

THE QAWALANGIN TRIBE OF UNALASKA | SUMMER ISSUE 2020

Unangan Tide





QAWAX (SEA LION) NECROPSY

By: Elizabeth Mears

On Saturday, the 27th of June, 2020, the Qawalangin Tribe staff and Melissa Good, a Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program Agent local to Unalaska, ventured out to Front Beach to perform a necropsy of a washed-up Steller sea lion. The purpose of the necropsy was to determine the cause of death of the animal through the process of dissection, observation, interpretation, and documentation.

On arrival, Melissa Good offered a range of jobs that people could get dirty, minimally dirty, and not at all. As such, the participants claimed their roles. Kate Arudser, Wellness Program Manager of the Qawalangin Tribe, took the role of photographer, and her two daughters, Anja and Anika, acted as helpers. Elizabeth Mears, APICDA Office Intern, documented and held the bags open for sample taking. Shayla Shaishnikoff, Camp Q Coordinator, was at the frontline assisting Good with cutting off pieces of the sea lion.

Before any dissecting and cutting, the participants and Good measured the length and

width of the deceased sea lion. After taking measurements, samples of the skin, muscle, blubber, trachea, and whiskers were taken. While observing the inside of the sea lion, Good noticed a hematoma, localized bleeding outside of blood vessels in the mussel tissue that can occur from blunt force trauma or disease, an indication to what could've happened. From there, the samples were sent to Alaska Veterinary Pathology Services to be tested. The cause of death cannot be officially determined at this time; however, samples may give us further clues to the cause of death on health of the animal. Good responds to stranded marine mammals within the Aleutian Islands region under a stranding agreement with National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region (Stranding Agreement Number: SA-AKR-2020-03). until the samples have been tested.



FISHING ADVENTURES WITH JAZZMYNE

By: Jazzmyne Shapsnikoff

Hi everyone,
I can't wait to share with you what I've been up to this last month. My latest adventure took me completely out of my element, 300 miles out of it actually. It took me away from my dogs, family and friends. While I was on this extravaganza I decided to journal during it because I knew it was going to be quite the experience. So before you guys read my personal journal entries I'd like to tell you all how much I respect commercial fishing, don't ever underestimate the hours and hard work those people put in. And for anyone who doesn't have respect for them and what they do I highly recommend giving it a shot, coming from my personal experience and thinking of myself as a pretty tough cookie those guys are the real deal.

JUNE 5, 2020 "Ready for take off or knot"

6 people deep, radio rubbish in the background, rough wind guiding the wings and beautiful glaciers below us, here I sit headed to Naknek Alaska. I have no idea what to expect from the time I land to the time I leave. What I do know is it's new, it's exciting and I am ready.



JUNE 9, 2020 "The set"

One cold community shower shoe half a leg shaved shower down, & one completed hung net later here I sit with a few new skills. Two full days of "hanging gear" (in my head I had pictured hanging gear so much differently) boring perhaps, and even a little repetitive. Little did I know it would become one of my favorite ways to pass the time and to keep my hands & mind busy.

JUNE 20, 2020 "Low tide"

The vessel laying at a 25-30 degree angle on Naknek river with the tide continuing to go out. Me involuntarily sideways in my bunk, safe to say low tide got the better of us tonight. We've been sitting around the river for three days now waiting for the reefer guy and openers to open up. Things have been slow in the fishing world and here on the boat. The sunshiny days have a real way of dragging on due to the lack of things to do. The nights when the boat is rocking and the water wave noises are trickling tend to be the most relaxing for me. Three days of nothing but eating sleeping and suntanning with me throwing a kink in with the "on deck workouts" has been surprisingly draining. I'm ready to move my body, make money and kill fish.

JUNE 25-27, 2020
“Wet nets”



8 foot seas crashing one after the other on all sides of the boat with no consistency on which direction they are wanting to ram us from. On the back of the boat we're tossing our end buoy over with our gear following it into the angry sea, losing sight of it as our lines race into the water. The openers begun and our nets are set. The boats still getting beat up from the waves, I'm green with seasickness, the other deckhand is yelling fishing terms to the captain who is not inside the cabin driving but up top watching the net and keeping the boat pointed in the right direction so we don't get tangled into our gear. Stressful doesn't even begin to explain it. While vomiting, keeping my balance & picking fish I'm watching my arms, legs and all my zippers on my rain gear. One wrong move or someone not paying attention and or being alert / aware of what's going on could put my life or someone else's on the line. This is no place for error.

