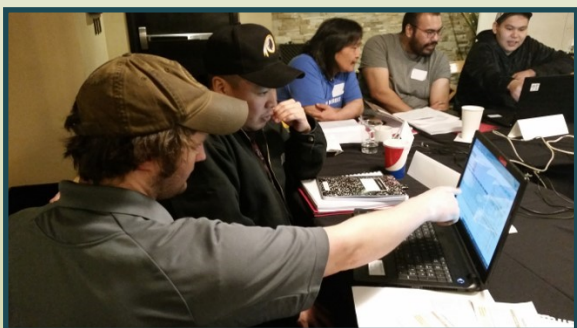




RACEJT



Rural Alaska Community Environmental Job Training (RACE JT)



Eight Year Review & Program Portfolio 2012 - 2019



Placing a skilled and educated
environmental technician in every rural
Alaska community

Program Overview



Cassandra Sund -2017, Point Lay

**Our Mission?
“Placing a skilled and
educated
Environmental
Technician in every
rural Alaska
community”**

Serving rural Alaska communities since 2007, we at Zender Environmental Health and Research Group, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, recognized that developing rural resident environmental skills would help to build the necessary environmental program capacity needed to address the widespread environmental health challenges that our clients commonly faced, and at the same time help to address the low rate of project local hire that exacerbates rural poverty. The connection would be a full circle. With jobs and the economic multipliers they create, environmental health services, such as landfill management, could be better sustained and made more protective of community health.

The RACEJT mission was thus born; to place a skilled and educated Environmental Technician in every rural Alaska community. The RACEJT program model was collaboratively developed with multiple local employers, rural communities, regional consortia, and state and federal entities, who continue to serve as partners and RACEJT Advisory Board members. In 2012, the first RACEJT graduates returned home with new technical skills and certifications that met local program and community project hire needs.

To fulfill its mission, the RACEJT curriculum has evolved over the years, and is based on an annual review of environmental employer needs. RACEJT also identifies soft skills that enable our graduates to successfully apply for and retain a job. The in-residence support structure of the program is developed specifically for students to not only complete the program, but to return home as inspired and confident individuals.

Finishing its 8th year, RACEJT offers a 97% job placement rate, and graduates can be found working diligently to improve the quality of life in 66 communities across the state. This celebrates the hard work and achievements of these professionals, and is dedicated to them and our partners whose commitment and vision make RACEJT possible.

Lynn Zender
Executive Director
Zender Environmental Health Group



Sean Komonaseak -2018, Wales



Refrigerant Recovery Exercise



Waste Stream Characterization

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Mock Interview Practice

**RACEJT
employs
real world,
rural Alaska
experiences and
problem solving
in its
nationally certified
training courses**



HAZWOPER Mock Spill Practicum

RACEJT by the Numbers

RACEJT flies into Anchorage
18 students from Rural Alaska villages
to house and train them for
two 2-week Spring sessions,
totaling
260 class hours,
Costing them NOTHING for
15 state and national certifications.

Since it's first training in 2012,
RACEJT has achieved a
84% retention rate,
graduating
117 Environmental Technicians,
representing
66 communities
that span
10 Alaska ANCSA regions,
with a
97% job placement rate,
increasing rural local hire
and community health protection.



NORTHWEST CENTER FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH • UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



Curriculum

Each year, we survey rural employers and project contractors to identify their labor needs and hire criteria. The RACEJT Curriculum is designed around those results.

Additionally, RACEJT ensures that the rigor and breadth of its curriculum courses meet the standards of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF), a primary RACEJT partner institution.

RACEJT students are concurrently enrolled in seven UAF courses, taught by RACEJT instructors that are individually approved by the University.

Graduates exit RACEJT with ten UAF credits and receive the University's Occupational Endorsement as a

Rural Waste Management & Spill Response Technician.

Typical Certificate and Course Offerings

- HAZWOPER 40 hour
- Solid Waste Management & Resource Recovery
- Introduction to Water Quality and Soil Sampling
- Community Spill Response
- Rural Alaska Landfill Operations
- Refrigerant Recovery
- Advanced Job Readiness
- First Aid and CPR
- Confined Space Entry
- OSHA 10 Hour Construction Safety
- AK Certified Sediment and Erosion Control Lead
- Forklift Operation Standard
- National Incident Management System 100 and 200 Level
- GPS and GIS Mapping Basics
- DOT HAZmat Regulations
- Boating Safety

RACEJT Graduates Obtain Meaningful Work Within their Home Community or Region



*David Olanna and Brandon Tocktoo -2013,
Brevig Mission, Backhaul Specialists
(pictured with Kawerak's Anahma Shannon)*



