



**Alaska Native Technical Assistance and Resource Center
Final Report**

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of a Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) supported project entitled the Alaska Native Technical Assistance Resource Center (ANTARC). Based upon our knowledge of what has worked in Native communities in Alaska, the lower-48, and Canada, this project rests on the premise that local solutions are the best solutions to local problems. Accomplishing this requires the development of a different relationship between BJA and Alaska Native villages.

There are tremendous variations between lower-48 views of what works and what can work in Alaska Native villages. The priorities of federal funding agencies are not necessarily the priorities of these villages. Instead, we believe, the villages must set their own priorities. This process requires a long term approach that also should not be driven by grant opportunities that may or may not be available in the future. Furthermore, personal capital needs to be acknowledged and developed, rather than always looking for a cash solution. The technical assistance provided by ANTARC worked toward helping villages to establish their own priorities, to identify what they believe are their own problems, and to devise their own solutions.

This report examines the evolution of the ANTARC project, explains the context of the project, considers its implementation, describes its outcomes, evaluates the results, and presents recommendations for promoting effective change in Alaska Native villages.

PART 2: THE EVOLUTION OF ANTARC

In 1998, the Director and staff of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) of the U.S. Department of Justice toured rural Alaska to determine the conditions and scope of problems faced by villages. They became aware that, all too often, federal and state justice programs are

uncoordinated in planning and funding, and are not tailored to fit local cultures and needs.

Decades of alcohol, drug, and spousal abuse programs have come and gone with poor results, even those that were generously funded.

BJA contacted the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage, which partnered with the Alaska Native Studies department to attempt to explain these failures and offer more effective solutions. From decades of our own experience, we knew that the language and institutional contexts of requests for proposals for grants, and granting agencies, frame justice problems and their solutions in causal terms that may or may not relate to the experiences of Alaska Native villages. For example, monies earmarked for suicide prevention programs are more likely to be awarded to clinical psychological studies than they are to Native language immersion programs, whereas people in villages see a direct connection between language, identity and lowered suicide rates. The funds may be obtained and managed by outsiders who proceed to implement programs in an inappropriate fashion. Or they may be obtained by Native organizations, who tailor proposals to fit the vision of granting agencies. When villages receive funds, then, they can conform to the externally-devised program, do it their own way but risk losing future funding when they do not provide results in form or content that the non-Native agencies can understand, or try to do a combination of both at once. All of these greatly handicap the effectiveness of any individual grant and of funding programs.

We were aware of additional problems, not the least of which is a lack of trust of the University of Alaska on the part of Alaska Natives. There is virtually no village in rural Alaska untouched by university programs. It is now routine to cite the history of colonialism as a barrier to rural development, and not uncommon to recognize the historically assimilationist agenda of educational institutions in general, and the social sciences in particular, *vis-à-vis* Native Americans. It is less common for social scientists to take the dimensions of this history to heart,

not to mention recognize modern, still-potent forms of colonialism from which universities are not exempt (Jordan and Yeomans, 1995; Jennings, Forthcoming). Inappropriate programs, either intentionally harmful or unintentionally misguided, have been documented sufficiently to establish this point. Native Americans have cultivated a strategic suspicion of universities — sometimes local universities in particular — as well as internal discourses about experiences of racism and scientific elitism (Smith, 1999; Quigley, et. al., 2000; Harrison, 2001).

Alaska Natives are also suspicious about solutions developed by entities that are perceived to be the problem. For example, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) recently filed a suit on behalf of the Alaska Inter-Tribal Council, ten Alaska Native villages, and seven Native individuals that charges the State of Alaska with discriminating against off-road Native villages in the provision of police protection. NARF reports that whereas Alaska's urban centers and on-road communities are fully served by certified and trained police, "in contrast, most of Alaska's off-road communities, including nearly all Alaska Native villages, either have no local police at all, or the police they have lack training, equipment, and certification...[and] are not allowed to conduct essential law enforcement functions" (Native American Rights Fund). From the Alaska Native standpoint, then, traditional criminal justice interventions in villages are either absent or inappropriate.

Innovators in collaborative or participatory research are developing detailed critiques and methodologies that include scrutiny of the extent of power sharing and control at every juncture of social development and research projects. Their recommendations include review and approval of grant proposals by local communities who are affected by the problem and solution under consideration. ANTARC attempted to address some of these issues by seeking support from participating communities as part of the proposal process. However, the design of ANTARC was not able to alleviate the typical situation in which the non-Native partner has more

resources and more inherent control. In such situations, ensuring Native control and the local fit of the program is particularly difficult. Moreover, if this agenda were to be taken seriously, it would have forced a single-handed restructuring of the role of universities, and of their institutional culture and norms, with respect to rural Alaska.

Underlying our collaborative approach was the recognition that village residents have the experience, wisdom, and responsibility to specify and resolve problems at the local level rather than importing canned “blueprints” from dissimilar places which prove to be inadequate or unsuitable for our rural communities. As investigators, we knew that we wanted to facilitate a process in which local communities and elders framed their own problems and devised their own solutions. Thus the Alaska Native Technical Assistance and Resource Center (ANTARC) was designed as a three-year project to improve village capacity to identify and solve problems within local cultures and value systems, in which the University of Alaska and other federal and state agencies, rather than imposing paradigms or answers, could learn to provide more meaningful assistance to rural Alaska by providing logistical support and topical expertise as rural village partners asked for it. It is now fashionable to pursue “capacity building” in Native communities, but it is less common to reverse this paradigm by assuming that local communities have the knowledge to educate the university and granting agencies about the nature of their justice problems and the resources they need to implement solutions. The ANTARC project attempted both. The goal was a more productive relationship between rural Alaska communities, agencies, and governments so that their policies and programs reflect workable solutions to actual village problems and conditions.

PART 3: STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

A three-year long grant was designed to contend with the “revolving door” syndrome: the commitment of outsiders to Alaska Native villages is typically temporary, resulting in a staggering turnover of personnel, inconsistency of funding, and additional suspicion of extra-local initiatives. To allay this problem, ANTARC proposed to work with four villages in the first year, then support those village representatives in choosing and training an additional village in their region according to their own criteria, and to further expand that pool in the third year. The program was to be exported by Native people to Native people, with touchstone support from ANTARC staff. The University gradually would be removed from the process, to the point where it would only intervene when and how Native communities called for it. In this model, neither the granting agency nor the PIs could predetermine (beyond very general indicators) what issues would be tackled, what programs ANTARC would facilitate, or what “product” the PIs would be able to deliver to the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance.

In brief, the three years were scheduled as follows:

Year 1: The first year’s focus was on problem identification and specification by the village partners. A typical difficulty is the premature identification of the “problem.” Programs based on that “instant identification” do not get to the root causes of the problem, and so do not really make a lasting impact on the situation. Problem identification methods were explored in this workshop. A second workshop, held in October reviewed the problems that had been specified over the summer, and began to work on actions that needed to be taken to begin resolving those problems.

Year 2: The spotlight was shifted to the development and implementation of programs designed to deal with the identified problems. The Year 1 Village Representatives were to become peer trainers, passing on the process of problem specification to persons from other communities in each region.

Year 3: Programs that were developed in Year 2 were to be assessed for effectiveness, and still other communities in each region were to be trained in problem identification, continuing what was begun in Year 1.

CHOOSING VILLAGES AND ANTARC STAFF

We used systematic and interpersonal methods for choosing partner villages for ANTARC. We selected a group of villages that was regionally and culturally diverse, individual villages that already had some proven planning capacity, which could get ANTARC off the ground and could, in turn, be enhanced by ANTARC; and villages that were regionally prominent, which would give credibility to ANTARC expansion during the second and third years, and would increase the chances that second-year training would be successful. The selection of year one villages was crucial because, once ANTARC had a solid base, it would set in motion a Native-to-Native training process that would shift the role of the University of Alaska Anchorage from trainer and provider to one of distance consultant.

Other reasons for the choice of our first four villages were by necessity less objective and systematic. If PIs or other university faculty had previous, positive experiences in the village, this was a positive factor in selection. Additionally, in Alaska, the endorsement and assistance of the Alaska Federation of Natives is more or less necessary, though insufficient, for accessing and working successfully with rural villages. The appeal of our project, in addition to a proven track record of one PI with the Federation, led AFN to provide us with contact names and numbers in proposed villages.

The BJA and project staff agreed that the entity in each village that would take part in ANTARC was the tribal government, whether IRA or traditional council. From the federal government's perspective, this was a logical choice, given the directives from the White House for each agency to deal with tribes in Alaska on a government to government basis. From project staff perspective, tribal organizations offered the greatest potential for community change in the current climate in which the state has provided less support to local entities such as

municipalities and school districts. ANTARC thus reflected a changing legal and political climate in Alaska.

