

# 2019 IMPACT REPORT



“

Covenant House Alaska is a miracle. Through all my starts and stops, they are always here and never give up on you.”

— Tony, 19, CHA Youth

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# WHO WE ARE

## OUR MISSION

We serve suffering children of the street, and protect and safeguard all children with absolute respect and unconditional love.

## OUR VISION

We lead change that motivates our community to end youth homelessness so at-risk youth can pursue a lifetime of opportunity.

## WHO WE SERVE

Since 1988, Covenant House Alaska has served more than 30,000 at-risk youth experiencing homelessness.

Covenant House Alaska is nationally recognized for the innovative work we do to provide at-risk youth everything they need in one place—so they can move forward to a brighter future.



# A Youth Shelter **Reborn**

Dear Friends: Covenant House Alaska marked 31 years of service in 2019! And with that milestone, we gratefully look back at all we've accomplished together as a community, including the tremendous outpouring of support five years ago for the building of our new Youth Engagement Center (YEC) at 755 A Street.

Where we once had cramped, dark quarters in our old shelter downtown, we now have 60 beds and enough open space for youth to grow and flourish into productive and thriving young adults. We envisioned our new shelter as a sanctuary where at-risk youth can heal, learn and be wrapped in critical services—and since our opening day, that vision has been realized. In fact, our youth helped lead the design of the building! From a safer, more concealed entryway to more space for healthy activities, youth partnered with our team to create a building where at-risk teens can succeed in life.

**960 different youth received help from CHA last year.**

Because of this new space, we have witnessed a dramatic change, not just in the number of youth we serve, but in the innovative ways we serve them. We have also seen an upsurge in more serious problems that bring these youth to us in the first place. Over 900 young people had the courage last year to seek help at Covenant House Alaska after already suffering a lifetime of trauma, including family

violence, trafficking, alcohol or drug abuse, and sexual or physical abuse at home. But when they walked through our shelter doors, they knew they had a chance to beat the odds.

This Impact Report will give you, our supporters and donors, an earnest look at the work being done here at Covenant House Alaska. We are now starting to track the data that gives us a more accurate idea of how our youth fare after leaving the safety of Covenant House Alaska.



**We have witnessed a dramatic change, not just in the number of youth we now serve, but in the innovative ways we now serve them..."**

— Alison Kear

We want you to know that none of this could have been accomplished without your help—65 percent of our funding comes from private donations like yours. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of our Alaskan youth, recognizing their potential, and giving them a second chance to achieve a productive and meaningful future.

ALISON KEAR  
CEO



JUDITH CROTTY  
CHA BOARD CHAIR



# HOMELESS YOUTH IN ALASKA: MORE YOUTH EXPERIENCING SERIOUS CHALLENGES

**28%** HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING

**46%** HAVE BEEN  
SEXUALLY ABUSED

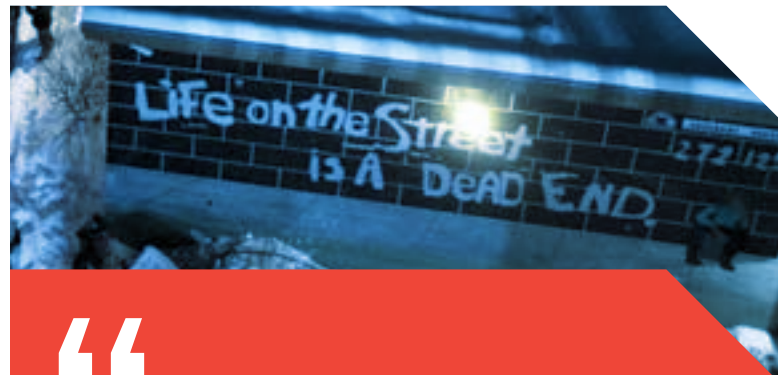
**66%** HAVEN'T FINISHED  
HIGH SCHOOL

**26%** ARE PREGNANT OR ALREADY HAVE  
CHILDREN ON ARRIVAL (GIRLS)

**40%** HAVE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

**50%** HAVE BEEN IN FOSTER CARE

Nearly every teenager who arrives at Covenant House Alaska has experienced trauma—and they are experiencing more serious challenges than ever before, including sex trafficking, abusive homes, substance abuse and mental health issues. These adverse childhood experiences put youth at greater risk of exploitation later in life.



“

Alaska has the highest rates of child abuse and neglect in the nation – we see this every day in the young people who seek sanctuary at our shelter.

