

# EXCEL Alaska Quarterly Newsletter - March 2019 Newsletter



The new year is here! The third quarter is over! Take a look at how EXCEL Alaska is expanding students' horizons. We have only one more quarter to go in this school year and a packed quarter it will be!



## EXCEL 9



Our second EXCEL 9 (January 14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>) of the 2018-2019 school year opened our third quarter and nine students completed the session! We had a few trials going into this session, starting with weather keeping about half of the students who had

signed up to attend from getting to Anchorage. We truly missed our students from Chevak and Tununak.

With students in the EXCEL house, we were met with one more earthquake-related

challenge; the sewer line out of the house had been damaged. EXCEL is nothing if not resilient and we adapt well. We packed up the students and relocated the session to a hotel and continued on with our new plan.

The curriculum remained the same and students had a wonderful week, accomplishing a great deal, regardless of the issues we faced at the beginning of the session. The EXCEL 9 is designed to introduce students to various career pathways through interactive field trips and job tours. The students practiced valuable employability skills, such as time-management, teamwork, consensus building, and problem solving. (They were able to witness the “problem solving” skill in action while our staff dealt with the much-needed session relocation!) Additionally, the students started their Personal Learning & Career Plan (PLCP) on AKCIS. Students completed a resume, cover letter, and job application as part of their mini-career workshop and took a look into their work-values and the importance of finding a career to fit them. Below are some highlights of what the students completed.

- Drug and Alcohol Prevention Training
- Healthy lifestyles lesson about the importance of drinking water
- Social media use training
- Job tours at The Alaska Zoo and The Anchorage Museum
- Service learning project, created beaded bracelets for elders at the South Central Foundation
- AKCIS profiles
- How to fill out and complete a job application, resumé, and cover letter
- Personal social skill such as hand-shakes, eye contact when speaking, and active listening

Our thanks to the Yukon-Koyukuk School District, Kuspuk School District, Iditarod Area School District, and the Yupiit School District for sending their students to us. We missed our students from the Lower Kuskokwim School District as well as the Kashunimiut School District and hope the weather is more forgiving in the coming months!

Problem Solving \* Know How to Learn \* Respect Others



**Did you know?** - You can visit the [Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development's](#) webpage and take a peek at occupations and sort them alphabetically, by wage, and employment outlook.



# EXCEL 10

Our second EXCEL 10 session is behind us. From Jan 31<sup>st</sup> – Feb 7<sup>th</sup> 18

students joined us in Anchorage! It was a wonderful week and the students experienced a variety of lessons.

EXCEL 10 is designed to give students a taste of different career industries to get them thinking about their future career paths. The activities included in EXCEL 10 push students to



step outside of their comfort zones and teach them to effectively communicate with adults and peers in business environments. Students went on job tours at Providence Hospital, and the University of Alaska Anchorage. Additional highlights are listed below:

- Self Defense Class
- How to exercise correctly to improve heart function
- Suicide Prevention and Stress & Coping
- Completed a job application, resumé, cover letter, mock interview
- Job tours at Providence Hospital and UAA
- Learned personal social skill such as hand shakes, eye contact when speaking, active listening
- Personal Learning Career Plan (PLCP) on AKCIS
- Navigate public transportation in Anchorage
- Alaska State Driver's Permits
- Alaska State IDs
- Earned .5 high school credit in Career Development Life Work Planning

Obtain a Driver's License \* Communication \* Fit for Duty



**Did you know?** - The [Alaska Career Information System \(AKCIS\)](#) you can store your resumé and other documents to have readily available to send to prospective employers?



## EXCEL 7

34 students joined us from February 10th through the 13th for EXCEL 7. We spent a wonderful three days with the students. We tried out a new (to us) camp, Birchwood Camp, in



Chugiak. It was a wonderful venue for our youngest set of students, plenty of room to run, as was indicated by the fun game of tag played in the evening.

EXCEL 7 is all about introducing students to different leadership traits and to start thinking about

their futures. We include activities in EXCEL 7 intended to push students to step outside of their comfort zones and teach them the importance of communication, motivation, integrity, adaptability, and flexibility when working with others. Students become immersed in various activities and lessons where they learn about themselves and what types of careers they would be of interest to them.

Good Attendance \* Follows Through \* Accepts Advice



**Did you know?** - There are many [healthcare jobs](#) listed on the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's [website](#).



## EXCEL 8

From February 18<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> 27 students joined us for the EXCEL 8 session. Similar to EXCEL 7, leadership traits are at the forefront of this session to help us build our students.

