



Regional Housing Authority

Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority
5446 Jenkins Drive • Juneau, Alaska 99801

THRHA NEWS

TLINGIT HAIDA REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2019



MESSAGE FROM CEO

January is always a good time to reflect upon the prior year and to share plans for the future. If you are a sports fan, you are probably familiar with the term “rebuilding year”.

2018 was a rebuilding year for team THRHA. We have several new employees; we have new programs; we’ve renewed our focus on customer service; and we are excited about the future.

Looking back at 2018, our team has several notable accomplishments that include:

- Completed an accounting system software conversion.
- Embarked on a revamp of our website.
- Created a Tribal member apprenticeship program for carpenters, plumbers, and electricians.
- Installed an alternative heat source in our Angoon units and upgraded the oil heat source to a more efficient system.
- Completed a modernization of our elderly housing buildings in Hoonah and Saxman.
- Awarded the program maximum number of student housing voucher scholarships for the first time. Fifty-two students received scholarships.
- Provided heating assistance to almost 1,000 households.
- Completed the Juneau Village historic restoration project.
- Housed 20 Veterans through our HUD tribal VASH grant.
- Provided down payment assistance to eleven home buyers.
- Improved the health of many homes across Southeast through partnerships with our Tribes and HUD’s ICDBG funds.
- We reached the end of the fifteen-year tax credit compliance period for one of our Juneau tax credit projects. We are excited to assist these tenants with the transition to home-ownership.
- We began construction of a four-plex in Yakutat.
- We started construction of a duplex in Kasaan.
- We were awarded a HUD Healthy Homes grant for \$1 million.

Looking forward to 2019, we are planning to work closely with our Tribal partners to create new housing opportunities throughout Southeast Alaska. THRHA will kickstart this process with our annual housing conference in March. This year's theme is "Planning Our Future Through Housing". This event will be bigger and better than ever before.

Team THRHA will continue our commitment to improve the health of all homes in Southeast Alaska. We will work to continue to modernize our rental units, including updating them with more efficient heat sources. We are dedicated to using renewable energy sources. And, our home-ownership education programs will be receiving a makeover.

Please friend us on Facebook and sign-up to receive our newsletters to keep updated on all the opportunities we are planning in the coming year.

Our entire staff is dedicated to connecting all Southeast Alaskans with sustainable housing opportunities and innovative financial solutions.

WANT TO BUY A HOME?

Contact Louise Kadinger at (907) 780-3117 or via email at lkadinger@thrha.org to learn more about THRHA's Home Buying Programs.



THRHA CONGRATULATES SAXMAN'S NEWEST HOMEOWNERS

Marilyn Blair-Catron of Saxman was recently conveyed ownership of her home through the THRHA New Mutual Help program. Marilyn and her children, Julie, Donna, and Randy moved into the four-bedroom, two bath home soon after it was constructed in 1995. "Moving into the house was so exciting for my family," shared Marilyn. "When we moved in on Halloween day, we weren't prepared and didn't even have a bed, but that didn't matter. We were just happy."

In the time that Marilyn and her family have lived in the home, they have

learned a great deal about the importance of home maintenance. "The houses are very well made. But as homeowners we have the responsibility of maintaining the house. Over the years, we found out so many things we never knew before," said Marilyn. "For instance, you shouldn't store things under your house because that collects mold and that mold can get into the foundation."

The house was originally valued at \$158,000 when they started the program, though Marilyn isn't sure of today's value of the house. "Our

experience with the Housing Authority has been very good," shared Marilyn. "They are good people and always managed to work with us through the challenges when we needed to get caught up."

While no new homes are being built under the New Mutual Help program, occasionally one of these homes are vacated and made available to new applicants.

For more information, contact Norton Gregory, Director of Housing Services at (907) 780-3125 or ngregory@thrha.org.

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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Bettyann Boyd has recently been promoted to THRHA's new Client Services Navigator position.

Bettyann joined THRHA in 2017 as a Customer Service Specialist in the Housing Department. In her new position, she will assist clients, tribal members, partner tribes, and agencies with connecting to THRHA programs and services. In addition, she will collect and refer applications, information, and requests to appropriate team members.

"I have always had a strong passion for helping others and I am looking forward to putting my customer service experience to work," said Bettyann. "I am excited to be able to partner with Communities in Southeast and help our clients find resources that will meet and improve their unique needs."

Bettyann was born in Sitka and raised in Juneau. She is Eagle/Wolf of the Yanyeyidi. Previously, she held positions at Cornerstone Home & Health and the Southeast Regional Health Consortium.

