What's Your Story?

Spring 2010

news for & from alaska's middle schoolers

vol.6 no.1

Want to tell your story?
See back cover for more details.

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www.AKadvantage.alaska.gov

AlaskAdvantage Programs
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
800 East Dimond Blvd., Ste. 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99515

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I want to be... a Teacher

ZIONA BROWNLOW

7th grade, Romig Middle School, Anchorage

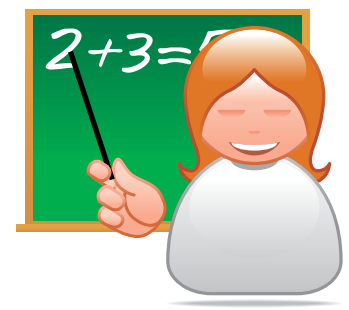
Ziona grew up in Anchorage; she likes math and plays the violin in the school orchestra.

Why do you want to become a teacher?

"If you take all the good things teachers do and put them all together, you have a great teacher. That's who I want to be. Sixth grade teachers are so important because they have to help 6th graders get ready for the transition to middle school."

Have you thought about college?

"Yes--I will be the first one in my family to go to college. My mom is very supportive and she wants to go to college, too, some day! I hope to go to Alabama State University because we have family near there. Go Crimson and Green!"



Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Your State Higher Education Agency

The Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education - funded by the Alaska Student Loan Corporation - promotes access to and success in education and career training beyond high school.

This ***What's your Story?*** Middle School Newspaper provides encouragement and resources for students about to enter high school.

For more information, please visit our Web site at *AKadvantage.alaska.gov*.

Colynn graduated from Togiak School in 2005 and was a UA Scholar. She chose the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where she is president of the Alaska Native Education Student Association.

"When I was younger, I was intent on majoring in math or science. As a college freshman, I signed up for Yup'ik and really enjoyed it and took all the classes offered. I participated in Yupiit Nakmiin Qaneryaraat, an immersion program offered through the Kuskokwin Campus in Bethel. I will graduate with a focus in Elementary Education and with a certificate in Yup'ik language proficiency. I am particularly interested in cross-cultural education."

COLYNN ISAACSON

High School Graduated:
Togiak High School, Togiak, AK

Current College:
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Major:
Elementary Education

"Teaching is never boring! Something new happens every day..."

ERIC GALLOWAY

High School Graduated:
Colony HS, Palmer, AK

College Graduated:
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Current Career:
Teacher at Effie Kokrine Charter School, Fairbanks, AK

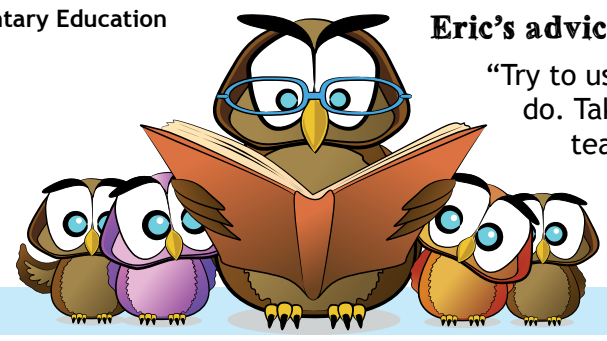
"I grew up in a military family so we moved around a lot. I was actually born at a military base in Turkey! My parents always encouraged me to do well and let me know they were proud when I did a good job. My dad even learned to play baseball so he could teach me to play!"

Tell us about your work as a teacher.

"I got my B.S. in math, then completed my teacher's certificate, and right now I'm working on my master's degree in education. What I love most about teaching is that it's never boring! Something new happens every day and the people you meet are amazing. It's also great to know you are helping someone meet their own goals. I've also gotten to take part in cool activities like coaching MathCounts and being part of ASRA—the Alaska Summer Research Academy—at UAF. I've met many awesome students through these programs, some from as far away as Kotzebue and Dutch Harbor."

Eric's advice to students:

"Try to use high school to get a feel for what you really like to do. Take as many different classes as you can. Talk to your teachers and counselors to get advice because that's what they're there for, to help you as much as possible."



What do you want to be when you grow up?

"I think I would like to be a teacher. I see that many teachers are respected for being able to keep the kids in line, but for me, teaching is much more than that. What appeals to me most is the ability to teach kids new things. I love that feeling when new information finally clicks."

What are your future plans?

"I would love to major in history and English, with a minor in education. I'm taking extra courses and going to a summer camp called ASRA (Alaska Summer Research Academy). It's really fun and I recommend it."

CLAIRE BURNHAM

8th grade, Tok Middle School, Tok

FUTURE TEACHERS VISIT ILISAGVIK COLLEGE

On April 29, 2009, sixteen Future Teachers of Alaska (FTA), including eighth graders from Eben Hopson Middle School, met at Ilisagvik College in Barrow to participate in a teleconference with Senator Lisa Murkowski.

The students learned some interesting things about Senator Murkowski. She was born in Ketchikan and raised in Southeast Alaska. She has two high school aged sons and two dogs. Her broken leg was propped up on pillows for this conference from a recent ski accident. She has still been going to work, though. "If I wasn't in the U.S. Senate, I would do what my grandmother did and be a teacher." She said she would love to teach middle school.

The students then asked a variety of questions about current events around the world. When asked who she had seen in Washington, D.C. from the North Slope, Senator Murkowski remarked that "the Barrow Dancers were present for President Obama's inauguration and were wonderful representatives for the state and the nation." Senator Murkowski ended the session by saying, "I want to do what I can to encourage our young people…to become teachers."

Eighth grade FTA students have opportunities to travel to attend conferences on education. Ilisagvik FTA director Martha Stackhouse describes FTA as "a cooperative effort between Ilisagvik College and the North Slope Borough School District to grow our own teachers from within our district."

I want to be a Teacher

> **"If I wasn't in the U.S. Senate, I would do what my grandmother did and be a teacher."**
>
> --Senator Lisa Murkowski

Send us your news!

WHAT ARE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS DOING IN YOUR AREA?

Maybe there is an exciting summer program or camp in your town. There might be a community service project in which middle school students are active and involved. We'd love to include your news in the fall issue of ***What's your Story?***

Call us at 269-7980 (Anchorage area) or toll-free at (877) 577-3367 (outside the Anchorage area) and we'll tell you how to share your news and become part of ***What's your Story?***

Sudoku

3			6				2	
	9	7		4		8		6
	2		5		9	1		7
9	8		1		6			5
			4	2			1	9
4				7		3		2
	1		2		3		4	
				5		7		3
	3	5					9	

How to play: Fill in the blank spaces with the numbers 1 - 9. Every row, column and 3 x 3 box must contain all nine digits with no number repeated.