— Covenant House Alaska

# CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

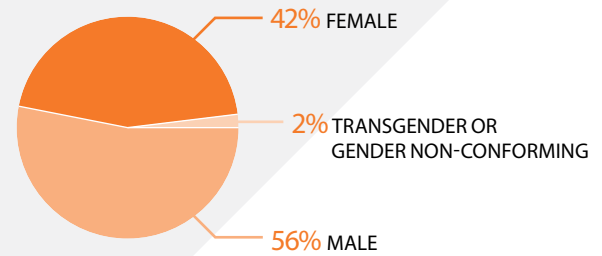
AVERAGE AGE OF YOUTH WHO ARRIVE AT CHA FOR THE FIRST TIME **19 YEARS**

YOUTH WHO CAME DIRECTLY FROM OR HAVE BEEN IN FOSTER CARE **50%**

Twenty years ago, Alaska Native youth made up over 20 percent of the population at our shelter. Today, almost half of our youth are of Alaska Native and Native American descent. We are seeing an influx of at-risk youth coming from rural Alaska to Anchorage as the state economy continues to decline. (See data below.)

We are fortunate to partner with organizations in serving our youth, including Alaska Native Justice Center, The CIRI Foundation, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, and Southcentral Foundation.

GENDER



47% ALASKA NATIVE OR NATIVE AMERICAN

26% CAUCASIAN

10% AFRICAN AMERICAN

5% ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER

12% MULTI-RACIAL/OTHER



# CHANGING LIVES

## Redefining What a Homeless Shelter Means

On any given night, CHA can provide up to 60 young people with a warm, safe place to lay their heads at our Youth Engagement Center (YEC). But it's much more than "bread and a bed." It's an intentional space where youth can stretch to their greatest potential with art, music, exercise, cultural programs and computer skills, as well as the necessary services like counseling, education and job opportunities.

Collaboration is crucial to CHA's mission of ending youth homelessness. Inside our building is a community within a community, where lives are changed with help from our on-site partners who provide everything a youth will need under one roof: healthcare, high school classes, cultural workshops, GED preparation, job readiness, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, suicide prevention, mental health services and life skills training. All our partners have space at the Youth Engagement Center, so no youth falls through the cracks.

### OUR PARTNERS

- ◆ Anchorage School District
- ◆ AWAIC (Abused Women's Aid in Crisis)
- ◆ Cook Inlet Housing Authority
- ◆ Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- ◆ National Crisis Response Canines
- ◆ Nine Star Education & Employment Services
- ◆ Southcentral Foundation
- ◆ STAR (Standing Together Against Rape)
- ◆ United Way
- ◆ Volunteers of America
- ◆ YWCA

### VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers embody the mission of Covenant House Alaska. Year in and year out they tirelessly give their time to mentor young people and help provide critical services. Volunteers help serve food, sort donations, maintain our facilities, lead art, recreation and music groups, and are consistent role models for our young people. Last year, **585 volunteers** gave over **9,900 hours** of service to the young people of Covenant House Alaska.

# OUR PROGRAMS

## Street Outreach

260 YOUTH SERVED

## Drop-In Services

521 YOUTH SERVED

10,882 CRITICAL SERVICES WERE OFFERED

“

I was alone and so scared before I came to Covenant House Alaska. I imagined something like a gym with rows of bunk beds, lots of noise and chaos, but this place is so much better than I could have ever hoped for.”

— William, 19, CHA Youth

## The Journey Begins: Street Outreach and Crisis Care

CHA's Street Outreach team meets at-risk kids where they are, on the streets, and then builds trusting and safe relationships with them. Inside our shelter, youth receive immediate medical attention at our Wellness Center operated by South Central Foundation, critical mental health and substance abuse counseling, as well as a warm meal, a hot shower and dry clothes. 255 vulnerable young people received help through our Outreach and Drop-In services last year.

We help youth ages 13 to 24 who have been trafficked, have fled physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse, have been forced from their homes, and who have aged out of foster care.





# Youth Engagement Center (YEC)

61 DAY AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY

46 YOUTH OBTAINED JOBS

284 YOUTH SERVED

20 YOUTH OBTAINED HSD OR GED

50 AVERAGE DAILY YOUTH CENSUS

51 YOUTH PER DAY (AVERAGE)

2,461 VISITS TO WELLNESS CENTER

## Crisis to Stabilization: From the Streets to Stable Housing

Youth experiencing homelessness are not hopeless. They are resilient and working hard to achieve success everyday—like stable jobs, diplomas and secure housing. At our 60-bed YEC, young people get the support and guidance needed to reach their full potential. Here, they receive job training, counseling and educational services—and most importantly, the love and guidance they never experienced as children. Last year, 334 young people gained not only shelter and services at the YEC, but also a realization of all the opportunities that lay before them in life.

