



ALASKA
FELLOWS
PROGRAM

FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER



Hello from the Fall 2024 Alaska Fellows! In these first few months, fellows have been getting settled in Sitka, Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. In early September, the fellows got together at Lost Lake near Fairbanks for the opening convening. We bonded over cold lake plunges and warm fires before heading off to our various sites.

This newsletter gives you a look into who all the fellows are and what we've been up to. We hope you enjoy!

Sincerely,
Nisha & Claire
Co-editors



Contributors

Dannia Andrade
Liz Carter
Julia Cheesman
Haley Goodman
Emma Hamilton

Tamika Harris
Hollis Long
Michael Martins
Natalie Marrewa
Charlotte Moore

Will Salaverry
Samantha Sharkoff
Autumn Shelton
Molly Simons
Kristen Watkins

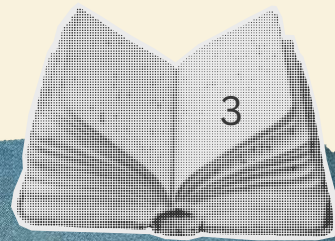
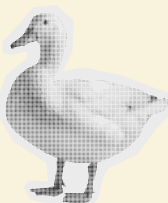
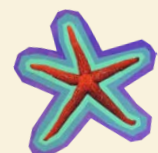




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Anchorage Fellows



Tamika Harris (she/her) is an early career professional who is passionate about improving the quality of life for historically underserved people. She has dedicated her time in academia to studying the use of risk reduction strategies for preventing the harms related to HIV in high priority populations. After graduating with her Master of Public Health, Tamika worked in harm reduction. She has learned a lot from her previous roles and is excited to continue learning from her fellowship position with the ACLU of Alaska. Outside of work, Tamika enjoys language learning, exploring new hobbies and interests, and visiting new places.

Haven Clare Townsend (she/her), a graduate from the University of Toronto, specialized in International Development and Human Geography. Her research interests lie at the intersection of caregiving in stigmatized circumstances, disability justice, and the use of storytelling in legal and health geographies. As a Cook Inlet Housing Authority 'Housing Impact and Evaluation Fellow', Haven brings her expertise in GIS analysis and participatory research methodologies to examine housing challenges in Anchorage. When Haven's not nerding out on her maps, you can find her reading at a local cafe, thrift shopping, seeing live music, or getting outside to hike/ice skate/ski.



Kaitlin Tunstall (she/her) is a policy researcher and analyst, having recently graduated from Columbia University in New York with her master's degree in public policy. Kaitlin is passionate about sustainability, climate resilience, and infrastructure investment projects. She has previously worked across DC and New York communities, having contributed to With Honor Action, a cross-partisan organization geared towards addressing hyper partisanship in Congress, and with Cogent Strategies, a bipartisan lobbying firm based out of Washington. She has also worked as part of several Congressional campaigns for office in New York, including for Leader Chuck Schumer and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. In her free time, Kaitlin enjoys surfing, yoga, and free diving.

Hollis Long (she/her) recently graduated from Yale University with a degree in English in the creative writing concentration. Her passion for working with youth blossomed during her summers with the Mayhew Program and her involvement in New Haven afterschool programs. At university, she focused on advocating for literacy opportunities for incarcerated youth and children with incarcerated guardians. She is thrilled to continue her youth advocacy with Alaska Children's Trust. In her free time, she likes to write about suburban drama of the Midwest, drink iced lattes, coach youth basketball, and watch Bluey with the Anchorage homies!





Claire Warncke (she/her) grew up in Salem, Oregon and recently graduated from Whitman College where she studied Environmental Studies, Politics, and Global Studies. At Whitman, Claire had the opportunity to participate in the Semester in the West program, a semester-long field studies program that traveled throughout the interior American West. This inspired her love for community based action and storytelling. Additionally, through her work with the Washington Physicians of Social Responsibility, she gained statewide organizing experience and ran a book club with the Washington Against Nuclear Weapons Coalition. Claire is excited to serve as the Anchorage Community Coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska to follow her passion of building strong, resilient communities. In her free time she loves to read, play board games with friends, and play the viola. She looks forward to living in Alaska and going cross-country skiing all winter!

Born and raised between Buffalo, New York, and Minnesota, **Kristen Watkins** (she/her) is accustomed to snowy winters and is passionate about preserving northern environments. She is a dedicated environmental advocate and nature enthusiast who graduated from Middlebury College with a degree in Environmental Studies focusing on Environmental Policy. She is dedicated to uplifting sustainability and environmental justice wherever she is, whether teaching nature-focused arts and crafts to eight-year-olds as a camp counselor or compiling corn yield data as part of a fellowship with the USDA. Kristen is thrilled to spend her fellowship working with the Alaska Center for Energy and Power, researching Arctic energy transitions!



Samantha Sharkoff (she/her) is a recent graduate of the University of Oxford, where she earned her MPhil in Economics. Prior to completing her masters, she worked for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors in Washington, DC, where she contributed to economic research on the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and led the Research Assistant Resource Group. Samantha graduated from the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Science in Economics/Mathematics and a Bachelor of Arts in English. Her pastimes include reading, traveling, hiking, and visiting museums. Samantha is passionate about public service and excited for the upcoming year in Anchorage as a fellow for the Alaska Children's Trust.



Francesca Ciampa (she/they) is originally from coastal Maine and holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Urban Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. She is passionate about community-based advocacy and has previously worked with grassroots fundraising, labor rights, and student organizing groups. Francesca is excited to be in Anchorage this year as the ACLU of Alaska's Legislative Policy Fellow. They are a lover of the outdoors and in their free time enjoy hiking and ice skating as well as yoga, ceramics, and baking projects.



Emma Hamilton (she/her) Deeply curious about energy systems and passionate about storytelling as a tool for education and connection, Emma is excited to join Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP) as their Energy Storyteller Fellow through the Alaska Fellows Program. She recently earned her undergraduate degrees in English (Creative Writing) and Environmental Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As part of her studies, Emma met with people involved in energy systems and conservation in Montana while traveling 700 miles by bicycle across the state, which fueled her interests in clean energy and place-based learning. Emma looks forward to learning more about Alaska's energy ecosystem during her fellowship by collaborating with REAP staff and partners to tell their compelling stories related to REAP's clean energy efforts in Alaska. Emma loves spending her free time outside. Her favorite outdoor activities are nordic skiing, cycling, canoeing, and swimming in cool water. When she needs to hunker down inside, she enjoys painting, learning the guitar, and visible mending clothes. She believes all these activities are better with good company!



Originally from Concord, Massachusetts, **Ayden Nichol** (he/him) graduated this past spring from Bowdoin College. He has worked on multiple political campaigns and spent a year at American Promise, a nationwide nonprofit working to pass a constitutional amendment to limit the power of money in politics. His work experience also includes two summers as a cook, guide, first responder, and host for long-distance hikers at the Appalachian Mountain Club's backcountry huts in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. At Bowdoin, Ayden studied political science and studio art and competed on the varsity cross-country ski team. As part of his studies, he also spent four months in Nepal, studying development and gender issues and learning conversational Nepali. As the Democracy and Civic Engagement Fellow at the Alaska Center, Ayden looks forward to engaging with Alaskan communities to help realize a more just and vibrant future.



Emma Waters (she/her) was born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska. She spent the past three years living in Prague, Czech Republic and Wellington, New Zealand. Emma is completing her fellowship as the Sustainable Tourism Fellow at the Alaska Travel Industry Association. After her time exploring Alaska, central Europe, and New Zealand, she has developed a strong conviction for sustainable travel, which she hopes to support in her home state through her work with ATIA. She enjoys film, volunteerism, hiking, and long train rides. During her time in the fellows program, she is looking forward to sharing her hometown with other fellows and creating community across the state!



Born and raised in Rwanda, **Ornella Bayigamba** (she/her) is an engineer, project manager, and visual artist. She is a sustainability enthusiast with an environmental engineering degree from Yale and experience as a Harvard teaching assistant in sustainable investment. She's worked in a variety of capacities for corporate, government, and nonprofit entities during her career, a highlight of which was structuring the communication plan for Rwanda's engagement at the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit. An emerging voice in the climate space, Ornella has spoken on the intersection of science and policy at the UN and on supply chain strategies with regards to scope 3 emissions at GreenBiz' GreenFin24 conference. In 2024, she began pursuing art professionally; her first museum exhibition opens in January 2025 at the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. Ornella is excited to join the Mayor's team as a constituent relations fellow; she plans to use her broad range of experiences to serve Anchorage's diverse population.

Benjamin Craig (he/him) is originally from New Braunfels, Texas. After graduating from Trinity College in Hartford last May, Ben continued to explore his varied interests and curiosities. He draws inspiration from many perspectives, particularly from anthropologists like Eduardo Kohn, whose ideas emphasize the role of empathy in shaping individual understanding. Ben's academic journey has been one of adaptation and exploration, resulting in works of creative expression and ethnography. He is thrilled to continue this journey as Outreach Director for the Alaska Native Arts Foundation in Anchorage this winter, through the Alaska Fellows Program.



SITKA FELLOWS



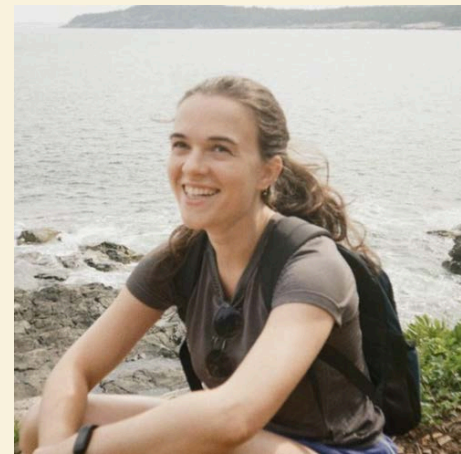
Isabelle Qian (she/her) is from Seattle, Washington, and she graduated with a degree in History from Yale University. While at Yale, Isabelle acted as an editor of the Yale Historical Review, conducted research on Chinese culture and politics at Yale Law School, sang in an acapella group, and wrote short stories in her free time. She enjoys novels, Joni Mitchell, studying foreign languages, and Rainier cherries.



Lennon Claypool (she/her), originally from Virginia, recently graduated from New York University with a degree in social work. She is driven by a passion for using her skills to make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people, particularly through fostering creativity and empowerment. On her days off, Lennon finds solace and inspiration in the outdoors, often pairing this with craft projects that further fuel her artistic expression. Her journey blends her love for art with her professional ambitions in social work, reflecting a compassionate and dedicated individual committed to bringing about positive change in her community.



Haley Goodman (she/her) grew up in Irvington, New York, a small town along the Hudson River. She developed a love for the outdoors in high school and has been driven by a passion for addressing the climate crisis ever since. She attended Middlebury College in Vermont, where she studied Environmental Studies and Geography. In college, she was a whitewater rafting guide, agricultural fellow, and environmental advocate. After graduation, she led community engagement efforts for a community solar developer that provided energy savings, workforce development, and other benefits to low-and-moderate income communities throughout the U.S. In her free time, she loves spending time with friends, singing with her sister, jumping in cold bodies of water, learning guitar, and being outside.



Sadie Cowles (she/her) grew up in Yarmouth, Maine which fostered a deep love of the outdoors. She attended Georgetown University and graduated in the class of 2024 with a major in American Studies and a minor in Chinese. She will be working at Sitkans Against Family Violence (SAFV) and the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence (ANDVSA). In her free time, she enjoys playing guitar, reading, running, swimming, and hiking.



