

MESSENGER

Fall 2020



RESILIENCE

By Jens Laipenieks CEO/General Manager



Definition of **resilience**:

- 1: the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress
- 2: an ability to recover from or adjust easily to **misfortune or change**

On the North Slope, we are faced with constant change. Changing tides, changing seasons, changing climate. We are now faced with the growing misfortune of living in the time of a worldwide pandemic. Things are changing almost daily on the COVID-19 front and the impacts are spreading to almost everything we all take for granted in our lives. Traveling, a doctor visit, going back to school, grocery shopping, dining out, social and religious gatherings...everything.

It's easy to panic and worry about all the unknowns, and what could be on the horizon, but we have to remind ourselves that we are resilient and that we will overcome whatever comes next. Resilience and adaptability are ingrained traits in all Alaskans but even more so in the residents of the North Slope. When times get tough, we rely on each other, our friends and family, our community, we roll up our sleeves and find a way to solve the problem.

For almost 40 years, ASTAC has been a part of the North Slope community and continues to step up when needed. This spring we responded to the immediate need for relief on bandwidth charges and for four months provided a \$100 month COVID-19 credit to our Home Internet¹⁰ subscribers and provided interim relief to both the

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ASTAC

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The advertisement features a blue background with a purple pencil and a smartphone displaying a colorful scene with a purple dinosaur, a yellow ball, and a pink flower.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Glenn Balanza, Utqiaġvik

Glenn is a Barrow High school graduate and attended Iḷisaġvik College this past year in Utqiaġvik.

Glenn is pursuing a Computer Engineering degree and will be transferring to the University of Alaska Fairbanks this fall. Glenn is an excellent student with a vision for a better future for the communities he cares about. We appreciate his positive outlook on life and aspirations to change the world.



Juliana Osgood, Utqiaġvik

Juliana, a recent Barrow High School graduate, will be interning for the North Slope Borough's Administration and Finance Department this summer. In the fall, she will attend Norwich University, the oldest military school in the United States where she will study computer science and cyber-security. Upon her college graduation, Juliana plans to serve our country as a military officer.



Tracy Burns, Kaktovik

Tracy Burns' grew up in Kaktovik and is currently studying Film Production at Valencia College in Florida. She plans to pursue a career educating the world on authentic Iñupiat culture. She wants to give pride to her people by showing a true depiction of her culture on screen. She said, "The Inuits have many stories and have such a rich culture that often gets wrongfully or stereotyped on screen. This is something I plan to change in my career as a filmmaker."



Resilience continued from page 1

hospital and schools. We are committed to student development along with the NSBSD by supporting the Battle of the Books program and promoting STEM with the FIRST Lego League program. We had planned to conduct our first annual Alaska Business Week entrepreneurial boot camp in Utqiaġvik this summer, but have decided to defer it until next summer. I look forward to that event and the positive impacts it will bring to our youth and community.

ASTAC also gives generously to various community causes through our charitable contributions program. We focus our support on organizations and activities that strengthen our youth, community spirit, and education. In particular, we support those that preserve and promote the Inupiat culture. In 2019, we contributed to 20 different entities, all of which are listed on our website along with the program guidelines.

No matter what 2020 throws at us this fall, we will come together, show our resilience, and support one another.

Please stay safe and mask up.

JL

ANNUAL MEETINGS



The ASTAC Leadership Team has unanimously decided to hold its Board of Director elections in November and Annual Meetings in December – virtually – due to the severe and unprecedented public health emergency facing the State of Alaska, ASTAC, and its members. Look for confirmed dates on our web site and social media.

Questions or comments concerning our Annual Meetings should be directed to info@astac.net or by mail to ASTAC, 4300 B Street, Suite 501, Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

CITY CLEAN UP



ASTAC staff participated in Anchorage's Citywide Clean up in May.

BATTLE OF THE BOOKS



ASTAC is pleased to announce it will continue supporting the North Slope Borough School District's (NSBSD) Battle of the Books program. For a 7th consecutive year, ASTAC's \$15,000 donation will keep this reading incentive program going for students in grades three through 12.

About 365 students took part in the program last year, a 25% drop over the previous school year. Schools in all eight North Slope villages will compete against each other during the upcoming academic year and ASTAC's donation will cover the cost of books and supplies for every school in the district.

Goals of the nationwide program include encouraging and recognizing students who enjoy reading, broadening reading interests, increasing reading comprehension and promoting academic excellence.



We recently launched a new page on our web site dedicated entirely to SmartHub. Its full of helpful information including step-by-step instructions, video tutorials and frequently asked questions. Click on over to astac.net/smarthub to see how this powerful tool can help you track your data usage, pay your bill, vote for your board director, shop and more – all from the comfort of your own home.

SmartHub can be accessed via the web or the free app can be downloaded for both Apple and Android devices. Give our friendly Customer Experience Team a call to get set up today.



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OPERATIONS UPDATE

ASTAC understands how much concern and economic hardship the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has caused in the communities across the North Slope. During this time, ASTAC's operations has been focused on workforce preparedness and taking safety protocols so we can provide the best service possible during this trying time. As things continue to change in this ever-fast world, rest assured ASTAC is making the safety of its members and the communities we serve our top priority. We're all in this together!



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