

# Annual Report

**Tundra Women's Coalition**

**Fiscal Year 2021**



TUNDRA WOMEN'S COALITION



WORKING TOGETHER  
TOWARD A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

# Programs



## Emergency Shelter



**186 women** provided shelter

**3 men** provided shelter

**148 children** provided shelter

**12,852 shelter nights** provided in total

**760 crisis calls** answered

Shelter has increased training for staff by instituting monthly inservices. Staff have become certified in QPR (a Suicide prevention training), trauma-informed care, coping strategies (for ourselves and to share with residents), and are implementing Strengthening Families' classes for shelter residents. We increased our ability to work with adults with disabilities through establishing a working relationship with Adult Protective Services.

## Children's Program



**47 children** received **277 individual activities**

**102 children** received **1,340 group activities**, including responsibility-development activities, childcare, homework help, mindfulness activities, community engagement activities, and cultural activities.

## Non-Resident Assistance

Many people impacted by violence don't need shelter, but do need assistance with civil legal remedies like protective orders, divorce, custody, and connecting people to pro bono and low bono legal assistance. A study funded by the Department of Justice found that providing civil legal services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault is the most effective means of ending the violence in their lives.



**50 people** assisted with protective orders

**11 people** assisted with divorce and/or custody cases

**6 people** assisted with Violent Crimes Compensation Board applications

“ I'M GRATEFUL THERE WAS AVAILABLE HELP FROM FRIENDLY STAFF WHEN I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND [PROTECTIVE ORDERS]. ”

