

# EXCEL Alaska Quarterly Newsletter - 2018 December Newsletter



The calendar year is nearly over, as is the second quarter of the 2018-2019 school year! Take a look at how EXCEL Alaska is expanding students' horizons and we still have the rest of the school year ahead of us!



## UAF Mini-Bridging

The UAF Mini-bridging was a great start to the second quarter of the school year and it was as successful as you would imagine. Nine students traveled to Fairbanks from October 8th through the 13th to get a taste of college and getting immersed in campus life. While in Fairbanks, each student completed the



following:

- Office of Admissions meeting
- UAF application
- UAF main campus tour
- Pipeline Training Center tour - Process Technology
- Community & Technical College tour - Culinary Arts, Automotive Technology, Welding, Nursing, Information Technology, Construction Technology, Aviation Maintenance Technology, and Heavy Duty Diesel Technology
- A visit to the Veterinary Medicine Program
- Financial Aid office meeting - beginning FAFSAs
- Meeting with a UAF student panel - Q & A session
- Sitting in a 200 level criminology class
- Learning about and filling out scholarship applications
- Sitting for ACCUPLACER for writing placement

Students left with a list of things they will need to complete; here are the next steps:

- Finish FAFSA
- Finish scholarship essays
- Ask for two letters of recommendation for scholarship packet
- Take ACT or Workkeys assessment for Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS)
- Take ACT and send scores to UAF
- Take ALEKS math placement assessment

Our thanks to UAF for the hospitality. The students gained a great deal of knowledge, enabling them to make more informed decisions for their futures.

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



## EXCEL 11



What answers do you get from students in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade when you ask the question, “What do you want to do after you graduate?” Collectively, many of us still don’t know the answer to that question, but we’re giving the students at EXCEL an opportunity to find out, and better yet, where they can go to gain education to get to where they want to be. EXCEL 11 is designed to

give students a taste of different post-secondary options to spur students to think about their future career paths. The session is student-run, as a simulated corporation. Each student completes a job application, resumé, and cover letter, then interviews for a position within the “corporation.” Students learn independent

living skills by budgeting for food and leisure. The session requires they purchase their own food and cook for themselves. They're learning some valuable lessons about how much it takes to feed a group! Those who might be on a culinary arts tract received some excellent experience.

Some of the other activities included in EXCEL 11 push students outside of their comfort zones and teach them to effectively communicate with adults and peers in business environments. Students visited UAA, AVTEC, Kenai Peninsula College, Alaska Christian College and GCI.

Some highlights:

- Students who visited AVTEC took the TABE entrance exam
- Completed drug and alcohol prevention training
- Completed a job application, a resumé, cover letter, and mock interview
- Job tours at Kenai Peninsula College (KPC), AVTEC, UAA, Job Corps, and Alaska Christian College
- Learned personal social skills i.e.: Hand-shakes, eye contact when speaking, and active listening
- Learned real life budgeting skills and independent living skills
- Created and/or updated a personal Learning Career Plan (PLCP) on AKCIS
- Learned how to navigate public transportation in Anchorage
- Learned how to write a formal thank you letter and properly address envelopes
- Studied for and received drivers permits
- Students earned .5 high school credit in Career Development Life Work Planning

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



**Did you know?** - The largest earthquake ever recorded by seismic instruments anywhere on the earth was a magnitude 9.5 earthquake in Chile on May 22, 1960.



## EXCEL 12

November 1st through the 11th, we hosted eighteen students for the EXCEL 12 session! We had eleven days with the students and in eleven days, we can accomplish a tremendous amount. EXCEL 12 is designed to be very individualized to the students' needs and wants for their next steps after

high school.

Students went on various post-secondary tours, filled out applications, and learned about scholarship opportunities.

The activities included in EXCEL 12 push students to step outside of their comfort zones and teaches them to effectively communicate with adults and peers in business environments. Below are some highlights of what the students completed.



- Healthy lifestyles lesson, including how to eat a balanced diet
- Shopping for food for the session, cooked all meals, planned leisure activities
- Alaska State Drivers Permit
- Found and applied for an actual job in Anchorage (for which they are qualified)  
Created a resume and cover letter for the job
- Interviewed for the job in a mock interview with either Calista Corporation, or Donlin Gold
- Toured campuses at Alaska Job Corps, AVTEC, Kenai Peninsula College, Alaska Christian College, UAA, and GCI
- Attended a personal finance presentation w/ Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
- Opened checking or savings accounts at Alaska USA Federal Credit Union
- Started scholarship goal essay
- Budgeting sheet for post-secondary options to understand the cost and needed scholarship money
- ACCUPLACER for U of A system
- Real life budgeting activity based on the job for which they interviewed
- Researched a place to live to fit their budget, and a car they could afford
- Completed TABE test for AVTEC

Good Attendance \* Follows Through \* Accepts Advice



**Did you know?** - Taking the proper actions during an earthquake, such as “Drop, Cover, and Hold On”, can save lives and reduce the risk of injury.



