



IRHA

Fall 2024

COMMUNITY
NEWSLETTER

www.irha.org

To provide Tribal Housing opportunities to foster and encourage self-empowerment.

Speedy Sam, Chairperson

Speedy was elected Chairman of the Board in March of 2024. He has served for nine years on the Board of Commissioners (BoC) and has worked with three different CEO's during his service. Speedy is from Huslia, an Athabascan village located on the Koyukuk River, and is of the Caribou Clan. Speedy has five grown children and is the proud grandpa to a bunch of grandchildren!

During his service on the board Speedy has watched the purchase and development of the Mendone Housing Project, and has been fortunate to see many families move into new homes.

Speedy is excited about the future of the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), and the direction of the organization. "We have a strong focus on seeking additionally funding to help our Tribes build homes", and "we have to continue to focus on advocating with HUD and Congress to increase the annual NAHASDA appropriation.

As a board we have a clear vision of building homes in the villages. That is done by the BoC, the CEO Eugene Paul, and the staff working together. A piece of wisdom given to Speedy is, "to remember that you are not better than anyone else, always think about that because our job is to always work for our people."



Kimberly Carlo, Secretary/Treasurer

Kimberly was elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Board in March of 2024. Kimberly Carlo is a Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal member, who grew up in rural Alaska. Kimberly is the daughter of Kenny Carlo and the late Karen Carlo. Kimberly's grandparents are the late Bill and Poldine Carlo and the late Richard and Eva Carroll. Kimberly has three children and one grandchild.

Kimberly has over 17 years of housing experience, having worked for IRHA previous to serving on the BoC. Kimberly has advocated at a local and national level for healthy homes, and has been nationally recognized for her weatherization and housing work.

Kimberly is honored to serve as an IRHA Commissioner, she is motivated by her commitment to serve our communities, focusing on providing healthy and affordable housing.



Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Chiefs, Tribal Councils, and Tribal Members,

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Interior Regional Housing Authority. As we move forward and plan for the future, my team is focused on building trust relationships, committed to follow through with our clients, and seeking additional funding sources to leverage funds that provide housing for American Indian and Alaska Native people.

I am pleased to share with all of you the achievements of my first 180 days of service to the Interior Regional Housing Authority.

My priority to the Board of Commissioners and our Staff was to build stronger relationships of trust with our Tribes, and to focus on Tribal Sovereignty working to achieve the goals of each Tribe. In the last six months my staff and I have traveled to Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Northway, Tok, McGrath, Circle, Kaltag, Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Evansville, Nenana, Minto, and Manley. I believe the most important work we can do is to come to the table and listen to our Tribes, from there we can work together to accomplish the housing needs for the communities we serve.

I have worked closely with the Tribal Leaders that serve our region and have met with Chief Brian Ridley at Tanana Chiefs Conference, Steve Ginnis and Melissa Charlie at Fairbanks Native Association, the Doyon Shareholder Relations Committee with Chair Shirley Cleaver, Aaron Schutt of Doyon, Limited, President Chris Simon of K Corp, as well as attended the Denakkanaaga meeting. My goal is to regularly communicate individually, regularly, and participate in regional meetings.

My team has worked diligently to advocate for our Tribes for a Build America Buy America (BABA) waiver, Congressional Approval for Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA), increased NAHASDA appropriation as it has been flat funded from 2014 until 2021. A critical component in our national networking has been advocating with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (TIAC). This has resulted in an



additional 48% of NAHASDA funding this year.

Advocacy work has continued with a trip to visit the Alaska State Legislature in Juneau, which resulted in the legislature providing BABA waiver letters to HUD on IRHA's behalf. Senator Sullivan visited IRHA in Fairbanks, met with my staff, and visited one of the homes that our team is remediating from methamphetamine. We were able to discuss the housing needs for the region and the total development costs for building, which is the same in Fairbanks as for a remote community such as Alatna. I met with Senator Murkowski and visited Minto with her and her staff. IRHA staff have participated in Representative Peltola's community meeting regarding outmigration and housing.

Partnerships have continued with other agencies such as Cold Climate Housing Research Center, Rasmuson Foundation, Wells Fargo, Mt. McKinley Bank, and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation all of which have provided financial funding to support projects in our region.