“

My mom and I moved every few months before I came to Covenant House Alaska. After awhile here, my grades started to get way better, I felt rested and healthy and cared for and I realized I wasn't the loser I thought I was, I just needed what everyone needs.”

— Dillon, 19



79 YOUTH SERVED

60 PERCENT EXITED TO STABLE OR PERMANENT HOUSING

## Learning to Fly:

### Transitional Living Programs

**Rights of Passage** is 25-bed, dorm-style transitional living program for youth ages 18-24 who are looking to gain stability. Located at the Dena'ina House (a partnership with Cook Inlet Tribal Council) in downtown Anchorage, youth learn to hold down jobs, pay rent, save money, balance a budget, and cook healthy meals. Residents receive individualized guidance and support from staff and mentors during this two-year program as they prepare for independent living.

Covenant House Alaska also serves pregnant teens and young parenting mothers who are experiencing homelessness at **Passage House**, a home in Anchorage which can house up to 10 mothers and their children. Here, young moms learn positive parenting skills, how to find and sustain jobs while being a single parent, and how to live a healthy lifestyle—both for themselves and their children.

In October 2018, Covenant House Alaska took over a program previously run by Catholic Social Services. The **Charlie Elder House** is a supportive home setting for young men ages 16-19 who are experiencing mental health challenges and homelessness. Here we help teenage boys prepare for independent living in a safe, supportive environment.

## Expanding Access to Education — One Size Fits One

Only 33 percent of youth have a high school diploma when they first arrive at Covenant House Alaska. By the time they move forward from our programs, 71 percent have achieved a high school diploma or GED! We have dramatically expanded the range of our high school programs so that youth can achieve their educations in a variety of ways, from onsite ASD classrooms to the nationally-recognized JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) program. It's never too late for youth to earn a degree for a lifetime of independence. Thanks to our partners—Nine Star, United Way, AT&T, the Anchorage School District, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation—for helping us empower our youth with education.

**101** YOUTH GRADUATED FROM OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED IN 2019

**315** WERE ENROLLED IN ON-SITE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**235** YOUTH OBTAINED CREDITS

Nearly 700 individual lives  
were changed last year.

# POSITIVE OUTCOMES

## What Happens After Youth Leave Covenant House Alaska?

Our ultimate goal is to help each young person move forward positively in their lives, with education, stable employment and secure housing. We are starting to track what happens to youth after they leave Covenant House Alaska—and it is encouraging news. Our data shows that youth are able to keep their jobs and stay in secure housing after they move forward from our programs.

Your support is truly making the difference in their lives—and breaking the cycle of homelessness.

60% HAD JOBS AND/OR STABLE HOUSING UPON LEAVING RIGHTS OF PASSAGE TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

100% REMAINED HOUSED AFTER LEAVING RIGHTS OF PASSAGE

92% OF YOUNG MOTHERS STAY EMPLOYED AFTER THEY MOVE FORWARD FROM RIGHTS OF PASSAGE

# EMPOWERING YOUTH VOICE

## Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

Two years ago, with Covenant House Alaska was named as the Lead Agency for Anchorage's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), an opportunity through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This program calls on communities to develop innovative, outside-the-box solutions to tackle homelessness. After a youth-led planning process, Covenant House developed two YHDP projects.

The first project, Rapid Re-Housing (RRH), quickly houses homeless youth in apartments instead of in shelters. Step-down rental assistance is offered over 12 months as youth get on their feet. The second is Permanency Navigators, who provide long-term, 100% mobile support as they help youth find housing and navigate community resources. They help young people accomplish everything from small tasks, like obtaining IDs or filling out forms, to big goals, like getting the right apartment and finding meaningful employment. Navigators walk alongside youth through successes and failures with the consistency young people need in a caring adult.

### 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ 33 homeless youth gained housing
- ◆ 244 young people were connected with a Permanency Navigator
- ◆ Navigators helped young people complete 1,712 tasks or goals related to housing, education, employment, and health.



## YHDP Program Continued

### Chuol's Story...

Through this program, one young man was even able to purchase a house! Here is the story of Chuol:

"When I was a little kid, I was playing in the river in South Sudan and I was bitten by a snake. My leg had to be amputated below the knee." Thus began the journey of Chuol, who, after this incident moved to a boarding school in Nairobi, Kenya to receive a better education. When he finished high school in 2016, Chuol could not return to South Sudan because of the ongoing conflict, and with the help of a teacher he emigrated to Alaska.