- Stopping the journal entries here because I stopped shortly after this. After being out on the water barfing, not being able to keep anything down for days at a time I realized the sea had gotten the better of me. I came, I did not conquer and I was embarrassed to wave the white flag. But my captain being not only my captain but one of my best friends saw it before I could call it. He pulled me aside and gave me the “this isn't for everyone speech” followed by if you want to leave I completely understand....
- I was crushed because I knew in my heart I was just going to put myself or one of them in danger if I chose to stay. I was out of my element and over my head in seasickness. I've never ever quit or given up on anything in my entire life. So for this to be something I couldn't tackle or get over is still something I'm struggling with. All in all I got the experience I worked my butt off and I tried it and that's more than some people have ever cared to do is what I've been reminding myself. I want to give a huge thank you to the tribe for being flexible and so unbelievably supportive.



DANGEROUS PARALYTIC SHELLFISH POISONING (PSP) LEVELS

By: Chandra Poe

Recent test results of blue mussels and snails collected in Unalaska have shown extremely high paralytic shellfish toxin levels. Our summer interns have worked along with Alaska Sea Grant to help spread the word around town of these unsafe toxin levels. Consuming these shellfish can lead to Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning, which can mean serious sickness and even death.

Shellfish consume algae that produce toxins that cause PSP in humans (and other animals). Warming ocean temperatures may be increasing the algae, which in turn leads to higher potential for PSP toxins in shellfish. We cannot see, taste, or smell toxins that cause PSPs. They are not removed by freezing or cooking. PSP toxin levels have been documented at high levels throughout the year, and the levels can be very site-specific. Just because one beach has low levels, the next beach may have high toxin levels. Even at different ends of a long beach the levels can be very different.

The way to be 100% certain your shellfish are safe to eat is to get them from a commercial market, where testing is required before they can be sold.

Our Q Tribe environmental staff are very aware of this issue and the impact to our community, and we are working with other tribes and researchers around the state to identify the best way we can work together to address this issue. Our summer interns have been collecting blue mussel samples this summer and freezing them, these will be analyzed this winter. We don't have any real-time monitoring or testing capacity in Unalaska, all samples have to be frozen and shipped. If you would like more details, please contact Chandra to discuss further (chandra@qawalangin.com), or contact local PSP expert Alaska Sea Grant agent Melissa Good (Melissa.good@alaska.edu or 907-581-1876).

DANGEROUS PSP LEVELS

Extremely high paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) levels have been found this year in shellfish (mussels, bivalve mollusks, clams, oysters, cockles, snails and scallops) in the region.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO SEE, SMELL, OR TASTE IF SHELLFISH ARE CONTAMINATED!

Freezing and cooking the shellfish



DOES NOT remove the toxins!

Commercial products purchased at the store



have been tested and are safe for consumption.

Toxic algal blooms are invisible and can vary from one beach to another. It does not have to be red tide. Shellfish may have completely different toxin levels depending on the site. Regardless, PSP levels in the region are far above the FDA limit for safe consumption.

PSP Poisoning Symptoms:

- Tingling and numbness that spreads from the lips and mouth to extremities
- Shortness of breath
- Confused/slurred speech
- Weakness in legs & arms
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Sense of floating
- Vomiting
- Paralysis
- Death

Anyone with these symptoms should seek immediate medical care or call 911.

This notice was made by the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska in partnership with Alaska Sea Grant. If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Good at (907) 581-1876 or melissa.good@alaska.edu.