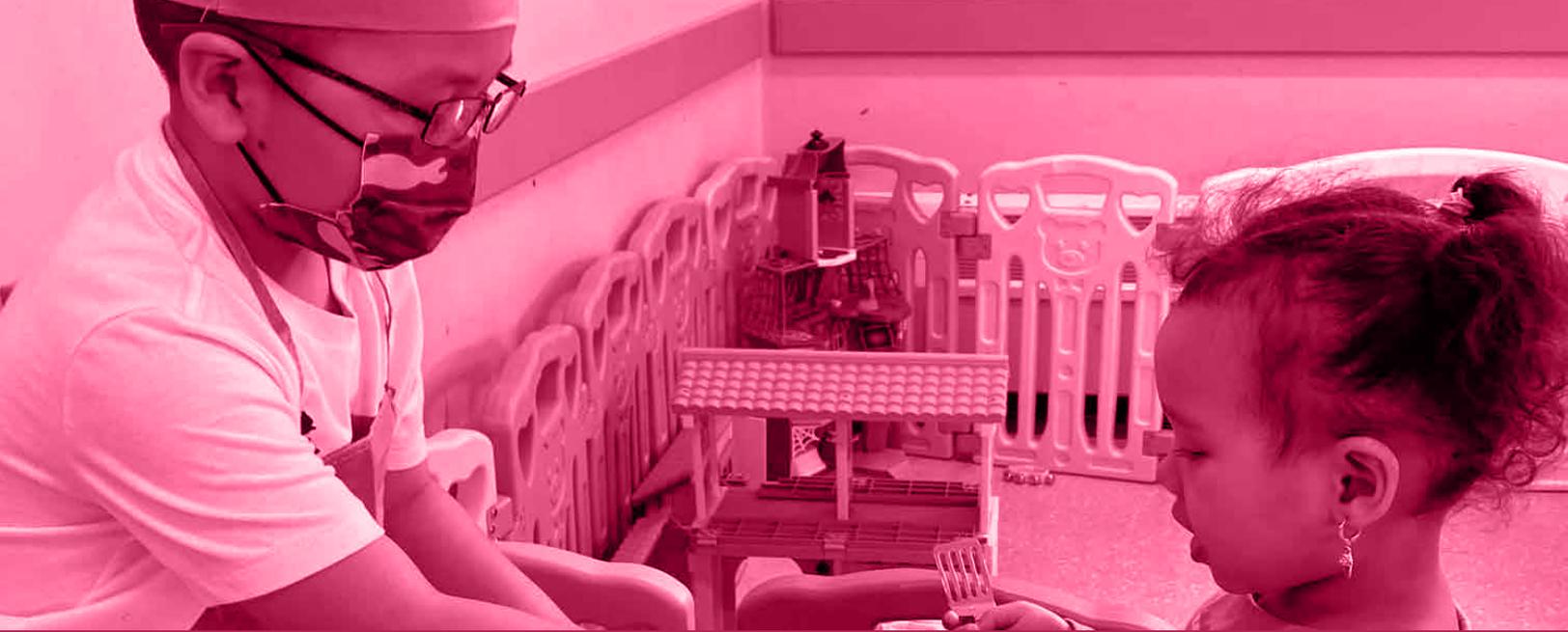
## Teens Acting Against Violence



**27 teens** received **416 group contacts**, some virtual, some in-person with appropriate safety measures

Hosted **Pride Parade**

Hosted a mini-**Teens Lead Ahead** conference



## Children's Advocacy Center

Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) stress a child-focused multidisciplinary approach to investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse cases. The CAC that serves the YK Delta is called Inniamta Ikayurviat, the Children's Center. We respond to children and caregivers when there is a report of child abuse to provide evaluation services in a safe, child-friendly environment. We strive to ease childhood trauma and connect families to resources to support them so they can begin the healing process.

“PRECISE, HELPFUL, COURTEOUS.”  
- ADULT

“[THE CAC] IS KINDA GREAT AND FUN.”  
- CHILD

CAC

## Outreach

Doing Outreach during COVID was a challenge, but we managed **53 educational presentations** on a range of topics, including domestic violence, sexual assault, trauma-informed care, TWC services, legal advocacy, and more.

**326 adults** attended these trainings, including health care professionals, law enforcement, district attorneys, and other community members.

We held monthly Peace Talk radio shows.

We hosted events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October and Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April. TAAV also hosted a Pride Parade in June.

## Housing



**7 adults** and **15 children** lived in TWC's Transitional Houses over the course of the year for **1,705** Transitional Housing nights

**6 shelter residents** obtained subsidized housing

**6 shelter residents** found non-subsidized housing

**2 shelter residents** moved into assisted living

**53 adults** and **52 youth** were assisted with funding that stopped them from becoming homeless

While TWC is a short-term emergency shelter, the reality is that most people need longer than a month to reestablish their lives after leaving violence. Getting affordable housing in Bethel can take 18 months to two years. In recognition that TWC has to meet people where they are, we created a new position to specifically work with people who need longer term stays in shelter when our transitional houses are full. This employee works on case management, makes referrals, and helps survivors navigate housing benefit systems.

## Wellness



**87 individuals** received individual counseling

**63 people** received **617 sessions** of therapy

**80 people** received **306 sessions** of support group

TWC has a Chemical Dependency Counselor I on staff, a contracted Licensed Clinician, and TWC can arrange treatment assessments for people looking to attend inpatient or outpatient treatment.

# Community

## Bethel Housing and Homelessness Coalition

Hosted by TWC, The Bethel Housing and Homelessness Coalition agreed on three goals when we began meeting in 2017:

1. Help the Bethel Winter House become a full time shelter with its own space,
2. Begin youth homelessness services,
3. Explore Housing First as a solution for the chronically homeless in Bethel.

Major partners include Bethel Community Services Foundation, Bethel Winter House, The Kuskokwim Consortium Library, ONC, and AVCP Housing. The Coalition helped the renovation of the Bethel Winter House in the Old Senior Center. The Housing Coalition assisted TWC in selecting Anchorage partner Choosing Our Roots to apply for youth homelessness program funds—and are looking to hire in order to launch youth homelessness programming for the first time in Bethel.

## Prevention

Violence Prevention Coalition held ten meetings with members from ONC, KUC, LKSD and TWC.

The Coalition developed a white page in support of the Phase II Multipurpose Gym as a way to prevent violence, especially in young men.