Chuol came to Anchorage through Catholic Social Service's refugee program and got employment help through Nine Star Education and Employment Services. After being accepted into Covenant House Alaska's Rights of Passage transitional living program, Chuol was soon working two jobs - Walmart and Fire Island Bakery, and was peddling between them on a donated bike. He diligently saved every penny and when it came time to graduate from the program and move on into an apartment, he and his case manager made a discovery. Chuol had saved enough money to make a down payment on a house! A Permanency Navigator worked with Chuol, helping him access a Cook Inlet Housing Authority matching program, taking him to appointments and to the signing during the loan process.

With the help of a YHDP program, Chuol made an incredible journey in just a few years - from a boarding school in Nairobi to being a new home owner in Alaska. "I like living by myself, though it is a big change, I want to plant a garden, and grow sunflowers by my front door. I love Alaska! I love the snow and I've made myself a family here. Also, there are very few bugs, and no snakes!"



# Covey Café

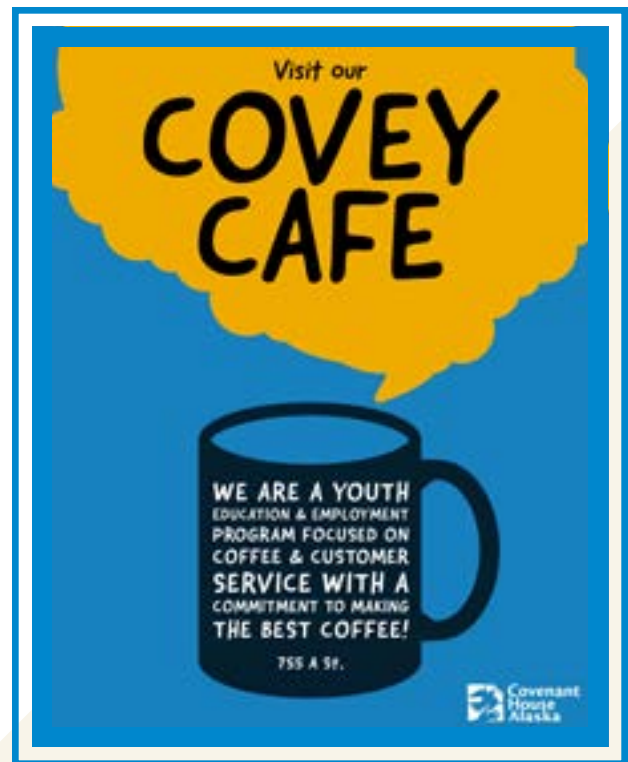
## Opening

In January 2019, Covenant House renovated some space at our Youth Engagement Center to create an exciting new job-training program for young people: Covey Café. This cozy, youth-designed café house is a barista training program and a comfortable meeting spot for young people. It also keeps our staff caffeinated!

“The Covey Cafe is an innovative and meaningful way our community is coming together to bring hope and support, as well as job training and business skills, to our at-risk youth who are experiencing homelessness,” said Alison Kear, CHA’s Chief Executive Officer. “It also will be a much-welcomed downtown neighborhood spot to come in from the cold for a hot cup of coffee, a gathering place for friends, youth and colleagues to build relationships. We are grateful to our partners, especially Matson, (lead donor) for helping us open the door to opportunity for our youth.”

### THANK YOU TO OUR COVEY CAFÉ FUNDERS AND PARTNERS:

- Matson
- Kaladi Brothers Coffee
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Wells Fargo
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Nine Star Education and Employment Services



# MILESTONES



AUGUST 2013

Opened new 60-bed Youth Engagement Center with all needed services under one roof.

FEBRUARY 2016

Chosen by Annie E. Casey Foundation to teach innovative JAG program (Jobs for America's Graduates), which has a 93% graduation rate nationwide. 112 youth are currently enrolled in the JAG program.

APRIL 2016

Entered partnership with Southcentral Foundation to operate and staff our on-site Wellness Center with a full-time clinician.

OCTOBER 2016

Expanded transitional living program (Rights of Passage for youth ages 18-21 at newly remodeled Dena'ina House with help from our partner, Cook Inlet Tribal Council.

JANUARY 2017

Chosen as lead agency in Anchorage for national pilot program, HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. Only ten cities across the country were selected for this innovative project.

OCTOBER 2018

Acquired Charlie Elder House.

JANUARY 2019

Opening of Covey Café

30,000 at-risk youth have been helped by Covenant House Alaska since 1988.





## Charlie Elder House Acquisition

In October 2018, the Charlie Elder House was transferred to Covenant House Alaska by Catholic Social Services (CSS), which had operated the program successfully since its opening in 2001. The Charlie Elder House, named for the Alaskan philanthropist, is a supportive home setting for young men ages 17-19 who are experiencing mental health challenges and homelessness.