We traveled to proposed villages to present information about the potential partnership and to offer a draft memorandum of understanding. We emphasized that village “ANTARC teams” would be chosen by the Tribal Councils, who would devise their own methods for selection of team members. (See Figure 1 for a map showing the location of each of the original four ANTARC villages.)

Figure 1: Map of ANTARC Villages.



Yakutat is a well-established Tlingit village and Home Rule Borough of approximately 800 (about half Native) in Southeast Alaska. While the weather is mild, precipitation is among the heaviest in the state. The region has seen English, French, Spanish, and Russian explorers, as well as sawmills, canneries, and railroads. Fishing and other subsistence activities are prevalent, and a cold storage plant is currently the major private employer. The village is almost fully plumbed, and has three schools.

At our first meeting, tribal staff, elders, and other active members in the community first tried to situate the project, to find out who exactly we were, with whom we were allied, and what organizations were implicated. They were, of course, trying to decide how to deal with us, use ANTARC, and whether to trust. They asked whether the grant was with the staff or the council. Our response was that we hoped the two weren't mutually exclusive. Then they described instances of bad internal communications within Yakutat — for example, between the tribe and the city, or even within the tribal government — and of bad external relationships, such as with the Forest Service. While there have been attempts to build bridges, they obviously wanted to communicate the complexity of having six governmental or quasi-governmental entities in Yakutat: the city and borough, Yakutat Tlingit Tribes, Yak Tat Kwaan (the Native corporation), Alaska Native Brotherhood, Yakutat Community Corporation, and the Chamber of Commerce. As for criminal justice, meeting participants described the governing philosophy of the police as one of reaction to offenses rather than planning for prevention. A petition against the police force was ignored by the city, and one person reported that community members who signed the petition received threats by police officers. Clearly, a federally funded, university-managed project couldn't walk into "the community" and expect straightforward acceptance, planning, and implementation of any program.

In discussing justice problems, the participants in our first meeting primarily brought up issues relating to economic development and cultural identity, which they perceived to be a starting point that ended in "justice" issues such as crime and substance abuse. We agreed that these issues could be addressed in the context of ANTARC. When the Tribal Council decided to participate, it solicited applications from which it selected its ANTARC team.

Gulkana is an unincorporated Athabaskan Indian village in the Interior of Alaska (Borough unorganized), about 200 miles southeast of Fairbanks, and the only ANTARC village

that is accessible by road. Almost sixty percent of the ninety-five residents are Alaska Native, and there are no state-operated schools. There are no businesses in the community: employment is limited to the village council and seasonal construction where residents work in nearby roadside communities and worksites.

In Gulkana, some additional communication was required initially to explain the idea of ANTARC. Clarifications of the relationship between the University and the villages, and the commitment and time required of villages and village teams, were essential. Eventually, Gulkana advertised informally in the community for its ANTARC team, and the Village Council announced four names in February 1999. The ANTARC field team learned an important, initial lesson: at our first meeting in Gulkana, people were extremely quiet, and we were worried that the village was not interested in participating. However, we planned to stay overnight in the village, and it turned out that folks had discussed the project outside of the formal meeting. The next day, we had additional, informal discussions with villagers and council members, and it was clear that they had in fact thought considerably about the issues, and were in favor of the project. Rather than moving quickly in and out of rural Alaska, then, we confirmed that lingering beyond scheduled meetings can be very fruitful.

Kotlik, is a remote Yupik Eskimo village in western Alaska (second-class city, Borough unorganized). It acts as a regional hub for several smaller villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and is easily accessed by large riverboats and barges, as well as by air. The population of 543 is almost exclusively Yupik and Yupik-speaking, and practices a subsistence lifestyle.

ANTARC was first introduced by the Kotlik Traditional Council at its meeting on January 11, 1999. Traditional Council minutes from January 26 announce the arrival of Drs. Jennings and Rieger the following week for a special meeting, stating that “we should be honored for this opportunity because out of the State of Alaska there were four villages contacted.” Having been

postponed twice because of weather and once because of a death in the village, the special meeting was held on February 4. Jennings and Rieger explained the ANTARC concept to members of the Council, and a Memorandum of Agreement was signed. Kotlik vested the selection process in its Tribal Administrator, who interviewed and chose persons he considered capable of fulfilling the project requirements. This smooth start was an encouraging sign of things to come.

Wainwright was the only village among these four that was not a first choice selection. Nuiqsut, an Inupiat Eskimo village of 435 bordering the new Alpine oil field on the North Slope, was first identified by the ANTARC PIs, but the Tribal Council decided to reject the partnership. Many villages on the North Slope have devised favorable relationships with oil companies, and thus have sufficient access to and control over resources. Because the North Slope is politically, economically, and scientifically desirable to non-Natives, they also have a healthy suspicion of outsiders. As for Nuiqsut, while they have justice needs of which they are aware, these were not addressed by the terms of the ANTARC grant, which provides university expertise and logistical help at the request of villages. We then approached Wainwright (second-class city, North Slope Borough), another North Slope village that shares many of these characteristics. Wainwright was interested in finding out what ANTARC had to offer, so the Tribal Council signed an MOA and set about selecting their team by posting notices asking those interested to apply verbally or in writing. This rather rocky start was also, unfortunately, a sign of things to come.

COMMUNITY PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHOP I: MARCH 1999

Prior to the March workshop, three of fifteen year-one objectives had been achieved: Four villages had signed onto ANTARC, had been visited by ANTARC university staff, and had signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Justice Center and the Alaska Native Studies

Department to establish ANTARC. The four village ANTARC teams consisted of sixteen Village Representatives, among whom were two Elders (one each from Yakutat and Kotlik) and one high school senior. Three persons worked part or full-time for their tribal council (Yakutat and Wainwright). Several had not previously been involved in similar or related community development training or programming but were well-established and respected in their villages. They were paid \$250 per month, and made a three-year commitment to participate in training, communicate and work with individuals and organizations in their villages on problem identification, and attempt to plan, ratify, and implement solutions. These teams were flown to Anchorage to participate in the first ANTARC workshop.

The first workshop was a week-long, joint community analysis and problem solving training session. Also participating were the ANTARC staff and field teams (from the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center and Alaska Native Studies Department); the program manager from the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance, which funds the project; and the two trainers, Inspector Vern White of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Julie Roberts, Executive Director of the Native Village of Tanana. A complete, videotaped record of the workshop is available, as well as written proceedings that were reviewed by all four village teams and project staff. Two crucial goals of the workshop were 1) to demonstrate that ANTARC staff were either familiar with the concrete realities and perspectives of Alaska Native communities, or ready and willing to learn and be guided by the work and wisdom of the village ANTARC teams; and 2) to provide village teams with the encouragement and resources they needed to return to their communities and initiate problem-identification processes, collaboration, and enhanced communication among village entities (the spirit of the project is reflected in the proceedings of the first and second workshops; see Appendices 1 and 2). The first day was opened with a prayer given by Peter Elachik, Sr. of Kotlik. Then three speakers

discussed models of decision making and problem solving. These discussions provided insightful information about the different and sometimes conflicting approaches the ANTARC partners brought to the table as the project began.

First of all, Michael Jennings discussed various tribal approaches to problem identification, and emphasized differences between Native American models and those of the federal government. Most tribal peoples see the interrelationship between problems: if one thing is out of balance it impacts the entire community. They do not segment problems into need boxes, as the federal government tends to do, and thus do not define any given issue narrowly as a justice issue within the purview of the justice department. These differences were embodied in the images of a circle, for Native American models, and a pyramid for organizational models. Jennings encouraged participants to use their own, culturally relevant models, and to adapt parts of other models that they found useful.

Next, Heber Willis discussed the evolution and structure of the Justice Department, its crime prevention programs, and its types of program funding. Partnering with villages is encouraged by the department both because of declining funds, and because “tribal leaders are saying they don’t want more experts with slides.” He also discussed the alignment of grant applications from tribes with the issues addressed by the Department’s Requests for Proposals, a topic that led one participant to ask a question fundamental to ANTARC and any collaborative project:

Q.: *How can we be involved in helping the feds put together a funding agenda? How can we help shape future solicitations for proposals (RFP’s)?*

The answer was essentially, “keep in touch with us” and contact your congressional delegation — the only answer available, but one that has proven to be insufficient. Additional questions

demonstrated the participants' knowledge of structural barriers to the ability of tribes to receive funding and collaborate with the Department of Justice:

Q.: *Right now the State is the only body that has the authority to go into villages and conduct murder and sexual abuse investigations and provide enforcement. What can DOJ do so that its funds to the State help to alleviate this problem?*

Willis noted that DOJ would attend an upcoming meeting of the Governor's Alaska Commission on Rural Governance and Empowerment to indicate its willingness to work with the state, but that improvements depended on gubernatorial programs and legislative funding.

