

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council, as the Healthy Alaskans 2010 process advisory group representing people and organizations from across the state, asked the Division of Public Health to find a new approach to strategic health planning. They approved the idea of using stories about local efforts to improve community health to provide strategies to help other communities. Staff members Nick Coti, Margo Waring, Susan Keady and Christopher Wright talked with dozens of people, in dozens of communities, about their work, communities and families, to explore lessons learned and outcomes. Many advisory group members provided encouragement through their enthusiasm and excitement for the story project. This made the project even better.

Individuals in many communities around the state have given generously of their time, their caring, and their thinking about how they became involved in making their community and its people healthier and happier. In addition to the folks described in the various stories, many others including public health nurses, community health aides and practitioners, students, and other citizens of many ages have provided nuggets for these and other stories to be written. We have discovered rich diversity in traditions that can be drawn upon, positive attitudes toward “new knowledge,” and many examples of effective partnerships and collaborations between local, state, and federal entities, including individuals, government agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations. Sharing the experiences, strategies and knowledge among communities and neighborhoods will help all Alaskans reach the targets for improved health for 2010 and beyond.

Many of the contributors to this project are directly quoted in the various chapters. Others are not, out of respect for the wishes of contributors regarding publication of their names. However all of the individuals who shared their insights and experiences, whether they are cited or not, have made this a better publication. Their contributions are appreciated. These are gifts we seek to give again to others. Sharing knowledge is a central theme of this effort.

Health and Social Services Commissioner Jay Livey provided unwavering support for this effort, together with Karen Pearson, Director of the Division of Public Health, and Janet Clarke, Director of the Division of Administrative Services, who co-chair the Healthy Alaskans Partnership Council. They confidently supported the staff’s efforts to discover and present the inspiring stories and concepts that have strengthened Alaskan communities.

Jim Craig and Julie Sanbei designed the publication. Original drawings and graphics are by Julie Sanbei, unless noted otherwise. Special thanks to the artists and authors who have given permission (as noted through the book) for photos, replications and quotations. The cover photograph taken by Margo Waring is “An Eagle/Raven Memorial to Kake Elders.” The work was commissioned by and is the property of the Kake Tribal Heritage Foundation, carved by Mike and Norman Jackson, and dedicated September 25, 1994. Nick Coti took the photographs of the Bethel dumpsters.