



# Alaska Children's Trust

## CHAMPION FOR KIDS

Each year Alaska Children's Trust recognizes individuals that have demonstrated dedication and commitment in working toward preventing child abuse and neglect by ensuring that children are living in safe, supportive, and nurturing communities. Get to know our Champions for Kids in the next few pages to see who we've celebrated for their contributions to Alaska's children, youth, and families!



## DIANE GUBATAYAO

Community and school board member  
(Ketchikan, AK)

Diane Gubatayao's worked as a special education para in Ketchikan's school district, then as a Parks and Recreation programmer before leading a community public health initiative called PATCHWorks, based upon Search Institute developmental assets. More recently Diane worked at WISH (Women In Safe Homes), the local women's shelter, and Community Connections. Now retired, Diane devotes her time to volunteering. As her passion has always been positive youth development, she now serves on the school board, referees soccer, directs races and a triathlon, and serves on the Ketchikan Wellness Coalition Board. She also participates in the Revilla Island Resilience Initiative, Ketchikan Non-profit Collaborative, and as a Rotarian. Learn more about Diane in [our video here](#)



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## LIKKA MCCAULEY

Principal at Williwaw Elementary School  
(Anchorage, AK)

Likka McCauley has been a principal at Williwaw Elementary School for going on 8 years. She is a National Board Certified Teacher, Middle Childhood Generalist, with an endorsement in gifted education, and is currently the president of the Anchorage Principals Association. Previous to administration, Likka taught in a variety of grades and content areas and is interested in anything related to education. She has been inspired by many passionate educators in the past 20 years with the Anchorage School District, and credits these influences heavily for their deep impact on her life and worldview. Learn more about Likka in [our video here](#).



## LINDA FRAINI

Retired Professional  
(Fairbanks, AK)

Linda Fraini's service as a child and family advocate spans nearly 40-years. It began in the Boston Area in the field of Deafness and mental health and continued on in Alaska's Golden Heart City, Fairbanks, where she collaborated with community members to establish a local advocacy center for Deaf and HH children/adults - Deaf Community Services.



Before pursuing a graduate degree in Social Work from the University of Vermont, Linda was chosen and served as the initial Program Coordinator for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Greater Fairbanks Area. Upon her return to Fairbanks, Linda dedicated the next 12-years as a mental health clinician specializing in the treatment of child abuse and neglect for children, families and at risk youth with Fairbanks Community Mental Health Center and Fairbanks Counseling and Adoption. At the Office of Public Advocacy in Fairbanks, Linda was one of the first mental health clinicians to be retained. For the next 15-years, Linda represented the best interests of children and youth in legal matters - Child in Need of Aid; Juvenile Delinquency; and Civil Custody proceedings. And when the opportunity arose to develop and implement educational protections for children and youth in care, Linda spent the last four years of her career as Fairbanks North Star Borough School District's Foster Care Liaison. Learn more about Linda in [our video here](#).



## DEB SPENCER

School Counselor, Sayeik: Gastineau Community School (Juneau, AK)

Deb Spencer works as an elementary school counselor in Juneau and is dedicated to going the extra mile to preserve and repair relationships with families while looking to long term outcomes and prevention.

Learn more about Deb in [our video here](#).

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## UN HUI (KIM) CHANG

Program Manager, Putyuk Children's Home (Kotzebue, AK)

Un Hui (Kim) Chang works as a program manager at Putyuk Children's Home in Kotzebue, where she provides a nurturing and loving environment for children and ensures they feel special.

Learn more about Un Hui [in our video here](#).

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## LES GARA

Community Member and Former Legislator (Anchorage, AK)

Les worked as a strong advocate for children and youth in his years serving in the State and House of Representatives. He has continued that work in his personal life, championing numerous child welfare reforms and working closely with organizations that serve foster youth.

Learn more about Les [in our video here](#).



## **THEA AGNEW BEMBEN**

Consultant, Agnew::Beck Consulting  
(Anchorage, AK)

Thea is a passionate advocate for strong families, convening individuals and organizations to take on root causes and systems issues for children and families. Thea's work crosses sectors and focuses on coalition-building in order to empower communities to create a thriving environment for all.



Learn more about Thea in our video [here](#).