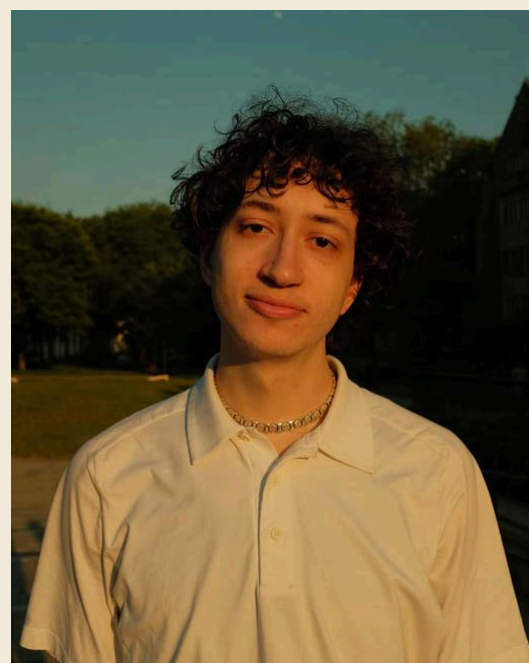


Annie Sidransky (she/her) is a recent graduate of Yale University, where she studied English Language and Literature. At Yale, she was a staff writer for the Yale Daily News and on the board of the Yale Guild of Bookmakers. She loves to read and write, as well as crochet in her free time. Originally from Southern Arizona, she's more than excited to make the move to Sitka and serve as Mt. Edgecumbe High School's Post-Secondary Guide. Having spent most of her undergraduate summers working as a law clerk, Annie hopes to attend law school after her time as a fellow.



Will Salaverry (he/him) hails from the San Francisco Bay Area. He recently graduated from Yale University with a degree in Latin American Studies and a Spanish Language Certificate with a focus in environmental studies. Will adores singing and playing guitar with friends, meeting new people, and being involved in community work in service of more interdependent relationships between humans and the natural world. Will is so excited to be working with OuterCoast as an Alaska Fellow.

Hailing from Monsey, New York, **Marshall Barg** (he/him) was raised in minority filled suburbia surrounded by juxtaposing urban and rural landscapes. He's grateful for continued exposure to diverse experiences while attending Yale University where he achieved a B.S. in Art with a concentration in graphic design. He is a passionate learner, lover of conversation, and empathetic designer looking to use his skills to connect with community both personally and through art. Marshall recently moved to Sitka at the start of the summer prior to the fellows program and has been working as a tour guide. He has also been volunteering and doing research with the Sitka Historical Society, and will start working part time at the Sitka Sentinel while working at MEHS as a Cultural Activities Coordinator. In his free time he loves to go hiking, continue his dozen ongoing art projects, play board games, yap nonsense, live sarcastically, and cook with friends."



Fairbanks fellows

Michael Martins (he/they), a dual Brazilian and American citizen, grew up in Connecticut and moved to Alaska when he turned eighteen. He graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks with a B.S. in mathematics and a minor in Arctic skills, where he led research projects ranging from modeling artificial airglow to investigating the cognitive effects of cold-water scuba diving. When not crunching numbers, Michael is a ski patroller at Ski Land, a “Big” through Big Brothers Big Sisters, and a staunch advocate for public pianos. In his freetime, Michael enjoys indulging his passion for ski mountaineering and practicing piano. He also plays chess. In the future, he hopes to serve the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, one of the nation’s eight uniformed services.



Joseph Rutledge (he/him) is the Tribal Justice and Development Fellow for Tanana Chiefs Conference. Born and raised in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, a small farming town near the Delaware River, Joseph developed a love for nature and community from a young age. He graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor’s degree in History from Gettysburg College, where he also minored in Classics. Before moving to Fairbanks, Joseph worked as a Winter Adventure Guide for the Omni Resort at Mount Washington, leading outdoor excursions in cold weather conditions. He is passionate about travel, the outdoors, and enjoys games, sports, and trivia.



Molly Simons (she/her) hails from Long Island, NY and is a recent graduate of Trinity College, where she studied American Studies and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. At Trinity, Molly was involved with the outdoors community, an a cappella group, and the writing center, meaning she was able to do everything she loves—write, sing, and enjoy the outdoors. Molly is passionate about keeping people safe, focusing much of her undergraduate research on violence against Alaska Native women, Tribal court jurisdiction, and Indigenous jurisprudence. She enjoys combining her academic, professional, and recreational interests and is looking forward to continuing her work with service-based nonprofits as the Marketing and Program Development Fellow at the Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC).

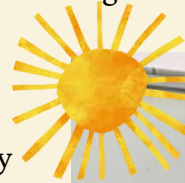




Danna Andrade (she/her) is a dedicated pre-med student from the Big Island of Hawaii. Danna joins AFP as the Energy Learning Design Fellow at the Alaska Center for Energy and Power. With a strong commitment to sustainable practices and community empowerment, she focuses on ensuring that all communities, especially marginalized populations, have the resources necessary to succeed. Danna holds a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and has extensive experience in education, rural communities, and health. She has collaborated with local organizations and government agencies to develop initiatives that promote place based learning, community engagement, and equitable access to healthcare in rural communities. She hopes AFP will provide new insight to her background in rural community research and looks forward to embracing a new culture and life in Fairbanks, Alaska.

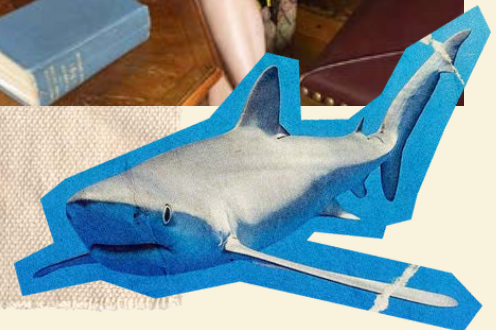
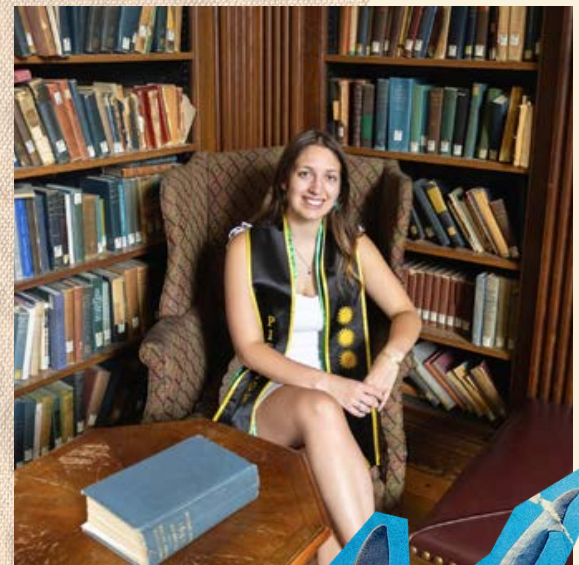


Julia Cheesman (she/her) is a recent graduate of Trinity College where she studied Environmental Science. Originally from Plymouth, Massachusetts, Julia enjoys being outdoors, running, film photography, baking, and travel. At Trinity, she was a part of the radio station on campus (WRTC), which allowed her to explore her love for all genres of music. Through her studies, Julia became invested in the world of geology and sustainability. To combine her interests, her senior thesis focused on creating a model that mimicked the development of soil magnetic properties to better understand the time it takes for loessic sediments to develop. She is very excited to be on board with the Arctic Coastal Mapping Project at INE-UAF this fall, continuing in the world of research.



Autumn Shelton (she/her) is a recent graduate of Princeton University where she studied anthropology and archaeology. Her primary research interests centered around rural American cultures, crafts, and arts. In particular, her senior thesis research analyzed festival culture in her hometown area of the Ozarks - a region that encompasses southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas. Outside of academia, Autumn has worked as a writer at a Missouri newspaper, finished a farm apprenticeship in rural Maine, and volunteered at her local library's children's summer reading program. In her free time, Autumn enjoys reading, baking coconut cream pies, and hand-building pottery. She is excited to be this year's Community Outreach Fellow for The Folk School Fairbanks.

Liz Carter (she/her) is a recent graduate from Yale University, who majored in Environmental Studies with a focus in Biodiversity and Conservation. She is originally from a petrochemical refinery town in coastal Texas, and her time there inspired her to pursue a career focused on environmental conservation and protection for at-risk communities and environments. Liz focused her undergraduate studies on marine conservation, her senior thesis analyzing population estimation methodologies for bottom-dwelling shark species in South Africa. As a Climate Science Communication Fellow at the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy, she hopes to explore how science can be much more useful when it is accessible to communities at risk and policymakers who can make a difference. She is excited to spend her time in Fairbanks enjoying the natural landscape and meeting new people. In her free time, she enjoys writing, hiking, running, and spending time at the beach.



Leah Winters (they/them), from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, has always balanced their artistic pursuits alongside a strong commitment to social justice. Growing up, they attended a performing arts middle and high school, specializing in cello performance. Their interest in activism began in high school, driven by the 2016 election and the 2018 Parkland massacre, leading to their involvement in the organization of several protests. These experiences inspired Leah to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Trinity College, with a focus on human rights. They simultaneously played significant roles in multiple political campaigns, including as Deputy Data Director for the 2022 Florida Democratic Coordinated Campaign, where they led efforts to safeguard voter protection and electoral integrity. Leah is excited to join the Cold Climate Housing Research Center as their Public Policy Fellow and to contribute to research regarding energy-efficient housing policies in Alaska. Their passion for social justice and the arts as a musician and vocalist makes them eager to immerse themselves in Fairbanks' artistic community. Following their fellowship, Leah plans to prepare for law school, aspiring for a career in human rights law.



JUNEAU FELLOWS



Natalie Marrewa (she/her) recently graduated from the University of California, San Diego, where she obtained a B.A. in Political Science with a concentration in Public Policy and double minored in Urban Planning and Climate Change Studies. Natalie is passionate about the intersection of science and policy, community-based solutions, and place-based design. In her free time, she enjoys reading, cooking, sketching, painting, and getting outside any way she can. Natalie is thrilled to be working as an Education Fellow at the Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau and cannot wait to soak up all of the lessons and experiences ahead of her.



Alexandra Sutton (she/her) is a recent graduate of the University of Notre Dame, where she majored in Political Science and minored in Middle Eastern & North African Studies and Business Economics. Originally from Ocala, Florida, she has a love for all things outdoors and never turns down an opportunity to fish, bike, hike, or kayak down Florida's blue springs to see the manatees! She is excited to join AFP's Juneau cohort as a Public Education Fellow for the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA). Through her studies and experiences, Alexandra has cultivated a passion for public policy advocacy and using the law to uplift communities. She is eager to support Alaska's educational leaders to ensure all students have access to high-quality public education. In her free time, you can find her practicing yoga, reading, or playing with her dog Finn.



Stephane Granato (he/him) is a graduate of Georgetown's School of Foreign Service passionate about the intersection of environmental policy, Latin America, and international affairs. For his undergraduate thesis, Stephane explored the design and impact of forest carbon credit programs such as REDD+, identifying key characteristics that make projects successful. He is also the co-founder of Georgetown REUSE, a nonprofit that reduces waste and improves accessibility by selling donated dorm items and clothes at affordable prices on Georgetown's campus. Stephane is fluent in French and proficient in Spanish. Outside of work and academics, Stephane enjoys running, spending time in nature, and cooking. He is very excited to contribute to the Southeast Conference this year in Juneau, Alaska.





