



IRHA

Interior Regional Housing Authority

Spring 2024

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Www.irha.org

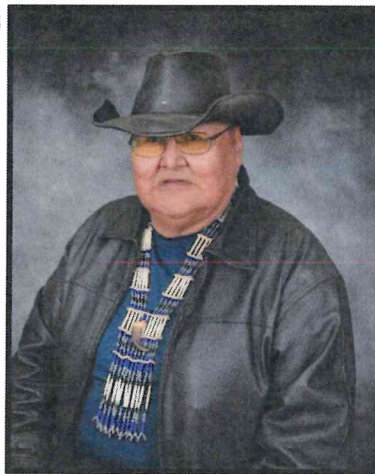
To provide Tribal Housing opportunities to foster and encourage self-empowerment.



Pictured (Left to right): Alfred Demientieff, Chaaiy Albert, Speedy Sam, Marvin Deacon, Kimberly Carlo, Eugene Paul

The Interior Regional Housing Authority wants to sincerely thank outgoing Board of Commissioner Marvin Deacon, of Grayling, for eight years of dedicated service.

During his tenure at IRHA Marvin served as a Commissioner, Secretary, Vice-Chair, and Chairperson of the Board. Marvin worked with four CEO's, Jana George, Charlene Ostbloom (acting), Ori Williams, and Vanessa Cruger (acting).



During this period IRHA went from building 5 star plus homes to 6 star plus homes, providing a higher quality product for our consumers.

Marvin states that he is thankful for the time he had to serve our Tribes. "I found great satisfaction helping Tribes build homes, and hearing about families move in." Marvin's advice to future board members is, "to understand that the job of a commissioner is to work for all the Tribes, to understand there is a large time commitment, and to remember we are here to serve."

Marvin is thankful for his wife of 48 years Judy, and her unwavering support of his service and the time it takes him away from home.

Board of Commissioners



Speedy Sam

Chairperson

Huslia

Seat C – Exp. 3/2025

William Chaaiy 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

The IRHA Welcomes New Leadership

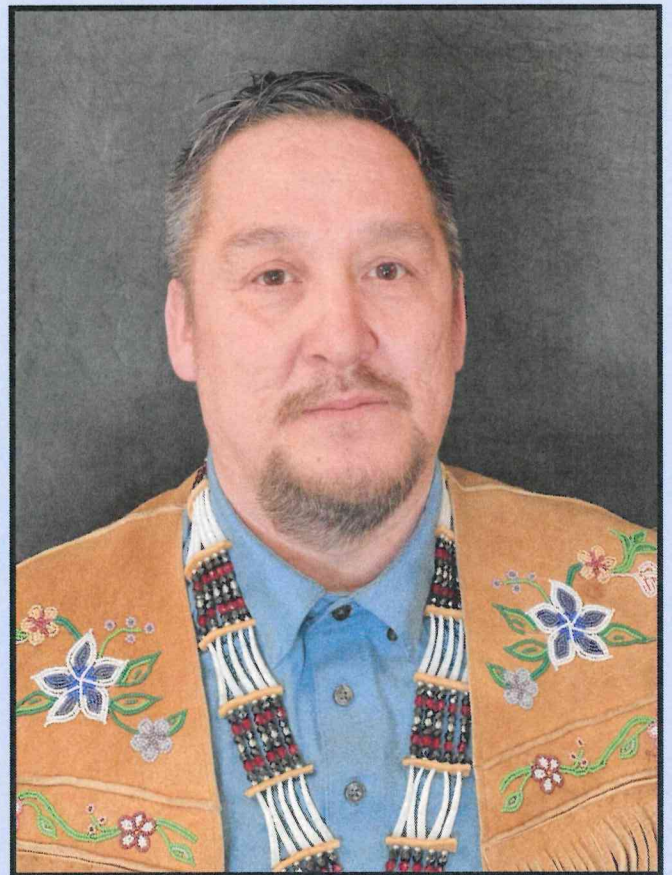
Eugene Paul, Chief Executive Officer

Eugene Paul is a Deg'hitan Athabascan from the village of Holy Cross where he served as First Chief for over 20 years. His parents are the late Vaska and Phyllis Gregory and the late Leroy Green. His late Grandpa John Paul was the last known Traditional Chief of the village to speak all the Native languages in the region. Cultural knowledge and values are important to the family.

