specialist

Under The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) for 2021, the Tribes Housing Department provided Housing Assistance for Winter Emergency and Iglut Senior Apartment Rental Assistance and maintenance as needed.

Housing Assistance: The Housing Assistance for Rehabilitation provides a specific scope of work for renovation to eligible applicants based off assessment and an approved scoring system. Rehabilitation projects were on hold in 2021 due to COVID and staff shortage.

We received twenty (20) applicants with eighteen (18) that qualified.

Winter Emergency: The Winter Emergency Program was available from October 1 - April 1 during the winter months. This Program pays for any (heating, plumbing,) emergency the tribal member may have.

Thirteen (13) Tribal Members received serviced through the program.

Iglut Senior Apartments: The Iglut Senior Apartments are designed to provide safe, affordable housing for independent living elders of the Nana region who meet the eligibility requirements. There are 16 total units. Rent is based off income verification and yearly fair market rent. Low income Alaskans who are 62 years of age or older or are disabled may qualify for Iglut.

Two (2) units were filled within the last year.

We have requirements for all of the housing programs we provide, including:

- Deed of conveyance/ Quitclaim Deed
- If not the property owner: A long-term lease agreement with property owner is necessary with a minimum of 25 + years.
- Copy of Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) card or enrollment card.
- Income tax return
- Other income documents, such as: pay stubs, proof of public assistance, social security benefits, native corporation dividends, etc.



Realty — Saqik Peter H. Lie: Realty Director

The Native Village of Kotzebue, Realty Department, administers and manages 353 Native allotment parcels and 51 restricted Townsite lots. Our office provides the following real estate services for the landowners of these restricted properties:

**Advertised Sale
Leases**

**Negotiated Sales
Mortgages**

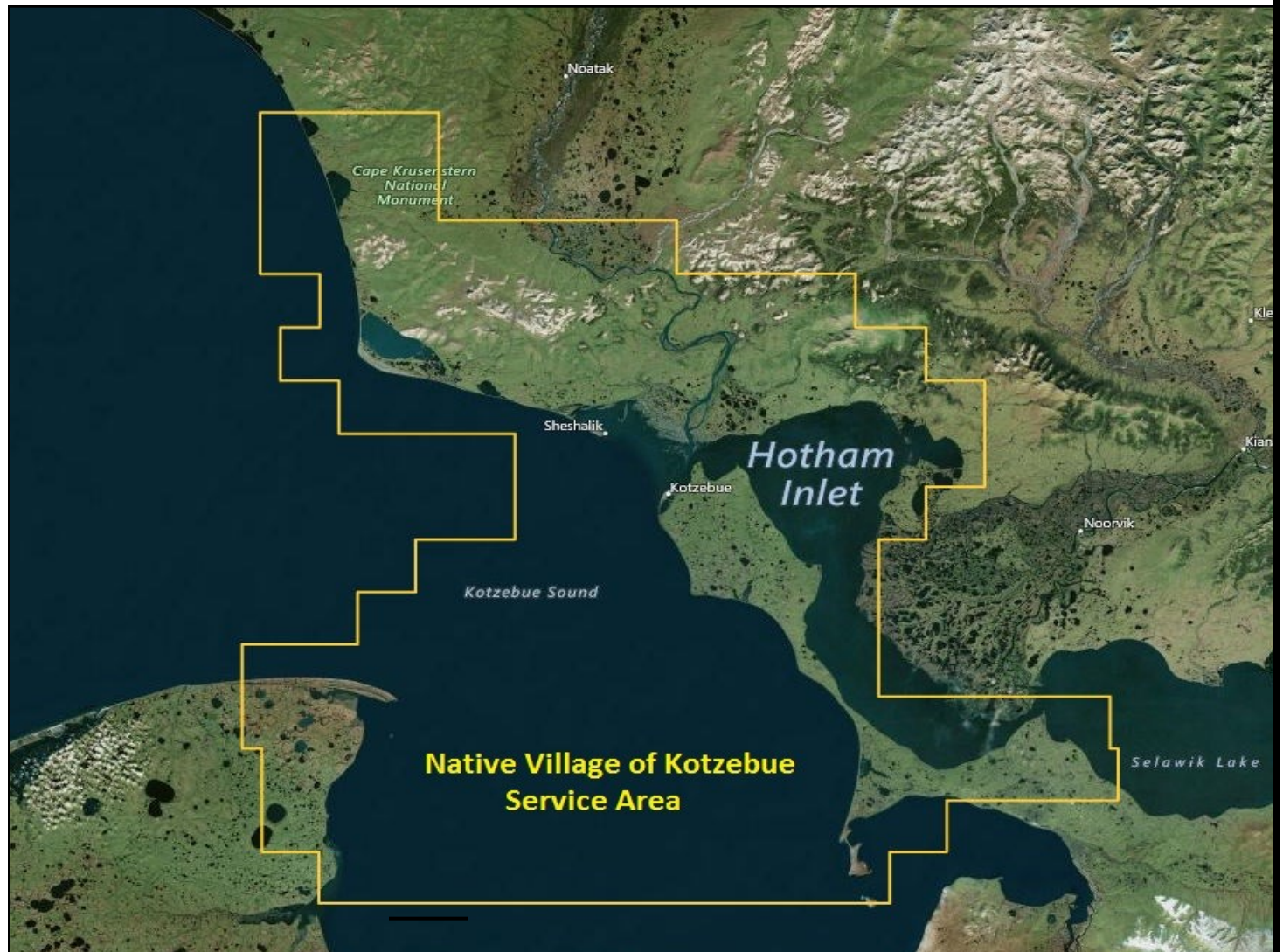
**Gift Deeds
Revocable Use Permits**

**Rights-of -Way
Subdivisions**

**Unresolved Rights
Removal of Restriction**

Our office also provides estate planning and probate services. We work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Probates and Estate Services, and the Office of Hearings and Appeals to provide them with the information and documents required to conduct a probate hearing. An Administrative Law Judge will then issue a probate decision for any Native allotment parcel(s) and/or restricted Townsite lot(s) an individual owned.

It is highly recommend that everyone considers estate planning. We are available to assist with drafting Last Will and Testaments as well as other options, please contact us and we can provide additional information.



Environmental Program — Pamiuqtuuq Alex Whiting: Environmental Program Director

2021 was the Tribes twenty-fourth year of its Environmental Program (EP) funded by the U.S. EPA IGAP, which is integrated with other project specific grants. The EP undertakes activities that relate to the environment its members depend on. While COVID still hampered field research, we were able to carry out some limited water monitoring for harmful algae blooms and to test out a mooring that will be used to collect a variety of water based samples continuously throughout the summer months. The following is a brief summary of activities the EP undertook in 2021: Completed the feature film of our cooperative sea ice research project Ikaagvik Sikukun (Ice Bridges) - posted on Youtube: search Ice Edge Ikaagvik Sikukun and you will find it there, we also have a link on the Tribes Facebook page. We are cooperating on a children's book on Kotzebue Sound ringed seals being put together by the EP in cooperation with Kathy Frost and Donna Hauser, with contributions by Cyrus Harris and John and Pearl Goodwin – all of whom have participated in seal research with the EP. The book is expected to be completed and published in 2022 and will be made widely available to the community and schools. The EP participated in many web-based conferences with the opportunity to present about Co-produced research (integrating western scientists and Indigenous people), tribal research protocols and the value of Indigenous Knowledge. The EP continues to review and comment on NEPA documents and related management and development proposals, like the Am-ler Road and NPR-A management plans, in order to convey the interests our members have in the fish, wildlife, and other resources, that could be impacted by these projects. The EP cooperated with the Wildlife Conservation Society to develop a research project funded by the Moore Foundation to continue our use of acoustic recorders to document the presence and timing of marine mammals. This project will focus on the area between Cape Espenburg and Cape Krusenstern. These efforts in the past have uncovered winter use of Kotzebue Sound by harbor porpoise and a sustained daily presence of killer whales during late summer and early fall in the area off of Cape Krusenstern. The area around Cape Espenburg has not been studied year-round using acoustic recorders, so it should reveal new insights into marine mammal use in this area. The Moore Foundation also funded a pilot project for the EP to research the phytoplankton community and cyanobacteria blooms near Kotzebue in cooperation with Columbia University. Cyanobacteria blooms have been increasing in the area since at least 2008 due to warming waters and increased nutrient runoff caused by increased precipitation and thawing permafrost. These changes can have significant effects on the marine ecology of Kotzebue Sound and can introduce toxins that can get into the food that we eat and harm fish and wildlife. The EP is continuing to build our capacity to monitor these blooms and their associated toxins. The EP continues to cooperatively publish papers on the research being accomplished, this year most papers focused on the Ikaagvik Sikukun project. The EP is working on posting all the past research papers it was involved with on the Tribes website: Kotzebueira.org/environmental, so they will be easily accessible to our members and other interested people. Newsletters, Facebook posts and other ways of informing our members of ongoing activities will be continued.