Q.: *How much monitoring does the DOJ do of its block grant allocations to states if part of that money is to be distributed to federally recognized tribes? If it's not being done here, can the DOJ insist that it be allocated to federally recognized tribes? Also, can DOJ mandate tribal representation on the Byrne Fund Advisory Committee that makes funding recommendations?*

Willis replied that there is no mandate requiring states to allocate funds to tribes, only local governments *or* tribes. DOJ cannot instruct states on this matter, and there is currently no tribal representation on the Advisory Committee for the Byrne Fund in the State of Alaska. This leaves tribes/villages with little access to discretionary justice funding in the state, and points to a weakness in the distribution of federal justice money by the State of Alaska.

Vern White introduced the CAPRA model, a problem-oriented-policing model used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in its community policing efforts. Essentially, the CAPRA model provides a method for the identification of the underlying causes of community problems and the development of collaborative solutions that serve the needs of those affected by the solution to the problem. Similar to strategic planning approaches such as the SARA model, CAPRA provides for community mobilization and the development of local capacities for dealing with whatever issues might arise in a community in the future (see Appendix 3 for a copy of training materials explaining the CAPRA model). Key to the process of the CAPRA model is:

- the development and maintenance of partnerships and trusts within communities to establish priorities for service delivery and preventative problem solving;
- the recognition of the perspectives of those most affected by specified problems in order to better establish priorities and partnerships; and
- the generation of ongoing feedback for continuous improvement in the problem solving process.

In White's experience, the model is particularly important because, without trust and support throughout the community, programs are doomed to failure. CAPRA is represented graphically in a circular fashion because the process is not linear and does not end. While it starts in the center with client identification, any step in the process may require reassessment, and communities must constantly reassess and respond to interrelated problems. The model is a theoretical guide to help assure complete assessment and analysis, but in any concrete situation requires culturally-specific and issue-specific adaptation. Thus, each village team worked through the model, defining and assessing a problem in their own community.

One of the salient messages of White's presentation was the idea that our identification of a problem is usually based upon the effects we see, not its underlying causes. If a problem is not properly identified, a community will ultimately end up tackling the wrong issue. Throughout the process of the CAPRA model, steps are taken to insure that the underlying causes of a problem are identified.

During his presentation, White also argued that one of the benefits of the CAPRA model was that it allowed for community problems to be dealt with inexpensively. Instead of relying on federal and state grants to deal with problems – a practice that is becoming exceedingly difficult given the intense competition for a gradually shrinking pool of resources – White noted that the best solution to a problem is often the one that combines community cooperation and agency resource pooling to develop a shared response. Throughout this first workshop, the training in

the CAPRA model involved solutions to problems that required no outside funding and instead utilized the resources available in most any Alaska Native community.

We closed the session with a prayer given by Elder Nellie Lord from Yakutat.

On the second day of the workshop, everyone sat in a circle as Elder Peter Elachik, Sr. opened with a prayer. For the rest of the day, Julie Roberts, President of the Tanana Tribal Council, led a discussion on the concrete realities of problem solving in Alaska Native communities. The circle contrasted with the way the tables were arranged the day before, in which participants were lined up at tables instead, physically but subtly demonstrating the difference between Native and on-Native approaches. Discussing the trials and tribulations of the Tanana council, she advised:

You have to listen with a real heart to what your people are telling you and then do something about what you hear.... Stay focused on what you're trying to accomplish and don't get distracted.

Her experience and her own examples of everything from state and federal grant management to conflict between tribal and municipal governments elicited discussion and sharing among the village representatives.

Julie Roberts said that **local control** is one of the most difficult issues we face as tribes. She has learned that if you want to overcome problems in your community, you need to decide for yourself what has to be done and to advocate for village self-governance. As an example, a proposal by Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 would have changed the scope and structure of its power over each tribal government in its region. More than 40 villages in the TCC region agreed they did not want to relinquish any of their powers so they met in a circle with TCC for two days. Each person there had an opportunity to talk about what he or she wanted, opening the discussion to include everyone. Most villages had similar issues so they came up with another resolution, deciding to vote down

the original TCC proposal. Julie has found the CAPRA model complimented this traditional method, particularly given the maze of regulations, governmental and quasi-governmental authorities, and overlapping jurisdictions that have grown since non-Native settlement began. Particularly for non-Natives, perhaps the most important advice Julie gave, in addition to the fundamental importance of self-governance, was:

*It is important to listen, **to really listen**, to what others are saying. We need to allow the opportunity for everyone to have a chance to speak, to be heard, to share, and we need to listen to what they are saying so we can bring our communities together.*

This discussion continued on day three.

Problems commonly identified by the village teams included:

- Abuse of alcohol and other drugs
- Curfew for youth
- Domestic violence
- Gambling
- Lack of youth activities
- Lack of community involvement
- Lack of counseling
- Loss of language and culture
- Parent / student / teacher relationship
- Policing concerns
- Program funding
- Trash (garbage)
- Unemployment (lack of economic development)

It is interesting to note that, while many of these problems could be issues for solution by the criminal justice system, the teams seemed to see justice issues in broad terms. For example, the village team from Wainwright noted that the lack of activities for youth in the community led to break-ins, use of alcohol and other drugs, gambling, thefts, and breaking curfew. Throughout the project tribal council meeting minutes reflected similar concerns. Tribal councils are involved in economic development, governmental operations, environmental issues.

Of the list of problems identified by the village team members, those with the highest priorities were: lack of support from the community and communication within the community (Gulkana); parent / student / teacher relationships and vandalism (Kotlik); youth using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs and a lack of community involvement (Wainwright); lack of support for those in recovery who are returning to the community and lack of drug testing of those working in the schools and in the health field (Yakutat). Over the next two days the village team members used the CAPRA problem solving model to tackle these problems.

Thus far in the workshop, the initiation for all activities had come from Vern White and Julie Roberts, or other ANTARC staff. To prepare the teams to give presentations to their village or tribal councils and continue their work at home, the agenda for the remainder of the conference was developed with participants as follows:

Thursday Morning: The session was opened with a prayer led by Elder Nellie Lord. Each participant met with one person from each of the other three communities, selected a problem, and worked through it using the CAPRA Model.

Thursday Afternoon: The participants met in community teams, using the list of problems facing each community, selected one, and then applied the CAPRA model to it.

Friday Morning: The session was opened with a prayer led by Elder Peter Elachik, Sr. Teams presented the CAPRA Model and the community problem to which it has been applied to a “mock Council.” This was to be a practice among friends to prepare for what each team would be doing when it returns to its village.

Julie encouraged everyone to make a list of resources within as well as outside the village that would be able to provide support in future efforts. She pointed out that these could be individuals as well as agencies (for example, the Project staff). The teams were also provided with extensive reference materials, including statistics and demographics, lists of granting agencies, strategies or grant writing, community information, and various Native models of decision-making, justice, and dispute resolution.

ANTARC staff and village representatives agreed that the workshop had been a success, both in increasing trust and in motivating and providing resources to the teams. Both White and Roberts were very well received, and the sustained focus over five days had created a great deal of motivation. The comments of team members from Yakutat encapsulate the fact that the workshop was useful and comfortable for village representatives, as well as the fact that establishing communication, collaboration, and trust among Alaska Native communities, the University of Alaska, and federal and state agencies will take more time and persistence than most non-Natives recognize:

I didn't know what it was all about until I came here and (an elder) put in an application for me at the last minute. It's been real good, I've learned a lot, and I'm comfortable and relaxed...I hope to come to more.

I don't know who wrote the grant to have this happen, but I appreciate it. I appreciate the University in working with the communities and realizing that we can solve our own problems.

These participants know that while they can learn from and use University and government resources, the University and government have much more to learn from Alaska Natives. Village teams agreed on a number of performance expectations that were to be accomplished subsequent to the workshop. They agreed to meet consistently, communicate with their Tribal Councils, refine their identification of problems and causes, mobilize local resources, identify and create new partnerships, complete and submit monthly documentation of their progress, and other activities. If they failed to meet commitments, ANTARC field teams (consisting of two or three PIs) would visit the village to provide motivation, support, and technical assistance. Many timelines and teleconferences were indeed postponed — sometimes as a result of local problems or strife — but more often because of subsistence work, critical illnesses and death, cultural obligations, demands of work and family, and full-time or temporary employment.

Agencies working with rural villages must account for two realities: 1) since most people in a village are related by blood or marriage, a critical illness or death affects nearly everyone, and common cultural obligations are observed in those instances; and 2) vital subsistence and seasonal employment activities engage entire communities during a large part of the year, leaving a narrow window of time in the coldest months during which focus on community development activities can occur.

