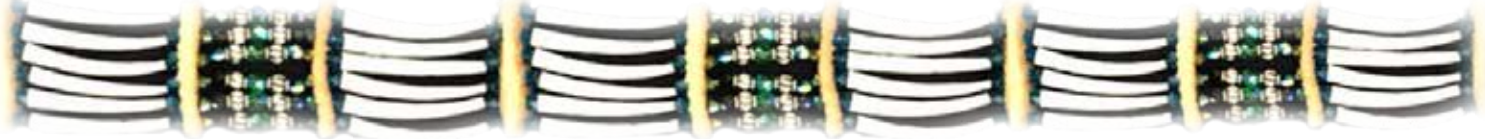


# Fairbanks Native Association Highlights

*A Voice for the People of Fairbanks*

Spring Issue 2018



## Fairbanks Native Association Co-founder Passes

It is with great sadness we inform our membership of the passing of long-time FNA co-founder and Elder representative, Dr. Poldine Carlo. She passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at the age of 97. "Her impact was tremendous," said FNA Executive Director, Steve Ginnis. "What saddens me is...her inspiration, her love of her people and culture...that voice is no longer with us." Ginnis said Carlo's long commitment and personal dedication to Native civil rights will be missed. "She's been a powerful force and through it all, she has remained humble," he said. "You don't see that in people with all that she has done. She was proud, but never boastful."

Carlo and her husband Bill Carlo founded FNA in 1967 with Nick Gray and her cousin, Ralph Perdue. Before the creation of

Dr. Poldine Carlo  
December 5, 1920  
May 9, 2018

FNA, Carlo observed there was not a place for Native people to gather. FNA became the first civil rights organization in Interior Alaska and, over the years, helped influence public policy change and provide advocacy to the Native population in an era where civil liberties were denied. Carlo sat on the board for FNA since its creation and never missed a meeting. With her influence, FNA has helped countless thousands through education, community and behavioral health programs and services. In later years Carlo also helped found Denakkanaaga, Inc., an organization dedicated to advocating for all Native elders in the region.

Upon news of her passing, the Fairbanks community rallied to provide support for her extended family and held a celebration potlatch in her memory. FNA, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Doyon, LTD. and Denakkanaaga all provided support for the potlatch and the evening was filled with singing and drumming in celebration of Poldine's life. "She would have liked this," Ginnis noted. "I asked her once how she would describe herself. Language, she said. Our people's language is who I am."

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### Board of Directors

**Dr. Poldine Carlo**  
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President

**Sarah Obed**  
Vice President

**Andrea Durny-Nield**  
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**Sharon Hildebrand**  
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**Gerald "Jerry" Sam**  
Member

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**Dr. Jessica Black**  
Member

**Beverly Kokrine**  
Member

**Tonya Garnett**  
Member

# Annual Membership Meeting Unveils Solid FNA Numbers

FNA Executive Director Steve Ginnis and the Board of Directors offered solid, stable numbers to the FNA membership at this year's Annual Membership Meeting, held at the Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall. For fiscal year 2017, total revenue increased by 4.4 million dollars (\$18,118,324 - \$22,480,305) while net assets increased by 26%, or \$3,242,658 (\$12,268,255 - \$15,510,913). Increased revenue can largely be attributed to expansion of Medicaid over the past few years and expanded services to programs.

FNA Board President Dr. Charlene Stern updated members on the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan. The plan has been reduced in scope to three years instead of the original five year plan as a way to better align with the average grant cycle. The new plan calls for five significant objectives to strengthen FNA: 1) FNA effectively communicates with the Native community, consumers, partners and funders; 2) Key partnerships support successful Native advocacy and services; 3) Satisfied, well-trained FNA staff

provides great customer service; 4) Revenue streams to sustain key essential services; 5) Excellent facilities support essential services.

The Board of Directors also passed Resolution 2018-03, recognizing retiring board member Shirley Moses for her years of volunteerism and dedication to Fairbanks Native Association. In appreciation, Shirley was presented with flowers and a variety of gifts including a custom-made gaspeq jacket. Shirley's daughter, Christy Shank thought of the unique gift and Lindsay Charlie made it.

