



Building inclusive communities with film and story.



A Letter on Change, Gratitude, and Looking Ahead

This year at See Stories was marked by deep listening, collective learning, and the steady work of showing up for youth and educators across Alaska. From classrooms and clan houses to forests, film festivals, and community gatherings, stories continued to lead the way. We witnessed young people ask big questions about history, identity, land, and belonging, and then answer them with courage, creativity, and care. Educators stepped into new tools and new ways of teaching, grounding their work in place-based knowledge and community voices. Again and again, storytelling became a bridge between past and future, between generations, and between communities, and through it all, our community continues to show up with resilience, care, and belief in the power of stories. The moments highlighted here reflect countless hours of collaboration, creativity, and trust, and remind us why this work matters. We are deeply grateful to everyone who continues to stand with Alaska's youth as they share stories that strengthen connection and belonging.

MOMENTS THAT SHAPED US *in 2025*

TEACHERS EXPLORE PRIMARY SOURCE HISTORIES OF INDIGENOUS ENSLAVEMENT & COLONIZATION



We launched a fully asynchronous professional development course for educators this fall with incredible success. We built asynchronous modules from recordings of presentations by our incredible steering committee and ARISE team in the previous live course.

Though the course topic was heavy, educators appreciated an honest look at this aspect of our state's history. Many shared that the course challenged long-held assumptions and revealed perspectives they had never encountered before.

One participant shared that the materials "brought depth and nuance to topics I thought I understood," explaining that the sources revealed "brand new perspectives, as well as the layers of bias and missing voices that often shape our understanding of history." Another educator noted how impactful it was that the course did not avoid difficult truths, but instead "provided tools for addressing them thoughtfully and respectfully."

For many, the course also prompted deep reflection on gaps in their own education. As one participant put it, "I just remember thinking, how did I not know these stories after taking state mandated classes in Alaska history and culturally centered classrooms?"

Lesson plans created by educators in the course will be available soon at seestories.org/lessonplans, extending this learning into classrooms across Alaska. You can explore a selection of course modules on our teachable site here. This course was led by Hanna and Megan, whose leadership, preparation, and deep respect for educators were felt throughout the course. We are deeply grateful to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for their generous funding to create this course. We hope to offer it again in the future, pending funding.

"IT IS OUR BIRTHRIGHT TO TELL THE TRUTH TODAY FOR ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE PREVENTED FROM CONFRONTING THE OPPRESSION. WHEN WE SHARE TRUTH, WE CAN BE FREED FROM THE WAR OF INTERNALIZED AND LATERAL OPPRESSION." - STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER AMBER WEBB (YUP'IK, SUGPIAQ)

A NIGHT OF STORY AND COMMUNITY: SEE STORIES LIVE IN JUNEAU



We are still feeling an immense sense of gratitude after See Stories LIVE in Juneau. Our fundraiser at the Gold Town Theater was a truly special evening, one that reflected the care and generosity of the Juneau community in powerful ways. Thanks to the support of local artists, residents, and friends, we raised nearly \$5,000 to support our mission. Just as importantly, the night felt like a true FRIENDraiser, filled with connection,

celebration, and shared belief in youth storytelling. We were honored to screen youth films by Angel, Mazelle, Nadine, and Kainoa, and to hear students speak directly about the impact See Stories has had on their lives. Their voices were the heart of the evening, shared with an audience of more than 80 community members. The event also featured a lively silent auction made possible by generous local donors, and we are deeply thankful to Connor Meyer, Morgan, and Andres Camacho for co-emceeing the night with warmth and care. We were also grateful for the gift of live music, which added to the sense of joy and celebration throughout the evening. It was a beautiful night of storytelling, connection, and community, one we will carry with us for a long time. We are excited to share that See Stories LIVE will now be an annual event, and we cannot wait to gather again next year.

**THANK YOU, JUNEAU, FOR SHOWING UP FOR YOUTH STORIES IN SUCH
A MEANINGFUL WAY!**



SEE STORIES 2025 VIRTUAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

This December, See Stories hosted our 2025 Virtual Youth Film Festival, celebrating the creativity and voices of young Alaskan filmmakers with our Virtual Youth Film Festival. This statewide showcase that brought student stories from classrooms and workshops into homes across Alaska. The event featured an inspiring lineup of films that reflect the rich cultures, unique perspectives, and lived experiences of youth from communities large and small.

We were honored to be joined by special guest 'Waats'asdiyei Joe Yates, See Stories board member and award-winning Haida filmmaker, who helped spotlight the incredible work on display. The festival highlighted award-winning films, including first-place Walk with me by Mazelle Joseph, second-place Old Nulato and Subsistence by Trevon, and third-place Carving Totem Poles by Quinn, alongside environmental reflections, cultural histories, and personal narratives. The virtual format allowed families, educators, and community members from across the state to gather and celebrate these stories together.

We are deeply grateful to the young filmmakers, educators, reviewers, and partners who made this festival possible!

[Read the full festival highlights and](#)
[watch the films on our website](#)

WE ARE EXCITED TO WELCOME TWO NEW MEMBERS TO THE SEE STORIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS!