I am exceptionally proud of my team which has developed a plan to fight methamphetamine and the negative impacts on housing it has in our region. Our construction team has a foreman and crew that are trained to test for methamphetamine, determine the amount, and then come up with a remediation plan based on the amount found in the home. We can test homes to ensure they are healthy and safe for homeowners to inhabit, and we can effectively clean homes that test positive. This is a critical component of being proactive as we move forward with the epidemic that faces our people.

As we move forward into the next year and reflect on our accomplishments, I am proud of the work my team has done to work with our Tribes, and the relationships that we are building as we build homes for those that we serve. Homeownership makes such an impact on the individual family that receives the home. It has a larger impact on the community and brings a sense of pride while ensuring that families that want to live in their home villages can, where their children are raised within their family units, learning from their elders their traditional ways. These homes can make the difference between keeping a school open and having a clinic in the community, and that is what success looks like.

Dogi'dinh,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eugene Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Eugene Paul

Board of Commissioners



Speedy Sam, Kimberly Carlo, Chaaly Albert, Eugene Paul, Kristin Moreland, & Alfred Demientieff

Speedy Sam

Chairperson

Huslia

Seat C - Exp. 3/2025

William Chaaly Albert

Vice-Chairperson

Northway

Seat A - Exp. 3/2027

Kimberly Carlo

Secretary/Treasurer

Ft. Yukon

Seat D - Exp. 3/2025

Kristen Moreland

Commissioner

Ft. Yukon

Seat E - Exp. 3/2026

Alfred Joseph Demientieff

Commissioner

Holy Cross

Seat B - Exp. 3/2027

IRHA is selected Fairbanks

Chamber of Commerce

2024 Family Friendly

Workplace Winner



Eugene Paul, CEO, accepted an award for 2024 Family Friendliest Workplace through the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the Interior Regional Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, and the Staff!

"It's a great place to work, and our goal of building homes for families is a priority, we can only do that by working closely together and creating a positive work environment. I love seeing kids in the office, they are our future."

Employee Highlights

Carl Demit, Jr.

Carl Demit, Jr. son of late Carl Sr. and Mable Demit was raised in Northway. Carl is married to his high school sweetheart Shelley Hosken and they are the proud parents of three grown children with five beautiful grandsons.

Carl has come a long way from where he started as a Laborer in 1990 . Now a respected Foreman, Carl has the ability to lead multiple projects and ensure his crews are able to complete projects scopes on time and on budget.

Carl worked as a Union Carpenter for sixteen years, during which he would work on and off for IRHA. He made the choice to work full time at IRHA because of the work environment. Carl says it is very family oriented and we can put our families first and that's important. When asked about what he likes about working in the villages, Carl stated, "It's like being home. You get to spend time with friends and family and it feels like I am making a difference." "It's pretty neat to see the smile on someone's face when they move into a new home." As a leader Carl believes it is important to try to teach his crew what he knows and be a good role model. "I work right with there with them, teaching them."



Edith Hildebrand

Edith Hildebrand from Koyukuk & Nulato, is the daughter of the late Hughey & Eleanor Kriska of Koyukuk , and the granddaughter of the late John Dayton & Madeline Solomon & Herbert Solomon, and the late Kokrine & Mathilda Kriska. Edith and her husband Darrell have two adult children, Shawna & Edward, and now reside in Fairbanks.

Edith graduated with a BBA from UAA in 1989, and has worked for TCC, Manilaq, UAF, in two school districts here in Alaska, and has dedicated her whole career to meeting the needs of rural communities. Edith has over 20 years of experience in budgeting, Human Resource Management, and other administrative functions. In the midst of juggling full-time work, kids in school, and her husband working in the field, Edith successfully earned her Masters in Rural Development from UAF in 2005.

Edith enjoys subsistence hunting, fishing, gathering and cultural activities. Her hobbies are sewing and beading, crafting, and she loves to bake. Edith loves family time, especially being a grandparent. Her earliest role model was Grandmother Madeline Solomon who displayed compassion, hard work, creativity, resilience, perseverance, and had a strong dedication and love of family! Edith is excited for the opportunity to work with a great team at IRHA, and to work for our Tribes.



Build America, Buy America (BABA)

What does Build America, Buy America mean to you?

The Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act goes into effect 10/01/24, and requires that materials used in Federally Funded Infrastructure Projects be made in the United States including:

• *All iron & Steel items, all manufactured items, and all construction materials must be made or manufactured in the United States.*

Infrastructure includes projects such as housing, roads, energy systems, broadband, airports, and more.

BABA only applies to any new money appropriated AFTER 10/01/24.