Visit us on MySpace or Facebook!

We have updates on events across the state, fun quizzes, and information about top Alaska careers!

www.myspace.com/alaskadvantage

www.facebook.com/alaskadvantage

Don't forget to get permission from your parents before creating a MySpace/Facebook account. MySpace and Facebook are for teens 13 and older.

I want to be... an Environmental Scientist

KATHERINE DOLMA

8th grade, Homer Middle School, Homer

Katherine has lived in Homer all her life but has traveled a lot with her family, including trips to national parks, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and crossing Canada by train.

Katherine says, "Math is my favorite school subject, and outside of school I like to go tidepooling, hiking, camping, canoeing, kayaking, skating, and cross-country skiing."

"I became aware of environmental science as a career living near the ocean in Homer. There are lots of scientists in Homer, and it's a place where people are environmentally aware. In fourth grade, our Girl Scout troop interviewed women scientists of Kachemak Bay for our Bronze award. I've participated in the Coast Walk clean-up every year, visited Islands and Oceans labs, and attended Wynn Center summer science programs. I also participated in the Alaska Summer Research Academy (ASRA) in 2009."

I want to be an Alternative Energy Engineer.

COLE JOHNSON

8th grade, Tok Middle School, Tok

"Keep jumping over those hurdles to get to your goal."

ERIN DONMOYER

Please describe your job for us.

"I work as an environmental scientist with a consulting firm in Anchorage. I work with various energy and natural resource organizations throughout Alaska, helping them work in the most environmentally sound fashion."

What do you find most challenging?

"Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plans are challenging because they are complex documents that involve weaving an individual client's needs with state and federal environmental regulations, which are numerous and intricate. I enjoy this challenge because it's an important and necessary step in protecting our environment."

Advice for students?

"My advice for students who are interested in science but apprehensive about their math skills is to keep jumping over those hurdles to get to your goal. Math has never been my strength, but I didn't let that deter me from getting a degree in a subject I had passion for. It was definitely a struggle, but worth every extra hour of studying!"

High School Graduated:
Chugiak High School, Eagle River, AK

College Graduated:
Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage

Current Career:
Environmental Scientist, SLR, Anchorage

I want to be a Mechanical Engineer. I'd like to engineer anything energy efficient, such as solar panels. I might go to UAF or UAA to study engineering.

TREVOR CREED

8th grade, Kotzebue Middle School, Kotzebue

I want to be a Software Engineer or Computer Game Designer.

GARRETT COX

8th grade, Wendler Middle School, Anchorage

I want to work in Robotics.

JOSH CHERNIKOFF

8th grade, Ouzinkie School, Ouzinkie

I want to be a Computer Engineer or be in a band.

PAUL TANDY

8th grade, Romig Middle School, Anchorage

I want to be an Engineer.

SPENCER ADAMS

8th grade, Kotzebue Middle School, Kotzebue

I want to be an Astronaut or work in Computer Science.

JEDIDIAH PAINTER

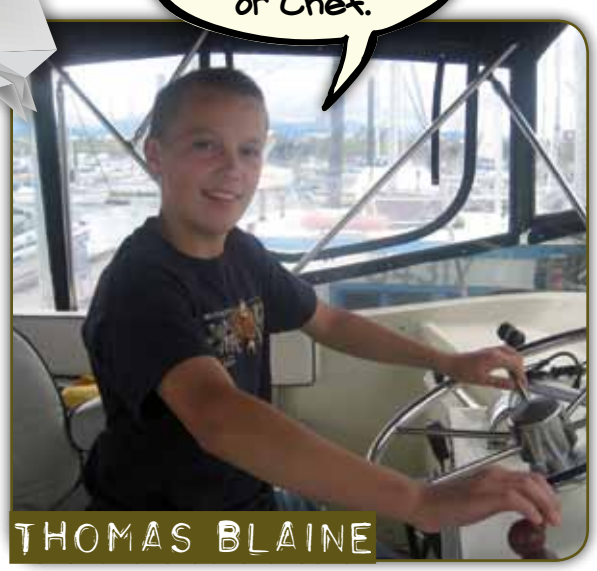
8th grade, Homer Middle School, Homer

I want to be an Astronaut or a Professional Athlete.

JOSEPH QUINN

8th grade, Wendler Middle School, Anchorage

I want to be a Pilot or Chef.



THOMAS BLAINE

8th grade, Homer Connections Program, Homer

Engineering fields include electrical engineering, chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, and many others.

Learn more about engineering-related careers at *www.akcis.org*.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANSEP?

Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program at UAA

ANSEP Pre-College Program

This fabulous enrichment opportunity targets high school freshmen and sophomores, but juniors and seniors are also welcome to apply. The Pre-College Program is designed to help students learn that science and engineering are fun! Students who participate in the ANSEP program commit to enroll in and successfully complete biology, chemistry, physics, and trigonometry. Why are these courses so important? Because students will then arrive at the university ready to succeed in university-level engineering and science classes.

Check it out at *ansep.uaa.alaska.edu/pre_college.html*.

I want to work... in the Arts

TAYLOR SEITZ

7th grade, Polaris K-12, Anchorage

"Dancing is fun and it makes me feel good. When I'm in my pointe shoes, even when they kind of hurt, I still enjoy it because I have things to work towards when we are learning new steps. Dancing is just fun because I am with my friends and we all love to dance."

DIERDRE CREED

8th grade, Kotzebue Middle School, Kotzebue

JAMIE MCKOY

8th grade, Central Middle School, Anchorage

"I like so many things. I like to travel with my family. At school, I like Algebra, Science, Band, Gym, and Language Arts. I also like to dance, sing, play the piano, and play the flute in the Alaska Junior Symphony Orchestra. I plan on taking high school classes in drama and music, and I want to go to Julliard in New York City after high school. My mother and father have always encouraged me, taking me to my dance and music classes and coming to my recitals. They have always been there for me."

LAURA ANN BLEICHER

High School Graduated:
Colony High School, Palmer, AK

College Graduated:
University of Alaska Anchorage, BA in Theatre and Dance

University of Melbourne (Australia), Postgraduate Diploma in Performance Creation

Current College/Major:
University of Alaska Anchorage, Paramedical Technology

"Many people told me that an Arts degree wasn't a smart move and that I wouldn't get a 'real' job. While many performing arts jobs aren't long-term careers, many of the skills I learned have helped in my new career field. I have learned how to create a work/life balance. Because of my acting classes I have become more confident, whether giving a dance performance, giving a speech, or teaching a class. My training has also helped me sell myself to potential employers. People like to see confidence and when you are confident, it really shows!"

YASMINE OKPEALUK

8th grade, Polaris K-12, Anchorage

JULIAN ALFREDO

Current College:
Prince William Sound Community College, Valdez, AK

Major:
Fine Arts/Playwriting

What advice would you give younger students?

