

# EXCEL Alaska - Education for Life Quarterly Newsletter - June 2019 Newsletter



The new year is here! The fourth quarter is nearly over! Take a look at how EXCEL Alaska is expanding students' horizons. We feel so fortunate to have provided so many opportunities to so many students and made a difference in so many lives.



## EXCEL / NIT Industry Boot Camp

The *Industry Boot Camp* is an important session for any student who wants to go into the construction field. Students have the opportunity to earn certifications, key components in any resumé when seeking employment. Aerial Manlift, OSHA 10-Hour Safety First Aid/CPR/AED, ATSSA Flagger, NCCER Compaction Equipment, and Fall Protection Certifications each has standards to which the students had to meet to earn their credentials. Ten (of ten) students met the standards with the exception of Compaction, in which eight of the



ten were successful. Our thanks to NIT for tailoring these session to our students while not losing the integrity and rigor of the subject matter.

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/NIT Driver's Education / License

Getting a driver's license is a big hurdle for any teenager, but in rural Alaska it is often unsurmountable. In this *Driver's Education* session, students were in an 8-hour driver's safety course followed by six hours of driving time with an instructor. Of the 17 students who attended this course, eight of them successfully were able to pass all the tests required to obtain a license. The others have their permits and will practice for the next time.



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



**Did you know?** - The [new design](#) for the Alaska driver's licenses have some new features for increased security.



# EXCEL Introduction to Aviation



Fourteen students attended our *Introduction to Aviation* strand this past March and were able to observe a variety of careers in the industry. With the vast variety of jobs associated with aviation, it would be impossible to see all of them. However, through some amazing tours, students were able to observe those unique to the industry. Our appreciation to UAA Aviation for the tour of their facility

and for allowing our students to practice on the simulators. Being able to see how air traffic control works can only be realized through this sort of experience. We thank Alaska Airlines for the tour of their new maintenance hangar. Those giant jets are a completely different bird when standing next to one! Students attended the Aviation Hall of Fame banquet and were recognized by the master of ceremonies. We suspect the highlight of the session was their one-hour "discovery flight" with a certified flight instructor (CFI). To find out some of what it takes to be a pilot, students spent time in a classroom with a CFI studying the ground school curriculum. All of this combined realized students a .5 high school credit in Introduction to Aviation.

Good Attendance \* Follows Through \* Accepts Advice

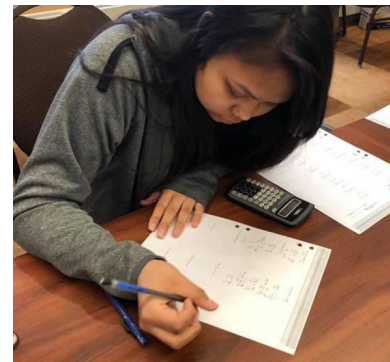


**Did you know?** - The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development estimates employment and [job openings for airline pilots, co-pilots and flight engineers](#) will grow nearly 12 percent between 2014 and 2024.



## Credit Recovery

Choosing either math or language arts, seventeen students attended this intensive *Credit Recovery* session. The class breaks down to 70 hours of instructional time over the 9-day period, giving each what they need to earn .5 high school credit! In some instances, this session made the difference between graduating or going on to another semester of high school. Congratulations to the participants, it was a tough nine days, but you did it!



Volunteer \* Graduate from High School \* Manage Stress



**Did you know?** - EXCEL Alaska has served 487 students this year so far. We still have the MAPTS program as well as Summer XL to count. We are on our way to a record year, despite the hurdles weather and an earthquake threw at us!



## CTMJ Futures Fair



This spring we tried something new. Mid-April brought our first *College, Trades, Military, & Jobs Futures Fair* (CTMJ). 44 high school seniors who had an idea of where they want their life to lead them had the opportunity, over the course of four full days, to get assistance with the next step towards realizing their goals. Day one was "testing day" for those who needed to take ACCUPLACER, TABE, or ASVAB. ACCUPLACER is a

placement exam for the University of Alaska, TABE is an entrance exam for AVTEC, and ASVAB is the adult basic aptitude test for entrance into the military. Additionally, these tests can serve as benchmarks for the students to know where they may need extra assistance, or in some cases, skip to a higher level course. The second and third days, students were treated to a career fair like no other! They visited with college and military recruiters or they could have applied and even interviewed for jobs. Each vendor was able to offer personal assistance for the students on entrance applications, scholarship applications, and even job applications. Some had interviews, while others worked on resumés and cover letters. The final day was wrap up, anything they didn't complete, they were able to get help to finish. Of course it was all culminated with a dance and the Mark Brown Band supplied some great music! For a first-time event, it was a home run. We will definitely do it again next year!