Nisha Marino (she/her) is originally from the San Francisco Bay Area in California. She recently graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a degree in Political Science and a minor in Latin American Studies. In college, Nisha worked in and on a variety of justice-oriented clubs and committees, and co-created an initiative for better anti-racist education at Bryn Mawr. Nisha is passionate about education, justice, community, and the ocean. In her free time, you can find her reading, baking, dancing, and spending time outdoors. She is excited to join the Juneau cohort as the Communication Fellow for the Coalition for Education Equity (CEE), and is looking forward to enjoying what the future holds.

Charlotte Moore (she/her) graduated this past spring from Boston College with a B.S. in Neuroscience and a minor in Managing for Social Impact and Environmental Sustainability. During her time there, she was actively involved in various environmental clubs and sports teams, where she developed a passion for sustainability and community engagement. She also has a strong interest in entrepreneurship, education, and activism, and spent her summer volunteering with a nonprofit focused on promoting local green action. Growing up in Lexington, Massachusetts, Charlotte is grateful to have spent much of her youth outdoors exploring New England, and is looking forward to all of the new adventures ahead of her in Juneau. In her free time, Charlotte enjoys traveling, reading, running, and meeting new people. She's very excited to be part of the Alaska Fellows Program and is working with the University of Alaska's Career Services team as their Marketing and Program Development Fellow.



Meet **Sam Taishoff** (he/they). After his youth spent in McLean, VA near Washington DC, Sam desired a winter with much more snow. Naturally, he went on to Trinity College in Hartford, CT, only to find their moderate winters much like those back home. Still, he had fun up there, becoming twice President of Chapel Council, performing in musicals, resurrecting the Trinity Fencing Club, and graduating with a double major of Mechanical Engineering and Russian Studies. Beyond Trinity, Sam's second home is that of Camp Rodef Shalom where he went from camper, to Science Specialist, to Woodworking Instructor, to the Program Director for the summer of 2024! Now Sam finds himself in Juneau where he's sure to have his wish for a snowy winter (hopefully) more than granted. Sam is filled with joy to be a part of the Alaska Fellows Program! He is working with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska as a Community Coordinator for Juneau.



What have Anchorage Fellows been up to?



Sunday Evening Fellow Dinners



Turkey Trot



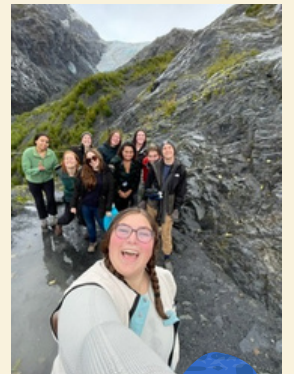
With Mary Peltola



Costumes Galore!



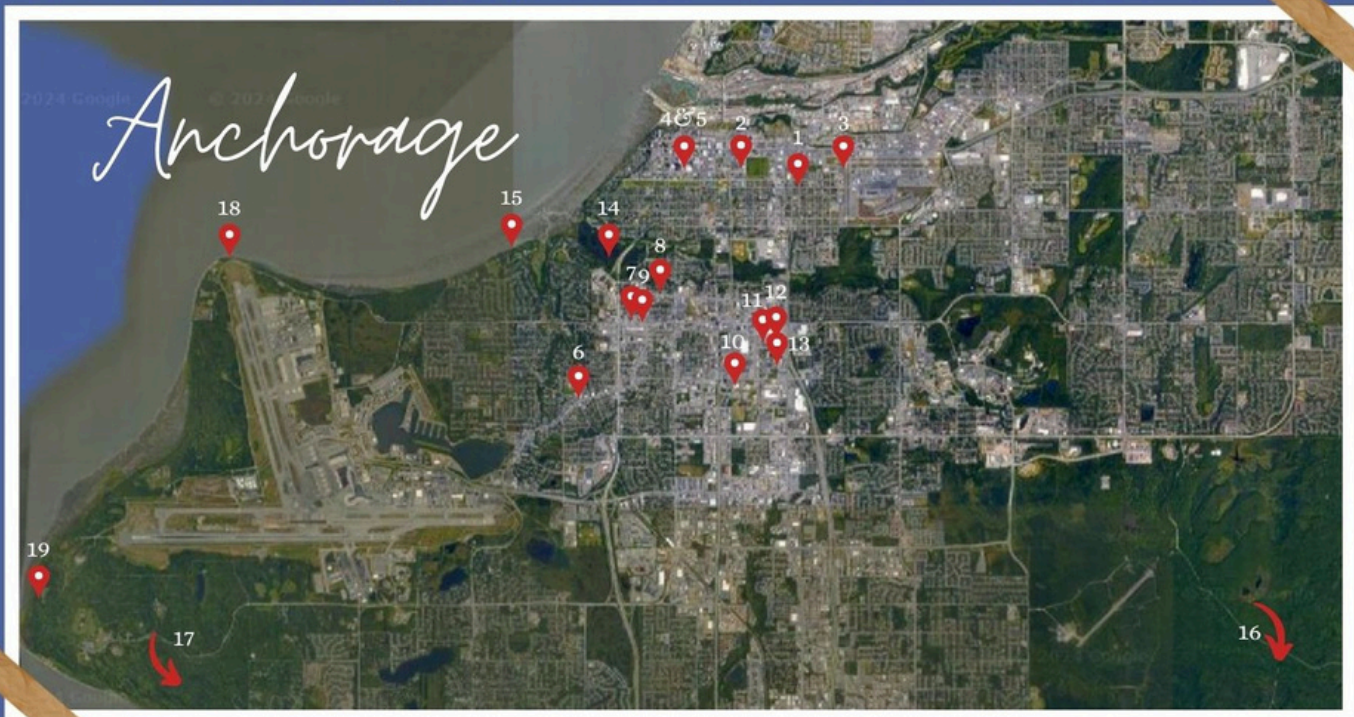
A Trip to Seward



Snowy Talkeetna



Our Favorite Places to Spend Time in



by Francesca Ciampa

Downtown

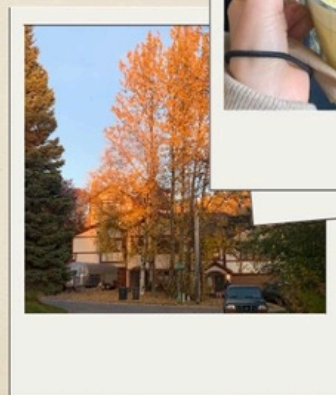
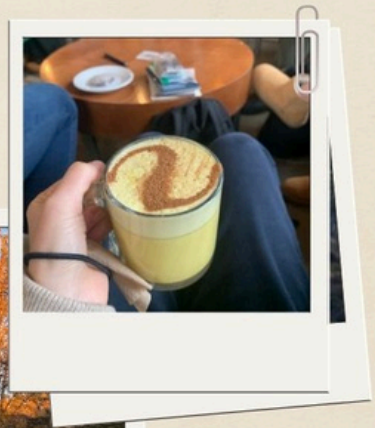
- 1** Anchorage Museum *free events on first Fridays*
- 2** Alaska Center for the Performing Arts *Arctic Entries storytelling shows*
- 3** Myrnas *gay bar!*
- 4** Fire Island Bakery *great pastries*
- 5** That Feeling Co. *café & plant store*

Midtown

- 6** Writers Block *café & bookstore, open mic nights*
- 7** Concoction *best bagels*
- 8** Koots *bar*
- 9** Title Wave *new & used bookstore*
- 10** The library *third floor behind the genealogy section or behind the roman section have the best windows*
- 11** Wild Scoops *ice cream*
- 12** Black Cup *coffee, good for working*
- 13** Alaska Rock Gym *climbing & bouldering!*

Nature Spots

- 14** Westchester Lagoon *skating in winter!*
- 15** Coastal Trail *walking, jogging, biking, skiing, etc.*
- 16** Flattop mountain *hike, sunrise*
- 17** Potter Marsh *nature walk*
- 18** Point Woronzof *sunsets*
- 19** Kincaid Park *skiing, walking, sunsets*



ANCHORAGE FELLOWS



COASTAL TRAIL	SEE A MOOSE	DO CARTWHEELS IN THE SNOW	BERRY PICKING AT ARCTIC VALLEY	SPEND EVERY FIRST FRIDAY AT THE MUSEUM
HIKE FLATTOP	VISIT THE BEACHED WHALE	LOSE TRIVIA AT BEARTOOTH	BECOME A SUNDOG GROUPIE	DO A POLAR PLUNGE
RUN INTO YOUR COWORKERS ON A NIGHT OUT	HIKE AT EKLUTNA LAKE		DOWNTOWN BY MALCKLEMORE SING-ALONG	WIN FAT BEAR WEEK
ICE SKATING ON THE LAGOON	LEARN HOW TO PRONOUNCE POINT WORONZOF	GET OUT OF BED FOR THE NORTHERN LIGHTS	DEVELOP A FEAR OF THE MUDFLATS	GO CONTRA DANCING
BUY VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTS AND/OR HAPPY LIGHT	SKATEBOARD DOWN A SNOWY HILL	SKI HATCHER'S PASS	FALL SKIING DOWN A HILL	SLIP (AND FALL) ON ICY PAVEMENT

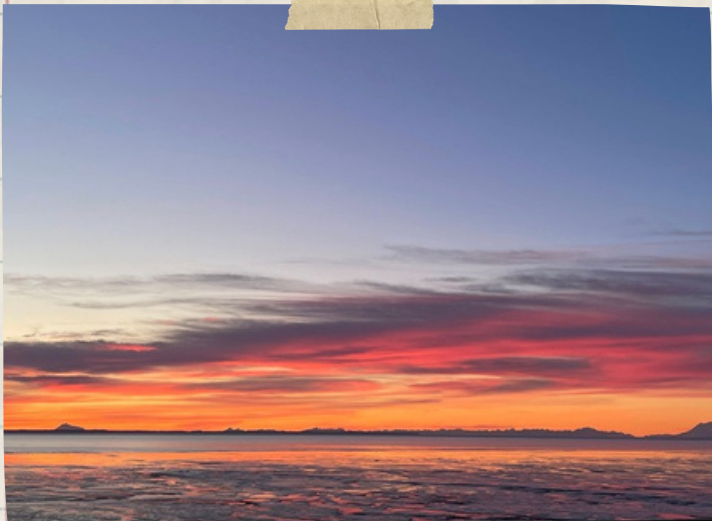
TOP 5 SUNSETS



BY KRISTEN

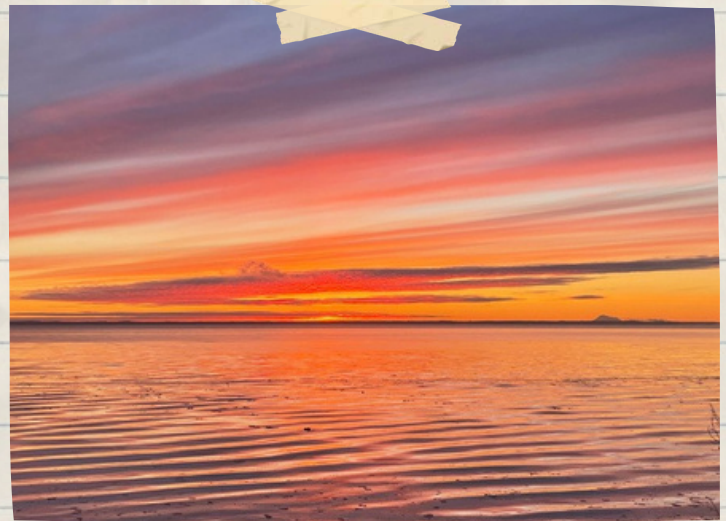
ANYONE WHO FOLLOWS ME ON INSTAGRAM KNOWS THAT I AM A FREQUENT SUNSET ENJOYER. ANYTIME THE SKY PUTS ON A PERFORMANCE, YOU CAN EXPECT TO SEE AN INSTAGRAM STORY FROM ME POP UP 20 MINUTES LATER. WITH COUNTLESS SUNSETS UNDER MY BELT, HERE ARE THE TOP 5 SUNSETS OF MY TIME IN ANCHORAGE SO FAR!

