ALASKA COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING CONSORTIUM (ACAC)
NEAR-PEER COLLEGE & CAREER ADVISING

GOAL
Increase the number of Alaska’s high school students accessing and benefiting from various forms of postsecondary education – career & technical schools, apprenticeships, colleges, universities – through relevant mentorships with recent college graduates working alongside school counselors.

PRINCIPLES
Connecting with students on a unique level and providing personalized guidance through near-peer mentorships

Recommended Delivery Models
- **Large schools**: 1-2 mentor(s) per school
- **Medium Schools**: 1 mentor per school, or 1 mentor serving 2 schools (where feasible)
- **Rural districts with hub**: 1 mentor in hub school providing distance-delivered services to village schools
- **Rural districts with many small schools**: 1-2 mentor(s) located anywhere in the district providing distance-delivered services to village schools

**Service Learning Approach**: 2-3-year term limit for mentors, where feasible, has been proven to be successful

Consortium Participating Member Sites Receive
Intensive summer training annually, for the mentors(s) they employ (travel, housing, and training cost covered; subject to annual maximums set by ACPE).

Professional development for their mentors through year-round, distance-delivered training and participation in a network of fellow mentors.

A toolkit of proven successful ACAC activities and resources that can be adapted to fit their community and school environment.

Optional resources, such as sample job descriptions, memorandums of agreement (MOAs), etc., for use in developing, fundraising for, and administering their mentor programs.
Making it Happen

Mentors must meet the following specifications:
- Must be a Near-Peer* – graduated from college within the last 2 years (Associate’s, Bachelor’s, or Master’s) at the time of hire
- Provide college & career planning focused services for the entire student body
- Cannot recruit exclusively for any specific college, institution, or career training

Mentors may be employed by participating organizations/entities, such as:
- Local/regional Native Corporations
- Local non-profits
- School districts, etc.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) defines the service area and specifies the partnership provisions pertaining to mentors’ placement:**
- Employer of the mentor, position title, and cost
- Funding partners
- District(s) receiving services from the mentor
- Base location and office space for the mentor
- Format and budget for distance-delivered services and/or travel-based services
- ACPE’s role as Consortium facilitator and training provider

*Training and resources may also be available to districts’ employees, e.g., counselors, advisors, or other staff members, who cannot meet the near-peer requirement
**Sample MOAs available on request

Funding

Each site is required to identify funding to cover the cost of hiring a mentor. Funding can be derived from multiple sources. Funding for such initiatives has come from:
- Local/regional Native Corporations
- School districts
- Local/national grants
- AmeriCorps programs

Please note: Consortium participating members must apply for and manage any grant funds. ACPE can provide examples of materials previously used.