



# NSED

*Norton Sound Economic  
Development Corporation*  
Spring Newsletter 2025

## News

Member Representative Elections,  
Expanding Crab Capacity,  
History of Energy Subsidy

*Pages 1-3*

## NSSP

NSRKC From Sea to Table,  
Work for GFC, NSSP Capacity

*Pages 4-5*

## Fisheries

Pilgrim River Sockeye, Summer  
Work as a Fisheries Technician

*Pages 6-7*

## EET

Career Exploration, Boiler  
Maintenance Training

*Pages 8-9*

## Employment

Kathy Wheelehan to CAO,  
NSEDG Grows Nome Opps

*Pages 10-11*



*Nome NSSP crab processing on a busy July day during summer 2024.*

## NSSP is Expanding Crab Processing Capacity

New equipment is heading to Nome to expand the crab processing capacity at the Norton Sound Seafood Products plant this fall. The current crab processing line has been serving NSSP since 2008, and the time has come to update, streamline, and create more efficiency in the plant's crab production. Additionally, the rate of deliveries during the recent summer commercial crab fisheries has spurred the need to increase processing capacity to better support regional fishers. The upgrades, which will include installation of new cookers, chillers, and an upgraded refrigeration system, are expected

to double the plant's crab processing capacity.

Thanks to NSSP Operations Manager Justin Noffske, Northern NSSP Plant Manager Josh Osborne, and Safety Manager Jacob Mannix, conversations regarding new equipment at the plant have not only revolved around how to increase processing capacity but also how to reduce physical demands on employees and improve safety. Justin anticipates the upgrades, saying, "We look forward to these improvements to better serve our fishers, customers and team members." While Justin

*"Capacity" continued on page 5*

## NSEDG Board of Directors

Frieda Southall • Brevig Mission  
Vacant • Diomedes  
Ronald Daniels • Elim  
Shirley Antogham • Gambell  
Dean Peterson • Golovin  
Melvin Otton • Koyuk  
James "J.T." Sherman • Nome  
Milton Cheemuk • St. Michael  
Preston Rookok • Savoonga  
Harvey Sookiayak • Shaktoolik  
Morris Nashoanuk • Stebbins  
Joe Garnie • Teller

Frank Katchatag • Unalakleet  
Anna Oxereok • Wales  
Dan Harrelson • White Mountain

## Over \$20 Million Given Through NSEDG Energy Subsidies

The NSEDG Energy Subsidy has been an important part of NSEDG's community benefits for over 15 years. The electric utility subsidy program was initiated by the NSEDG Board of Directors in 2008, was offered again in 2012, and has been renewed annually since 2014 to assist eligible member community

households with their energy expenses. Since its inception, the program has provided over \$20 million in support to eligible households in NSEDG's member communities. NSEDG's 2025 payments have been made to regional utility companies to be distributed to household accounts in the coming weeks.

*"Energy Subsidy" continued on page 3*

***NSEDG will participate in the Bering Sea fisheries to provide economic development through education, employment, training, and financial assistance to our member communities.***

# Member Communities to Hold 2025 Elections for the NSEDC Board of Directors

In October, the communities of Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Stebbins and Wales will hold elections for their member representative seats for the NSEDC Board of Directors. The terms for the seats are five years and the elections will be held on October 7. Eligible candidates must be a resident fisher of the member community, have a criminal history free of any felony convictions or misdemeanor controlled substance convictions, and pass a drug screen test.

Candidacy packets will be made available in these communities in August. Packets will include more details on eligibility requirements and election information.



NSEDC Member Representative Election Candidacy Packets will be available in regional communities holding 2025 elections in August.



## NSEDC summer internship

Join the NSEDC team for 12 weeks, May-August this summer! Learn on-the-job, build professional skills, and engage with NSEDC departments and Norton Sound Seafood Products. Ask us about potential opportunities with NSEDC fishing partners in Seattle.