While ANTARC staff knew it was important for village representatives set their own schedules, we were nevertheless surprised, and even frustrated, by scheduling difficulties and constant changes. For good reasons, we were committed to the timeframe and outline of the grant; for reasons that were not only good, but also locally binding, village representatives were committed to the cultural and economic life of their communities. In retrospect, there is an underlying problem. ANTARC expressed the desire to change the role of the University, and in unique ways did put village representatives in charge of organization, staffing, and problem definition. However, ANTARC was unable to research, assess, and address the problems of inter-agency communication, the lack of articulation between fiscal cycles and community realities, or other issues that have prevented the University of Alaska and the Department of Justice from more successfully assisting Alaska Natives. This report provides both a general call for this sort of self-scrutiny, and some specific recommendations based on our learning over the last three years.

PART 4: IMPLEMENTATION

Now that ANTARC and CAPRA had been explained, we expected each village team to adapt and apply the strategies we had discussed to local contexts. They did just this, and yet we

realized that despite our openness to local articulations, we retained a set of expectations about what constituted a “correct” or “successful” outcome.

COMMUNITY PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHOP II: NOVEMBER 1999

In ANTARC’s first year, village teams were expected to undertake problem identification and analysis, form partnerships for addressing the problem, and select a second-year village in their region that would participate in ANTARC under the training and supervision of the first-year village. Workshop II, which took place on the Anchorage campus in November 1999, was designed to help villages transition from problem identification to solution planning and implementation. The challenges facing change makers in rural Alaska Native villages are highlighted by what happened in this second workshop. One of the village participants requested project staff to use domestic violence as sample problem for solution planning using the CAPRA model. In spite of the fact that these village team members had worked with each other and with the University for a period of six months, they did not feel comfortable addressing that issue. This demonstrates the importance of taking adequate time to develop mature relationships between agencies and tribal governments necessary to develop confidence and competencies

Teams revisited the CAPRA model, reviewed and shared their experience thus far, and created their own criteria for measuring the effectiveness of their projects. The second workshop was also designed to prepare the village teams to select and peer train their selected year-two villages. Considerations for the choice of year-two villages included the villages’ willingness to participate in ANTARC; the logistics of communication and travel between first-year and second-year villages; the availability of meeting space, lodging, etc; the strength of the tribal government and/or other village organizations; and the existence of shared concerns that would make training of the second village by the first particularly compelling and successful.

Workshop participants also evaluated the problems, mistakes, and successes in ANTARC's first six months. Village representatives reported the importance of working more closely with their tribal councils — barriers to which included the difficulty of getting on meeting agendas, a lack of communication, political conflicts and power/control issues, and council and team turnover. They also found that more regularly scheduled meetings were crucial. Everyone agreed that ANTARC's expectations, and particularly the timeframes in which they were developed, had been unrealistic. The evaluation led to two immediate changes in the ANTARC program. First, Workshop I had collided with the beginning of the subsistence season, and Workshop II with its end: clearly, expecting villages to prioritize ANTARC and get off to a running start between March and November was inappropriate. Thus, training for second-year villages would be scheduled for January or February. Second, because of village timelines and because creating innovating relationships and problem-solving methodologies takes a great deal of attention and focus on each village, everyone agreed that each first-year village should select one, rather than two, second-year villages to train. Third, because of some difficulties meeting with tribal councils when we were in the villages, we discovered that tribal council members were accustomed to receiving payments for attending tribal council meetings. Therefore, the budget was modified accordingly to include tribal council member stipends.

In fact, our plans for the second-year villages would change again, this time for a less positive, but equally educational, reasons. The understanding of the PIs (and what was communicated to the village teams and tribal councils) was that ANTARC was to be a three-year grant, with funding renewed each year pending submission of a report from the previous year. However, we were informed at the end of year one that our budget would be subject to substantial — but unspecified — reductions. One explanation was ANTARC-specific: the program had not expended all of its first year funding. The reason for this was that the initial

funding came three months late, leaving less time in the fiscal year to plan and carry out the ANTARC activities for which the budget was projected. Despite this fact, the under-spending was used as a justification for reducing second year funding. Our second year funding arrived not only substantially reduced, but again, months late.

This development took substantial wind out of the all of the ANTARC participants. A preliminary meeting was scheduled with one village when the funding was delayed. That village never ended up participating because the momentum, not to mention trust, were lost. A second village participated, but in a much more perfunctory manner than would have been possible if the village had started earlier. The future potential of ANTARC, particularly when the Bush administration took office, seemed lost. Needless to say, enthusiasm was also crushed in first-year villages, where a suspicion of public and grant-funded programs was reinforced, and any developing trust in the University was severely tarnished. ANTARC staff and first-year villages continued to work on projects we had begun together, but now the second of the two central components of the ANTARC concept was lost. That is, second-year villages opted out, and the process of village-to-village training was largely dropped. In order to accommodate the shortened timeline and reduced funding, the project reduced the goals and collapsed the funding into a single year. Thus, both the program implementation and the evaluation components of the project were addressed less extensively and not given enough time for development. Ultimately we were able to stretch two years worth of funding over a period of three years. This allowed us time to establish a productive relationship with the Kotlik village team for which we hoped at the beginning of the project.

For these reasons, and because of the nature of our work, implementation and outcomes cannot be reported according to evaluative measures that were conceived in the abstract at the outset of ANTARC. However, the narratives of village activities are equally, if not more,

instructive for the University, the Bureau of Justice Administration, and anyone working with or for Alaska Native communities.

VILLAGE OUTCOMES

These narratives demonstrate that three intersecting factors significantly affected the results at the community level. First of all, the involvement and commitment of the tribal administrator was critical to the successful operations of the village team. Those villages where tribal administrators were continuously available and effectively able to capitalize on the skills of village team members in furthering the goals of ongoing village programs were the most visibly effective. Second, selection of the village team members had a significant impact on project viability. Each of the villages selected their teams differently, and for different reasons. Some were more able than others to make effective substitutions of team members who were unable to contribute to the project. While none of the villages ended the project with the same four people they started with, some of the villages were able to arrive at a better balance of complementary skills and abilities in their team members. For instance, team members who did not have full time employment in the cash economy were able to devote more time and energy to moving the project forward. Third, those village teams that built their success from smaller problems to progressively greater ones were most able to cultivate the community problem solving method to their own purposes. They developed credibility within the community as well as confidence in their own abilities to make a difference.

Kotlik. The Kotlik experience exemplified the goals and premises of the project. The tribal administrator was a strong force in guiding the team, which all interacted extensively with the tribal staff and tribal council. The tribal administrator used ANTARC to leverage other, ongoing projects such as suicide prevention and environmental protection/clean-up. Thus, the

village team started by reinforcing and essentially staffing the suicide prevention program, which was a family week in which there were activities each night for one week of the month. For various reasons, this community program was defunct; the ANTARC village team members demonstrated that it could be viable. From there, they moved on to the curfew problem. Children were not obeying the curfew and no one was effectively enforcing it. One of Kotlik's first major successes was in curfew enforcement, through which they brought together a number of community organizations among which poor communication and even conflict was frequent. First, a team member who is a respected Elder brought up the problem at a general meeting. The team then informed the City Council that they would spearhead a group to address the issue, and proceeded to talk with schoolteachers, the school principal, and the Student Council. The school arranged for an Elder to come talk to the students about the issue, and the team circulated flyers about the curfew hours to every household — even those without children. With the help of ANTARC staff at the University, the team obtained a siren to signal the curfew, and ever since has reported not only success in enforcement, but also improvement in other youth problems.

Following on their successes with family week and curfew enforcement, the team gained momentum. They used CAPRA to tackle problems between teachers, parents and students at the school, taught CAPRA to the high school students and also attacked the trash problem. Their letter to everyone in the community illustrates how potent developing local responsibility can be:

Kotlik ANTARC TEAM (Community Problem Solving)
Kotlik, Alaska 99620

To the local businesses and entities of Kotlik:

We have worked with Victor Tonuchuk and Lena Okitkun in the talking with the students about our environment. Victor and Lena have emphasized the importance of recycling and keeping our lands clean.

It is important to keep Kotlik clean because we are owners and stewards of this land around us. During AFN and many other native organizational meetings, many of the native residents of Alaska debate and fight for our lands. Yet in many

of our villages such as Kotlik, we do not have a system to provide jobs to keep Kotlik trash free. We have relied on the children in Kotlik to pick up the trash in Kotlik every spring.

We as adults in the various entities and organizations should be obligated to keep our village clean. Perhaps jobs can be created to hire someone to clean the area in and around the office buildings to keep them clean and orderly.

If we continue to ask for outside help for funding programs we may be waiting over a long period of time. The village of Kotlik needs to take the responsibility to take the first step.