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## **YATIBAHEY EVANS**

Creative Director, PBS (Fairbanks, AK)

Yatibahey has centered her career around helping children succeed in school and in life with special emphasis on building resilience in Alaska Native children. She is also creative producer of "Molly of Denali".



Learn more about Yatibahey in our video [here](#).

## LISA WADE

Community Advocate (Chickaloon, AK)

Lisa Wade is Ahtna Dene' of the taltsiine (water clan) and the c'etsiy tnaey (iron people clan). Lisa is a Nay'dini'aa Na' Kayax (Chickaloon Native Village) Tribal citizen. She is a wife and mother of two amazing daughters and currently lives at Tsidak'etna' (Grandmother's Creek), just north of Palmer.



Lisa has served as a member of the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council since 2012, and Council secretary and Tribal Court judge since 2018. She has worked for Chickaloon Village Traditional Council since 2007, and serves as the health, education and social services division director. She also manages the Ya Ne Dah Ah School, the first school in Alaska established by a Tribal government.

Lisa is an advocate for the health and wellness of Alaska Native peoples and is committed to supporting healthy communities locally, statewide and nationally through community building, policy development, and indigenous advocacy. She enjoys cultural learning and creating community art projects, especially with children. Learn about Lisa and the other [2020 Champions in the video here](#).

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## CHARITY CARMODY

Founder, Board President, Beacon Hill (Anchorage, AK)

Charity Carmody is a fourth generation Alaskan. She and her husband, Kris, have been married 26 years. They have four grown children and two grandchildren. The Carmody's took in their first foster child when Charity was only 21 years old. Within the first six years of their marriage, they owned a large home in North Mountain view and cared for foster children and adults in need of rehabilitation. Their oldest son, Jesse, was one of their first foster children.



Caring for foster children continues to be a passion for Charity. The nonprofit Beacon Hill was founded in the Carmody's living room in 2009 by a group of friends that wanted to give back.

It started as a transitional living facility for homeless mothers and children, and then became a foster care and adoption agency five years later.

Today, Beacon Hill has a foster care prevention program called Safe Families for Children Alaska that operates in six cities. It also operates Family Support Centers in Anchorage and Wasilla that host supervised visits and mentorship for children in foster care with their biological families. Beacon Hill also manages the Heart Gallery of Alaska, which recruits adoptive homes for children in foster care that are legally free for adoption and are waiting for a forever family. In 2017, Beacon Hill opened a thrift store and café, whose profits fund Beacon Hill's operating expenses. Charity acted as Beacon Hill's volunteer executive director until 2018, when Kristen Bierma was hired to take the organization to its next level. Charity remains the board president. Learn about Charity and the other [2020 Champions in the video here.](#)

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## TRACI MCGARRY

Child and Family Services Director, Kawerak (Nome, AK)

Traci McGarry has dedicated both her professional and personal life to preventing child abuse and neglect, and advocating for changes that improve the lives of Alaska's children and families. In her role as Child and Family Services/Child Advocacy Center director at Kawerak in Nome, Traci spends many hours working directly with families, assisting with court appearances, providing a safe and comfortable environment to ensure children are protected, and helping families return to a safe home situation. Traci is also dedicated to seeking funding to improve and expand services offered to children and families in her community. Outside of work, Traci still finds time to be an active advocate and member of the community, volunteering on many local and state committees, boards and commissions that focus on the safety of children and families.



Learn about Traci and the other [2020 Champions in the video here.](#)



## **BERNARD GATEWOOD**

(Fairbanks, AK)

It is said that one of the best ways to prevent child abuse and neglect is to find ways to address the cyclical nature of abuse. That is exactly what Bernard has focused on during his more than 30 years of working with Alaska's children and families. During his 15-year tenure as superintendent at Fairbanks Youth Facility, Bernard placed a premium on developing partnerships that promoted academic achievement and real-world skills. Bernard, known for his skills in securing necessary capital for projects, was also tireless in his work to obtain funding for various projects that would positively impact the residents. In addition to his career in juvenile justice, Bernard served on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Health and Social Services Commission, was elected to the Fairbanks City Council, and was co-founder of the Black Role Model Initiative.



