

# Happy Holidays

**LOV**  
Living Our Values

Living Our Values  
Page 4

Southcentral  
Foundation



New Generations Project  
Page 11

## COVID-19 Vaccines Arrive in Alaska

By SCF Public Relations

In what state health officials are calling a turning point in the pandemic, the first shipment of COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Alaska. Southcentral Foundation received an initial allotment of the Pfizer vaccine with the Moderna vaccine expected to arrive soon.



Southcentral Foundation provided COVID-19 vaccines to employees based on the established prioritization phase 1A list for critical health care personnel.

Following state and federal guidelines, SCF has prioritized vaccinations for frontline health care providers and Elder customer-owners who are at high risk of infection. Primary care teams will be reaching out to Elder customer-owners who are at high risk

to schedule appointments for vaccinations. Additional vaccines will be arriving in the coming months and eventually, all customer-owners who want to receive a vaccine will have an opportunity.

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require a second vaccination dose (17 - 21 days later for Pfizer, and 28 days later for Moderna vaccines). SCF care teams will schedule a second vaccination appointment during the initial vaccine appointment. Receiving only the first dose will not result in long-term immunity. It is critical to receive both doses and receive them from the same location. Given the limited quantity of vaccines, customer-owners are urged to return for the second dose.

The COVID-19 vaccine has been shown to reduce the chance of you suffering from COVID-19 disease. It takes a few weeks for the body to build up protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

There are side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine, and most are mild and short-term. Even if you do have symptoms after the first dose, you still

need to have the second dose. Although you may get some protection from the first dose, having the second dose will give you the best protection against the virus.

Common side effects include having pain and tenderness at the injection site; feeling tired; headache; general aches; or mild flu-like symptoms. While feeling feverish is not uncommon for two to three days, a high temperature is unusual and may indicate you have COVID-19 or another infection.

### Can I catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realize you have the symptoms until after your vaccination appointment. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

Although a mild fever can occur within a day or two of vaccination, if you have any other COVID-19 symptoms or your fever lasts longer, stay at home, and arrange to have a test.

### If I receive the COVID-19 vaccine, can I still pass the COVID-19 infection to others?

The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19 infection, and both vaccine doses will reduce your chance of becoming seriously ill. At this time, we do not yet know whether it will stop you from catching and passing on the virus, but we do expect it to reduce this risk.

With COVID-19 vaccinations becoming available, now is not the time to let your guard down. Continue to maintain physical distancing, wear

a face mask, wash your hands frequently, and avoid gatherings, even after receiving the vaccine.



Southcentral Foundation received an initial allotment of the Pfizer vaccine.

For more information, please call your primary care provider with questions.

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Anchorage, AK  
Permit No. 1022

4501 Diplomacy Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508



The Anchorage Native News is published by Southcentral Foundation Public Relations.

If you have questions, comments, wish to submit articles, or be added to our mailing list, please contact the Public Relations department.

SCF reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, length, and content.

Every article will be considered for publication depending upon space available.

#### SCF Public Relations

4501 Diplomacy Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508  
(907) 729-4953  
SCFMediaRelations@scf.cc

#### SCF Public Relations

Shamika Andrew  
Addi Arave  
Denise Bingham  
Kira Bouwens  
Tara Carey  
David Clark  
Tessa Clifton  
Lyla DeTavernier  
Tara Durand  
Brandy Gallagher  
Jody Hammock  
Domonique Hansen  
Connie Irrigoo  
Sharon Leighow  
Benjamin Merkouris  
Michelle Mincks  
Nicole Nordstrom  
Esther Robertson  
Gabby St. Clair  
Karla Starbard

#### Vision

A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

#### Mission

Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.

#### Board of Directors

James Segura (Chairman)  
Charles G. Anderson (Vice Chairman)

Karen Caindec (Secretary/Treasurer)

Charles Akers (Director)

Roy Huhndorf (Director)

Dr. Terry Simpson (Director)

Thomas Huhndorf (Director)

#### Interim President/CEO

April Kyle

Southcentral  
Foundation



© 2020 Southcentral Foundation

## Services for Non-Beneficiaries Offered at Community Health Centers

By Senior Public Relations Specialist Brandy Gallagher



C'eyiits' Hwnax Life House Community Health Center offers services at no charge for beneficiaries and can bill insurance or charge on a sliding scale fee for non-beneficiaries.

Having accessible health care is particularly important during these uncertain times. Eklutna Community Clinic and C'eyiits' Hwnax Life House Community Health Center offer primary care and preventative care services to all members of the community. Establishing health care in your nearby community has many benefits including reduced travel-related costs and an opportunity for whole-family care.

These community health centers provide services for people of all ages, insured and uninsured, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Qualified Alaska Native and American Indian customer-owners receive services with no out-of-pocket expense and non-beneficiaries' services are charged on a sliding fee scale based on household income, size, and ability to pay.

Eklutna Community Clinic is conveniently located off the Glenn Highway in Eklutna between Eagle River and Palmer. This community health center offers primary care services, COVID-19 testing, flu vaccinations, and radiology services. Southcentral Foundation partnered with the Native Village of Eklutna to expand medical services and provide quality health care services to the Chugiak and Eklutna area. To register to receive services at Eklutna Community Clinic, call (907) 688-6031.

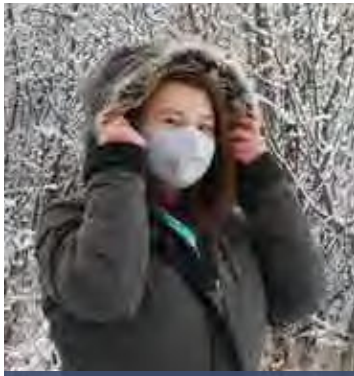
C'eyiits' Hwnax Life House Community Health Center is located at the Ahtnahwt'aene' Nay'dini'aa den Gathering Place (Ahtna People Chickaloon Place). The building also houses the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council's Health and Social Services Department. This community health center offers primary care, behavioral health, select pharmacy options, scheduled specialty care, COVID-19 testing, health education, flu vaccinations, nutrition counseling, and well-woman services. To register for services at C'eyiits' Hwnax Life House Community Health Center, call (907) 631-7665.