Focus on your goals and keep in mind that whenever a new obstacle presents itself, there's always a way around it. Anything is possible.

Prince William Sound Community College Presents...

Last Frontier Theatre Conference

Did you know that a small Alaska college hosts one of the premiere theatre festivals in the United States? New writers, established playwrights, and actors gather in the seaside community of Valdez to immerse themselves in and celebrate all things theatre for about nine days in May or June. Learn more about this event at *www.pwscc.edu/conference/*.

8th grade, Randy Smith Middle School, Fairbanks

Young People's Drama in Alaska:

Perseverance Theatre, Juneau
www.perseverancetheatre.org

Alaska Theatre of Youth, Anchorage
www.alaskatheatreofyouth.org

Fairbanks Children's Theatre, Fairbanks
www.fairbanksdrama.org

Kenai Theatre
www.kenaiperformers.org

Sitka Fine Arts Camp
www.fineartscamp.org

7th grade, Polaris K-12, Anchorage

Kathleen grew up in Dillingham and moved to Kenai when she was in sixth grade. In addition to her theatre management responsibilities, she does some prop design and puppet design work.

High School Graduated:
Kenai High School, Kenai, AK

College Graduated:
St. Mary's University, Minnesota

Current Career:
Theatre Manager, Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, AK

How did you become interested in drama and theatre?

"In fifth grade I did a drama intensive and acted in a production of 'Aladdin.' I took drama classes in middle school and high school, and got involved in school plays and the drama club. It wasn't until college that I learned about the non-acting sides of theatre. I found I really enjoyed them as well."

What is "prop design," exactly?

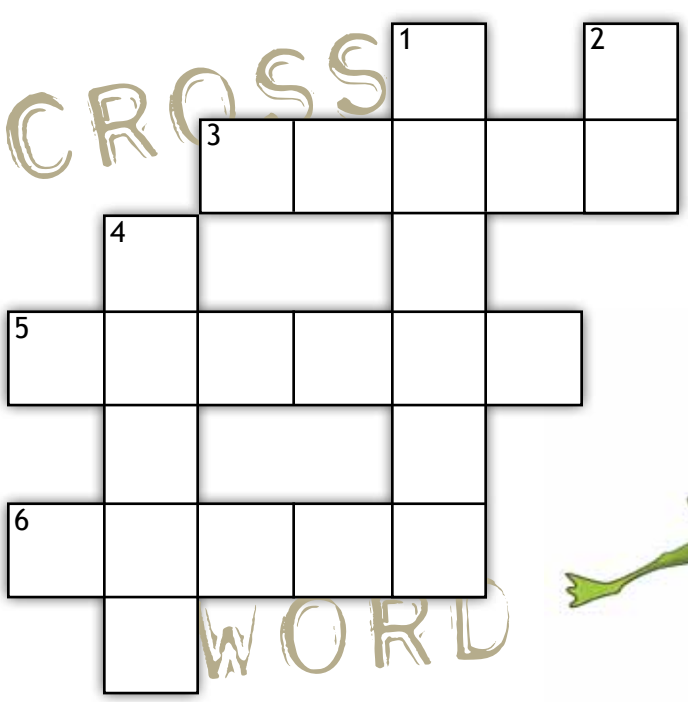
"Prop design is the creation of all the items that the actors use on stage, including the furniture on the set, and the things that perhaps the actors never physically deal with but which make a space look lived in, like curtains, books on a shelf in the background, or pictures on the walls."

What do you like best about your career?

"Theatre is hardly ever boring. It's a group of people all striving for the same thing--to make really great stories come to life on stage for an audience and have some effect on them, whether it's to make them think, feel deeply, or just laugh and have a good time."

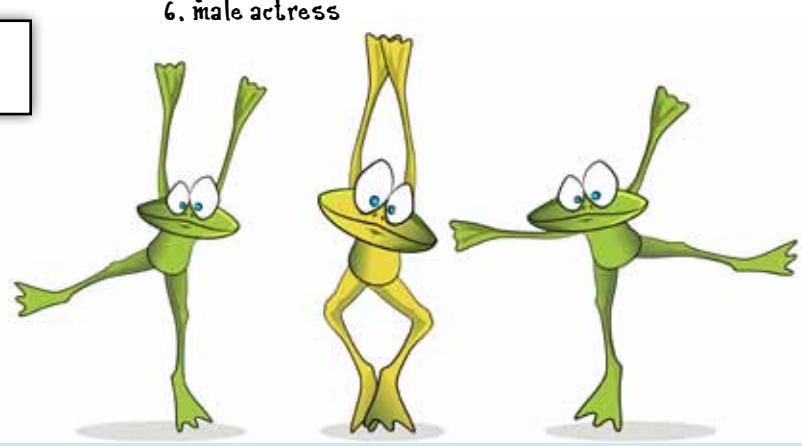
"Great stories come to life on stage..."

CROSS WORD



Down:
1. Kathleen Harper's _____ is Theatre Manager.
2. Bachelor of Arts (abbr.)
4. ballet, jazz, modern, waltz, etc.

Across:
3. the art dealing with writing and producing plays
5. a classical dance form demanding grace & precision
6. male actress



I want to work... with animals

7th grade, Homer Connections Program, Homer

8th grade, Homer Connections Program, Homer

8th grade, Homer Connections Program, Homer

How long does it take to become a veterinarian?

Veterinary school usually takes four years beyond the bachelor's degree. The fourth year is usually spent in a veterinary clinic, helping to treat animals. There are currently 28 veterinary schools in the United States accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Alaska SeaLife Center

Photo courtesy of the Alaska SeaLife Center

The Alaska SeaLife Center, located on the shores of Resurrection Bay in Seward, is Alaska's only public aquarium and ocean wildlife rescue center. Visitors to this "window on the sea" have close encounters with puffins, octopuses, sea lions and other sealife while peeking over the shoulders of ocean scientists studying Alaska's rich seas and diverse sealife.

Research projects help scientists discover reasons for declining marine animal populations and environmental changes. In the picture above, researcher Jo-Ann Mellish from the Alaska SeaLife Center releases a Steller sea lion after fitting it with high tech tracking devices.

Marine mammal research conducted under NMFS permit no. 881-1668.

WHAT CLASSES SHOULD I TAKE IN HIGH SCHOOL?

BE PREPARED FOR YOUR FUTURE!

It's probably not enough to take your high school's minimum requirements for graduation. To prepare for and do well in college, vocational training, and any other education opportunities, you should take:

- Four years of math (including advanced math classes)
- Four years of English (including literature and both oral and written communications)
- Four years of science (including biology, physics, and chemistry)
- Four years of history and geography (including U.S. Government and World History)
- Two years of a foreign language (preferably two years of the same language)
- Computer Science (become as computer savvy as you can)
- Round out your class schedule with art, dance, drama, and music classes.
- Also take psychology, economics, and any research-based classes that are offered at your school.