To cap off the evening, board elections were held as three open seats were available with four candidates running. Charlene Stern was re-elected to her seat as was Gerald "Jerry" Sam. The remaining seat was won by former FNA Communications Director Tonya Garnett. She currently is the Executive Director at the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government.



Steve Ginnis (AboveLeft) gives his Executive Director report to the general membership at FNA's Annual Meeting, Marh 9th. Dr. Charlene Sterns (Below Left) gave the Board of Directors report. Retiring board member, Shirly Moses (Above) recieves a resolution of thanks and gifts for years of unwavering support to the organization. Thank you, Shirley!



# Calling all Potential Members!

Fairbanks Native Association offers many programs and services in the greater Fairbanks area. FNA offers educational, community and behavioral health services which has helped thousands over the years. There is an advocacy side to FNA as well. FNA began in 1967 as the Interior's first civil rights organization. Though FNA welcomes natives and non-natives alike to utilize our services, to be a voting member of FNA you must be Alaska Native or American Indian. Though FNA programs are located in Fairbanks, which is traditionally Athabascan lands, membership is open to any Fairbanks resident with Native lineage, meaning you can be Yu'pik and be a member. You can be Tlingit and be a member. You can be Inupiaq and be a member. Lower 48 American Indians are welcome as well. Eastern Shawnee, Choctaw, Navajo, Seminole, Sioux and all other indigenous peoples may join FNA if you have resided in Fairbanks for at least 30 days. FNA would like to invite you to become involved and see what we are all about!

For more information, please visit FNA's website at [www.fairbanksnative.org](http://www.fairbanksnative.org) or email at [info@fairbanksnative.org](mailto:info@fairbanksnative.org)



## All Staff Meetings are Vital to FNA

At any one time, FNA employs 235-250 people throughout the many different programs underneath the organization. Keeping employees informed and up-to-date is a large task, but administration does offer a quarterly solution. The month of March kicked off with the All Staff meeting held at the Westmark Hotel & Conference Center. During the meeting, Employee of the Month awards were handed out for the months of December, January and February. Five year Service awards were bestowed to Aliya Maiden (Early Childhood Development, or ECD), Marie McCarty (Johnson O'Malley) and

Michelle Farrell (ECD). Elizabeth Bennett was honored with a ten year Service Award (ECD) and Janet Pearson (Behavioral Health Services) received the fifteen year Service Award.

Staff also received program updates from the Opioid Use Disorder Program (OUD) and from the newly acquired Street Outreach & Advocacy Program. Program spotlights are important elements of the All Staff Meeting and are another way FNA administration offers a chance for Program Directors to share more about the services they offer and the achievements they've accomplished.

**Elizabeth Bennet (Left) is awarded the 10 year service award, Staff line up for burgers (middle), Janet Pearson celebrates 15 Years of FNA employment.**



# 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Potlatch & Pageant



**T**radition. Culture. Singing. Dancing. Food. Laughter. The 55th Annual FNA Potlatch & Pageant went off without a hitch on March 17th bringing both the Native and the greater Fairbanks community together for a night of celebration. For attendees, the evening began at 5 p.m., however for the numerous volunteers who prepped for the event they were already well in to an 8-hour day.

As tradition dictates, no person serves them self at a potlatch. Instead, those dining take to their seats as food is served to them by teams of volunteer servers. Elders are always served first, especially the wood-fired prepared

moose soup. Once Elders are served, the rest of the food is dished out to attendees. This year FNA prepped to serve 350 people. Any food leftover is shared with attendees to take home or given to those in need.

After the food was cleared, a performance by the Johnson O'Malley dancers set a festive tone to the rest of the evening. Tanana Chiefs Conference had just finished their annual convention earlier in the week and FNA took the opportunity to specially invite Nulato First Chief Mickey Stickman and Tribal Administrator Paul Mountain. They performed songs from Nulato and the surrounding areas and were joined by the late Poldine Carlo in one of her final performances in public. Paul Mountain dedicated his performance to honor his sister, Kris Ann Mountain, who was a former FNA employee who passed away last December. Paul wasn't finished with the evening quite yet as he was also tapped to be a judge for the pageant.



