



Thursday, October 1st, Ketchikan's Ted Ferry Civic Center



Alana Peterson, Executive Director, Spruce Root

Alana's Tlingit name is Gah Kith Tin, from Diginaa Hit, Luknahadi. She grew up and currently lives in Sitka, a small island community in Southeast Alaska. Professionally, Alana earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration at Charleston Southern University. After graduating from college, she joined the Peace Corps where she served as a Small Business Development volunteer for two years on the southern coast of Peru. She obtained her master's degree in business administration from Northern Arizona University. She has continued to work in economic development in her current role as Executive Director at Spruce Root.



Mayor Albert Smith, Metlakatla Indian Community

Before being elected Mayor of the Metlakatla Indian Community (MIC), Albert Smith honed his leadership skills as a successful commercial salmon fisherman and captain. The people of Metlakatla elected him several times to serve as a member of the Council, and he has fulfilled the roles of Acting Mayor, Chairman of the MIC Natural Resources Committee, and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors for Metlakatla Power & Light. Thanks to his considerable experience in the realms of both fisheries and governance, Mr. Smith has become adept at navigating through troubled waters, marshalling resources, performing well under pressure, and bringing out the best in his crew. As Mayor/City Manager, Mr. Smith is committed to upholding and strengthening the principles of sovereignty and self-sufficiency. He works collaboratively with the Council in order to achieve its strategic goals to revitalize

Metlakatla's economy and provide more opportunity for MIC Members. His straightforward, no-nonsense management style is especially well-suited to these uncertain times. Most importantly Mayor Smith's heart is for the People. He works hard to meet the needs of today while doing all he can to ensure the next generation will inherit a modern and prosperous Community, rooted in Metlakatla's rich culture and traditional values.



Blue Shibler, Executive Director, Southeast Childhood Collective

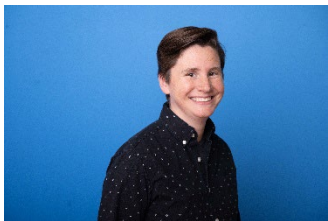
Blue has been working in the early learning profession in Juneau for 23 years. During those years, Blue covered the full spectrum of child care roles from being a teaching assistant and then assistant director at Juneau Montessori school, to owning a family child care program, a group home, and a large child care center. Blue considers herself a master of circle times and transitions, and loves to hear children tell their stories. Though she will miss working with children every day, Blue sees her work at AEYC as the natural next step in her journey to support early learning professionals through direct technical assistance and public advocacy. Blue holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration from UAS and 30+ ECE credits from UAF. In her free time, Blue enjoys, cooking, gardening, and playing board and card games with family.



Donner Kahl, High Street-coming soon

Emily Deach, Borough Manager, Municipality of Skagway

Emily Deach is the Borough Manager for the Municipality of Skagway, Alaska, where she leads the administration and strategic direction of the municipality. She oversees day-to-day operations, budget development, personnel management, and the implementation of policy and infrastructure initiatives. Working closely with the Mayor, Assembly, staff, and community partners, Emily ensures alignment between municipal services and the needs of residents, while advancing long-term planning efforts that support economic development, public safety, and quality of life. Emily has worked in Skagway's municipal government for over 18 years, previously serving as Deputy Borough Manager and Borough Clerk. Her deep institutional knowledge and collaborative leadership style have been instrumental in moving forward key initiatives across departments. She brings extensive experience in municipal governance, project oversight, and community engagement. She holds a Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Communications and a Master of Arts in History and Culture.



Issa Spatrissano, Rasmuson Foundation

Issa Spatrissano is the Director of Programs at Rasmuson Foundation. She first joined the Foundation in July 2025 as a Program Officer. Originally from Michigan, she moved to Alaska in 2010 planning to stay just a couple of years, but ended up falling in love with the state and building a long-term career serving refugee and immigrant communities. Most recently, she served as the Alaska state refugee coordinator at Catholic Social Services. Through her work in teaching and resettlement, she has had the privilege of assisting newcomers from more than 80 countries. Issa holds a bachelor's degree in history and political science from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and a master's degree in teaching and learning from the University of Alaska Anchorage. In 2024, she was named one of the Alaska Journal of Commerce's Top 40 Under 40.

President Jeff Jackson, Kake Tribal Corporation-coming soon

Jillian Simpson, Executive Director, ATIA-coming soon



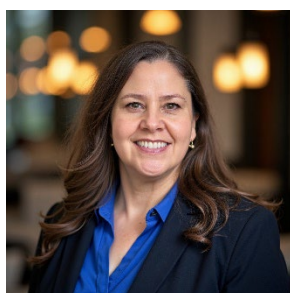
Katie Berry, President, McKinley Research Group

A lifelong Alaskan, McKinley Research Group President Katie Berry leads teams focused on economic and social research related to the industries, communities, and people of Alaska. Her experience extends from Ketchikan to Kaktovik, and she routinely speaks to audiences about the state of the Alaska economy, work force, and industry-specific economic impacts and trends. Her firm's research includes the recently published Alaska Child Care Cost study, demand assessments and feasibility related to senior supports, and housing needs assessments. Katie has led some of the most complex economic impact research in Alaska, and is well-versed in the recruitment, training, and employment barriers across urban and rural Alaska.

