



Jenay Mike,
2025 Social Media Intern at Nordic-Calista

SHAREHOLDER AIMS TO LIVE CULTURE THROUGH CREATIVITY

JENAY MIKE, EMPOWERING OUR SHAREHOLDERS

Jenay Mike, a Calista Shareholder with ties to Kotlik, wants to utilize her degree to serve Shareholders in a creative capacity. She graduated in April with a BA in Liberal Studies and a minor in Indigenous Studies from Alaska Pacific University and was the 2025 Social Media Intern at Nordic-Calista.

Jenay began her career as an artist learning from her mom, **Theresa Mike**, owner and artist of **Theresa-m Piliari**, a business featured on **Calivika**, Calista's Shareholder-owned business directory. Theresa is also a past recipient of Calista's Raymond C. Christiansen Business of the Year award.

"My mom would always offer to work with me on craft projects at home, and I started pretty young," Jenay says. "I worked on beadwork and

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THE VOICE OF THE REGION

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025 • CALISTA CORPORATION NEWSLETTER



2025 Calista Interns on their final day of the internship in Anchorage.

A LOOK AT CALISTA SHAREHOLDER INTERNSHIPS

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR NEXT GENERATION

The 2025 Calista Internship Program provided 22 Shareholders and Descendants with a 10-week competitively paid internship. The program funded 36 positions and filled 22 positions, 15 in Alaska and 8 out-of-state. Interns applied lessons learned in the classroom to gain real world experience.



Madison Glore,
2025 HR Intern at
Nordic-Calista

"Whether it was an employee of Nordic-Calista or a fellow intern, I was always excited to get to know them," says **Madison Glore**, a Calista Shareholder who interned with the Nordic-Calista HR team. "I value creating relationships for the long run."

Glore has village ties to Lower Kalskag, Aniak and Chevak and is entering her fourth year at Northern Arizona University, studying Psychology. "Everyone who works for Calista and its subsidiaries bring a light to the community; it was great to be part of that team."

In addition to their internship work, the interns were invited to weekly talks with special guest speakers, including **Calista President & CEO Andrew Guy**. The interns had the chance to better understand how our corporation works with Q&A sessions with each speaker.

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Willie Kasayulie, Board Chair

“THIS YEAR’S
REELECTED BOARD
OFFICERS HAVE
86 YEARS OF
COMBINED SERVICE.”

Willie Kasayulie

BOARD MESSAGE: BOARD OFFICERS ELECTED

Willie Kasayulie, Board Chair

The Calista Corporation Board of Directors has elected its officers following the 2025 Annual Meeting of Shareholders. I, **Willie Kasayulie** of Akiachak, was reelected as Board Chair, **Margaret Pohjola** of Chuathbaluk as Vice Chair, **Johnnie Evan** of Tuntutuliak as Secretary, and **Earl Samuelson, Sr.** of Bethel as Treasurer.

Each year after the Annual Meeting, the Calista board elects its officers. Officers serve a one-year term. This year’s reelected board officers have **86 years** of combined service to Calista Shareholders.

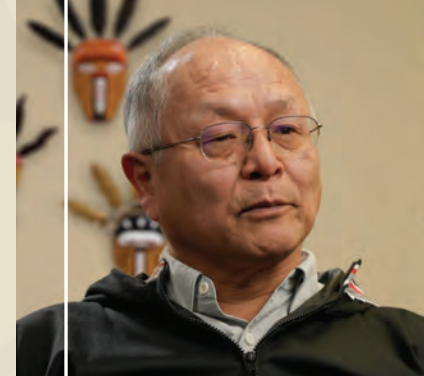
I have served on the Board for 26 years, including as past chair. I previously served in the Alaska National Guard and have been involved in many leadership roles in Alaska Native organizations, including co-chair of the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Vice Chair Pohjola, a past Calista board chair, has held accounting roles with Tribal organizations. Secretary Evan is a former Tribal Services Director

for AVCP and retired as Major from the Alaska Army National Guard. Treasurer Samuelson is a member of Bethel Search & Rescue and spent 30 years as an aircraft pilot for the Alaska Department of Public Safety.

Shareholders have elected three Descendants to serve on the Board. Audrey Alstrom of Alakanuk and Glenn Ivanoff of St. Mary’s were elected by Shareholders last year. Chris Kolerok of Mekoryuk was elected by Shareholders this year. The other continuing directors are Nick P. Andrew, Jr., Paul George Guy, Ron Hoffman, and Myron Naneng, Sr.

Quyana to all Shareholders who voted in the Annual Meeting this year. By electing directors, you have an important role in enabling Calista to fulfill its mission to improve the **economic well-being** of our Shareholders and communities. As Shareholders, only your votes elect directors.



