

Covenant Youth of Alaska

'A catalyst for the development of youth ministry in Alaska'



Dear Education Majors,

I graduated from North Park University in May, and promptly moved to Alaska. Are you going into teaching with a heart for ministry? If you are, consider *Teach for Alaska*. *Teach for Alaska* is a new program of Covenant Youth of Alaska (CYAK) through which teachers commit to one year of teaching in Alaska, while simultaneously making it possible for indigenous young Native Alaskan leaders to minister to the youth of their communities. If you are certified in most states, you are eligible for 'Initial Certification' in Alaska and are able to teach after filling out some paperwork (nothing new to an Ed. major-see below).

All *Teach for Alaska* participants will commit to live on a budget of \$24,000 for the year (the typical CYAK mission worker raises and lives on \$12,000-\$14,000). The remainder of the participant's salary (approximately \$14,000) will provide much-needed funding one of three areas in CYAK's ministry: 1) Leaders for Life Program (Student Leadership development) 2) Scholarship students to Bible Camp, fall and spring youth retreats 3) Placing an Indigenous youth worker in a village for one year.

Out of the thirteen Covenant Churches in bush Alaska (small, remote predominately Native villages not connected to anywhere else by road), only three can afford to help compensate their youth ministers, due to high unemployment rates and their small populations. There is no youth ministry happening in many of these villages whose youth have a rate of suicide over 10 times the national average. These kids need hope. Our mission to resource these Churches with youth workers and to develop local leaders pursues of the hope we have as we've seen cycles of abuse broken-Praises be to God!

All *Teach for Alaska* participants will commit to serving in the local Covenant Church a minimum of two hours a week (e.g. volunteering with the youth group, teaching Sunday school), actively participating in the local life of the Church (e.g. small group Bible study), and volunteering at least one CYAK retreat during the course of the year. Climbing mountains, fishing, and attending Vision (the young adult Bible Camp near Unalakleet in early August) are all strongly recommended.

Teachers are needed to teach in the bush. One might live with a CYAK youth worker serving in the local church-for mutual support and encouragement. Living in these communities involves immersion into a radically different cultural context. Teaching at-risk kids while living in isolated small (sometimes only ten kids in a graduating class) Native village with extreme winter conditions is extremely difficult and a strong network of support and prayer is essential. These communities have the highest rates of physical, sexual, alcohol and drug abuse in the country by over four fold. Some cultural training and resources are provided by the school system and by our ministry. The students in these villages tend to identify safe and caring teachers and come over to visit on a very

regular basis. Being a teacher there involves more than full time teaching. There is different pedagogy and academic standards implemented in these communities (more information on this is accessible through some of the links provided below).

Another, less extreme, possibility for teaching in Alaska, would be on the Road System. These teaching positions would be at schools more comparable to those in Illinois. Most of the towns and cities are primarily Caucasian, the exception being some ethnically diverse schools in Anchorage. Teaching on the Road system will be in schools that are larger, with fewer at-risk students. Ideally, you would find a position in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley, Eagle River or Fairbanks as these are the cities on the Road System with Covenant Churches.

Be sure to check out www.cyak.org to learn more about our ministry, and feel free to contact me if you have any questions! If you would like to see some faces to put with our ministry and bush Alaska, see my facebook photo albums put up in recent months: <http://northpark.facebook.com/album.php?aid=2017934&l=6ddcf&id=67600241> In Matthew 9:37, Jesus said, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest field."* If you feel led, we would love to see you become a part of the work that God is doing in Alaska.

