



RRANN

Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing
University of Alaska Anchorage - School of Nursing - Spring 2005

FALL 2004 RRANN Graduates

Here are profiles for two of five of our most recent graduates. There are 10 RRANN graduates for the three trimesters in 2004, bringing the total to 37 the number of Alaska Native/American Indians graduating with a degree in Nursing since RRANN started counting in 1998.

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ANNA MOORE

2004 BS Nursing Graduate

I am half Inupiaq Eskimo from Elim, Alaska. My dad, Nathan Nagaruk, was a commercial and subsistence fisherman, trapper, hunter, log cabin, boat, and basket-sled builder. He worked hard in his workshop, converted from our "old house" he built in the 1970s. You knew he was there working on a sled because the single light bulb shone through the window in the dark of winter, across from our new house, or you could hear the loud table saw and other tools he used. Mom, Christina, and I would

be cooking supper, often caribou or salmon. She would say, "Go tell Dad it is time to eat." Often there would be sawdust covering the floor in the old house. Dad had on a cap, jeans and plaid shirt, a pencil behind his ear. Mom taught my brother and sister and I about hard work too and living conservatively. When Dad died of a heart attack when I was 10, she got a job, continued

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SHANNON SHERMAN

2004 BS Nursing Graduate

My name is Shannon Sherman and I was raised in Unalakleet, with the exception of attending Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka, Alaska. My husband Thomas and I have four children ages 11, 10, 7, and nearly 5. I'm Inupiaq Eskimo and am a member of the Native Village of Unalakleet.

The Bachelors of Science Nursing program here at UAA has been a valuable learning experience that I am very grateful to have completed with the beneficial help and support from RRANN and it's staff members. It's hard to believe that it's finally over considering the fact that I have been in school year around since May 2001. Before attending UAA, I was working part-time in Unalakleet raising my four children. I had always desired to obtain a career in the health field but timing was never

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ANNA MOORE *Continued from page 1*

commercial fishing, hauling wood for our wood stove, and began dog-sledding with our handful of dogs. Mom and Dad had never been to college, but they taught us skills for success. I need to honor my parents because I have been honored as a result of my educational achievements.

I planned to go into medicine, guiding my younger siblings. As it turned out, after marrying my high school sweetheart and having 4 boys of our own, my younger brother and sister have gotten their degrees already. When my second son died from complications of leukemia in 2000, I looked forward to meeting him in heaven, rather than remain on this, what seemed, lackluster earth. He had been so tolerant of suffering, so strong. He was able to show joy and have fun despite yucky medicine and pain. During the 2 years my son spent in and out of the hospital, I learned more about nursing and medicine. I learned to trust the Lord more too. Two years later, I talked my husband into moving to Anchorage so that I could finish school. He was reluctant, but we made it happen. It was a little scary leaving our home. We didn't know our way around Anchorage and I had never driven in a city.

I am so fortunate for my husband who loves me so much. He has put aside his dreams for mine. I hope I never forget how much he sacrificed. I thank my mom and Lloyd too for encouraging me and praying for my family. Along with my parents, siblings, husband and children, I would like to acknowledge my lifelong friend, Jeanne, who also encouraged me to go into nursing.

Have you ever heard, "If I can do it, you can too."? Well, it applies with me too, thanks to the help of many. There were a lot of obstacles, but many opportunities too. My advice to students interested in nursing is, realize that it is hard work and plan accordingly, have a support system in place, and try to apply for as many scholarships as you can.

SHANNON SHERMAN *Continued from page 1*

right. Finally, during the spring of 2001, I was given the chance to return to college to finish my education and chose nursing as my major. That Thanksgiving, my family suffered the loss of my uncle unexpectedly and I was given the opportunity to help take care of him in the ICU. The nurses that worked with us were so wonderful and caring. It was then that I knew that I had made the right choice to pursue a nursing degree.