There are three age categories for the pageant: FNA Baby (6-24 months), FNA Princess (13-17 years) and Miss FNA (18-24). Each title has its own set of categories and criteria to be met, but all scores depend highly of the display of Native regalia. "Seeing all the regalia during our pageants truly bring joy to your heart," said FNA Executive

Coordinator Shaylene Dublin. "Our Elders get the best seats that night, so they can see all the details and we get to see the smiles on their faces."

The 2018 FNA Baby title went to one-year old Easton Burnham. Easton wore a mixture of marten, rabbit, wolf, wolverine and beaver fur regalia and also showed off bead work that represented his Native name Yee\_daadleggots, or "Even Tempered."

13-year old Savannah Torres, or Tagoh'suh' (Swan) was honored with the FNA Princess title. The accomplished basketball and softball player donned a beautifully beaded moose hide dress. In her spare time, Savannah babysits and volunteers quite often at area potlatches.

The evening came to an official end with the coronation of Maya Blackweasel as 2018 Miss FNA. Maya is Athabascan, Tlingit, Aleut and Blackfeet Indian, a unique mixture of backgrounds she says she is proud to have. "Being Alaska Native and American Indian mean a lot to me," she said. "Our culture is so beautiful and I am proud especially of my Athabascan and Blackfeet side. It is beautiful in

the way we traditionally dance, sing, celebrate and the food we eat. We should take confidence in what they (ancestors) have done (for us) and use it as a reminder to keep our culture alive. The recent high school graduate will visit Israel and Western Europe before attending college in the fall. Maya says she is still deciding between a nursing or counseling degree.

The potlatch and pageant were very successful this year due in large to the efforts of FNA's Deputy Director Melissa Charlie and Executive Coordinator Shaylene Dublin. Though it was a lot of work, Dublin says she's already excited for next year. "We'd love to have more pageant participants next year!"



Potlatch Dancing (Top), Easton Burnham showcases regalia (UL), Drumming (LR), Miss FNA - Maya Blackweasel (M), Food! (UR), FNA Princess Savannah Torres

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## Fighting the Opioid Epidemic with FNA Behavioral Health Services



In October of 2017, President Trump directed the Department of Health and Human Services to declare the opioid crisis a public health emergency.

In Alaska there is currently a shortage of beds for managing the withdrawal of opioids. FNA's Gateway to Recovery has stepped up to help combat this modern day plague. Beginning March 5th, GTR began offering inpatient opioid withdrawal management with the availability of two beds at the facility. Consumers admitted to the program are offered medical assistance to manage their symptoms as well as medical examinations, comprehensive behavioral health assessments

and substance use assessments. "We are staffed 24 hours a day with licensed registered nurses and have immediate access to medical providers 365 days a year," said Brian Robb, Clinical Director of GTR. Robb is an active member of the Fairbanks Opioid Workgroup and licensed to provide medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction.

In addition to the inpatient care, FNA offers intensive outpatient therapy through its Behavioral Health Services. "We collaborate with local outpatient medication assisted treatment providers, if needed, to eliminate gaps in care," said Robb.

- **Since 1999 the number of overdoses from opioids and heroin have quadrupled**
- **There are approximately 175 deaths a day from overdose in the United States**
- **Opioids are the leading cause of death from injury, surpassing auto accidents.**

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## Update: 3830 South Cushman Building

Things are really jumping at FNA's new building, located at 3830 South Cushman Street. FNA purchased the former Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center building last summer with repair work and renovations taking place over the winter. In March, FNA administration, Johnson O'Malley and language staff moved into the building followed by Head Start programs from 609 Third Street and Poldine Carlo building in mid-April. The moves complete phase two of FNA's initial plan. The third and final phase is to renovate and repair the south wing of the facility, allowing additional office space and classrooms. The goal is to move the remaining McKinley Head Start program after repair work is completed. Vacated space at 605 Hughes Avenue is now occupied by more Behavioral Health Services and the relocation of FNA's Street Outreach Advocacy program. An open house and renaming ceremony and dedication for the South Cushman building has been temporarily postponed and will be announced at a later date.