It was a great 3 days and the students accomplished a great deal. The EXCEL 8 is designed to introduce students to different leadership traits and to guide them to think more about their futures. The activities included in EXCEL 8 push students to step outside of their comfort zones and teaches them the importance of communication, motivation, integrity, adaptability, consensus building, resiliency, teamwork, and flexibility when working with others. Students were immersed in various activities and lessons where they learned about themselves and what types of careers would be of interest to them.



Volunteer \* Graduate from High School \* Manage Stress



**Did you know?** - There is an [AKCIS Junior](#) for middle school-aged students. It is a free, interactive, web-based education and career planning tool to help students identify their interests, explore career pathways, and begin to make their own Personal Learning and Career Plans.



## Board News

Congratulations to Viola Smith, of CITC, new Executive Board member, sitting in the Secretary seat; to Brenda Pacarro, Calista Corporation, moving into the Vice-Chair seat; to Wayne Morgan, Aniak Village Council, new to the board; and finally, to Andrea Gusty, TKC, moving into the Board Chair seat. We thank all our board members for their continued service and strong leadership throughout the life of EXCEL Alaska and we look forward to continuing to work with these wonderful individuals. Their insight, knowledge, and dedication is one of the many reasons we are so strong at EXCEL.

If you have an interest in serving on EXCEL Alaska's Board of Directors on either the advisory board or the executive board, please contact [Carol Wilson](#), EXCEL Alaska's Executive Director.



**Did you know?** - [Registered Apprenticeships](#) are helping more than 225,000 employers across the country reduce employee-training costs, increase employee knowledge and loyalty, and keep pace with advancing technology.



**Did you notice?** After each session report in this newsletter (and in previous newsletters) there are three words, or set of words, separated by an asterisk, such as "Fit for Duty \* Respect Others \* Dependable." Each of these has been taken directly from the *YES! Employability Skills* program, and all the skills are embedded in the curriculum for EXCEL Alaska. We use them in foundational sessions as well as specialty sessions and they are one of the reasons our students are so successful. Not only are they good for the workplace, but they are wonderful for classroom management. Students understand what Alaska employers are looking for and they hear it again and again when they are participating in their mock interviews, job tours, and from other instructors in other programs, such as MAPTS and NIT. If you would like to know more about the *YES! Employability Skills* program, or if you would like posters for your workplace or school, please contact us, or partner, [APICC](#).

**Want a Great Career?**  
**Alaskan Employers Expect:**

**WORK ATTITUDES**

- RESPONSIBLE/SELF-DISCIPLINED**  
Is a self-starter, committed to and accountable for work assigned. Does not do just the bare minimum to get the job done.
- WILLING TO LEARN/PRIDE IN DOING A GOOD JOB**  
Is flexible, ambitious, driven, realistic, efficient. Willing and able to respond to change in work assignments or team roles enthusiastically and in new ways of doing things. Willing to do the job even until it is done correctly. Able to see long term results of efforts on the job.
- SAFETY-CONSCIOUS**  
Always thinks about safety in every aspect of the job. Takes responsibility for work team actions. Notices and corrects unsafe situations in the workplace. Does not have to be told for safe procedures, concerned for the safety of others.
- MANAGES STRESS AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS**  
Manages job pressures constructively. Does not allow personal problems to interfere with work.
- POSITIVE OUTLOOK**  
Views the good in situations and works constructively to solve problems. Has a positive self-image, is self-confident, sets personal goals.
- FOLLOWS THE RULES**  
Performs tasks in the prescribed manner, does not break rules but will help change rules if needed.
- WORKING WITH OTHERS**  
Is able to work as a productive team member. able to share information, credits and praise. others, puts the team above personal interests.
- RESPECTS OTHERS**  
Has good manners, shows common courtesy, appreciates multicultural diversity.
- TECHNOLOGY USAGE**  
Smartphones and tablets have changed the workplace in a short amount of time. Keeps your employer's technology guidelines.

**SKILLS/COMPETENCIES**

- COMMUNICATION**  
**READ:** Has the ability to comprehend written material and take appropriate action.  
**SPEAK:** Be able to express ideas clearly and concisely to individuals and in groups. Has good customer communication skills, gives clear directions.  
**WRITE:** Speaks correctly, writes legibly, constructs ideas clearly and concisely. Is able to write a business letter and fill out forms properly.  
**LISTEN:** Can comprehend what is said and take action.
- MATH**  
Able to apply basic and applicable math skills to accomplish tasks.
- PROBLEM SOLVING**  
Has the ability to identify source of problem, demonstrates good common sense, is creative and innovative.
- INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY**  
Can compare computers to process information, is familiar with common technology applications, and works in the workplace.
- KNOWING HOW TO LEARN**  
Is able to teach oneself new skills, to seek and use new information appropriately.
- APPLYING WHAT IS LEARNED**  
Processes various skills including the more complex kinds of thinking, such as reasoning, analysis, and problem solving.
- LOOKING FOR WORK**  
Is able and confident to identify job opportunities, to complete a job application, to prepare a resume, dress appropriately and conduct oneself during an interview.