Primary and preventative health care should be a priority at all ages, even during a pandemic. Community health centers aim to help you and the people you love stay healthy. These clinics provide timely, affordable, quality, and convenient health care. All insurances are accepted, including Medicaid and Medicare.



# Stay Healthy While Celebrating the Holiday Season

By SCF Public Relations



Customer-owner Esther Robertson makes sure to always have a mask handy.

The holidays are traditionally a time when special memories are made as families and communities come together. With COVID-19 still active in many areas, including across Alaska, it is vital to try new traditions to help keep your friends, families, and communities safe. Families are tasked with finding new ways to share holiday cheer while remaining diligent in efforts to contain the COVID-19 virus.

“Now is the time to hunker down, keep within our households, be vigilant about mask wearing and distancing, and be safe at work and at home,” said Southcentral Foundation interim President/CEO April Kyle.

To minimize occurrences of the virus spreading to loved ones, it is best to celebrate this holiday season only with household members for in-person activities and to include others in your celebrations virtually by phone or video chat. Avoid hosting holiday parties, potlucks, and or gatherings that are not within your household.

**“Celebrating holidays will take creative, virtual approaches this year since we are not able to have in-person parties, potlucks, and gatherings,” said Kyle.**

Despite eagerness to spend time with friends and family as holiday plans are made, considerations should be taken for the associated risks.

“One idea is to gather virtually and share three or four things you are grateful for,” said SCF’s Clinical Director of Employee and Community Support KJ Worbey. “These can be small in size but big in meaning –

hearing the laughter of a child playing, witnessing a moment of beauty in nature, enjoying a favorite recipe. This can generate positive feelings that can be savored. It is also a reminder that peaceful and joyful moments surround us when we stop to see them.”



**Wear a mask**



**Wash your hands**



**Physical distance**

While finding new ways to create holiday memories, remember to:

- Physical distance at least 6 feet from others when possible.
- Wear a well-fitting mask in common areas and in public.
- Practice frequent hand hygiene.
- Wipe down high-touch and shared surfaces.
- Limit social contacts and keep your bubble small.
- Limit public gatherings.

The containment efforts do work, and it is very important they continue. Working together, we can decrease the spread of COVID-19 and keep Alaskans healthy.

“Staying connected with family and friends is more important than ever,” said Worbey. “Strong relationships are a key component of resilience, and so is gratitude.”

*If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or need to contact your provider, if in Anchorage call (907) 729-3300.*

## Athabascan Elder Lived by Example

By SCF Public Relations



Southcentral Foundation extends its condolences to the family of Alberta Stephan. An Alaskan author, historian, and traditional knowledge bearer, Alberta was also a wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She accomplished no less than three careers in her lifetime. Born in Whitney, Alaska, Alberta passed away Nov. 4 at her home in Anchorage at the age of 86.

Alberta was born to Pete and Ruth Ezi, and had one brother, Peter. She grew up living a traditional subsistence life, traveling to food sources with each season. In her youth, she subsisted in areas from Matanuska to Eklutna to Point Possession. Alberta spent her later years in Anchorage. A firm believer in living a traditional lifestyle, Alberta took every opportunity to teach others about her Athabascan culture authoring three books. She shared her culture through activities and taught beading, sewing, and survival skills while working at SCF’s Quyana Clubhouse. Youth also learned cultural lessons from her during annual summer camps hosted by the Native Village of Eklutna.

Whether Alberta was sharing beading tips, teaching youth how to gather and preserve food, or writing about her family and culture, she lived by example. Her book “Treat other people the way you want to be treated” was published in 2000.

Alberta was the granddaughter of Simeon Esi, the last traditional Indian chief of Upper Cook Inlet. She and her husband, Leo, had 13 children; and was preceded in life by her parents and brother, three sons; Leon, Lenny, and Lenard and two daughters; Susan and Connie.

The family will notify all when they expect to hold the memorial potlatch come spring thaw.

**TO ALL  
FRONT  
LINE  
WORKERS**



**THANK YOU**  
for standing in the gap  
and continuing to provide  
services for Alaskans.

# 2020

## Living Our Values

# Award Recipients



**Darrell Acheson**  
Pharmacist  
Pharmacy



**Shamika Andrew**  
Public Relations Assistant  
Public Relations and Corporate  
Communications



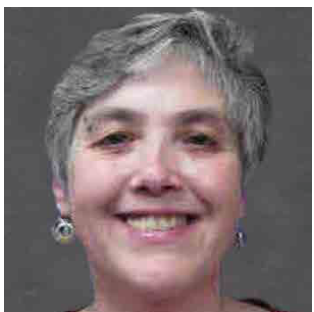
**Marcel Bergeron**  
Learning and Development  
Associate  
Family Wellness Warriors Initiative



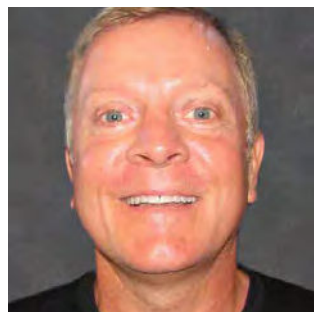
**Bonnie Bishop-Stark**  
Certified Nurse Midwife  
Primary Care 2 West