### Apply online by April 18

- Competitive wages
- Housing stipend
- Professional development
- Meaningful work



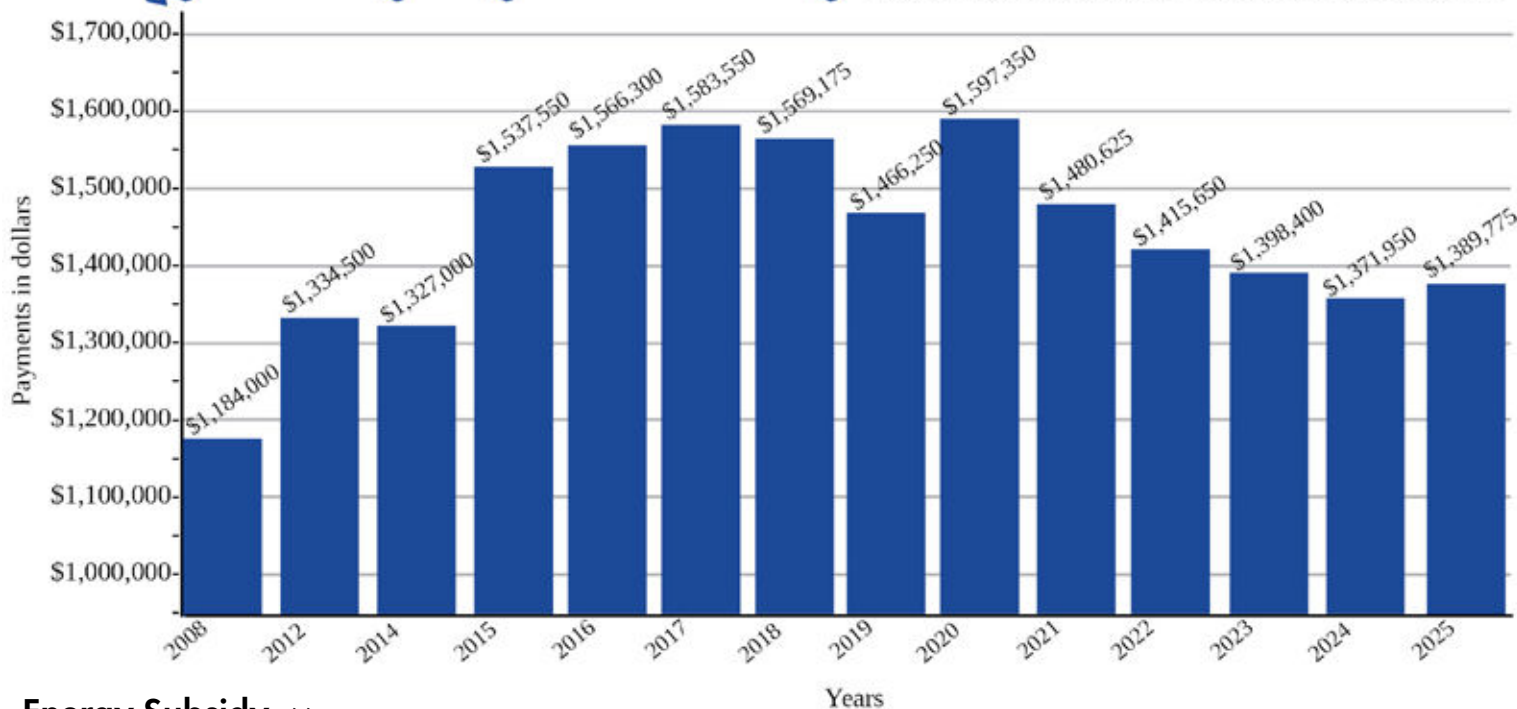
**Questions?** Contact NSEDC EET Director Dylan Johnson via email: [djohnson@nsedc.com](mailto:djohnson@nsedc.com) or call: (800) 650-2248.

\*applicants must qualify as Norton Sound residents under NSEDC's Norton Sound residency policy.



# Energy Subsidy Payment History

Since its inception in 2008, NSEDC has made over \$20 million in energy subsidy payments to qualifying resident households in our 15 member communities.



