



Sitka AmeriCorps volunteers Will Ortiz and Grace Denney (right) lead a lesson on civil rights at Blatchley Middle School on January 23. The project was part of a required Day of Service, in which AmeriCorps members directly help out in the community. Photo by: Kristen Martinez

Recruitment begins for Sitka Campus mentorship program

23 January



The UAS Sitka Title III grant team will launch a mentorship program this semester for Sitka Campus students. The program aims to boost student retention by pairing both local and distance students with professionals in their communities.

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The goal for the semester is to pair 25 students with mentors. The matches will focus on academic and professional success. As a soft launch, grant team members are recruiting mentors primarily from the UAS faculty and staff.

The Title III team hosted an information session on January 23. There, attendees asked questions about mentoring, and six interested persons signed up for the program. Michael Mausbach and Angie Hilsman are still accepting mentors. If interested or for more information, please contact Michael Mausbach (mwmausbach@alaska.edu) or Angie Hilsman (ahilsman@alaska.edu).

Opening posted for third Personal Education Planner

15 January



The University of Alaska Southeast Sitka is hiring for a third Personal Education Planner (PEP). The PEP position would focus on distance and online learning.

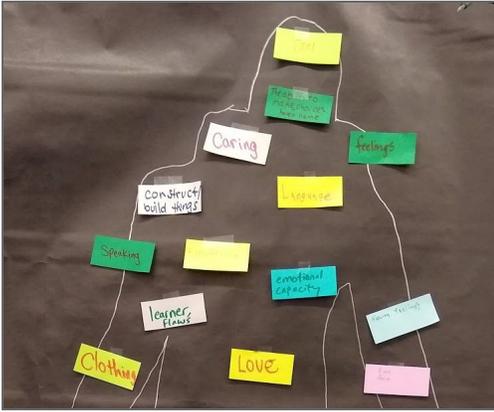
The posted PEP position will replace the prior Behavioral Health and Wellness PEP. The position will continue to complement the two current PEP positions covering financial literacy and Native/rural services.

This PEP will offer additional support to students new to UAS Sitka and to distance education while also supporting ongoing and upcoming activities to meet grant objectives and requirements.

The position has been posted to careers.alaska.edu. The hiring committee will begin reviewing applications on January 30. For more information, contact David Felts (dgfelts@alaska.edu).

UAS AmeriCorps volunteers extend reach to Pacific High, Blatchley Middle School

23 & 25 January



In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Sitka AmeriCorps volunteers met with Sitka students to teach them about civil rights.

University of Alaska Southeast Sitka volunteers Will Ortiz and Angie Hilsman participated in the project. Each worked with a group of AmeriCorps colleagues to build and deliver a unique lesson plan.

Ortiz, along with six other AmeriCorps volunteers, visited about 90 students at Blatchley Middle School on Wednesday. The group focused their lesson on the United Nations' [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

"It was great," said Ortiz. "The students received the lesson in a positive manner. They have some interesting responses, and were surprisingly aware of contemporary human rights issues occurring presently."

Demonstrating human value, Ortiz crumpled up a \$20 bill. He then stepped on it and asked the children if they still wanted it. He questioned why when they all raised their hands.

"They wanted a \$20 bill. They wanted the value of it," said Ortiz. He then explained that even humans, no matter what they'd been through, maintain their value as well. "It was a good way to get them thinking about themselves and their inherent value."

The AmeriCorps group collectively put in about 40 hours researching and creating their lesson plan before delivering it to five middle school classes.

Angie Hilsman also led a group of AmeriCorps in delivering a lesson plan at Pacific High on Friday. The six-person group aimed to teach about 25 students to identify human rights violations and empower them to advocate for human rights.

Instructors kicked off the lesson by encouraging the class to define "human being." The students then wrote a word that defined "human" or "human ability" in some way; answers ranged from "sympathy" and

“creativity” to “language” and “war.” They then put their responses into a body outline that was laid out on the floor.

“I think the students understood that despite our different appearances and backgrounds and abilities, we all fall into that category,” said Hilsman. “The harder part was getting them to understand what they’re entitled to because of their humanity, and how to protect those rights.”