Andrew Guy, President and CEO

“SINCE FORMATION,
THE SRC HAS
COMPLETED ABOUT
200 VISITS TO OUR
YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
VILLAGES.”

Andrew Guy

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: SHAREHOLDER RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Andrew Guy, President and CEO

The Calista Board of Directors formed the **Shareholder Relations Committee (SRC)** to visit our communities in person to provide company updates and address questions and input from Shareholders. The SRC is made up of five directors and supported by corporate staff.

Since the formation of the SRC in 2004, the committee has completed about 200 visits to our Yukon-Kuskokwim villages. The SRC typically travels to villages in the fall and spring to avoid summer subsistence activities. This summer the SRC provided an additional opportunity in July for Shareholders in Anchorage and the Mat-Su to participate.

As an Alaska Native corporation (ANC) with open enrollment for Descendants to become Shareholders, we choose to evolve with our Shareholder base while keeping our cultural roots firmly in place. During our SRC meetings this year, we provided the following details on our current enrollment and population trends.

Through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, Calista formed with about **13,300 original Shareholders**. Calista Shareholders approved open enrollment in 2015, and we introduced the first new enrollees in 2017.

To date, Calista has over **38,400 Shareholders** and growing. We are the largest ANC by Shareholder numbers in the state. Currently, over 31,000, or **81 percent of Shareholders are enrolled Descendants**, and over 7,000, or 19 percent are original Shareholders.

With open enrollment, Shareholder demographics have changed significantly. As of February 2025, 67 percent, or **nearly 7 of every 10 current Shareholders are 40 years old or younger**.

The other shift since open enrollment began is where Shareholders live. In the Y-K, excluding Bethel, 48 percent of all Shareholders live in

villages other than Bethel. Another 9 percent live in Bethel, totaling **57 percent of Shareholders in the Y-K Region**.

While the percent living in the Y-K has gone down slowly over the years, Bethel and the Region remain a strong hub for our Shareholders.

The largest concentration of Calista Shareholders in a single community is Anchorage at **21 percent**. An additional 8 percent live in the Mat-Su borough, including Palmer, Wasilla, Big Lake and Houston.

With Anchorage and Bethel holding the largest concentration of Shareholders, nearly a decade ago the Board approved a plan to hold annual meetings periodically in these two communities. Additionally, the Board remains committed to the goal set by our Elders, the founders of Calista, to hold an annual meeting in every community in the Y-K Region.



The Calista Shareholder Relations Committee meeting in Anchorage hosted nearly 300 Shareholders.

Along with visiting villages in the Region this year, the SRC visited the Mat-Su and Anchorage, with a large gathering of Shareholders in Anchorage. It felt like a family gathering with corporate updates and a Q&A session for Shareholders to voice their concerns. The meetings were complete with yuraq dancers at both sessions.

To all the Shareholders who joined us in the Region and in Anchorage or the Mat-Su, quyana for participating with your corporation.



The Anchorage-based Yup'ik dance group made up of Shareholders from Nelson Island, known as **Qaluyarmiut Yurartet Nunarpagmi**, performed yuraq at the Anchorage SRC meeting.

2025-26 Calista Board Officers



Willie Kasayulie, Chair



Margaret Pohjola, Vice Chair



Johnnie Evan, Secretary

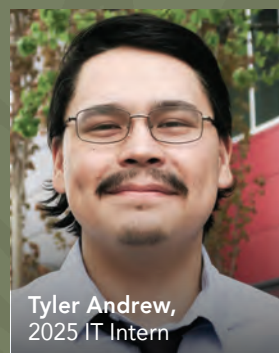


Earl Samuelson, Treasurer

A LOOK AT CALISTA SHAREHOLDER INTERNSHIPS

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR NEXT GENERATION

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Many interns liken their experience back to the way they've lived back home in the Region, including **Tyler Andrew**, this year's Calista IT Help Desk Intern.

"As a current Computer Science undergraduate [at the University of Alaska Anchorage], I bring a unique perspective shaped by strong ties to the communities of St. Mary's and Bethel," Tyler says. "My roots instill in me a deep commitment to collaboration and inclusion. I am passionate about developing technologies that serve our rural communities."

In Tyler's case, and like many interns, his background motivates him to contribute to the corporation through internship work. He can move the company forward while gaining personal experience and see how our work is intertwined with our cultural values and **Yuuyaraq** way of life.