I genuinely enjoy working with and caring for others in the hospital. My clinical experiences have been very fulfilling and uplifting. It also helps that I have had superb clinical instructors to guide me along the way. Chris Mumma, Mary Logan, Andy Posey, Denise Brakora, Shirley Valek, and Kathryn Sexson have all instilled in me the desire to continue to learn and do my very best at all times.

My only challenge during the semesters was being separated from my family, so I made the difficult choice to work full-time at an airline in order to receive flight benefits. This allowed me to travel home to Unalakleet during weekends and my children to Anchorage during vacations. It was hard but it allowed me to remain focused on school work because I didn't have time to get homesick.

My plans are to work on the Inpatient Surgical Unit at the Alaska Native Medical Center for the next couple of years while I further my education with the goal of becoming a Family Nurse Practitioner. This way, I will be able to return to Unalakleet someday to care for the people in my community.

My only advice to other students is to learn as much as you can from your instructors because they offer valuable information that will definitely be helpful in your near future. It's an amazing feeling when you realize that the materials you learn in lecture and skills lab apply in the real world once you figure out how to put it all together.

RRANN at University of Alaska Southeast

Recruitment Trip- by Sarah Kreher, RRANN Student Success Coordinator at UAS

As the pilot tried for the second time to land the Alaska Airlines Boeing 747-400 onto the Ketchikan airstrip, it occurred to me that I may have to reschedule this first recruitment trip. Gail Klein, the Student Services Coordinator for UAS in Ketchikan had scheduled many meetings and presentations with many interested Ketchikan-ites. She and her colleague Colleen Scanlon had put time and effort into this, and by golly, I was going to land this plane myself if I had too. I soon relaxed and realized there was no way I could predict or change Southeast Alaska weather in December. However, after many hours and packages of peanuts, I had finally landed in this small little town of 12,000.



Rose Natkong (left) and Sarah Kreher (in Juneau)

The next morning I was practicing what to say for my first radio interview. Wendy Gierard, the PR/Marketing Director for UAS in Ketchikan had arranged a short 10 minute interview on KRBD, the local non-profit radio station. Overall, it was a wonderful experience and I thank Maria Dudzak, the Morning Edition Host for making it easy to speak into a microphone. After that I spoke to local CNA's at KIC, the guidance counselors of Ketchikan High School, and some perspective students.

I had accomplished a lot in one day. I had 2 perspective RRANN students, had met with a variety of people, and made new friends at UAS in Ketchikan. I thank them for making the trip such a success. I currently have 4 pre-nursing students, and 1 student in the AAS program. I am planning on going back sometime this semester and know the trip will bring many new adventures.

Rose Natkong

Hello, my name is Rose Natkong and as a pre-nursing student here at University of Alaska Southeast I have found the RRANN program very helpful. Since this is the first year for the RRANN program to be in Juneau, Sarah and I are sharing the learning experience. I'll admit it is kind of lonely being the only RRANN student here in Juneau, but at the same time I feel privileged to be the first and only to hear about the opportunities and assistance this program has to offer. Through this program, I have been able to make connections with people in the health field that are helping me pursue my career path. As a pre-nursing student, I am looking forward to being teamed up with a nursing student, another great opportunity offered through the program. Both academically and financially, the RRANN program has been very supportive and for that I am very grateful. I encourage any and all nursing and pre-nursing students to enter the RRANN program, it can help in so many ways.



*In November a delegation from RRANN visited Sitka on a recruitment trip. Shown here are **Bitsy Mosher**, AAS faculty Sitka, **Shannon Sherman**, senior nursing student, **Sarah Kreher**, RRANN Student Success Coordinator at UAS, **Mary Sue Anderson**, RRANN Coordinator and **Cheryl Lestenkof**, pre-nursing student.*

Judy Staveley RRANN Tutor

by Tammy Eckert, Tutor Coordinator

For a few years now Judy Staveley has been an enthusiastic, successful RRANN tutor in pre-nursing subjects such as chemistry, general biology, anatomy & physiology, and microbiology. She is highly sought after each Semester, as she is full of energy and knowledge about the subjects she teaches. Where did we get such a tutor wiz? After some serious detective work and a few tips from CSI, we were able to come up with a trail of clues as to how this biology extraordinaire ended up on tutor most wanted list.