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## **KEVIN RITCHIE**

(Juneau, AK)

Kevin Ritchie, a Juneau resident for over 40 years, came to Alaska as a VISTA/AmeriCorps volunteer. Kevin was instrumental with starting Big Brothers-Big Sisters of Juneau in 1978 and was made the President of the first Board of Directors. Kevin has a true passion for caring for Juneau's youth, he works closely with middle schools as well as serving on the booster club for the Thunder Mountain High School boys basketball team. In 2009 when the Boys and Girls Club suddenly closed, he led a committee in developing the now highly successful BAM (Body and Mind) afterschool programs, he also served as a leader in developing Juneau Best Starts, to increase access to affordable child care. Kevin is a compelling spokesperson, a can-do problem solver, and his incredible energy, enthusiasm and passion, compels others throughout the community to rise up alongside him.





## KYLE WORL

Coach, Native Youth Olympics Team  
(Juneau, AK)

Kyle Worl, a Tlingit born Alaskan, spearheaded the movement to bring back the excitement of traditional games to Southeast Alaska. Kyle spreads his love of the traditional games across Southeast Alaska, often times going to the high schools to recruit and train coaches. The Juneau based program, is open to all students, but Kyle especially targets at-risk youth. He teaches athletes to strive to perform at their personal best while helping and supporting their fellow competitors. In the true spirit of the games, Kyle is instrumental in getting the students to work together toward common goals and learn from the skills and values that allowed Alaska Native people to survive and thrive in some of the harshest conditions in the world. In 2018, Kyle led a Juneau team to compete at the state Native Youth Olympics for the first time in 30 years.



## **DIANE PAYNE**

(Chugiak, AK)

Diana Payne (posthumous) dedicated her life's work to protecting Alaska's children. She played a major role in the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) nearly forty years ago. For the next three decades, she was on the front lines of creating policy, curriculum and setting new standards in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. She provided tools and training across the state but made huge impact in rural areas where resources were scarce. Diane was involved in the development of almost every child advocacy center in Alaska. She also served on numerous boards, task forces and organizations that had Alaska's children at their heart. Her friends describe her as a healer-warrior. Someone who was committed to healing and showed deep empathy for survivors but was also their voice, speaking truth to power. Diane passed away June 3, 2019



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## **BARBARA MALCHICK**

(Juneau, AK)

Barbara Malchick has helped thousands of Alaskan children during their most vulnerable moments. She dedicated nearly 30 years of her career advocating for the well-being of children and their families. She started her work as a lawyer in the Office of Public Advocacy and used her skills, compassion and determination to make positive change for Alaska's youth. She is well known for her longtime advocacy for children in the foster care system. In 2010, she retired but remains an active and steadfast presence in the Court Improvement Program, as a CASA volunteer, serves on numerous committees and is a proud member of the board of directors of Facing Foster Care in Alaska. She dedicates much of her time training parties involved in child welfare throughout the state. Her colleagues describe her as having unwavering dedication to the well-being of children.



## **BRENDA RILEY**

Co-Founder, Fairbanks Children's Museum (Fairbanks, AK)



Alaska Children's Trust thanks the Golden Heart city for the warm welcome and show of support at our annual Fairbanks fundraising event held on April 4, 2019. Due to the support of many, Alaska Children's Trust met the \$5,000 Doyon challenge grant opportunity and raised over \$10,000 for the Alaska Children's Trust. We honored our 2019 Northern Champion for Kids, Brenda Riley, known for her inspirational work for the Fairbanks Children's Museum. Thank you to Doyon Limited, our many Fairbanks Co-Hosts, board members and friends.

As a co-founder and the inaugural director of the Fairbanks Children's Museum, Brenda and her partners, supporters, and staff have built much more than just a museum. Her passion for her work helping children and families thrive is an example to us all. She is the Patron Saint of Fairbanks' Parents. Her commitment to children, families and her community does not end with the Children's Museum. She has been a member various community boards - President of the Arctic Alliance for People and was Chair of the Fairbanks North Star Borough's Early Childhood Development Commission. Plus is a sitting member of the Board of Directors for the University Alumni Association.

Daily, Brenda demonstrates her commitment to improving the lives of those in her community, especially those most vulnerable. Thank you Brenda for being a Champion for Kids.



## JOY LYON

(Juneau, AK)

For 23 years, Joy was the first Executive Director for The Association for the Education of Young Children (AEYC) in Southeast Alaska and in retirement from that position she is still a fierce advocate for children.



As a mother of three, Joy knew being a parent was hard and all children have potential – we just need to help create those nurturing environments to help them flourish.