## Energy Subsidy // continued from page 1

Electricity is a costly household expense in western Alaska, and this cost continues to rise with the increase in fuel and shipping costs. In 2008, the NSEDC Board of Directors acknowledged the rising cost of electricity and moved to support a one-time, \$500 subsidy payment to eligible households' electric utility accounts. In its first year, the Energy Subsidy program provided over \$1.18 million in subsidies to 2,368 electric utility accounts throughout the region. Similarly, in 2012, in response to a record-breaking cold snap across the region, the board voted to again offer a \$500 one-time credit to eligible households. In total, NSEDC paid \$1.34 million in electric utility subsidies for nearly 2,700 households in the region in 2012.

Recognizing the outsized impact of the program for regional households, the NSEDC Board of Directors began offering the Energy Subsidy program annually in 2014. NSEDC supports residents in completing the application process through assistance from community liaisons and Community Benefits Department staff, through sign-up events or by outreach to households. Starting in 2021, an online application process was introduced, making it even easier for residents to apply for the subsidy. The 2025 Energy Subsidy program completed sign-ups on February 14th with the subsidy credit scheduled to hit residential utility accounts this spring.

Visit [www.nsedc.com](http://www.nsedc.com)  
to learn more about  
NSEDC's Community  
Benefits programs.



Community Benefits Specialist Marcus Pedro sits with NSEDC's Stebbins board member Morris Nashoanak during the Energy Subsidy sign-up event in Stebbins.



NSEDC Community Benefits staff Amanda Patrick and Bebucks Ivanoff offer sign-up assistance to community members at Nome City Hall.

# Norton Sound Red King Crab's Journey from Sea to Table

Norton Sound commercial fishers work hard to prepare for the summer season during which they harvest and deliver live Norton Sound red king crab to Norton Sound Seafood Products tender vessels and the plant in Nome each year. A portion of the crab stays in Nome, stocking the Norton Sound Seafood Center's retail store's live tanks for a

month or more for purchase. The seafood center sells live crab locally in Nome and will ship to other communities in the Norton Sound region during the summer season. For orders from farther afield, NSSP will ship frozen crab to the customer's door, whether across the state or on the other side of the country. Following the summer season sales, the seafood center continues to make steady sales of frozen crab and tends to see more activity around the holidays for gifts sent to friends and family near and far, and during Iditarod with the influx of visitors to Nome. But these individual purchases only account for a small

portion of the crab that passes through NSSP. So where does the rest of the crab go?

During production, the majority of crab purchased by NSSP is cooked and frozen with a brine glaze added to preserve its quality. The crab is then packed into boxes and held in NSSP's freezing facilities until it is loaded onto pallets and delivered to air cargo for shipment out of Nome. Keyport, LLC, a premier supplier of wild caught crab and a long-time partner of NSEDC's, became the primary market for NSSP's Norton Sound red king crab in 2024. Keyport purchases the bulk of Norton Sound red king crab to sell at retail stores, restaurants and businesses that span from the Pacific Northwest to as far east as Boston and south into Florida.

Keyport, LLC President and CEO Mark Pedersen is excited about the initial response to Norton Sound red king

*"Sea to Table" continued on page 5*



Norton Sound red king crab packed and loaded on a pallet, getting ready for shipment.



## Norton Sound Seafood Products is Hiring!

Norton Sound Seafood Products has seasonal jobs for regional residents every summer, offering competitive wages and opportunities to build skills for your future. Come work on a crew for NSSP this summer!

If you don't live in one of our seafood plant communities, NSEDC offers travel and housing or a stipend to friends or relatives to host your stay away from home through our Community Hire Program.

To find out more, connect with NSEDC Human Resources: 907-274-2248 or email [hr@nsedc.com](mailto:hr@nsedc.com).

Visit [nsedc.com](https://nsedc.com)  
to learn more  
about seasonal  
employment  
opportunities!





## Sea to Table // continued from page 4

crab they've seen from retailers and markets across the country. "In our first year bringing Norton Sound king crab to market, it has already reached all corners of the country through national and regional retailers, and some of the top restaurant chains. Everywhere it goes, we hear the same thing—people love its uniquely sweet flavor and can't get enough," he said. "Just last week, our team was able to highlight it with buyers at Seafood Expo North America, sharing the story of the communities and fishery behind this incredible crab.

Keyport sees huge potential to keep growing the Norton Sound king crab name, making more people recognize and appreciate just how good it is. With our strong connections to major retailers, restaurants, and distributors, along with our unrivaled marketing efforts, we're excited to continue building momentum as we bring this crab to an even wider audience."

