

Alaska Field Report
January 2020

Infrastructure, Field Strategies and Administration

Field Strategies and A Novel Approach Leadership Meeting in Calgary

We appreciated the opportunity to attend the meeting in Calgary as Mike and George discussed *A Novel Approach* and implementation for ministries such as ours. It was very beneficial.

As a field we believe we have identified a cluster of strategies that fit well together, build upon the good ministry work previously done by InterAct missionaries in Alaska, and advance our effectiveness in the current environment. These include:

- A focus on discipleship (using 4 Chair Discipleship as our “common language”)
- Increase our use of the Bible and discipleship through training opportunities such as biblical counseling
- Address some felt needs as a portal to relational discipleship
- Continue strengthening our relational and long-term commitment with people as we focus on going deep in solid relationships
- Utilize “A Novel Approach” strategy to help us effectively understand the people and clearly communicate His message
- Assigned mentors for the first+ year for new staff
- Increasing staff equipping, learning together as a field
- Team-based ministries in all locations

Field Advancement Project

Recognizing the greater under-utilized Lazy Mountain property, we believe we can advance all ministries by increasing usage of the property. We are currently working on the project document, including timelines for the various stages of the project. As we think forward for the Lazy Mountain Discipleship Center, we envision:

Counseling Center:

Biblical counseling with clinical support
Individual counseling
Marriage and family counseling
Families in crisis
Youth
Retreats and workshops

Alaska Educator Professional Membership with InterAct and Support:

Partnering to provide professional development conferences for Alaska Christian educators. (educational topics and cross-cultural support)
Participating with Alaska Bible College Elementary Education School (2020)

Victory High School/Boarding School/Christian School:

Investigate and explore needs around the state, researching options
VHS or Victory School could open doors to relationships in villages/urban
School could become a “feeder” for LEaD Alaska

Entrepreneurial Business to Provide Ministry Funding:

Research ways we could utilize our campus for small business, as we see the shifting realities of missions and the need for alternate funding sources

Lazy Mountain Discipleship Center:

Rebrand our campus

Increase usage, workshops, retreats, training sessions

Eventually, utilize our campus for things such as “A Novel Approach” training with multiple organizations

Resource Development and Implementation

We have completed all training material for EnGage! Alaska (fund-raising workshop, pre-field placement training, mentoring handbook and related material, intern handbook, and debrief material.)

We have completed most of the onboarding workshops.

We have handbooks for the annual conference and winter retreat.

Jill is working on a revised hospitality ministry handbook and manual.

Finally, our next project is completion of the Field Advancement working Project document.

Mobilization Activities

In addition to working with the other field directors on mobilization, Jill and I have worked with Jerry to regularly contact interested individuals. Since July we have had conversations with approximately ten interested individuals.

A priority for us is attracting students from Frontier School of the Bible. Jill and I will be speaking on campus three times from February 2-5, along with Bill and Lois and the Appointees, Jonathan and Amy DeVries.

Onboarding

Frank Emrick facilitated a reading group with the Rodericks, Derrs and the Watts as they read together, “Cross-Cultural Servanthood,” by Dwayne Elmer.

We have begun onboarding classes with Appointees Daltons and DeVries. They will also take several CIT Next online courses. (Resiliency and Sustainability, and Spiritual Warfare.)

Winter Retreat

With the retreat an optional event, we were pleased that most of our staff attended. Donna Embree and the Watts family provided meals and cared for the MKs. After starting with time spent in worship and guided prayer, we then reviewed the Field Advancement Project. George Walker joined via technology to give a more direct overview of *A Novel Approach*, and we concluded by each missionary providing an update on their ministry and family.

Field Consultation Team

George and Judy, Ted and Kate, and Jill continue functioning as my Field Consultation Team. I have really appreciated the wisdom and sense of “coming alongside” from our Consultation Team. I have seen God give insight and clarity through their wisdom. This was particularly important as our team was able to discuss and give insight regarding the challenging situations with both the Tramm and the Josephs. I saw God use their insights to help me direct the course of action for both situations.

Regular Field Communication

We had quite a setback when we learned that all my field email communication had been blocked by the InterAct server. Thankfully, this has been addressed and I am back on track striving to keep everyone informed as a field.

Village & Rural Ministries & Staffing

Ruby

When we think of setbacks and disappointments, the situation with the Tramm and Ruby comes to mind. We were disappointed to have John and Jen resign this fall. We have previously made a commitment (along with the Tramm) that we would not abandon the community. Now we find ourselves with an amazing new church building, and a struggle to find ways of actually supporting the people with Tramm’s departure.

