



Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc

A CONSORTIUM OF EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Progress Report

U.S. Army Garrison Fort Wainwright and Partners Collaborate on Introductory Archaeology Fieldwork Class

The Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. partnered with the U.S. Army Garrison Fort Wainwright to successfully deliver an *Introduction to Archaeological Fieldwork* over two intensive weekends of course work—April 24, 25 and 26 and May 1, 2 and 3 at the Delta Career Advancement Center. The Partners provided housing for non-Delta participants, classroom support and an employability session thanks to the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Tanana Chiefs Conference assisted with travel for its region's participants to get to Delta.

The 22 Alaska Native and non-Native, male and female students aged 17 to 67, lived and breathed archaeology for the two weekends and 10 of the participants have been offered summer jobs as archaeological

aides helping at the excavation site at Donnelly Training Area where the U.S. Army continues its cultural resource assessment work. Completion of the class makes participants competitive for entry-level archaeological fieldwork positions with other agencies.

The U.S. Army conducts annual summer field work in training areas near Delta Junction. Extensive survey work at 136 sites at Donnelly Training Area, located within 30 minutes of Delta, was conducted during the 2008 season. The 2009 season required archaeology technicians and aides to move the cultural resource assessment work to the next level to actually mitigate or otherwise investigate these sites. Field crews work in groups of four, with three archaeological technicians, who hold a bachelor's degree and one aide who is completely new to the discipline. Successful course participants, who complete a season's



Left: Instructor Aaron Robertson. Right: Students learn to uncover artifacts and keep a log book.

What's Hot and What's Not in Biomass Heating Systems



A one-day symposium on biomass heating systems for community use brought panelists from Anchorage, Tanana, Fairbanks, Tok, Dry Creek, Delta and Portland, OR to Delta on May 16. Board member Jon Dufendach noted, "We had both rigor and enthusiasm in about the right amounts!" The daylong exchange offered a wealth of information based on research and hands-on experience.

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Board member PJ Ford Slack facilitates the panel on applications and technology with Kent Scifers, Tom Norbonne, Jeff Hermanns, Bear Ketzler and Gwen Holdman.

Construction Trades Classes Create Prom and Circus Props

Construction Trades coordinator Gary Hall wants his students to feel a sense of accomplishment about the things they build throughout the year as they learn the skills to become carpenters and construction related workers. When his classes can contribute to the success of community activities, he is all the more proud of his students. This year his students built a ramped tunnel entrance and a working waterfall to make the "Journey to the Center of the Earth" 2009 Junior-Senior Prom one of the best ever.



His students also designed and produced top-notch magic trick props for the Delta Elementary Flying Circus with a performance for the community at the end of the school year.



State Commissioner of Education and Early Development Larry LeDoux makes a point during breakfast with the board of directors for the Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc., just before the biomass heating symposium (see cover story).

Archaeology Fieldwork from p. 1

fieldwork with on-the-job training, are eligible for employment advancement in future seasons as archaeological technicians.

PPD board president Rick Caulfield believes collaboration is mutually beneficial, "This is what it is all about. We want to work with prospective employers in the area and assist them by either providing or help delivering the training and education needed to actively contribute to Alaska's workforce development."

University of Alaska Fairbanks Director of Career Services Patti Picha helped kick off the class with practical tips about job preparation, skill development and employer expectations. UAF Career Services is available to students in need of resume building, career path questions and guidance, and assistance to help them pursue their career goals.

Archaeology instructor Aaron Robertson covered the basics of archaeology, prehistory of Alaska, definition and discussion of artifacts, cultural resource management, excavation, and tools of the trade. Hands-on training included uncovering artifacts in simulated digs using sand boxes constructed by the Delta High School Construction Trades students.

U.S. Army Native Liaison Elizabeth Cook said, "This was a great prototype class and we look forward to expanding on it in the future. We needed a location for the class, but more important, the partnership with the Partners for Progress meant many who might not otherwise be able to participate could benefit from this growth experience."

Students travelled from Tok, Tetlin, Fairbanks, Mentasta, and Allakaket to join Delta and Fort Greely residents who took the class.