When we decide as a community to take responsibility, there will be respect from our community members and visitors. Those who are greatly affected with our trash problem is the younger generation. They are observing how we care for the land about us, and will imitate our actions.

Speeches, lectures and letters will be of no help to our community unless we take the step of practicing what is being preached through native leaders, elders, and organizations. Let's work together to improve on the condition of the land in the village of Kotlik.

Will you take the responsibility of keeping your business area clean and orderly? Will you be a good example of caretakers of this land? Are you willing to give Kotlik a good reputation of being a hard working generation?

This letter is not to insult you and your business but to encourage you and to reflect on our responsibility as citizens of this community. We want to encourage and challenge you to take the first step of providing jobs to hire local people in the village to maintain our lands.

Respectfully,

ANTARC TEAM MEMBERS (Names listed but omitted here for privacy.)

The Kotlik ANTARC team also gave a workshop on CAPRA to the newly formed Kotlik Fisheries Corporation. After all these increasingly more visible successes, the Kotlik team's work culminated in a "Visioning Workshop" that all the village entities requested they facilitate. Through this visioning workshop, the village identified a need economic development in the form of the expansion of their craft sales. The ANTARC project then provided assistance in the form of a University of Alaska business faculty member to assist in the development of a business plan and technical assistance for the creation of a web-based sales outlet. Given the

geographic remoteness of Kotlik, access to external markets is essential. An additional benefit of this particular form of economic development is the respect it pays to the skills and contributions of Elders in the community and the promotion of culturally relevant practice amongst the entire village.

Because the substance of the Kotlik team's work is so instructive, it is also useful to report on their process and interactions with the tribal council and others as they developed their competencies. The Kotlik team presented its Workshop experience to Traditional Council on April 20. They emphasized the need for community cooperation, described the CAPRA model, discussed the way in which they had chosen and worked through the problems of vandalism and lack of curfew enforcement, and announced the next workshop scheduled for October. Interestingly, another item on the Council's agenda was a meeting in Seattle regarding a new congressional appropriation of \$88 million for the Department of Justice under the Indian Country Law Enforcement Initiative, and the Council wondered whether the regional organization Association of Village Council Presidents would send a delegate. There were four categories listed for new appropriations: hiring of more police officers, construction of detention centers, creation of juvenile justice programs, and enhancement of tribal courts.

ANTARC was on the agenda again on a May 17 Tribal Council meeting attended by a member of the ANTARC field team, this time to encourage cooperation from the village community, troopers, tribal organizations, city, and church. A problem-identification meeting was also scheduled. Over the next six months, the team planned and executed the described activities: ANTARC team participation in local suicide prevention workshops; making presentations and holding events during Family Week; enforcing a youth curfew; presenting the CAPRA model to classes in the local school; using the CAPRA model for school district conflict

between the teachers and the parents, holding a community clean-up day; and improving communication among village agencies.

Logistical exercises were instructive: one village team member reported that the only effective way she found to discuss inhalant abuse was when the kids were at fish camp. Finding a more public opportunity to address a group of youth, the Tribal Administrator discussed vandalism at the high school graduation. Other more informal activities were ongoing as well, such as work with domestic violence victims and the elderly. Communication with and reporting to the ANTARC staff in Anchorage was constant and effective enough to overcome a number of scheduling conflicts, such as illness, death, moose season, and a late herring run that occupied the entire team. This was not easy, as reflected in one ANTARC staff report in August:

Spoke to (team member). He's been quite busy lately, but not on ANTARC business...Everyone is out berry picking and they want to stay out late. I told him when we were coming to Kotlik and that it was important for us to meet with everyone then. I told him we had to have something to report, so I hoped they would have something to tell us then. He said, "we'll try to come up with something."

This team member was replaced because of his lack of participation and enthusiasm. One of the identifying characteristics explaining why Kotlik was able to “perform” more according to the expectations of the grant was that the tribal administrator had the flexibility to replace team members to make a stronger team during the first year.

The pressure to fit village activities into the pre-established timelines of the grant was felt by everyone. One Elder refused to write anything down, which frustrated some and even led to discussions about replacing him, but which also highlights the distance between the form and content of wisdom in Alaska Native communities, and the grant proposal and reporting requirements of federal and state agencies. However, contact was facilitated by persistence, the use of email by some village representatives, and a particularly close relationship between the women on the team and Professor Lisa Rieger. The tribal administrator also made the tribal

offices available for telephonic meetings and team meetings. When that tribal administrator was on leave, the team did not feel as comfortable working out of the tribal office, and started conducting their telephonic meetings from one of their homes. Encouragingly, Kotlik representatives also inquired about progress in other villages, and hoped they would “really get to it.”

Following the second workshop, the team kept in closer contact with their Tribal Administrator, who began to take primary responsibility for initiating contact with Kotlik’s choice for its second-year village, Stebbins. After initial excitement, progress was slow, particularly given staffing changes in Stebbins’ Tribal Council. In winter and spring 2000, Kotlik prepared to train Stebbins, and had additional successes at home. They successfully introduced CAPRA to the newly incorporated Kotlik Fisheries, and were asked to address additional disciplinary problems in the school and the village trash problem. The team had become a recognized, ‘go-to’ resource in the village. In preparation for a February potlatch, of course, all ANTARC activities stopped: as the Tribal Administrator said, *"it's been going on since before I was born, and we were born into it."*

By February, it was clear that our grant monies were at risk, and a Kotlik representative warned that becoming too involved in Stebbins could be a waste of time if the funds did not materialize. A successful training was finally conducted in early October of 2000 once the project eventually received the second-year funding. That workshop was significant for a number of reasons, including the degree of ownership over the process that the Kotlik team members demonstrated. For instance, they were insistent in controlling the organization of the workshop including restructuring the meetings so that part of it took place in Stebbins and the other part took place in Kotlik. Their reason for having part of the workshop in Stebbins was that it allowed for a greater degree of community participation. Their reason for having part of

the workshop in Kotlik was that it allowed for the Stebbins team members to focus exclusively on the training and for them to view the potential results of successful implementation of the problem solving approach.

The Stebbins team seemed to like CAPRA, particularly because it encourages the local community to take ownership of the problem and to decrease its reliance on the federal government. They shared many of Kotlik's problems, including suicide, and in the training they chose to apply the CAPRA model to the problems they were having in operating a teen center. Kotlik encouraged them to get everyone involved, from the teens to the Elders.

Following their training in the CAPRA problem solving model, the Stebbins team remained largely independent of the University and used the model to enhance their ongoing community problem solving projects. While informal contacts were maintained between the teams from Stebbins and Kotlik, the lack of contact between the Stebbins team and the University is largely attributable to one of the goals of the project, which was to gradually phase out the University.

In the spring of 2001 a workshop on the assessment and evaluation components of the CAPRA model was held in Kotlik (see Appendix 4). Both the Kotlik team and the Stebbins team (who traveled to Kotlik for the meeting) participated in this workshop. Topics covered in the workshop included the methods of and the need for documenting problem solving activities, the process of developing goals and objectives, the various methods of evaluating a community problem solving response, and the ways that objections to evaluation might be managed. Although the process of evaluation within the village is immediate, direct, and personal, the participants understood the need for documentation and evaluation for the purposes of satisfying the requirements of federal and state funding agencies. For instance, the Kotlik team developed a form listing each of the issues dealt with using the CAPRA problem solving methods. They

felt this was an important part of accountability to their village, or, in their words, it provided a means to show that they were "walking the talk."

Wainwright.

Early morning, got to Anchorage airport at about 5:30, flight left and arrived in Barrow on Schedule. We were about 2.5 hours late getting out of Barrow and finally arrived in Wainwright at about 2:15. The snow was all gone from Wainwright and the village, save a great number of parted out trucks and snow machines in front yards, was quite clean. In walking from the airport into town we saw in the distance a group of about a dozen kids out picking up garbage. We had just began the walk to town when we were offered a ride on the back of a four-wheeler by local townsman. We asked for a ride to the Tribal Office and he took us to the hotel. From the hotel we walked to the community center where we thought the meeting might be held. Finding no one there we asked another townsman how to get to tribal offices. He didn't seem to know what the tribal office was, so we asked him if he knew where [the Tribal Administrator] worked. He said that [she] wasn't in town and that she was in Anchorage.

...It is a busy time of year here in Wainwright. The village killed six whales this season, and they were all busy getting things ready for the feast. A great deal of time was spent talking about whaling and all the work they are doing slaughtering the whale and preparing it for the feast. During the meeting [a team member] seemed quite anxious to get back to her butchering. After about an hour and 45 minutes at 4:30 we allowed her to do just that when we ended the meeting (field notes from meeting with Wainwright team, June 1999).