WISLOW TRIP

By: Kaye Gamera

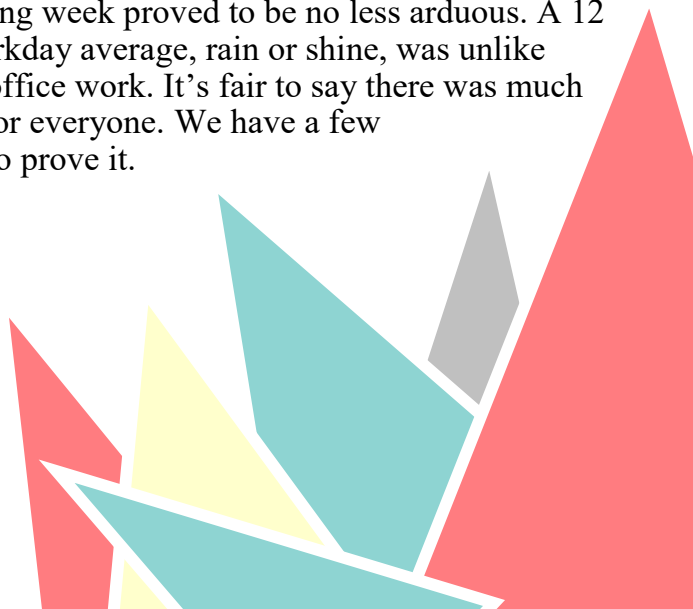
Due to state-level budget cuts, McLees Lake fish sampling had been discontinued for these last two years, leaving a tiny cabin to befriend Unalaska's inclement weather indefinitely. This resulted in the build-up of mold, rotting parts of the cabin. This year, in collaboration with Fish & Game, four Tribal staff arrived at McLees Lake to help prepare our fish counters' long-awaited sampling season. These preparations involved digging and building a new outhouse, replacing the entire cabin roof, replacing molded patches of walls, and a whole lot of clean-up.



On June 5th, 2020 Shayla & Landen Shaishnikoff, Julieanne Berikoff, and Kaye Gamera arrived on shore via Mike Lloyd's landing craft after three scheduled attempts, one week behind schedule. With the help of five community volunteers who were also on board for arrival day, what would have taken half the day, took close to under an hour. Still, the task of hauling plywood, posts, and firewood piece by piece from a buoying landing craft to the inclines of a rocky shore crowded by seaweed, was fatiguing all the same. The landing craft, which could only arrive during low tide, was bridged to a patch of sandy shore with plywood that would later take part in the cabin's structure. This bridge struggled not to crack as a million heavy feet ran across one surface while the ocean drowned the other. The haul turned out an unforeseen test of speed, balance, and agility. A fall here, a slip there, and soon enough there was a soggy crew, proud have emptied the vessel.



The coming week proved to be no less arduous. A 12-hour workday average, rain or shine, was unlike familiar office work. It's fair to say there was much to learn for everyone. We have a few pictures to prove it.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF



A WISLOWNIAN!





SALMON. WEIR ARE THEY NOW?

By: Kaye Gamera

This is a question we ask after having had the lowest fish counts since 2008 at the McLees Lake Weir. The net count as of July 26, 2020 were 4,807 sockeye— less than half of the most recent count at 10,777 sockeye in 2017. In 2016, counts were at their highest with a total of 39,877.

So, what happened? Weir did the fish go?

bah dum tss

The answer is... we're not quite sure.

McLees Lake Biologist, Tyler, who was involved with the weir set-up earlier in the season, admits that there are too many factors that might have contributed to the low counts, and that it's difficult to pinpoint just one source. Could it have been from warming temperatures? Our trash-infested waters? Predation? Unknown activities in the ocean? The source of imbalance could be anything, if not, a little bit of all of it.

According to data from previous counts, it has been observed that salmon populations tend to oscillate substantially from year to year. He says, "They're famous for booms and bust." One theory, Tyler suggests, is that salmon may actually be extending their stays in the saltwater before cozying up at the lake. To test

that theory, biologists will have to observe fish scales in the future.

Fish scales? Yes. One fish scale sample from salmon, with the right amount of knowledge and tools, can actually tell you how much time this shining being has spent in freshwater vs. saltwater.

Still, when is it apt to raise our concerns about these populations? Since we have zero data for the previous two seasons to use for reference, it would have to take another season or two of counting to deduce if this pattern has indeed been a steady decline. Until then, a subtle anxiety creeps at us while the active process of ensuring we have funding and field scientists for the next season takes place. It's not always guaranteed, and we've seen that with our gap in research data in 2018 and 2019.