George Richardson spoke at the building dedication service and I am flying out this week. I am in the process of working to develop a monthly rotation of individuals that could fly in to support the ministry and community. This is a location where we will hope to find a replacement missionary family.

Grayling

The Daltons are officially appointees and have begun building their team in preparation for their ministry in Grayling as Alaska staff. Dennis and I will continue to work with village believers as we help transition things for the Daltons. We also have work that will need to be accomplished on the house. We will be looking for another couple to work in team with the Daltons. Dennis has agreed to continue involvement with the Daltons and Grayling, and will be mentoring the Daltons when they arrive back on the field to start ministry.

Copper Center

The Petersons continue their ministry preparation in Washington with their sending church. God has blessed them with a caring church that wants to be a part of equipping them for ministry.

We have been looking to fill a ministry request for a missionary pastor in Copper Center. God is answering that prayer through Ron and Jean Paull, who will also minister in team with the Petersons.

Kenai and Soldotna

Alan and Linda continue involvement with the Kenai Native community, and have led several home Bible study groups. They are working to pass the leadership mantle of Hearts Going Toward Wellness.

Ted continues his secondment at New Hope Counseling Center, along with his and Kate's participation on the Consultation Team. Kate was promoted as director of nursing this year.

Urban Ministries & Staffing

Lazy Mountain Campus

Rodericks have completed a full year of ministry and we are working through their next steps as they anticipate becoming full-time, rather than short-term. In addition to this we have another applicant that will be focused on the campus. Our houses have been leased the majority of the year and the hospitality ministry has also been busy, which included an InterAct-led Women's Retreat in September.

SonRise Community Church

Dennis and Celesta Richardson continue leading this ministry. Rodericks and DeVries are also both involved at the church. Dennis is mentoring both couples. Jamie has agreed to participate in elder classes, as is Jonathan. The Rodericks and DeVries are both involved on Sundays, Tuesday mid-week service, and on a Friday night leadership group.

First Native Baptist

Matt Derr has found a niche in urban ministry by accepting a call to pastor the First Native Baptist Church, located in downtown Anchorage. In addition to this ministry, Matt serves as occasional chaplain at Alaska Native Medical Center, where Lisa is director of nursing for the Mom's and Babies unit.

Fairbanks Native Bible Church

This fall I accepted the resignation of David and Marci Joseph, who continue ministering at Friendship Baptist Church in Fairbanks. Tim and Larissa Zook are continually increasing their ministry involvement with the Fairbanks Native Bible Church through leading worship, serving on the leadership team, and with youth. They are planning to lead the Youth Connection Event again this year at the Native Musicale in Anchorage.

Mat-Su Valley

I was asked to assist Denali Native New Life Fellowship, and so Jill and I attend Sunday nights regularly. We have a growing desire, and dialogue with several others, to see a church in the Valley that is more conducive to Alaska Native culture. It has been challenging to try and launch the Watts (currently volunteers) into youth ministry in the Valley.

Lazy Mountain Campus, Field Programming, Partnerships

Campus

We hosted several retreats and the InterAct-led a Women's Retreat in September with about 27 women in attendance. Hearts Going Toward Wellness was held in October. We had several more work teams the end of last summer. Our overall campus usage has remained fairly steady and we had all houses occupied until November.

EnGage! & Market Place Ministry- ending August 10, 2 group calls since that time
We had three Frontier students attend *EnGage!*, ministering in Copper Center. Two remained for Market Place Ministry, which ended on August 10. For a number of reasons, we are not advertising Market Place Ministry in 2020.

LEaD Alaska

We proposed an alternate schedule this year to try and increase attendance with students unable to attend all of LEaD. We had no students in October, although we may have three for the second half of January. In addition to this, we will run the month of March.

In February James Barefoot (Evangelical Covenant Church and Council Member) will disciple our alumni from last year during a two-week trip to Shaktoolik. Sam will be preaching and teaching, under James' guidance, and we view this as a sort of "LEaD Alaska year two" approach. We are thankful God has provided us adequate funding so that LEaD can cover Sam's expenses.

Intercultural Ministry Stream Internship- Alaska Bible College

Our last intern in this program attended the *EnGage!* Canada internship this summer. Eleanor really appreciated the internship in Winnipeg and Jill continues to meet with her regularly. She graduates in May.

With a change in leadership at Alaska Bible College, the emphasis is moving away from missions. This has been disappointing as we have invested significant resources into developing this internship, and there are no further students scheduled for the program. We will be speaking at their missions conference in April and encouraging students to consider *EnGage!*.