The archaeology class gets ready to dig in the sand in a simulated excavation site. Inset: UAF Director of Career Services Patti Picha.

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc.

Board Members

- Rick Caulfield (President)
- UAF Tanana Valley Campus
- PJ Ford Slack (Secretary)
- Delta/Greely School District
- Jon Dufendach (Treasurer)
- CampWater Industries
- Randy Cheap
- Alaska Works Partnership
- Whit Hicks
- Delta Mine Training Center
- Mary Leith-Dowling
- City of Delta Junction
- Fred Schlutt
- Cooperative Extension Service

PPD Board Briefs Chamber

The Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc. (PPD) took center stage at the March Delta Chamber of Commerce general membership luncheon. Board president Rick Caulfield teamed up with Jon Dufendach, Mary Leith Dowling and Randy Cheap to make the presentation.

Cheap explained how Alaska Works Partnership has been involved with the partnership from the beginning because it believed in the community, its need for skill development and the team developing the programs. Mayor Leith-Dowling said, "The city jumped in right from the start because it would make a huge difference for young people in the area. She served as vice mayor

when the council agreed to support the educational consortium with federal impact dollars.

Questions and comments ranged from suggestions for classes to comments about the value of vocational programs for area youth to pursue. Caulfield invited members to attend board meetings and feel free to follow-up with ideas as the new non-profit will be looking to address career advancement education and training needs. Dufendach said, "We're now a regional training center. Let's get those seats filled. This is a great opportunity and we have funding to make some things happen." The Delta Chamber of Commerce has been a supporter of the partnership and invested in construction of the Delta Career Advancement Center.

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 A consortium of educational partners operating the Delta Career Advancement Center to train, educate and build Alaska's workforce



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MISSION

Partners for Progress in Delta, Inc, an educational consortium located in Delta Junction, serves as a gateway for learning and training in Alaska, providing the state with a long-term asset for developing and maintaining Alaska's workforce.

GOALS

- To excel in helping Alaskans to be competitive for jobs emerging from new developments and existing workforce opportunities in the area;
- To be a focal point for Alaskans who seek career advancement education and training, academic degrees and continuing education credit;
- To better prepare secondary students for career options;
- To facilitate on-the-job training for long-term employment;
- To build and nurture long-term partnerships with agencies, businesses, organizations, trades and government.

Biomass Symposium from p. 1

The Delta/Greely School District is the recipient of HB 152 funding through the Alternative Energy Fund and has been researching the range of options available to them for a biomass heating system. Tok's Gateway School District also received support, and they have cleared 50 acres around the school to create a firebreak, while simultaneously generating the biomass for use in the heating system to be installed.

Ron Brown of the Alaska Energy Authority shared highlights of experiences with projects around the state, providing a perspective on the benefits and challenges of the different systems and how to learn from each other's successes and failures. Peter Crimp of AEA outlined the role of AEA—the organization wants to make sure grant projects are successful. "We want to make sure the state money is spent wisely."

University personnel provided updates on the research emphases through the School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences and Alaska Center for Power and Energy (ACEP). Steve Sparrow addressed the use of woody species biomass and trials underway. Gwen Holdman explained ACEP is focusing on systems that combine heat and power as is used widely across the U.S. She commented that we seem to be coming full circle. Biomass systems are a part of our past; and more than three quarters of the world is still using biomass for energy.

Internationally recognized biomass consultant Tom Miles of Portland, OR explained the trade-offs between combustion versus gasification systems and noted the importance of using the

right boiler with the right fuel source. Using conventional wood stoves to burn crop residue fuel sources is not the best scenario for burning the crop residue or barley efficiently.

Preliminary data from the Cold Climate Housing Research chamber analyses indicates barley is as efficient as red fir pellets from OR in producing BTUs per lb. Dave Misiuk of CCHRC said data showed the barley flows better than wood pellets in the test they have conducted. Bryce Wrigley, the current President of the Alaska Farm Bureau, said barley needs to be on the state list for optional alternative fuel sources. Dry Creek logging and Milling owner Tom Nerbonne described the experience at Dry Creek where wood fired boilers have been used successfully for four years, providing reduced energy costs and jobs for the small community.