In Christ,

Nick Bruckner

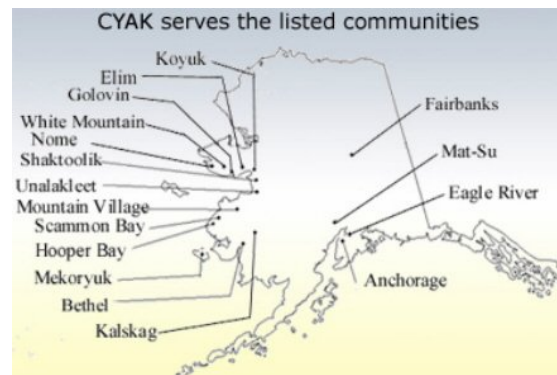
nick@cyak.org

(907) 373-2322

(773) 208-3986

5201 Mayflower Lane

Wasilla, AK 99654



- Villages range in population from 150 to 6,000. In some villages, most of the people still live without running water.
- All villages have internet access. The Covenant Churches are in Yup'ik and Inupiaq villages (there are six main tribal groups in Alaska).
- There are currently thirteen people from the 'Lower 48' who have graduated in the last four years doing ministry through CYAK in some capacity.
- Alaska is 8 times larger than Minnesota. It has a road system equivalent to Rode Island.
- All donations are tax-deductible. Even if you choose to teach outside Alaska, you can still support the ministry financially and through prayer! You can give monthly or a one-time donation online at www.cyak.org.
- There are only 600,000 people in Alaska. Roughly 6% of Native students graduate from college.
- Check out these links for teaching opportunities...
- <http://www.asdk12.org/depts/hr/employment/salary.asp>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Find-a-Teaching-Job-in-Alaska>

INITIAL TEACHER CERTIFICATION

To qualify for an Initial certificate, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

- Bachelor's degree or higher
- Completion of a teacher preparation program

OR

- Current enrollment in a teacher preparation program (Program must be completed within two (2) years of the issuance of the Initial certificate)

NOTE: Program enrollment cannot be used for individuals enrolled in special education programs. Those individuals must complete their program prior to applying for the Initial certificate.

- Passing [scores](#) on the Praxis I, CBEST, or WEST-B exam
- Fingerprint cards submitted with application for background check
- Complete application and fees (*All fees are non-refundable.*)

A one-year teaching certificate may be issued for applicants who have not yet met the testing requirement, but hold a current, valid teaching certificate in another state. E-mail Teacher Certification at tcwebmail@alaska.gov for details and further qualifications for this certificate.

The Initial Certificate is valid for three (3) years and is NON-RENEWABLE. Although the Initial Certificate is valid for a period of up to three years, you are required to:

1. Under AS 14.20.020 (h) to complete the Alaska studies and Alaska multicultural requirement within two (2) years from the issuance of your Initial Certificate.
2. Submission of two video [performance reviews](#) within two (2) years of the issuance of the Initial certificate

The requirements for the Professional or Master certificate must be met during the life of the Initial certificate.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY TRANSCRIPTS BE SENT DIRECTLY TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION.

Teacher Loan Forgiveness Programs

Most rural, and many urban Alaskan schools with low income populations are eligible for various teacher loan forgiveness incentives.

There are very specific criteria that allow some teachers in low income schools to get part or all of their loans paid off. The rules vary by loan type, certification area, school, and number of years you teach there, but range from a total of \$5,000 to \$17,500 in loan cancellation.

TCLI Eligible Schools in Alaska - 344 Schools in 2006

http://www.alaskateacher.org/downloads/tcli_alaska_2006.xls

TCLI Eligible Schools in Alaska - 355 Schools in 2005!

http://www.alaskateacher.org/downloads/tcli_alaska_2005.xls

Also, this is not just for new teachers. If you meet the listed Stafford or Perkins loan criteria, and taught in one of these schools, you should really check it out.

The list that the U.S. TCLI folks keep goes back to 1998, and as long as you fill out the form, and have the Chief Administrative Officer of the district you worked for sign it, you may get some repayment help. You can get credit for service in eligible schools that you've worked in since 1998. It's pretty cool, and I don't know why this program isn't better known!

TCLI Website

This site is searchable by year, state and district.

<https://www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp>

Alaska EED Contact for TCLI

Elizabeth Sweeney

elizabeth_sweeney@eed.state.ak.us

For some quick information, try these links:

- [Teacher Loan Forgiveness](#)
- [List of Perkins Loan Eligible Schools](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Description](#)
- [Stafford Loan Forgiveness Information](#)
- [FFEL & Direct Loan Forgiveness](#)
- [FTLFP Info](#)