EXCEL 9

We just finished our second  
EXCEL 9 Session this





year! It was a wonderful week and the students accomplished a tremendous amount. 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. Additionally the

students started their Personal Learning & Career Plan (PLCP) on AKCIS. In the seemingly short time the students were with us, they also completed a resumé, cover letter, and job application as part of a mini icareer 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
- Training on social media use
- Job tours at the Alaska Zoo and the Anchorage Museum
- A service learning project (beaded bracelets for elders at the South Central Foundation)
- Creation of AKCIS profiles
- How to fill out and complete a job application, and resume, and cover letter
- Lessons on personal social skills such as: Hand shakes, eye contact when speaking, and active listening

It is such a joy to us to see these young people work through the steps to become responsible adults.

Volunteer \* Graduate from High School \* Manage Stress



**Did you know?** - [The Indian Ocean earthquake in 2004](#) generated enough energy to power all the homes and businesses in the United States for three days.



## AVTEC Mini-Bridging

Our AVTEC Mini Bridging Session brought fifteen students to the training campus from December 3<sup>rd</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>. Mini-Bridging Sessions are designed to give students a taste

college or trade school by having the students immersed in campus life. Below is a list of everything the students completed while at AVTEC.

- Met with admissions and completed AVTEC application
- AVTEC main campus tour
- Participated in Diesel Heavy, Small Boat Repair, or Culinary Arts classes
- Met with Financial Aide and started filling out their FAFSAs
- Met with an AVTEC student panel where students asked questions about AVTEC
- Students completed scholarship goal essay
- Started filling out scholarships
- TABE Assessment (AVTEC's entrance exam)
- 11th grade students took the WorkKeys Assessment for the Alaska Performance Scholarship
- Learned about scholarship opportunities



As with the UAF Mini-Bridging Session, students left with a list of next steps:

- Finish FAFSA
- Obtain two letters of recommendation for scholarship packet
- Secure an official copy of high school transcript for AVTEC application and scholarship packet
- Take WorkKeys assessment for Alaska Performance Scholarship
- Study for and retake TABE assessment

The students who attended this session could sign up for the post-secondary prep session this coming spring to prepare to retake the TABE exam for entrance to AVTEC. Students who are attend both Mini-Bridging camps were awarded .5 credits.

Follows the Rules \* Applying What is Learned \* Technology



**Did you know?** - [An average earthquake](#) lasts around a minute.



## Credit Recovery

Due to the earthquake in the Anchorage/MatSu area and the time needed to ensure the

EXCEL House is safe for our students, damage the *Credit Recovery or Postsecondary Prep* session was canceled. We are waiting on repairs and will be back on track in January.

Positive Outlook \* Dependable \* Working with Others



**Did you know?** - [Scientists think animals may sense weak tremors](#) before a quake. Other scientists believe animals may sense electrical signals set off by the shifting of underground rocks.



## Board Seat Available

Evelyn Pensgard, one of our esteemed executive board members, has retired and is leaving Alaska. While we certainly will miss Evelyn's insight and the positiveness she brought to our board, we do wish her all the best in her upcoming adventures.

Evelyn's departure leaves an empty board seat with EXCEL and we are now reaching out to see if any of you, or if you know of anyone, who would like to serve on the executive board. Please contact [Carol Wilson](#), Executive Director, for questions or for an application.



**Did you know?** - The highest tsunami caused by an earthquake happened in Japan in 1771. A tsunami 278 feet high struck Ishigaki Island.



