



# IRHA

## Community Newsletter

### ICDBG Success Stories in Native Communities

Each year HUD offers a competitive grant application for the Indian Community Development Block Grant (or ICDBG). It is a great opportunity to complete more projects in your community by making more funds available to you than what you receive from your yearly NAHASDA allocation. The Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) can apply on behalf of a few tribes each year. If you have questions please reach out to the IRHA CFO, Teodora Domea, at

tdornea@irha.org. Below is a summary of items normally needed from your community to be able to write the grant application.

1. Tribal Resolution (template will be provided) authorizing the project and the Competitive application. (Resolution would need to be completed, signed, and placed on your letterhead.)
2. Documentation of authority for IRHA to apply on behalf of the Tribe. (done through the

resolution)

3. Resumes from the Tribal Administrator and the First Chief (to show prior experience with managing grants).
4. Recent photos of the community (if available).
5. Information available for the land where the home will be built if the grant is awarded, such as photos, location coordinates, and copies of information proving site control.



### OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Thursday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
 Closed to the public on Fridays.

Interior Regional  
 Housing Authority  
 828 27th Ave.  
 Fairbanks, AK 99701  
 907-452-8315  
 www.irha.org

#### Mission

Provide tribal housing opportunities to positively impact housing needs.

#### Vision

Families with quality affordable housing.

#### Our Core Values

- > Innovation
- > Respect
- > Honesty
- > Accountability
- > Service

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## Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

**Dear Chiefs, Tribal Councils, and Tribal Members,**

As we welcome the New Year, the days are getting longer and brighter. I want to take a moment to reflect on where we've been and where we're going together. As a Housing Authority, we don't just manage units; we help build futures. Every repair completed, every family housed; to long-term stability for our villages. We invite our Tribal partners to continue working alongside us through collaboration, shared planning, and open dialogue. By aligning our efforts, we can strengthen housing stability and create lasting solutions for our villages. Our focus remains clear: safe, stable, and affordable housing for the people we serve. Over the past month, our team has been working hard at addressing housing needs, strengthening partnerships, and tackling challenges head-on.

On behalf of the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA), I extend my gratitude for your continued partnership and leadership. As the 2025 year ended, I would like to provide an update on IRHA's activities, accomplishments, and challenges experienced from October through December 2025, and how these efforts continue to support housing stability and development within our region.

During this quarter, IRHA reached an important milestone through collaboration with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC). For the first time within the Interior, IRHA successfully combined funding from our Home Ownership Program (HOP) with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Housing Improvement Program (BIA-HIP), administered by TCC. This collaboration resulted in a \$75,000 award in October toward a client's homeownership opportunity. This precedent-setting partnership strengthens long-term housing investments for our people and demonstrates what is possible when Tribal organizations work together to leverage limited resources.

The fourth quarter also presented significant challenges. On October 1, 2025, the federal government shutdown resulted in the temporary closure of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). For 43 days, IRHA was unable to access critical funding systems, submit reports, receive technical assistance, or secure approvals, including approval of the FY 2026 Indian Housing Plan. While services have resumed, this delay significantly slowed project progress and planning efforts across the region.

Advocacy remained a priority throughout this quarter. Prior to the shutdown, housing leaders from the Alaska Association of Housing Authorities met in Anchorage with HUD Secretary Scott Turner. This meeting provided an essential forum to elevate Alaska's unique housing challenges and to emphasize the importance of equitable Tribal housing funding. IRHA leadership also met directly with the Secretary's Chief of Staff to discuss the long-standing funding disparity between Tribes and public housing agencies, and to highlight the positive impact of increased Tribal housing allocations in recent years.

Homelessness continues to be a critical concern throughout Alaska. Federal funding



Eugene Paul, IRHA CEO



Meeting with Representative Begich



Eugene Paul speaking at 2025 TCC Annual Convention.



Eugene Paul speaking at a meeting in Fairbanks.

formulas that prioritize city size rather than the actual number of unhoused individuals continue to disadvantage rural and Tribal communities. These concerns were raised directly with federal and state leaders, and Secretary Turner committed continued support to Alaska Tribes, recognizing the long timelines and insufficient annual allocations many Tribes face in building or rehabilitating even a single home.

IRHA also made progress in workforce development and community health. In November, we hosted our first two cohorts on Methamphetamine and Fentanyl Remediation Training in Fairbanks. This curriculum provided certification training to sixteen Fairbanks North Star Borough residents and four village-based participants, strengthening local capacity to safely rehabilitate homes affected by these substance contaminations.