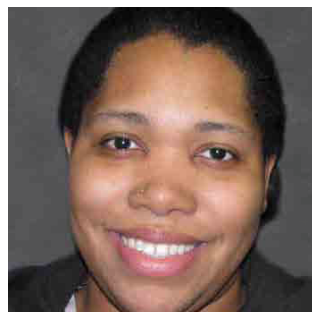
**Teresa Boddy**  
Supervisor of Dental Assistants  
Children's Dental



**Charlene Bortz**  
Learning Circle Specialist  
Family Wellness Warriors Initiative



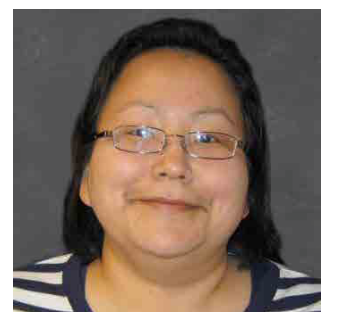
**Joel Brown**  
Certified Teacher  
The Pathway Home



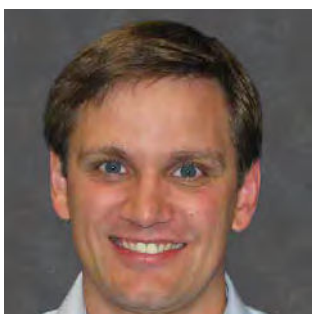
**Marla Clark**  
Licensed Practical Nurse  
Detox Center



**Ashley Colley**  
Medical Radiology Tech  
Radiology



**Claudine Davis**  
Audiometric Technician  
Audiology



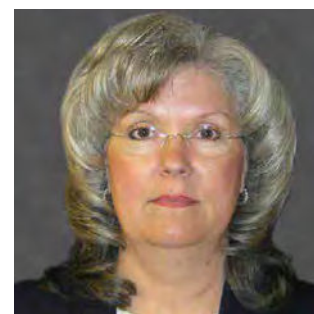
**Logan Duerksen**  
Nurse Practitioner PCP  
Medical Services Division Iliamna  
Lake Region Port Alsworth



**Naomi Eben**  
Program Coordinator  
Physical Therapy, Occupational  
Therapy, and Exercise



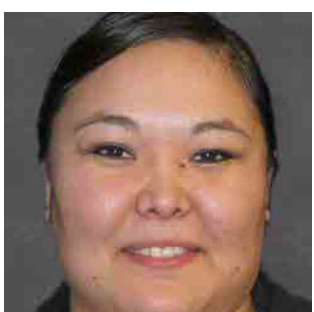
**Mary Epchook**  
Program Coordinator  
VNPCC Wellness Center



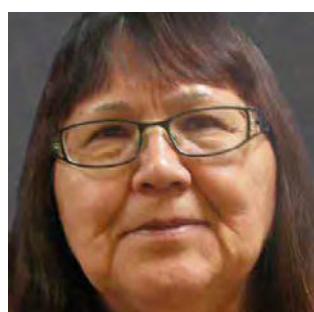
**Theresa Forbes**  
Program Coordinator  
Behavioral Health Intensive Care  
Management



**Gwendolynn Gabbert**  
Registered Nurse Case Manager  
Nutaqsiivik Nurse-Family  
Partnership



**Shannon Godwin**  
Certified Medical Assistant  
Primary Care 1 East



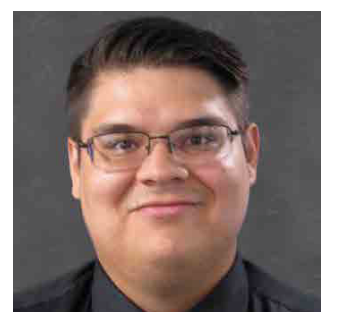
**Elena Hurley**  
Elder Resource Specialist  
Elder Program



**Elizabeth Little**  
Physician  
Outpatient Pediatrics



**Matthew Malouf**  
Senior Physician Assistant  
Fast Track Emergency

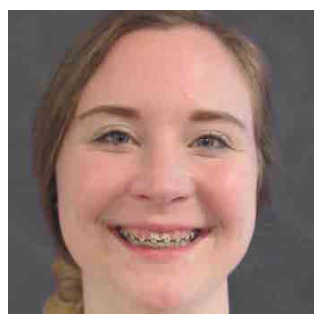


**Benjamin Merkouris**  
Public Relations Specialist  
Public Relations and Corporate  
Communications

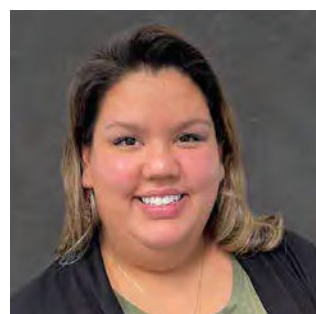


Living Our Values award recipients are recognized for outstanding work supporting Southcentral Foundation's vision, mission, and corporate goals. SCF's Living Our Values award is corporate wide and based on at least one of the following: role model for other employees on how to perform job duties, notable achievements and/or high productivity in service delivery, quality improvement, customer service, risk management, administrative management, improvements in safety, health and well-being of others, family wellness, outstanding teamwork, or any other mission-related activity of SCF. Employees may also be nominated for exemplary performance above and beyond the scope of their respective positions.

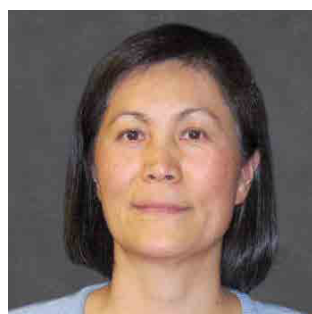
## Please join SCF in celebrating our employees and their contributions toward achieving SCF's Vision and Mission!