Basil Lake -2014, Hooper Bay, Landfill Operator



*James Kakoona -2013,
Shishmaref, Road Construction*



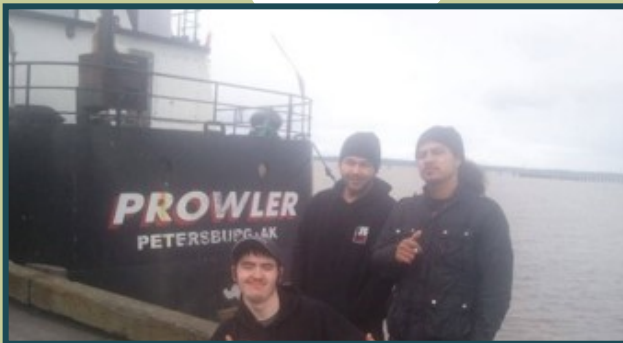
*Middle: Jerry Kusayak -2018, Pilot Point,
Confined Space Technician*



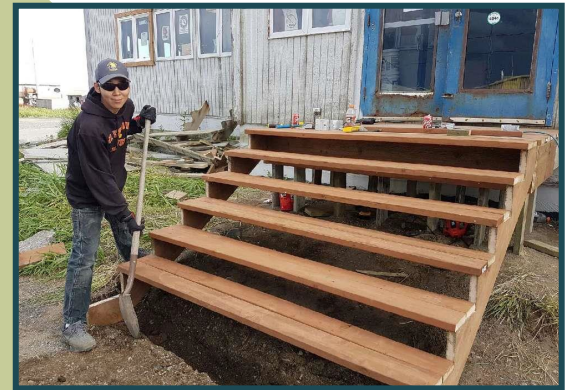
Alvaro Sutton -2016, Togiak, Housing Director



*Harvey Nusunginya -2012, Wainwright
Landfill Operator
Above: Wainwright Whale Camp*



*Nathan MacDonald -2014, Eagle, youngest Fishing
Captain in his field*



*Tommy Togiak -2016, Togiak ,
Housing Construction Crew*



Tommy Tebbits -2015, Noorvik , Recycling Technician



*Candice Saunders -2014, Allakaket,
IGAP Coordinator*

Past Advisory Board & RACEJT Selection Committee Members

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Scott Anderson | Native Village of Port Heiden |
| Steven Angasan | Southwest AK Vocational & Ed Ctr |
| Trish Bower | AK Dep. Of Environmental Conservation |
| La'ona DeWilde | Central Recycling Services |
| Michael Dunn | University of Washington |
| Sarah Durand | AK Dept. of Environmental Conservation |
| Susan Flensburg | Bristol Bay Native Association |
| Julie Frizzell | AK Dept of Labor |
| Mary Goolie | US EPA/Brownfields |
| Millie Hawley | Native Village of Kivalina |
| Adelheid Herman | Southwest AK Vocational & Ed Ctr |
| CaSandra Johnson | Bristol Bay Native Association |
| Billy Joey | Association of Village Council Presidents |
| Nicole Krause | Bristol Bay Native Association |
| Heidi Kritz | Bristol Bay Native Association |
| Renee Lee-Roque | Bristol Bay Native Association |
| William Naneng | Sea Lion Corporation |
| Todd Radenbaugh | Bristol Bay Campus, UAF |
| Gerald Sam | Tanana Chiefs Conference |
| Joe Sarcone | Centers for Disease Control |
| Anahma Shannon | Kawerak, Inc |
| Jacqueline Shirley | Rural Community Assistance Corporation |
| Steve Street | Association of Village Council Presidents |
| Jeremiah Szepanski | Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association |
| Kent Winship | Bristol Bay Campus, UAF |

Honored Partners & Sponsors

Acknowledgements

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- *University of Alaska, Fairbanks*
- *Municipality of Anchorage*
- *NIEHS Worker Training Program/UW*
- *Total Reclaim*
- *State of Alaska Job Center*
- *State of Alaska Central Response Team, DEC*
- *TTT Environmental*
- *State of Alaska Solid Waste Program, ADEC*
- *SGS Environmental*
- *Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry*
- *Bear Tooth Theatre & Grill*
- *Solid Waste Assoc of N. America, AK Chapter*
- *Bering Strait Corporation*
- *Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium*
- *WH Pacific*
- *State of AK Spill Prevention Program*
- *Integrity Environmental*
- *Brice Construction*
- *Paragon Professional Services*
- *Agviq*
- *Bethel Environmental Services*
- *Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation*
- *Maniilaq Association*
- *Ahtna*
- *Tanana Chiefs Conference*
- *Sea Lion Corporation*

Leilani Luhrs, Togiak, 2012



Togiak is a traditional coastal Yup'ik village of 817 residents with a per capita income of \$12,907, and 22% living below poverty.