All in all, these numbers matter. Research allows us to observe the ways in which our world is changing. From these observations, we may learn the many ways our actions connect us to one another. When we understand these connections, we are better able to take care of the life beyond ourselves. For now, what can we do to show that we care about the land, the sea, and each other?



LIFESTYLE COACHING TO PREVENT DIABETES

By: Kate Arduser

In July Wellness Program staff participated in a National Diabetes Prevention Program training taught by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The training helped us better understand how life coaching works, gave us the tools we need to facilitate a National Diabetes Prevention Program in Unalaska, and provided insight about online and phone-based life coaching programs that are available free to Unalaskans right now.

In the training we learned that lifestyle change programs work by teaching participants to make lasting changes, like eating healthier, adding physical activity into their daily routine, and improving coping skills. The programs are delivered over a year, allowing time for new habits to form.

If you've already been diagnosed with diabetes or think you might be at risk for developing diabetes, we encourage you to continue or begin management with the Clinic. They have staff on Island that specialize in diabetes prevention and treatment.

To better understand your risk right now, you can take the Center for Disease Control's prediabetes test at <https://www.cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/>.

If you're at high risk for developing diabetes a life coaching program might be a good fit for you. Please call the Tribe for more information about available programs or if you want help registering.

1 OUT OF 3 U.S. ADULTS
HAS **PREDIABETES,**
ONLY 10% **KNOW**
THEY HAVE IT.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014)

ymca.net/diabetes

MY EXPERIENCE TRAINING AS A LIFESTYLE COACH

By: Alysha Richardson

Recently, I received training to facilitate the National Diabetes Prevention Program. I learned that this evidence-based program is highly effective in preventing and/or delaying the onset of diabetes. While Covid-19 has altered the Tribe's original plans to implement this group-based program locally, we are happy to report that there are two other diabetes prevention programs immediately available to Tribal members.

Immediately entering into the training, I was encouraged by the research that proves promising results for participants of the program. Check out the research results here: <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/research-behind-ndpp.htm>

Over the course of a year, participants become well-equipped to improve their health and well-being by tracking and self-monitoring their food intake, physical activity, and weight; ultimately building self-awareness and a path to realizing goals through small, sustainable changes. I started self-monitoring right away and am inspired by the power of self-reflection.



I am excited about the program's complete curriculum which includes lessons such as:

- Shop and Cook to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes
- Manage Stress
- Find Time for Fitness
- Take Charge of Your Thoughts
- Get Support
- Have Healthy Food You Enjoy
- Get Enough Sleep
- And so much more!

When it is safe to do so, we look forward to offering the in-person diabetes prevention group program. In the meantime, please reach out to us for more information about the available programs or if you need help registering.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TRIBAL MEMBERS ON GRADUATING!

SASHA RANKIN, CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Since graduation Sasha Rankin has been fishing, camping, and hiking this summer. Sasha will be attending school at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington. This fall, Sasha will be majoring in biology! She will not be doing online classes, but instead attend school in Washington! She'd like to give a shout out to her friends and family, as well as the community!



JULIEANNE BERIKOFF, NORTHWEST NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

As of right now, Julieanne Berikoff has been working as the environmental intern at the Qawalangin Tribe through APICDA. She has been interning since she graduated in late May until the beginning of August. She is grateful to have this opportunity to work and enjoy the beauty Unalaska has to offer before she leaves! Julieanne will be attending school at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho. This fall, Julieanne will be majoring in nursing! She will not be doing online classes because her university is allowing their students back on campus in August! In addition, she'd like to thank everyone who has helped her along the way!



SCOTT LORENZEN, ALASKA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL CENTER (AVTEC)

Scott Lorenzen is planning on attending trade school at Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) located in Seward, Alaska once he can get a TABE test proctor and finish his admissions. He wants to pursue a career in information technology. In addition, he also has thoughts of going to culinary school someday.

As of right now, he is staying in town and working to make some extra money before he decides to attend AVTEC. Scott would like to thank his family for being hard on him when he needed it and taking the last 18 years to help him become who he is today. He'd also like to thank the community for never changing from the small town that he always knew that would always lend a helping hand whenever someone needed it.