Gabriela Olmos Rosas is a Ph.D. Candidate in Anthropology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and an educator whose work bridges scholarship, art, and community engagement. She teaches at UAF and the University of Alaska Anchorage and recently curated *Nuestra Huella*, a historical photo exhibit documenting Latino presence in Alaska.

WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Waats'asdiyei Joe Yates is an acclaimed Haida filmmaker and photographer from Craig, Alaska. A three-time Emmy-nominated writer for *Molly of Denali* and an Associate Field Producer for *Life Below Zero: First Alaskans*, he is dedicated to preserving Indigenous culture and supporting future storytellers.



ANGOON YOUTH TAKE TOP HONORS AT AISES NATIONAL CONFERENCE



Three high school students from Angoon—Cody Pitka, Collins Mendenhall, and Angel Jack—traveled to Minneapolis, Minnesota last fall, to present their research at the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) National Conference. Their project, documenting and mapping culturally modified trees (CMTs) near Thayer Creek, a site proposed for a hydroelectric development, was recognized among the top five high school presentations out of 63 competitors!

As participants in Sealaska Heritage Institute's STEAM Opening the Box program, these students combined Indigenous knowledge with STEM skills, using story mapping, 3D photogrammetry, LiDAR, and film to preserve these vital cultural landmarks before the hydroelectric project begins.

With a crowd of around 100 attendees, Cody, Angel, and Collins confidently shared their work, connecting their community's past to its future through innovative storytelling and research methods. Their efforts earned them the prestigious Top High School Presentation Award—an incredible honor recognizing their dedication and hard work.

Gunalchéesh to Chatham School District, Kootznoowoo Inc., Angoon Community Association, University of Alaska Southeast, and Sealaska Heritage Institute for supporting this inspiring project.

Stay tuned—See Stories will soon share a short film, story map, and detailed documentation of the CMTs these students helped preserve.

Featured Story



Clan House Storytelling

During See Stories tenure in Angoon, we have worked to document stories of connection to their land, culture, Elders, and ancestors. Students have made films, reflecting on parts of Angoon's challenging history like the US Navy's Bombardment of Angoon in 1882. Angoon students have travelled to film festivals, conferences, and learning symposiums with the support of See Stories.



Clan House Storytelling in Angoon by Seth Bader

See Stories has been fortunate enough to work in Angoon, a small Tlingit village on Admiralty Island in Southeast Alaska, since 2022. The school in Angoon is small, only ~35 students at the High School, but it is full of energy and passion for learning.

alongside students while they



Although my time in Angoon has only stretched over four school years, See Stories as an organization and myself as an individual, have felt welcomed into the community, trusted with their youth, and given the gift of learning some of their people's stories and histories. It has been nothing short of humbling.

Over the past year, Angoon High School's principal Emma Demmert, who was born and raised in Angoon, expressed a desire to have the students learn and understand more about the history of their Tlingit Clans and Clan Houses. As she put it "We hear about the clan houses, but we don't always hear the history or who is supposed to be taking care of the houses. If we don't get this down, then we are going to lose it in some way."



CLAN HOUSE STORYTELLING CONTINUED...



During November 2025, in recognition of Native American Heritage Month, See Stories' Youth Programs Manager Seth Bader worked alongside Angoon High School teacher Reanna Kookesh's US History Class to research and create short films about the history, and future of Angoon's Clan houses. Students talked to Elders and Clan leaders to learn more about the history of their specific clan house, which was the focus of each of their films.

Each Clan in Angoon is composed of multiple houses that fall under the broader Clan structure. These houses subdivide larger Clans into smaller family units. These sibling houses remain within the same moiety (Eagle or Raven), which distinguishes Clans from one another. Each Clan can have one or more houses. Clans and Houses are represented in crests by two layers of identity- moiety identity (Eagle or Raven) and one which represents their Clan, usually an animal significant to place. A list of the Clans and Clan Houses represented by Angoon students participating in this project is as follows:

Houses We Interviewed and Elders, Clan Leaders

- L'eendeidí (Raven- Dog Salmon)
 - Aanx'aak Hít (Central House)
- Dakl'aweidi (Eagle- Killer Whale)
 - Kéet Ooxú Hít (Killer Whale Tooth House)
- Kwaashk'i Kwáan (Raven- Humpback Salmon)
 - Dís Hít (Half Moon House from Yakutat)
- Teikweidí (Eagle- Brown Bear)
 - Shaanax Hít (Valley House)
- Wooshkeetaan (Eagle- Shark)
 - Noow Hít (Fort House)
- Deisheetaan (Raven- Beaver)
 - Shdéen Hít (Steel House)
- Kak'wedí Kakáak'w Hít (Basket Bay Arch House)



As students interviewed Elders about their Clan Houses, they were reminded about the staggering ages of the houses. Tlingit people have lived in Southeast Alaska since time immemorial. During our interviews, several Elders referred to the great flood while telling Clan House migration or origin stories, which took place sometime between 8,000-10,000 years ago. While the physical structures of the Houses have changed over the years, their significance is indelible. Several students will, one day, inherit the important role of "House Head", or leader of the house.