Joy has been instrumental in raising awareness, lending her voice to those who are normally silenced, and created programs to support families. For the first part of her tenure, she organized Stand for Kids – an annual advocacy event on the steps of the legislator. By early 2000’s, she was asked, why are we outside and not inside. That prompted her to change and began the Little Red Wagon visits. Over the course of a week, she and other advocates toured children in red wagons to legislators’ offices – helping to remind them what the future of Alaska looked like. Today, this program has developed into the annual valentine outreach.

She brought Parents as Teachers – a home visiting program to Juneau. As well as established the Juneau Imagination Library which has ensured children receive books. She is part of the leadership behind Best Starts – a local initiative to encourage local investment in early childhood. She led the fight for the creation of “Hearts Award” for early educators.

Joy has easily established herself as one of Alaska’s strongest children’s advocates and will tell you, “It is never easy, but it is harder not to do it!”

## SEN. PETER MICCICHE

(Soldotna, AK)

One of the greatest challenges children face is the lack of a political voice. They rely on individuals to lend their voice to ensure their needs and perspective are represented when decisions are being made. As a father to four amazing young women, Peter knows how important investing in our children is for their future and our own. Since the day he entered the legislature back in 2013, he brings the stories of children and families to the table. He challenges himself and his colleagues to use a child focused lens when making decisions that impact people across our great state.



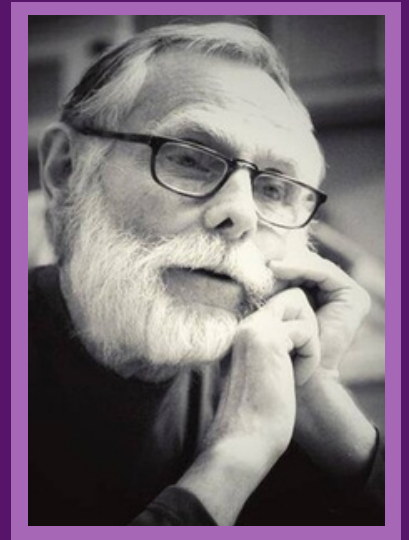
The vast majority of child abuse and neglect and domestic violence cases involve alcohol. Utilizing this knowledge, Peter has ensured language that promotes responsible consumption, while effectively supporting industry, and protecting our families is included in Title 4. In addition, he has included key regulations that create stricter regulations that prevent youth from accessing alcohol. And when they do, new regulations promote a trauma-informed approach – youth are given access to treatment and their record will no longer be tarnished due to making a poor decision.

As an advocate for children, Peter held conversations to help other legislators understand the importance of how legislation can impact children and families, and on many occasions, shows his personal support by co-sponsoring. Two great examples of this level of support was the passing of the legislation that supported the State of Alaska to utilize a trauma-informed lens and the legislation designating marijuana tax revenue towards afterschool programming. Both pieces of legislation will help strengthen our children and families.

Peter's dedication to children does not solely exist in the legislature. As a community member, he is consistently engaged in projects that help create a safe, stable and nurturing community for the children. He has been a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Kenai Peninsula for nearly a decade – most recently was President of the board. He participates in a variety of community event that promote and build strengthen family protective factors.

## **GEORGE BROWN, M.D.**

(Juneau, AK) posthumous award



There are few pediatricians who have the breadth and depth of experience as the last Dr. George Brown. Some would say his life was symbolic of the Alaska Children's Trust ideal. He was a persistent advocate for Alaska's children. For many years he bombarded legislators and executive branch officials with letters and visits urging the creation of the Trust. During his years of practice in Palmer, he worked with Senator Jay Kerttula to create the statutory framework for the Alaska Children's Trust.

For over 48 years as a pediatrician, the prevention of child abuse and neglect was a primary focus of his career. George worked tirelessly ensuring our children and families lived in safe, stable and nurturing communities. In the 1960s as a public health physician at the Alaska Native Medical Center, villages in Africa, several states in the lower 48, and his practice in Juneau. George and his wife, Dr. Carolyn Brown, an obstetrics and gynecological physician, were an unstoppable team. They worked and consulted with the pioneers of child abuse prevention and neglect throughout the country. As a result, Dr. Brown was the first recipient of the C. Henry Kempe Award for his work in child abuse prevention. In 2009, he received the Dr. Ray Helfer award which is named after the creator and advocate for the idea of children's trusts throughout the United States.

