

MESSENGER

Summer 2021

HIGHER EDUCATION

By Jens Laipenieks CEO/General Manager



Being the father of a 2020 high school graduate and sophomore, I have witnessed first-hand the challenges students in the time of COVID have faced. They say adversity builds character, if so, this year's graduating classes have more character than any other before them. ASTAC shares in the joy of their achievements, perseverance and are excited to witness their impacts on the world.

At ASTAC we support the continuing education of both our employees and our membership. ASTAC's scholarship program has been in place for over 30 years and has helped countless students from the North Slope reach their goals. This year ASTAC increased scholarship funding and now provides four \$2500 scholarships, two to high school seniors, and two for students enrolled in post-secondary education.

In 2015, ASTAC began supporting the NSBSD "Battle of the Books" program. This statewide program is a reading motivation and comprehension program to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading. The competition spans kids from kindergarten to high school and fosters a love for reading that accelerates learning and future academic growth. This year 334 kids accepted the challenge, read all 12 books, and competed in the district competition. Four teams represented NSBSD in the State Battle of the Book competition. Congratulations to all who participated!

At our core, ASTAC is a technology company and I feel it is important to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education wherever possible. The more our kids become comfortable with computers, networking, programming, and analytical thinking, the stronger we all become as a community. Since 2016, ASTAC has helped fund the FIRST Lego Robotics League program along with the NSBSD. Each year on average 70+ elementary



ASTAC is celebrating a major milestone: 40 years of serving North Slope residents. Our success is inextricably linked to our ability to adapt and make smart, proactive investments in our networks, in partnerships with AT&T, Quintillion and other companies, our employees, and our members.

school kids participate in this great program which teaches them problem-solving and teamwork along with the basics of programming and engineering to build and control a robot to complete missions and rack up points in a head-to-head competition. It is amazing to watch these teams compete and learn to adapt and think on their feet. ASTAC is happy to invest in robotics and STEM as we will be looking to hire our next generation of village reps and network technicians directly from our communities.

The challenges were many this year, but

Cont...

Cont...

rather than dwell on the past it's best to keep looking forward. I like to think that some of our graduating classes of 2021 had the opportunity to take part in Battle of the Books or the FIRST Lego League over the years and that they were able to expand their abilities and horizons because of them. ASTAC will continue to play an active role as a member of the North Slope communities and will do what we can to ensure the success of future graduating classes in the years to come.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

ASTAC encouraged high school seniors and students currently enrolled in post-secondary education institutions to apply for one of four \$2,500 scholarships to be awarded. The application deadline was June 1, and we look forward to sharing more in our next Messenger issue.

2021 ANNUAL MEETINGS AND DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

While COVID-19 cases are becoming increasingly more manageable, our team is evaluating several factors in determining both a date and location (via in-person or virtual) of our 2021 annual meetings. Stay tuned to our web site and social media channels for up-to-date information.

PIURAAĠIAQTA FESTIVAL

ASTAC technicians had a great time participating in this year's Piuraaġiaqta Festival parade in Utqiaġvik this past April. It was one of the warmest in recent memory! This year ASTAC had two bucket trucks that drove the two mile loop around town tossing nearly 600 lbs. of candy to the community.



Purchasing Agent Rhyann Graves coordinated the shipping, while Technicians David Serino, Randy Duncan and Mike Phillips had fun throwing the candy.

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE

ASTAC believes in inspiring science and technology leaders of tomorrow. This school year marked the 6th consecutive year we have sponsored the NSBSD's FIRST Lego League program. Our \$2,000 annual sponsorship covers the cost of registration and playing fields for each school in the district.

This school year was like any other, making it difficult for teams to get meet and work together but for those that were able to, learned a lot and look forward next school year.

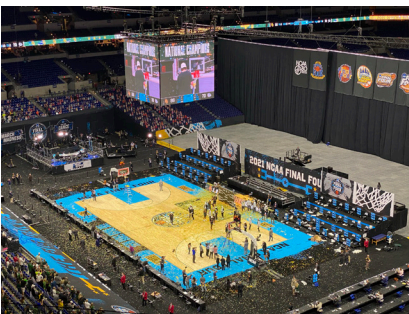


SWOOSH GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Roy Fischer-Akootchook of Kaktovik was the grand prize winner of our 2020 Swoosh Photo Contest. He and his brother Bob enjoyed 4 days in Indianapolis, Indiana taking in the Final Four championship game and an Indiana Pacers game. Plus many other sites around the area.

