

Alaska Field Report
February 2018
Steve Horsman, Assistant to the Field Director

We exist to make disciples among least-reached peoples in cooperation with churches and like-minded organizations.

We desire to see reproducing disciples impacting communities throughout the state.

Diving Deep into Discipleship...
Heart by Heart
Community by Community

What a joy it is to be part of the resurgence on the Alaska field as we share the common goal of seeing Christ's name glorified among the least-reached peoples of this vast state. The information presented in this report represents progress made, and challenges faced over the six months of Map implementation.

State of the Field- Focus Spheres

Our 2016 Conference Ministry Map identified these four areas of priority:

- Recruitment
- Village Ministry
- Urban Ministry
- Equipping Ministry

State of the Field- MAT (Map Advancement Team)

The MAT has continued with a variety of tasks in the focus spheres, meeting twice since July. (The MAT consists of: David Joseph, tasked with recruitment, John Tramm, tasked with village ministry, George and Judy Richardson, tasked with urban ministry, and Jill and I, tasked with equipping ministries. Dale (Carol) provides leadership to this team, and the Executive Team (Dale, Carol, Jill, and myself) accelerates the action items for the MAT.) We have met most of all SMART goals set in 2016. This fall the team reviewed DRAFT ministry maps for each of the four spheres and these will be refined during upcoming meetings. A monthly Alaska prayer calendar keeps these issues on the minds of all our staff.

The Recruitment Sphere

Primarily the responsibility of David Joseph, however during the last six months there have been others also involved in this ministry. The fall trip to Moody-Chicago was comprised of Thomas Slawson and Larissa Zook, with both of them speaking in classes. Jill and I spoke again at the Alaska Bible College missions conference, which included additional participants from local churches.

Meanwhile, David continued scheduling opportunities and flew out for several visits. We are beginning to experience the fruit from his recruitment efforts as he has worked with Frontier School of the Bible to set up a vision trip for this coming summer, expecting a number of juniors and seniors to attend. David also reports that he is developing some solid relationships with several other colleges.

When it comes to *EnGage!* Alaska, some changes were made to ensure that our tuition charge was not greater than Canada or Russia. We have offered to help interns with fund-raising and David reports he has several showing interest in Alaska for this summer. As a member of the Mobilization Task Force, David is working with the others to assess and improve all aspects of our recruitment process.

All of our relational efforts with interested individuals is generating organizational fruit and I would like to update you on the status of these couples.

Jamie & Beth Roderick – Appointees – Palmer, Lazy Mountain Campus

Jamie & Beth will fill a much-needed role in properties and hospitality areas of support ministry. They plan to attend SonRise Community Church (Richardsons) and become involved, as the Lord leads. They brought a work team up in December and completed some priority tasks on the campus, which was a tremendous blessing. The Rodericks have two children and they report being currently at 48%.

Perhaps more than any other staff coming, this couple will significantly lighten the ministry load that Jill and I carry, allowing us to focus more heavily in areas of our intended responsibilities.

Chad & Andrea Peterson – Appointees – Copper Center

They have begun building their ministry support team and are getting additional Bible training and equipping. They are considering the option of changing the training they are receiving in WA State and attending Alaska Bible College. We discussed various possibilities for this approach, including the option of using Alaska Bible College programming for them to do the intercultural ministry stream internship that includes InterAct supervision and mentoring as they live in a village. This may be an excellent way for them to get their ministry started among the Ahtna people of the Copper Valley. The Petersons have a toddler and a baby.

Greg & Linda Snell- Appointees– Anchorage

Greg and Linda were exploring ministry possibilities when the Board met last August in Alaska. Having spent several months on the campus, they are now actively building their ministry support team and look forward to urban ministry among the Alaska Native people, in the most ethnically diverse city in the nation, Anchorage. They plan to attend, and help out, at SonRise Community Church, as well as with the Anchorage Native New Life Fellowship. We look forward to seeing their ministry unfold in the Anchorage bowl. The Snells may have their granddaughter join them when they move to Anchorage.