Dr. Brown's passion for our kids was exhibited and lived out in clinical and hospital practice, seemingly eternal weekend and night calls, family counseling, public speaking, teaching, professional writing and community leadership in every community where he lived. He was well-know, for the "high-fives" he exchanged with children across time and continents. He gave medical care to thousands of children and families. He provided forensic evaluations for Child Protection groups, testified in court as expert witness, championed public health vaccinations and fluoridation in the midst of opposition, volunteered at local vaccination fairs and served on the Crime Victims Compensation Commission.

All the while, he lived and talked prevention of child abuse and neglect – in his practice, contacts, newspaper articles, letters to the President, Senate, and House of Representatives, speaking, time with Alaska Legislators and in his personal life.



## TABER REHBAUM

(Fairbanks, AK)

Taber is a household name in Fairbanks and many parts of the state. For twenty-two years, she worked for Big Brothers Big Sisters, helping children and teens build the skills needed to thrive and grow up as contributing members of our community. She was hired as the executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters – Greater Fairbanks Area in 1995. Between then and 2007, she grew the Fairbanks agency from less than 30 children served per year to approximately 600.



Growth came out of Taber’s vision for the organization to be more than just a “matching program”. She embraced the power that a strong, healthy, and loving relationship between a child and an adult can play in the development of our children. She built school-based mentoring programs, expanded out to villages in the Interior, created partnerships across various sectors, and explored non-traditional areas like partnering with juvenile justice systems. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska was also a leader in developing systems and practices to partner with parents to prevent child abuse and to identify and respond to indicators of abuse. In 2007, Taber was instrumental in the merger process of the three Big Brothers Big Sister organizations to be one statewide organization. Two years later, she became the CEO of the statewide organization.

In addition to leading the agency, Taber was also matched with two Little Sisters, both of whom she is still in contact with. Taber’s first Little Sister now lives in Houston, where she and her husband are expecting their first child. Taber’s second Little Sister will graduate from high school this spring.

Taber says she is grateful to have her Little Sisters as well as many mentors in her life – and Alaska Children’s Trust is grateful for Taber and the years of dedication she has shown to Alaska’s children and families.

## SENATOR ANNA MACKINNON

(Eagle River, AK)

As a Representative, Senator and community member, Anna MacKinnon has ensured our children and families live in safe, stable and nurturing environments. Anna started out with impressive beginnings as the Executive Director of STAR.

During her time at STAR, Anna established herself as an effective advocate for abuse prevention programs. While at STAR, her team implemented a children's sexual abuse outreach program in the school district.

Her commitment to children continued when she became a state Representative. Anna was an invaluable partner of ACT's. In 2008, ACT and its' sister organization, Friends of Alaska Children's Trust (FACT) began the process of transforming ACT from a state led organization to an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit. To make this goal a reality, the state entity needed to be abolished and the endowment transferred to the Alaska Community Foundation (ACF). After lawmakers argued over the legality of the bill, a controversy ensued and, ultimately, the bill failed. It was at this time that ACT knew that they needed to enlist a champion within the legislature who could help this goal be realized; Anna MacKinnon was that champion.

In 2009, Anna introduced two bills to achieve ACT's goal. For two legislative sessions, these bills languished until finally Anna's persistence was rewarded; in 2010 the bills were passed and signed by Governor Parnell. In 2015, she was instrumental in making Erin's Law into law after it had failed to do so the year prior; Erin's law requires the public schools of Alaska to have prevention-oriented child sexual abuse programs in place. To make the bill stronger, the bill was expanded to include Bree's Law, which prevents teen dating violence, and it became known as the Safe Children's Act. The bill became trapped in red tape, but Senator MacKinnon, helped broker a deal between all parties to get the law passed. Anna has worked tirelessly to enrich the lives of our children, and, because of her, children are growing up in an even safer Alaska.



## MONTE LYNN JORDAN

(Fairbanks, AK)

For 30+ years Monte Lynn Jordan has been a driving force behind agencies and events that help prevent child abuse and neglect through supporting healthy kids in Alaska. When she believes in something, her whole heart goes into it, and she believes that healthy communities begin with healthy kids.

