

# Covenant Youth of Alaska

*A relational outreach, discipleship and leadership ministry  
for Alaska youth and young adults*

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## Fall Time, Retreat Time!

Fall time is retreat time for CYAK! We are excited for this year's fall retreat season - we recently finished up the Young Adult retreat, and look forward to two regional Fall Blast retreats in the coming month. Your prayers and support go a long way in making these retreats a reality, as well as making it possible for young people like Kirstian (below) to experience God's love. Thank you for your commitment to youth and young adults in Alaska! We are grateful for your partnership in ministry.

*"Fall Blast is encouraging to me because you see how God is working in our region and how he brings the youth together to serve and worship him. You learn something new and encouraging every year that makes you want to change your life around for the better. You hear something that stands out and sticks with you for the rest of your life. It strengthens your relationship with God and also lets you meet adults and youth that you can talk to when you have difficult times in your life." - Kirstian, Unalakleet*



### Ministry in the Eyes of: Adam London CYAK Staff, Unalakleet

#### Please introduce yourself:

Suvat? Uvana Atiga Umialikaq. ("What's up? My Eskimo name is Umialikaq."). Most people know me as the Youth Pastor, Adam. My wife, Shirleen (her Eskimo name is "Patuk"), and our 4 children have made Unalakleet our home for the past 5 years. My

wife (her home village is Atqasuk, a village of 250) is an elementary teacher by trade and currently takes care of our gaggle of little ones at home. We have both been working with youth in the villages for over 10 years, though we have officially been a part of CYAK staff for about 7 years now.

#### Tell us some about the community of Unalakleet:

Depending who you ask, Unalakleet has a population anywhere from 688-900. Part of that fluxuation is because we are a fishing village and in the summer, when fish are running, our population booms. About 85% of the population is Alaska Native and about 14% is Caucasian. We are a "hub village," which means everyone from surrounding villages flies in/out from our village to go to/from Anchorage. Being a hub village also means that we have many of the regional offices in our village, such as the school district, dental, or the troopers. Most villagers (including ourselves!) still live subsistence lifestyles consisting of things like fish, moose, caribou, seals, and berries.

#### What does a typical week of youth ministry look like?

Busy! This past year every week we had 2 separate Sr. High and Jr. High Youth Group nights, 2 separate Youth Bible Studies, CYIA (Christian Youth in Action) training, and youth-led Children's Church. We also had several youth events like 30 Hour Famine, weekend youth retreats, movie nights, game nights, holiday parties, and a whole lot of informal time just hanging out. We also do a boatload of fundraising through rummage sales, pizza sales, catering luncheons, selling calendars, auctions, and various other things. We fundraise almost \$20,000 a year to supplement our Youth Group activities budget. We've had between 30-55 youth attend regularly every week during our time here.

During the summer our schedule is a little more relaxed, with Bible Camp going on for 6 weeks. The Youth Group also is in charge of the Community Garden, so we plant, water, weed, harvest, give away, and sell all the produce that God

allows to grow. We have more outreach events and less regular program. Summer is a great time to build relationships.



**Unalakleet High Schoolers at the CHIC Conference in TN!**

#### What are some challenges of doing youth ministry in Unalakleet?

Busyness. This is a not a problem that is unique to village Alaska, but seems to become more and more prevalent as the culture becomes more Western and less traditionally Native. Adults struggle with being too busy with their jobs to volunteer with the church or with Youth Group. Youth struggle with being too busy with sports to do service projects. I struggle with being too busy with ministry to spend enough time with my family. Life is all about balance: prioritizing and living into your identity. Our greatest challenge is to prioritize loving God and loving others first as well as living into our identity as dearly beloved children of the one true king (rather than finding identity in work or sports)

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**Bri with fresh picked carrots! Sunday School teaching.**



...continued from page one.

### What has been encouraging in ministry this year?

Doing 3 youth baptisms! All of these youth have been leaders in the Youth Group and I have had the joy of seeing their faith grow in the past few years. One of those youth went on our Mission Trip to an orphanage in Mexico and reported back home, from the pulpit, that one week is not long enough, one month is not long enough, one year is not long enough, but that she wants to follow Christ to be a Missionary with her entire life! Praise the Lord!

I was also blessed this past school year with 2 awesome interns from Alaska Christian College (ACC). I have had 8 interns from ACC over the past 5 years and the internship program has had a huge impact on our ministry. It is my heart's desire to help equip young adults with skills to be able to do Youth Ministry in the villages. It was a true joy and encouragement to see them grow personally and to see how they helped our youth grow as well.

***"It is my heart's desire to help equip young adults with skills to be able to do Youth Ministry in the villages."***

### How can we be praying?

- Please pray for wisdom, patience, compassion, and joy for our family as we seek to serve the Lord together.
- Please pray for our youth that more leaders would rise up and serve within the church. Pray that their hearts for service will be infectious.
- Please pray for the community that hard hearts would be softened and that more people in the church would answer the call to be Missionaries with their entire lives.
- Please pray that the cycles of sexual abuse, physical abuse, drug abuse, and alcohol abuse would be broken. Pray for those stuck in these cycles to know that the only hope is surrendering to Christ.



**Unalakleet Youth Interns and Student Leaders led Children's Worship during the 2015 Annual Meeting in Elim.**

## Get involved!

**pray**

- {** We know the importance and power of prayer, and are grateful for those who serve in this way. Consider joining our monthly prayer team. Visit [www.cyak.org](http://www.cyak.org) and click the 'pray' button.

**give**

- {** CYAK would not be able to work toward its mission without the generous donations people make toward the ministry. Learn how to give at [www.cyak.org/give.html](http://www.cyak.org/give.html). To learn about specific ministry needs, contact David Rurik: [david@cyak.org](mailto:david@cyak.org)

**highlight**

- {** Consider highlighting CYAK's ministry at church! To receive resources to share with your congregation, small group, or community, we would love to help! Contact [lauren@cyak.org](mailto:lauren@cyak.org).

**serve**

- {** There is a definite and continuous need for youth workers in the villages across western Alaska who have hearts to see youth grow in Christ. To learn more about various opportunities, contact [info@cyak.org](mailto:info@cyak.org).

## Around the State...



**Arigaa Soldotna Kick-Off!**



**Chickaloon Retreat Center**



**CYAK Young Adult Retreat!**



**Scammon Bay Youth Group**



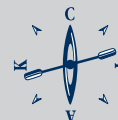
**Arigaa Anchorage Pie Night**

## Prayer Praises & Requests

*We are incredibly grateful for all of those who faithfully lift up CYAK's ministry in prayer.*

- We **praise God** for a wonderful **Young Adult Retreat!**
- We **praise God** for **the start of Arigaa Soldotna!** The first night showed an awesome turnout! Excited to see what God will do there.
- We **praise God** for **teachers, youth workers and volunteers** in AK who have begun youth gatherings and Bible Studies for the year.
- We **ask for prayer** for **students who have moved to the road system** - please pray that they will transition well.
- We **ask for prayer** for the **upcoming Fall Blast Retreats** - in Bethel and Unalakleet. Pray for safety for all involved and a deeper understanding of Christ's love!
- We **ask for prayer** for CYAK as we **continue to grow as a ministry** - please pray for wisdom and discernment.

## Find us online



Learn what CYAK is all about, our history, mission vision and values by visiting [www.cyak.org](http://www.cyak.org)!



See photos, hear about events and learn what's new with CYAK on our facebook page.



Check out some of our videos on You Tube! Search: Covenant Youth of Alaska