Along with his wife, Tessiana, they raised their four (4) kids with strong traditional values through the understanding of place names and subsistence ways of living with the importance of being able to provide and sustain themselves and their families in today's world.

Mr. Paul has been a strong leadership advocate for the Holy Cross Tribe, something he took very seriously. There is much that involves being a Chief. He successfully guided Tribal operations, policies & procedures, and the Tribal Court. He led many of the Tribal court hearings and is a strong voice for child protection matters. With help from his peers, he volunteered a lot of his time as a first responder, with search and rescue, burial assistance, public safety, cultural camps, and other community activities.

Mr. Paul expanded his leadership by representing the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross Tribes on the TCC Executive Board. He always had their best interests in mind especially when it came down to improving life in the villages.



Other boards Mr. Paul participated/ participates in include: the City of Holy Cross, Advisory School Board, Fish & Game Advisory Committee, and the recent formation of the Bering Sea-Western Interior Tribal Commission.

Mr. Paul has served in many leadership roles and assignments, he remains involved, believes in service, is humble, and committed to respecting our people, the land, natural resources, and traditional life style.

During Convention Mr. Paul committed to the Tribes that, "My door is always open", and as such is prepared to advocate for housing opportunities for your community.

Letter from the CEO

I'd like to express my gratitude for the support that has been extended to me during my transition into my CEO position for the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA).

Last month I attended the Tanana Chiefs 2024 Sub Regional and Annual Convention with my staff. We met with Chiefs and Tribal Administrators to learn more about housing in each of your communities. It was an honor to sit in your meetings and hear from you directly, and I look forward to working with all of you to serve our people. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve your villages and look forward to getting to know many of you as I get an understanding of the housing needs for each of your Tribes. One of my priorities is traveling to the villages that the IRHA serves. In my first ninety days I have traveled to Allakaket, Minto, and Dot Lake and we have upcoming planned trips to McGrath and Circle.

As my team looks forward to the 2024 Construction Season, we have our key positions filled and for the first time in four years have a full staff. IRHA is actively seeking additional funding on behalf of our Tribes. Since January my team has written and submitted fifteen grant applications to supplement the overall cost of building to a variety of agencies: Rasmuson Foundation, Wells Fargo, Housing Alaskans, Cold Climate Housing Research Center, Denali Commission, IHBG Competitive, and Senator Murkowski's Congressional Appropriation.

I am excited to share that Congress passed FY24 appropriation for NAHASDA's Indian Housing Block Grant to \$1.11 Billion, an increase of 39.71% over FY23, and an increase of 69.67% from FY20. This is a step in the right direction for Tribes.

IRHA has aggressively advocated for a waiver to Build America Buy America (BABA). The IRHA

has focused hard at networking with other Alaska Association of Housing Authorities to bring awareness to HUD about the key impacts of BABA and how it will increase costs, delay delivery of materials, and logistically make building extremely difficult in Alaska with many of the components that we utilize being made outside of America (example: Toyotomi). IRHA submitted twenty letters on behalf of the Tribes to HUD requesting a blanket waiver to BABA. With the upcoming deadline of May 22, 2024, IRHA continues to advocate for Alaska's Tribes working with the State of Alaska's delegation in Juneau, as well as meetings with our Congressional Delegation in Washington DC. I will continue to keep all of you updated on our progress.

I want to take a moment to thank Ori Williams for his leadership at IRHA over the last three years and wish him the best on his retirement. I appreciate his commitment to our Tribes, and the staff. Additionally, I want to extend a special thank you to Vanessa Cruger, who stepped up as Acting CEO during the transition. I cannot say enough about her hard work and dedication to the organization and our management team that continues to prove her commitment and dedication to our people.

Additionally, I'd like to also thank the IRHA Board of Commissioners for this opportunity and look forward to working together to provide housing to the communities under the IRHA.

Finally, I'd like to honor Janet Carroll for her twenty years of dedicated service to IRHA. She is the longest serving employee and continues to give her very best each and every day. Janet is an example of hard work and dedication, and I look forward to working with her.

Dogi'dinh,

Eugene Paul, CEO

Newest Board of Commissioners

Join us as we welcome two newly-elected Commissioners to the IRHA Board!