“ IN HIGH SCHOOL, WE WROTE DOWN REASONS TO LIVE DURING SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH AND OFTEN I SAW SPORTS... YEARS LATER I NOTICED SOME OF THOSE KIDS WHO PLAYED A LOT OF SPORTS STRUGGLING WITHOUT THAT OUTLET AND CONNECTION TO OTHER PEOPLE. ”

- ANNIE MAE LEE, OUTREACH AND PREVENTION COORDINATOR

## Coordinated Community Response

CCR partners include TWC SART Program, TWC CAC Program, AST, BPD, OCS, YKHC Medical and Behavioral Health, District Attorney, Attorney Generals' Office, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Bethel Family Clinic.



**178 children** were seen at the Children's Advocacy Center for allegations of sexual or physical abuse or neglect

**3 adults** used the CCR for severe physical domestic violence



**1 adult** used CCR for a case involving both domestic and sexual violence

**55 adults** reported sexual assault and went through the SART process

The YK Delta Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) responds to allegations of adult sexual assault and cases of serious physical violence including strangulation in Bethel and the village communities. The team is multidisciplinary and partners together to provide interagency, coordinated responses that make victims' and survivors' needs a priority, hold offenders accountable, and promote public safety. This model is standard and reflects best practices across the nation. The region's team includes TWC, BPD, AST, DA, and YKHC.

“ I FELT SAFE, I FELT GOOD THAT I HAD A GREAT ADVOCATE THERE WITH ME, SHE MADE ME COMFORTABLE AND HAD VERY GOOD INFORMATION SHE MADE SURE I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING ON. ”

SART



## Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

Shelters across the nation were notified that many would receive reduced funds (in the State of Alaska, a 33% reduction) in funds because of the VOCA shortfall. TWC's board members, staff, and scores of community members contacted our Senate representatives and the "VOCA Pass" was approved by the Senate and House and signed into Law. In the meantime, TWC board members, staff, and scores of community members called state legislators asking them to close the gap that the VOCA shortfall created and were successful. Shelter programs, including TWC, didn't receive any cuts in operating funds for FY22.

### Testimony from a YKHC member of the CCR Team

"My name is Farah Sears and I am a Family Nurse Practitioner at Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation in Bethel. I perform medical forensic exams for both adult and pediatric sexual assaults. In the YK Delta, we have two times the number of sexual assaults (child and adult) than the Alaska state average, which is already four times higher than the Lower-48 average. In Bethel, we have worked very hard to build a multidisciplinary SART that responds to each and every child or adult sexual assault. I consider the advocate to be the glue that holds this team together and helps the patient navigate the medical, law enforcement and judicial systems. If the funding of Victims Services in our region is cut, that will devastate our community, which desperately needs these services, and undermine the foundation that our multidisciplinary team is built on and continues to rely heavily on. I urge you to consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall as I have seen on an almost daily basis how invaluable the services of our TWC and CAC are to the YK Delta survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual assault/abuse and child abuse."

## COVID-19

TWC worked in conjunction with the City of Bethel and Bethel Community Services Foundation to award over 1,500 grants for a total of over \$650,000 to individuals and households in Bethel that experienced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like nearly every agency in Bethel, TWC experienced positive cases of COVID-19 in shelter residents and with staff. TWC is grateful to YKHC's staff and COVID-19 response. Each time we had a positive case, YKHC rapid tested our entire population and quarantined the infected residents. Because of this, TWC experienced no disruption of services during the pandemic and, in fact, increased our number of people served from the previous year. Shelter census increased by 20 people and over 3,000 nights over FY20.

TWC had to adapt with survivors and compensate for other agencies being closed to the public to help survivors access services and begin to stitch their lives back together. We continued to illuminate and work to overcome barriers to services that were created by COVID-19.