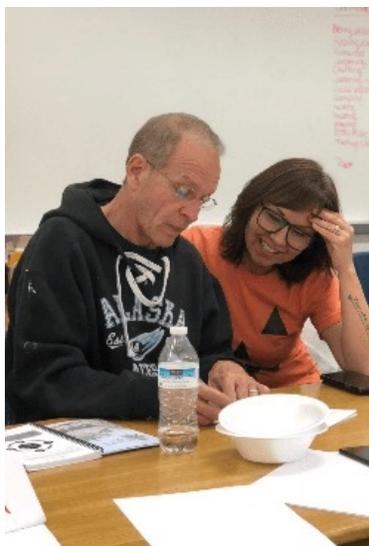
Bettyann is a graduate of Juneau Douglas High School and also holds a certification from the University of Alaska Southeast.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL LITERACY?

Financial literacy is the education and understanding of knowing how money is made, spent, and saved, as well as the skills and ability to use financial resources to make decisions. These decisions include how to generate, invest, spend, and save money.

This concept is applicable to both individuals and households. Individuals must be able to balance a checkbook, comprehend personal income taxes, and understand the concept of budgeting in order to make wise decisions with money. These skills are vitally important; yet, many individuals lack this basic knowledge and consequently are unable to meet their daily expenses.

KLAWOCK HOSTS FINANCIAL CENT\$



This past fall on October 25-28, sixteen participants in Klawock partook in THRHA's Financial Cent\$ classes that focused on financial education and building skills. In addition to completing classes on home buying, money values, and credit, participants also had the opportunity to sit with the class trainer one on one and set their individual goals towards home ownership.

Pilar Mas, who serves as the Financial Manager for the Klawock Tribe attended the three-day seminar. "This was not a typical read out of the textbook type of class," said Pilar. "The trainer made learning the materials fun. It was very hands on, there were lots of group activities, and because participants were able to talk with each other, we learned about how similar our childhoods were when it came to dealing with and learning about money."

Participants Jimmy and Charlene Mackie work on a

Though she already has a strong background in finance, Pilar further shared, "I actually learned a lot and I encourage others to take this course if they can to learn more about credit and how to

For more information, or to learn about upcoming classes and events throughout Southeast Alaska, contact THRHA at (907) 780-6868, connect with us on Facebook, or visit our website at www.regionalhousingauthority.org.

THRHA STAFF RECEIVE FINANCIAL SKILLS TRAINING

In November, THRHA continued to demonstrate its commitment towards building stronger native communities by participating in a three-day "Train the Trainer" course offered by First Nations Oweesta. The program is provided to help tribes and other native organizations establish and sustain financial education programs in the communities they serve.

"It was really important for THRHA team members to participate in this training because we've never

had such a culturally specific training before," said Desiree Jackson, Director of Tribal Services who also received training.

In total, five participants learned effective financial education training techniques to prepare them to become certification financial education trainers.

Additional THRHA staff who participated in the training include Shaun Guthrie, Bettyann Boyd, Louise Kadinger, and Leah Williams.



A helical pier machine sets a pier to stabilize the center of the house.

ICDBG GRANT CHANGING LIVES IN KAKE & SAXMAN

"It's hard to imagine the many ways this grant changed the lives of the people it served," said Lorraine DeAsis, THRHA Director for Development and Construction Management. "Through Tribal Partners' ICDBG Mold Grants, THRHA has replaced roofs on homes, completed numerous bathroom remodels, provided wood sheds, upgraded to more efficient oil boilers/hot water heaters, replaced leaking oil tanks, insulated homes, repaired electrical issues, and more." Additionally, THRHA has worked with people on the Healthy Homes principles and shared information about the importance of ventilation.

Recently, THRHA completed an installation of helical piers on a home in Kake. The piers, which went from fifteen to forty feet deep, corrected serious foundation issues. Additionally, the house also received a new roof and a new boiler. "It was an extensive scope of work, but the home will serve this family for many years to come," said Organized Village of Kake President, Joel Jackson.



Electricians work to replace the home's electrical panel in the rebuilt arctic entryway.

In Yakutat, crews encountered significant rot in the home of a mold grant recipient. In order to make the home safe, they replaced three structural beams, the entire rim joist, several floor joists, and most of the arctic entryway. Additionally, the boiler,



Before and after the removal of the old structure attached to the home in Saxman.

plumbing, and other major electrical issues were corrected in the home. "It is amazing to see the changes in people's lives," said John Buller, president of Yakutat Tlingit Tribe.

In Saxman, one homeowner had struggled for years to keep their old boiler operational. Through the ICDBG grant, THRHA removed an old metal structure that surrounded the home and also installed a new heat pump. Removing the structure let sunlight in, allows for egress and has completely changed the lives of the homeowners.

"It is overwhelming to receive the gratitude and pride people share with us when they have nearly given up in frustration of these things ever being fixed, not to mention the local jobs and training that have been provided," shared THRHA project supervisor, Gordon Kookesh.

The program is nearly complete with the original homes scheduled for work. Currently, the program has three more roofs and two more homes to insulate. At their completion, THRHA will evaluate the financial status of the program to determine if there is enough funding to serve any additional homes with the ICDBG Grant.