Monte's exemplary service is a motivating force behind groups that support healthy families, and especially children. She has worked with the Resource Center for Parents and Children helping parents develop parenting skills, which in turn strengthens the family unit and helps prevent child abuse and neglect; she is a member of the Board of Directors for The Carol H. Brice Center, which promotes healthy families through education, daycare assistance, legal help, and low-cost health care; and she has been a Court Appointed Special Advocate for abused, neglected, or abandoned children in juvenile court proceedings.

In addition, Monte works to prevent child abuse and neglect by providing young people with healthy activities. She's a founding member of Running Club North's Equinox Kid's Marathon; she volunteers to help with high school track and field events; and helps organize the Alaska Children's Trust Mush for Kids. Monte is also involved in the Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization as an active Big Sister to a local young person, with whom she has maintained a relationship well into adulthood.

Whether as part of a group, or individually, Monte's enthusiasm for a healthy, active lifestyle is both an inspiration and motivation for kids, many of whom face challenging circumstances. Monte is quite simply a positive force in society. Her ardent activism on behalf of children, faith in the power of a healthy lifestyle, and unwavering efforts in her community mean that she can will be wherever she is needed. She has been called many things: persistent, insistent, ally, and friend to name a few, but one thing is certain—she is a champion for kids.





## HEATHER HARRIS

(Anchorage, AK)

It is nearly impossible to talk to Heather for more than a few moments without hearing her clear commitment to children and teens – especially those who are at greater risk of experiencing

trauma in their lives. The more complex the human experience, the more she is ready to engage. Uniquely, however, Heather isn't just interested in a quick fix, but rather her strategy is first to listen and understand and then to seek collaborative solutions that don't make life better for just one person but for a system of people.

Currently the executive director for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Heather has dedicated two decades to our most vulnerable children and youth, engaging with Alaska Youth Advocates, Standing Together Against Rape, Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association, Anchorage Youth Development Coalition and Alaska CARES, among other. She has worked with homeless youth, been an advocate for children who have experienced sexual abuse, and has promoted positive youth development through her leadership on various boards.

This dedication and passion does not stop at the office. At home, Heather and her husband Josh create safe space in their extended family and in their neighborhood. That space engages the neighborhood kids who instinctively know that Heather and Josh are there for them. Neighborhood kids, children in foster care or incarcerated or abused and neglected are all welcomed by Heather and Josh – there is truly enough love and support to go around.



## RIVERBEND ELEMENTARY STAFF

(Juneau, AK)

Riverbend team is a strong symbol of commitment and dedication for children.

Riverbend Elementary School has committed to working towards being a

trauma-informed school. Each day, they encounter students who are angry, hurt physical or mentally, hungry, tired, hopeless and not ready to learn. What they were doing was not working. Staff was becoming burnt out and hopeless themselves. One of their first steps towards becoming trauma-informed was to train the school team on brain development, how trauma impacts that development and the role resilience plays in curbing this impact. The team became aware how environment at the school could be a trigger causing the children to go into the fight, flight or freeze mode. The team took action and have started to transform their school into a truly “safe place”. Teachers would teach ‘mindfulness’ and how to self-calm, breathe and self-regulate.

One of the key components to resilience is having at least one trusting adult, other than your primary care giver, a child can go to for help. To build this type of relationship with the students, staff participated in afterschool activities when parents can't or won't go. The school uses empirical validated trauma informed interventions. Staff continually go above and beyond to create the environment that students can learn to bounce back from their trauma (i.e. resilience). They develop realistic goals for all students and believe in all of them to achieve their dreams. The school partners with organizations outside so vital services can be connected to both the child and family.



## JULIE WILD-CURRY

(Fairbanks, AK)

Out-of-school time programs play an important role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. These types of programs create environments that endorse key protective factors for both the child and the parents. Early on, Julie recognized how important out-of-school programs were to

help children grow-up to be successful. She has dedicated over 25 years, personally and professionally, to ensuring all families have access to these programs. She began her career building healthy, resilient kids and communities in Haines, AK through the community schools program. A few years later, she moved to Fairbanks, with her family and began working for the Fairbanks North Star Borough. In 1999, Julie established one of the country's first federal funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) at Hunter Elementary in Fairbanks. 21st CCLC are federally funded afterschool programs that support low-income, underachieving students. As the Director of eleven 21st Century Community Learning Center programs for the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Julie and her team serve over 800 low-income students and families. In addition, she has served on committees and boards supporting the efforts to grow and strengthen afterschool programs.