MARIANA BULGARELLA

Current College:
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Major:
Biological Sciences, PhD Student

Studying how waterfowl adapt to high altitude and low oxygen in the High Andes Mountains of South America

"I was born in a little town called Baadero, north of Buenos Aires province in Argentina. Ever since I was young I have had a strong interest in the natural world, especially in the mechanisms and processes that have shaped the world we live in today."

Mariana compares being a student in a South American university to being a student at UAF:

"Being a student at Patagonia National University was an adventure. University education is free, but often things don't work properly. There were times when classes were cancelled because there was no money to pay electricity bills or even for chalk to write on the blackboard. Most of the labs consisted of resolving problems on a piece of paper because there was not enough money to run a real "wet" lab. Seeing all the possibilities students have here in the United States, I would say: You have everything you need to succeed here. Take advantage of your opportunities and good luck with your career choice!"

"Take advantage of your opportunities..."

What is the Center for Alaska Coastal Studies?

CASC has been learning and teaching about the marine and coastal ecosystems of beautiful Katchemak Bay, on the Kenai Peninsula, since 1982. The Center holds Junior Naturalist Summer Camp, Alaska Whale Camp, and EcoAdventure Camp each summer.

Learn more about the Center and these summer opportunities for students at www.akcoastalstudies.org.

What type of school would be just right for me?

Answer the following questions to help in the search for your dream school.

1. Is this college in a small town, a medium-sized town, or a large city?

_____

2. What classes would be offered (computer science, theater, welding, auto mechanics)?

_____

_____

_____

3. What type of social activities would be offered (sports, clubs)?

_____

_____

WORD FIND

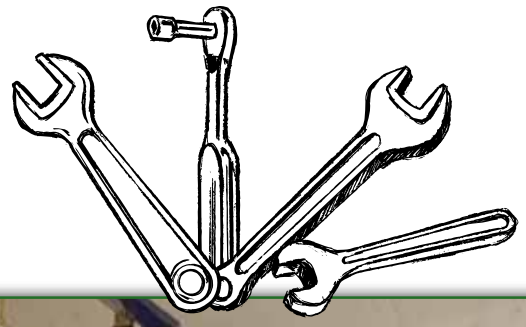
Find the following words in any direction.

Veterinarian	Mariana
Marine	Biology
Classes	Animal
Zoo	Chalk
Lab	World
Math	Art
Career	Succeed

G	O	V	Y	D	A	E
Y	C	E	G	L	N	C
M	H	T	O	R	Z	A
S	A	E	L	O	L	R
U	L	R	O	W	A	E
C	K	I	I	B	M	E
C	M	N	B	A	I	R
E	M	A	R	I	N	E
E	Z	R	T	R	A	A
D	L	I	Y	H	M	E
C	L	A	S	S	E	S
O	I	N	B	O	Z	D

I want a... Vocational Career

8th grade, Wendler Middle School, Anchorage

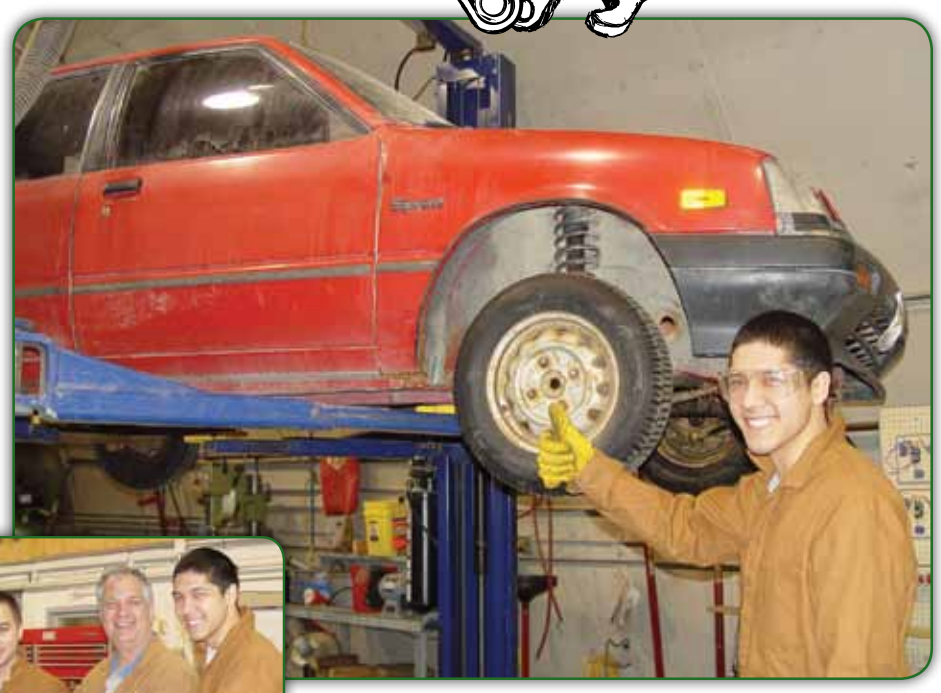


High School Graduated:
Point Hope, North Slope Borough, AK

Current College:
Ilisagvik College, Barrow, AK

Major:
Carpentry

Aaron attended three Allied Health Camps put on by Ilisagvik College in summer 2009 and then decided to return as a full-time Carpentry student in the fall. Aaron says, "My family helped me decide. I chose to come because they wanted to see me be successful, and I wanted to be successful, too." After he completes the Carpentry certificate program, Aaron says he will either go back to Point Hope and fix his dad's house or else go into psychology. "I enjoy psychology because it deals with the mind and the mind is the most powerful tool there is," he says.



ELECTRIC CAR IN BARROW!

Ilisagvik College students have built a car that won't be pulling up to the gas station!

In a week-long Electrical Trades course last March, Matt Gueco, Robert Brower, Joshua Okpik, Ben Hildebrand, and Floyd Davidson helped instructors Dave Elbert and John Howlett convert a gas-fueled car to electric power. UAF instructor Michael Golub came to Barrow to lead the project. Dave Elbert commented, "we pay about 9 cents per kilowatt hour [for electricity] here in Barrow compared to around $4.70 per gallon for gas, so when you do the conversion cost estimates, we come up with a car that gets approximately 125 miles per gallon."

A large crowd, including the college's Board of Trustees, watched with excitement as the car drove successfully over three miles from Ilisagvik's campus into downtown Barrow at speeds up to 35 miles per hour! After the car's successful trial run, Elbert was beaming: "Look for us out on the roads of Barrow, but you won't see us pulling into the gas station!"