**Desiree Mobeck**  
Case Management Support  
Four Directions Outpatient  
Treatment Center



**Kara Ocasio**  
Supervisor  
Fireweed Dental



**Sookran Oh**  
Registered Nurse Case Manager  
Primary Care 3 West



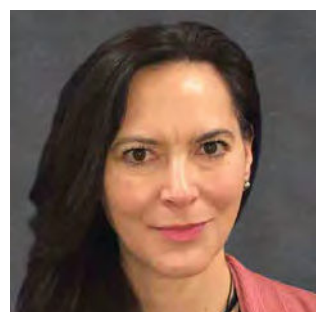
**Christine Parente**  
Supervisor of Behavioral Health  
Technicians  
The Pathway Home



**David Root**  
Clinician  
Four Directions Outpatient  
Treatment Center



**Elize Rumley**  
Registered Dietitian  
Primary Care 1 West



**Gretchen Sagan**  
Supervisor  
Health Education



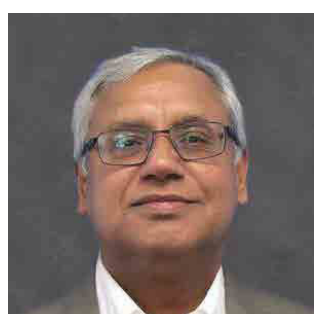
**Abigail Samuelson**  
Dental Assistant Specialty  
Alaska Native Medical Center  
Dental



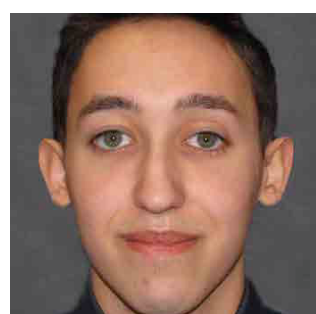
**Phillip Sargent**  
Registered Nurse Case Manager  
VNPCC Primary Care East



**Christine Schmidt**  
Manager  
Dental VNPCC



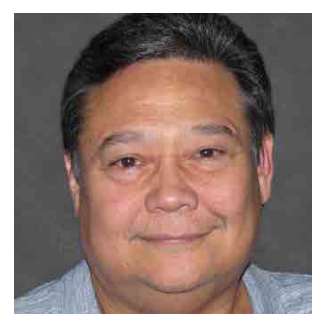
**Sunil Sethi**  
Database Administrator  
Information Technology Services



**Devon Sigourney**  
Program Coordinator  
Research



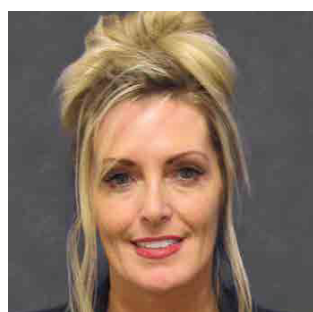
**Flora Sommers**  
Audiometric Technician  
VNPCC Audiology



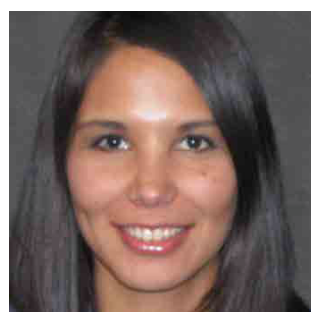
**William Soper**  
Supervisor  
Traditional Healing Clinic



**Spencer Tee**  
Information Technology  
Technician  
Information Technology Services



**Linda Vincent**  
Manager Accounts Payable  
Finance Operations



**Rena Wallace**  
Program Coordinator  
Four Directions Outpatient  
Treatment Center



# Home for Good Changing Lives with Stable Housing

By SCF Public Relations

As the snow and the temperatures continue to fall, more and more people are in need of a warm place to stay. Shelters across the city are stretched to capacity.

Compounding the issue of homelessness in Anchorage is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which has led to unprecedented job losses. This vulnerable population often relies on emergency response systems such as shelters, hospitals, safety centers, and jails.

One coalition is working together toward the ultimate goal for this population — permanent housing.

Home for Good, a public private partnership, aims to help 150 of Anchorage's most vulnerable homeless residents within the next three years by connecting them with housing and support services. The project delivers supportive housing with intensive case management, an evidence-based approach to improving outcomes for individuals experiencing persistent homelessness who have significant physical and behavioral health challenges.

As one partner in this multi-agency initiative, Southcentral Foundation's Intensive Case Management program provides behavioral health in the form of intensive case management and wrap around services for customer-owners experiencing homelessness. Participants in the Home for Good program are referred by the Municipality of Anchorage.

Piloted in July 2019, the initiative's first year was successful in connecting 22 individuals with stable housing which significantly reduced the utilization



The Home for Good program is helping people find stable housing.

of emergency services while simultaneously increasing the use of preventive services such as primary care, behavioral health, and substance use services.

The initial pilot year showed great promise with newly housed customers-owners experiencing 85% less police contact, 44% less EMS responses, and 63% less use of shelters.

“At a time when our shelters are bursting at the seams, this project can help create space and save money. During the pilot year of the program, arrests and ambulance calls dropped. If we continue to see these kinds of results, our officers and first responders will have more capacity to respond to calls elsewhere,” said acting Anchorage Mayor Austin Quinn-Davidson.

Moving from continual homelessness to stable housing requires commitment, and shared responsibility, by both the agency and the customer-owner. Individuals identified as eligible for Home for Good services are offered an opportunity to partner with SCF to obtain stable housing. In addition to housing, participants are supported in identifying trainings and programming at SCF, and by community partners that provide coaching and guidance to develop the skills needed to sustain long-term housing under traditional landlord/tenant relationships.

SCF has committed to participating in the launch of this program for the next three years by providing intensive case management for 45 customer-owners who are transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing.