#1 LIFE ALTERING.



THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I WATCHED THE SUNSET FROM THE SNOWPLOW TRAIN OFF THE SEWARD HIGHWAY, AND ITS THE REASON I KEEP GOING BACK. MUD FLATS HAVE NEVER LOOKED BETTER.

#2 THE NEWS WAS FILMING THIS SUNSET

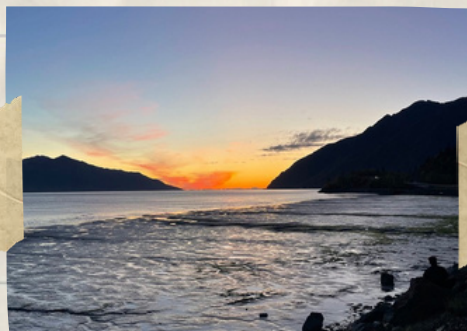


AS I STOOD IN THE COLD, FREEZING MY FINGERS OFF FROM TAKING MY GLOVES OFF TO TAKE PICTURES, A REPORTER FROM THE NEWS CRASHED MY SPOT TO TAKE CLIPS OF THE SUNSET.

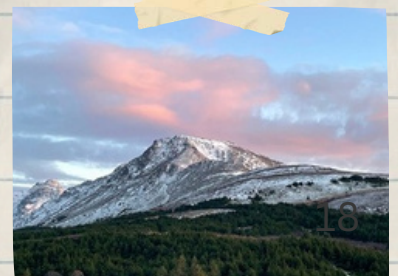
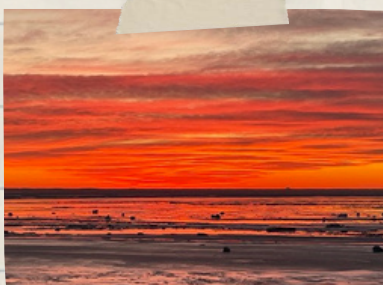
#3 A SIGN TO ALWAYS PULL OVER FOR THE SUNSET



#4 IN GREAT COMPANY



#5 BEST VIEW OF ANC



\$5 MOVIE REVIEWS

BY HOLLIS AND KRISTEN

GLADIATOR II



Consider me entertained. While *Gladiator II* lacked quoteworthy performances from Russell Crowe and Joaquin Phoenix, there were just enough men in skirts to hold my attention. Joseph Quinn served just the right amount of freak but was unfortunately fighting for screentime with a monkey. But, I'll still give this movie a thumbs up purely because of the Paul Mescal face zoom-ins and the sharks.

WICKED

In 2016, I saw *Wicked* on Broadway, and my life changed for good (I spiraled into one of my most insufferable phases where I almost exclusively listened to show tunes). Although I have left my theater kid in the past, she lives in me still and seeing *Wicked* on the big screen has woken her from her slumbers. It was fantastical and brought life to Oz that is not possible on the stage. It was a beautiful movie adaptation of a classic musical, with some technical issues I'm willing to ignore in the name of joy and whimsy.



WE LIVE IN TIME

I heard mixed reviews about this movie, but as someone who cried for at least 75% of the movie, it got 5 stars from me. It was a touching love story between two very hot actors that makes me want to go stand in the street until I have a "you hit me with your car" meet cute. More than that, it was a story of trying to make the most of the short time we have. Like any good movie, it made me immediately want to call my mom and tell her I love her.



SATURDAY NIGHT


Did you know you only have 30 minutes? 30, yes 30. If you can't attend a movie at the theater because you constantly need to check the minute marker at the bottom of the Netflix screen, Saturday Night was the perfect opportunity for you to spend \$20 on mediocre popcorn and not regret it. Between characters constantly shouting out minutes till showtime, Dylan O'Brien wearing short-shorts and a wife pleaser, and Cousin Greg making an appearance as a puppeteer, Jason Reitman delivers a chaotic comedy that had me feeling electrically coked out for 90 minutes - don't worry it's the 70s, it's normal.






ICEBREAKERS SEASON OVERVIEW

By HOLLIS LONG



Basketball changed forever on October 10th, 2024. The Boys & Girls Club was buzzing with excitement the night Coach Hollis and her new team, the Ice Breakers, stepped onto the court. With four vets (6th graders) and five rookies (5th graders), Coach Hollis was feeling good about their odds. They had had an amazing pre-season (2 1-hour practices), and the team was feeling good in their new jerseys. However, the opponents, the Green Knights, were all vets and it showed - they knew how to make layups.

As the warmup clock counted down, Coach Hollis' starting shooting guard Tikiun told her that they were "cooked," but Coach assured her the Ice Breakers were running the kitchen that night. The game was brutal. Back and forth, the teams ran down the court, but the Green Knights' experience began to show, and by halftime, the Ice Breakers were trailing by ten points. The team despaired on the bench, but Coach told them to get their heads in the game. As the famous basketball star Troy Bolton said, "This is the last time to get it right. This is the last chance to make it all night. History will know who we are. We gotta show what we're all about, work together." The Ice Breakers picked up their heads and grabbed some balls to take shots before the new quarter, and Coach Hollis' star point-guard, Baxter, stopped her to say, "Don't worry, Coach. I'm cooking tonight." And cook he did.



With the help of his teammates, Baxter tied up the score in the third quarter, and the battle for the lead began. Coach Hollis ran up and down the sideline as her team played better than the Miami Heat in the 2013 NBA Finals Round 6. Parents stood in the three-tier bleachers and yelled encouragement, as well as “Come on, ref!” The game was tied, with less than 20 seconds to go, and the Green Knights were on offense. Coach Hollis told her team to “D Up” and “Become Walls,” but one Green Knight was too crafty and shot a jumper from way downtown. Swish! The Ice Breakers passed the ball into Baxton and he sprinted down the court for a layup, but the buzzer rang out. 18-16. Final Score.

Coach Hollis rolled up her sleeves, ready to fight the refs for their jank calls and prepared herself for damage control with her team, but the Ice Breakers came back to the bench smiling. Giacalone told her, “It’s okay, Coach. We have a game next week.” And that’s when Coach Hollis realized: 1) She might be too invested in a children’s sport and 2) the Ice Breakers would win another day.



On Mending

Emma Hamilton

For my birthday in September, my mother mailed me a book titled, “Creative Mending: Beautiful Darning, Patching and Stitching Techniques” by Hikaru Noguchi, along with a darning loom kit. I have kept a threaded needle close to me since then. From a pair of holey wool socks to a snagged base layer shirt, my hands have been busy sewing colorful stitches through my well-worn garments, usually while watching “Sex And The City” or “Survivor” with the Anchorage fellows.

One of the most useful and exciting stitches I have learned so far is the honeycomb stitch. The honeycomb is ideal for athletic clothing, but I did not know this when I began stitching them over almost every snag on my purple base layer shirt. I thought they looked cool, like sunbursts, and sometimes, depending on the color of thread, a virus. Although I failed to read the fine print of my mending book, things worked out anyway.

The dictionary that rests among the many treasures on the shelf in Virginia Court will tell you that to “mend,” means “to make repairs or restoration to; fix; or to reform or correct; or to improve in health, heal.” When I first set out to mend my clothing, I set out to cover up, or fix their snags and holes. But diving into the mending process has convinced me that we must consider a fourth definition: “to make new or transform.”

For the past few years, my purple base layer shirt usually took the back hanger of my closet. The shirt was still functional--it kept me plenty warm during the winter in the Upper Midwest--but it somehow earned more and more snags with each year. I did not love the way it looked. So the shirt hung cold in my closet, and I only wore it on days when my more desirable base layer was dirty. I did not think to do anything about the shirt until I started learning mending techniques. As it turned out, my purple shirt became the perfect canvas to test out many of the visible mending techniques I learned from the book my mother gifted me.

And as I mentioned earlier, the honeycomb stitch proved to be the most favorable of all the techniques I had been practicing on my purple shirt. I repeated the technique for weeks, transforming what used to be snags into bright honeycombs. I often found myself itching for the next opportunity to stitch the next honeycomb onto my shirt, and our group’s regular check-ins with Carrie Bradshaw and Jeff Probst helped me scratch that itch. The shirt that once took the back hanger of my closet could no longer leave my hands. Now, I cannot help but feel warm when I wear my purple shirt because I know the care, creativity, and joy that went into mending it. I also think it looks plain fun.



But more importantly, the mending process has made visible a method for embracing change in a world that is always changing. I do not think I am alone in sometimes feeling upset when I realize that things are no longer how they used to be. Take the story of my shirt as a small example. For a while, I lamented how my shirt changed in its materiality. But, as soon as I leaned into the path of mending, of agency and opportunity, my perception of the shirt changed.

Tambourine darning



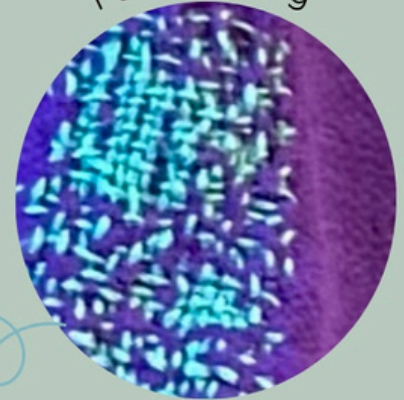
Through mending and living this year, I am reminded that new opportunities arise when we consider new things and perspectives, or when we try to mend, or make something new, out of what has been well-worn. I have learned a lot about this method from my fellows, too. Many of us left our familiar homes and relationships for a new place and a new community. Over the past few months, it has been exciting to see each of us try on new relationships, hobbies, and jobs with care, joy, and creativity.

Basket darning



We have been busy bees. From shuffling up new mountains to trying on new skis, we have been creating new, beautiful, and growing honeycombs of ourselves and our communities wherever we land. I hope this newsletter gives you some insight into what we have been mending together over the past few months. I cannot wait to see what sweetness we all mend together in the new year.

Palm darning



I am threading the eye
with colorful hues,
and with each honeycomb stitch,
I am creating something new.

I am wondering, how
did my shirt get so frayed?
How my life might look
if I only stayed?

I am threading the eye
with colorful hues,
and with each honeycomb stitch,
I am creating something new.