CHECK OUT AVTEC!

AVTEC (The Alaska Vocational Training Center), located in Seward (south of Anchorage on the Kenai Peninsula), is a component of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. To learn more about this school and its many programs, visit AVTEC's Web site at www.avtec.edu.

"I was born in Casper, Wyoming and moved to Fairbanks with my family when I was six. When I was 12 my father began taking me with him on residential construction job sites as a go-fer. Being around the job and seeing what my father did made me really appreciate and enjoy electricians' work."

"I graduated from Hutchison Institute of Technology in 2009. Hutchison is the only school in the Fairbanks-North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) that requires a senior project to graduate. I took that opportunity to look into the Industrial Electricity field. I job-shadowed with workers at the FNSBSD Physical Plant and also talked with my uncles, who are electricians."

"The most challenging part of my AVTEC program is the math. I was never really good at math, but since I began this IE class the math seems to make sense to me. After I graduate from AVTEC, I hope to get a job with the IBEW (electrical workers union) and further my knowledge."

High School Graduated:
Hutchison High School, Fairbanks, AK

Current College:
AVTEC, Seward, AK

Major:
Industrial Electrician

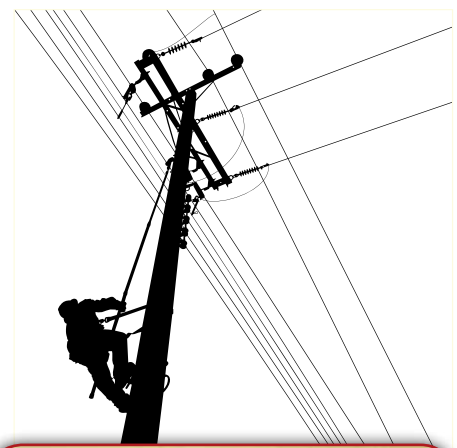
"I graduated from Eagle River High School in 2008. I've always wanted to be an electrician. At AVTEC I'm getting a more hands-on experience and better preparation for the 'real' workforce. The most challenging part of my program at AVTEC is consistently working to Industrial Electrician standards by passing the exams, having good attendance, and being good at math. After completing my program, I plan to either join the IBEW union as an Industrial Technician or else continue my education at Kenai Peninsula College."

ALEX KIGHT

High School Graduated:
Eagle River High School, Eagle River, AK

Current College:
AVTEC, Seward, AK

Major:
Industrial Electrician



WHY DO WE NEED ELECTRICIANS?

Electricians install, maintain, and repair all the electric circuitry and related components in homes and businesses.

Think about what happens at your house when there is a power outage. Unless we have a powerful back-up generator at home, we can't use our computers, TVs, electric stoves and microwave ovens, and electric lights. Our refrigerators cannot keep food cold. If we live in a city, our neighborhoods are dark because the street lights and our home lighting are not working. Our modern lives depend heavily on electricity and the electricians who keep things working well!

High School Graduated:
Cordova High School, Cordova, AK

College Graduated:
AVTEC, Seward, AK
IBEW Apprentice

Current Career:
Electrician

What is a Registered Apprenticeship?

If you like to learn new things in a hands-on way, by doing them, you may find that an apprenticeship is the perfect career path for you. Apprenticeships provide people with skills and knowledge for specific jobs. Apprentices spend part of their time in the classroom and part of their time on the job. Depending on the occupation, an apprenticeship lasts from one to six years.

Apprenticeships are available in many different career fields, including construction, operating engineers/mechanics, electricians, plumbing, culinary arts, and painting. Nationally, there are more than 850 different apprenticeship occupations.

> **"Nationally, there are more than 850 different apprenticeship occupations."**

Find out more about the advantages of Alaska apprenticeships at *www.ajcn.state.ak.us/apprentice/student-parent.html*. The United States Department of Labor apprenticeship site is *www.doleta.gov/atels_bat*.

How did you become interested in becoming an electrician?

"I returned home to Cordova to work summers while I was away at college. One summer I watched the electricians near the job site where I worked, and I was intrigued by the things they were doing. I learned that to become a journeyman electrician, I'd have to go through a federally approved apprenticeship. I didn't feel that I was ready to start an apprenticeship so I chose to attend AVTEC's Industrial Electrical program to better prepare myself."

Has this worked well for you?

"I'm grateful I chose to go to AVTEC before becoming an apprentice because this helped me start my apprenticeship with a good knowledge foundation to build upon, and this allows me to learn more easily on the job."

What do you like best about your career choice?

"It's technically challenging, diverse, has great pay, and most importantly, it's fun."

I want to be... a Doctor

KIMBERLY KAIRAIUAK

7th grade, Kwigillingok School, Kwigillingok

"I was born in Anchorage, and have lived in Chefornak, Kwigillingok, Bethel, and Seward. My favorite school subjects are math, reading, and PE."

Why do you want to be a doctor?

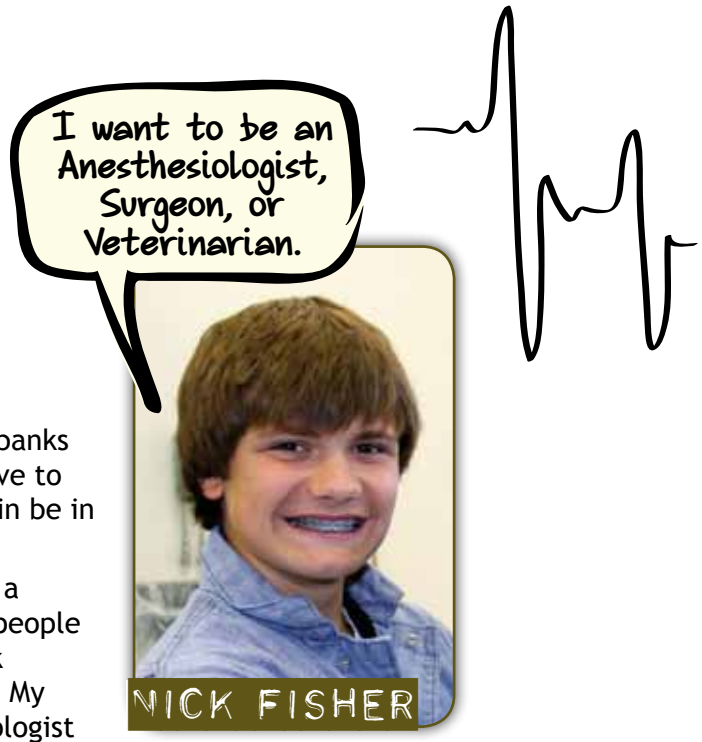
"I became interested in becoming a doctor mostly through television shows. I plan to graduate from high school, go to college, and then go on to medical school."