**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](http://APICC.org).



# Want a Great Career?

## Alaskan Employers Expect:

<h3 style="text-align: center;">WORK ATTITUDES</h3> <p><b>RESPONSIBLE/SELF-DISCIPLINED</b> Is a self-starter, committed to and accountable for work assigned. Does not do less than a minimum to get the job done.</p> <p><b>WILLING TO LEARN/PRIDE IN DOING A GOOD JOB</b> 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.</p> <p><b>SAFETY-CONSCIOUS</b> Always thinks about safety in every aspect of the job, takes responsibility for work area actions. Notices and reports unsafe situations in the workplace. Does not have to be told to use safe procedures, concerned for the safety of others.</p> <p><b>MANAGES STRESS AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS</b> Manages job pressures constructively. Does not allow personal problems to interfere with work.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">SKILLS/COMPETENCIES</h3> <p><b>POSITIVE OUTLOOK</b> Views the good in situations and works constructively to solve problems, has a positive self-image, is self-confident, sets personal goals.</p> <p><b>FOLLOWS THE RULES</b> Performs tasks in the prescribed manner, does not break rules but will help change rules if needed.</p> <p><b>WORKING WITH OTHERS</b> Is able to work as a productive team member, able to share information, credits and praise, others, puts the team above personal interests.</p> <p><b>RESPECTS OTHERS</b> Has good manners, shows concern, courtesy, appreciates multicultural diversity.</p> <p><b>TECHNOLOGY USAGE</b> Smartphones and tablets have changed the workplace in a short amount of time. Begins your employees technology guidelines.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">COMMUNICATION</h3> <p><b>READ:</b> Has the ability to comprehend written material and take appropriate action.</p> <p><b>WRITE:</b> Speaks correctly, writes legibly, expresses ideas clearly and concisely. Is able to write a business letter and fill out forms properly.</p> <p><b>SPEAK:</b> Be able to express ideas clearly and concisely to individuals and in groups, use good customer customer service skills, gives clear directions.</p> <p><b>LISTEN:</b> Can comprehend what is said and take action.</p> <p><b>MATH</b> Able to apply basic and applicable math skills to accomplish tasks.</p> <p><b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b> Has the ability to identify source of problem, demonstrates good common sense, is creative and innovative.</p> <p><b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b> Can use computers to process information, is familiar with common technology applications and tools in the workplace.</p> <p><b>KNOWING HOW TO LEARN</b> Is able to teach oneself new skills, to seek and use new information appropriately.</p> <p><b>APPLYING WHAT IS LEARNED</b> Possess various skills including the more complex kinds of thinking, such as reasoning, analysis, and problem solving.</p> <p><b>LOOKING FOR WORK</b> 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.</p>
<h3 style="text-align: center;">WORK ETHIC</h3> <p><b>HONESTY AND INTEGRITY</b> 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.</p> <p><b>ACCEPTS ADVICE, SUPERVISION, CRITICISM</b> Has high self-esteem and does what is asked, accepts criticism and uses it to improve.</p> <p><b>DEPENDABLE / FOLLOWS THROUGH</b> Works diligently to complete tasks, persists superior to problems or delays.</p> <p><b>GOOD ATTENDANCE / ON TIME</b> Can be depended upon to be at work except for very good reasons.</p> <p><b>ACCURACY OF WORK / NO WASTE</b> Is careful and avoids mistakes, corrects errors, takes pride in work well done, holds high standards.</p> <p><b>VOLUNTEER</b> Volunteering shows initiative and a commitment to community.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">OPEN DOORS TO EMPLOYMENT</h3> <p><b>GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL</b> A high school diploma is a minimum education requirement for employment.</p> <p><b>HAVE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY</b> 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.</p> <p><b>HAVE A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE</b> 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.</p> <p><b>GAIN TRAINING/EDUCATION</b> Some employers say if you have mastered soft skills, they will give you the rest. Others require job specific training or experience.</p> <p><b>BE ABLE TO PASS A DRUG SCREENING</b> 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.</p> <p><b>NARROW GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT</b> If you have poor work history or you are an ex-offender, utilize resources offering help. Many companies hire ex-offenders, the honest, persons who self-improve, and rebuild your resume.</p> <p><b>POSSESS BASIC EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS</b> Utilize some of the soft skills programs to help you develop the competencies, attitudes, and values employers are seeking.</p> <p><b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b> 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.</p> <p><b>FIT FOR DUTY</b> Be able to pass a medical assessment to be sure an employee can safely do a specific job or task under the working conditions.</p>	



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:

- **EXCEL 9** - January 14 - 19
- **EXCEL 10** - January 24 - 31
- **EXCEL 7** - February 5 - 8
- **EXCEL 8** - February 18 - 22
- **Postsecondary Prep and Credit Recovery** - February 27 - March 8
- **Industry Boot Camp** - March 19 - 30
- **Introduction to Aviation** - March 21 - 30
- **EXCEL 12** - April 3 - 12
- **Mini-bridging** - April 15 - 20
- **EXCEL Academic Decathlon & Career Fair** - April 30 - May 3
- **MAPTS** - May 20 - June 14
- **Summer XL** - June 1-

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 Manager
- Russ Mills - Facilities & Capital Projects Manager
- Kattie Hoeldt - Instructor
- Carlene Liskey - Instructor
- Dyllon Mills - Instructor
- Konrad Kosciak - Facilitator
- Walter Lee - Facilitator
- Callie Phillips - Facilitator
- Marquis Revels - Facilitator
- Tina Simpson - Administrative Asst.
- Beverly Hayes - Cook

#### EXCEL Board of Directors:

- Maver Carey, The Kuskokwim Corporation - Board Chair
- Krystal Komkoff, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. - Vice Chair
- Colin Stewart, LKSD - Treasurer
- Andrea Gusty, The Kuskokwim Corporation - Secretary
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#### Advisory Board Members:

- Sam Brice, Brice Construction
- Meg Day, Donlin Gold
- Sue Hoeldt, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp (retired)
- Brenda Pacarro, Calista Corporation
- Patty Woody, YKSD
- Viola Smith, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.