The work the EP does would not be possible without the support of the Tribal Council and the community, in addition to the participation of our members in research activities—and the EP will continue to advocate for the environment and the resources our Tribal citizens depend on.

Quyanaqpaq!



Tribal Transportation Program — Anugi Noah Naylor: Transportation Director

Cape Blossom Road and Port

The Native Village of Kotzebue continues to work with the City of Kotzebue, the Northwest Arctic Borough and the State of Alaska Department of Public Facilities on the Cape Blossom Road and Port. Members of each of the organizations were able to tour the ice road leading to the gravel pile at the Cape. This pile along with the one next to the City of Kotzebue Bail fill will be used to complete a road to Sadie Creek. We are working with the City of Kotzebue to identify grants that will allow us to fund the second phase of the Road to Cape Blossom.

Cape Blossom Port Development

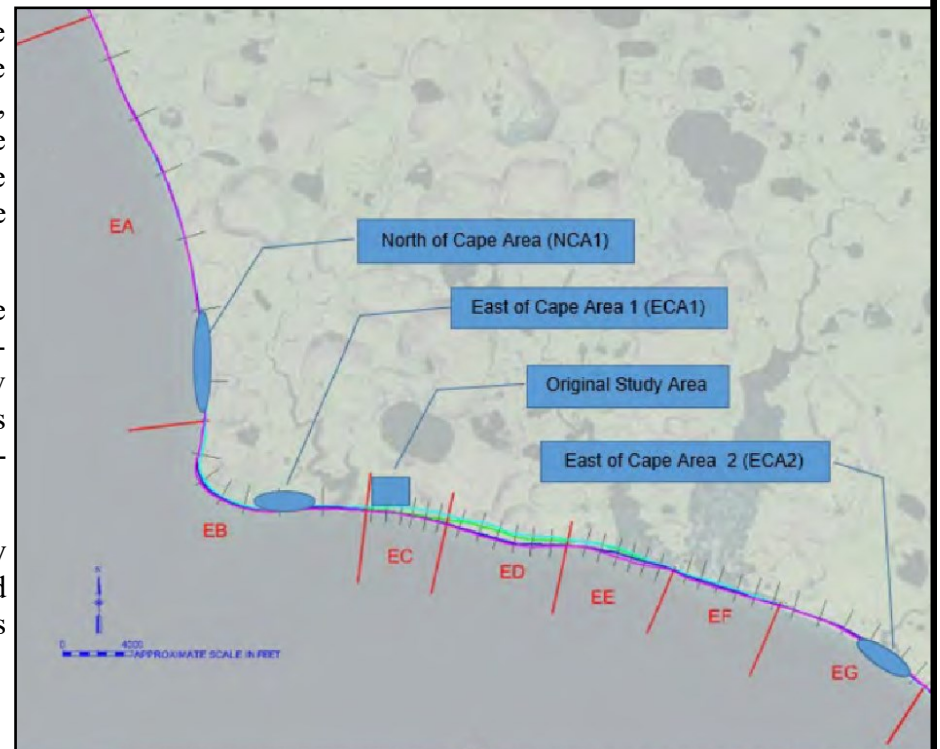
Meetings continue between the Tribe, the City of Kotzebue, and United States Army Corp of Engineers, to discuss the Navigation Improvement Technical Report. The Technical Report discusses the condition of four potential port sites in the area: the Original Site, East of Cape 1 (ECA1), North of Cape Area (NCA1), and East of Cape Area 2 (ECA2).

- **Original Site:** Since 2012, at least one reach of the coastline east of Cape Blossom has been receding at a significant rate as described in the Navigation Improvement Technical Report. The erosion rate in this reach threatens development of a proposed port at this location by increasing estimated design and construction costs, but more specifically, the ever-changing site conditions significantly increased and made it difficult to estimate with confidence operation and maintenance costs for the potential port project.