Has there been anyone special inspiring you?

"The people who helped me the most are my granny and my teachers Kathy Harsch, Mike Wier, and Aldora Atti. They encourage me to do my homework and do well in school."

CONOR QUARTERMAN

8th grade, Polaris K-12, Anchorage



NICK FISHER

9th grade, West Valley High School, Fairbanks

Nick says, "I have lived in Fairbanks all my life. Besides sports, I love to fish, travel, hunt, and just plain be in the wilderness.

"When I grow up, I want to be a doctor because I love helping people and working with them. I think the human body is fascinating. My friend's father is an anesthesiologist and he told me that he loves the work he does."

"My teachers and my parents encourage me. They know how to get me motivated to do my work. What I admire most about them is that they never give up and always try the hardest they can, no matter how hard the task."

> **"I love helping people... I think the human body is fascinating."**

CHARISSA HOBBS

High School Graduated:
Chugiak High School, Eagle River, AK

Current College:
Pre-med student,
University of Alaska Anchorage

Charissa says, "While in high school I job-shadowed Dr. Jeffrey Moore, an orthopedic surgeon, and Dr. Judith Whitcomb, a general surgeon—I fell in love with surgery. I believe in the AMSA (American Medical Student Association) slogan: 'It takes more than medical school to make a physician.' Yes, you do need to get good grades, but it's not only about grades. It's about your life experiences along the way that help shape you into a great doctor."

TINA TRAN

Tina says, "I remember the exact moment when I decided I wanted to become a physician. I was lying on a stretcher in the emergency room following a pedestrian-car collision, surrounded by a team of doctors. They moved around me quickly while calmly assuring me that I was in good hands. I felt a sense of trust and belief that has inspired me to give back to others."

"Growing up as a first generation Vietnamese-American, I feel that my parents instilled a work ethic that helps me push above and beyond in nearly everything that I aim to accomplish."

"My specialty interests include Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, and Obstetrics and Gynecology. One of my goals in life is to establish a non-profit organization that delivers essential medical care to Vietnam and other impoverished countries that lack access to good healthcare."

High School Graduated:
Unalaska High School, Unalaska, AK

Current College:
Pre-med student, UAA Honors College,
University of Alaska Anchorage

> **"It takes more than medical school to make a physician."**
>
> --American Medical Student Association

“Healthcare is really about teamwork.”

RYAN MCGHAN

What do you like best about your career?

“The best thing about being a doctor is that it’s the only job I’ve had where I am never looking at the clock to see when my shift is over. I enjoy the work and it is totally absorbing.”

What do you find most challenging?

“Becoming a doctor takes a long time, and a lot of hard work, before you ever get to do the job. All my training took me about 14 years after high school, but I had a lot of fun along the way and got to live in interesting places. Also, since I work primarily in the Intensive Care Unit, taking care of very, very sick people, it can be pretty emotional.”

Any advice for students?

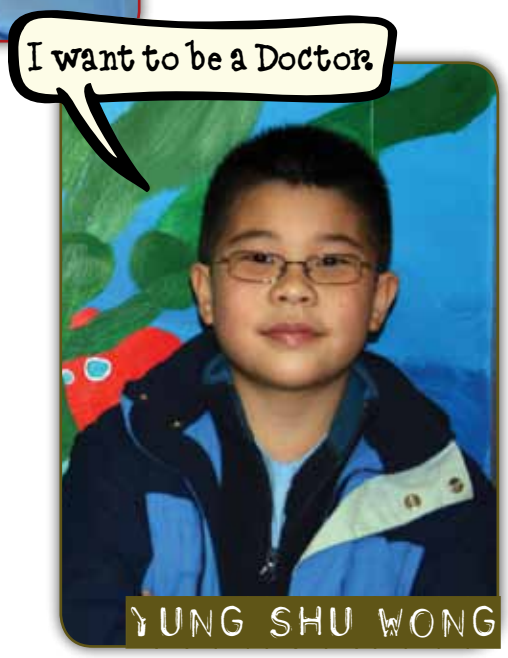
“I like being a doctor, but there are a lot of other ways to work in healthcare that don’t require the long schooling and effort. What they all do require, though, is a good work ethic and the desire to spend every day helping take care of other people. Healthcare is really about teamwork.”

High School Graduated:
Houston High School, Houston, AK

Colleges Graduated:
Amherst College, Massachusetts

University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Washington, WWAMI Program graduate

Current Career:
Physician, Providence Medical Center, Anchorage, AK



YUNG SHU WONG

7th grade, Polaris K-12, Anchorage

Doctors, Nurses, and a Whole Lot More ~ Check out Healthcare Careers!

Check out the many career possibilities in the healthcare field. Do you know what a medical technologist does? How about a radiographic technologist?

Find out about these careers and others in the **“Hot Jobs in Alaska - Consider a Job in Healthcare”** publication from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Ask about this booklet at your local Job Center, or find it online at *www.jobs.alaska.gov/hotjobs/healthcare.pdf*.

CEDAR O’DAUGHERTY

8th grade, Homer Connections Program, Homer

Why medicine as a career?

Hunter says, “Even as a small child, I always wanted to do something in service of my community. My favorite toys when I was little were an old stethoscope and a little plastic syringe that had a red core so when you pulled it back, it looked as though you were drawing someone’s blood. Cool!”

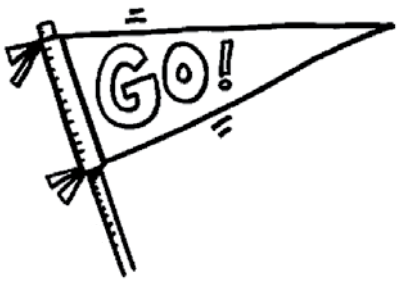
You want to become an Emergency Room doctor... why?

“I really like the problem-solving aspect of the ER. That’s what the physician does: gathers medical clues, pieces together the evidence, and hopefully finds an answer and a cure! It’s a lot like being a detective, only in medicine the end result of solving the problem is that you help someone get well.”

High School Graduated:
Wasilla High School, Wasilla, AK

Current College/Major:
University of Alaska Anchorage, Psychology, Pre-Med

HUNTER SCOTT RHOADES



What if No One in My Family Ever Went to College...

Even if no one in your family ever went to college, that doesn't mean that no one will. It takes just one person in a family to act upon that dream and be the example for others to follow.

You can be that first person!

It takes courage, determination, and planning to be the first. Talk to your teacher, counselor, or principal about what college is and how to prepare. Ask questions! Find out what you can do to get ready now. Take high school classes that will prepare you. Ask if your school has a mentor program to help you succeed in education after high school. Look around for role models. Find people like you who have succeeded. Ask them how they did it. Every family has had the first to go to college and yours can, too.