MIKE ALFRED EARNS JOURNEYMAN LEVEL ONE CERTIFICATION

Mike Alfred, from Yakutat, who has been working as an apprentice with Pacific Rim Mechanical in Haines, completed his Level One Certification towards a Journeyman Plumbing License this past fall. "All of us at Pacific Rim Mechanical are pleased and extremely proud of Mike," said owner Shawn J. O'Brien. Mike has four years left in his apprenticeship until he receives his license. This certification is the equivalent of the completion of the first year of college.

THRHA is dedicated to doing its part to fill the gap of licensed trades professionals in Southeast rural communities. Through multiple partnerships, THRHA supports apprenticeship and training opportunities for electrical, plumbing, and carpentry. The plumbing and electrical apprenticeships are five-year programs that are fully accredited through the Department of Labor. Apprentices who successfully complete the program will receive a Journeyman certification and career opportunities that pay \$70,000-100,000 annually.



Mike Alfred, working on-site at his Journeyman Plumber apprenticeship with Pacific Rim Mechanical.

Pacific Rim currently has three apprentices that they are mentoring at the moment. In addition to Mike, they also include Charles Bagoyo of Juneau and Jason Aceveda from Kake.

To learn more about the Pacific Rim apprenticeship program, contact Melissa Snell or Shawn O'Brien at (907) 766-2086 or (907) 766-3191. They can also be reached via email at melissaprm@outlook.com or shawnjobrien@gmail.com.

ARE YOU READY TO APPRENTICE?

THRHA has apprenticeships for Tribal members available in carpentry, plumbing, and electrical. Applications are accepted on a continual basis. To learn more or to apply,

STUDENT SUCCESS



THRHA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

Miranda St. Clair, of Juneau has a dream of becoming an early childhood teacher. “I chose teaching as a career when I discovered that I loved working with children and that I was actually really good at it,” said Miranda. However, as a single mother with a full-time job, Miranda knew that returning to school to pursue a degree would present some challenges.

“Even though it can be hard, I realize that the burden of juggling school, work, and being a parent is temporary, but the long-term rewards are priceless,” said Miranda. “Children are the future and those early years in school matter the most. It sets a foundation for children to love and understand why school is important. I hope that I can be a small part of that process and helping our children have a better future.”

Miranda is currently attending the University of Alaska Anchorage where she is a senior majoring in Early Childhood Education with minors in Special Education and Children’s Mental Health. In the last academic year, she passed her classes with straight A’s. “I don’t just want to meet my goals,” shared Miranda, “I want to exceed them!”

In addition to receiving the THRHA Student Housing Voucher Scholarship, Miranda also received an academic scholarship from the Central Council Tlingit Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. “I depend on these scholarships to help me pay for my tuition and housing,” she said. “The Student Housing Voucher Scholarship helped me pay my rent and it has let me be less stressed so I can focus on my studies.”

To learn more about the THRHA Student Housing Voucher Scholarship, contact Megan Gregory, Energy Assistance Coordinator at (907) 780-3122 or mgregory@thrha.org.

RURAL ALASKA PREPARES TO KICK OFF 2020 US CENSUS

*By Anna Rose MacArthur,
KYUK-Bethel
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One of the most important tools for ensuring government representation and the distribution of federal funds relies on neighbors counting neighbors. The 2020 United States Census is more than a year away, and government officials are already planning the effort to count each person living in rural Alaska. The first person in the nation to be counted in the U.S. Census is always in rural Alaska. The 2010 census began in Noorvik with Clifton Jackson, a World War II veteran and the community’s oldest resident. Noorvik and Jackson were both selected after a long vetting process.

“We work with local organizations and groups to get recommendations on the first tribe, and then the tribal

three potential communities to be counted first in the 2020 census; they expect to be making an announcement soon.

“And every tribe that we’ve worked with in the past has considered this really an honor to kick off the census,” Novy added.

The U.S. Census will begin in January of 2020 in rural Alaska. The rest of the nation will begin its count three months later in March. The reason: “Because if we wait too late, we can’t access those villages,” Novy said.

Spring break up, storms, subsistence activities, and all the transportation and weather dependent issues of

chairman actually picks the first person in the nation to be enumerated,” explained Census Manager Kori Novy.

To be enumerated is to be counted in the census. The tradition of beginning the count in rural Alaska began in 1990. The census committee is down to a shortlist of

rural Alaska require an early start. Plus, it's great publicity for the census to begin in Alaska. In 2010, when Clifton Jackson was the first person counted, the national Director of the Census Bureau, Robert Groves, flew to Noorvik. He rode a dogsled from the airstrip to the school, where he ate whale meat with village elders before walking to Jackson's door.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 13-14—First Annual Southeast Housing Summit, Juneau**
- **March 15—Tribal Housing Meeting**

Keep up with us on Facebook!