“ I'M SO THANKFUL THERE'S SUCH A THING AS TWC. YOU SAVED AND HELPED MANY WOMEN DURING THEIR TOUGH TIME INCLUDING MINE. ”



# Donors & Volunteers

## Volunteer Spotlight - Angie



When Angie Smitley first stepped into the TWC Thrift Store as a customer two years ago, she saw a diamond in the rough and started making plans. A dental hygienist for Bethel Family Dental Clinic, Angie understands the benefits of order, cleanliness and positive habits. She saw a commitment to volunteering at the thrift store on a regular basis as an opportunity

both to create an orderly space for customers and to help connect people to clean, quality items that could have a whole second life with someone new. In addition to keeping the store open on a regular basis, Angie has begun creating a standardized protocol for assessing thrifted items to make it easy for all volunteers to keep merchandise quality consistent and high. **Quyana, Angie!**

## Community Connector - Don



Any time a group of seemingly random donations start coming in from folks who we've never encountered, the first person we always think of is Don Rearden. Don, who grew up in Bethel, Akiak and Kasigluk, is a professor at UAA, novelist, screenwriter and poet, and he is a vigorous advocate for TWC. Growing up in the Delta, he was always aware of TWC and its importance to the region. His first charitable donation as an adult went to TWC and from that point

on, he has not only remained a loyal donor, but has faithfully pointed his wide social and professional networks toward TWC as well- we frequently hear from new donors that they were sent our way by Don. When asked about his willingness to connect his community to TWC, Don said, "It's easy to remind people when it's time to Pick.Click. Give., and during the #BethelGives campaign to donate and share links to donate. You don't get a full berry bucket with one berry. Every donation matters. It all adds up." **Quyana, Don!**

## Sustaining Supporter - Justin



Justin Willis started coming to Bethel in 2018 as part of his medical education with Seattle Children's Pediatric Residency. He loved the YK Delta and enjoyed his patients so much that when he graduated in 2020, he accepted a pediatrician position at YKHC and moved out to Bethel permanently. Interacting with the children of the Delta everyday, Justin noted the crossover between his work and the work of TWC. He wanted to find a way to provide sustaining support to TWC to ensure that the agency would long be able to protect children in the YK Delta. To achieve this, Justin initiated a monthly recurring contribution to TWC, which allows him to provide continuous support

without needing to remember to do anything and makes it easy for him to build the contribution into his monthly budget. We are thankful for this monthly support- and the gratitude is mutual! Justin said, "I am beyond grateful for being welcomed into this community and being allowed the opportunity to serve with the children of the Delta as a pediatrician. I am constantly thankful that TWC is in the community to continue to provide incredible support to the region." **Quyana, Justin!**

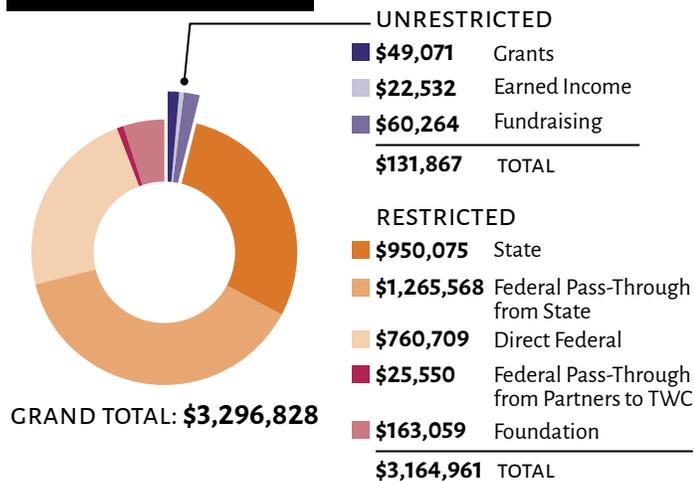
### QUYANA

DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS ARE AN INVALUABLE AND CHERISHED PART OF THE TWC FAMILY!

THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO TO MAKE THE YK DELTA A SAFE AND HEALTHY PLACE TO LIVE AND GROW.