## Take Steps to Optimize Your Immune System Health

By Medical Director Dr. David Lessens

Though this season has brought us the familiarity of mountain tops covered in white snow and days with limited sunlight, this has been an unusual winter as our lives continue to be altered by the COVID-19 pandemic. We also find ourselves entering the cold and flu season. There is no better time to ensure that we are taking care of ourselves by focusing on the health of our immune system. Increase your chances of a healthier winter season by practicing physical distancing, getting recommended immunizations, and adopting immune boosting activities into your daily routine.

The interconnected systems in your body — and especially your immune system — all improve by adopting a similar set of behaviors. While making changes may not be easy, the following goals can serve as guideposts to motivate you and your loved ones on your health journeys:

### Restful and Sufficient Sleep

For adults, an optimal sleep duration is 7 - 9 hours per night. Sleep may be the most important factor in keeping the immune system primed, as a single night of insufficient sleep can immediately increase one's chances of contracting a viral illness the following day.

### Relaxation and Connection

Much like insufficient sleep, stress can also impair immunity. Stressors can be physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Strategies for combating stress and boosting immunity include reconnecting with family or friends, tending to a daily breathing or meditation practice, journaling, or visiting a behavioral health professional. Southcentral Foundation providers and behavioral health consultants are available to provide support. Work with your primary care team to help you identify other techniques that are appropriate for your specific situation.

### Nourishing Foods

Eating a healthy, well-balanced diet can boost and improve immune health. Here are three factors that are particularly important:

- Boost healthy fats and decrease simple sugars. Healthy fat examples: fatty fish, wild-caught meats, avocados, nuts/seeds, olive oil. Simple sugars examples: candy, white rice, refined pasta, chips, baked goods, white bread.
- Eat a daily rainbow of fruits and vegetables. The nutrients that give these foods their color have a range of unique immunity benefits. Aim for two servings with each meal, to include red, blue/purple, orange/yellow, green, and white/brown.
- Tend your microbiome. The bacteria in our gut helps to prime our immune systems from an early age. Because your gut bacteria feed on fiber, aim to get at least 25 grams per day. You can replenish your gut bacteria, and even change it, by eating fermented foods, which include dried fish, tempeh, sauerkraut, yogurt, and kombucha.

### Targeted Supplementation

Although food nourishes our bodies better than supplements, the additional intake of key vitamins and minerals can boost our immune system. Due to our northern latitude, for instance, Alaskans are commonly deficient in vitamin D. It is important to boost intake of vitamin D because the lack of this key vitamin has been associated with contracting more and having more severe viral illnesses. If you are curious about other supplements, work closely with your primary care team to determine what is best for you.

Along with wearing a mask, washing your hands, and practicing physical distancing, we can thrive this winter by taking care of ourselves and our immune systems.

*For more information on methods to improve immune system health, or to make an appointment with a registered dietitian about creating a meal plan, speak with your primary care team or call (907) 729-3300.*

# Gearing Up for a Safe and Healthy Winter

By Senior Public Relations Specialist Brandy Gallagher

Winter in Alaska offers some of the most spectacular scenery imaginable. The wonderful vistas, however, come with diminished daylight and freezing temperatures. It also means driving in the snow, shoveling snow, walking on icy pathways, spending more time inside, and relying on vehicle and house heating systems for comfort. This is the time to ensure our families and vehicles are visible in the dark, our homes and vehicles are prepared for the cold, and preparations are in place for emergencies.

This winter, while walking outside, be sure to wear visible clothing during low-light times. Reflective gear or bright, high-visibility items allow you to be seen sooner and at a farther distance. Public safety is a shared responsibility, and we can all take steps daily to help others stay safe. While on the Alaska Native Health Campus, there are designated crosswalks with crossing flags for enhanced safety.

During cold and dark days, we can still enjoy spending quality time with our family indoors doing healthy activities. Your family is invited to join one of Southcentral Foundation's virtual learning circle opportunities. Some virtual learning circles include Snuggle Time, Dinner Makes a Difference, Creating Wellness, Parent Strong, Lose to Win, Soldier's Heart, and many more. This winter we will likely spend more time indoors watching and learning virtually – making it important to ensure your home heating system, smoke alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are in working order.



The Alaska Native Health Campus has designated crosswalks with crossing flags for enhanced safety.

After a home winterization, your vehicle will need to be ready for winter use by servicing your radiator, filling all the vehicles fluids, and ensuring you have the proper tires and tire tread for safe driving. Although accidents and highways delays are not planned, preparing for a potential winter emergency, by putting together a vehicle emergency kit, can help make the best of a less-than-ideal situation. A vehicle emergency kit should include a phone charger, blankets, food and water, jumper cables, flares, a tire pump, a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction), a first aid kit, and winter jackets for everyone in the vehicle.

Preparedness for weather-related emergencies can save a potential headache if and when an emergency does occur. Other types of emergencies to prepare for include power outages, house fires, carbon monoxide poisoning, or natural disasters. An at-home emergency preparedness kit should include similar items as a vehicle emergency kit.

Don't let the cold winter months get you down, enjoy Alaska safely this winter by taking necessary preparations! Your overall health and path to wellness can thrive in the winter months.

To view SCF's learning circle opportunities, visit <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/events>

## COVID-19 TESTING SITES

### Drive-thru Testing

4141 Ambassador Drive | Enter between the Inuit Building and Education and Development Center

Register online in advance at [covid19test.anmc.org](https://covid19test.anmc.org) for self-swab testing. Stay in your vehicle and self-swab to collect your test sample.