MERCEDEZ CAUDILLO, FORT LEWIS COLLEGE

Over the summer in Unalaska Mercedes Caudillo has worked for the Qawalangin Tribe for a couple weeks to do landscaping projects at the Russian Orthodox Church. She is currently working for O.C. to do the same work for them. In addition, to put her art skills to work she is painting the Norwegian Rat Saloon

logo on the containers outside their bar/restaurant. Mercedes will be attending school at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado.

She will be majoring in business. Her plans after college include going to an institute for doing hair and make up to eventually run her own beauty salon! As for college, her school will be regular in-person until Thanksgiving and then it will switch to online classes. She would like to thank the community and family friends for being so supportive of her, as well as the whole class of 2020.





**ALYSHA
RICHARDSON,**
Wellness Program Coordinator

Unalaska has been my home for the majority of my life. I am grateful to be living and raising my children here. My daughter, Lennyn, is a member of the Qawalangin Tribe. Throughout my life I have had many tribulations which I am determined to turn into triumphs. Those experiences have lead me to being enthusiastic about healing, supporting others, being in relationship with the land, and serving my community. I have worked at Unalaskans Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence (USAFV) for six years and will use much of what I have learned there in my new position as wellness coordinator for the

Qawalangin Tribe. I love being outside, working in my greenhouse, reading, and learning new things. I look forward to growing and learning in my new position for the Qawalangin Tribe and am grateful for the opportunity.

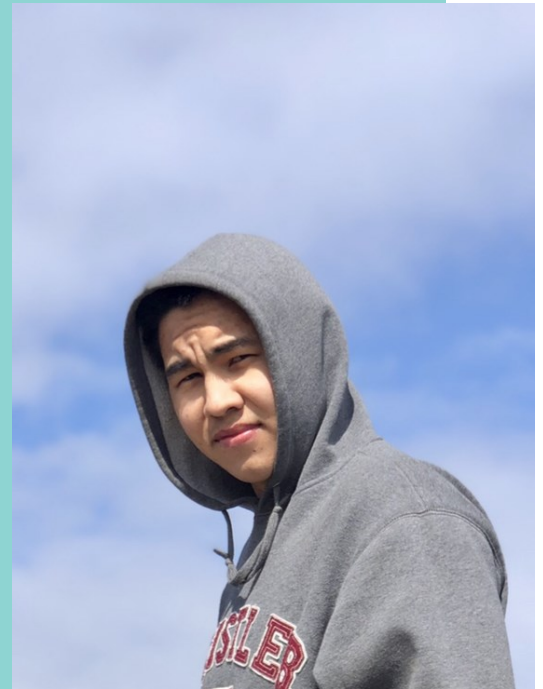
**MEET
OUR
NEW STAFF!**



**ELENA
RAMIREZ,**
Operations & Finance Director

I was introduced to beautiful Unalaska and her generous people through my work as an environmental consultant to the Tribe. I grew up in the shadows of the Sierra Nevada mountains of California (outside of Yosemite), but I currently call Seattle home. My academic training is in geology/geochemistry, environmental toxicology, and chemical oceanography and I have spent the last two decades applying this knowledge to environmental issues at a variety of projects, but largely at contaminated sites: brownfields, superfund, landfills, and industrial and military facilities. Over the last five years, my environmental work has served Tribes across the U.S. whose primary environmental issues are related to past military occupation and impacts to traditional lifeways due to environmental degradation, but also resource protection, state cleanup projects, and general environmental program support. I now apply my grant, financial, and operational management skills to support the Tribe's administration. When not focused on balancing budgets and reviewing technical guidance documents, I am a big fan of museums, kayaking, and metalsmithing, among other things. I look forward to learning more about the Tribe, these spectacular lands (and waters) and what I can do to support our programs.