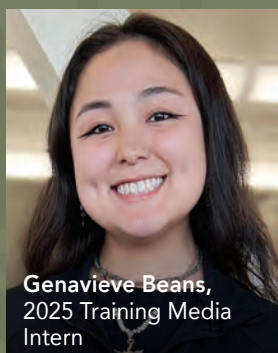


"The opportunity to work and immerse myself more with the Alaska Native community was incredible to see. It was great to work alongside a team that values teamwork and assists our community to the best of their ability," says **Valerie Rodriguez**, a Calista Shareholder with ties to Bethel who interned with the Calista Shareholder Services team this year.

The Calista Internship program accepts applications from December to March. Eligible applicants are Calista Shareholders or Descendants, at least 18 years old, and enrolled full-time in a college, vocational training program, or is a high school senior with proof of future enrollment. The program begins in May and typically ends in early August.

"I WOULD RECOMMEND THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM TO ALL SHAREHOLDERS AND DESCENDANTS OF CALISTA."

- **Valerie Rodriguez**, Calista Shareholder Services Intern



"The internship has opened a new career path for me to explore, creating a more well-rounded portfolio and shows that my work is useful for the corporation," says **Genavieve Beans**, Calista Shareholder and Training Media intern with the Calista Finance Department. She is a junior at the University of Alaska Fairbanks this fall, pursuing a BA in Arts.

Beyond the learning experience, the competitive pay and cultural and business knowledge shared with the interns, the program is a key initiative to building Calista's workforce.

Last year a record of five interns transitioned into full-time positions across the Calista family of companies in fields like construction, IT, administration and finance. Additionally, six interns have received offers after their internship in 2025.

"I have met some of the most amazing people, who have taught me some valuable lessons," says Rodriguez. "I would recommend the internship program to all Shareholders and Descendants of Calista."



Learn more about Calista internships by scanning the QR code or visiting our Shareholder Development page: calist.biz/shdev



2025 Calista Interns with Calista Corp. President/CEO Andrew Guy.

BRICE ENVIRONMENTAL WINS TWO SAFETY AWARDS

EMPLOYEES ENCOURAGED TO RECOGNIZE HAZARDS, RECOGNIZE PEERS

Brice Environmental is a subsidiary of the Calista Brice holding line with 50 years of experience, and this past April it received national recognition for its accomplishments in environmental, health and safety (EHS).

The organization took home first in the Alaska Governor's Safety and Health Conference and third in the Associated General Contractors of America National Conference.

What's the secret behind these wins? Brice Environmental attributes these wins to its safety programs, employees with a safety centered mindset, and leadership that supports effective training.

One of Brice Environmental's safety programs is called SLAM, which stands for stop, look, assess and manage.

"SLAM encourages employees to pause and evaluate potential hazards before beginning a task. This simple practice reduces the chance of injury and empowers our employees to take corrective action when there is risk," says Jamey Smith, the EHS manager at Brice Environmental.

Brice Environmental often handles complex projects in rural areas that add risk in the work zone. Because of that, employees are encouraged to use their Stop Work Authority to intervene when there are unsafe conditions.

"WE ARE ALIGNED WITH CALISTA'S CORE VALUES, AND WE'VE BUILT OUR OWN STRONG CULTURE THAT ENCOURAGES PROACTIVE REPORTING, HELPING US STAY AHEAD OF INCIDENTS INSTEAD OF REACTING TO THEM."

- **Jamey Smith**, Environmental, Health & Safety Manager at Brice Environmental

"We are aligned with Calista's core values, and we've built our own strong culture that encourages proactive reporting, helping us stay ahead of incidents instead of reacting to them," says Smith.

Success in safety isn't only in the programs but rooted in the work culture at Brice Environmental.

"The President [of Brice Environmental] Jamie Oakley shows every single day that safety is a daily priority, and that mindset trickles down to all the employees," says Smith.



The Brice Environmental drilling team strikes a yoga pose at a work site on Amchitka Island, putting the company's "Flex 'n' Stretch" safety campaign into practice.

Oakley does this through a program called Atta Boy that helps promote the company's core values that are family built, excellence delivered and uniquely agile. Employees praise their peers anonymously through Atta Boy for upholding these values, keeping their employees focused on being safe.

"Atta Boy nominations are recognized at company-wide meetings, which shows our appreciation for our employees' dedication to our core values and the safety of everyone," says Smith.

Following an increase in preventable strains and sprains in employees over the past few years, Brice Environmental implemented a Flex 'n' Stretch program. It is now part of the workers' daily routines, and participants are given free T-shirts and stickers to promote participation. Flex 'n' Stretch posters are placed throughout worksites to raise awareness for safety.

"The Flex 'n' Stretch program reflects Brice Environmental's commitment to promoting safety, fostering teamwork and reducing workplace injuries one stretch at a time," says Smith.