Looking ahead, IRHA received approval during this quarter to move forward with our Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) partnership with the United States Marine Corps. This program will bring military and IRHA construction crews together in Allakaket and Beaver in 2026, with additional communities scheduled in future years. This partnership represents a significant opportunity to increase housing production while fostering collaboration and skill-building.

Throughout this quarter, IRHA's Tribal Development team, continued direct engagement with Tribes through monthly calls, quarterly reporting, and ongoing technical assistance. We remain committed to ensuring Tribes are informed about available resources, planning options, and program opportunities, and to advancing Tribal priorities through sustained collaboration.

We acknowledge that 2025 presented both progress and obstacles, yet IRHA remains steadfast in our mission: **to provide Tribal housing opportunities that positively impact housing needs.** Your guidance, advocacy, and partnership are essential to this work, and we thank you for your continued trust and collaboration.

The IRHA Management team and staff look forward to meeting and seeing all of our Chiefs, Tribal Councils, and staff from the villages at the spring Subregional Meetings, and the 2026 TCC Annual Convention this coming March. Please do not hesitate to reach out to IRHA staff or myself with questions, priorities, or concerns as we move into 2026 together.

Dogi'dinh,



Eugene Paul



Above:  
Various meetings in 2025  
Below:  
Staff luncheon



## 2025 IRHA Christmas Party

Administrative Employee of the Year is current acting COO, **Lori Bishop**, and Construction Employee of the Year is **Patrick Captain**. Congratulations to you both.



June 2025

Board of Commissioners & CEO  
L.R: Chaaiy Albert, Leah Woods,  
Eugene Paul, Kristen Moreland,  
Kimberly Carlo, and  
Alfred Demientieff

### Board of Commissioners

**Kristen Moreland**

*Chairperson*

Ft. Yukon

Seat E – Exp. 3/2026

**Kimberly Carlo**

*Vice-Chairperson*

Ft. Yukon

Seat C – Exp. 3/2028

**Leah Woods**

*Secretary/Treasurer*

Manley

Seat D – Exp. 3/2028

**William Chaaiy Albert**

*Vice-Chairperson*

Northway

Seat A – Exp. 3/2027

**Alfred Joseph Demientieff**

*Commissioner*

Holy Cross

Seat B – Exp. 3/2027



## Employee Highlight

### Justina Demoski

Justina Demoski is a proud Koyukon Athabascan from Koyukuk, Alaska. I am the daughter of Peter and Euphrasia Demoski, also of Koyukuk. My paternal grandparents are Winnie and the late Peter Demoski Jr., and maternal grandparents are the late John Jr. and Lillian Dayton of Warner and Justine Paul of Galena.

Justina Demoski is a proud bringing over 15 years of experience in accounting. Prior to joining IRHA, I dedicated 13 years to the Tanana Chiefs Conference, where I worked in the accounting and administration department. A passionate advocate for cultural traditions, Justina loves taking her daughters subsistence hunting and berry picking, passing down the knowledge and values that were taught to her.

I joined Interior Regional Housing Authority in June 2023 as a payroll specialist, I'm not working, you can find me on the sidelines of basketball courts and softball fields, cheering on my daughters as their biggest fan and strongest supporter.

A passionate advocate for cultural traditions, Justina loves taking her daughters subsistence hunting and berry picking, passing down the knowledge and values that were taught to her.

"I enjoy working for IRHA and supporting their mission, it feels good to be part of a team that serves our communities."



Justina Demoski  
Payroll Specialist

# IRHA is 95% Alaska Native/American Indian Hire

## Yearly AMERIND Safety Poster Contest

### ATTENTION YOUNG ARTISTS!

It's time for the yearly Safety Poster Contest. Submit your safety themed poster to IRHA for a chance to win a prize for the following categories: **Preschool, K-3, 4-6, 7-8.**

There will be a winning poster from each age group that will be submitted to the National Amerind Safety Poster

Contest for a chance to win \$1,000. Amerind will announce the winner in September 2026 during their Annual Meeting.

The Poster can be on any safety topic of your choice: fire safety, boating safety, gun safety, driving safety, cyber bullying, etc.

Submission should be on a blank 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper and include:

First & last name, grade, age, tribal affiliation, and parent/legal guardian: Name, phone number & email.