As of June 23, the Wainwright team had met with their Tribal Council and presented the CAPRA model and the team's focus in the Workshop on the lack of activities for youth, which were well received. They seem to have the impression that the only time they were to be doing ANTARC was when they are "having meetings" and that they needed to have meetings to go through the process. We tried to stress to them that they could be doing ANTARC work outside of meetings and that they could learn about what people thought about problems when they were just chatting with people in and out of work. This was a productive conversation, and allowed us to re-communicate the fact that, while the University team was available for facilitation and assistance, the project was under the control of the village, to be conducted on village terms. Reiterating this motivational speech was essential in every village — not necessarily because

Alaska Natives in general, or the teams in particular, “lack” motivation per se (although this may have been true of specific individuals), but because the historically institutionalized relationship between Alaska Natives and non-Natives has been one of outside control and dependency. Because outside programs and experts have rarely encouraged or accepted truly cooperative relationships, Alaska Natives have learned to separate these programs from their everyday, village lives. Other symptoms of this relationship are, of course, a mutual lack of trust, and a de-prioritization of the program relative to other aspects of village life. These are barriers all parties faced to our theory of supporting ANTARC projects that are conceived and “owned” by the villages themselves.

As of August 1999, Wainwright had not submitted any reports or documentation, and the team cancelled a teleconference because of the death of a former Tribal Council member. Further delays resulted from power outages and additional illnesses in the village. Finally, we scheduled a visit of the ANTARC field team to the village on September 20, and confirmed it a number of times. Yet we were frustrated again. We called a village representative after traveling to Barrow and found there had been no communication among team members, and no meeting scheduled. Given this news and the worsening weather, we turned back from Barrow rather than continue onto Wainwright. Additional attempts at organizing meetings of the village team failed until December 13, when the team discussed organizing a bake sale at some holiday events. An ANTARC team member gave the Tribal Council a pep talk at a December meeting, citing successes in other villages.

By February of 2000, the team was raising funds to address the problem of the need for a food bank in the village; requested (and eventually received) land skills training from the local search and rescue organization; and had sent to various tribal councils on the North Slope letters and emails of invitation to participate in ANTARC as second-year villages. Virtually no

responses were received. For a while, council and administrator in Kaktovik was interested, but no second-year partnership developed. This occurred at the time when second year funding was pending but the uncertainty of the situation made it difficult for the tribe from Kaktovik to commit to the project.

Over the course of the two years, our trips to Wainwright became increasingly problematic, and what started out as reluctance ended up as flat out refusal to participate in the project. For instance, in March of 2001, three attempts were made to provide a workshop on evaluation to the village team members in Wainwright. The first and second attempts were cancelled by village team members before project staff traveled to Wainwright. In spite of scheduling to accommodate village team members on the final attempt, village team members failed to arrive at the agreed upon time and place to meet with the staff member from Anchorage who had traveled to Wainwright for the meeting at the tribal office.

Gulkana. The CAPRA model was introduced to the Tribal Council in an April 1999 meeting following the Workshop. A team member suggested applying it to a discussion of the Y2K problem, and as a result, CAPRA was used at a town meeting to create an emergency response plan. They were also successful in dealing with the loose dog problem they had identified at the workshop. After this encouraging start, ANTARC activity largely broke off for some time, and was not discussed at Tribal Council meetings. Team members explained that this was in part because of the onset of the summer “work season” and subsequent hunting season, and in part because of two team members not showing up to meetings or engaging in activities. Predictably, few monthly reports were delivered to ANTARC staff. The tribal council replaced two of the team members.

In August, a visit from the ANTARC field team re-invigorated the village representatives. By December the village team had two successes: three quarters of the community turned out for

an event at which they presented of the Y2K emergency plan, and they got a generator for the water system to keep the water flowing so that it did not freeze up. In fact, with support from some team members, the Village Council President and Administrator reported that they applied the CAPRA model to a problem they and the village were facing, and together came up with nearly twenty options that they alone would not have considered. Also in December of 1999, Gulkana chose Tazlina to be the year-two village in their region. Tazlina's tribal administrator was enthusiastic, and agreed to propose the idea to the tribal council president. A Gulkana representative described Tazlina as a village slightly smaller than Gulkana that had developed a number of innovative programs. Unfortunately, although the Gulkana team was ready to travel to the annual meeting of Tazlina where they were scheduled to present ANTARC to the entire village, the trip was cancelled because second year funding was not yet assured. Neither Gulkana village team members nor project staff were willing to make commitments they could not keep. It may have also caused a loss of respect for the project in the region.

Following this unfortunate aborted attempt to follow the goals of the project, the Gulkana team became less active. Not only did they lose momentum and enthusiasm for the project, but there were changes in the tribal administrator and team members at this time. While the Gulkana team had early successes and indeed involved the entire village in such a way that they could see the value of collaborative community problem solving, the project was unable to sustain itself there.

Yakutat. As in the other villages, Workshop I and its follow-up expectations were poorly timed relative to important subsistence activities. Turnover in Yakutat Tlingit Tribe staff, a dispute in the ANTARC village team that resulted in the resignation of one member in July 1999, and general distrust between the tribal council and the team also hindered first-year progress. Initially, one very outspoken team member was very focused on drug and alcohol testing, which

made ANTARC less than popular with the tribal council. Moreover, staff and council turnover meant that the basics of ANTARC had to be constantly reintroduced to the council. The council had worked hard to prioritize cultural identity, self-esteem, and economic development — as opposed to the typical focus on testing — as more appropriate initiatives that targeted the root of justice problems, and thus gained the impression that ANTARC was just another misguided, “outsider” project. The tribal council and administrative staff clearly articulated their perception that a lack of Tlingit identity among tribal members is inextricably linked to unemployment and substance abuse.

In September 1999, a member of the ANTARC field team visited the tribal administrator, and reiterated that, while the village team was funded by a University grant, it worked under the authority and management of the tribal council. Such discussions made the ANTARC University staff increasingly cognizant of how ingrained the historical relationship between the University and rural Alaska remains, and how much effort and communication it takes to initiate change. This particular clarification was crucial: relations between the team and the council improved in the next twelve months, and in October 2000 the Tribe formally requested that ANTARC staff “begin to plan with the council to teach our people their language, and culture,” and that the University arrange for a consultation with a Fairbanks linguist regarding the development of a Tlingit language immersion program.

In some respects, Yakutat used ANTARC in exactly the way it was intended: the local team and tribal council found a University resource that they could use to solve problems and develop programs as they saw fit. In other respects, University staff learned that progress could not be evaluated solely by our typically analytical, categorical techniques. This is exemplified by a conversation recalled by a University of Alaska Anchorage field team member with a Yakutat team member: “He said he has been involved with [the] Onward to Excellence [program] with

the school district and he was invited. I asked what that had to do with ANTARC and he said he was invited. I asked if that was in his capacity with ANTARC or as ANB [Alaska Native Brotherhood] president. He said it was who he was in the community.” Academic and granting institutions want specific, preferably quantifiable evidence of project impacts, and view participants in terms of their contribution as an individual working on behalf of (in this case) ANTARC. As this Yakutat representative indicated, however, Alaska Natives wear many hats, but rather than divide their consciousness and actions into discrete units, they tend to act first and foremost as members of families, clans, and communities. Another tribal staff member said that during the three years of the ANTARC project she has been General Manager/Tribal Planner, Acting Health Director, State Magistrate of Yakutat, Co-owner of a local smokery, Board Member and Secretary of her church, wife, mother, and grandmother. It is unlikely that she forgets, for example, that she is a grandmother while she is acting as Tribal Planner.

The Yakutat team used ANTARC to get a grant to send two people to a linguistics workshop on grant writing for language programs, and by improving relations between the tribe and the city, brought the school district on board to develop a language program in which an elder now runs regular sessions of two levels of Tlingit. But *how* did they use ANTARC? There was little, if any, talk of CAPRA. One village team member said that, “trying to explain it as CAPRA — C stands for this, etc. — doesn’t make sense to people.” Written reports were irregular, and people in Yakutat did not seem predisposed to filling out the slots in the CAPRA worksheets or using the systematic method of problem identification and evaluation in a way that was directly identifiable to the ANTARC field team. This is not to say that they did not benefit from training or from CAPRA ideas: Tlingit participants said that indeed they did enjoy the workshops. However, it is not possible to draw the kind of direct line from ANTARC and CAPRA to the positive outcomes that are preferred by funding and social service agencies. For

example, it seems clear that the Yakutat team used ANTARC as *cultural capital* as much as anything else — as an example of their connections to, and ability to access, federal departments and funds, participation in ANTARC helped them win other grants and achieve other programmatic goals. Is this an “appropriate” or “successful” ANTARC outcome? It does not fit the direct intentions of ANTARC grant writers, but it is clear that Yakutat used ANTARC as they saw fit, and with very little external support, as one among a network of funds, resources, and connections leveraged together to achieve the goal of creating a Tlingit language program. Again, as the above quote indicates, a identifiable outcome for ANTARC work in particular is not as important to the Yakutat team as was the way in they could leverage ANTARC toward their goals as members of their families, clans, and communities.