LANDEN SHAISHNIKOFF, LABORER



My name is Landen Shaishnikoff and I have lived in Unalaska all my life. I will be a senior in high school next year. This summer I am working at the Qawalangin Tribe as a laborer and I get to help out in the warehouse and am doing projects around the office. This summer I am also fishing for Dungeness crab on the F/V Lucky Island with my cousin Diego Castillo. We take trips out to Unimak to pull pots on 4 to 5 day trips every so often until the quota is met and deliver to Westward in Unalaska. This has been my first-time commercial fishing and I have enjoyed it a lot so far. I love being home in the summers so working at the Tribe for the Unangan people and getting to be out on the water crabbing is a perfect fit for me. I am thankful for the opportunity to work and be involved. Qagaasakung.

QAWALANGIN WELLNESS

unangan ukuqasatxin

"look after/take care of unangan"

WALK TO WORK WEDNESDAY

By: Alysha Richardson

This summer the Qawalangin Tribe is encouraging Unalaskans to walk to work. Qawalangin Tribe staff have found that walking to work on Wednesdays requires unique workarounds, such as:

- Biking to work because it's faster.
- Choosing to walk on a different day if the weather isn't optimal.
- Walking with a coworker, friend, or family member.
- Driving halfway and walking the rest.

And for those of us who haven't been able to make it work yet, we certainly recognize how good it makes our coworkers feel.

We hope you'll be able to join us sometime this summer.

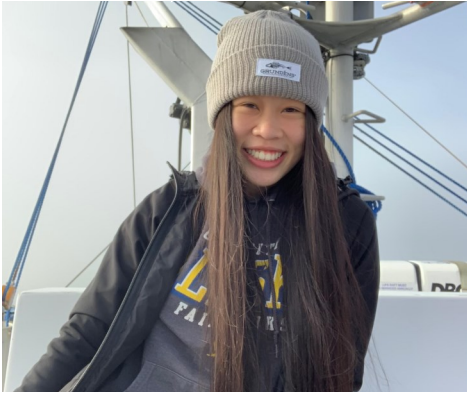


FIND QAWALANGIN WELLNESS ON FACEBOOK!

By: Kanesia McGlashan-Price & Kate Arduser

The Tribe's Wellness Program has a Facebook page. You can find us at Qawalangin Wellness. Our page is a work in progress that aims to foster the value of "Unangan Ukuqasatxin" (look after/take care of Unangan). We believe that wellness goes beyond physical health, and that connection to our land, culture, and each other plays an important role in our lives. We'd love to hear ways that you look after one another.

MEET OUR SUMMER INTERNS



LISA TRAN,
APICDA Office Intern

My name is Lisa Tran, and this is my second summer working at the Tribe as an intern. I have lived in Unalaska for 16 years and just last spring, I graduated from Unalaska City High School. Unfortunately, I finished my freshman year of college at the University of Alaska Anchorage from home due to COVID-19. I am currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in Nursing and plan to eventually earn a master's degree, so that I can care for those in the State.

I was initially involved with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) and the Tribe's recycling program during my last two years of high school, so that is what led me to the Tribe. I am very thankful to be working with the Tribe again through APICDA and I am excited to see what we accomplish this summer!



ELIZABETH MEARS,
APICDA Office Intern

Hi, my name is Elizabeth Mears and this is my first year as an intern for the Tribe. I have completed my freshman year at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS). I am pursuing a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Human Resource Management. I have lived in Unalaska for 15 years and love to go berry picking, hiking, and fishing! Being involved in the community is very important to me and I am grateful to work at the Qawalangin Tribe through APICDA this summer. I cannot wait to learn about how the Tribe serves its members and community. I've been an intern for Senator Murkowski's office, a student ambassador for UAS, and am eager to continue to hone and develop my skills at the Tribe!



JULIEANNE BERIKOFF
APICDA Environmental Intern

My name is Julieanne Berikoff, I have been hired as the environmental intern for the summer! I have just recently graduated high school at Unalaska City School District. I plan to attend Northwest Nazarene University in Idaho with the intent to major in nursing. Some of my hobbies include; hiking, kayaking, camping, fishing, and dirt bike riding! I am very grateful to work at the Tribe through APICDA before heading to college this fall.

I hope to learn more about my people as well as the island itself. I believe this intern position will be a great experience since I love being outdoors. I'd also like to thank you all for the opportunity and support through it all!