Learn More About Careers ~ Interview people in your Community!

One of the best ways to learn about different careers is from people who work in them. That person might be your parent, your teacher, or a family friend. If you don't know anyone who works in the area that interests you, ask your parents and teachers for some ideas about whom you could talk to about the work they do.

Here are some questions you can ask them:

What do you like most and least about your career?

_____

What education or special training did you need to work in your career? _____

What high school subjects were most important for you to prepare for this career? _____

What advice would you give someone preparing for this career?

_____

DO YOU KNOW

which Alaska college campus this is?

Photo by Todd Paris, UAF

Answer: University of Alaska Fairbanks

Can you picture yourself here?

anatomy

language arts

history

dance

sports

geology

art

I like science...or math...or music...

What careers might be good for ME?

Check out the U. S. Department of Labor Web site below to learn about careers in fields that interest you.

www.bls.gov/k12/

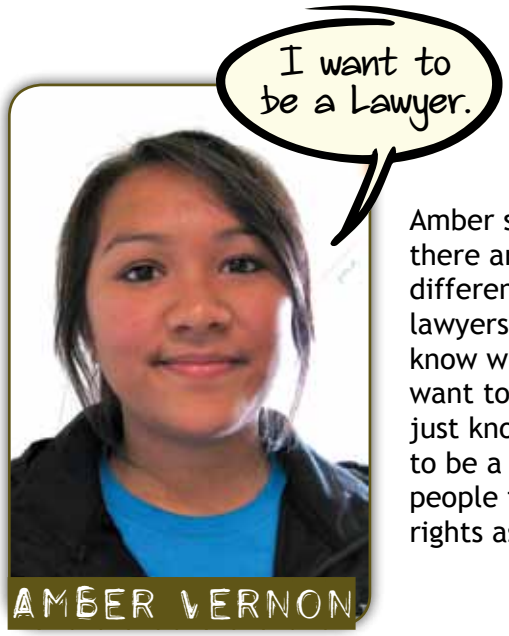
algebra

geography

Political science

band

I want to be a Lawyer



8th grade, Unalaska City School, Unalaska

Amber says, "I know there are lots of different types of lawyers and I don't know which field I want to practice in. I just know that I want to be a lawyer to help people fight for their rights as citizens."

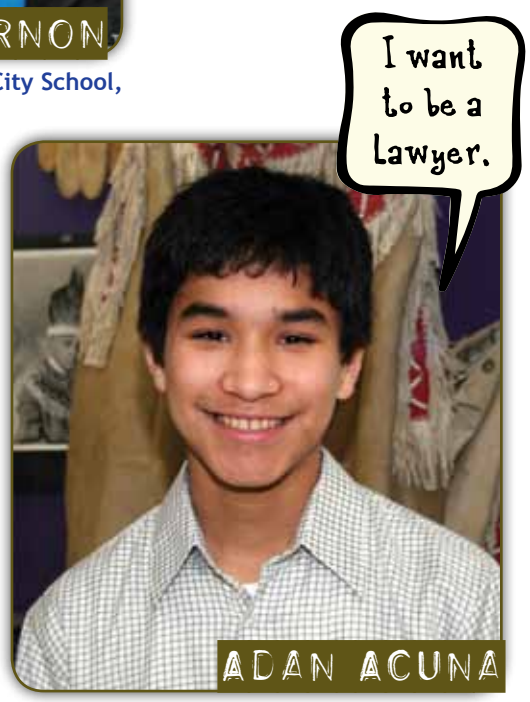
How long does it take to become a lawyer?

After graduating from high school, it takes about seven years to become a practicing lawyer. This includes four years for a bachelor's degree and three years in law school. After law school, to be licensed to practice law, a person must pass the state bar exam in the state where he or she plans to work.

7th grade, Central Middle School, Anchorage

How do you become a Judge?

In the United States, someone who wants to become a court judge starts by becoming a lawyer. Most potential judges practice law for ten to fifteen years before seeking to become a judge. Judges are either appointed or elected.



8th grade, Romig Middle School, Anchorage

DESIGNER

ACCOUNTANT

PLUMBER

RADIOLOGIST

DOCTOR

PROFESSOR

MUSICIAN

CARPENTER

You could also become a Paralegal!

Paralegals work in law offices, researching and investigating facts for lawyers. They help prepare for hearings and trials by using computers and legal books to research previous court rulings. Paralegals write up summaries for lawyers to review and prepare legal documents to be filed with the court.

To work as a paralegal, you will need to complete a paralegal program, which can be a 2-year associate degree or a 4-year bachelor's degree.

Careers, Careers, Careers....

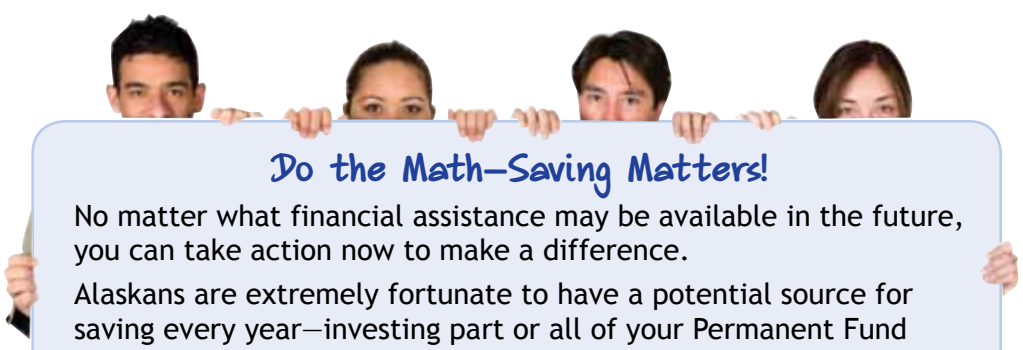
Find them all on AKCIS!

There are many, many jobs and careers that you have probably never heard of—one of them may be just right for you!

A great place to learn all about hundreds of different careers is AKCIS—the Alaska Career Information System.

Ask your teacher if your school is connected to AKCIS. It's available free to all Alaska schools! If your teacher or principal needs information, tell them they can call the AKCIS Helpline (877) 269-7974 (269-6929 in Anchorage), or email us at *akcis@alaska.gov*.

akcis.intocareers.org



Do the Math—Saving Matters!

No matter what financial assistance may be available in the future, you can take action now to make a difference.

Alaskans are extremely fortunate to have a potential source for saving every year—investing part or all of your Permanent Fund Dividend in a savings account or college savings program is a great financial step to achieving your education and career goals.