PART 5: EVALUATING RESULTS

As an effort to understand the impact of the ANTARC project in the participating villages, project staff made final field visits to the villages to conduct exit interviews and consultations with team members, tribal councils, and tribal administrative staff. Based upon these visits, a number of questions regarding the outcome of the ANTARC project in these villages can be answered.

Question 1: What did villages identify as a “justice problem”?

For the most part, ANTARC did not guide villages to identify problems that they had not considered before—they are exposed to these problems every day. In many cases, the program did assist villages in analyzing relationships between various groups involved in problems and solutions, and/or enhancing communication between those groups toward resolving them. What ANTARC allowed them to do was to take these familiar problems and break them down into manageable pieces that could be resolved. In all cases, problems on which ANTARC teams

chose to work were not typical “courts, cops, and corrections” issues, but were issues that attended to community integrity and respect, including cultural and economic development. The Department of Justice can glean from these results that the scope of its work in rural Alaska — while responding to the lack of equal protection and safety officers identified by the NARF lawsuit — must also include support of such programs as Native language training, community clean-ups, or local economic development projects. In brief, ANTARC projects included:

- Native language program
- Grant writing workshop
- Small business workshop
- Arts and crafts cooperative
- Enhanced inter-agency communication
- Land skills / search and rescue training
- Self-sufficiency and local control efforts
- Vandalism
- Food bank
- Youth curfew
- Teen center
- Suicide prevention
- Emergency readiness plan

The broad range of projects developed by the village teams is evidence of their understanding that being proactive on these issues is a more productive use of their time than reacting to the symptoms (violence, substance abuse, suicide) that are more traditionally thought of as “justice” issues.

Question 2: What were the “results,” and what do they mean?

Again, some results can be quantified, and many cannot. In our view, perhaps the most impressive, overall result was the extent to which ANTARC facilitated, or provided the opportunity for, enhanced communication among village organizations and governmental entities. For example, the final visioning workshop in Kotlik brought together all of the entities in the village as well as a number of regional agencies to consider economic development

strategies. This result can be documented to some extent, but mostly in the form of qualitative experiences and comments of ANTARC participants. This is a problem for the status quo of federal agencies, which prefer a more quantifiable, and *scalable*, result. Essentially, ANTARC sought local definitions of success, and non-Native agencies must learn how to recognize and cope with these. Failure can be difficult to understand and process as well — often, failure is expressed in silence, non-communication, or pat politeness by Alaska Natives. There is a tendency for researchers and agencies to over-emphasize the data that does exist and the participants that were eager and active, and this practice risks losing the important information that can be gleaned from silences and failures. Thus ANTARC is successful less for the hard data it has generated than for the important experiences of partnership from which we draw the concluding recommendations below.

Question 3: *Did the villages' views of the University, or relationship to the University, change as a result of ANTARC?*

In all villages, the ANTARC project staff worked hard to establish relationships of trust. The iteration of ANTARC's intention to put Native villages in control of their own problem-solving projects was reiterated for three years, and there is ample evidence that continual clarification of this point was essential to ANTARC's successes. Several of the villages expressed that they had never before been placed in such a position of control over a project. Moreover, a program in which Native communities could call on University faculty for assistance that the community defines and supervises did provide a positive experience and precedent. Kotlik in particular expressed this view. From the beginning of the project, during the initial workshop, the team members from Kotlik understood the concept of the University as a resource. As part of their practice presentation on the final day of that workshop, they

explained that the University “is not going to come in and tell us what to do or how to do it but rather to be a resource and support in the problem solving process.”

For the most part, however, Alaska Native participants did not experience a significant change in their attitudes toward the University of Alaska as an institution. Yakutat was particularly articulate on this front. In many cases, relationships between individual Alaska Natives and ANTARC project staff enabled progress in spite of this distrust, yet Alaska Natives saw no reason to assume that these successes represented a change in the dominant nature of the University system. The delay and ultimate failure of ANTARC’s planning and budget for second-year villages merely reinforced this feeling.

Question 4: Will ANTARC activities continue now that the grant has ended?

ANTARC as a distinct program almost certainly will not continue in any of the four villages. There are unlikely to be identifiable “teams” with systematic meetings and activities. This is a shortcoming of ANTARC, and a failure of the limited commitments that grants are able to make to Alaska Native villages. Kotlik was the village most concerned about the end of ANTARC, and is most likely to retain CAPRA as a working model. Two ANTARC team member and two elders, who were already actively engaged in community life, felt that ANTARC gave them tools and ambition that will stay with them to some extent. On the other end of the scale, Yakutat and Wainwright, while their team members reportedly enjoyed some aspects of the trainings, are not likely to associate their activities with their ANTARC experience in the future, but are likely to use other approaches that they consider more entrenched, effective, or appropriate. Perhaps because the North Slope routinely employs university and professional consultants for Native projects, Wainwright did not find ANTARC to be novel. To a much lesser extent, the same could be said of Yakutat. On the other hand, more important than the question of whether villages will continue to use something they call ANTARC or CAPRA is whether

experiences associated with the program will have lasting effects. In all communities to a different degree, local organizations had an experience of greater communication and collaboration on the problem selected by the ANTARC team, and those are the precedents from which communities can build.

PART 6: CONCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The ANTARC experience reinforces the fact that when working with Alaska Natives, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the University of Alaska, and outside agencies more generally, must use a village by village approach and allow communities to define their own justice problems, take time and care in choosing local partners, understand the importance of local time frames and timing, accept the potential for unexpected results, reform rigid practices of grant management according to local needs, recognize the difficulties of dealing with a lack of economies of scale in Alaska Native villages, and work to reduce attrition and turnover of those involved in projects at the community level. A more expansive discussion of each item follows.

VILLAGE-BY-VILLAGE APPROACH AND DEFINING LOCAL PROBLEMS

There is not and cannot be one point of access through which a federal department can approach diverse peoples within a bureaucratic region defined by state boundaries. Therefore, these recommendations can not provide cookie-cutter models, but can prepare federal agencies with more appropriate attitudes and approaches to assisting Alaska Native communities in achieving their justice goals.

A large portion of federal funding funnels through regional non-profit corporations prior to reaching the village level. While some villages work closely with their regional corporations, others work better on their own. Funding agencies that wish to insure the success of their

programs need to recognize and support these distinctive villages. This requires a deeper, more extensive investigation into village/regional dynamics. When this is done, it is possible that approaches to problem solving may grow from the village to the regional level, as opposed to the usual top-down approach. Two examples of village influence at the regional level were evident in the ANTARC project: (1) several regional agencies were interested in participating in the village level visioning workshop facilitated by the Kotlik team; and (2) Julie Roberts, village executive from Tanana and trainer at the ANTARC workshops used the CAPRA model to help resolve economic development issues at a regional meeting.

When villages have the freedom to develop problem solving responses for their own purposes, they are less likely to compartmentalize those responses according to categories that federal and state agencies will recognize. So, for example, although this was a BJA supported effort, the issues they addressed were linked from their perspective to justice goals, but not the typical criminal justice focus. Alaska Natives have fundamentally different approaches to problem definition and evaluation, and the self-definitions of problems is essential to the creation of successful solutions. Because the villages almost invariably identified the loss of culture and self-determination as the source problem, solutions and programs take a more socially “holistic” approach to crime prevention than “courts, cops, and corrections.” In some sense, these villages' responses are more in tune with views of the effect of community disorganization (e.g., "broken windows") than with many bureaucratic responses recommended to communities as a solution to issues of local concern.

CHOOSING LOCAL PARTNERS

Because of the complex history of Alaska Native cultures, non-Native settlement patterns, land claims, and other legal and political patterns in Alaska, there are multiple and

overlapping governmental or quasi-governmental authorities in virtually every rural village, no matter how small. Both internal and external conflict can be expected. This means that the definition and boundaries of “the community,” not to mention the identification of legitimate leadership, can be extremely difficult for outsiders to understand. There cannot be one single criterion for choosing community partners. An increasing number of mandates in federal and state agencies to include “community input” in programs has proven shaky and manipulable, primarily because funding cycles, methodologies, and bureaucratic practices do not take time to account for community complexity. Moreover, the burden is usually on Native people to develop voices and mechanisms that outsiders can understand.