COLORING PAGES

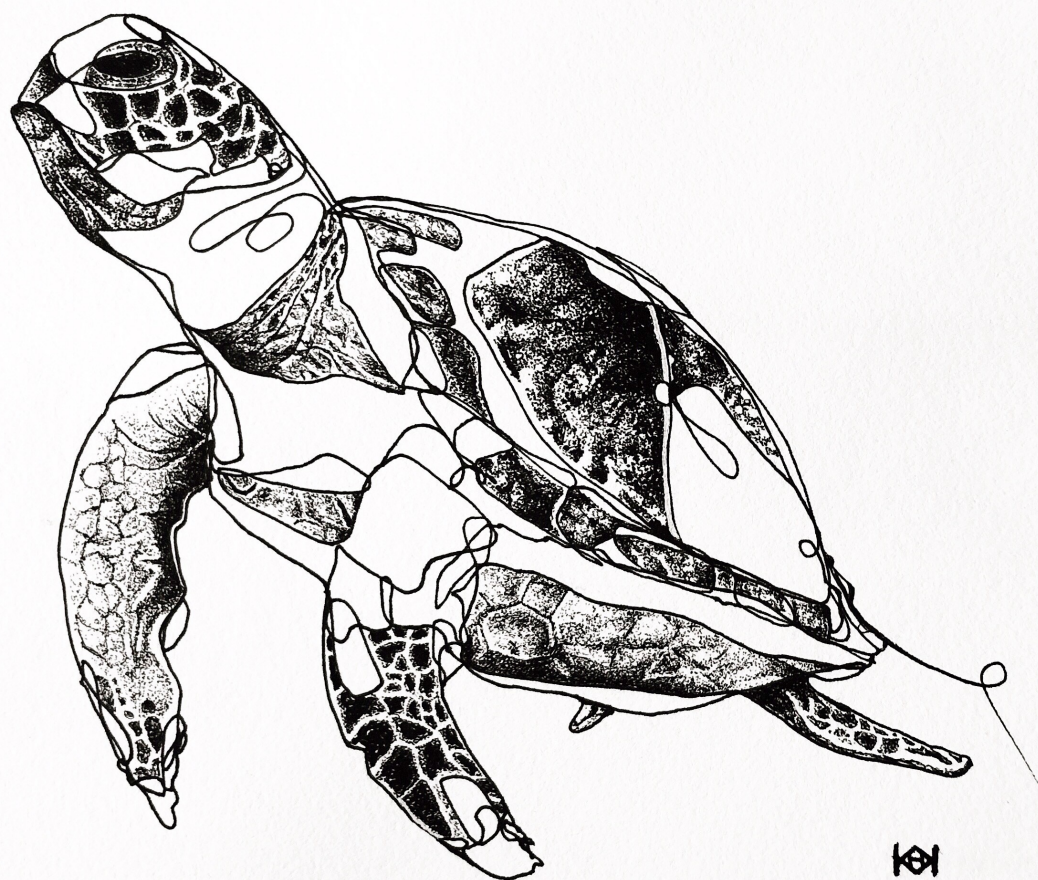
By: Kaye Gamera



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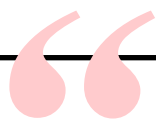
COLORING PAGES

By: Kaye Gamera



KG
06.04.19

QAWALANGIN TRIBE OF UNALASKA



The Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, a federally recognized sovereign nation of the United States since 1989, vows to exercise its powers to further the economic and social well-being of all its members, and in doing so, will safeguard and support the Unangan language, culture, customs and traditions for those generations to come.”

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday-Friday: 9am - 5pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

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MAILING ADDRESS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: (907) 581-2920

Fax: (907) 581-3644

Email: email.qtribe@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The environmental program team is hard at work on planning for the next few years. We would love to hear from you – what are your environmental priorities? We will be reaching out to members this fall to gather input and hear all voices. If you would like to provide your opinion of which environmental issues are your top concerns, please email Chandra (chandra@qawalangin.com), write to us at the office or call the office and Chandra or Shayla will be happy to talk with you to understand your environmental program priorities.
- All Tribal members and staff now have free access to PCR facilities!



Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska
Qawalangin Wellness



@qtribe



<https://www.qawalangin.com/>