TOP 10 THINGS I'VE LEARNED FROM MY FIRST FEW MONTHS IN ALASKA



BY SAMANTHA SHARKOFF

1 Moose are perhaps some of the most dangerous animals out there that you'll actually encounter.

Unless you're in the far north where the polar bears live, moose might be your biggest threat. Who would've thought, right? The cute, horned mammals, emblematic of the last frontier, are actually some of the most dangerous creatures you'll encounter in Alaska mostly because of their sheer size. Oh, and did you know they might charge you if they feel threatened? I witnessed one such event with my own eyes by Westchester Lagoon: a young moose charged a cyclist, who promptly jumped off his bike and reared it on its hind wheel to defend himself. Incidentally it did work, but please note this is not proper moose protocol; it is simply best to avoid them when at all possible. We opted instead to walk on the frozen ice of the lagoon rather than risk this cyclist's fate. And of course, if you find yourself in the unlucky position of being charged by a moose, it's best to quickly run or jump to the side, as moose are notoriously bad at turning. So even if you may be tempted to chase after an opportunity to see a moose, it's probably best to remember that they are still wild animals, and when spooked, can be extremely dangerous.

2 The art of falling down and how to get up again.

To be honest, I have not yet mastered this one, but when I do, I plan to elucidate the best way to fall - or better yet, how to avoid it altogether (this option may not really be an option, though, if you're learning new things like how to ski). Essentially, a bruised butt is par for the course when it comes to life in Alaska - even as early as autumn. Mud is ubiquitous, so any outdoor excursions are best done in hiking boots - or any shoes for that matter with sufficient grip. This is not a fail safe, but it will make a big difference. And of course, there is ice and snow come late October. You might just fall walking around outside, but there are also tools to prevent (or minimize) this: ice spikes or "yaktrax" - attachable soles to the bottom of your shoes that add a little more grip. So far, just buying hiking boots and yaktrax has saved my tailbone from further bruising. However, some injuries may simply be a rite of passage, as when learning to ski, skate ski, or "wild" ice skate for the first time. It's best just to embrace the bruises; or, if like me, you're tired of it being painful to sit down, maybe it's time to invest in some kind of butt pad. I'll do some investigation and get back to you on that.



Alaska is, in fact, part of the United States (at least Anchorage is).

Yes, you read that right. Anchorage has a lot of the luxuries we are used to in the lower-48, including Target and Costco. It does not, however, have Chick-fil-A or In-N-Out. So, you win some, you lose some. You can, however, find yoga and pilates studios, artisanal cheese shops, and even fancier restaurants reminiscent of those in big cities like Los Angeles or New York (I'm thinking Whisky & Ramen). There are also vibrant indie music and jazz scenes, a gorgeous library, and free nights at the museum. I can't say the same for any of the other placements, though; they'll have to let you know about their sites.



The Northern Lights are not the way they are in the movies.

At least not in Anchorage, they're not; the aurora borealis, as viewed from the city, tends to be on the dimmer side - though if you're lucky, you might still see them dance. I've heard they can be more vibrant further north, though - but that's a question for the Fairbanks folks. Nonetheless, they are a sight to behold and well-worth any trek to the city outskirts for a better view.



Caribou and reindeer are essentially the same animal.

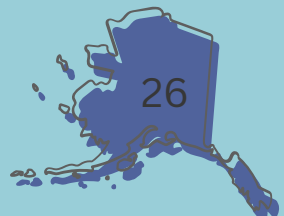
Reindeer are just domesticated caribou; caribou are wild reindeer. Also, their fur is apparently hollow which makes it extremely warm and soft to pet. I highly recommend the reindeer farm in Palmer - don't worry, the reindeer there are strictly friends, not food.



The biggest tourist attraction this season is a beached whale.

Everyone and their mother and grandmother has been on the coastal trail the past two weeks as they hope to catch a glimpse of a juvenile fin whale beached on the mudflats. For better or worse, it was dead on arrival with the cause of death still unknown. I was among the first to see it before people began posting about it on social media. I was on one of my usual lagoon/coastal walks when we saw the figure in the distance. Although I was apprehensive about venturing closer to see it for many reasons (including but not limited to the danger of the mudflats, the possibility of smell, and sheer morbidity), I eventually did trek across the frozen mudflats to get a closer look. Ultimately, the feelings I have are mixed: on one hand, this might be the only time I get to see such a creature up close - and what a magnificent creature it is. On the other hand, there's something deeply depressing about seeing a corpse, and even more disconcerting is watching people smile as they pose for photos with it. To me, death requires reverence, an honor for the life that was and the beauty that remains.

The whale, as far as I know, is still there on the mudflats, now frozen solid to the ground and hacked apart by biologists and perhaps others: a depressing attraction and a sobering reminder of what's at stake for the future.



7

Alaska Natives are resilient people.

From subsistence living in harsh arctic environments to surviving colonization at the hands of Russians and Americans, Alaska Natives' ability to not only survive but hold onto their identities is an incredible testament to human resilience. During my time in Alaska, I've had the privilege to hear Jim LaBelle, a boarding school survivor, speak - stories which forever shaped my perspective and honed a deep appreciation for the legacy of generational trauma. I've learned how Alaska Natives make art out of salmon skin, porcupine quills, mammoth tusks, antlers, shells, walrus whiskers, and fur - any resource has the potential to be transformed into jewelry, clothing, or art. The ability to create something beautiful from what little has been given, whether a story or a pair of earrings, exemplifies the perseverance of life.

8

Alaska, though big geographically, is small.

You'll meet people who know people you know. You'll probably walk in the same circles as influential politicians and government officials. If you've met them once, chances are you'll meet them again. If you're lucky, you may even catch Lisa Murkowski on the Coastal Trail, or Mary Peltola at 49th State Brewery. But chances are, you probably know someone who already knows them.

9

The light exposure is worse in the UK than it is in Anchorage.

I'm willing to bet Anchorage gets more sun than the United Kingdom and that the overcast days are brighter here than they are there. That has made all the difference to me. Also, did you know the days are not that much shorter in Anchorage than they are in London? Long story short, seasonal depression is real and it's not the cold so much as the darkness that gets to you. But happy lamps work and if you overload yourself with vitamin D, you'll probably be ok. And oh, buy a hatch alarm clock if you can; the gradual brightness as you wake is a total game changer. And of course, get outside when you can. Some of the most spectacular sunsets I've seen to date are the winter sunsets in Anchorage out on the coastal trail or by the lagoon. It's also amazing how much better you'll feel after attempting a ski, even if you fall a million times, or just freezing outside for a walk.

10

Challenge yourself to try new things, especially if you're scared to do them.

This is not an entirely new thing I've learned, but something that has been reinforced by my time here in Alaska: do the things you are most scared to do because they are by far the most rewarding.

I've done many things in my life: I've moved across the country and across an ocean, traveled to Siberia, bungee-jumped, and even survived a minor horse stampede (the latter I don't recommend). But moving to Alaska was a whole new kind of terrifying for me, in a way which moving to Europe was not: it was the unknown, the pure mythology of the "last frontier" which both excited and terrified me.

And wow, am I glad I came here. I've done hikes I've only ever dreamed of, seen animals I've only previously seen in captivity, eaten moose jerky and reindeer sausage, shared my poetry at a spoken word night, and learned how to ski (ish). I'm excited for adventures yet to come: perhaps dog sledding and glacier climbing, or ice fishing! If you're reading this, take this as a sign to be brave: make the move, try something you're not sure you'll like. Chances are it just might change your life.

FINDING COMMUNITY AND PURPOSE IN ALASKA AFTER LOSS

Tamika Harris

Moving to Anchorage, Alaska allowed me the space to understand what losing my mother in 2023 means for my life. As much as I have been learning about the unique state of Alaska, I learn even more about myself and what my life can be after the most significant loss I have faced. I knew I would carry the weight of grieving my mother's death into my journey in my new home, but I could never anticipate the lessons I would learn from my time in Alaska.

Grief has Opened a World of Connection to People Mourning Departed Loved Ones

A core tenet of the Alaska Fellows Program is living intentionally in community. I have found this in obvious and surprising places: community among my housemates, my colleagues, and among the bereaved. Everywhere I go, I now find connection in the beautiful kinship of people growing their lives after loss. I have found this in my weekly grief and loss learning circle where I am privileged to be in fellowship with people who know my name and share my experience. People who I can learn from. And I find this connection among new friends whose compassion keeps me uplifted.

Life is Temporary and that Makes it Beautiful

Witnessing fall transition into winter over the past three months, I am reminded of an impossible to forget lesson: the impermanence of life is what makes it precious. After experiencing the death of a loved one, we are confronted with our own mortality. And with that confrontation we are faced with defining our purpose. Mine is to live my life intentionally honoring my mother by honoring my own happiness. I am grateful for the many opportunities Alaska has afforded me to discover my newly defined purpose. Novel experiences, like cartwheeling in a glacier outwash field, rejuvenate my youthful spirit and fill me with joy. But I truly find the most meaningful moments are born of embracing the magic of the everyday.

The Beauty of the Alaskan Landscape Connects me to my Mom

I have learned that I can find my mom's presence anywhere in the world. Back home in Georgia, I would be reminded of her whenever I saw a North American Cardinal and a Yellow Swallowtail Butterfly. While it was initially heartbreaking to learn that I am thousands of miles away from encountering these symbols, that does not make me any further from finding my mom in the landscape.

I wrote the following poem to illustrate how the Alaskan landscape is restorative and keeps me connected to her:

Make your presence known to me

Kiss my head with warm sunlight
Tuck me under blankets of stars at night

Deliver me a blissful breeze
Sent dancing through the birch trees

Reveal yourself to me

Appear in the Aurora above
Envelope me in your love

Send feathered messengers in the air
Let me know that you're still there

A Final Message

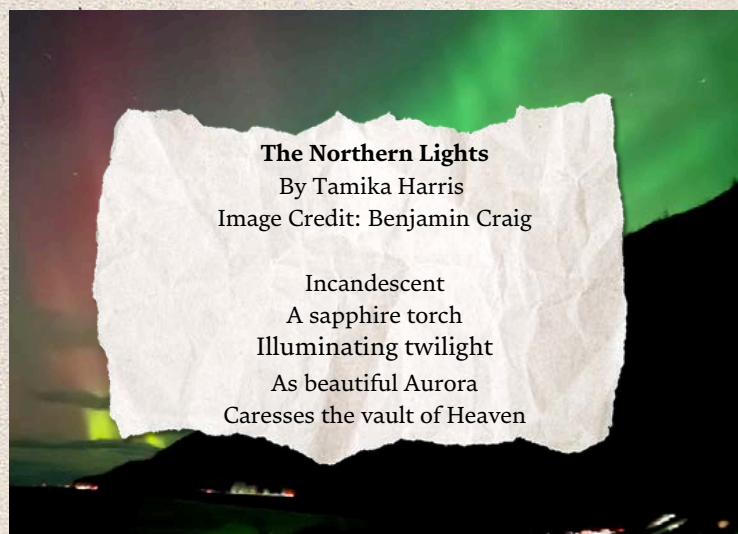
If you are reading this while rebuilding your life after loss my heart goes out to you. Adjusting to your new reality without the presence of your loved one is a feat that deserves to be acknowledged. Continuing your life's journey accompanied by grief is exceedingly painful. But know that joy is still in your future. Even when it is bittersweet without your loved one to share in it, you deserve to fully experience happiness.



An impromptu memorial service I had on top of the frozen Westchester Lagoon.



My mom's final painting, a mantra that gave her comfort in strength before her surgery.