In search of a more grassroots approach that allowed communities to work on their own terms, ANTARC chose to work with the Tribal Councils, and while it was a relatively successful choice, it was not unproblematic. For example, recall the fact that villages have little confidence in the commitment of outside programs and funds. From this perspective, we can see why Native villages have come to treat these programs as a way to channel money and resources to particularly needy individuals in the community. For example, we found that individuals were sometimes chosen for the ANTARC team not because they were thought to be particularly effective community leaders or activists, but because they particularly needed the ANTARC stipend that came with the position. This is a natural tactic for communities that traditionally attend to the distribution of resources among their people, and in communities in which the leaders wear so many different hats that they are over-extended. However, until outside organizations are able to inspire a greater level of trust, their reasons for choosing partners will continue to differ from local reasons.

IMPORTANCE OF TIME AND TIMING

The importance of time and timing cannot be over-emphasized. To be more successful in rural Alaska (if not everywhere), federal and state agencies simply must realize that collaborative programs take more time than any project to date, including ANTARC, has devoted. There are at least two major reasons for this. First, as exemplified by the relationship between rural Alaska and the University of Alaska, truly collaborative projects are faced with the task of overcoming a deeply-ingrained relationship of distrust. Institutional change is slow and difficult, and programs must account for a process of continual reassessment, plan for continuous communication, including multiple face-to-face contact, and be open to changes in goals and methods. This all takes an unpredictable, but certainly extensive, amount of time, and will never be accomplished so long as Alaska Natives witness a “revolving door” of federal and state projects and administrators. In some cases, credibility and success for ANTARC were truly achieved in the final year, just as the funds were closing down. Second, time and timing is culture specific. The prioritization of activities is for the local community to decide, and a schedule of meetings and expectations must be acceptable and realistic with respect to the patterns of village life. In Alaska, these patterns have primarily to do with cultural and subsistence activities, though we learned that they are also heavily influenced by less-predictable events such as weather and deaths. It is simply unreasonable to expect grant work to be done during subsistence season. The unexpected must be expected.

ACCEPT UNEXPECTED RESULTS

Governmental departments and budgets are based on a certain predictability of outcomes and relationships between means and ends. However, in truly collaborative projects, results cannot be determined ahead of time, or evaluated by one party alone. Broadly speaking, a

positive, quantifiable justice outcome is less crime; however, if ANTARC has helped mobilize a Tlingit language program, who can determine, at the end of the grant, whether that is a step toward reducing crime? We believe it is. To be true to the spirit of this project, as one tribal council member in Yakutat commented, "the lack of identity, the lack of language, are at the beginning of the problem and substance abuse and crime are at the end." Grant-making agencies and university researchers must be willing to rework assumptions regarding the ends and means of solutions to justice problems. While many of the issues presented by the village teams might be anticipated (youth violence, vandalism, substance abuse), others were not (walrus poaching, trash collection).

GRANT MANAGEMENT

As noted above, the financial relationship between the villages and the University, as structured by a grant is problematic. Additionally, bureaucratic structures make it difficult for outside agencies to work in villages, and for villages to work with outside agencies. For example, computers and fax machines in villages are located primarily only in tribal council and city offices, and postal service can be irregular. The University and the villages operate according to vastly different schedules and time frames. The exchange of paperwork required by the University to get people in villages on grant payrolls is burdensome. The Justice Center attempted to modify forms to accommodate village needs, but village team members had a perception that financial processes were more flexible than the University systems allow. For example, if a village team member was in Anchorage for medical or business reasons, they sometimes asked to receive their stipend in Anchorage when the checks had already been sent from University payroll in Fairbanks. Furthermore, while project staff understands the

relationship between tribal councils, tribal governments, village governments, and other rural entities, those in the University bureaucracy often find them opaque.

Clearly, then, the system is not only complex, but complex in culturally specific ways. For example, budgets and payments are divided by activities such as travel, salary, “expenses”, and so on. A gaggle of rules — *de jure* or *de facto* — that govern specific ways in which monies may be spent are equally culturally specific. Accordingly, we were forced to explain, or to try to explain, to village teams that they could spend ANTARC money on magic markers or flip-boards for meetings, but not on coffee or appropriate foods that they consider equally essential to productive meetings. This small example merely alludes to a much larger problem Alaska Natives face in interacting with urban bureaucracies that have little understanding of village life, what is needed, what is available, how much it costs, or how much \$250 buys.

Federal and state agencies also need to recognize the pivotal role that tribal administrators play in the success of village programs. The ANTARC project budget should have acknowledged this role; these administrators might have put forth more time and energy toward the project had they been paid for their efforts. As it was, the ANTARC project was for most of them just one more responsibility to uphold without compensation.

ECONOMIES OF SCALE IN ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES

An additional important lesson for those doing business in Alaska villages is that agencies cannot assume the specialized capacities that are present in the larger Indian nations in the lower-48 are present in those villages. As shown in Table 1, the populations of Alaska Native villages are considerably smaller than their “Outside” counterparts. For instance, the median population of Alaska Native villages is a third that of Lower-48 tribes. Also, the tribes in Alaska are much younger than those of the Lower-48, leaving fewer adults available to provide essential

community functions. As a result, village human and social service providers are forced to move fluidly between different roles, maintain a multiple task bundle, and maximize opportunities for solving problems in the villages.

ATTRITION AND TURNOVER

Attrition in village teams and Tribal Councils will happen for many reasons, some of which ANTARC worked to minimize. For example, ANTARC fostered increased communication to lessen distrust and miscommunication, as well as expanded the size of village teams, which buffered against attrition and the over-burdening of any given individual. ANTARC also encouraged collaboration between village teams and other village organizations to increase community familiarity with ANTARC, reduce the need for constant re-training and prevent teams from going back to square one every time staff turned over. Each of the teams replaced at least one member, and most of them replaced two. Finally, for all of the reasons discussed above, attrition is also reduced by sufficient and culturally appropriate timeframes.

Table 1: Local Estimates of Resident Indian Population and Living on and Adjacent to Reservations, 1995

Population	Alaska Tribes (n=210)			Lower-48 Tribes (n=340)		
	Total	Age 0 to 15	Age 16 to 64	Total	Age 0 to 15	Age 16 to 64
Mean BIA Tribal	295	136	145	3486	1182	2047
Median BIA Tribal	234	83	86	738	222	458
Smallest BIA Tribe	2	1	1	1	0	0
Largest BIA Tribe	3488	1403	1837	225668	87736	124421
25 th Percentile BIA Tribal	79	37	39	247	81	141
75 th Percentile BIA Tribal	344	162	167	2290	718	1469
Mean Tribal Enrollment	311	n/a	n/a	4093	n/a	n/a
Median Tribal Enrollment	186	n/a	n/a	740	n/a	n/a

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1995. *Indian Service Population and Labor Force Estimates*.

Other reasons for attrition are inevitable (death or illness, personal factors, reprioritization, and so on), and non-Native staff must appreciate these. Attrition is equally a problem with federal and state granting agencies, including the University. We must remember that Alaska Natives have experienced decades of attrition on the part of outside staff and social workers — what has been referred to as the “revolving door” of programs and staff. Extensive research on a variety of development workers in third world, “fourth world,” and rural contexts has documented the personal, cultural, and structural conditions that produce and reinforce this situation (e.g., Chambers, 1983; 1996). Agencies need to institutionalize a new relationship with Alaska Natives that includes culturally appropriate attitudes and longer-term funding and program commitments so that Alaska Natives do not need to continually re-educate the stream of people and programs that come through their communities.

CONCLUSION

From any perspective, Alaska Native villages are special, different places. In many ways, they are certainly different from the communities that are typically the recipients of the services of government agencies such as the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Most of these villages are remote from the road system, small, relatively homogeneous communities with no real law enforcement presence. Problems of survival are immediate, cultural heritage strong and with it the attendant culture clash with western systems and approaches.

In recognition of the special nature of Alaska Native villages and the difficulties of providing technical assistance, the ANTARC project was an effort to bridge some of the differences between these culturally confusing approaches; when we explained that one of our goals was to provide an opportunity for the villages to let Washington, D.C. (and state agencies) know what were their issues and concerns, rather than responding to RFPs set in D.C. or Juneau without input from their communities, this goal resonated for them. We hoped to create a “two-way street,” where the University facilitated understanding of federal and state expectations, as well as demonstrating how important it is to set goals from the local level up, rather than the other way around.

The results of this project, while perhaps unexpected, were in the end true to what the villages wanted and to what the project proposed. The villages arrived at issues and projects from within, without our imposing ideas of what they should address. It was clear throughout the project and from our exit interviews that the villages were not used to being in the driver’s seat on grants, and that it was something to which they had to adjust. Of course they did so in varying ways, all of which need to be recognized and appreciated. Sometimes the silence was deafening. In most of the villages, communication and cooperation between the various governmental entities (city, tribe, corporation and state and federal agency representatives) was

sorely lacking. Crossing these boundaries and promoting greater cooperation was identified as one of ANTARC's achievements.

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