- **North of Cape Area (NCA) 1:** The coastline immediately north of Cape Blossom and the south end of Coastal reach EA appears relatively stable with a 50-yr land loss estimate that was not measurable (see Table 10), however the navigation channel and near-shore connection lengths (see Figure ES-2) are typically longer than locations east of the cape. Also, the shoreline is much less protected from waves making safe access to the coastline more difficult than areas east of the cape.

- **East of Cape Area (ECA) 1:** The coastline immediately east of Cape Blossom, coastal reach EB extends to the former area included in the former GI study (USACE 2019 and 2020). This reach has a relatively low erosion rate with a 50- yr land loss estimate of 175 ft. The bathymetry is also favorable which results in the shortest navigation channel and near-shore connection lengths of any of the reaches (see Figure ES-2).

- **East of Cape Area (ECA) 2:** The coastline farthest east within the study area in reach EG has a low erosion rate with a not measurable 50-yr land loss estimate. The navigation channel and near-shore connection lengths are longer than at ECA1 (see Figure ES-2).



Nikaitchuat Iḷisaġviat — Suksran Candice Baldwin: Nikaitchuat Director

Mission: Inillaglugu kañiqsimman Iñupiaġuliptigun kisuutilaaqput, kammakkun suli iḷisautilugich nakuulhanik iḷisauralhum taimuġa. To nurture and cultivate our Iñupiaq identity by strengthening our language and culture, with respect and dignity, while encouraging a lasting love of learning.

GOALS:

- Instruct students on cultural knowledge using the traditional teaching methods of observation and practice to students age 3 to 8.
- Create conversationally fluent youth in the Inupiaq language for both the school and family settings.
- Teach traditional human relation skills that prepare youth to be tolerant members of a global society.

As Iñupiat, it is our responsibility to carry out the dreams of our people to preserve our identity, and one way we are doing this is through teaching our Iñupiaq culture and language here at Nikaitchuat Iḷisaġviat. Nikaitchuat teaching methods are not standard methods of like a public school; however, there are thematic units that are selected for the appropriate age groups. The units are considered levels, each level is based upon the seasonal cycle of the Iñupiaq culture and lifestyle, performance categories like; knowledge of language, knowledge of traditional culture and history, environment and geography, skills for a healthy lifestyle, respect for nature, the arts, mathematics, etc. One of the goals this year is to establish the levels by having the curriculum published, distributed, and taught. It has always been the vision of the Kotzebue Vital Team (grassroots volunteers) for the school to grow through Level V and beyond. We believe, while we are at the preschool age, we will not stand idle, we will do what it takes to get there.

Our Lead teacher is Pañagin Nina Nanouk with an assistant teacher- trainee Qutan Lambert, and teacher-aid Qatlu Pauline Nelson. With the work and dedication our team puts into the classroom made this year wonderful and I appreciate their work this year. During the 2021-2022 School year we were able to open with in person learning as per the updated Covid-19 Mandates and low number of cases we remained open all year. The school only closed down 4 times due to close contacts in the school. We currently have 18 children enrolled in Nikaitchuat and are functioning in compliance with the health and safety mandates set by the City of Kotzebue and the Northwest Arctic Borough. This year we have (4) returning students on their second year, (1) on their third year enrolled, and (13) new students.



Nikaitchuat Iḷisaġviat

Second Generation Students: Included of the 18 students are three 2nd generation students. Igluġuq Veronica Ferguson and Panitchiaq Hyatt where first year student when the doors opened in 1998. The three students that are second generation this year include Panitchiaq Hayatt son Qaunnaq, he is a second year returning student, Qutan Lamberts daughter Panitchiaq is a new enrollee and so is Igluġuq Veronica Ferguson Daughter Aliqataaq Ferguson.

During the school year we practiced all set mandates in the classroom and keep our school functioning under regulations with social distancing, sanitizing, and proper handwashing. In the classroom this school year, we taught the students about wildlife, dog mushing, animal homes, singing, animal tracks, and making aqutuk, weather and the seasonal changing signs. The kids continue to go to the Elders Long Term Care to sing on Wednesday's starting April 13th, and we do other activities like ice fishing, working on fish and game when available, gathering berries in season and learning about edible plants. We continue to implement the parent volunteer program to ensure a volunteer guest visitor comes to the school. The parents of our students have put in a lot of effort to volunteer their time in the classroom this school year as guest visitors as well as sharing their knowledge in cultural activities. Quyana for all your help!