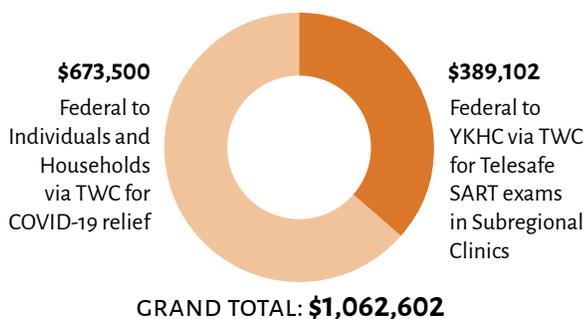
# Financial Information

## FY21 Income

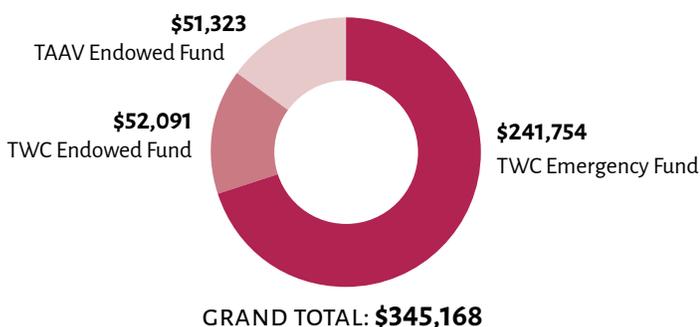


## Pass-Through

Funds passed from TWC to partner agencies and community members

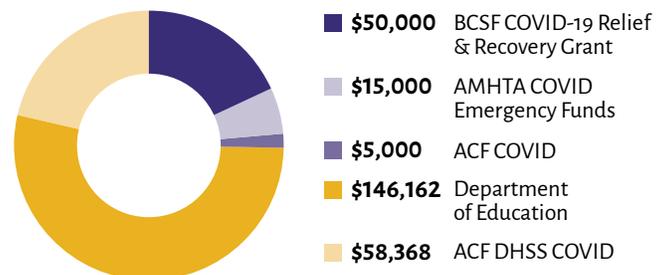


## Endowed Funds



## COVID-19

TWC received several grants for COVID-19-related expenses. With these funds, the agency was able to enhance services for children in the shelter and assist with remote schooling, increase travel funds to transport survivors to alternative safe locations while keeping the shelter census within the CDC-recommended range, and purchase technology for remote work and remote service delivery. Additionally, TWC was able to purchase PPE and cleaning supplies and pay for relief staffing when core staff were unable to work due to illness or quarantine requirements.



In addition to funding aimed at maximizing operational efficiency during the pandemic, TWC also helped the City of Bethel and Bethel Community Services Foundation distribute individual and household assistance grants for families in Bethel financially impacted by COVID-19.

**299**  
Household grants awarded

**1,209**  
Individual grants awarded

**\$656,500**  
Total funds awarded

“ THANKS TO [THE INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE GRANTS], I DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BECOMING HOMELESS DURING THESE VERY HARD TIMES. QUYANA, I WISH THAT I COULD GIVE YOU A GREAT BIG HUG. ”



TUNDRA WOMEN'S COALITION PROVIDES SAFE, EMPOWERING SERVICES FOR FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

WE SEEK TO PROMOTE VIOLENCE-FREE COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE OUTREACH PROGRAMS, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

## Services

- 24-Hour Shelter for Women and Children
- 24-Crisis and Support Line
- Wellness Services
- Legal Advocacy Program
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
- Housing Program
- Community Education Program for Youth and Adults
- Teens Acting Against Violence (TAAV)
- Children's Program
- Irniamta Ikayurviat, Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)
- Thrift Store

## Board of Directors

- **Monica Charles**, President
- **Angelica Afcan**, Vice-President
- **Jill Keene**, Secretary
- **Gwen Drake**, Treasurer
- **Elizabeth Roll**
- **Gerald Sherman**

[www.tundrapeace.org](http://www.tundrapeace.org)  
[facebook.com/tundrapeace](https://facebook.com/tundrapeace)

**Physical Address:** 248 6th Ave Bethel, AK 99559 | **Mailing Address:** PO Box 2029 Bethel, AK 99559  
**24-hour Crisis Line:** 907-543-3456 or 1-800-478-7799 | **Business Phone:** 907-543-3444 | **Fax:** 907-543-3752