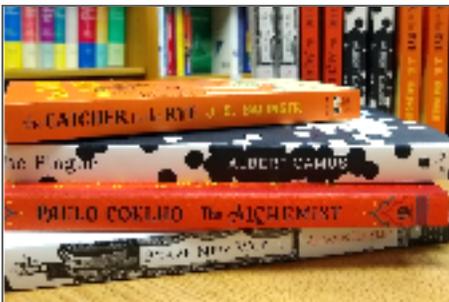
In smaller group discussions, students reviewed news articles that had all been published within the last two months. Each explored some human rights violation; themes included environment, labor, housing, education, healthcare, and immigration.

“It was a great chance for students to see how human rights issues have stretched the length of history and into today, while also seeing that violations aren’t always clearly visible,” said Hilsman. “Students were also encouraged to voice their opinions and defend them. Critical thinking skills are always a good thing.”

A third group of AmeriCorps volunteer will deliver a civil-rights themed lesson plan at Sitka High in April.

AmeriCorps are encouraged to participate in biannual service days, which include MLK Day and September 11. The aim of an AmeriCorps volunteer is to serve the community in which he or she is placed by collaborating with a host-site, such as UAS. To learn more about the AmeriCorps program, visit www.nationalservice.gov.

Upcoming Events



Book club resumes

January 23, 6-7 PM

Weekly book club meetings will resume on Wednesdays, 6-7 PM, in Room 206. The book club is free and open to all community members, despite reading level. Books are provided.

This semester’s reads will explore human choices. The books include 1) “Catcher in the Rye,” by JD Salinger, 2) “Brave New World,” by Aldous Huxley, 3) “The Plague,” by Albert Camus, and 4) “The Alchemist,” by Paulo Coelho.

Contact Will Ortiz (waortiz@alaska.edu) for more info.



Career Development Workshops

January 30, 6-7 PM

The Title III Grant Team will host a monthly series of career development workshops. These workshops will be open to all community members, and available online. This series is connected to career readiness, and aligns with the grant's college-to-career objectives.

The first in the series will be held on Wednesday, January 30 in Room 229. It will focus on job success, and include topics such as presentation, communication skills, time management, and workplace culture. Contact Angie Hilsman (aehilsman@alaska.edu) for more information.



Teen Night escape room

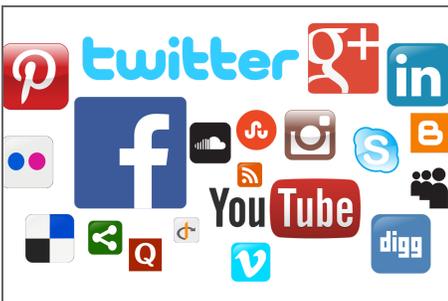
February 8, 6-8 PM

Teens can test their logic and puzzle skills during UAS Sitka's first ever escape room! Two escape room scenarios will be set up next month, thanks to the Student Success Center staff.

Participants will have to solve riddles, break codes, and find clues to work their way out of a "locked" room. Complimentary pizza and refreshments included. Recommended for ages 14 through 19.

Contact Student Government President Gabrielle Barile (gbarile@alaska.edu) for more info.

News & Announcements



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<https://www.facebook.com/uassitka/>

<https://www.instagram.com/uassitka/>

<https://twitter.com/UASSitka>

Have something you want shared on social? Contact Angie Hilsman (aehilsman@alaska.edu) to collaborate.



Counseling services available for student

February deadlines

Title III continues to sponsor Behavioral Health Counseling for UAS Sitka students. Please refer a student to an advisor if they are interested. We also continue to have distance counseling services available through the UAS Regional Counseling office. Please call 907-796-6100 for more info.



Scholarship opportunities to share

February deadlines

The UA Foundation 2019-2020 Scholarship is due on February 15. Please share with students. Application available at uaonline.alaska.edu. Please see UAS Sitka on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter for more scholarship opportunities.



Help available for disability inclusion

Meet Meggan Turner

Sitka High Special Education Instructor Meggan Turner is available for consultation with faculty, students, and staff. Areas of support include how to deliver accommodations in your class, disability awareness and accepted terminology, and training on specific disabilities and/or how they may manifest themselves within your classroom, in person or online.

Visit Meggan in Room 211 on Wednesdays & Thursdays, 4-7 PM, or contact her via phone or (907 747-7798) or email (mcturner2@alaska.edu).



Have announcements to share?

Send in your news for the February 2019 newsletter.

The Social Media Team hopes to keep Staff & Faculty in the loop by sending a monthly newsletter via email. Contact Angie Hilsman (aehilsman@alaska.edu) for more info.