### Walk-up Testing

4000 Ambassador Drive | Consortium Office Building

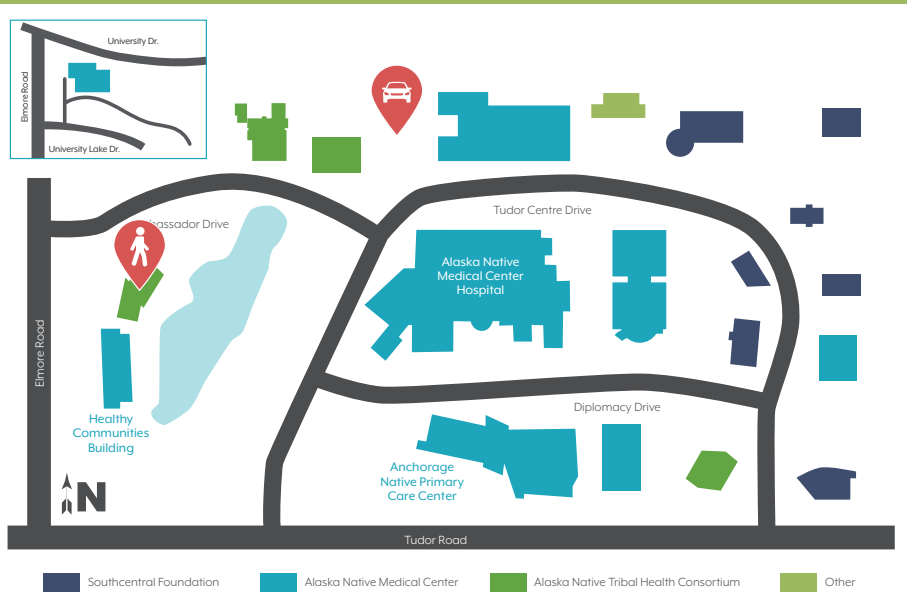
Park your vehicle and walk into the north entrance to have an employee collect the test sample. This location is for those who are unable to register online in advance, without vehicles, with special needs, pediatric patients, or those who do not want to self-swab.

### Hours

9 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Monday - Saturday

10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sundays and ANTHC holidays

## ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH CAMPUS



## REGISTER NOW!



## Southcentral Foundation's VIRTUAL Nuka WINTER CONFERENCE FEB. 8-10, 2021

Join Southcentral Foundation's Virtual Nuka Winter Conference, and discover how the Nuka System of Care model has led to decreased costs, improved outcomes, and increased satisfaction.

Visit [www.SCFNuka.com](http://www.SCFNuka.com) for more information. If you have questions, please contact us at (907) 729-6852, or email [SCFNukaEvent@southcentralfoundation.com](mailto:SCFNukaEvent@southcentralfoundation.com)





**Southcentral Foundation** celebrates a successful year of working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.



Russian Christmas was celebrated in January at the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center, with the starring, singing, Russian teacakes, and tea.



Attendees, including Tillie the Tooth Fairy, enjoyed the Indigedash Indigenous skills challenge at the 23rd Annual Gathering in February.



In March, SCF partnered with Iļisaġvik Tribal College to offer the Tribal Doctor Training Program as a two-year certificate program.



SCF Health Education marched in the Fur Rendezvous Parade while raising awareness to help reduce colorectal cancer.



Alaska Mask Makers donated thousands of homemade cloth masks. Many masks were donated to SCF's Elder Program to be distributed to Elder customer-owners.



In April, SCF Pharmacy began offering curbside pickup for medications to help ensure safe processing and timely service for customer-owners.



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many SCF departments quickly adapted to a virtual operation in lieu of in person.





SCF Pharmacy enjoyed ice cream donated by Wild Scoops as a thank you to front line workers.



The 10th Annual Nuka System of Care Conference was held virtually for the first time.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar toured the Anchorage Native Primary Care Center with SCF interim President/CEO April Kyle and SCF VP of Medical Services Dr. Doug Eby.



Jacqueline Qataliña Schaeffer demonstrated how to make cottonwood bud cream during the virtual Tikahtnu Plants Symposium hosted by SCF's Traditional Healing Clinic in August.



SCF Elder Program delivered over 120,000 pounds of food to Elder customer-owners throughout the Anchorage area since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.



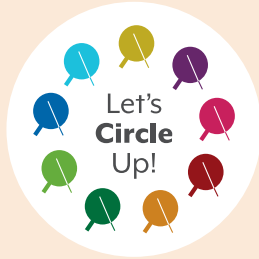
SCF RAISE Program celebrated the success of six RAISE interns graduating high school with a graduation parade.



SCF Family Wellness Warriors Initiative hosted a virtual Domestic Violence Awareness and Action Month commencement and shared how communities are creating a safer future for healthy generations.



## Southcentral Foundation Learning Circles



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Southcentral Foundation will continue to evaluate learning circle services in the coming months, and schedules may be subject to change. Currently, Family Wellness Warriors Initiative is offering the following learning circles virtually through Zoom video conferencing:

### Creating Wellness

**Mondays, 10 - 11:15 a.m.**  
Meeting ID: 919 6815 1995  
Password: FWWILC!20

### Na Tia Sukan: Recovery Support

**Monday thru Friday, 1 - 2:15 p.m.**  
Meeting ID: 929 1269 8799  
Password: FWWILC!20

**Thursdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m.**  
Meeting ID: 959 7381 1073  
Password: FWWILC!20

[southcentralfoundation.com/learning-circles](http://southcentralfoundation.com/learning-circles)

## Building Community Through Virtual Learning Circles

By Public Relations Specialist David Clark

“Even when we go back to normal, we don’t want to forget what we learned here,” said Gordon Hanes, Southcentral Foundation learning circle coordinator. “We can still build community through these tough times because at the end of the day we still need each other.”

SCF currently provides opportunities for customer-owners to build community by offering virtual learning circles. SCF recognizes the need to support one another through challenging times. In this edition, we highlight two of the many learning circles being offered:

Creating Wellness is a weekly learning circle that applies to everyone, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose is to help attendees develop ways to take care of themselves. Together, the group explores healthy coping mechanisms, self-care, acts of kindness, and the benefit of playtime for youth and adults, among many other topics.

