

Alaska Research Spotlight

Heather Sauyaq Jean Gordon was born and raised in Homer, Alaska on a reindeer ranch. She is Inupiaq and a tribal member of the Nome Eskimo Community where her grandmother Mary Jean Kaguna Yenney is from. Dr. Gordon has a B.A. in Race and Ethnic Studies (University of Redlands, CA), a M.S. in Sociology (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and a PhD from the Indigenous Studies program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her dissertation research examines what community members think that individuals, the community, and the tribe can do to improve sustainability and wellbeing in Ninilchik, and how to achieve those goals through self-determining actions. This type of research demonstrates how tribes can address the results of historical trauma and take control of their fate through self-determination.



New to ANCHRR



Charlene Apok is ANCHRR's new Graduate Research Assistant. "My family is from Golovin and White Mountain, Alaska. I have a four year old son Evan Lukluan. I currently work as a researcher for a tribal health

organization in Anchorage. I received my BA from the University of Washington and my MA from UAF in Rural Development with an emphasis on Circumpolar health. I am currently a doctoral student in the Indigenous Studies Program at UAF. I served on the ANCHRR Research Steering Committee before I took on this new role as part of my graduate program. I am thankful to be a part of ANCHRR because I believe in culture as the foundation of wellness. It's exciting to have research serve our community through building the strengths and resiliency of our people!"



Upcoming ANCHRR Events

ANCRS research student **Jim Chaliak**, along with **Elder Esther Green** and **Dr. Diane McEachern** will be featured at **The 10th Anniversary Conference: Global Mental Health Research without Borders** in Bethesda, Maryland. They will be presenting on the topic of community resilience in a Symposium: Suicide Risk and Related Behavioral Health Problems among American Indians and Alaska Natives: Detection and Management in Primary Care. The annual conference is co-hosted by the NIMH Center for Global Mental Health Research and Grand Challenges Canada.
Date/Time: April 8, 2019 — April 9, 2019
Location: Natcher Conference Center, in Bethesda, MD, USA

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ANCHRR Outreach Coordinator

Carol Murphrey
University of Alaska Fairbanks
P.O. Box 757000
Fairbanks, AK 99775

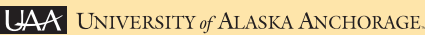
Phone: 907.474.7659
Email: admin@anchrr.org
Website: anchrr.org
Fax: 907.474.5700

ANCHRR Leadership Team

Stacy Rasmus
Lisa Wexler
James Allen
Evon Peter
Jessica Black
Billy Charles
Rhonda Johnson



UMassAmherst



ANCHRR
Alaska Native Collaborative Hub for Research on Resilience

"Our living Alaskan Native culture and strengths are paths of resilience. We have many paths that fit any spirit, a spirit in need, a spirit in joy."

— Jim Chaliak from his mother Natalia —
Apaurhurluma Tumai – My Grandpa's Tracks



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Rural Human Services Students get the ANCRS

During a Spring 2018 Research Steering Committee meeting for the Alaska Native Community Resilience Study (ANCRS) a simple question was asked: 'Would it be possible to train people living in rural communities to do the data collection instead of people who are not from the regions or cultures?' There was a renewed energy around the table with this question. The discussion led to consideration of UAF's Rural Human Service (RHS) program with its primarily Alaska Native adult students. A commitment was made to focus on developing Alaska Native research assistants and recruitment was centered on the RHS program. From current students and recent graduates of RHS, a team of research assistants was invited to join the research project.

Once the decision was made to train and support Alaska Native research assistants, a hands-on training was developed and held October 8-10, 2018 at the Kuskokwim Campus of UAF in Bethel. All of the 10 research assistants were graduates or students of UAF's Rural Human Service (RHS) program.

During their training in the Fall, the research assistants were oriented to the ANCRS project, trained in data collection and documentation, taught skills for effective interviewing, and completed a four hour human subjects ethics and confidentiality training course.

The research assistant trainees had the opportunity to do role plays, engage with in depth discussions about the ANCRS project including how to respectfully engage people in rural communities in telephone interviews about community strengths. The training included Yup'ik Elder, Esther Green, who provided insight, support, and encouragement to the students. She told the group, "I am so proud of you, and it warms my heart that is it my people doing the interviews, not people from other states, but people who were born and raised here."

I gave them time and a listening ear...

"My experience facilitating the ANCHRR ANCRS structured interviews has been a grounding experience. I can relate to the other person on the other end of the phone just simply by being Alaska Native. Also, I believe each individual interview has given a person time to voice their own opinions of how they feel their community is to them. Whether it be a positive or negative experience, I gave them time and a listening ear to hear where they are coming from. Saying this, I really appreciate who I am and where I come from. My experiences will never be the same as another human being and with my experiences I hope to grow and strengthen my community by voicing my opinions, providing and seeking quality services and encourage others to make good choices"

Sherri (Nayokpuk) Anderson "Aziqsik"
Shishmaref, Alaska



Yup'ik Elder Esther Green (right) shares a laugh with a couple of friends.
(left to right: Gertrude Serradell, Martha Olick and Esther Green)



ANCHRR is one of three collaborative hubs funded through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as part of its Reducing the Burden of Suicide among American Indian and Alaska Native Youth initiative. These hubs held their first annual meeting in Arizona that was attended by Program Officials from the NIH.

The ANCHRR team and Research Steering Committee traveled to Arizona for a week long gathering. The first stop was to Whiteriver where they were hosted by the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the Southwest Hub for American Indian Youth Suicide Prevention.

Our ANCHRR group was introduced to the White Mountain Apache's prevention programs including, New Hope and the Elders' Resilience Curriculum.

The second part of their trip brought everyone to Scottsdale with the goals to:

- Build trusting relationships among the tribal-academic partners to promote Native American youth suicide prevention research and service
- Ensure tribal community stakeholders are authentically engaged in national hub activities and effort
- Share unique and cross-cutting approaches of the three Hubs to learn from one another and optimize individual and cross-hub impacts
- Discover opportunities for cross-hub collaboration to deepen impact and scope of the Hubs' work to prevent youth suicide.

The 2nd Annual Meeting of the Hubs will be held in Alaska on August 19-22, 2019.

Take into consideration:
→ Social/Cultural roles
→ family roles
→ Balancing risks/benefits
think it through
... many factors affecting Wellness
→ Structures/Restrictions...

*Honor Each Other
Building Partnerships
Honoring the Stories
Reciprocity*

