



# Interns Build Ministry Skillset

## Local collaboration gives young leaders a chance to shine

BY DAVID RURIK

The community of Bethel on the Kuskokwim river in Alaska is a hub for many who travel through the region. It is a vibrant community and home to Bethel Covenant Church pastored by Adam London. Previously, Adam served on staff with Covenant Youth of Alaska in various roles across the state. As he and his family transitioned into the lead pastor roll in Bethel we at CYAK knew he would take his heart for partnership and youth with him.

Enter Ben and Emily Wickstrom. Ben and Emily recently graduated from North Park Theological Seminary and are heading to their first call in California. Before they head that way Adam recruited them to help lead at Covenant Bible Camp in Unalakleet then spend the remainder of the summer in Bethel working with two young indigenous CYAK interns.

Partnerships between CYAK and local churches allow for students like Freeman and Jessica to explore what a calling in vocational ministry

may look like. Through this summer they have encountered the work of Christ at Covenant Bible Camp, Bethel Covenant Church and Camp Hope.

“I’ve enjoyed interning with CYAK this summer as it taught me how to give a message and lead devotions. I’ve seen myself grow in my spiritual walk by watching our other leaders and other people,” Freeman said. Watching young people walk along the continuum of care is one of the great joys of working with CYAK.

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For much of their time, the interns helped to the run a pilot program for the new food truck in Bethel. Through this, Freeman, Jessica and the Wickstroms were connected with the ministries that Bethel Covenant Church has established, such as the ministry to the homeless and to at-risk youth.

“I have enjoyed working in a cross-cultural setting and finding ways to do it in a God-honoring way,” Jessica reflected. Partners who give financially, as well as partners who volunteer locally, allow our team to take advantage of these cross-cultural partnership opportunities. CYAK is able to walk alongside young adults as they discern their calling and become leaders in their communities in both faith and culture.

**You are a part of the team that God has called together to impact youth and young adults in Alaska.**

Not only do we have some of the most committed staff on the ground in Alaska, but we have some of the most committed partners around the country driving the vision of CYAK forward.

Internships allow students to have specific encounters with God. Consider the impact that your giving has on the lives of young people as we do kingdom work in partnership together.

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Covenant Youth of Alaska is a relational outreach, discipleship and leadership ministry for Alaska youth and young adults. A ministry of the Alaska Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church, we work in partnership with 19 churches across Alaska for the cause of ministry to young people. To join our efforts or to learn more, go to [www.cyak.org](http://www.cyak.org).