Bryan & Brandy Watts- Appointees- Mat-Su Valley

Bryan and Brandy previously resided on the campus while Bryan attended Alaska Bible College. During their time here they sensed God's call to ministry in Alaska and began the process of becoming appointees. After starting to build a support team they felt God calling them back to their home community in the south. We have maintained contact with them and were excited when they asked to Skype and announced that they sensed their renewed call to ministry with Alaska. A discipling ministry among youth and young adults in the Mat-Su Valley is what piqued their interest and rekindled the desire to join our Alaska staff.

The Mat-Su Valley is the only urban area in Alaska which continues to grow, despite significant population declines since 2016. Approximately 7-10% of this population is identified as Alaska Native according to the 2016 Census. They look forward to building relationships in the Palmer and Wasilla areas and to supporting Denali Native New Life on Sunday evenings. They have completed Kingdom Come training and are beginning to build their ministry support team. They have six children.

Leroy & Sarah Miller –Independent Missionaries in Alaska

We continue to dialogue with Leroy and Sarah, although they have at least a full year commitment with a Bible Camp before they will make any decisions about joining InterAct. Their interest with InterAct continues, and we maintain our relationship with them as we discuss ministry possibilities. They have ministry throughout the state, doing summer camps up in the northeast. Leroy works with the radio stations and travels frequently to villages, and they assist with the Native Musicale and other regional

activities, including their interest in LEaD Alaska. The Millers have six children, and their two eldest graduated high school this past spring.

Our partnership with Alaska Bible College has provided potential candidates for Canada. Eleanor is in the intercultural ministry stream and she and Leevi were recently engaged. Their plan will be to do her 3-credit internship in Canada with the Sikh ministry, at which time they said they would also be evaluating future ministry options.

Finally, we come to Ryan and Rachel Smith, who will be moving on the campus this week. They will be contacting Jerry to start the application process and see God potentially leading them into long-term ministry with InterAct.

The Village and Urban Spheres:

Most of the specific work accomplished in these spheres relates to our collective work to create ministry maps. Jill and I did visit the Tramm in Ruby, and met with the church leaders to discuss the next steps in the matter of the church facility, which led to good conversations about their vision for their church. We visited with the Millers and have had similar discussions about their ministry vision for Grayling and Shageluk. In addition to these discussions about village ministry, there have been several discussions among MAT members and our Anchorage staff as we plan for the Snells and Watts to join us in urban ministries.

In October John and Jen Tramm met with Jill and I to write their Ruby ministry map, a process we plan to duplicate with James and Shannon Miller when they return to Alaska. Both Tramm and Millers have been on SpA since October.

We have held several discussions with other organizations related to the research and current status of need in Alaska, particular the villages. We plan to schedule a networking summit with a few selected individuals to discuss what research has been completed and find ways we can work cooperatively to complete the snapshot of need in Alaska.

Equipping Sphere:

In the equipping sphere, Jill and I continue to see four main areas for activity. These include:

- Equipping/discipling Alaska Native believers
- Equipping volunteers and short-term missionaries
- Equipping new missionary staff
- Better equipping existing missionaries

Our goal is that all village or urban missionaries are involved with equipping and discipling Alaska Native believers. LEaD Alaska is the additional ministry designed exclusively for this goal. This year we attempted to take a different approach, which has not worked as well as was anticipated. Without any student registrations, we held a day of "Speed LEaD" in December with two alumni taking leadership roles, and one new participant. We have several days scheduled for a similar experience during the Native Musicale, hoping to allow people to attend and get a sense of what the ministry entails. The regular program will be scheduled to run again next year, which has allowed us to focus on building up the scholarship fund and do more extensive advertising this year. This different approach also allows Jill and me the opportunity to take a much-needed SpA so we can reconnect with our ministry team.

In other areas, we have worked quite a bit with Alaska Bible College students, and continue to speak in chapel or in classes. We also have scheduled three ministry work teams for this coming summer, with one of the teams providing work on the property in either Grayling or Ruby.