**RACEJT
provided
Leilani the
foundation
needed to
become a
leader
in her
community**



Top: Leilani leads a workshop with NOAA Fisheries. Photo courtesy: Bristol Bay Times

Leilani grew up in Togiak, and served on the Native Advisory Board as a student representative while in high school. During this service, she was nominated for the Spirit of Youth Award. After graduating RACEJT, she served two years of AmeriCorps in Togiak while taking classes at UAF, Bristol Bay Campus, graduating with two A.A. certificates; Environmental Studies and Sustainable Energy.

Leilani continues her education in Rural Development and has received various awards from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and Alaska Forum on the Environment. She remains an advocate for the youth of Togiak, and has started a culturally-based youth group focused on environmentally consciousness and healthy lifestyles. She continues working with entities across the state. Currently, as a RuralCAP employee, she enjoys the opportunity to inspire and engage youth and adults alike, all across Alaska.

RACEJT provided Leilani with the foundation in environmental health to become an empowered leader and enabled her to obtain meaningful work opportunities in her community and region.

Lepani Nadori, Old Harbor 2013



Old Harbor is a coastal Alutiiq on the Kodiak Island.

Community consists of a population of 218 with a per capita income of \$24,219 and 25% living below poverty.



Left to right photos: Lepani conducts spill response trainings and drills with his crew. Lepani learns spill response with leaders in the field during the RACEJT training

Lepani, a single parent, was under-employed as the community landfill operator, and recommended to RACEJT by his employer, Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor. After graduating, he returned to his community and was able to successfully backhaul several shipments of hazardous waste and remove refrigerant from discarded appliances in compliance with federal regulations.

Lepani was promoted, and is now the full time Environmental Director and Grants Manager for the tribe. Currently, he leads a crew of six, serves as a trainer, and addresses multiple community issues and projects.

"I graduated in 2013 from RACEJT and my career began to grow to what it has become today. I am now an Environmental Coordinator for our Environmental Department and I am overlooking our Solid & Hazardous Waste, Air Quality, Contaminated Sites, Water

Quality, and Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Programs. I am grateful for the opportunities and certifications that I have received from completing this program and the wonderful individuals who came out from numerous communities to expand in their fields."

"We've backhauled a lot of hazardous materials including Freon. I was the only technician who was certified to remove Freon from vehicles and appliances during our metals backhaul process which I had gotten the certification for during my training at RACEJT.

The skills I've acquired and technical trainings helped me move up in my field of work to handle more responsibilities and gradually be promoted as Environmental Coordinator for our Environmental Department. I have continued to work in conjunction with the City of Old Harbor in leading our Emergency Response Drills, as well as training staff on site."

Elizabeth Phillips, Kwethluk 2016



Kwethluk is a YK Delta Yup'ik community of 830 residents, per capita income of \$12,628, and 23% living below poverty

Elizabeth entered the program under-employed and a single parent. She was employed by her traditional council less than 20 hours per week on an on-call basis as a laborer. She completed the training and returned to a full time position, earning a living wage doing meaningful work.

With her 40 hr HAZWOPER certification qualifying her, Elizabeth was also hired locally for Bethel Services Inc. to drive and fill fuel tanks. A new mother, Elizabeth is taking a break before returning to work. Due to the RACEJT program, Elizabeth has employment options in her small community and is a good provider and role model for her community and her children.



Elizabeth on the job at Bethel Services Inc

A Rural Employer's Perspective

In the past, five years Kwethluk has supported three success-motivated RACEJT applicants through a promise of work upon RACEJT graduation. From sediment and erosion control, to landfill operations and recycling, the Organized Village of Kwethluk, Environmental Program has been able to hire local, skilled Tribal members, says Ruel McDalton -Environmental Coordinator. 'Hiring local residents and community members is the biggest benefit to our community.'

'The RACEJT program has opened up many doorways to allow our organization to hire certified Tribal members and give them an opportunity to work for our EPA/IGAP department and gain work experience. It feels great knowing our organization can hire certified/qualified individuals from our community as opposed to hiring outside. This valuable program provides our workers with the full range of skills needed to help our department and community progress.'

'Hiring local residents, community members is the biggest benefit to our Community'

-Ruel McDalton-Kwethluk Environmental Director



Household Hazardous Waste and Transfer Station in Anchorage



Kwethluk is experiencing river bank erosion



Meeting Local Hire Goals

Jerry Kusayak, Pilot Point, 2018

Jerry came to the program unemployed and seeking opportunities to better support his new family and community. While in the training, Jerry attended our Employer Panel and realized he now met the criteria for hire listed by one of the business representatives. He submitted the resume that students work on while in the RACEJT program, and his final RACEJT mock interview turned into a real interview. Directly after graduation, Jerry joined the fieldwork in Cold Bay and Adak for Integrity Environmental, an Anchorage-based woman owned business.