## AMANDA METIVIER

(Anchorage, AK)

Amanda has dedicated her entire life to improving the lives of youth in foster care. She became a leader and spokesperson for foster youth when she was just a youth herself. She has now built the state's largest and strongest network for foster youth and alumni. As the founder and Executive Director of Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA), a statewide nonprofit that supports foster a youth and alumni, Amanda has created an incredible resource for some of the most vulnerable youth in Alaska. FFCA gives foster youth an opportunity to share their experiences, to promote improvements to our child welfare system, gain access to much needed resources, and heal from past traumas. FFCA members live across the state. Amanda simply leads by example. She's compassionate, intelligent, passionate, and reliable, and it only takes spending a few minutes with her to see all of those traits shine. Despite the tremendous pressure she faces running FFCA, working full-time, being a foster parent, and serving as an unofficial parent to scores of youth, Amanda is always ready to help whenever she is needed.



## CYNTHIA ERICKSON

(Tanana, AK)

Cynthia lives in Tanana, Alaska and was instrumental in starting the Tanana 4-H club and founding the nonprofit youth group “Setsoo Yeh, My Grandma’s House” created to battle youth suicide and encourage healthy activity. Community support systems have been shown to be an important factor in promoting resilience in children; Cynthia has exemplified community support through her work in all aspects of her life. While 4-H clubs have traditionally focused on leadership and life skills, Cynthia created hers to double as a safe space for Tanana children to discuss the harder aspects of village life, including child abuse. By refusing to stay silent about these issues, she has empowered her club members to utilize their own voices to bring awareness regarding the challenges that are faced in their community. She is very active in her community through her church; she organizes healing ceremonies to deal with tragedies and opens up her home to youth who need a safe place. She is an incredible example of the power of community.



## MUSH FOR KIDS COMMITTEE

(Fairbanks, AK)

Each year, the Mush for Kids (MFK) Committee puts together a premier Fairbanks spring event for children, bringing out over 4,000 people each year to celebrate the importance of healthy families raising healthy children in a safe community environment. The MFK event would not be possible without the dedication from each member on the committee. The funds raised at MFK are committed to the Alaska Children's Trust, which is the state's only organization solely devoted to eliminating child abuse and neglect in Alaska. With that money, ACT is then able to fund community-based programs that empower parents and reflect the communities we live in together. Mush for Kids endorses the Strengthening Families five protective factors by not only providing a day filled with family fun activities, but also providing resources for families. In 2014, the Pioneer Center was filled with nearly 20 local providers who provided free resources to families. This event helps contribute to building a statewide community where all kids are safe and thriving.



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## MARGO MCCABE

(Anchorage, AK)

Margo (posthumous) spent her life helping others – particularly children. As an individual who was adopted, Margo made it a personal mission to advocate for children, which has earned her the highest respect across the state. For nearly 10 years, Margo was instrumental in providing leadership to Alaska Children's Trust (ACT) by helping ACT and the state develop systems that ensured Alaska's children live in safe and supportive communities. In her everyday life, Margo consistently exhibited the characteristics of a champion for kids. She continually volunteered for youth programs and served as a court-appointed special advocate (CASA) for foster children in Alaska, and was also actively involved in the lives of her and her husband's own four children. Margo passed away February 7th, 2014



## CAROL BRICE

(Fairbanks, AK)

Carol Brice, long time Fairbanksan, has spent her career advocating for children and their families and has dedicated decades of work to improve the lives of children throughout Alaska. Carol is the founder of The Carol H. Brice Family Center which houses and provides stewardship for several organizations providing family services. She has also been involved since 1978 with the Fairbanks Child Protection Task Force, Inc., and was a co-founder of both the Resource Center for Parents and Children and the Fairbanks Head Start program. Throughout her work, she has increased awareness to the societal and lifelong impacts of child abuse and neglect. She began a movement, and ensured that every door she opened was due to people's commitment to the vision of all children being safe.



Carol has been a supporter and advocate for Alaska Children's Trust, and in 1996, Governor Knowles appointed her to the board of trustees, on which she served as the chair the entire time, from 1996 to 2003. As a founding member, Carol established the infrastructure and guiding principles that still guide and support ACT today. The work she and her fellow trustees accomplished over the years set in motion 15 years of high energy fundraising and successful grant-making.