Kate Govaars, Communications Director, Peace Health-coming soon



Laurie Booyse, Tourism Manager, City of Ketchikan-coming soon

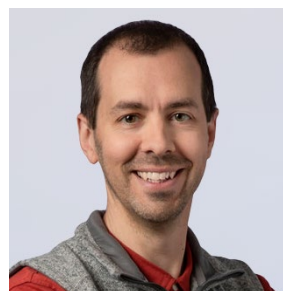


Mary Edenshaw, CEO, Klawock Heenya Corporation

Mary Edenshaw (Tlingit/L'eeneide Raven/Dog Salmon) is the Chief Executive Officer of Klawock Heenya Corporation. She joined the corporation in 2005 as Chief Operations Officer and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2020. Under her leadership, Klawock Heenya has focused on growing the company through strategic partnerships, responsible development, and long-term economic opportunities that strengthen Klawock Heenya Corporation and support the community of Klawock.

President Meda DeWitt, Yak-Tat Kwaan, Inc. -coming soon

Melissa Levy, Community Roots -coming soon



Patrick Cotter, Program Manager, Respec

Patrick Cotter, AICP, has been working with Alaska communities since 2006 to craft plans for development, transportation, climate action, hazard mitigation, and solid waste management. A graduate of UAF, Pat has worked for the State of Alaska, University of Alaska, and Bureau of Land Management, and is currently a principal planner for RESPEC Company. An avid fly fisherman, Pat enjoys exploring Alaska with his wife, two boys, and two Golden Retrievers.

Rachel Roy, Executive Director, Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce -coming soon

Ricky Gease, Director, DNR,-Division of Parks & Recreation -coming soon



Ryan Matej, Chief Administrative Officer, SEARHC

Ryan Matej serves as SEARHC's Chief Administrative Officer, where he leads a broad portfolio of administrative functions in support of SEARHC's mission to provide comprehensive, culturally responsive healthcare across Southeast Alaska. With more than 25 years of leadership experience in healthcare finance, operations, and technology, Ryan brings a strategic, systems-oriented approach to advancing organizational performance and service delivery. He values relationship building and believes delivering quality care starts with creating strong teams invested in growing together. Ryan has held several leadership roles during his career at SEARHC, including Vice President of Finance and Senior Director of Finance. Prior to

joining SEARHC, he served as System Director of Budgeting and Planning at UW Medicine and spent nearly a



decade with Providence Health & Services in financial leadership roles, including Director of Strategic Financial Management. Ryan also gained significant financial management experience earlier in his career at UPS. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nuclear Chemistry & Molecular Biology from the University of California, Irvine. Ryan is dedicated to building resilient systems that empower teams and enhance care for the communities SEARHC serves.

Sarah Dybdahl (Aanshawatk'i), President, Sealaska Corporation-coming soon



Scott Habberstad, Alaska Airlines

Scott Habberstad is a lifelong Alaskan currently residing in Anchorage with his lovely bride Amy, daughter Catheryne, and son Jack. Scott graduated from Ketchikan High School in 1989, and then attended flight school, earning his multi-engine commercial land and sea ratings. He returned to Ketchikan to fly for Taquan Airlines in the summer and attended college in the fall at Boise State University. Scott graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing in 1997 and returned to Ketchikan to continue his flying career; shortly after returning, however, he decided to peruse a business career, and accepted a position with the Ketchikan Visitors Bureau as the Director of Marketing. In 2001, Scott went to work for Alaska Airlines as an account executive in Anchorage and was later elevated to

Manager of Regional Sales, Alaska; today, he is the Director of Sales & Community Marketing-Alaska. Scott is active in the community serving on many boards.



Tom Wetor, Chair, SEASWA

Tom has lived in Wrangell for 13 years and has been the Public Works Director for 5 years. In that time solid waste operations in Wrangell have seen some changes with baling MSW, equipment procurement and construction projects at the transfer station. Before taking over as Chair of SEASWA Tom served as Vice Chair for 2 years. Tom has a diverse background including experience in construction, behavioral health, as a boat captain and guide before moving into public service. He holds degrees from Winona State University and is passionate about building resilient infrastructure and supporting his community. Outside of work, Tom enjoys spending time outdoors exploring the

beauty of Southeast Alaska.

Zach Gianotti, Environmental Specialist, AKDEC-coming soon