ASTAC has been hosting a Swoosh free-throw contest in each of the eight residential communities it serves since 2009. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ASTAC changed its annual contest from an in-person free-throw competition to a photo contest.

In October & November 2020, participants submitted photos of themselves shooting a free-throw in various locations. All North Slope Borough residents were eligible to participate and need not be an ASTAC member. Three winners were randomly selected from the 14 entries received.



SEND US YOUR BEST SHOT

ASTAC would like to extend its appreciation to everyone that captured and shared the beauty of the North Slope this March. We received some beautiful photos including this artic fox taken by Lloyd Pikok of Utqiagvik. It was selected as the cover image of ASTAC's 2021/2022 Phone Directory that members should have received last month.

JOIN TEAM ASTAC

ASTAC is seeking qualified applicants for a Village Representative in Atqasuk and alternate Village Representatives in Anaktuvuk Pass, Kaktovik and Nuiqsut. Additionally, we are seeking a part-time Customer Experience Specialist in Utqiagvik. Learn more about these positions and others from the job descriptions posted on our web site at: www.astac.net/company/careers.

ALASKA RELAY

Alaska Relay Service is a statewide service that connects standard (voice) telephone users with deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, speech-disabled, or late-deafened people who use text telephones (TTYs) or other telephone devices available depending on the type of relay services used. This service allows relay users to communicate with standard telephone users through specially trained Communication Assistants (CA). Calls can be made 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with no restrictions on the number, length, or type of calls. Dial 7-1-1 to place a Relay call, or for more information visit www.AlaskaRelay.com.

ASTAC connects you...

to work from home.

SEE OUR PLANS



PARENTAL CONTROL FEATURES SURVEY WINNER

ASTAC would like to thank all those that participated in our parental control features survey in April. The information is invaluable to us and we appreciate everyone taking the time to provide their feedback. Alice Matumeak from Nuiqsut is the winner of our drawing for an \$100 Visa gift card. Congratulations Alice!



NEWS YOU CAN USE: FOLLOW US!

Did you know ASTAC is active on social media? We share lots of great information including promotions, announcements, career opportunities, network information, and more. Follow us and stay up to date.



@GoASTAC



ATQASUK FIBER BUILD

Creativity and ingenuity are a must to expanding broadband in rural Alaska. While working on the last aerial section to extend our fiber network to Atkasuk, we added skis to our 15,000 lb. ladder truck to help pull it through the snow.



MANDATORY 10-DIGIT DIALING COMING TO ALASKA

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted 988 as a new three-digit number to be used nationwide to reach the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline. In order for 988 to work in our area code, the way you dial local calls must change to 10-digit dialing (area code + telephone number). There are a few things you need to be aware of to prepare for this change:

- **Beginning April 24** – callers should have begun dialing 10 digits for all local calls.
- **On July 16** – dialing 988 will route your call to the National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline.
- **On October 24** – callers must begin dialing 10 digits for all local calls or they may not be completed.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marietta Aiken
PRESIDENT, UTQIAĠVIK

Carla SimsKayotuk
VICE PRESIDENT, KAKTOVIK

Sophie Tracey
SECRETARY/TREASURER, POINT LAY

Isabel Nashookpuk
ALTERNATE SECRETARY,
WAINWRIGHT

Pearl Burris
DIRECTOR, ANAKTUVUK PASS

Marlene Bolt
DIRECTOR, NUIQSUT

Della Segevan
DIRECTOR, ATQASUK

John Long Jr.
DIRECTOR, POINT HOPE

Trish McFarlin
DIRECTOR, PRUDHOE BAY

ASTAC OFFICES

4300 B St. Suite 501,
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-563-3989 Anchorage
907-852-7100 Utqiagvik
800-478-6409 Toll-free
E-mail: info@ASTAC.net