**WORK ETHIC**

- HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**  
Actions are based on a personally held set of values, can be trusted to follow the rules even when supervisors are not present. Keeps one's word or consistent with the company mission and vision.
- ACCEPTS ADVICE, SUPERVISION, CRITICISM**  
Has high self-esteem and does what is asked, accepts criticism and uses it to improve.
- DEPENDABLE / FOLLOWS THROUGH**  
Works diligently to complete tasks, alerts supervisor to problems or delays.
- GOOD ATTENDANCE / ON TIME**  
Can be depended upon to be at work except for very good reasons.
- ACCURACY OF WORK / NO WASTE**  
Is careful and avoids mistakes, corrects errors, takes pride in work well done, holds high standards.
- VOLUNTEER**  
Volunteering shows initiative and a commitment to community.

**OPEN DOORS TO EMPLOYMENT**

- GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL**  
A high school diploma is a minimum education requirement for employment.
- HAVE A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE**  
A driver's license is a formal form of ID and demonstrates initiative. Keep a clean driving record as many companies will not hire someone with a DUI.
- BE ABLE TO PASS A DRUG SCREENING**  
Many companies have a zero tolerance for substance abuse. Often it means employees do not show up for work, or can be a safety hazard if they have been using drugs or alcohol in the recent past.
- POSSESS BASIC EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**  
Unlike some of the soft skills programs to help you develop the competencies, attitudes, and values employers are seeking.
- FIT FOR DUTY**  
Be able to pass a medical assessment to be sure an employee can safely do a specific job or task under the working conditions.
- HAVE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**  
Many services are available for people who speak English as a second language. Employers need workers who are proficient in English, as this can be a matter of safety in many professions.
- GAIN TRAINING/EDUCATION**  
Some employers say if you have mastered soft skills, they will give you the rest. Others require job specific training or experience.
- NARROW GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT**  
If you have poor work history or you are an ex-offender, utilize resources offering help. Many companies hire ex-offenders, the honest, persons yearn self-provisionally, and reliable job seekers.
- SOCIAL MEDIA**  
With the ever-increasing use and variety of social media, many employers check social media for potential employees' character and to see if the applicant would be a good fit for the culture of the organization. Use social media wisely.

**APICC**  
Alaska Process Industry Careers Consortium  
[APICC.ORG](http://APICC.ORG)



## Sessions in Process or Coming Soon!

The rest of the year is ahead of us! Please check into the following:

- [Industry Boot Camp](#) - March 19 - 30
- [Driver's License Camp](#) - March 19 - 30
- [Introduction to Aviation](#) - March 21 - 30
- **EXCEL 12** - CANCELLED to make room for CTMJ Futures Fair
- [CTMJ Futures Fair](#) - April 15 - 20

- [EXCEL Decathlon & Personal Finance Fair](#) - April 30 - May 3
- [MAPTS](#) - May 20 - June 14
- [Summer XL](#) - June 8 - 29

For an application, [click here](#). Applications are submitted through your school's principal or counselor. If you have any questions about any of EXCEL's camps or sessions, please contact Tony at [twilson@excelalaska.org](mailto:twilson@excelalaska.org).



Look forward to more in the next EXCEL Newsletter!

In the meantime, keep up with us on [Facebook](#).

#### EXCEL Staff

- Carol Wilson - Executive Director
- Billijo Mills - Deputy Director
- Christa Wilson - Director of Operations
- Martha Peck - NYCP Industry & Community Outreach Manager
- Joe Thornton - NYCP Post-secondary Outreach Manager
- Tony Wilson - Student Services Coordinator
- Russ Mills - Facilities & Capital Projects Manager
- Marquis Revels - CTE Lead Instructor
- Kattie Hoeldt - Instructor
- Carlene Liskey - Instructor
- Dyllon Mills - Instructor
- Konrad Koscik - Facilitator
- Walter Lee - Facilitator
- Callie Phillips - Facilitator
- Tina Simpson - Office Manager
- Beverly Hayes - Cook

#### EXCEL Board of Directors:

- Andrea Gusty, The Kuskokwim Corporation - Board Chair
- Brenda Pacarro, Calista Corporation - Vice Chair
- Colin Stewart, LKSD - Treasurer
- Viola Smith, CITC - Secretary
- Wayne Morgan, Aniak Traditional Council - Board Member at Large

#### Advisory Board Members:

- Sam Brice, Brice Construction
- Meg Day, Donlin Gold
- Sue Hoeldt, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp
- Patty Woody, YKSD

