Nicole George Blog Post

Fav Part in Internship has been seeing the growth in the program. When it started it was small and mostly just a foundation to preserve culture, recording the language, stories and archiving to now it’s more about actually teaching the culture and the language started as just high school kids to now all ages and adults. Getting to work with people who’ve been there since day 1 and learning from the people who built this great organization from the ground up. The kids and getting to work with them and see their growth is the best part.

Camper as a youth and then a chaperone and now an Intern and a board member  
Grew up in a climate where it was uncool to be Native but now Native students feel proud to be Native and have different needs where they require assistance to navigate the Western schools systems and feel comfortable with themselves as a Native youth

The programs have definitely supported a huge cultural transition from an unacceptable Native identity to a collective consciousness that is more inclusive and accepting

Students have many more options for organizations that offer programs—now programs are fighting over people (both students and speakers for their events)

Most of the instructors are non-native Alaskans who now see the importance and significance of TEK in the school system

Most of the push-back comes from student’s parents because there was a large generation of parents who were sent to boarding Western schools and weren’t exposed to the Clingit language or the culture and so there is push-back not because of the programs themselves but because the parents want to be a part of the programs themselves but it’s hard to sell adult education as a Grant Proposal for cultural relevance so they are not going to get what they want from the programs as adults

Clingit Culture Language Learning Program allows students to learn the language in whatever class they were taking, now it’s expanded so that it’s being offered K-12 and University level

10 Apprentices are chosen to spend a whole year with the elders to learn the language and record anything that may not be written down and now efforts are expanding to include Heida and Shumshan languages in the school system

First year that Nicole will be able to see the curriculum they’ve come up with to help teachers learn how to engage with Alaska Native students

Seen a big change in the teachers and the ways they communicate with Native youth as well as the ways they teach content to Native students in the classroom from when Nicole was a student in the classroom

Programs are optional for teachers but they are advertised to different school systems but teachers are actually paid to come via a stipend at the end of the training

Board Member for the Sea Alaska Corporation (accepted position in March)

Helping the 14 interns help uncover their family lineage and understand their cultural heritage because they didn’t grow up in the Native community and they have not been exposed to the traditional Clingit ways

Sea Alaska Heritage Institute will help Nicole make culturally relevant and grounded decisions as a Board Member for Sea Alaska. Not to washout or waterdown the core cultural values but to keep them whole and hold them up to the same standard that the original elders found to be so important.

Sea Alaska branched off and became the Sea Alaska Institute

Sea Alaska Education Institute Program Intern

Engages in cultural activites and communicate with youth

Monitoring the programs and following the guidelines provided to keep the grants for SAEI

* + Updating the economic impact work
  + Collecting surveys of participants and families
  + Keeping up with the finances and making sure they understand where the money is going
  + Internship description changes on a weekly basis; could be a project coordinator or a camp counselor
  + Worked primarily with K-12 at the beginning of summer and now their gearing up for programs to teach teachers culturally appropriate language, Clingit history, stigmas,
  + In the past they’ve just tried to prepare teachers for teaching native students
  + This year they want to include more Native based curriculum and seminars, breaking stereotypes and helping teachers be more aware, conscious and educated about the Native culture in Alaska
  + Mostly middle school students in the Program focused on Math and Culture
  + Teach culture through traditional ways with a writing component and public speaking and communicating to create the next generation of voices to speak for Sea Alaska
  + K-12 Programs go until the end of August for summer but then the Math, Theater programing continues into the school year to get students comfortable with Math
  + Math: work with the two Juneau middle schools with cultural relevance and significance and then they have a finished product where they get to take home the materials they work with like bracelets and halibut. A huge difference in the ways that students succeed in math with the program versus without the program.
  + Publish the Sea Alaska children’s book each year to get kids to read early at the end of summer for toddlers and pre-K students

Booking travel

Financing

Reporting results to the board to aid in decision making processes

Primarily focuses on the logistics of the programming for the education department

Education department expanding programs it offers (started with 1 program each month and now supports 14 different K-12 programs as well as professional and teachers)

Surveys: students get two surveys about the program’s success

Pre and post math test to see their math progress and to see if the cultural relevance was helpful

Compare the Western test results with the Program test results to see if the way that the questions are posed helps in student answering and retention of information

An in-house survey and an external survey administered by an outsourced organization