Jerry looks forward to sharing his knowledge with his family and his community and is grateful for a chance to support himself and his family with meaningful work close to home, in his region.



Pilot Point is a Yup'ik community of 68 residents, per capita income of \$19,666 and 23% below-poverty level

Are you a firm that hires in Rural Alaska?

Look to RACEJT graduates for reliable, skilled local hire.

'Jerry is great. He is a hard worker and gets along well with all our crews. Really hoping he can do a whole field season with us next year. We are very pleased to have him on our team!'

-Shannon Oelkers, Owner/Engineer, Integrity Environmental



Photo credit to Integrity Environmental



Thomas Dock, Togiak 2016



Left and middle RACEJT 2016 photos and, Far right photo credit to Samaritans Purse

"I am Thomas Dock, a lifelong Alaskan Native Yup'ik, living off the road system. It is an honor to have been a part of RACEJT program, where before I was underemployed, and not aware of all the disastrous health hazards that I was taking for granted. I had no clue of this opportunity that has brought me to where I am now, state recognized with all the certifications earned.

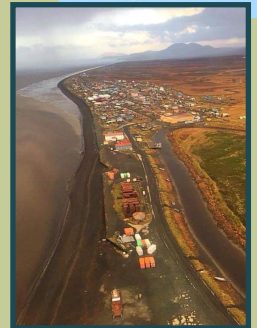
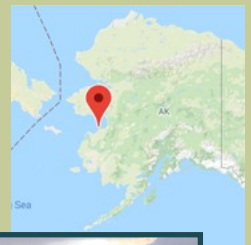
This [training] was introduced to me by our federally recognized organized Traditional Council of Togiak. I would deeply and sincerely encourage everyone and anyone to take the opportunity because it will give you above and beyond your imagination the knowledge you thought you never had [in environmental health]. I am currently employed by the Traditional Council of Togiak, working \$18 per hour. I also started my own business. I do my own safety lessons with the people that work with me, my kids and young community members that I educate to keeping the environment clean. I also have been able to remove the hazardous Freon gases at our dump site which makes the [community] aware of all the hazardous and harmful gases that they might bring back to their homes."



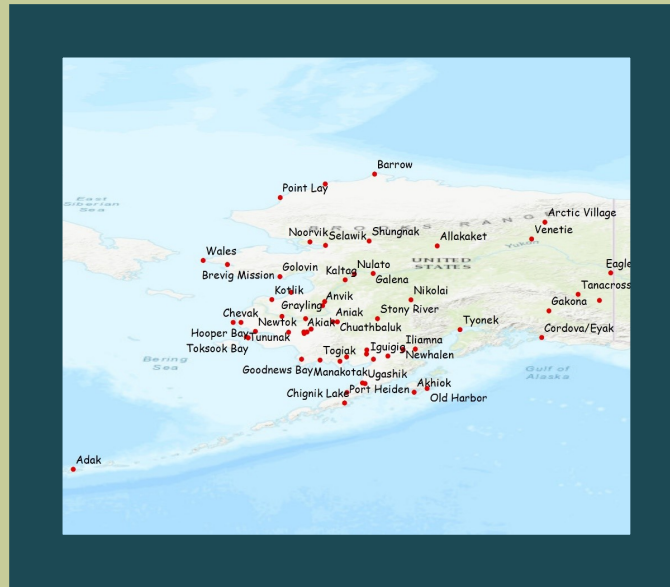
***'RACEJT gave me the huge boost
I needed to start my own business'***

This Zender training gives us a boost and confidence that we need to even start our own businesses.

— Thomas Dock,
RACEJT
Graduate
2016



Graduate Communities



Akhiok
 Akiachak
 Akiak
 Aleknagik
 Allakaket
 Aniak
 Anvik
 Arctic Village
 Barrow
 Brevig Mission
 Chevak
 Chignik Lake
 Chuathbaluk
 Cordova/Eyak
 Eagle
 Gakona
 Galena
 Golovin
 Goodnews Bay
 Grayling

Hooper Bay
 Igiugig
 Iliamna
 Kaltag
 Koliganek
 Kotlik
 Kwethluk
 Levelock
 Manokotak
 New Stuyahok
 Newhalen
 Newtok
 Nikolai
 Nondalton
 Noorvik
 Northway
 Nulato
 Nunapitchuk
 Pedro Bay
 Pilot Point

Pilot Station
 Point Lay
 Port Heiden
 Russian Mission
 Selawik
 Shishmaref
 Shungnak
 Stebbins
 Stony River
 Tanacross
 Togiak
 Toksook Bay
 Tuluksak
 Tununak
 Tyonek
 Ugashik
 Venetie
 Wainwright
 Wales



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