When it comes to short-termers and volunteers, we want to be intentional in equipping and maximizing opportunities with ministry work teams and volunteers. We have tested some PowerPoint presentations this summer and continue to adjust these, and will look forward to have additional material that can be utilized by all missionaries as they host summer volunteers and work teams.

At the 2017 Summer Conference we held a training day to introduce the concept of learning together, with a special focus on 4 Chair Discipling. This month we have launched the field-wide project of reading and reflecting together, using a reading schedule and technology that will allow everyone to review the same ideas, expand our thinking, challenge ourselves, listen to one another, and improve our ministries' together. We are calling this the, "Alaska Professional Reading Group."

Another staff equipping ministry in Alaska is the partnership ministry of Northern Ministry Training. Launched by SEND North, the training takes place one week each year with four years of class tracks. We are currently serving on the steering committee and will get a first-hand exposure to this ministry. Teachers are selected for the various modules and they come from a wide variety of ministries in Alaska or the Yukon. In the future, we hope to see some of our newer missionaries attending this class and benefitting from the extensive expertise.

Jill and I continue to develop orientation and mentoring materials, with a goal for this to be completed early this winter and ready for the field to review at the conference. We have enrolled with an Onboarding class through CIT, and are currently looking to glean whatever is helpful as we improve our process of bringing new missionaries onto the Alaska field.

Finally, I have begun weekly communication with the field staff by email. Although it is quite short, the intention is to give everyone a quick word of encouragement, feature the ministry of another Alaskan InterActer, and provide an update on one of the appointees, along with any highlights (courses available, etc.) Several InterAct staff will be attending a 3-weekend course in biblical counseling over the next three months.

State of the Field-PROPERTIES, recent upgrades on Campus, Ruby plans, Maqii, Architect plans for MB addition

These last six months have been a flurry of upgrades on the Campus, some that were unscheduled. We have been blessed to have a man from Lazy Mountain Bible Church (retired contractor) that has volunteered extensively, and we also were thankful to have the December work team. We have installed the donated SMART Board, and purchased a new stacking washer and dryer for the Valley View complex and installed this unit. The work team painted the interior of one of the vacant houses and we were able to get free installation of the new carpet. Thanks to an essential donation, we have new water-efficient toilets replacing the older versions in each bathroom on Campus. These toilets will significantly reduce the water consumption reducing the pressure on our water system. I have a local architect drafting the plans for a storage addition to the main building that we hope to build this summer utilizing one of the summer work teams.

One exciting addition to the campus has been the addition of an Alaska Native Maqii (steam bath), with volunteer labor almost exclusively provided by one of LEaD Alaska alumni and his father. Many of our retreat groups were excited to hear about this and look forward to using it. They will not be the first, however, since several local Native men (and Steve) make use of it regularly!

I continue to work with the property situation in other locations of Alaska. We anticipate seeing some significant change to the status of the Ruby church and property this next year, and also to making decisions on a number of other InterAct properties around the state.

Finally, we are continuing our work on the campus water system. I am continuing the work to utilize campus water ponds this year and maintain usage of our water rights. A number of other maintenance and smaller upgrades have been completed on campus, as well as the continuing discussions related to our overall water consumption. Property management continues to be a time-consuming responsibility and I look forward to the day when the Rodericks will be joining our staff and can assume this responsibility, as well as that of the hospitality ministry.

State of the Field- STAFF

Dave Hill-Long-term leave

Dave has made several trips to Alaska, one this summer and another this fall, connecting with people in Port Lyons.

Steve & Jill Horsman-Lazy Mountain Campus, Palmer

I continue to serve as Assistant to Field Director, Properties Director, MAT, Executive Team for MAT, direct the activities on our Lazy Mountain Campus, work with the *EnGage!* Alaska ministry, the Alaska Bible College Intercultural Ministry Stream, and both Jill and I direct LEaD Alaska. We have enjoyed all the networking opportunities these past six months. I had a total knee replacement surgery in October, and the recovery has not gone as well as hoped so it has taken a significant portion of my time. Jill and I plan to leave March-May 8 on SpA, if we can secure a replacement to provide oversight to the campus.