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## Whatever the Season, JOM Promotes Cultural & Educational Opportunities to Native Youth

Fresh off another successful basketball tournament in March, Johnson O'Malley Program Director Daphne Gustafson and her team were already busy at work, preparing more cultural lessons for their students and planning for their annual spring event, Camp Read-A-Lot.



The event occurred the second week of May, near the end of the school year as families were welcomed by JOM to an evening filled with food, fun, laughter and most importantly, free books for students. "Reading proficiency

by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success," says Gustafson. "It is very important for young learners to read or be read to for 20 minutes a day at home."

Fairbanks North Star borough School District test results show only 17% of Alaska Native/American Indian students meet standards for reading. "Many families in transition do not have access to books to keep skills sharp," says Gustafson. "The purpose of this event was to offer free books which students may choose from and to build awareness of the free and fun summer enrichment activities available for children and families in the Fairbanks community."

Door prizes for the evening ranged from free duffle bags and movie tickets to passes to local swimming pools, basketballs, bookstore gift cards and a free bike.

Thank you to everyone who donated a door prize to Camp Read-A-Lot!

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## Meet the new Communications Director: Lifelong Alaskan with Media background

Late last year FNA's Board of Directors and senior administrative staff recognized a need within the organization. Communication efforts, both internally within FNA and externally to the greater community, needed improvement. As part of FNA's Strategic Plan, it was decided to fill the vacant Communications Director position and establish a communications plan. In February, local news anchor and life-long Fairbanks resident Darrell Clark was hired to fill the role.

If he looks familiar, you might have seen him on television over the years, anchoring KTVF 11's newscasts. The news only takes an hour or two of his day and for many years he has worked outside of television in the communications/marketing field for various industries. Darrell has worked for Catholic Schools of Fairbanks/Monroe Foundation, the Alaska Nanooks Athletic Department in charge of marketing and, most

recently, as VP of Marketing for Spirit of Alaska Federal Credit Union. He graduated from UAF in 1997 with a double B.A. and is Muscogee (Creek) Indian. "It's a real honor to work for Fairbanks Native Association and the task given to me to help improve communications is one I won't take lightly," says Clark. "Employees are the foundation of any successful organization so when discussing a communication plan, our internal needs will be addressed, providing better ways for employees to communicate with each other and to stay informed of FNA news and events." If you see him around, say "Hi!"





**3830 South Cushman Street, Ste. 100  
Fairbanks, AK 99701**



**Visit our website at:**  
[www.fairbanksnative.org](http://www.fairbanksnative.org)

**Like us on Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/Fairbanks.Native](http://www.facebook.com/Fairbanks.Native)

### Upcoming

- 05/30 Native Food Day at Community Services for Elders
- 06/12-14 Denakkanaaga Elders/ Youth Conference
- 06/22 FNA Employee Picnic
- 06/26 - 06/29 Elementary Hoops Academy\*
- 07/31 - 08/03 Pre-Teen/Teen Hoops Academy\*

\*Free basketball camp. Pre-registration is required.  
Call FNA community Services at 452-5225 for more information.

**December 2017**

**January 2018**

**February 2018**



**John Yates**  
Behavioral Health Services



**Raelynn Verney**  
Early Childhood Development



**Shaylene Dublin**  
Administration

## Board Congratulations!

FNA would like to congratulate several Board members on their recent academic achievements. Board President Charlene Stern (left) earned her Ph.D. in Indigenous Studies from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Board Secretary Andrea Durny-Nield (middle) earned a Master's in Education from University of Alaska Southeast. Treasurer Sharon Hildebrand (right) earned a Master's in Public Administration from UAS as well. Congratulations and job well done to all!