Just think—if you start in 7th grade and put just half of your PFD into an investment account you can have almost $5,000 when you are ready to start college. If you invest the entire dividend you'll have almost $10,000 to get you on the road to success.*

For more tips on saving smart for college visit Alaska's college savings plan online at *www.uacollegesavings.com*.

**Based on average PFD of $1,400 with 5% interest compounded monthly.*

Alaska Summer Research Academy (ASRA)

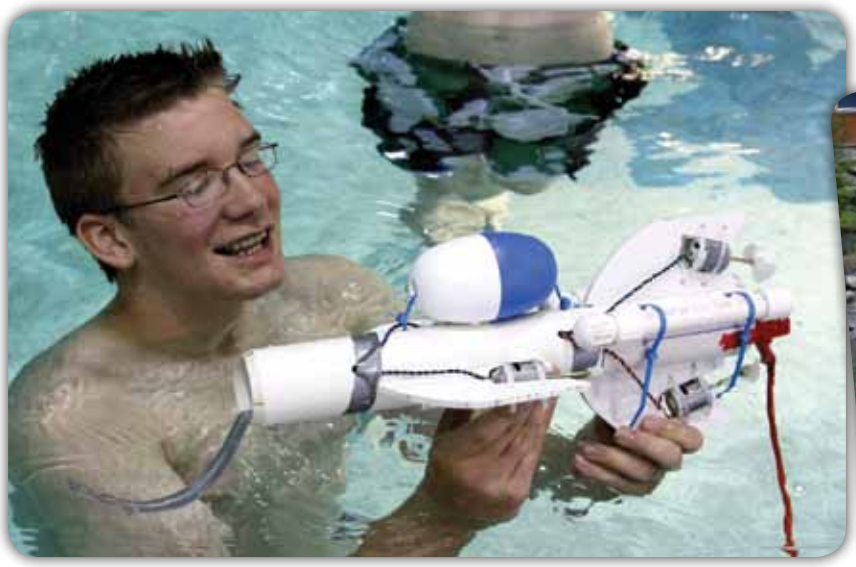
CHECK IT OUT!

Some of the students in this newspaper attended ASRA in 2009. This exciting program might be a great way for you to spend your summer, too!

ASRA provides an opportunity for students in grades 8-12 to live on the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) campus and work with UAF faculty, staff, and local professionals to learn and have fun.

You choose one course and are immersed in that single subject for the entire two weeks. Some of the courses planned for summer 2010 include Radical Math, Forensics, Archaeology, Extreme Photography, Marine Biology, and others.

At ASRA, you'll be in a small group of students who share your interests and are excited about learning new things. Find out more at *www.uaf.edu/asra*.



ASRA Engineering Design student Paul Owens (sophomore at Lathrop HS, Fairbanks) tests his underwater robot in the UAF pool.

What's your story going to be?

Have you started writing your story? You begin by setting goals for your future and learning how to reach those goals. Your actions now can help you create a satisfying and successful life story.

In this issue of *What's Your Story?* middle school students from Tok, Homer, Anchorage, Kotzebue, Unalaska, Ouzinkie, Fairbanks, Kwigillingok, and others have shared their stories.

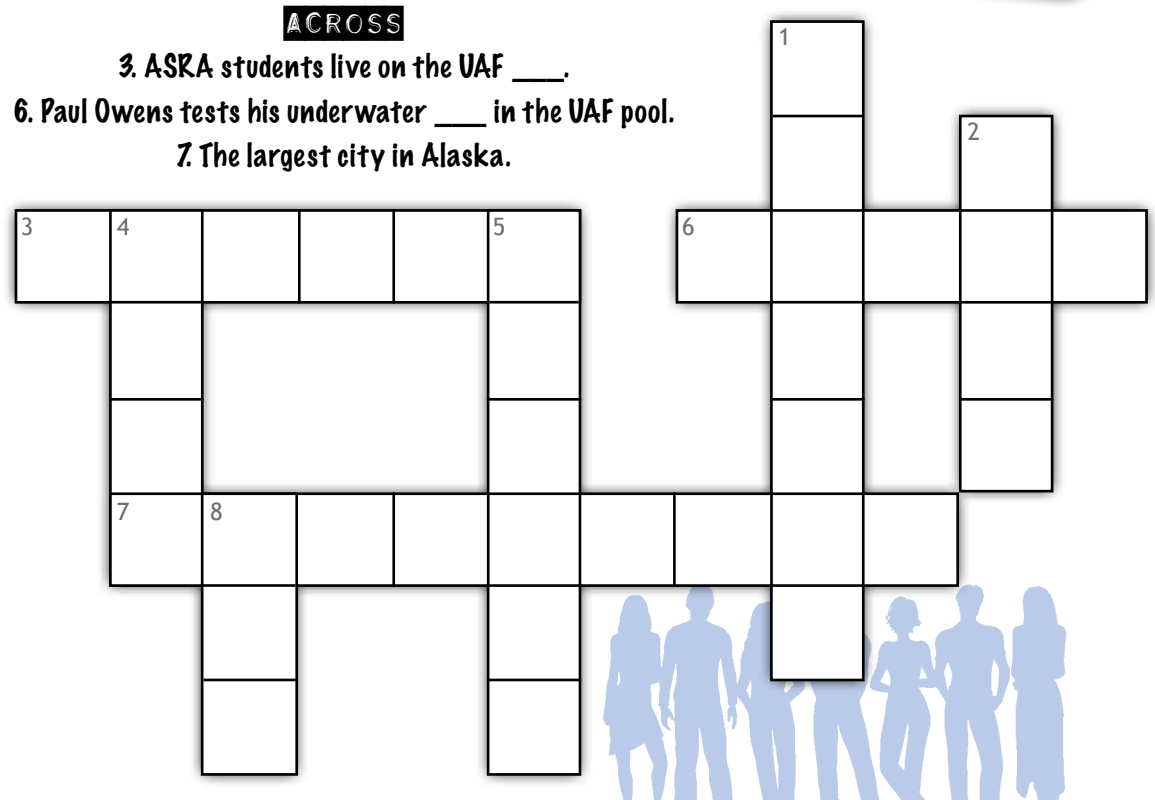
Interested in sharing your story? If you'll be in middle school or junior high school during the 2010-2011 school year, we want to hear from you.

Ask your teacher or parent to call our Outreach staff at 269-7980 (toll-free outside Anchorage, 877-577-3367) to learn how YOU can become part of the next issue!

Crossword Puzzle:

DOWN

1. ASRA marine ___
2. Paul's robot is tested in the UAF ___.
4. Alaska Summer Research Academy
5. middle ___
8. opposite of old

ACROSS

3. ASRA students live on the UAF ___.
6. Paul Owens tests his underwater ___ in the UAF pool.
7. The largest city in Alaska.