Bear Ketzler of Tanana likes to say, "If Tanana can do it, anybody can." He said community skeptics have become vocal proponents of the project in Tanana where wood-fired gasification is used to heat community buildings. He zeroes in on the economic development benefits in a small community where now gathering cords of wood means a steady income.

Jim Dodson of the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation urged the audience to think beyond the use of biomass for schools and about the need to switch from a diesel driven economy so communities can create a successful economy anywhere in the state. He noted that "In Alaska we have lived in a social experiment for 40 years where one half of the state has had a relatively cheap supply of energy and those communities are economically successful." Mike Crouch of

Delta Industrial, Inc. shared information about a Canadian company making a Bio Baler for woody crops—a piece of equipment that chops, rolls and bales woody species all at once. He said European technology is building systems that can burn a whole bale. "It's a multiple use piece of equipment for habitat improvements, fire mitigation and balancing biomass for fuel."

Resource management foresters created a lively discussion as Jeff Hermanns from Tok and Al Edgren from Delta discussed the need for the state to start looking at the huge amount of available biomass in the Interior. Hermanns supports a goal of an integrated forestry industry whereby the entire tree is utilized.

Brian Ellingson of TVC's Process Technology Program and Fred Schlutt, the new director of the Cooperative Extension tackled the issue of skilled workers to run the equipment need for these new boilers and systems. Understanding everything from conveyors, boilers, wastewater and distillation systems, instrumentation, and other related equipment requires knowledge for responsible operation of the equipment as well as for optimizing a system for increased reliability. The question and answer period identified the need for forest technicians—someone to be trained to help the forester—not just to fight fires.

PPD board president Rick Caulfield said, "My sense was that participants came away with a wealth of solid practical information along with a sense of enthusiasm. Clearly, a related benefit to this event was to put our partnership even more on the map—working together to focus on community economic development through workforce education and training."

Senator Gene Therriault helped close the session with an update on legislative action plans. He agreed that his colleagues down south have limited understanding of the Interior's challenges and opportunities for energy development. He said his "takeaway" from the session is that "It is clear that one system isn't going to work everywhere." He is supporting legislation that all public buildings be constructed in such a way that alternative energy could be used. He applauded facilities operations staff and others for their research and on-site inspections of operations around the state and in the Lower 48.

Welding and Heavy Equipment Academies

Recognizing its intensive summer academies have yielded a high rate of placement in jobs and or Trades apprenticeship programs, Partners for Progress in Delta is offering two concurrent academies this summer.

Ten successful applicants, ages 17-24, selected for two concurrent academies (Welding and Heavy Equipment Operator) from June 1 through June 19 will receive Forklift, OSHA 10, MSHA, First Aid, and CPR/AED certifications. Students can earn college credits from UAF Tanana Valley Campus, in Welding I and in Introductory Pipe Welding. They also receive Drug Awareness training from Alaska Works Partnership.

The summer program is a critical component of the organization's goal to link education and training with real world work experiences. The academies emphasize hands-on operation and work ethic instruction.

Alaska Works Partnership has been a key player in shaping the academies and offering financial assistance. The Partners for Progress in Delta have identified the capacity to offer housing for area wide residents as a high priority. As a Regional Training Center (identified in legislation in 2008) the Delta Career Advancement Center is looking ahead to how it can better serve the region.

Interested participants are required to complete a written application; when they are interviewed they are required to submit to a drug and alcohol test before acceptance into the program. The prospective participants get the message this program is serious. Academy organizers want participants to experience how it's done in the real world and reminding them this test can mean the difference between getting and keeping a job. Given the financial investment to make these programs possible at little or no cost to selected students, the partners expect them to make an investment of time, commitment and intention.



DGSD Board President Mike McCowan teaches First Aid/CPR/AED to spring 2009 Construction Trades students. All students receive certification at the completion of the class.