Denali Native New Life

After dialogue about what to change and how to make this fellowship more productive, and after a time with no weekly meetings, I am a part of their leadership group. It has not, however, yet led to any significant changes. It was an opportunity where we felt we could steer things toward an actual church plant, but that is not how things have developed to date. Jill and I continue to attend regularly.

Arctic Barnabas

They have completed a format for gathering and displaying village data for Alaska. Jill and I attended a meeting as they shared this, along with an agreement for participating organizations. They have wrapped into this agreement other items

with which I disagree, so I will be in dialogue with them about adjusting agreements. It is unclear if anyone is signing onto this project.

CIT Next

Our membership with CIT allows us to utilize courses for onboarding new staff, and as resources for all staff. We have utilized three of their courses, and Jill benefits from facilitating an onboarding class for CIT Next.

VBC and possibilities

We are exploring ways we could partner with Victory Ministries to run camping programs in the Copper Center Valley, with InterAct staff providing cross-cultural training to the Victory staff. This may be a small recruitment resource for InterAct.

Radio Station

In exchange for allowing CBI Media group to install and run their tower on our Palmer campus, we have free time available on their four stations. We have recorded short devotionals and sent information to advertise various events. This has been a good resource for InterAct.

Ministry Needs and Openings for Staff

Village ministries (Ruby, and another couple in Grayling or nearby village)
Biblical Counselors for the Counseling Center
Christian educators called to partner with InterAct and serve in villages
Support staff, particularly as we develop the Discipleship Center
Entrepreneurial assistance to help explore business supporting mission

Other

Hammond Property

The Hammond family has completed their portion of the estate inheritance. I am working to have the property appraised and then stage the remaining tasks for the house and property.

Miscellaneous

This was a challenging year as I contracted a serious staph infection in my knee. After three and a half months of antibiotic therapy, the infection is apparently eradicated. I resume some physical therapy in January to help with muscle atrophy and related issues.

We saw God do a mighty work in the life of our granddaughter as she and Stefan were married on November 23, holding their reception in the meeting room on campus. It was a great family gathering.

Staff Update

Staff	Type of Service	Where	Ministry
Tim & Larissa Zook (Merrick, Elliot, Reuben)	Volunteer (long-term)	Fairbanks	Youth and young adult ministry with Fairbanks Native Bible Church, discipling. Facilitator for Youth Event during the Anchorage Native Musicales.
Steve & Jill Horsman	Full-time	Palmer	Field Director, LEaD Alaska staff, Equipping Ministries
Jamie & Beth Roderick (Davis, Faith)	Mid-term (two year term)	Palmer	Property Manager, Hospitality, SonRise Church- Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays. Jamie is entering into elder training at SonRise. Beth is special education assistant (full-time) at the Palmer Junior Middle School.
Bryan & Brandy Watts (Allyssa, Avery, Hunter, Alyanna, Emily, Grace, and Evelyn)	Volunteer (long-term)	Palmer	Working toward full-time urban ministry in the Mat-Su Valley.
Matt & Lisa Derr (Emma)	Full-time	Eagle River-Urban	First Native Baptist. Lisa is head director of mom's and babies unit at Anchorage Native Medical Center.
Dennis & Celesta Richardson	Full-time	Anchorage	SonRise Church- discipling ministry as pastor
Alan & Linda Ross	Full-time	Kenai	Discipling, Hearts Going Toward Wellness, Alaska Freedom Journey Board.
Ted & Kate Mole	Full-time (Seconded)	Soldotna	Ted is seconded to New Hope Counseling Center. Kate is employed full-time as nurse. Consultation Team.
Win & Gracia Stiefel	Volunteers	Copper Center	Win is currently employed driving bus in the region. Gracia completing writing a Worldview Bible Study that she is currently "trying out."
George & Judy Richardson	Retired	Wasilla	Retired, yes, but still involved in ministry, counseling, and support. Consultation Team.

Appointees:

Snells-Montana (urban ministry Anchorage)

Greg and Linda have had some challenging health issues. They have seen God bring good medical care and healing, and are feeling God's leading as they restart their team-building process.

Petersons-Washington (Matthew, Zoey, new baby David) (Copper Center Youth Ministry)

DeVries-Anchorage (Support Ministry, Flight Support)

Daltons-Anchorage (Grayling)

Applicants:

Ron & Jean Paull- tentatively Copper Center

Marcus Gerber- campus and LEaD Alaska

Amber Fincher- *EnGage!* 2020

Steve Horsman

Alaska Field Director