Education — Quiññaq Paeton Schaeffer: Education Director

My name is Quiññaq Paeton Schaeffer and I started in the Education Specialist position in March 2022. Since then I have started coordinating Camp Sisualik which is scheduled for July 18th – 29th for 8th – 12th grade students. Our program is working with the Northwest Arctic Borough School District and the Chukchi campus so that the students who attend Camp Sisualik receive high school, or college credit. I met with the Arctic Remote Energy Networks Academy (ARENA) coordinator to plan a Youth/Elder event here in Kotzebue to discuss and learn more about remote and rural energy sources and what affects them. I will be coordinating the Elders Council meetings, and plan on creating a Youth Council. This year is very exciting as I plan for all these different events for the Elders and Youth in our community.

HIGHER EDUCATION – The Higher Education Program provides financial aid for eligible members in the amount of \$1,400.00 per semester for a full time Undergraduate student, and \$750.00 for a part time Undergraduate student. If funds are available, \$300.00 will be distributed to students seeking their Master’s Degree if they have not exceeded their five-year funding limit. In 2021 we distributed a total amount of \$37,940.00 for students seeking higher education.

ADULT VOCATIONAL TRAINING / DIRECT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM – The Adult Vocational Training Program provides enrolled members of the Native Village of Kotzebue a \$1,500.00 grant to help pay for associated costs in attending an accredited vocational technical institution. These programs will help students to gain the skills and training necessary to secure employment.

The Direct Employment Assistance Program provides eligible tribal members who currently reside in Kotzebue a twice in a life-time grant not to exceed the amount of \$3,000.00 that are transitioning to new or full-time employment. Transitional costs may include: transportation/travel, first month’s rent or current utility costs, household staples such as groceries and basic necessities for the first month, and employment related needs such as professional work attire, work gear or tools specific to job duties. Both of these programs totaled up to \$16,863.00 distributed in 2021.



Hunter Support Program — Qichaq Martha Hensley: Executive Assistant

PURPOSE: To provide and share traditional subsistence Niqipiaq (foods) with enrolled Tribal Members 60 years or older who reside within Kotzebue jurisdiction.

To participate in the Elders Traditional Food Hunter Support Program the hunter (applicant) must be a Tribal member of a Village IRA Tribe and must be a resident of Kotzebue for 30 days or more. The hunter must be the captain, or registered boat/snow machine owner, or have permission from the vehicle owner, and submit a copy of the boat or snow machine registration paperwork that will be used on the hunt from the captain, or vehicle owner.

All hunters are required to complete a program report for participation, and the program report must be signed and verified by a village elder who received a share of the hunt and returned to a staff member at the Native Village of Kotzebue. The hunter support program is designed to share Niqipiaq subsistence foods with our elder tribal members living in Kotzebue. The village residents have their own program given through their respective tribal offices. It is a program where TRUST to do the right thing is dependent on the hunter.

Hunters who meet the eligibility requirements are limited to one drum of gas each for spring marine mammal and fall caribou hunting and 15 gallons of gas for the winter or spring duck hunting season and summer berry picking/fishing. Depending on funding availability, ammo and oil is provided.



Native Village of Kotzebue - P.O. Box 296 - Kotzebue, Alaska

KOTZEBUE – ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – 442-3467 – FAX 442-2162

NAME	EXT	NAME	EXT
Siikauraq Whiting, Executive Director	202	Aqamak Connie Hunnicutt, Enrollment Director	210
Qaiqpak Christina Hensley, Deputy Director	206	Maqik—Uluguaruk Catherine Greene, Acct. Manager	206
Qichaq Martha Hensley, Executive Assistant	201	Saqik Peter Lie, Realty Director	211
Pamiuqtuuq Alex Whiting, Environmental Director	203	Anugi Noah Naylor, Transportation Director	214
Kuuqisaana Bibianna Scott, TFS Director	212	Agnatchaiq Judy Huss, Housing Director	209
Iriguurak Alice Melton Barr, TFS Specialist	308	Qiputaq Judith Hassinger, Finance Director	442-3467
Aullaqsruaq Kristen Walker, Housing Specialist	302	Pearl Goodwin, Iglut Manager	442-4044

NIKAITCHUAT ILISAĠVIAT – 442-4160 – FAX 442-2162

Suksran Candice Baldwin, Education Director	213	Quiḡñaq Paeton Schaeffer, Education Specialist	204
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Go to www.kotzebueira.org to visit program pages or to contact staff through e-mail.