First of all, Judy is from San Antonio, Texas (yes, I said Texas). She came up to our fair state because her husband is an F-15 pilot at Elmendorf so the Airforce brought her and the family along (thank you Uncle Sam) with him.

And thank Uncle Sam we do, as Judy has a vast educational background that makes her invaluable as an educator in the sciences. She has an AS in Computer Science from San Antonio, Tx (yep, Texas). Her BS in Biological Sciences was received right here at UAA. Judy is also has a certification in Medical Forensics Serology and DNA from the University of Florida, Gainesville, and she is currently working on a Masters of Science in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences with a concentration in Forensic Serology and DNA, also from UF in Gainesville (hey, check out the Distance Ed. website for UF and you'll see great picture of Judy hiking in Alaska :).

Here are Judy's own answers to some of our favorite RRANN tutor questions:

1. What was your favorite subject in school? Favorite subject to tutor?

My favorite subject in school was Gross Anatomy

My Favorite tutoring subject: would be any Biochem subject. Meaning any Biology or Chemistry. They both go hand in hand ;).

2. How did you get involved in tutoring for RRANN?

My friend Kristen Foger Easton was tutoring for RRANN at the time and asked me if I wanted to become a Tutor. I was a little skeptical about tutoring, and now I love it. Tutoring is very demanding at times. Why do you keep doing it? I know how stressful college can be from experience!!! Being a new freshman or entering a new class and not knowing what to expect can be a dreadful experience. Tutoring gives a student a chance to ask questions that they would never ask in class or get a better understanding of the material that was presented in class. Sometimes going over the notes and problems from the class will help students with a better understanding of a concept than just doing it by themselves. Students have learned better study habits, have even made friends and study partners in these tutoring sessions, which has help them through their college career. I have been tutoring for over a year now with RRANN WOW! I keep doing it because it has become easier with experience. Over time, I have figured out that the students I tutor get stuck on the same exact areas such as chemistry, micro, A&P and I know how to help them in those particular areas. I keep doing it because I like to see students achieve in what they want to do!!!

3. What is something about you that people may not know (remember this is going in a public document):- I have two kids Monique and Billy

4. Favorite resaurant?

F Street - I love Carlos the Chef - He can cook up a mean meal

5. Favorite book/movie?

Stiff by Mary Roach (Read only if you are into crimes of anatomy)

6. Favorite Movie - Animal House

7. What is your idea of fun?

Being with friends and laughing about silly things

8. What would you like people to remember about you? - LOL

9. Any claim to fame?

CSI anyone? Medical investigation?



Tutor, Judy Staveley and husband

What a character. We appreciate all Judy's hard work and dedication to the RRANN program and to the students she works with.

Thanks Judy!

The NEW Student Success Facilitator

by Penny Vasileff, RN, BA



Greetings! My name is Penny Vasileff, and I share an office with Kendra Schultz in PSB 103J. I am currently filling the position of Student Success Facilitator that became available when Laureen Young moved on to work with Cook Inlet Tribal Council. I look forward to getting to know and work with all of the RRANN students. My primary focus will be working with prospective students and with pre-nursing students.

I am in the office on Monday and Thursday from 9 am to 4:30 pm, and on Friday from 9am to 11:30am, and at the Lunch in the Lounge (Nightingale Wing of West Hall) Friday from 12 noon to 1:30 pm. My office phone number is (907) 786-4714, my email is anklv@uaa.alaska.edu . Please drop by and say hello!

Statewide Student Profile:

RRANN Statewide Students in the AAS, Nursing Major.