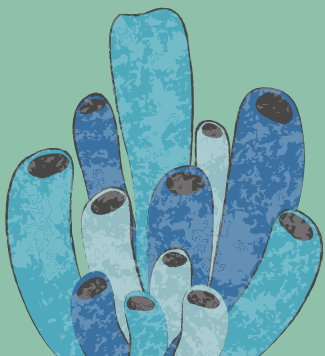
The Northern Lights

By Tamika Harris

Image Credit: Benjamin Craig

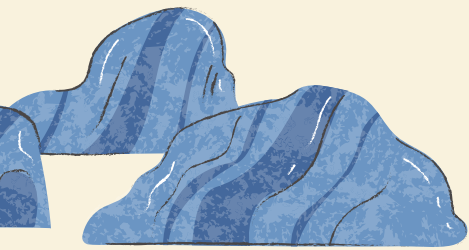
Incandescent
A sapphire torch
Illuminating twilight
As beautiful Aurora
Caresses the vault of Heaven

WHAT HAVE SITKA FELLOWS BEEN UP TO?



a Sitka Fall





A TASTE OF THE SITKA FELLOWS

Greetings, good people, from the Alaska Fellows of Sitka. The seven of us have loved nestling into 700 Etolin together and working our way into the vibrant life of our small island town. We wanted to give an update on our time here so far. They say the quickest way to someone's heart is through their stomach and we're going to prove that old adage right. Inspired by the dishes each of us rely on, we'll be taking you on a gastronomically themed tour of our unique AFP journeys. Fire up your burners and let's get ready to eat!

HALEY, A COMMUNITY CHEF:

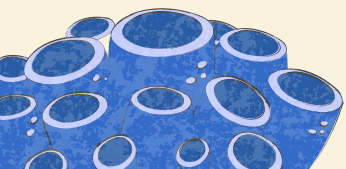
Food Item: Sourdough Chocolate Chip Banana Bread

Ingredients/recipe:

- 3 medium overripe bananas
- 1 egg
- 1tsp vanilla extract
- 80 g melted butter
- 100 g sourdough starter
- 200 g AP flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 100 g brown sugar
- 50 g white sugar (optional)
- Pinch salt
- 20 g golden syrup to brush on after baking
- 1-1.5 bars chocolate



- Step one: preheat oven to 350F
- Step two: mash the overripe bananas with the back of a fork until relatively smooth.
- Step three: lightly beat egg and vanilla together and add that to the smooth banana.
- Step four: in a small saucepan heat butter over low heat and then add to the egg/banana mixture.
- Step five: now add the sourdough starter to the mixture, mix thoroughly.
- Step six: mix the rest of the dry ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Step seven: Add the rest of the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, stir until smooth. Add chopped chocolate/chocolate chips while mixing.
- Step eight: pour mixture into a buttered loaf tin.
- Step nine: bake at 350 for around 1 hour. Baking time will vary depending on size of tin and oven.
- Step ten: the banana bread is baked when you can put a skewer in and it comes out clean.
- Step eleven: brush the banana bread with golden syrup for a shiny glaze.
- Step twelve: allow to cool for 30 minutes before removing the bread from the tin.



Our first Fellow up is Haley. Simultaneously the mom of the house and the social butterfly, she has filled our fellows group with light and magic. Always the ideas woman, Haley came up with the idea for our quintessential medieval night party and our group Halloween costume. She makes friends left and right throughout Sitka and is kind enough to mention that she has six cool housemates who also love meeting new people. Outside of her work with Spruce Root Haley can be found attending the Unitarian church, leading meditation circles, going to yoga, and trying new Sitka activities.

On top of her winning charm, Haley is a true creative. She is a wonderful singer, dancer, and baker. This third area of skill brings us to her food, the classic banana bread. Haley has made this for many a new friend, fellows party, and response to random bananas aging on the shelf. This dish is emblematic of Haley, using her creativity as a vehicle to bring people together. Everyone grab a slice and sit around the table, Haley wants us all to get to know each other and make lasting friendships, we'd be wise to listen.

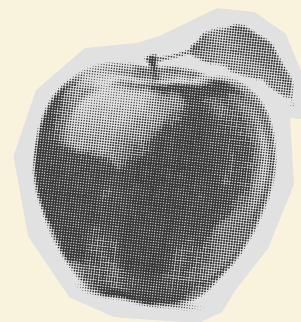


Lennon, a lot going on but not getting lost in the sauce:

Food Item: Applesauce

Ingredients/recipe:

- Applesauce
- Step one: open applesauce
- Step two: put in bowl
- Step three: turn on an episode of Glee and enjoy.



As one of the Mt. Edgecumbe Fellows, Lennon arrived a few weeks before most of the house. She got to work learning the town right away and by the time the four newbies piled into 700 Etolin Lennon could tell us what was what: how to get the best deals at White E (the local thrift shop), all the trails to walk, and what the difference is between distinct types of salmon. She's beloved by the students she serves at her job and has a unique talent for wrangling high schoolers while remaining a trusted face. She often has to employ that skill at home, keeping us and some of our BS in line but we love her for it.

A night shift worker, Lennon's days are filled with trips to the library, volunteering at the aforementioned thrift shop, and looking out at the ocean from the edge of Whale Park. She has become fast friends with a wonderful constellation of local Sitkans and transplants (Americorps, JV, etc.). You would think with all of this on her plate that she might be overwhelmed, but somehow she still finds time for quiet moments and calling her wonderful girlfriend Jules who visited the fellows earlier this year. Much like her beloved applesauce, Lennon is a balanced and comforting presence in the house.



Annie, the Deceptively Simple Food of Champions:

Food Item: Bread and Butter

Ingredients/recipe:

- Bread (preferably crusted but honestly whatever's on sale)
 - Butter
-
- Step one: spread butter on bread
 - Step two: eat.



Annie is one of the hardest working fellows we have in Sitka. During her time here she has worked at Mt. Edgecumbe High School as the college and career fellows. Alongside her official work, Annie studied for and earned an amazing score on her LSAT and has applied to many amazing law schools as she embarks on her promising legal journey. To power her incredible mind Annie has been using a simple and yummy bread and butter combination to fuel her inevitable rise.

As she looks forward to her admissions interviews she has been able to take her foot off the gas to a meaningful extent. She has returned more fully to her two loves of baking and crochet as the Sitka winter sets in. Annie can often be found these days out on a seaside walk or surveying the different ice cream sales at Sitka grocery stores. Additionally, she and Will alongside a few of their friends are reconnecting with their Latin American family roots (Annie has Mexican heritage and Will has Peruvian heritage) by cooking a different dish from the region every two weeks. An impressive reemergence from the slog of law school applications to be sure. Thank you, bread and butter, for helping our genius legal fellow over the finish line!!



Sadie, Consistency In and Out of the Kitchen:

Food Item: Sadie's Daily Eggs

Ingredients/recipe:

- 2 Eggs
- Mushrooms
- Spinach
- Cheddar Cheese
- Mayo
- Sriracha
- Onions
- Sourdough Bread
- Preferred spices/dressings



- Step one: Toast sourdough bread and then spread Mayo and sriracha on top.
- Step two: Sauté mushrooms, spinach, and onions in a pan.
- Step three: Once mainly cooked, add 2 eggs. Flip once then add cheese and let melt.
- Step four: Assembly: place the sautéed veggies on top of the cheese eggs and place onto your sourdough.
- Step five: Drizzle with chili crisp and add salt and pepper and garlic powder to taste.

Since arriving to Sitka, Sadie has been a rock for her housemates and friends in the community. She is always there to offer advice on essays or workplace gripes and creates a welcoming environment for the guests at 700 Etolin. She loves to get outdoors and is often the one dragging other fellows to the amazing sites around Sitka. Ask her if she wants to go for a Kayak and you'll be halfway across Sitka Sound before your done with your question.

Sadie has been an absolute pillar for the fellows house this year. She can be found going out on her daily runs when she's not crushing local races like the Whale Fest 10K run. She has already knit a full sweater for herself, despite the pranks from Lennon that slowed the process, and we could not be more proud of her resilience and final product. With all of this productivity she needs something to keep her going. That's where her classic breakfast comes in. The rest of the house often wakes up to the pleasant smell of mushrooms wafting throughout and we know Sadie is up and cooking. She inspires all of us to take care of ourselves and, although none of us are quite as diligent as she is, the motivation is much appreciated.

Will Finds Flavors of Home:

Food Item: Crimson Lentil Soup

Ingredients/Recipe

- Approx. 1-1.5 white onion.
- Approx. 9-12 fresh celery stocks



- Approx. 9-12 fresh carrots
- Approx. ½-1 cup Crimson Red Lentils
- Extra Virgin Napa Valley Olive Oil (way too expensive for Sitka, Will is an annoying CA food snob).
- Step one: Chop all vegetables into a small dice.
- Step two: Sauté onions in a medium-large pot until fragrant and translucent. If still white, sauté for longer.
- Step three: add carrots and celery to the pot, stir well into a classic French Mirepoix. Cook until carrots and celery are soft.
- Step four: wash lentils in a small bowl.
- Step five: cover mixture with water, two inches above the line of vegetables. Mix lentils into the water slowly.
- Step six: Cook at a slow, gentle roil for 45 minutes-one hour. Salt to taste.

Will has felt blessed with the abundance of community he has found in Sitka. Working at both Outer Coast as a programs/operations fellow and Mt. Edgecumbe High School as a tutor he has been surrounded by incredible young people day in and day out. Outside of working with students Will has loved hanging out with other fellows, tutors, and friends from town. Walks, movies, and dinner parties have populated his free nights and people’s kindness and generosity have felt so incredibly spirited to Will.

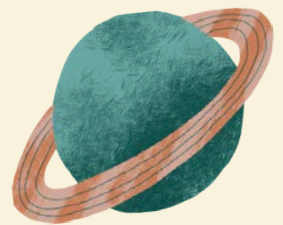
Working 12-hour days and hanging out with friends, however, can get a bit taxing. To remind himself of home he has taken to cooking his dad’s simple lentil soup recipe once a week to remind himself of home. This hardy dish, aside from delivering low-cost protein, brings him back to the rolling hills of Northern California from whence he hails. He loves sharing this meal with old and new friends alike and if you come by 700 Etolin on the weekends you can expect a ladle of this soup waiting for you. Over time, this is becoming Will’s Sitka soup, a dish without too much flare but with a lot of heart and community simmered into the essence of the dish.

Marshall Breaks Bread with those he serves:

Food Item: Mt. Edgecumbe Dinner

Ingredients/recipe:

- Step one: Show up to cafeteria at MEHS (usually with students)
- Step two: Pray they have salmon as a part of their ‘fish to schools’ program.
- Step three: Add veggies from the salad bar, gotta get that fiber.



Marshall’s Sitka story is decidedly different from the rest of ours. Inspired by his long-time best friend, Sitka site coordinator, and Alaska Fellow (2023-24) Jason Own, Marshall moved up here in the early summer to see what this Alaska life was all about. Suffice it to say he loved Sitka and with his patented Marshall charm made fast friends with people in the community. He worked as a walking tour guide as well as an artist for one of the galleries in town (he painted a beautiful Buoy). In the late summer he applied for a Fellow’s position at Mt. Edgecumbe High School in their cultural room as a way to keep exploring Sitka and indigenous cultures of Alaska.