Norton Sound red king crab's journey to domestic markets is a relatively recent development as, for many years, the

crab harvested from local waters made a journey across the Pacific to be sold in Japan. As remote as the Norton Sound region may seem, global events and economic forces work their way to our corner of the world to impact how our regional seafood is sold. The events of the past few years necessitated a transition to the domestic market for Norton Sound crab, which is good news for the Lower 48! Next time you're traveling south, keep an eye out for Norton Sound red king crab for a taste of home.

## WORK FOR NSEDC PARTNER GLACIER FISH COMPANY!

NSEDC partners want to hire you! Glacier Fish Company operates at-sea fish processing vessels in the Bering Sea. Join the crew for work at sea with room & board provided while processing fish!

### WHAT TO EXPECT:

- 13-24 days at sea, per trip
- While on board: 16-hr shifts, 7-days a week
- Room & board provided
- Eligible for 401k, health and dental benefits
- Earn crew share (typically \$3,900-\$4,300 each trip)



To learn more, sign up to  
chat with a GFC rep!



### Questions about GFC or the application process?

Visit [www.glacierfish.com](http://www.glacierfish.com) or contact  
NSEDC EET Director Dylan Johnson,  
email: [djohnson@nsedc.com](mailto:djohnson@nsedc.com) // call: 1-800-650-2248

## Capacity // continued from page 1



Randy Soonagrook works the crab processing line at the NSSP plant during a busy July day.

and Josh consider quality, efficiency and quantity of production, Jacob brings an important perspective to the discussion, as he assesses safety solutions to create a safer work environment. "We were able to work with the equipment manufacturer," Jacob explains, "to come up with solutions to address a couple of key areas that should both reduce the physical strain on our employees and increase processing capacity." Among cooking refrigeration and packing upgrades, the incoming improvements will also ensure a more ergonomic approach to the stations on the line and introduce lighter cooking baskets that will lower case weights.

Installation of the equipment is planned for the fall of 2025 with training and equipment testing scheduled to be conducted prior to the 2026 summer commercial crab fishery.



# Fertilizing Salmon Lake for the Health of Future Pilgrim River Sockeye Runs

Located 30 miles north of Nome and 45 miles east of Teller, is Salmon Lake. It empties into the Pilgrim River in the Port Clarence District and is home to one of the northernmost wild sockeye salmon populations in North America. Unlike other salmon species, which spawn exclusively in river systems, sockeye (or red salmon) primarily return to freshwater lakes to spawn. The first limnological studies of Salmon Lake were conducted in 1994 as part of an experimental fertilization program attempting to increase these adult sockeye salmon returns. From 1997 to 2006, sporadic fertilization occurred through cooperation from various organizations. In 2007, NSEDC fully took over the fertilization project and has continued to conduct lake fertilization each summer season in the 18 years since.

Norton Sound Fisheries Research & Development Department (NSFR&D) Fisheries Biologists coordinate

fertilization of Salmon Lake in partnership with the Kodiak Island Limnology Lab. Limnological studies assess the effect of fertilization and determine the amount of fertilizer necessary each year to create optimal rearing conditions for the sockeye fry. Each summer season, NSEDC Biologists visit Salmon Lake to monitor, take measurements, and distribute the liquid fertilizer into the lake.

After the eggs hatch, juvenile sockeye typically spend one to two summers feeding on zooplankton in the lake before they journey to marine waters as smolt. The fertilizer added to the lake increases nitrogen and phosphorous levels, which promotes the growth of phytoplankton. The increase in these plant-like organisms creates a larger supply of food for zooplankton, the primary food source for juvenile salmon. The goal of fertilizing the lake is to increase the size, health and survival of

the sockeye smolt through the bolstering of their food source.