Rental Insurance Importance

Rental Insurance is important because it offers you financial coverage for the following:

Protects your belongings-Renters insurance can help cover the cost of replacing or repairing your belonging if they are damaged, stolen, or lost due to theft, fire, vandalism, or natural disasters.

Provides liability coverage-Renters insurance can help cover medical bills, court costs, and other expenses if someone is injured on your property.

Helps with additional living expenses-Renters insurance can help cover the cost of temporary living arrangements if your home becomes uninhabitable due to a covered loss.

Northway Village New Construction



Carl Demit, Robert Pierce, Stefan Felix, Joseph Coppa, & Shane Sam are all proudly working to complete the two homes. Carl, Stefan, Joseph, and Shane all have direct ties to the village.



Welcome Home



(Left) Julie Settle IRHA and Leah David

A New Homeowner in Huslia

Leah David and her family have a place to call their own! Leah and her four children ages 2 to 14 moved in with so much excitement.

Leah shares that the application and paperwork process wasn't difficult, and says that being on the waitlist was worth it, now they have their own home.

Leah writes that "after growing up in a one-bedroom log cabin, my kids were ecstatic when we found out we were approved for one of the three new houses here in Huslia." She recalls that her youngest son wanted his own bedroom so badly so he would ask to move his bed into the living room or kitchen so he could have his own bedroom. She states that they have so much room now, and that it is awesome to have a washer and dryer in her own home.

Leah's advice is to save up while you are on the waiting list for furniture and things you will need so you don't have to go into debt.

"It's a great feeling to have a whole house to give my kids. Thank you so much IRHA for making this dream come true." Leah said she just cannot believe that they have a home of their own.

Smoke Detectors & Carbon Monoxide Detectors

It is fall which means it is a great time for homeowners and renters to replace smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries! The IRHA recommends alkaline batteries as they have a longer life span, and these detectors are essential components in saving lives! Make sure to test your detectors to ensure they are working, they can save a life!



Communities We Serve

Alatna	Holy Cross	Stevens Village
Allakaket	Huslia	Takotna
Anvik	Hughes	Tanacross
Beaver	Kaltag	Telida
Birch Creek	Koyukuk	Doyon:
Canyon Village	Manley	Tok, Canyon Village
Chalkyitsik	Minto	Medfra, Fairbanks
Circle	McGrath	
Dot Lake	Nenana	
Eagle	Nikolai	
Evansville	Northway	
Grayling	Ruby	
Healy Lake	Shageluk	



Fire Extinguisher Inspection & Maintenance

- Ensure easy access to the Fire Extinguisher
- Check the Pressure Gauge (Green Indicates Full Charge)
- Inspect the Hose for Cracks
- Make sure the discharge nozzle is clear
- Check the tank for physical damage, corrosion or leaks
- Ensure locking pin is intact & the tamper seal is not broken

Not Properly Charged



Charged Properly





Birch Creek 2010

Dot Lake 2011



Eagle 2012

Ft. Yukon 2015



Holy Cross 2016

Grayling 2018



Alatna 2007

Allakaket 2009



Anvik 2007

Beaver 2005



Tetlin 2015

Circle 2013

Celebrating 50 Years of Service

All Set For Fall

Home Maintenance Fall Checklist

- **Check** roof for missing, loose, or damaged shingles
- **Check** smoke detectors and fire extinguishers
- **Clean** chimney and fireplace
- **Seal** any gaps around windows and doors with weather stripping and check for cracks
- **Wrap** indoor pipes
- **Inspect** your heating system and schedule a routine furnace check
- **Turn off** outdoor water supply, remove and store hoses
- **Install** outdoor faucet covers.
- **Trim** tree branches
- **Clean** gutters
- **Remove** debris and dead vegetation

AMERIND

Connect with us for homeowner safety tips
and other information: AMERIND.com



Celebrating 50 Years of Service

It's been 50 years since the inception of the Interior Regional Housing Authority, (IRHA) and in that time we have built new homes, remodeled homes, built community centers, offices, weatherization, access ramps for elders, and much more. In that time the IRHA has built and conveyed homes in the communities we serve as well as Galena, Tanana, Rampart, and Fort Yukon.

Our leadership has been as diverse as the communities we serve with early pioneers in Alaskan Housing such as Alfred Ketzler, Tim Wallis, Ernest Holmberg, William Timme, and Reginald Denny Sr as the first Board of Commissioners to our first Executive Director, Chris Anderson.

