



Gathering at the Table

Building a legacy requires having a sense of vision now

BY DAVID RURIK

Families who gather around Thanksgiving tables this week may be regaled with tales of previous generations of family facing hardship, moving great distances, celebrating successes and reflecting on the pathway that the family has taken. Many will recall similar opportunities of metaphorically or physically sitting at the feet of their elders to hear about their family.

In Alaska, the context of hearing stories from elders is critical. It anchors a community and family with a sense of place in the midst of generations of time. What is being shared in those conversations is the concept of legacy. Where did we come from? Who is it that we are because of what happened in the past? What do these stories leave for us? These common legacy questions help create common cause and community.

Not only do families take on the task of reflecting on their legacy, but organizations and churches can ask similar questions. At CYAK, the question of legacy ties our entire network to the vision that we carry together.

Partners across the country have bought into CYAK's vision of 'Creating vibrant and healthy communities reflecting the gospel and led by people

Christ has transformed.' This vision guides everything we do so that in the future a legacy of our collective impact remains.

Building a legacy is not an overnight process. Many Native communities talk about family and life in terms of seven generations which is reflected in the stories and traditions that are passed down. For CYAK, building a legacy is a process that started 27 years ago and carries on into the future guided by the vision.

In 27 years the CYAK legacy appears to be showing some sense of clarity. Talking with Byron Bruckner, our executive director, will give you some sense for this. "When I started this ministry, we searched high and low for young adults engaged in the Covenant Church in Western Alaska and came away with just one name."

At the close of 2017, CYAK staff submitted a list of 70 names to Byron as youth and young adults who were actively engaged with their local church. We celebrate this progress alongside our partners who make the vision come to life.

Several years back a previous CYAK young adult helped lead Nome Covenant Church through the construction

of their new facility in partnership with Samaritan's Purse. In Bethel, a previous CYAK young adult serves her local hospital professionally while also chairing the CYAK board and serving with the national ECC church board.

There is evidence that a legacy is being built. While dinner tables fill on Thanksgiving with food, family and friends, remember that the legacy being built in Alaska is worth celebrating as well.

CONTINUE YOUR IMPACT TODAY

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.

The truth is that students are being daily disciplined and brought into closer relationship with Jesus because of the broad family that we call the CYAK team and network. Consider the impact that your giving has on the lives of young people as we do kingdom work in partnership.

Continue Your Impact Today
www.cyak.org/YourImpact



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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.