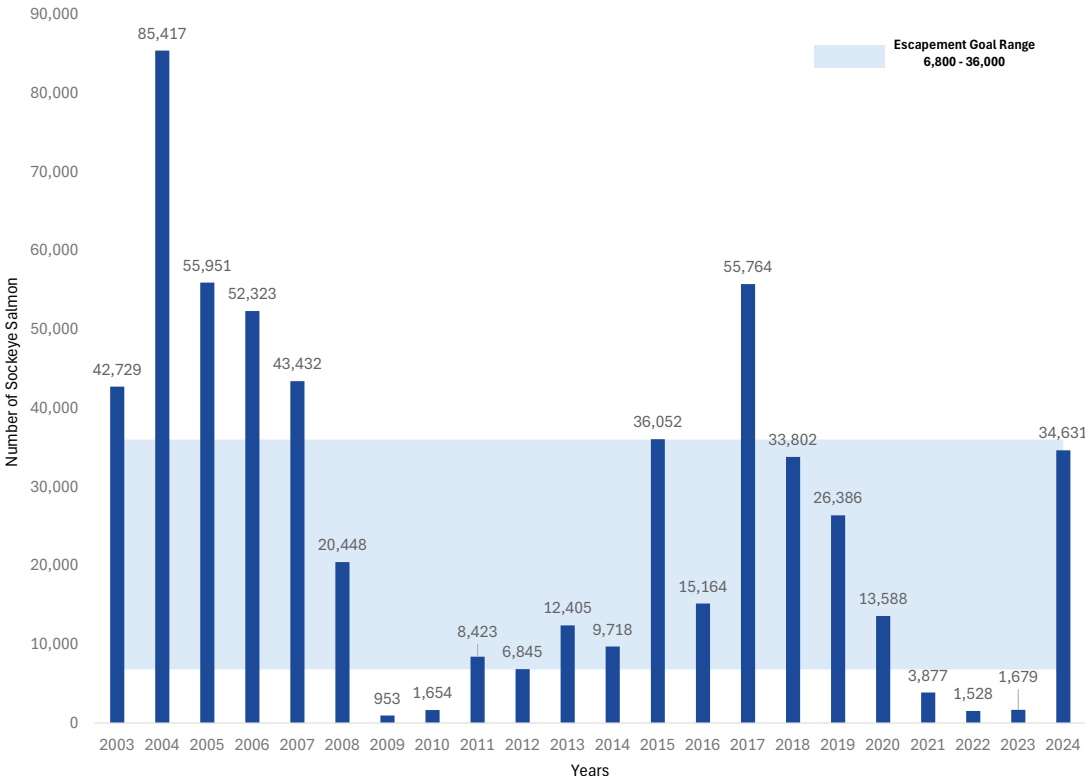
NSEDC also annually monitors the health of the sockeye population at the lake through direct observation and measurements. This occurs through assessment of the size and health of returning salmon, along with run size, at the Pilgrim River weir project. The NSEDC-operated weir employs local fisheries technicians to count and assess the returning sockeye salmon. Weir counts not only help to determine the effectiveness of the fertilization program, but also help inform ADF&G’s subsistence fishery management.

Over the past twenty years, the sockeye runs up the Pilgrim River have experienced a “boom and bust” cycle, with populations rising and falling over the course of about six years. From 2003 to 2008, the Pilgrim River experienced high sockeye escapement, with a six-year average escapement of 50,050.

The average sockeye run for the following six years from 2009 - 2014 dropped dramatically to 6,742. While sockeye escapement remained relatively high from 2015 - 2020 (six-year average 30,119), it again began a decline over the next three years, 2021-2023, with a three-year average of 2,351. Biologists expected another poor return in 2024, but the sockeye run was much more robust than forecasted. The Pilgrim River weir count of 34,604 sockeye salmon was within the escapement goal range of 6,800–36,000 fish and marks the first time the Pilgrim River had met its escapement goal in three years, creating an opportunity for subsistence fishing.

ADF&G projections for the summer 2025 sockeye run are not yet available.

2003 - 2024 Pilgrim River Sockeye Salmon Cumulative Count



The above chart displays the total annual cumulative weir count of Pilgrim River Sockeye Salmon from 2003-2024. NSEDC establishes the Pilgrim River weir and employs fisheries technicians to monitor the annual run size of fish up the river.







Fisheries Biologist John Wade examines salmon at the Pilgrim River weir, monitoring salmon runs up the river to Salmon Lake.