**Return the original poster no later than May 29, 2026 by 4:30 pm to:**

**IRHA  
ATTN: Housing  
Department  
828 27th Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701**



Above:  
IRHA CEO, Eugene Paul. & AAHA CEO, Griffin Forster

Below:  
Greg Stuckey, Alaska ONAP Administrator, Eugene Paul, IRHA CEO, & Patricia MacDonald, BBHA CEO.





Above:  
Lori Bishop with  
Senator Dan Sullivan and his wife,  
Julie Fate, in Washington D.C.

Below:  
New Window replacement.



## Deed Concerns for the Rehabilitation Program

Many Tribes have opened their Home Rehabilitation Program to their tribal members in their respective communities over the years. There are guidelines set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and IRHA Policies that must be adhered to, and the most frequent issue that IRHA Tribal Development staff have come across is deeds not being in the applicant's name. The biggest reason for this issue has been that a home was left to the applicant and was never put into the applicant's name through a title company and registered with the State of Alaska.

If the applicant's name is not on the quit claim deed, then the house is not legally the applicants and IRHA cannot work on the home.

IRHA urges homeowners to obtain a quit claim deed for their property with a title agency and have the title agency register the property with the State of Alaska. In some instances, homeowners who have received homes from family members who have passed away may have to go through Probate. If a loved one has passed more than three (3) years ago, then the process becomes harder and it is suggested to work with TCC - Probate and Realty Program (for Native Allotment land) and/or get a lawyer to help with getting a deed for the property.

For any further questions, please contact Brian Leal, Planning Coordinator, [bleal@irha.org](mailto:bleal@irha.org), or Constance Reimer-Ely, Tribal Development Manager, [creimer-ely@irha.org](mailto:creimer-ely@irha.org).

## IRHA Board Seat E Open for Elections 2026-2029

IRHA has one seat open for the upcoming elections at the Tanana Chiefs Conference Annual Convention in March.

The open seat is currently occupied by Kristen Moreland, Fairbanks. The seat information is IRHA Board of Commissioners Seat E, and is held for a 3-year term, 2026-2029.

### Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be eligible to serve on TCC Board of Directors (Article 18).
- Employees of TCC or IRHA are not

eligible to serve as IRHA Commissioners (Article 18).

Letter of intent is required and must be received before February 26, 2026 before 5:00 pm.

For more information contact:

Tanana Chiefs Conference  
ATTN: Chelle Johnson,  
Executive Coordinator  
200 First Avenue | Fairbanks, AK 99701  
1-800-478-6822 ext. 3044  
FAX: (907) 459-3953 Email:  
[chelle.johnson@tananachiefs.org](mailto:chelle.johnson@tananachiefs.org)

### Amazon Business Partnership

IRHA has begun Amazon Business through a contract from the Alaska Municipal League. This includes free prime membership, free shipping, contracted discounts on tens of thousands of commonly used business items, a dedicated account executive and more. This option is a valuable resource for supplying remote communities because it helps overcome the challenges of limited local vendors, high transportation costs, and long lead times. With access to a wide range of bulk and specialized items—from office and maintenance supplies to safety equipment—

organizations can consolidate purchasing through a single platform and many times at a negotiated contract price. It's features like tax-exempt purchasing, quantity discounts, and detailed order tracking support better budget control and transparency, which is especially important for small organizations.

Amazon Business can improve reliability and efficiency for communities that depend on careful logistics planning. Predictable delivery options, reorder lists, and approval workflows reduce administrative burden and help ensure critical supplies are available when needed. For remote locations where delays can disrupt operations or essential services, having a centralized, scalable purchasing solution like Amazon Business can significantly strengthen supply continuity and operational resilience.



### Did You Know?

The last NAHASDA funding increase was in Fiscal Year 2024. The increase for Native American/Alaska Native housing programs was \$324 million. This was the first

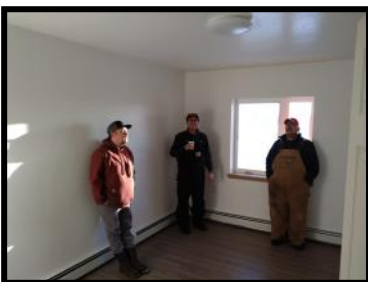
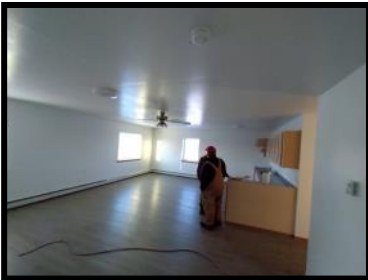
significant increase in funding since 2013. Nearly 580 federally recognized tribes shared a record \$1.34 billion in NAHASDA funding.

