

**Alaska Food Coalition
December Teleconference
Thursday, December 16, 2010
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

Attendees

Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition
Annabell Stevens, Anchorage United Way
Sarah Clark, Boys and Girls Clubs of South Central Alaska
Darren Billum, Copper River Native Association
Leah Walsh, Bethel Cooperative Extension Services EFNEP Educator
Lydia Houghton, Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Services EFNEP Educator
Katherine McConkey, Copper River Native Association
Susannah Morgan, Food Bank of Alaska
Heather Harris, Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation
Gloria Benson, Yakutat Healthy Community Coalition
Paul Watson, AFC Food Stamp Outreach
Linda Bond, St. Francis House, Catholic Social Services
Rebecca Steadman, Valdez Food Bank
Jo Dawson, State of Alaska Child Nutrition

Welcome

Heather Harris, AFC President

Member Update

Katherine McConkey is with Copper River Native Association (CRNA), Tribal Community Service Department. The local food bank is part of this department. Darren Billum is a volunteer who stocks, runs reports, and gets the food out. CRNA participates in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), serving 50 to 80 households, approximately 76 individuals each month. Last year they served 40 households, 60 individuals. Darren thinks some families who need help are missing out, not everyone in the community knows about the food bank. CRNA provides additional funding to buy food. Darren drives to the Food Bank of Alaska in Anchorage an average of every other month to purchase food. Darren has one volunteer along with CRNA staffers who help out when needed. They serve 10 communities from as far away as Slana, a village 53 miles southwest of Tok. CRNA received an AFC Mini Grant this year to help purchase freezers for meat and fish storage. Katherine noted Harding Ranch Meat Company recently donated 150 lbs. of hamburger.

School Meals Funding Update

Senator Weilechowski plans to pre-file in the Senate. AFC members are doing outreach to House members and school boards for support and sponsorship. If you have a new legislator in your district, please contact them and educate them about this bill. Contact Vanessa if you need updated outreach material.

AFC still has travel scholarship funds for our annual meeting in Juneau, February 6-8. Reservations at the Baranoff Hotel must be made by January 6 for the conference rate.

AFC Teleconference Time Change

Per a request from a member, teleconference participants agreed to move the teleconference start time to 2:00 pm starting in January.

Food Stamp Outreach

Vanessa was in Fairbanks recently, visiting Fairbanks Community Food Bank, Love Inc, and Unity Inc., North Pole. Alaska Food Coalition will be conducting Food Stamp Outreach in Fairbanks this spring. AFC will be connecting with EFNEP and DPA staff in Fairbanks to work collaboratively with outreach.

Leah, Bethel FSNEP Educator – This position in Bethel has been open for two years. She is working on identifying barriers in the community and the kinds and quality of food needed. ‘Kids in the Kitchen’ is an after school meal planning and basic cooking skills for kids program she is promoting.

Lydia, Fairbanks FSNEP Educator also started a couple of weeks ago. She will be doing more community outreach, especially at Title One schools and with pregnant women.

Paul, Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator for AFC noted the new FSNEP educator, Leah will be a welcomed addition to Bethel and the YK Delta. He let us know the central region Alaska DPA office received an award for improved food stamp participation rates from the USDA. It is estimated Alaska loses 30 million dollars a year Alaska in benefits because eligible people have not applied, including 1 in 5 seniors 65 and older. AARP has made senior hunger a priority. The recently passed Healthy Hungry Free Kids Act of 2010 (The entire Alaska delegation voted yes), includes cuts to SNAP (the food stamp program) in future years, President Obama has committed to fixing this. In Anchorage, we will conduct Food Stamp Outreach at Neighborhood GIFT on December 21. For Anchorage Blessing, we collected approximately 70 applications. DPA also noted an increase in requests for applications after Blessing.

Member News

Yakutat Healthy Community Coalition joined with Alaska Airlines, AC Foods, locally owned Mallots and private donations to distribute 26-30 holiday food boxes. They plan to purchase turkeys and complementary food for the boxes. National Honor Society school members will help prepare the boxes, the Chief of Police will help deliver along with Forest Service employees. Vanessa will send Gloria a link to the WIC application, Senior Benefits and Food Stamp Applications to include in the boxes.