## Work as a Fisheries Technician!

**Join NSEDC as a summer Fisheries Technician and spend June to August as part of a team counting salmon and/or supporting weir projects with NSEDC's Fisheries Research & Development Department! Food supplies provided while at camp. Positions start at \$30/hr.**

**Interested?** Contact Renae Ivanoff in Unalakleet:  
**call:** 907-624-3193 | **email:** [renae@nsedc.com](mailto:renae@nsedc.com)

Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) offers competitive wages and rewarding work during our summer season! \$500 signing bonus for seasonal workers. Must meet minimum requirements.



# NSEDC Supports Career Exploration Trips for Students from Nome-Beltz and Bering Strait School District

Each year, NSEDC provides funding to member community schools to support career exploration trips for students. In fall 2024, ten NBHS students traveled to the Mat-Su Valley, Anchorage and Seward to visit trade schools, apprenticeship programs, and associate degree programs at UAA and APU to learn about vocational and career training opportunities in the state. Aaron Brown & Deb Badertscher are NBHS counselors and trip chaperones that oversee setting the trip schedule and identifying interested students. Aaron says NBHS's goal is to expose students to training opportunities that are available in-state. Statistically, about 60% of NBHS students do not choose to immediately attend a 4-year college or university program upon graduation from high school. "There are many different ways to get from walking across the [graduation] stage to putting a roof over your family's head and food on the table doing a job that is satisfying to you." The NSEDC funding supports students' lodging, food and travel to and around the road system to explore job training opportunities and degree programs.

First, in Seward, students visited Alaska Vocational and Technical Education Center (AVTEC), a career training facility owned and operated by the State of Alaska. AVTEC initially opened in 1969 and houses hands-on training opportunities in a variety of career tracks including diesel/heavy equipment, industrial electricity, information technology, plumbing & heating, and refrigeration. Their programs are designed to simulate real-life workplace environments with hands-on training comprising over 70% of student learning time. While touring the AVTEC programs and campus sites, the NBHS students made specific visits with the culinary arts and construction technology programs and enjoyed learning about the apprenticeship opportunities.

The trip to the Mat-Su Valley included visits with Mat-Su College's Vet Tech and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training programs and Northern Industrial Training (NIT) in Palmer to learn about training opportunities in truck driving, welding, and heavy equipment operation. Students enjoyed learning about cosmetology training at The Beauty School

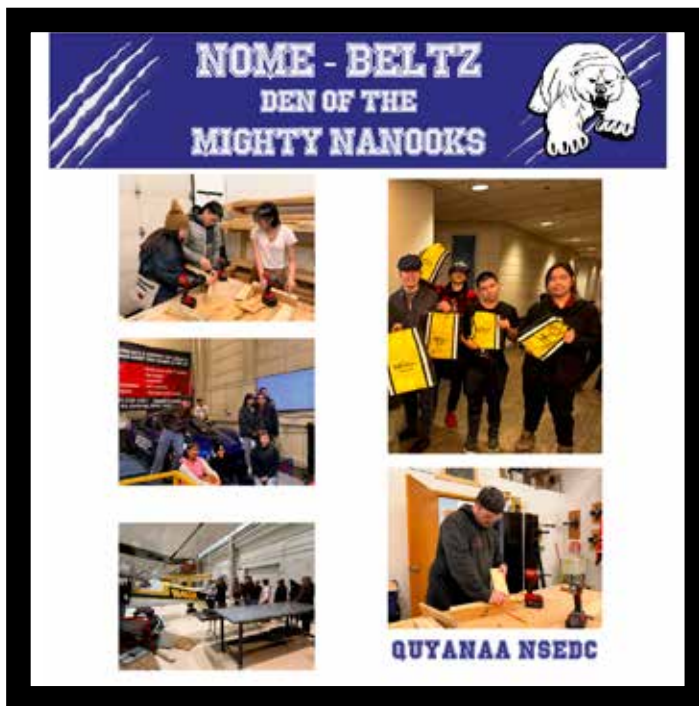
in Wasilla and Trend Setters in Anchorage. They also toured Alaska Pacific University (APU) campus and while there, learned about their Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program. The tour with University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) included the aviation, culinary and welding programs. Additionally, students visited the Alaska Works Partnership and Alaska Laborers Apprenticeship training centers. Students toured the centers and learned about apprenticeship opportunities.

