

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM
DENTAL HEALTH AIDE THERAPIST
TRAINING PROGRAM

January 2008 Monthly Report



The Class of 2008 with instructor Grace Landel, PA from the University of Washington

As planned, the 2008 DENTEX school year began on January 4 with eight new students. Pictured above and from left to right are Marian Petla of New Stuyahok, Jewline Ayojiak of Manakotak, Tatiana Barraclough of Atka, Cindy Sears of Fairbanks, Bernadette Charles of Mt. Village, Grace Landel PA from UW, Tambre Guido of Sahuarita, Arizona representing YKHC, Ooyuan Nagarauk of Elim, and Benjamin Steward of Seward and Anchorage. At this writing, one student has returned home.

A greet and meet potluck was held at Carol Odinzoff's home before the first day of class. This was an opportunity to visit, get to know the other students and their families and enjoy the chance to relax before classes began the next day.

School started January 4 with a 7 day Pre-session course. The 7 day course was added to the curriculum this year to better prepare our incoming students for the intense program of study they are entering. Some of the topics covered were: study skills, medical and dental terminology, introduction to anatomy and physiology, BLS certification, library skills, technical writing skills and professional role development. The students jumped right in and demonstrated the energy and willingness to learn all they could. Immunizations as required by the University of Washington were also updated during this course.

An Introduction to Dental Therapy course began Monday January 14, the official first day of the quarter. We welcomed UW's Dr. Phillip Weinstein back at the end of January as he taught the principles of his course on Community Based Dental Prevention Project. Dr. Weinstein's course guides the students as they engage in community projects such as working with Southcentral Foundation's Head Start Program.



Mushing for Brushing" with second year students Sheena Nelson and Daniel Kennedy in Bethel

The Yuut Elitnaurviat Dental Training Clinic in Bethel, Alaska also opened on January 14, 2008. Four Dental Health Aide Therapy students matriculated into the second year of training from the DENTEX training program in Anchorage, Alaska. The students, all from Alaska, are Danielle Boston from Chistochina, Christopher Evan from Russian Mission, Daniel Kennedy from Klawock, and Sheena Nelson from Yakutat.

The students' first week in Bethel included preparing the dental clinical site's equipment and operatories. In addition they participated in the annual Kuskokwim 300 sled dog race festivities. They took part in the "Mushing for Brushing", a dental promotional event conducted during the Bogus Creek 150 dog sled race portion of the K-300.

On January 23, the students saw their first Bethel patients. They took dental radiographs, completed dental exams/treatment plans and provided patients with oral hygiene instruction. Oversight for this portion of training was by Dr. Robert Allen of Bethel. Dr. Allen is the first of three instructors providing clinical instruction. His primary focus is Oral Surgery and each of the students has had an opportunity to extract a tooth.

The students seem to have adjusted to life at the Yuut Elitnaurviat. They are living in a brand new dormitory with individual rooms and combined common areas such as the kitchen, dining room and living room. The dorm will house the students as well as visiting instructors. The weather has been a bit different from recent winters in that the temperature and winds have not been too severe. .

We are looking forward to a week of instruction with Dr. Phil Weinstein from the University of Washington during the first week of February and then instructor Dr. Tom Beckman of the University of Minnesota will begin on February 11. Dr. Beckman's primary focus will be Pediatric Dentistry.

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