Some of our leaderships served for long periods such as Spud Williams, Jonathon Solomon,

Clarence Alexander, and Lorraine (Felix) Titus with Joseph Wilson serving the longest as our Executive Director for seven years.

During these 50 years housing has seen a drastic change from the inception of the United States Housing Act of 1937, to the Mutual Help Program for affordable housing. In January of 1996 the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) was passed which signified the importance of Tribal Sovereignty, and allowed Tribes to determine how their Federal Housing funding is spent.

Today the IRHA collaborates with the Tribes to meet the needs of housing in the communities we serve.

As we move forward into our 50th year of service we are focused on public and non-profit partnerships, grant writing, and seeking additional funding to supplement NAHASDA funding.

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IRHA Programs

HOP—Home Ownership Program **HOPE**—Home Ownership Program for Elderly

HOP Program offers an opportunity to Alaskan Native/American Indians to purchase a home through the IRHA for those who meet all requirements over a 20-year period. Monthly obligation payments are based on 30% of the household's monthly income. The home buyer is responsible for maintaining all the utilities and upkeep of routine and non-routine maintenance of the home until the home is conveyed.

HOP Applicants are required to pay a Minimum Monthly Payment (MMP) of 30% (Fairbanks), or 15% (Rural) of their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). Clients must provide a one-time (nonrefundable) fee of \$1500 for the down payment and processing.

HOPE Program offers an opportunity to Alaskan Native/American Indians to purchase a home through the IRHA for those who meet all requirements over a 10-year period. Monthly obligation payments are based on 15% of the household's monthly income. The home buyer is responsible for maintaining all the utilities and upkeep of routine and non-routine maintenance of the home for the duration of the agreement.

HOPE Elderly Applicants be 62 years of age or older. Applicants are required to pay a Minimum Monthly Payment (MMP) of 15% of their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). Clients must provide a one-time (nonrefundable) fee of \$1500 for down payment and processing.

The homebuyer is responsible for maintaining all utilities and maintenance on the home for the duration of the mortgage.

To qualify applicants must:

- Complete the IRHA HOP/HOPE application
- Have a steady income
- Complete the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) Homebuyers Course (www.ahfc.us)
- Applicant must not own a home or have owned a home in the previous 3 years

Interested Applicants can schedule an appointment to meet with the IRHA Housing Staff for assistance with applications.

Contact IRHA Housing at (907) 452-8315 to schedule an appointment.

2024 Native Hire Update

The Interior Regional Housing Authority prides itself on investing in our Native Communities!

IRHA is at 97% Native hire, with four of the five leadership positions being held by an Alaska Native.

Currently IRHA is proud that 100% of our Foremen are Alaska Native.

IRHA continues to identify ways to develop talent including hiring apprentices to increase our skilled workforce.

Educational Opportunities



COLD CLIMATE
HOUSING RESEARCH CENTER

Upcoming Fall Events

10/8

5:30-7:00pm

Heat Pumps:

Heating and Cooling for Cold Climates

GVEA



10/15

5:30-7:00pm

Harnessing Solar Power in Cold Climates

GVEA

10/22

5:30-7:00pm

Biomass Energy:

How to Effectively Fuel Your Home

GVEA



Saturdays
10/12-11/23
8:00-noon

Owner/Builder Master Class
with Brannon Richart of Intella Homes

Learn more and register here: <http://cchrc.org/classes/>



★ Working Together for Jobs

Alaska Works Partnership, Inc.
Cross-Industry Training & Education

Est 1996

Electrical Wiring

Power Tools (Evenings)

H2H Carpentry

How to Read Plans (Evenings)

September 30th-October 4th, 2024

November 4th-14th, 2024

December 2nd-6th, 2024

December 9th-December 12th, 2024

Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF)

The Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act provided money to support homeowners facing financial hardship associated with COVID-19.

Through the HAF program the following funds were distributed to the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) clients.

Mortgage Payment Assistance

\$276,236.47 to 105 Clients

Financial Assistance

\$90,014.27 to 20 Clients

Utilities Payment Assistance

\$1,621,124.87 to 296 Clients

This money was funded to help prevent mortgage delinquencies, foreclosures, losses of utilities and home energy services as well as displacement.

Thank you to our Community Partners

Interior Regional Housing Authority

828 27th Avenue

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Main Phone: 907-452-8315

Toll Free: 1-800-478-4742

www.irha.org

Find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing>