Below Pictures:  
IRHA Construction Staff  
rehabilitating a house



## Building Capacity for Safer Homes: Meth & Fentanyl Remediation Training

Below Pics:  
IRHA Management and Amerind in  
Huslia January 2026.



This past year, the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) made meaningful progress in strengthening local capacity to address methamphetamine and fentanyl contamination in housing units across the region. Through targeted remediation training supported by the FY 2025 Opioid Remediation Grant, participants gained essential knowledge and skills to identify and safely respond to contaminated sites, contributing to healthier and safer living environments for our communities.

### Measuring Success Through Engagement and Learning

Project success was measured by meeting program requirements for methamphetamine and fentanyl remediation training and by participant engagement throughout the course. The training successfully delivered required instruction, and several students demonstrated strong understanding of how to recognize contamination risks and apply safe remediation practices. Increased awareness and confidence among participants reflected the effectiveness of the instruction and reinforced the value of continued investment in this work.

### Overcoming Challenges Through Collaboration

Like many regional training efforts, the project faced logistical challenges. Travel from multiple villages limited scheduling flexibility, making it difficult for some participants to attend. To address this, the team coordinated the remediation

training alongside other tribal trainings, helping maximize attendance and reduce travel burdens.

Another challenge was the absence of a strong, pre-established curriculum and schedule. The project team responded by drawing on prior experience, collaborating internally, and incorporating supplemental literature to strengthen the training content. This adaptive approach ensured that participants still received high-quality, relevant instruction despite initial limitations.

### Looking Ahead: Lessons Learned

Reflecting on the project, several opportunities for improvement emerged. If implemented again, the team would expand advertising to reach all serviced villages, allow more preparation time to become familiar with the curriculum, and improve scheduling logistics. Future trainings would also place a greater emphasis on hands-on learning through mock scenarios, helping participants apply concepts in realistic settings. Creating a more engaging and supportive learning environment remains a priority for enhancing both participant experience and outcomes.

Overall, the FY25 Meth & Fentanyl Remediation Training marked an important step toward safer housing and stronger local expertise. The lessons learned this year will help guide future efforts and ensure continued progress in protecting community health and well-being.

## Title VI Loans

The Title VI Loan Guarantee Program was authorized under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA). It is designed to help federally recognized tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) secure loans for affordable housing projects. The program allows these entities to leverage their Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) funds to obtain HUD-guaranteed financing. Each Federally Recognized Tribe has the option to apply for a Title VI loan to fund eligible housing

activities, including constructing new homes, remodel activities, rehabilitating, purchasing, and repairing homes. This is a great option for Tribes due to limited yearly IHBG allocation amounts.

IRHA encourages Tribes who have selected future eligible projects to begin the planning process early. IRHA staff can assist the Tribe in completing the administrative tasks for future projects, including site control, preparing the environmental review responsibility (ERR), and identifying and securing funding. Once an ERR is approved, it is valid for five years.

IRHA Staff rehabilitating a roof.



# IRHA is hiring for the 2026 construction season

## 2026 Construction Season Recruitment

The IRHA is accepting applications for the upcoming 2025 construction season.

Applications and job descriptions can be downloaded at [www.irha.org](http://www.irha.org) under Careers.

### Available Positions:

- Carpenters
- Laborers
- Electricians

Submit your application to :  
Vcruger@irha.org.

To be considered for employment you must submit a 2026 application. Applications are retained until the end of each calendar year.

### Contact information:

Phone: 907-452-8315  
Toll Free 1-800-478-4742  
Fax: 907-452-3119

828 27th Avenue  
Fairbanks AK 99701

# Welcome Home

Fairbanks – Christine Elada





# Thank you to our Community Partners

We thank all of these partners and the generous support they offer those we serve.



**First National Bank**  
**ALASKA**

MEMBER FDIC



**Interior Regional Housing Authority**  
828 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
Main Phone: 907-452-8315  
Toll Free: 1-800-478-4742  
[www.irha.org](http://www.irha.org)



Find us on Facebook at  
<https://www.facebook.com/interiorregionalhousing>

Proudly Serving The Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Region