The EHS team at Brice Environmental is small but mighty. With only three employees, the team transformed the work culture at Brice Environmental to prioritize accountability and made safety a shared responsibility among the employees.

While a lot of work has been done, the EHS team still strives to make their operations better. Ideas for future improvements include new hire onboarding with a focus on safety, combined with annual refreshers on safety and project-specific safety training for jobs that are more complex.

CALISTA LAND & NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT PRESENTS: LAND IN FOCUS NEW MARSHALL QUARRY BENEFITS LOWER YUKON

Over the past three years, the village of Marshall was the epicenter of a regional ‘gravel rush’ generating millions in payroll for Calista Shareholders who worked on construction projects in four Lower Yukon villages.

These projects have ended, but Marshall’s new **Pilcher Mountain quarry**, owned by Calista and operated by **Brice Inc.**, a Calista Brice subsidiary, is ready to supply high-quality rock for western Alaska construction projects for decades to come.

“I applaud those who planned the quarry,” said **Calista Unit 10 Director Nick P. Andrew, Jr.**, who represents Marshall, Andreafski, Ohogamiut, Pilot Station and Russian Mission.

It took patience, research and planning over two decades for Calista, and partnership with surface landowner **Maserculiq, Inc.**, to develop this new source of gravel for western Alaska. Building and operating the quarry aligns with our corporation’s **strategic goals** for in-region economic development, putting Shareholders to work, and minimally impacting the environment, said Andrew, a lifetime resident of Marshall.



Brice Inc. work on airport access road.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Calista staff traveled to Marshall in June and asked Calista Shareholders—including Brice employees, local residents and leaders—how the quarry impacted their community.

Nicholas Fitka, Jr. is a former commercial fisherman who joined the **Marshall Traditional Council** last summer. In his current role as Tribal vice president and interim administrator, Fitka saw how the project boosted local wages and enabled community members to purchase new snowmachines, outboard motors and four wheelers.

“Right now, Brice is pretty much the biggest employer here in Marshall,” Fitka said in June. “They helped out a bunch of people and when they leave, it’s going to be hard [for local people] to find work unless they travel.”

Calista Shareholder Andrea Shorty’s husband, John, is an example of a Marshall resident who received on-the-job

training from Brice qualifying him to work elsewhere in Alaska. This year, he worked as a driller for Brice in Kodiak, returning to Marshall for a break in June.

“He said he really likes it,” Shorty said, adding “My three older ones, they are looking to my husband now. They see how he works. I’m happy how [Brice] came out here to inspire the younger generation.”

Like any other project of its kind, there are some mixed feelings about the quarry.

What upset Fitka, the Tribe’s vice president, was the tree clearing needed for a new barge landing site—it was hard for him to see that specific area developed. However, that was his only complaint. Brice was a good neighbor, he says, noting that workers helped fix washouts along local roads and provided material to stabilize house pads.



Andrea Shorty, Calista Shareholder and former Brice Inc. housekeeper.

BY THE NUMBERS

The payroll for individuals who worked on projects associated with Pilcher Mountain quarry since 2023 has reached nearly **\$21 million**.

These projects—which include the new Emmonak port—employed over **228** craft employees, who were largely Alaska Native and/or Calista Shareholders, according to Brice Inc.

“It’s opportunities we hardly ever see in Marshall, especially three years in a row,” said **Robert Owletuck**, a Calista Shareholder raising five children in Marshall.

Owletuck is one of 18 community members who gained a commercial driver’s license through Brice Inc. He worked for three summers in Marshall as a truck driver.

“Our subsistence is almost gone, all this work is putting food on the table and paying our bills,” he said.

Owletuck added that he looks forward to more work at the quarry in the future, “making good quality rock for everybody.”

BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAIN, BEAUTIFUL ROCK

Calista began evaluating a quarry on its subsurface land at Pilcher Mountain decades ago. Mining began in 2023, when Brice Inc. won a competitive bid to repair the St. Mary’s airport. Overall, Brice produced 400,000 tons of rock from Marshall over the last three years.



Barge carrying Pilcher Mountain rock.

Pilcher Mountain is a beloved landmark for lower Yukon communities, and some people were concerned that developing a quarry would “blow it up,” said Andrea Shorty, a former housekeeper for Brice in Marshall.

After three years of quarrying, the mountain remains beautiful. “People see how it is, and they are like, ‘Oh, they just put a little dent in it,’” Shorty said.

Meanwhile, the mountain has helped other communities. “People say Marshall has the prettiest rock. Every time we land in St. Mary’s, I don’t know how to explain it. They say it’s like a bluish color, but in the sunlight, it is shiny,” Shorty said.