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**Did you know?** - [AKCIS](#) 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.



## Academic Decathlon & Personal

# Finance Fair

The beginning of May found the EXCEL staff in Aniak for the annual gathering of students from up and down the Kuskokwim and points beyond for the *Academic Decathlon & Personal Finance Fair*. 136 students representing eleven villages and four school districts converged on the Aniak Junior/Senior High School for four full days of academic and skills competitions. Students vied for top individual awards in speech, essay, math, science, social studies, keyboarding, and geography. Friendly competitions for team awards brought students on the basketball and volleyball courts as well as merging their minds and creativity for the team banner awards and balloon car building.



The personal finance portion of the event was geared towards understanding money and budgeting. The upper level students spent some time at a "Financial Reality Fair" and finding out about the expenses of living as a head of a household. What does a car cost? What does rent cost? What do utilities cost? And what do kids cost? All of this in a matter of two short hours is pretty awakening! Our thanks to the kind folks from Matanuska Credit Union for sending George out to us!

We would also like to thank the adult chaperones and team leaders who helped make this a very successful session. We appreciate your energy and enthusiasm to direct students to meaningful experiences. As always, our cooks did an amazing job of keeping everyone fed.

Finally, our deepest appreciation to Donlin Gold, LLC for their generous support of this event this year and many, many in the past.

Check out our [Facebook page](#) for photos and awards.

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## Board News

If you have an interest in serving on EXCEL Alaska's Board of Directors on either the advisory board or the executive board,



**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, shows initiative, efficient. Willing and able to respond to change in work assignments or learn new technology and 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 area safety. Notices and corrects unsafe situations in the workplace. Does not have to be told to use 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 individual personal interests.

**RESPECTS OTHERS**  
Is a good team player, shows common courtesy, appreciates multicultural diversity.

**TECHNOLOGY USAGE**  
Sensitiveness and habits have changed the workplace in a short amount of time. Reminds your employers to change guidelines.

**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, is 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.

**APICC**  
Alaska Process Industry Careers Consortium  
[APICC.ORG](#)

**SKILLS/COMPETENCIES**

**COMMUNICATION**  
**READ:** Has the ability to comprehend written material and take appropriate action.  
**WRITE:** Speaks correctly, writes legibly, expresses ideas clearly and concisely. Is able to write a business letter and fill out forms properly.  
**SPEAK:** Be able to express ideas clearly and concisely to individuals and in groups, has good customer communication skills, gives clear directions.  
**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, brainstorm good common sense, is creative and innovative.

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY**  
Can search computers to process information, is familiar with common technology applications and tools 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**  
Possess 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 promote oneself during an interview.

**OPEN DOORS TO EMPLOYMENT**

**GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL**  
A high school diploma is a minimum education requirement for employment.

**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 barrier of entry in some areas.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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, person you self professionally, and rebuild your chance.

**POSSESS BASIC EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**  
Utilize some of the soft skills programs to help you develop the competencies, attitudes, and values employers are seeking.

**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 fit a good fit for the culture of the organization, like social media misdeeds.

**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.



## Sessions in Process or Coming Soon!

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

- [MAPTS](#) - May 20 - June 14 (application deadline is past)
- [Summer XL](#) - June 8 - 29 (application deadline - May 15th)
- [George River Internship](#) - July 13-22 application
- [Math-Science Expedition](#) - August 8-19 application

If you have any questions about any of EXCEL's camps or sessions, please contact Tony at [twilson@excelalaska.org](mailto:twilson@excelalaska.org).



**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
- Marquis Revels - CTE Lead Instructor
- Tony Wilson - Student Services Coordinator
- Russ Mills - Facilities & Capital Projects Manager
- Kattie Hoeldt - Instructor
- Carlene Liskey - Instructor
- Dyllon Mills - Instructor
- Konrad Koscik - Facilitator
- Walter Lee - Facilitator
- Cally Phillips - Facilitator
- Tina Simpson - Office Manager
- Beverly Hayes - Cook

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