Na Tia Sukan: Recovery Support has meeting opportunities several times a week to help attendees with recovery support. Na Tia Sukan is not a 12-step program, but rather a place for attendees to come together to support one another, offer encouragement, and hold each other accountable on their roads to recovery.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SCF will evaluate learning circle services in the coming months, and schedules may be subject to change. Stay connected and build relationships by participating in virtual learning circles.

For more information on learning circles and other opportunities, please visit [www.southcentralfoundation.com/learning-circles/](http://www.southcentralfoundation.com/learning-circles/).

## Staying Connected Through the Darkness

By SCF Public Relations

Alaska has unique seasons that include the midnight sun shining late in the night, captivating colors of autumn leaves falling to the ground, and the crisp mornings of winter. As the daylight decreases, it brings the bite of subzero temperatures and an increase in stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline. These changes can cause an increase in the diagnosis of seasonal affective disorder and other mental health challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional stress and the disconnect of being even more separated from others. With physical distancing practices in place, winter can take a heavier toll on a person’s mental health. While it is normal to have some days when you feel down or indifferent, if you begin to feel down for days or weeks at a time and are having trouble finding motivation to do things you typically enjoy, schedule time to see your primary care provider.

There are ways to combat SAD and other mental health challenges such as increasing the amount of natural light in your environment, taking vitamin supplements, using relaxation techniques, and exercising regularly. Some people find it helpful to paint walls in lighter colors or use daylight simulation bulbs.

Southcentral Foundation is helping strengthen connections while keeping customer-owners safety in mind by using and offering telehealth visits via Zoom. This is a safe and secure platform that can be used in the comfort of your own home. Customer-owners can use the program with a computer, laptop, mobile device, or tablet. SCF offers a variety of services available to support mental health and community connection, such as virtual learning circles, primary care visits, and behavioral health services.

For more information, contact SCF’s Behavioral Health Support Services at (907) 729-5260. #ListenShareConnect



### Family Health Resources

encourages customer-owners to use the MyQuickApp referral system to complete eligibility screenings, set appointments, and complete applications and forms for Medicaid/Public Assistance, VA health benefits, and the Tribally Sponsored Health Insurance Program. Customer-owners may work with FHR entirely through their phones or computers.

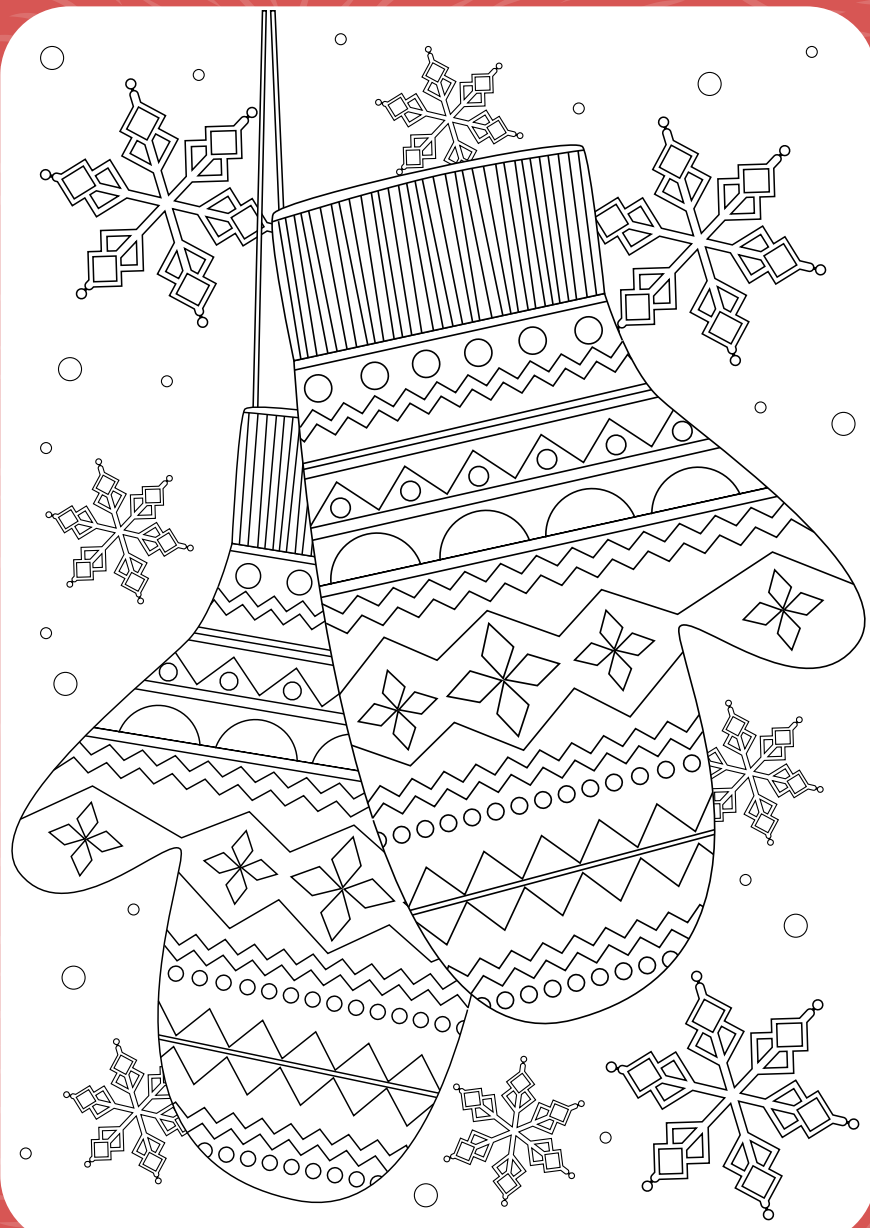
Visit

[bit.ly/FHRMyQuickApp](https://bit.ly/FHRMyQuickApp)  
to get started.