Aaron shares that this type of trip is valuable to students on a number of levels. Students have the opportunity to view job and career training first-hand and to evaluate if they feel a particular path is a good fit or not. They can ask questions. They can meet instructors. They can eat the food. Though student athletes do often travel to the road system at some point in their high school career, not all students have that opportunity. This trip exposes students to other parts of the state. Exploring Seward, Anchorage, and the Mat-Su valley is a wonderful, eye-opening experience. The chaperones also try to build in other real-life experiences as part of the trip, talking to

students about budgeting and practicing tipping after a nice dinner at a classy restaurant. Other discussions revolve around life outside of training: logistics such as finding affordable housing and what they would do in their spare time, etc.

Aaron says each student has unique experiences that are of value to them on a trip like this, whether it's their first trip on a jet, navigating the Anchorage airport, exposure to the culture of a larger city, or finding a training pathway that feels exciting to them. Career exploration offers students the opportunity to visualize different pathways to training for jobs, whether they want to return home to work or to pursue a career elsewhere. NBHS plans to offer another trip opportunity for juniors this spring.

BSSD schools utilize the funding for career exploration trips for their students as well and are planning for another trip in April to University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks.



*NBHS sent NSEDC a thank-you note showing some of their activities from visits made during the fall 2024 Career Exploration trip.*



# NSEDC Provides Community-Based Boiler Maintenance Training



Rebecca Jones hard at work during boiler maintenance training in Brevig Mission.

In 2023, the NSEDC Board of Directors identified a lack of expertise and knowledge in communities to service and maintain boilers and heaters and set a goal to offer boiler maintenance training in each of NSEDC's 15 member communities. Since then, NSEDC has contracted with instructor Dan Phinney to provide training to residents interested in learning how to service and perform basic

maintenance on their boilers and heaters. Instructor Phinney has visited eleven of the communities in the region, providing training to over 60 residents through hands-on boiler maintenance training sessions. During the fall, Instructor Phinney was in Brevig Mission and Teller, and he visited Gambell and Savoonga this spring.

Prior to each trip, NSEDC works with Instructor Phinney to reach out to the community to survey needs and to get a list of types and ages of boilers to compile a list of supplies to bring and plan the training sessions. Instructor Phinney has a partnership with US Boiler, who supports the courses in a number of ways, offering technical training aids and access

to online training videos along with discounted or donated burner parts. He says one of the challenges is finding a part you need that you don't have once on the ground. But he and the students try to be creative and have even surveyed the dump for discarded parts to find what they need.

The 3-day training sessions begin with a full day in the classroom, where students learn the basics of boiler and heater functions and essential maintenance procedures.

Then on day two, the group is out in the community, servicing boilers that need repair and maintenance. Over the course of the trip to Brevig Mission and Teller, Instructor Phinney says they serviced 17 boilers; took them apart, cleaned them up, and got them into good working condition again.

NSEDC and Instructor Phinney recognize that the benefits of these trainings are immense. Providing training to individuals in their own communities is extremely valuable, giving them the skills to support and become a resource for basic maintenance in their community. And Instructor Phinney also leaves students his contact information, in order to answer questions or help troubleshoot if they run into issues down the road.

NSEDC's Education, Employment and Training Department is continuing coordination with Dan Phinney to plan visits to the remaining communities of Diomedes, Nome, Wales and White Mountain, by the end of the year.



[www.my-cache.org](http://www.my-cache.org)

same great website

# NEW PORTAL



same sweet cash

## NSEDC Summer Scholarship Deadline: May 15



# COMMUNITY-BASED TRAINING

If you have an idea for a training you'd like to see in your community, consider NSEDC's Community-Based Training Program. NSEDC provides annual funding for courses and trainings in each of our member communities! What would you like to learn?

- Quickbooks
- Alaska Native languages
- Skin sewing
- More!

Coordinate with your community's city or IRA office to complete the application for Community-Based Training funding.