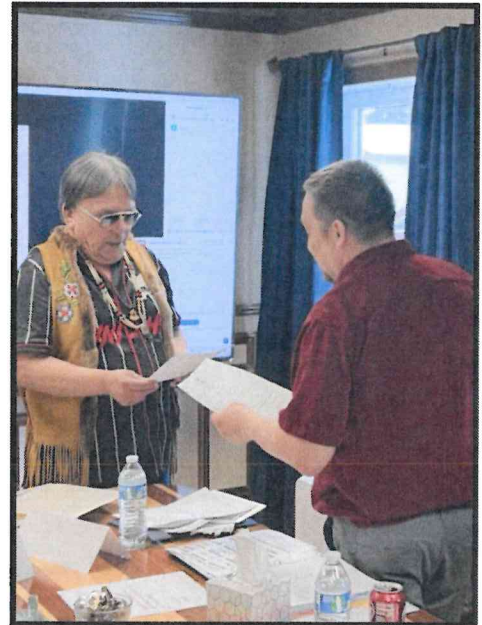
Alfred J. Demientieff

Alfred Demientieff is a Deg'hitan Athabaskan from the Village of Holy Cross, where he was born and raised.

Alfred enjoys the outdoors whether he is boating, riding his snowmachine, or gathering wood. Hunting and fishing are very important to him!

Alfred is constantly involved in local activities. He currently serves on the Holy

Cross Tribal Council, where he volunteers to plan and coordinate events. He previously served as a board member for his local corporation. Alfred actively advocates for fishing rights on the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. He looks forwards to serving as an IRHA board member and working to provide housing for our people.



William Chaaiy Albert



William "Chaaiy" Albert is the son of William and Pam Albert of Northway, and the grandson of the late Ena and Kenny Albert and the late Donna and Kenny Baker. Chaaiy was raised in Northway, graduating from Walter Northway school, and has worked for his tribe since.

Chaaiy began his work in public service at the age of twenty-eight when he was nominated to serve on his council.

He is married to Amber, his high school sweetheart, and they have seven beautiful children. His family loves to spend time hunting, fishing, and attending concerts and music festivals.

Chaaiy ran for IRHA board because he wanted to be a part of a team that produces amazing six-star homes, and to learn more about housing and how to better serve our tribes as in this critical area.

20 Years of Service Spotlight: Janet Carroll

Janet Carroll is the daughter of Annie Peter and the granddaughter of the late Herbert and Louise Peter of Fort Yukon. She is a member of the Gwichyaa Zhee Gwichin Tribe, and spent most of her life growing up and living in Fort Yukon, Alaska.

Janet attended Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka where she graduated, and went on to earn her Associates Degree in Tribal Management from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Janet met and married the late Clifton Carroll in November of 1993, and together they raised their four children; Nadine, Emily, Jada, and Gordon with a strong focus on a subsistence lifestyle.

In April of 2004 the family moved to Fairbanks to work for IRHA. The family has spent many hours on the river, hunting, camping fishing, and enjoying time together. Janet's heart has been stolen by her precious grandson Hayden Dane.

Janet loves her work at IRHA, and has enjoyed the opportunities to learn and grow while mentoring others. Janet states she enjoys the family atmosphere, the teamwork, and most importantly serving the Tribes.



Alaska Housing Finance Corporation HomeChoice Class

Free classes are offered to help prospective homeowners work their way through the decisions and steps of buying a home, and how to save money on closing costs.

The 6-hour class is open to all buyers and is taught via webinar. It is a great

opportunity to learn about shopping for a lender, insurance, energy efficient homes, contracts, home inspections, money management, budgeting, and more.

For more information go to:
www.ahfc.us/events

2024 Native Hire Update

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

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.



6-Star Energy Efficiency

What does that mean to you?

At IRHA every home we build is a 6-Star Energy Efficient Home.

That means that families that live in these homes will see a 65% reduction in energy use.

This means less money spent during our harsh winter months!

Interior Regional Housing Authority

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www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing

www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing

www.irha.org

Welcome to the Team

Constance M. Reimer-Ely was hired as the new Tribal Development Assurance Manager on January 29, 2024. Constance's family comes from Wisconsin, Tanana, Stevens Village and Allakaket.