Videoconferenced Certified Nurse Aide Course A Success

A group of dynamic young women embarked on a new experience this past spring to pursue their dreams of becoming involved in the healthcare field. They were the dedicated and hard working junior and seniors in high school to take the first university Certified Nurse Aide course in Delta Junction. It was also a first using the Delta Career Advancement Center's video conferencing technology. The class is coordinated by Allied Health instructor Cathy Winfree and included high school students from Hutchison in Fairbanks and Eielson and Delta Junction. From every indication it's been a huge success.

Winfree said getting the course offered around the state has been "a great experience!" Winfree credits instructors Anne Doeringhaus, Rachel Sunter-Storey, Cindy Schmitt, Hannah Smith, and Leah Kennedy for combining efforts to make the class possible. She went on to say, "It takes a great deal of coordination and energy by all involved but it is worth every minute when the end result is a successful student who can care for the residents in their community."

Yuliya Koval, Alina Rudenkaya and Anna Kurilchenko are the seniors at Delta High School, and Viktoriya Linnik is the only junior taking the Certified Nurse Aide class. "It's awesome," they say and by that they mean: "It's not too difficult if you work hard. It's an incredible opportunity. If you're interested in health care it's great way to learn about the many career options."

Full-time high school students, they had to adjust their schedules and make a few sacrifices to take this class, making up other classes because of the length and trips to Fairbanks for hands-on experience. All credit their high school teachers with great understanding and enthusiasm for their success so they could walk away with university credit at the end of the class; and DGSD gave them high school credit for their effort.

Yuliya said she has always wanted to be in the medical field. Alina wants to know more about how health care works and what differences or options there are for those who pursue this career field. Viktoriya has relatives who are nurses and she wants to be nurse. Anna, too, has a goal of becoming a nurse.

In one breath they all describe the class as demanding but "worth it." The hands-on part of the program includes role playing as the person receiving aid and as the person giving the aid. They learn right away when something hurts or doesn't feel quite right. The practice on each other produces an immediate reaction that they can learn from through discussion. Travel to Fairbanks about five times during the semester is for skill development. According to Anna, "It's so much better than just reading about it."

Three times a week for two-to-three hours they met in the

DCAC classroom and interacted with instructors through a video link. Although each walked into the class wondering what it would be like to have the instructor on the TV monitor and whether questions would be answered, they say it has been a great new experience. It's a new way of learning, but they discovered that it actually is much more interactive than sitting in a classroom in which a teacher lectures and then maybe there are a few minutes at the end to ask questions, or not. With the video link they are encouraged to interrupt and ask questions at any time. The class is enriched with the discussion from all sites and worry about whether they can learn this way disappeared early on.

Anna credits Principal Rod Schug as being their "cheerleader." She said he supported the class and their participation at all phases. Schug remarked, "These young ladies are absolutely exemplary in all facets of their education. I am so proud of their academic accomplishments and vision for their future careers."

All of the young women plan to go to the University of Alaska in either in Fairbanks or Anchorage to pursue their studies in the health field. Anna noted it's really helpful to have the class here so people could get jobs in the community after taking the class. Viktoriya agreed and said for older folks who haven't had the chance to take

classes, this is a good program to take a practical class and then aim to get a job.

Yuliya said, "the health care field is always demanding, there's always going to be job openings and it benefits the community" She added, "It's a way to feel good about yourself."

Cheryl Helkenn, the TVC program assistant and a registered nurse who worked in the field for more than 15 years and continues to keep her license current, has been the onsite resource for the class. She said, "It's been such a pleasure to work with these girls. They have such wonderful enthusiasm and excitement. I know they will be wonderful care providers. It's rewarding to see these young people step into the medical field."

Viktoriya said, the course opened up the possibility for her to take more classes. "I don't want to just stop here with this class. I want to go on and take more classes in science and anthropology." Alina said she values the fact that "you don't have to go somewhere else to get the class." She arrived in Delta from Anchorage in October 2008 and she was happy to discover the "resources to take college classes right here in Delta. You get the skills to survive life, to take of your family." The CNA license is certified by the state. All of the students passed the exam. As Viktoriya puts it, "I can work in my field and get paid while I am going to college."

An adult CNA program is being offered for the first time this summer.



Yuliya Koval, Alina Rudenkaya, Anna Kurilchenko and Viktoriya Linnik, students in the Certified Nurse Aide class.