FHR can be reached toll-free at (833) 729-4470.



## Coloring Corner



## Looking for an opportunity to quit tobacco?



**NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE THE CHANGE!**

Quit tobacco services are available via telehealth, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact your primary care team at (907) 729-3300 for a referral, or the Quit Tobacco Program at (907) 729-2689 for more information.

# SCF's New Generations Project Supports Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

By Public Relations Specialist David Clark

Infant and early childhood mental health, or IECMH, is the developing capacity of the child (from birth to five years of age) to form close relationships, manage and express emotions, and explore their environment and learn. Studies have shown that the first relationships a child has with their caregiver and environment can greatly impact brain growth, and have long-term effects on emotional and physical wellness over time.

In the first years of life, more than one million new neural connections are formed every second. Infants early relationships and experiences shape the architecture of their brain, creating a foundation much like the foundation of a house. If the foundation is unstable, the house may be weaker and unable to adequately weather the storms of life. Similarly, babies who engage with responsive, consistent, nurturing caregivers and who are living in safe and economically secure environments are more likely to have a strong foundation. Their emotional health is likely to be more resilient in times of stress.

During pregnancy and the first few years of life — there are opportunities for families to build the strong foundation for lifelong wellness. Exposure to toxic levels of stress or trauma can adversely affect a child's brain development. This can increase their risk for later physical and mental health problems, including addiction — according to ZERO TO THREE, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting healthy infancy and early childhood.

There are many opportunities within the first five years of life to minimize exposure to toxic stress and to build healthy relationships — allowing the child to be curious about their environment and grow and learn. Even beyond the first years, there are several protective factors that can offset some of the initial stress the brain may have encountered during the infant and early childhood years.

Southcentral Foundation's New Generations Project is raising awareness around IECMH and working to support families on their wellness journey. Since May 2020 and through the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, NGP has been reaching out to mothers of newborns and their extended families to offer referrals to resources depending on individual needs. This includes assisting with the Women, Infants, and Children program application process, referring children to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library that gifts free books to children monthly, connecting them to their primary care team to schedule well-child checkups and immunization appointments, and providing safe sleep education. NGP is also supporting parenting programs, home visitation, screening and assessment, and IECMH awareness for both employees and customer-owners.



Customer-owners participate in Snuggle Time, a virtual learning circle hosted by New Generations Project where new parents connect and share stories.

For more information about SCF's New Generation Project, call (907) 729-7430 or (800) 478-3343 toll-free.

Try one or more of these ideas to help **reduce feelings of isolation** when maintaining physical distancing.



**Send a personalized postcard** or card to those you love – they may return your card with calls or cards of their own.



**Bead while chatting** on the phone or via Zoom (or any video sharing platform) – you can also join a virtual learning circle where customer-owners can bead together. To learn more, call Southcentral Foundation Traditional Healing Clinic (907) 729-4958.



**Start moving, and take a walk.** You will enjoy fresh air and, if you time it just right, you can also get needed sunlight exposure during dark winter months.



**Host a virtual dinnertime** with family members or attend the Dinner Makes a Difference virtual learning circle. To learn more, call Southcentral Foundation Health Education (907) 729-2689.



**Record stories** to share with children and grandchildren. They will love hearing family stories in your voice for years to come.



**Call a friend** or connect with a preferred faith-based or spiritual group virtually or by phone.



**Volunteer at a distance.** There are digital opportunities to volunteer. For example, Smithsonian Institute needs help expanding access to collections. Participate online: [www.si.edu/volunteer/digitalvolunteers](http://www.si.edu/volunteer/digitalvolunteers)

Out of an abundance of caution and in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance on social distancing for higher-risk populations,

**Southcentral Foundation has suspended all in-program activities at the Elder Program.**

For more information, call the Elder Program at (907) 729-6500.

# WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the holiday themed words below.

- |                |                  |                |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. LYADHOI     | 9. STLEITEOM     | 17. UOJLFY     |
| 2. RKETUY      | 10. EJILNG EBLLS | 18. NCKTEURACR |
| 3. ARTOSNNME   | 11. PETSESRN     | 19. CEINPONE   |
| 4. AIRGLONC    | 12. APWIGRFT     | 20. REERDIEN   |
| 5. SUSETCHNT   | 13. THEARW       |                |
| 6. IWENRT      | 14. MBEDRCEE     |                |
| 7. AZBRDZLI    | 15. RALTEBEEC    |                |
| 8. RNADGREGIEB | 16. STVIEEF      |                |

- Answers**
- 1. Holiday
  - 2. Turkey
  - 3. Ornaments
  - 4. Caroling
  - 5. Chestnuts
  - 6. Winter
  - 7. Blizzard
  - 8. Gingerbread
  - 9. Mistletoe
  - 10. Jingle bells
  - 11. Presents
  - 12. Giftwrap
  - 13. Wreath
  - 14. December
  - 15. Celebrate
  - 16. Festive
  - 17. Joyful
  - 18. Nutcracker
  - 19. Pinecone
  - 20. Reindeer

## Important Phone Numbers

Alaska Native Medical Center..... (907) 563-2662	Food Bank of Alaska ..... (907) 272-3663
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)..... (907) 272-1444	People Mover ..... (907) 343-4536
Anchorage Police Department (non-emergency)..... (907) 786-8500	Salvation Army Meals on Wheels ..... (907) 349-0613
Anchor Rides..... (907) 343-2550	Senior Benefits ..... (907) 352-4150
Cook Inlet Housing Authority..... (907) 793-3000	Southcentral Foundation ..... (907) 729-4955
Division of Public Assistance ..... (907) 269-6599	SCF Elder Program Event Hotline..... (907) 729-6588