The UAA School of Nursing offers the Associates of Applied Science, Nursing Degree Program in Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Kenai, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Juneau and Sitka. Here are introductions to two RRANN Statewide students:



HOLLY STANTON, Bethel, Alaska

My name is Holly Stanton. I am a Yupik Eskimo / Athabascan Indian from Bethel, Alaska. Initially, I became interested in a career in health in high school. At the time, I was participating in a work-study program through the high school working at the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional Hospital in the Pharmacy Department. During that period, I was focused on becoming a doctor, but later changed my aspiration when I saw how much impact the nurses had on a patient's recovery and well-being. Additionally, my aunt and my stepmother were both registered nurses and served as role models for me. Throughout high school, I took as many science courses as the curriculum offered. I began to look into colleges in the lower 48.

However, as it often happens, life took me in a different direction than I had planned. Instead of starting college, I started my family. In 1992 I had my son, and in 1994 my daughter and in 2001 another daughter. I put college on a back burner until 1996 when I decided to start classes at the Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel. The Kuskokwim Campus at that time had a very limited amount of degrees that one could earn, none of which were nursing. So, being flexible and thinking that I wanted a career where I would be helping people in some manner, I began to focus on Social Work. I took all the preliminary classes and started on the Social Work curriculum. After two years of classes, I started to realize that perhaps Social Work was not for me after speaking to many Social Workers who said they were burnt out and overwhelmed with case loads and lack of success stories. I then took a break from college and started working for Public Health Nursing in Bethel.

Working for Public Health Nursing re-ignited my dream of nursing. I saw first hand how much the nurses appeared to enjoy their jobs. I witnessed the personal interaction and repertoire of relationships that the nurses built up with their patients in the villages and in Bethel. Some of the nurses had been working there so long that they helped 3 generations in a family! It appeared to be a very rewarding career from all angles and I wanted to be a part of it!

So, in the fall of 2002 I got word from the college that they were going to be introducing a program that would allow students to take classes at the UAA's School of Nursing and eventually graduate with an Associate Degree of Nursing. I was so excited! Not only would I be able to get a degree in nursing, I wouldn't have to leave home to do it! I started the science prerequisites that the School of Nursing required for admission consideration during the fall semester of 2002. After a lengthy application process, I was admitted to the program and started my nursing classes the spring of 2004. Nursing school is not easy by any means. All of your classes require a clinical lab in addition to the lecture portion, which means getting to the hospital before 7:00 am on clinical days. It was commonplace to have 10 chapters to read before a class the 1st semester, besides having clinical skills to master. We had to pass a mathematical exam with 100% accuracy before even continuing on with the classes. All this studying means that I have nearly zero time with my family (99% of the time I am studying in the bedroom while everyone else is doing other things). I often feel guilty and stressed out, but I am hoping that my children will eventually respect the toll that my educational pursuit has taken on us, by realizing that any goal can be accomplished with hard work. I see working up at the hospital how few Alaskan natives hold any professional jobs and I am hoping to change that number by graduating in December of 2005.

Statewide Student Profile: (cont)



Lawrence L. 'Larry' Valle, Kenai, Alaska

Past

My name is Larry Vallee, I was born in Arlington, Va. How that came about is my mothers story. Suffice it to say, we moved to Iowa where my brother was born, from there to California, and finally Mom, my brother and I wound up in Fairbanks in 1952. In 1953 we moved to Anchorage, lived in Mt. View to start with, and then moved to a small house on the corner of 9th & Cordova.

I went to kindergarten at All Saints Episcopal, grade schools at Denali, Sunflower (on Elmendorf AFB), North Star, and finally Abbot Loop Elementary. Junior high at A.J. Wendler, and finally graduating from East Anchorage High School in 1967.

I joined the U.S. Navy after high school, mostly to avoid the draft during the Vietnam War. I wanted to be either a hospital corpsman or an air traffic controller, but that was not to be. I became a parachute rigger instead.

After discharge in 1971, I started college with the thought to become a high school teacher in history and political science, with a minor in counseling. However, the counselor at registration pointed out that teachers were 'under-paid & over-worked' and 'a dime a dozen', which was true at that time.