She is mother of three adult children, Malea, Ariana and Antonio; foster daughters, Charlene and Roselynn; and many surrogate children.

Her parents are Ken Reimer of Fairbanks, and Sharon (Jay) Tyone of Glennallen. Her

grandparents are the late Raymond Sr. and Myrtle Reimer of Menasha, WI, the late Milton Moses Sr., of Stevens Village/Allakaket, and the late Virginia (Joseph-Moses) Mayo of Tanana.

Constance has worked for the interior tribal communities for the majority of her adult life and most recently worked for Tanana Chiefs Conference for 12 years in various capacities. She is excited to continue working with Interior Tribes.



Julie Settle, is a Koyukon Athabascan from the villages of Koyukuk and Tanana. Her parents are the late Leonard Kriska, and Karen and Hugh Kriska.

Julie and her husband Michael have two children, Ember and Levi. They have lived in Fairbanks for the past eighteen years.

Julie loves being outside and enjoys every minute of every day.

Julie previously served in the role of Work Assistance Program Manager for Tanana Chiefs Conference. She enjoys serving the Tribes and our community, and looks forward to serving in a different capacity.

She is thrilled to join the IRHA team and is excited to see the changes we can make for a better tomorrow.

WELCOME HOME



(Left) Kristin Wills, Albert Lawson, Savannah Fields, and

Nikolai Housing

When Kristin Wills was fourteen her family moved from Nikolai to Hawaii, and for the next fourteen years Kristin dreamt of going home. Home is Nikolai. She missed everything about home; the people, nature.

Like many of us, Kristin has dreamt about owning her own home, but she never thought it would happen as there is a lack of housing in Nikolai.

As a mother with three girls ages eleven to four months, the sense of owning her own home is empowering. Kristin states, “It was exciting moving into our home. A little nerve wracking, but it is going good.” There have been new opportunities to learn as Kristin filled her holding tank for the first time.

Kristin and her girls are pretty much unpacked and moved in. Her girls love their home, and Kristin says, “I can’t get them out of the house!” As the Tribal Administrator, Kristin is looking forward to more homes being built in her community as the lack of housing makes it difficult, and families are often living in crowded conditions or end up leaving the village. Every home that is built makes a difference in Nikolai for Tribal Members.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY = SAVINGS

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation’s One Minute Energy Man offers homeowners quick tips on how to save energy and money? www.ahfc.us/newsroom/videos

The Cold Climate Housing Research Center is a great resource for Alaska’s unique building.

www.cchrc.org

50 years of building better homes...



Pictured: Commissioner Kimberly Carlo, and Foreman Brian Cruger at Mendone

On October 14, 1974 the Tanana Chiefs Regional Housing Authority was created along with thirteen other Alaskan housing authorities according to Alaska Statutes 18.55.995 and 18.55.996 to administer programs of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The principal officers were; Alfred Ketzler, Reginald Denny, William Timme, Ernest Holmberg, and Tim Wallis.

In May of 1978 the Tanana Chiefs Regional Housing Authority officially changes the

name of the organization to the Interior Regional Housing Authority with Resolution No. 78-12.

Tribes that designate the Interior Regional Housing Authority as their Tribally Designated Housing Entity receive their Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act (NAHASDA) Indian Housing Block Grant funding through IRHA. The IRHA in collaboration with the Tribal Council work together to provide housing opportunities to communities within the region.

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Rural Projects



Huslia home exterior.



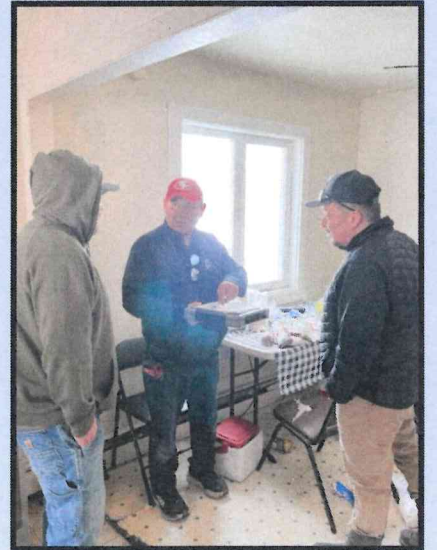
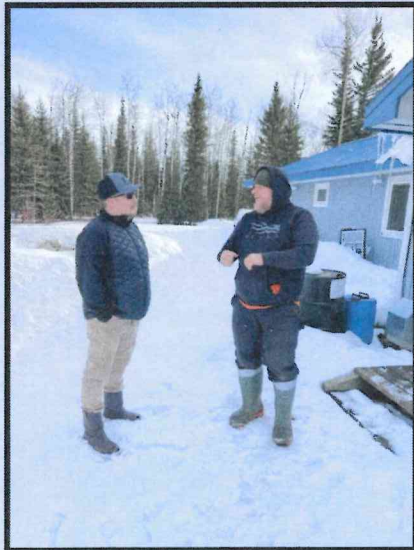
Interior of new home in Huslia.



