



Grantee Highlight - Gardening Conference



Ed Buyarski of Juneau sold local seeds and bare root berry stock.

Did you know that special community events can happen under fiscal sponsorship from any local 501(c)(3) nonprofit that is eligible to apply for CVCF grants? Fiscal sponsorship is what made it possible for a garden-loving group of six volunteers to organize the "Ready. Set. Grow!" 2025 Chilkat Valley Gardening Conference for local Haines gardeners last March. Seventy-five residents hungry for inspiration soaked up gardening expertise tailored to our Southeast Alaska conditions from local and out-of-town guest speakers during the three-day event at the Haines School.

Takshanuk Watershed Council, a local nonprofit, applied for a CVCF grant on behalf of the volunteer group to pay for the event space rent, advertising, technical support, catering, and guest speaker travel. Listeners were enticed by a wide range of presentations including composting, seed-starting, gardening myths, bumblebee nesting, building and testing soil, mushroom and fruit tree growing, edible landscaping, and crop storage.

Keynote speaker Marion Owen from Kodiak, garden coach and creator of The UpBeet Gardener video series, entertained listeners with unique wit and humor during five different informative presentations.



Tommy Thompson of Klukwan demonstrated mushroom growing.

A Match Is Met - A New Match Is Created

A huge thank you to all who invested in CVCF since January 1st!

Gifts to the CVCF Fund and the Operating Endowment Fund helped secure a \$20,000 match from The Alaska Community Foundation and Rasmuson Foundation. Each gift makes a difference for years to come by increasing funds available to support local nonprofits and the work they do. And the matching dollars helped build CVCF's operating endowment to support our ongoing program costs long into the future.



Our local nonprofits need our help more than ever as they work to continue to provide important services and programs to our community. Some have lost federal funding, all are dealing with rising costs, and the need for services in the Chilkat Valley continues to grow.

In response to these increasing community needs, the fourteen-member CVCF Advisory Board has created a **new \$17,500 match opportunity**.

Your gifts to ANY of CVCF's seven endowed funds, or to the endowed Art Jess Scholarship Fund, will qualify for this match while the board members' donations will be invested in the Operating Endowment Fund. This means YOU can give to the fund(s) that speak loudest to your heart and help ensure CVCF's long-term sustainability at the same time.



This new match is definitely a win-win opportunity!



Grantee Highlight - Chilkat Valley Avian Monitoring Program



The Chilkat Valley plays a critical role in facilitating avian migration from the coast to the interior. The mud flats at the mouth of the Chilkat River are a major migratory stopover site for waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls. This rich estuary enables them to rest, feed, and wait for favorable weather before heading over the mountains to the northern breeding grounds. In fact, the Chilkat Valley is home to the most breeding bird species in Alaska, the largest congregation of Bald Eagles in the world, and an unusually high number (at least eighteen) of migratory bird species with a significant portion of their global population occurring locally. These facts were discovered, in part, due to the Takshanuk Watershed Council (TWC) Avian Monitoring Program.

In the fall of 2024, CVCf granted the TWC funds to continue supporting this program and its important work - the long-term monitoring of bird migration, breeding, and seasonal habitat use. By continuing to study and collect this data, TWC will be better able to identify areas in need of restoration, educate the public about local avian communities, and research how environmental factors may be affecting bird species locally. Insights gained from the program surveys will ultimately contribute to the continuation of the spectacular biodiversity in the Chilkat Valley that supports the well-being of all residents.

Congratulations to our 2025 Art Jess Scholarship Recipients



Longtime Haines resident Art Jess was kind-hearted and generous. He was a champion for spiritual and social advancement of humanity in general and of Native American people in particular. Art was a lifelong learner who devoted himself to building community, and who believed a person never really graduates until life is over.

The endowed Art Jess Scholarship Fund was founded in 2018 by a local donor to honor Art's legacy. This scholarship is open to Alaska residents who are Alaska Native, American Indian, and/or Hawaiian Native. Preference is given to Chilkat Valley residents, Chilkat Indian Village and Chilkoot Indian Association members, previous scholarship recipients, and applicants already out of high school. Financial need and community service are also considered in review.

This year we had forty-four applicants from across the state. Though no Native from the Chilkat Valley applied this year, \$10,000 was awarded to the following six worthy students.

Sydney Dieringer, a previous three-time scholarship recipient from Fairbanks and Galena, plans to use her \$2,000 award toward graduate studies to become a speech and language pathologist.

Cyruss Sarren from Unalakleet is using his \$2,000 scholarship toward his lifelong dream of becoming a pilot for the small airlines serving NW Alaska.

Angelena Kashatok, from Eagle River and Chevak, will be using her \$1,500 scholarship toward her BS in Civil Engineering.

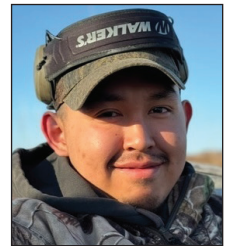
Ginger Keller from Valdez will be using her \$1,500 award toward her AA in Process Technology, a career path reinforced last summer when she interned on the Alaska Pipeline.

Tiffani Pearson, a single mom from Anchorage with a BA in Political Science, will be using her \$1,500 award toward an MBA.

Shandiin Wendell from Chugiak and Bethel, who interned at Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum last summer, will use her \$1,500 award toward a degree in Alaska Museum Studies.



Sydney Dieringer



Cyruss Sarren



Angelena Kashatok



Ginger Keller



Tiffani Pearson



Shandiin Wendell

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