As the Anchorage Community College (the forerunner of UAA) had an aviation program, I was convinced by one of the instructor/counselors to try air traffic control as a major; they had just started an AAS program. By following what that program outlined, I received my AAS in Air Traffic Control in May 1973, which was while I was being trained by the FAA as an Enroute Air Traffic Control Specialist. I retired from government service in April 2001, with more than 25 years service.

Our motto for providing ATC services is: safe, orderly, and expeditious movement of air traffic.

Present

I went back to college at Kenai Peninsula College in the fall of 2002, a minor gap of 27 years since my last college experience. One of the GER's I needed was a natural science GER, so I chose to take Anatomy & Physiology rather than either chemistry or biology, figuring knowing how my own body worked would be more useful to me than how to make plastic or the evolution of amoebas. I was fortunate to have a professor who has extensive experience in the medical field, and he related most of the information to his personal experiences as an EMT. He also indicated that KPC would be bringing a nursing program to the college, that A & P and microbiology would be prerequisite courses, and that the program would be very competitive; i.e. more applicants than program openings.

After taking the A & P, Microbiology, Life Span Development, and Clinical Nutrition courses I submitted my application for acceptance in the AAS – RN program. I received my letter of acceptance in September 2004, took a few days to decide if this is where I want to go, and accepted. My class started at KPC in January 2005, with the Nursing 120 theory class being provided via distance delivery, and the nursing lab class being taught locally.

Future

My immediate goal is to complete this program, receive the AAS – RN degree, take & pass the NCLEX-RN exam, and become licensed in the State of Alaska. The future, when I get there, is to complete the BS – RN degree. My thought process about where I am and where I want to go is similar to the motto that I operated under for the 25+ years I was an ATCS, I just changed some of the words to fit the career: safe, illness free, and healthy activities of daily living.

What Students Say About RRANN

“RRANN to me is like a support group where everyone is interested in seeing everyone else do well and that I believe is the goal of RRANN. I think they are doing an excellent job and I love being associated with them.”

-Jenny Owens, BS Nursing student



Jenny Owens, center, with fellow nursing students Sharon Darden (R) and Sadie Manor-Schwalenberg



“Being a part of RRANN is important to me, as right now it is my only link to my native community. RRANN support is important to my success in the BSN program.”

-Sylvia Eschbacher, BS Nursing student

“I have been attending UAA for a number of years now, and finally have begun taking classes in the nursing major. I am so excited and curious about taking these classes. I grew up with my Yup'ik relatives on the western coast of Alaska. I consider Kipnuk my home. I lived in Kipnuk, Platinum, Kwigillingok, and attended Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka before coming to Anchorage to pursue my dream of completing nursing school. I have always had an interest in helping and healing people and would like to complete college with a degree that will allow me to do that for the rest of my life. The RRANN stipend has helped me out a lot during past semesters especially since I am not working, but totally committed to UAA's nursing program.”

-Viola Samson, BS Nursing student



“My name is Jeanne Pickett. I am from Elim and Inupiaq. I worked as a Community Health Aide for 6 years before coming back to school to work toward my BS in Nursing. Without RRANN, I don't know where I'd be. The tutors helped me get past those pre-req's! Thanks!”

-Jeanne Pickett, BS Nursing student

Upcoming Events

☛ **Fridays Lunch in the Lounge**

Noon – Nightingale Wing

☛ **February Fun & Games Winter Potluck**

February 24th – South Cafeteria, Student Union

☛ **Majors Meeting**

March 18th – 4:00pm - Skills Lab A
- PSB (formerly Bldg. K)

☛ **SPRING BREAK!**

March 21st – March 26th

☛ **Honoring Our Graduates Potluck**

April 21th – South Cafeteria, Student Union

☛ **Majors Meeting**

May 21st – 4:00pm - Skills Lab A
- PSB (formerly Bldg. K)

Please visit our website at <http://nursing.uaa.alaska.edu/rrann>

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