Allakaket Home.



Chief PJ Simon, Lori Bishop, & Eugene Paul with elders.



Eugene & Mark Rajala, Maintenance Supervisor, Carl Demit, Ryan Strom, & Eugene conducting assessments. In Dot Lake.

10 Principles of a Healthy Home

DRY—Damp houses create an environment for mites, rodents, and mold, all of which are associated with asthma.

CLEAN—Clean homes help reduce pest infestations and exposure to contaminants.

PEST FREE—Exposure to mice and cockroaches increase asthma in children.

VENTILATED—Increasing the fresh air supply improves respiratory health.

SAFE—Falls are the most frequent cause of residential injuries to older adults and children.

CONTAMINANT FREE—Chemical exposures include lead, radon, pesticides, PFAS, and environmental tobacco smoke. Many of these exposures are far higher indoors than outside.

MAINTAINED—Poorly maintained homes are at risk for moisture and pests. Deteriorated lead-based paint in older homes is the primary cause of lead poisoning.

THERMALLY-CONTROLLED—Prolonged exposure to excessive heat or cold puts residents at risk for health problems.

ACCESSIBLE—Increased accessibility in and outside the home can help reduce trips, falls, and isolation, and improve mental health and physical activity.

AFFORDABLE—High housing cost burdens can lead to housing instability causing frequent moves, overcrowding, and homelessness; contributing to job loss, lack of nutritious food, adequate healthcare, and poor mental health.



Interior Regional Housing Authority Regional Map



Proudly Serving the
Tanana Chiefs Region
for 50 years!

Did You Know?

Smoke Detectors & Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Daylight Savings this year was March 10th which is always a great time for homeowners and renters to replace smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries! IRHA recommends alkaline batteries as they have a longer life span, and these detectors are essential components in saving lives! A great rule of thumb is to change the batteries twice a year during the start of Daylight Savings in March and the end in November.

Heat Recovery Units (HRV's)

The homes that IRHA builds are nearly airtight and require proper ventilation to maintain air quality for the structure. The units are built with Heat Recovery Units (HRV's) which must be utilized properly to ensure that moisture is removed from the home to prevent mold and mildew. If the HRV is not utilized properly, it will void any warranty work provided by IRHA.

IRHA Programs

TEAM—Tribal Equity Advantage Mortgage Program

The Tribal Equity Advantage Mortgage Program (TEAM) can help you purchase a home. This program is designed to provide Alaska Native and American Indians in the Fairbanks area with affordable housing.

The grant is designed to help with the down payment and closing costs associated with purchasing a home. This grant can provide funds up to 20% of the purchase price (purchase price may not exceed \$300,000). The grant is forgivable over a 10-year period.

HOP—Home Ownership Program

The Homeownership Program (HOP) offers home ownership opportunities to low-income families that are unable to attain a conventional loan through what is essentially a 20-year mortgage through the IRHA.

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.

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

HOPE—Home Ownership Program for Elderly

The Homeownership Program for Elderly (HOPE) offers home ownership opportunities to low-income families that are unable to attain a conventional loan through what is essentially a 10-year mortgage through the IRHA.

Applicants must 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.

Fairbanks Rehabilitation Program

The rehabilitation (Rehab) program was created to assist existing homeowners living in the Fairbanks North Star Borough with rehabilitation of their homes. IRHA provides material and labor for owner occupied rehabilitation of homes and addresses health, safety, and energy efficiency to improving the longevity of the home. To be eligible the family must meet the HUD income guidelines.