Since becoming a Fellow, Marshall has thrown himself into the community of MEHS and is a fan favorite of all the students. He has taken students berry picking, movie watching, and he accompanied the senior class on a hike up their school's namesake volcano (pictured below). An incredibly talented artist, his office at the school doubles as an art studio. Stay tuned for some beautiful pictures of Marshall's pieces in the spring newsletter. Quick with a smile and a helping hand for students, Marshall has become a fixture at Mt. Edgecumbe. He has added the wonderful community of students and educators to his already rich community developed over his time in Sitka. The next time you're visiting MEHS you can find Marshall eating everything from Sloppy Joes to pizza to questionable prepackaged chicken bowls in deep conversation with students and staff, smiles all around.



Isabelle Thinks Hard About Dinner:

Food Item: Isabelle™ Dinner.

Ingredients/recipe

- Assorted fish scraps
- Star anise
- Shaoxing cooking wine
- White pepper
- Ginger
- Spinach
- Rice Noodles
- 2 Eggs

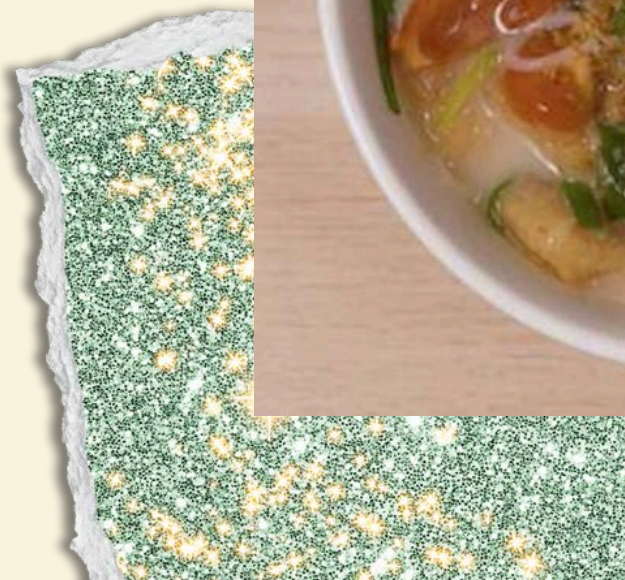


- Step one: Collect fish scraps (heads and spines) courtesy of friends in a big ziplock over the course of a month—or however long—and freeze until you have reached a critical mass.
- Step two: When critical mass is reached, place in big pot with plenty of water. Add star anise, salt, shaoxing cooking wine, white pepper, and a TON of ginger.
- Step three: Simmer for however many hours you want until the house smells like fish and everyone hates you
- Step four: When the broth looks good, freeze it in different jars!

- Step five: And then when it comes time to eat: heat a jar of broth in the microwave. Meanwhile, cook spinach and rice noodles and add to bowl. Pour soup over. Eat alongside chili sauce of your choice—I'm partial to sambal.
- Step six: Chinese style scrambled eggs are good addition if wishing for more protein

It is apt that Isabelle chose a stew for this recipe book. The true philosopher of 700 Etolin, Isabelle can often be found stewing on life's most persistence questions and discussing them with all of the fellows, pushing us to exercise our minds through the cold weather and long stretches of down time. Aside from working as the outreach Fellow at Outer Coast, she occasionally hosts a local radio show alongside Haley and is a prolific board gamer. She loves hiking with the other fellows in total silence, letting Sitka's tremendous natural beauty and our innermost selves spirit us along the path.

This beautiful stew recipe represents a little bit of the old and a little bit of the new for Isabelle. She's been making Chinese-style fish soup for a long time, however, the origin of the fish is classic Sitka. Since getting to town she has thrown herself elbows deep into the world of fish that pervades the community. She has snorkeled with fish, learned how to expertly process them (she's great at filleting and skinning salmon). She has truly embraced the Sitka life style and we're so excited for her to keep giving us the amazing food, and food for thought, that have become her signatures.

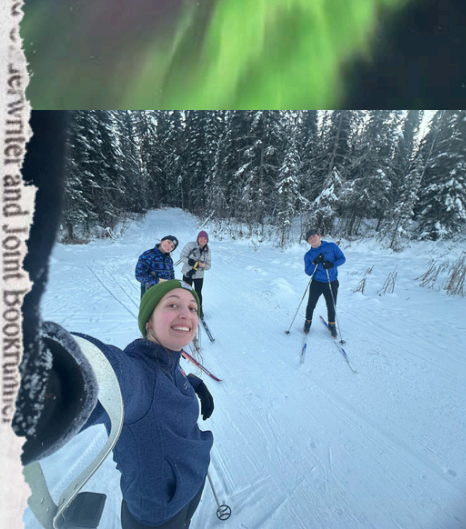


What have Fairbanks fellows been up to?



Meet The **FAIRBANKS FELLOWS!** 2024 COHORT

Page 2



A Day of BYOP (Planes, Pumpkins, and Pies)!

September 28, 2024

Fall in Fairbanks is incredibly fleeting. Just as you are settling in to the cooling temperatures and the beautiful leaves, the cold weather moves in and you are met with feet of snow, negative temperatures, and tons of skiing. But just before that happens, when the shadows are still long and the sun can still warm the air, an amazing event happens in Fairbanks that perfectly encapsulates the Interior.

The event that we dubbed BYOP rolled around on September 28th, 2024, a gorgeous fall day that was crisp and clear. Mid-morning we headed over to the Bradley Sky-Ranch Airstrip in North Pole (the town just east of Fairbanks) for the Great Interior Pumpkin Drop. It sounds exactly like what it is. Heats of small bush planes head into the skies four at a time and drop pumpkins out of their windows. Each plane has three attempts and at the end of the competition, whoever's pumpkin lands closest to the target wins.

Fairbanks and the broader Interior community show up for the Pumpkin Drop. There were countless food trucks, live music the entire time, bonfires aflame in the crowd, and lots of entertainment for kids. Think: a packed fall festival but place it on the side of an airstrip. (Literally though, we had to walk almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to and from our car.)

The dropping of the pumpkins never got old and we became fairly good at assessing the trajectory of a pumpkin even from its very first second of freefall. For every slightly disappointed "ah" that the crowd expressed when a pumpkin was nowhere near the target there was an accompanying and louder cheer when a pumpkin landed close. We melded into the crowd and saw people from work, some of our neighbors, generally enjoyed our Fairbanks community.

Continuing with our community events, that night we attended a fundraiser for the Ester Public Library at the nearby Golden Eagle Saloon – "The LiBerry Pie Throwdown." Accompanied by fellows and fellow-adjacents from the previous Fairbanks cohort, we indulged ourselves in the homemade pies, paying for slices and knowing our money was supporting a good cause. As pies were auctioned off, we watched on as a bidding war got the price of one key lime pie up to \$725! (As the younger folks in the corner we also gained the reputation of cleaning up any of the remaining pie left on the pie dishes that were brought to us :)

See, the 'P' in BYOP was malleable. Did it stand for planes, pumpkins, or pies? This day was part of a phase in our Fairbanks lives that has passed for some time now. Our days are now full of BYOS (bring your own skis) or BYOD (bring your own dip). But, our two weeks of fall, however fleeting, will always be remembered through the day of BYOP and the community it brought us into.

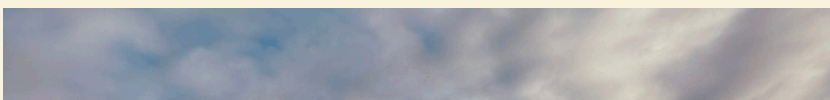


by Molly Simons



REFLECTIONS ON A TRIP TO NOME

A PHOTO ESSAY BY LIZ CARTER

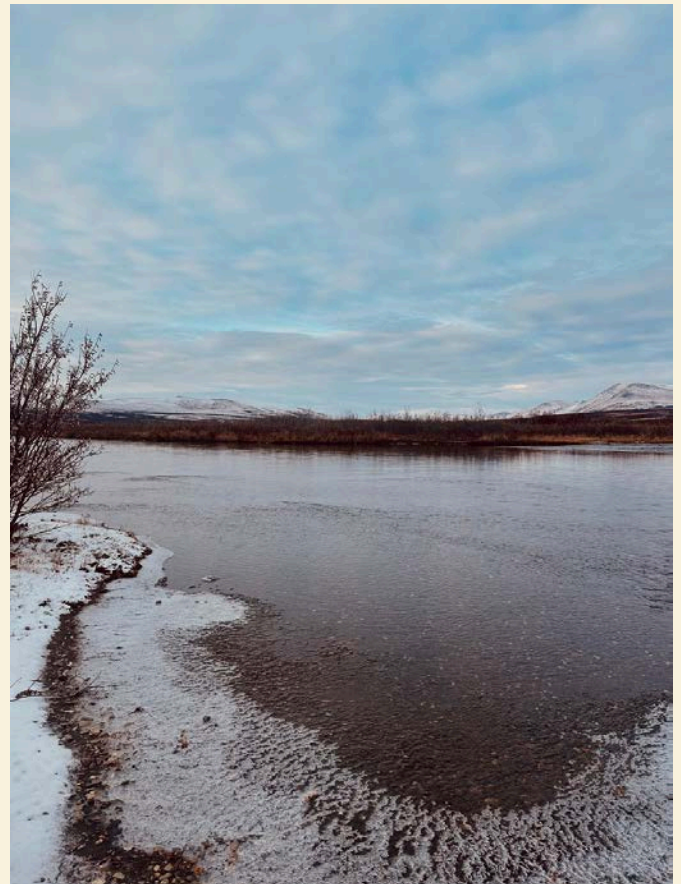


I firmly hold the belief that the places we go are meant to change us. We, at our core, are shaped by the experiences, locations, and people that we interact with. I have always felt this was true, but never have I felt it as deeply as I did in Nome. Back in October, I got the opportunity to go to Nome for a project I've been working on through my fellowship. I went with little in the way of expectation and came back to Fairbanks with so much more than I could've ever imagined.

I don't know that I will ever have the correct words to explain what it's like to stand on a jetty and watch belugas play in the waves, to talk about algal blooms and really be talking about culture and connection and subsistence, to sit at dinner with people you didn't know yesterday and really learn about the world from them.



It is an experience that no words, or photos, can express, though I do my best in these pictures to at least give a sense of the place in absence of the ability to convey the people - the part of Nome that I think is truly magical.



TRIP TO NOME

LIZ CARTER



Bright Winter Nights

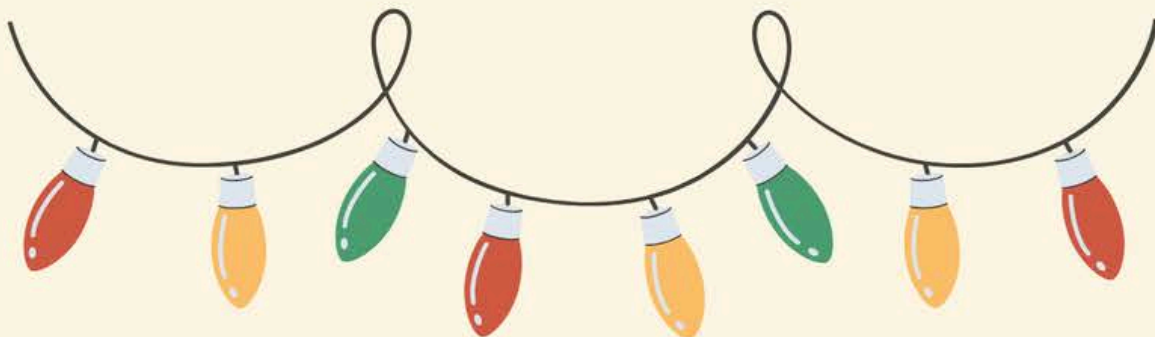
By: Autumn Shelton



The Christmas lights illuminate a creamy glow that reminds me of nights spent with hot cocoa while watching snow fall. Our TV plays Nat King Cole's "Autumn Leaves" and displays a log fire crackling. Myself, alongside the other Fairbanks fellows, wear matching polar bear jammies we found at Old Navy. We sit around the table and on the living room couches. Besides sharing laughs and stories, we are sharing another important thing tonight: crafts.