David & Marci Joseph-Recruitment, residing in Fairbanks

David and Marci continue their primary ministry with recruitment. David's ministry involvement also includes *EnGage!* Alaska and serving on the mobilization team. They are very involved in some challenging family situations.

Virginia Maillele-Anchorage

Virginia continues to attend every InterAct event. We last saw her at the Anchorage Native New Life Christmas dinner. She prays regularly and is sharing Christ with her family and others as her circumstances allow.

James & Shannon Miller-Fairbanks- SpA

James & Shannon have been on SpA and plan to return the end of January. They provide support to Alaska Freedom Journey Leadership Training Modules, support to Alaska Freedom Journey with Leadership Training Modules, monthly/bi-monthly itinerant ministry to Grayling (Shageluk on occasion), and support ministry in the Fairbank region. Jill and I plan to work with them prior to the May conference to write their first individual ministry map.

Ted & Kate Mole-Soldotna

Ted continues his secondment to New Hope Counseling Center in Soldotna and they also continue their ministry goals in Russia. They are involved with Hearts Going Toward Wellness and are reliable supports to all the other ministries, such as LEaD Alaska.

Shirley Morgan-Anchorage

Shirley is an enthusiastic member of the Alaska ministries. Continuing to disciple women in the Anchorage area and lead Bible studies, Shirley embraces each new opportunity. She enjoyed the training

day last May, is eagerly employing strategies she learned with 4 Chair Discipling and is attending an Anchorage training opportunity in biblical counseling.

Dennis & Celesta Richardson-Anchorage

Dennis continues to pastor SonRise Community Church, with Celesta heavily involved in the discipling focus of their church. Dennis will also be participating in the biblical counseling opportunity in Anchorage, and he will be an *EnGage!* Alaska mentor.

George & Judy Richardson-Wasilla-50th Anniversary

George & Judy continue in member care for Alaska. They serve on the MAT and hold the responsibility for assisting development in the urban sphere. They continue to disciple Native people from all over the state, and we all benefit from their collaboration, insight and leadership. They celebrated their 50th anniversary this past November with their entire family in Alaska for the celebration.

Alan & Linda Ross-Kenai

Alan & Linda continue on the Board of Alaska Freedom Journey and as the lead staff to Hearts Going Toward Wellness. They are increasingly involved in Kenai, through their church, and with the tribe's activities. People are welcomed into their home frequently. They have had a difficult few months with their son's brain tumor return, surgery, and recent seizures returning. We know they appreciate your prayers on Rich's behalf.

Win & Gracia Stiefel-Copper Center

Win & Gracia continue living in Copper Center and discipling people in this region. Gracia is continually developing teaching material and has been invaluable in providing the ministry perspective, historical and present, for that region of Alaska. They are selected to be *EnGage!* Alaska mentors.

John & Jen Tramm-Ruby- SpA

John and Jen have just returned from SpA and are currently our only full-time village missionaries, residing in Ruby. They are doing a good job of settling into the home they purchased this summer, and of leading the church into the next stage of church development. They have relationships with people both inside and outside the church, and are working intentionally to disciple a variety of these individuals. Having just completed their individual ministry map, they look forward to implementing some of the strategies and working toward their goals. John serves on the MAT and is responsible for the village ministries sphere.

Tim & Larissa Zook-Fairbanks-

Tim & Larissa are heavily invested in the lives of Alaska Native people in Fairbanks. They continue to minister with and through the Fairbanks Native Bible Church, and beyond as they reach out in new ways to connect with the youth and minister to their families. Their heart for the people drives their passion, and we look forward to their involvement this year with some new opportunities here in Alaska.

Retired Staff Residing in Alaska

Rhaylene Abby-Kodiak

Russ & Freda Arnold-Palmer

Barney Furman – Pioneer Homes, Palmer

Doris Hagedorn-Wasilla

Norma Hammond- Palmer

Dave & Kay Henry-Fairbanks

Florence Hicks-Wasilla

Jennetta Hughes- Big Lake

Rose Nabinger-Anchorage

Kathy Voran-Palmer