She isn’t the only one who received compliments about Pilcher Mountain rock, which has volcanic origins and is often described as green versus blue. People in Russian Mission and St. Mary’s said it made their airports look nice.

“This [compliment] was coming from Elders,” said **Wassilie Pitka**, a Calista Shareholder who worked as an operator and a laborer for Brice for the past three years.

“Everybody benefited [in some way] from this,” Pitka said. “I would like to thank Calista and Brice for bringing the work here.”



Scan the QR code to listen to an interview with Marshall resident and Brice Inc. employee Wassilie Pitka.



CALISTA EDUCATION & CULTURE PRESENTS

YUP'IK TEACHING MOMENT

TUUNRAQ (DOON-GHAK) IS SPIRIT HELPER

Calista Education & Culture (CEC) presents the **Yup'ik Teaching Moment** in our **Storyknife** newsletter. CEC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with the mission to serve the people of the Calista Region by preserving culture, empowering education and facilitating Yuuyaraq, our traditional Way of Being, to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future. This Yup'ik Teaching Moment is provided **Alice Cucuaq Rearden**. Rearden is a transcriber and translator for Calista Education and Culture and helps produce publications. She grew up in Napakiak and now lives and works in Bethel as a teacher at Bethel Regional High School.

Tuunraq [DOON-ghak] was a spirit helper that aided shamans communicating with the spirit world. Shamans are called **angalkut [uhng-UH'th-goot]** in Yugtun.

Shamans had **tuunrat [DOON-ghat]**, or spirit helpers, that they used to carry out healing ceremonies, to request abundance during hunting, gathering and fishing, or to ensure the wellness of the community.

“SHAMANS HAD TUUNRAT, OR SPIRIT HELPERS, USED TO CARRY OUT HEALING CEREMONIES AND TO REQUEST ABUNDANCE.”

According to the Elders, there were both good and bad **angalkut**. Good shamans healed injuries and sicknesses and

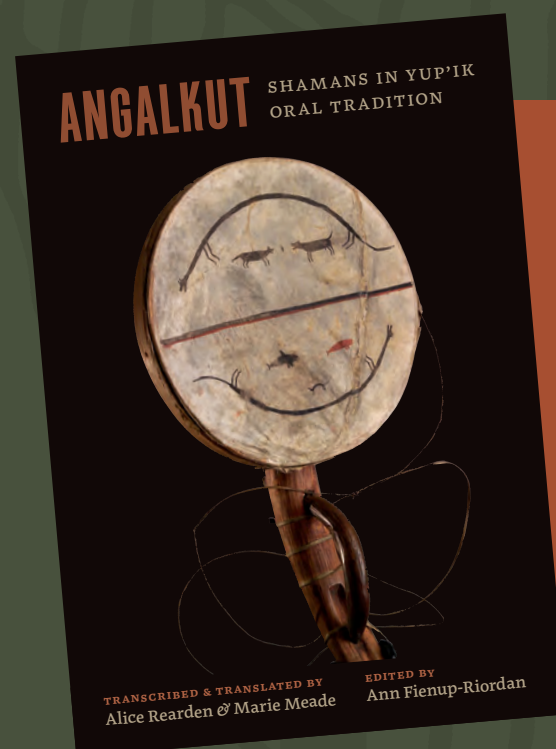
helped people with mental anguish. They also doctored babies in the womb to help them stay alive after birth. Through masked dancing, they also performed rituals requesting an abundance of animals, fish and other resources such as wood and good weather.

Shamans had people construct masks representing their **tuunrat** and perform dances. People paid shamans in goods to carry out ceremonies where they often used seal gut rain garments and drums. The shamans saw into the future and were asked to look in on people traveling to distant places to see if they were safe. Malicious shamans on the other hand were said to be jealous and meddle in people's lives. They would go into their dreams and attack them or try to injure or kill them. They also went after their fellow shamans and tried to take their **tuunrat** away, often ending their lives.

There are many stories told by Elders that depict shamans doing amazing things beyond the capabilities of an ordinary person. They were told to travel to the moon, fly through the sky, drown in the water, cook in large wooden pots in boiling water, perform surgeries and heal life-threatening injuries.

When Christian missionaries arrived and began ministering, they created and adopted the term **tuunrangayak** for the Devil derived from the term **tuunraq**. As people started converting to Christianity, shamans were shunned by missionaries, and they began having a negative reputation among the people. Some of the early Moravian missionary converts were once shamans including **Uyaquq**, also known as **Helper Neck**, who created his own Yup'ik writing system when helping to translate the Bible.