Learn more about  
NSEDC's Education,  
Employment &  
Training programs at  
[www.nsedc.com](http://www.nsedc.com)



Pamyua's Aassanaaq "Ossie" Kairaiuak sits with Teri Paniptchuk at a drum making workshop held in Unalakleet.



Kathy Wheelehan assumes a new role at NSEDC as the Chief Administrative Officer.

## NSEDC Promotes Kathy Wheelehan to Chief Administrative Officer

Please join us in welcoming Kathy Wheelehan to her new position as Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). In this role, Kathy will oversee the daily and long-term administrative operations to ensure the efficient and effective functioning of NSEDC while providing strategic direction and successful execution of organizational goals.

Kathy started with NSEDC in 2001 and has held several positions at NSEDC over her 24-year tenure. Starting in the role as Events Coordinator, she assisted in the coordination of a week of celebrations marking the 10-year anniversary of the Community Development Quota (CDQ) program. Then as Community Outreach Coordinator, she supervised the community liaisons, developed annual reports and newsletters and coordinated outreach visits to our 15 member communities. Since 2010, Kathy has filled the role of Executive Assistant to the CEO. As such, she has been an integral part of the NSEDC team, providing support and keeping the wheels of the organization turning on the frontlines and behind the scenes. Though her title has changed through her many years of service, Kathy has put her dedication, attention to detail, and tireless work ethic at the forefront of her tasks to help elevate NSEDC's operations.

NSEDC celebrates Kathy's contributions to the organization as she moves into this new position as Chief Administrative Officer. Her new role will allow her to grow and continue to put her skills to work while NSEDC's mission and work environment keep her motivated and dedicated to the organization. Knowing her work directly improves the quality of life for the residents of our member communities Kathy says. "To work with people from or tied to the region, that all want the best for the region and its health, makes working at NSEDC feel like home; a precious gift that I don't take for granted."

Kathy began her new role as Chief Administrative Officer at the start of the new year and she looks forward to continued service to NSEDC and the residents of our member communities.



# NSEDC Grows Our Nome Operations!



## Casey Menadelook Mechanic

Casey recently joined NSEDC's Nome operations as a mechanic. Prior to NSEDC, Casey worked with Norton Sound Health Corporation (NSHC) maintaining their facilities and vehicles throughout the region. He is looking forward to working on our equipment and boats to help keep operations and equipment moving efficiently and safely. Casey grew up in Nome and likes to spend his free time outdoors, either hunting or exploring with his family.

## Join the team at NSEDC!

NSEDC is recruiting for seasonal employees for Norton Sound Seafood Products and Norton Sound Fisheries Research & Development. Seasonal opportunities are available throughout the region during the summer months at our seafood processing plants, buying stations, NSFR&D camps and aboard fishing tender vessels.



Learn more about open positions on our website!

Or for more information:

Email: [hr@nsedc.com](mailto:hr@nsedc.com) or call (800)650-2248.

**[www.nsedc.com/employment](http://www.nsedc.com/employment)**



PRSRT STD  
US Postage  
PAID  
Anchorage, AK  
Permit No. 69



### **Anchorage Office**

2701 Gambell St., Suite 400  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
Phone: (907) 274-2248  
Fax/main: (907) 274-2249  
Fax/accounting: (907) 274-2258  
Toll free in AK: (800) 650-2248

### **Nome Office**

P.O. Box 358  
Nome, AK 99762  
Phone: (907) 443-2477  
Fax: (907) 443-2478  
Toll free in AK: (888) 650-2477

### **Unalakleet Office**

P.O. Box 193  
Unalakleet, AK 99684  
Phone: (907) 624-3190  
Fax: (907) 624-3183  
Toll free in AK: (800) 385-3190

### **Norton Sound Seafood Products (NSSP)**

#### **Nome Plant**

P.O. Box 906  
Nome, AK 99762  
Phone: (907) 443-2304  
Fax: (907) 443-2457  
Toll free in AK: (855) 443-2304

#### **Unalakleet Plant**

P.O. Box 323  
Unalakleet, AK 99684  
Phone: (907) 416-5014

#### **Savoonga Plant**

P.O. Box 156  
Savoonga, AK 99769  
Phone: (907) 416-5555  
Fax: (907) 984-6179