Together, Catholic Social Services and Covenant House Alaska decided that CHA's expertise in working with at-risk youth was a better fit for the Charlie Elder program. Covenant House Alaska looks forward to helping impact more young lives as we help teenage boys prepare for independent living in a safe, supportive environment. The Program Director of Charlie Elder worked at Covenant House Alaska for five years between 1998 and 2003, and we are happy to welcome her back to the Covenant House Alaska family.

**5** BEDS AT CHARLIE ELDER HOUSE

**5** YOUTH WHO EXITED TO STABLE OR PERMANENT HOUSING

**10** YOUTH SERVED

# ANTI-TRAFFICKING

## Anti-Sex-Trafficking Partners

According to a national study conducted by Loyola University New Orleans in 2016, 28 percent of homeless youth in Anchorage are victims of human trafficking. With our partners, we served 84 victims of human trafficking last year. We work with the following agencies onsite at the Youth Engagement Center to bring help and hope to these young survivors of the most heinous crime—sex trafficking:

Priceless

Alaska Native Justice Center

AWAIC (Abused Women's Aid in Crisis)

STAR (Standing Together Against Rape)

FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation)

““

Within 48 hours of finding themselves on the street, 1 in 3 at-risk teenagers will be recruited for sex trafficking.”

— Josh Louwerse,  
CHA Program Director

# WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO

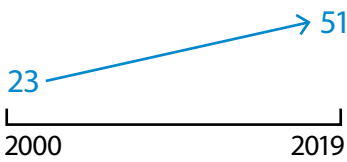
Our private donors provide 65 percent of our funding. We work to ensure every dollar you donate to Covenant House Alaska serves the children we care for as efficiently as possible. In fact, 87 cents of every dollar you donate goes directly to funding our programs to help the most vulnerable in our community. How do we do that? CHA has a proven track record of raising money through partnerships and private funds. Recognizing the scarcity of resources, especially in the current economic climate, we understand the importance of building partnerships to reduce duplication of services. We make the most of the resources we receive in order to wrap our homeless youth in services and meet their basic needs. (See financials on the right.) That is how we opened the doors to our new Youth Engagement Center in 2013 with no debt. Together with our Board, CHA is committed to expanding our operations and have developed sustainable funding to make that happen.

TOTAL REVENUE	\$7,963,579
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MISSION & YOUTH PROGRAMS	COST
Youth Engagement Center	\$3,760,235
Transitional Programs:	
Dena'ina House & Passage House	\$1,712,016
Street Outreach & Crisis Care	\$273,492
Employment & Education	\$658,709
YHDP Demonstration Project	\$460,959
Total Program Services	\$6,865,411
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SUPPORTING SERVICES	COST
Management and General	\$954,676
Fundraising and Special Events	\$674,999
Total Supporting Services	\$1,629,675
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Ending Net Assets	\$16,070,431

## Dramatic Expansion of Our Services at the Youth Engagement Center (YEC)

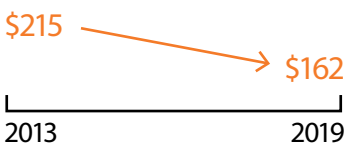
We are serving more youth for longer durations—at less cost per resident. Why is this important? The longer a youth receives compassionate guidance, job training, education and counseling services at Covenant House Alaska, the better the outcome. We are working to make youth homelessness rare, brief and non-reoccurring. (See data on left.)

### WE'RE SERVING MORE YOUTH EVERY DAY...



AVERAGE YOUTH PER DAY

### ...AT LOWER COST PER YOUTH



AVERAGE DAILY COST PER RESIDENT



# 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



JUDITH CROTTY, CHAIR — WELLS FARGO  
AMY MILLER, VICE CHAIR — PROVIDENCE HEALTH & SERVICES  
BOB FLINT, ESQ. — COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER  
CAROL GORE — COOK INLET HOUSING AUTHORITY  
DENALI KEMPEL — MCKINLEY CAPITAL MANAGEMENT, LLC  
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DEIRDRE CRONIN (NON-VOTING) — COVENANT HOUSE INTERNATIONAL

## 2019 PRINCIPAL STAFF

ALISON KEAR — CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
CARLETTE MACK — CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER  
JASON HAHN — CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER  
ELENA BEGOJEVIC — CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER  
JOE HEMPHILL — CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Every time we reach a trafficked child on the street, or care for a sick teen in our Wellness Center, or help an abandoned youth find a job, you've made an impact. It is amazing what can be accomplished when the community joins together."

— Alison Kear,  
CHA CEO

# 2019 CORNERSTONE PARTNERS





**Covenant  
House  
Alaska**