Despite being depicted in a negative way in recent times, **angalkut** are still the subject of many fascinating stories. Shamans were once an essential and vital part of Yup'ik life.



ANGALKUT/SHAMANS IN YUP'IK ORAL TRADITION

Angalkut/Shamans in Yup'ik Oral Tradition is a collection of stories from Yup'ik Elders from the Region. The book covers shamans and their healing abilities, the ceremonies and performances they carried out, and their abilities and how they got them. The book is a testament to a time when shamans were a vibrant and necessary part of life and an integral part of the community.



Scan the QR code to see the latest books from CEC.

SHAREHOLDER AIMS TO LIVE CULTURE THROUGH CREATIVITY

JENAY MIKE, EMPOWERING OUR SHAREHOLDERS

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sewing and have grown into making many types of items like earrings, necklaces, fur mittens, purses and more.”

Over the years Jenay also learned different styles of beading and sewing to grow her skills.

“I started making a profit from my work when I was 15 years old after taking a workshop with an Elder from Eklutna,” Jenay says.

Her favorite class through her degree at APU was a beading class with June Pardue, an Alutiiq and Inupiaq artist originally from Old Harbor on Kodiak Island.

“It was during COVID, so it was at home online, but I got to bead, so it was the best class ever,” Jenay says. “It inspired me to continue my craft and build my creativity.”

Jenay's parents are first generation college graduates who inspired her to go for her degree. She was able to work on and sell her crafts while going to school full-time. She graduated with the support of the **Calista Education and Culture** scholarship, her family and her kids.

“The scholarship was a great support, and my kids were my biggest cheerleaders going through school,” Jenay says. “My kids were with me every step of the way, even when there were tears. They motivated me.”

Jenay was born in Sitka and lived part of her life in Interior Alaska at Copper Center. She felt a little disconnected from her

culture growing up, since she didn't live in the Region. In second grade she moved to Bethel for six months with her mom and felt truly embraced in her Yup'ik culture.

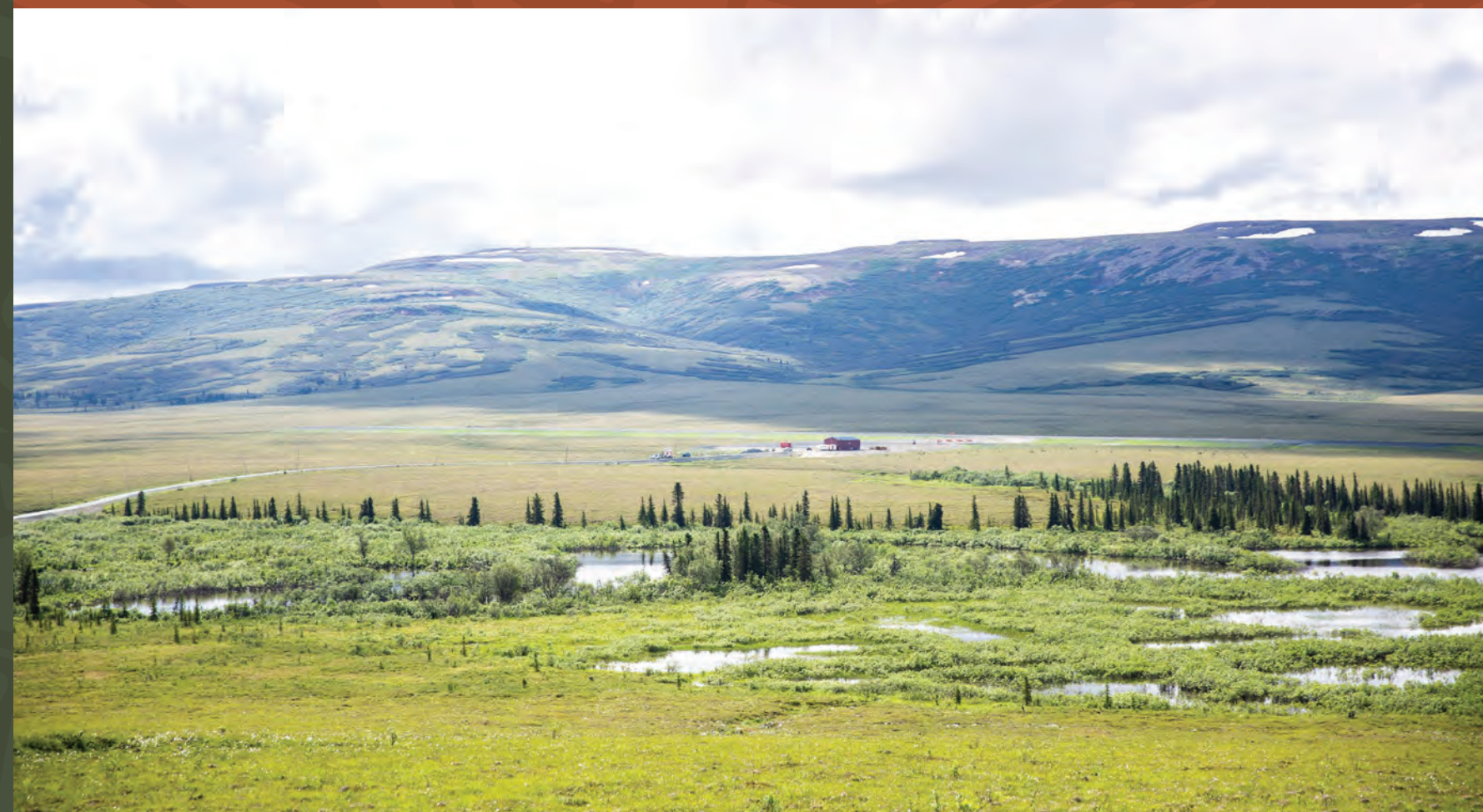
“I felt accepted into my culture and had my first **[yuraq]** dance at the Cama-i Dance Festival that year,” Jenay says. “Later on, I came back to sell my work at Cama-i.”