Molly makes paper garlands with construction paper. Her next task is to create strings of dried orange slices to hang on the walls. Julia watercolors Christmas cards for her family. Leah crochets a hat. Liz embroiders the Aurora Borealis on her jeans. Joey paints a tree from one of his travels. Hours are spent in a quiet hum of work and play; enjoying each others' company while also creating things to be shared far beyond our workspace. As an avid crafter and the AFP fellow who works at The Folk School Fairbanks - an organization that teaches crafting and nature skills - I find these nights to be powerful illustrations of how simple things like paper and paint can build community and friendship.

Although Fairbanks is notorious for its cold, what often can make winters so hard is the lack of sunlight. Despite the challenge of living a semi-nocturnal existence, crafting and the arts has been a way for us fellows to bond and have fun. Similarly, Fairbanks has a local storytelling event every year called Dark Winter Nights that highlights how community can be built because of the cold and night. Nevertheless, these evenings spent crafting and spending time with the fellows has shown me how Fairbanks has some of the brightest winter nights I've ever experienced.





The Fell-o-ship
Michael Martins

after Arthur Guiterman

There was a fellowship in Alaska,
Or maybe it was Nebraska,
Or some barbarous countryside of pestilence and drought;
They came here for a fell-o-ship-
Planned as an exotic trip,
But they chose to stay here long after, the novelty wore out.

The winter's air was violent;
The Fellows' outlook Nihilist;
They braced for cold dark winter nights; with
Desperate cries and wails
They found Alaska perilous;
With complaints that were so querulous
They hung their hat up on the state, and now here they get mail.

Fairbanks Fellow Selects



A blanket of fresh snow, dipping temperatures, and a cozy playlist.
By Julia Cheesman

The story of the playlist

Music does a beautiful job of encapsulating a person, place, or moment. In Fairbanks, we cherish sharing that music and always have music playing in the house. To offer a snapshot of the music taste in Fairbanks, I asked each fellow to select a song or two that reminds them of the transition between fall and (mostly) winter in Fairbanks. With these songs as a foundation, I curated a playlist thereafter that is cozy, comforting, and upbeat. It mixes genres, periods, artists, and more.

What did the Fellows pick?

Naturally, **Autumn** selected “Autumn in New York” sung by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong. This piece, originally written in 1934, hits all the quintessential jazz instruments, transporting you to a jazz bar in NYC.

Dannia shared a love song from 1967, “Ain’t No Mountain High,” sung by Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell. This R&B and soul-infused song gets you on your feet and dancing, an activity much sought after in Fairbanks.

Joey contributed “Vienna”, a 1977 chart-topper from Billy Joel. This song serves as a friendly reminder to take a step back, give yourself credit, dream big, and slow down because life is already fast enough.

From their 1966 Pet Sounds album, **I** selected “God Only Knows” by the Beach Boys. From the psychedelic rock era, this song explores sounds and lyrics that were uncharacteristic at the time of release. This song is fun and upbeat with lyrics that are up for interpretation.

Taking a more folk & indie route, **Leah** chose “No Children” by The Mountain Goats. This 2002 song has a clear piano and strumming guitar with a passionate vocalist, to craft a fast-paced and alternative rock piece.

Jumping to something with an acoustic feel, **Liz** shared John Prine’s cover of “Clay Pigeons” from 2005. This guitar and harmonica-centered track is soft and comforting. If you listen to the lyrics, it discusses searching for a home to build a life - something we young adults relate to heavily these days. As we near the holidays, Liz will do just as John Prine says and head back to her home state of Texas.

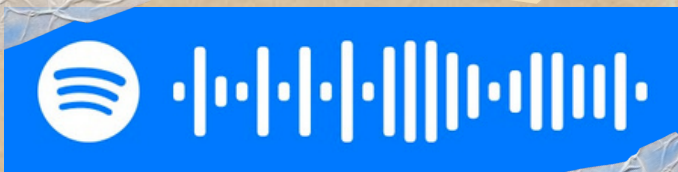
To focus less on lyrics, **Michael** picked “Long, Long Time Ago” composed by Javier Navarrete. This piece is elegant and mysterious as it is filled with a quiet hum, orchestra instruments, and a piano.

From Mavis Staples’ Grammy Award-winning album of 2010, **Molly** chose “You Are Not Alone.” As the title suggests, this soul-infused song highlights the importance of providing support to others with open hands and open hearts. Moreover, the melody is welcoming and something that largely reflects our music taste in Fairbanks.

Rounding out with some group-musts, **we** quickly became attached to “You Can Be My Water Jug” by Willis Fireball from a CD in our car. Also, after seeing Jonathan Bailey’s performance of “Dancing Through Life” in the new Wicked movie, this song has been on repeat in Fairbanks.

From these selections, amongst others, I crafted a playlist that all can listen to! As you can see it is a mixed bag filled with rock, indie, folk, jazz, soul, R&B, and more, but they all seem to fit together. Our music has brought us together, so we hope that sharing our music gives you a good picture of the atmosphere in Fairbanks.

Listen



Open Spotify App



Navigate to Search Tab



Click Camera Icon



Scan Code



WHAT HAVE JUNEAU FELLOWS BEEN UP TO?





Be Bright! Be Seen!

by Charlotte Moore

Living in Downtown Juneau has been nothing short of a dream. However, when you must commute out of town for work, that dream can quickly become a recurring nightmare.

But, only if you let it.

When I first accepted this fellowship, I was a little anxious about getting to and from work every day. I sat for hours mapping out my transit routes, trying to find the fastest and easiest route. I tried not to think about the fact that despite UAS being only a 15-minute drive from our house, taking the bus would make that commute over an hour each way. However, as a public transit enthusiast, I was not deterred by this job requirement and instead, I tried to plan my days around my travel time.



Every day, I wake up at 5:45 am, repeatedly snooze my alarm until roughly 6:20 am (sorry Nisha), make breakfast, pack a lunch, and am out the door by 7:04 am, to catch the 7:09 am bus to the Valley.

Each morning as I walk to my bus stop, I observe the changes around me that signify the passage of time. I watch the days get shorter, with the sun rising later and later. I feel the air turn colder, as the near constant cover of rain turns to ice and slippery snow. These changes all have felt so sudden, despite slowly occurring over weeks, and makes me wish I could slow down the time here.



But, I also feel a deep comfort in all the things that have stayed the same during my bus rides. My driver, Gernot, greeting me by name as I hop on the bus each day, that one guy who wears the same baseball cap every single day, the family that gets on together but gets off at different stops, the elderly lady who always wears a hot pink jacket and a chic scarf and only rides the bus for 2 stops. These people don't know me and I really don't know them, but they've all become a part of my life here.

I fill my bus hours with daydreams and Daylists, library books and quiet conversations. When it's raining, I read. When it's clear, I gaze out the window and pick a new favorite mountain or tree.

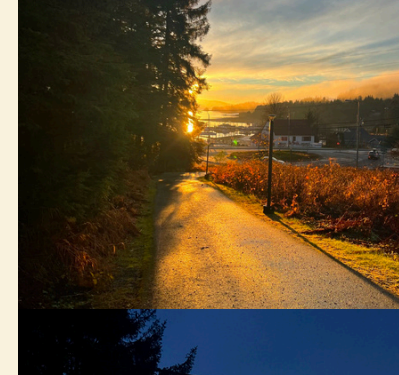


When I finally get to my stop at 8:10 am, I step off into the most beautiful place I've ever seen. Look left and see gorgeous mountains separated by the glacier. Look right and see the still ocean with hilly islands off in the distance. Look forward and see the tall, mossy trees lit up by lampposts. Every morning, I am in awe of the views around me that have somehow become my everyday reality.

I watch the bus drive away with its orange sign displaying the words "Be Bright! Be Seen!" and I know it's meant to be taken literally, but I can't help but read it as an affirmation. It is my perfect daily reminder to be grateful for each morning I have here, and to try my best to brighten up the days of those around me.

I wouldn't trade these experiences for anything.

Except, Ephraim, if you're reading this, a fellow car for the Spring would be nice.



THE IN-BETWEEN

by Natalie Marrewa

I can't remember your voice. I can't remember the scowl that hid at the back of each sarcastic remark. I can't remember the sound of your laugh that echoed off your speckled linoleum tile floor when I shocked you with a retaliating quip.

I can't remember the crinkle that creased your eye with each smile, the polished fingers that combed through my hair before bed, the head of hair, sometimes copper, sometimes brown, that was always cropped just above your ear.

I'm searching for your voice, your face, any evidence that I recorded each detail of you in my memory. Wednesday, wednesday, in and out, every week I spent at your house and what do I have to show? A scratched record where your voice should be, a blurry figure. Copper, Brown, Pink shirt? True blue. Why can't I see your face?

The face that smiled almost as much as it scowled. The mouth that reprimanded me, praised me. The woman that taught me what to love, how to love, how to live without the love of another. And what do I have to show?

A voicemail, one voicemail, "Natalie, did you call me?" five words, seven syllables, nineteen letters. If I break apart the consonants and vowels, can I weave your words into reassurances, retorts, laughs? Can I remember your voice, can I hear you?



I see you here
In the warm afterglow of nights among friends,
The break of blue in stormy skies,
The crinkled corners of shared smiles,
The bits of joy I fish out of each day,
And the pieces and parts of myself I like best

Dancing while grilled cheeses fry, colorful eggs spilled over our neon-block-patterned rug, eleven pm decisions to go aurora chasing, smiles shared over a half-empty morning dishwasher, our tiny basil and romaine tendrils, the reflection of the sun on snow-capped mountains, cheerios swept across our kitchen floor, and quiet breakfast conversations under rainbow christmas lights. Most nights spent here feel like I'm peering into a snow-globe, looking through our living room window and watching framed versions of my life play out in front of me. Soft yellow, blue, and orange hues contained in houses that offset red-nosed walks to work and windowless offices that transition the morning and evening shades of gray.



On the second of August I wrote, "I am sad to let August go, I am excited to let September in. I will plant my feet on August 2nd, bloom until September 1st, dig up my roots, and carry them to new frozen soil where I will tend to them with care each bitter morning, savoring the color-changing leaves and hearth-warmed laughs as well as the raw-nosed walks to work and nights spent away from the only people who know what makes me sing."

I sing here more than I did back home,

I can't seem to stop humming.



Thank you for reading our Fall 2024 AFP newsletter! We're so happy to live in this beautiful place and build community within the fellowship and beyond. We hope you enjoyed and we look forward to sharing even more in the spring iteration!

*Sincerely,
Nisha, Claire, & the AFP Community*



**ALASKA
FELLOWS
PROGRAM**