Looking back on her internship at Nordic-Calista, Jenay says she appreciated the chance to speak with Calista President and CEO **Andrew Guy**, other leaders in the corporation and cultural leaders.

“I liked learning from Andrew Guy, especially when he pointed out **Yuuyaraq** and how it relates back to Calista's corporate values,” Jenay says. “I admire that Calista's mission and values are woven into the **Yuuyaraq** way of living, our traditional way of living.”

“I ADMIRE THAT CALISTA'S MISSION AND VALUES ARE WOVEN INTO THE YUUYARAK WAY OF LIVING, OUR TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIVING.”

- **Jenay Mike**, Calista Shareholder and 2025 Social Media Intern at Nordic-Calista



CALIVIKA HIGHLIGHT: REBUILDING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH FOOD

CHARITY BLANCHETT OF DIPPING SPOON FOUNDATION



Charity Qalutaq Blanchett, Calista Shareholder and Founder of Dipping Spoon Foundation.

Dipping Spoon Foundation is helping Native youth become culinary rock stars and food systems leaders through cultural identity. Founded by **Charity Qalutaq Blanchett** in 2019, Dipping Spoon Foundation is a nonprofit organization that hosts culinary programs for 7-12th graders.

Dipping Spoon Foundation is the first and only nonprofit organization featured so far on Calista's **Calivika** website for Shareholder businesses, following an update on eligibility to include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

Blanchett has ties to Tuntutuliak and was raised in Wasilla. In times when she felt alone, she remembered that she has countless relatives, through the Yup'ik way, who give her the strength to persist. The inspiration behind the foundation's name came from Blanchett's Yup'ik name, **Qalutaq** which means "dipping spoon." From the dipping spoon, the water is shared among the people.

"We are living, breathing heirlooms. We are the embodiment of ancestors before us," says Blanchett. "Both my names are rooted in acts of service and love. As an entrepreneur, that has kept me going."

On late nights after her full-time job, Blanchett worked to make the Dipping Spoon a reality. Receiving a fellowship with the Mellon Foundation through Dillard University allowed Blanchett to fully commit to her dream of running the Dipping Spoon Foundation.

The Dipping Spoon Foundation operates from New Orleans, Louisiana where Blanchett currently lives. Through partnerships with the Lower Kuskokwim School District and Bering Straits School District, Blanchett often visits Alaskan communities.

Dipping Spoon Foundation has hosted after-school programs for kids in Tuntutuliak, Goodnews Bay and Kipnuk.

Blanchett has developed a curriculum catering to the needs of rural Indigenous communities. They even include a seasonal hunting guide and harvest map based on what is available in the Calista Region.

During the Kenirvik culinary arts camp, 10 students were able to fly into Bethel from their respective villages to participate.

"I came to Bethel thinking I was going to change these students' lives, when in reality my life has changed by being around our youth. These students were reserved when we started, then by the end of the week, we saw their leadership skills," Blanchett says.

This past July, the Dipping Spoon Foundation partnered with **Calista Education and Culture** to document the Yuuyaraq cultural immersion camp in Quinhagak for her Mellon Foundation fellowship report.

"The little girl inside of me was beaming with pride to experience that camp," says Blanchett. "I feel so blessed to contribute to the historical preservation and cultural documentation for our people."

Blanchett urges entrepreneurs to persevere and find comfort in their cultural identity.

"Do not give up," says Blanchett. "What you want is waiting for you with open arms. Success is rooted in who we are as Indigenous people, and by bringing our traditions to light and honoring them embodies our ancestor's success."

"SUCCESS IS ROOTED IN WHO WE ARE AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, AND BY BRINGING OUR TRADITIONS TO LIGHT AND HONORING THEM EMBODIES OUR ANCESTOR'S SUCCESS."

- **Charity Qalutaq Blanchett**, Founder and CEO of **Dipping Spoon Foundation**



Scan the QR code and visit the Calivika Shareholder Directory to create your own free business listing and review options to purchase goods and services from our people.

KOTLIK BEGINS RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT

YUKON DELTA COMMUNITY MOVING TOWARDS ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY

The village of Kotlik aims to transform its energy supply with a new project led by **Kongnikilnomuit Yuita Corporation** and its president **Richard Oakes Pilaarilgia Bender**, a Calista Shareholder.

Bender's Yup'ik name **Pilaarilgia** has two meanings: the person that makes the first cut on the seal after it's caught, and he will do what he says. Bender was born in Kotlik, moved to Anchorage at 19 and now works for his village corporation.

Kongnikilnomuit Yuita is the village corporation for **Bill Moore's Slough**, now relocated to Kotlik.

"Our corporation is one extended family, as we are all related. We own the land we chose for its subsistence value. It gives us a voice and place at the table in state and federal levels of governance," says Bender.

"OUR CORPORATION IS ONE EXTENDED FAMILY, AS WE ARE ALL RELATED. WE OWN THE LAND WE CHOSE FOR ITS SUBSISTENCE VALUE. IT GIVES US A VOICE AND PLACE AT THE TABLE IN STATE AND FEDERAL LEVELS OF GOVERNANCE."

- **Richard Oakes Bender**, President and CEO of **Kongnikilnomuit Yuita Corporation**

After decades of dependence on diesel fuel and uncertainty in the supply chain, leaders advocated for their community and received grants for renewable energy projects.

Three board members of Kongnikilnomuit Yuita were young adults when the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was passed, and two are Descendant Shareholders. All of the board members have executive experience and half of them have college degrees, which is helpful for managing this project.

"After getting to know who I was working with—the Elders and Shareholders of my village—working for my corporation is a way to stay connected and make an impact in our community. Our people are very supportive of me, and that made me want to keep working," says Bender.

There are three phases to Kotlik's renewable energy project. The project is in its first phase, which is planning and analyzing the existing grid's resilience. With the help of Alaska Village Electric Cooperative, Kotlik is using its U.S. Department of Energy 40101(d) grant to replace the existing generator, repair outdated transformers, and add grid components to prepare for the following two phases.

"Phase two is to develop solar capabilities, and phase three is to develop wind. We are using our U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs grant to create a business plan, power purchase agreement,



Richard Oakes Bender, Calista Shareholder and President and CEO of Kongnikilnomuit Yuita Corporation with his three kids.

and operation and maintenance practices for the next two phases," says Bender.

Once the project is completed, Kotlik plans to function as an independent power producer. This way, the utility buys energy from the village and the earnings are put back towards the community to provide benefits like bill rebates, all while providing energy at a reasonable cost.

Kongnikilnomuit Yuita is one of three corporations operating in Kotlik. Developing Kotlik's energy project increased the need for partnership and understanding between the corporations.

"We created the Kotlik Energy Planning Committee as a way to streamline and improve communications and coordination for this project and other projects moving forward," says Bender.

Bender's priorities for this project are creating capacity and workforce development for those living in Kotlik, and helping to pass down the traditional ways, values and culture of the region.

"After this project is completed, we need people trained to maintain our renewable energy," Bender says. "We want to empower people to stay in the village and have good employment opportunities. Two ways we ensure that is our local and Native hiring preference and offering competitive wages."

Bender's advice for other village corporations looking for alternative energy sources is to talk to community members through the entire process.

"These projects are a community effort. Ask questions and reciprocate with the community, because nothing is going to move forward without their support," says Bender. "My people are helping me not only with this project but with passing down the traditions and values of our region."

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Calista Corporation is holding an iPad Mini Giveaway in September to encourage Shareholders to sign up for digital services!

Three 2024 iPad Minis (A17 Pro Chip, 128 GB, Wi-Fi/Cellular, unlocked) will be awarded in a random drawing. All current Calista Shareholders 18 years of age or older on the contest **deadline of Sept. 30, 2025**, are eligible to enter the contest.



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