CLAN HOUSE STORYTELLING CONTINUED...

These students took their films, and the learning of their Clan's histories, seriously—knowing that it is not only their responsibility to take care of their Clan Houses, but also the stories of the Houses.

We all understand the power that stories can hold, and the impact sharing stories can have on others. Imagine being the steward and carrier of these stories, responsible for passing them to future generations, while also honoring the



ancestral stewards of the past. This weight was understood and palpable in the audience on the last Friday night of our workshop, as students shared their Clan House films with the Angoon community. Students introduced, presented their films, and answered questions from community members, who overwhelmingly shared their gratitude for students' efforts in documenting these stories to be shared. As you watch each film, please be reminded of the legacy of stewardship by Alaska Native peoples, embodied by these stories themselves.

See Stories In the Media

Four youth filmmakers from Southeast Alaska, Angel Jack, Malena Ollaol, Ayla Harris and Kainoa Thole, traveled to Calgary, Alberta last November to share their work at the Banff Mountain Film Festival. This year marked the festival's 50th anniversary, and the second time it has hosted an Indigenous youth showcase.

[READ THE STORY HERE](#)



SEE STORIES IN KAKE

See Stories Expanding Work

Last summer, See Stories partnered with Alaska Youth Stewards to support five young filmmakers in Kake as they created documentary films rooted in their community. This was See Stories' first time working in Kake and according to Marie, "Kake has taken our hearts!"

Through interviews and time at culture camp, students explored topics close to home—from Kake's ever-changing weather and the history of the cannery and logging, to fishing traditions and sea otter hunting.

The project culminated in a community film screening, where the young filmmakers stood proudly before family, friends, and neighbors to share their work. It was an evening that celebrated culture, place, and the next generation of storytellers, and we are excited to see how these films continue to ripple through Kake and beyond.

We are grateful to Eloise Peabbles for welcoming us into the Alaska Youth Steward Community and to Alyson Kenney for teaching with an open heart and smile. And of course our funders ASCA Youth Cultural Heritage Grant and the Nature Conservancy.



Youth Programs Manager, Seth Bader, pictured with Alaska Youth Stewards from Kake and AYS Coordinator, Eloise Peabbles.

SEE STORIES IN NULATO

This past fall, See Stories collaborated with the U.S. National Science Foundation's Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledges and Science (CBIKS), the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Alaska Pacific University, and the Anchorage Museum to engage high school students in Nulato through documentary filmmaking focused on place and climate change.



Arriving just after Typhoon Halong, when power was only beginning to return and many homes were still recovering, the students rose to the challenge. They interviewed Elders and community members, creating films that explore not only climate change but also the deep connection between respecting the land and respecting oneself—two ideas that are inseparably linked.

SEE STORIES EXPANDING WORK: NULATO DOCUMENTARY WORKSHOP



We are deeply grateful to project supervisor Katie Archer Olson, collaborator Blane De St. Croix, and Alyson Kenney, who paused her studies in Finland to support the workshop. Special thanks to Josephine Mountain, whose passion for her community was vital to the project's success. We also loved partnering with the Anchorage Museum education team, who helped students craft soundscapes that beautifully enhanced their films.

From partner, Alyson Kenney, "Through the workshop, students strengthened their connections to community while developing digital media skills. They conducted interviews with Elders to learn about long-term environmental changes through lived experience and observation. These intergenerational conversations offered valuable insights into climate impacts and community resilience in the region."

(Photos courtesy of Alyson Kenney)



[READ THE IG POST HERE](#)

See Stories Partnerships and Support



Last September, See Stories partnered with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) and Native Movement at the [Climate and Youth Storytelling Summit](#), where youth organizers from across Alaska explored how climate change is impacting their communities and how storytelling can be a tool for connection and action.

[FOLLOW AYEA](#)



In a recent Anchorage Daily News op-ed, educator Roben Itchoak highlights See Stories' work as an example of how youth storytelling in rural Alaska strengthens communities by honoring lived experience and local knowledge.

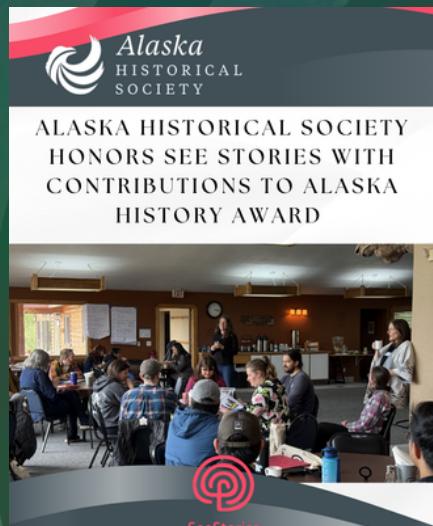
[READ THE FULL OP-ED ON ADN](#)

NEW WITH SEE STORIES

ANILCA Lesson Plans

Teacher- and student-created films exploring the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) are now available, highlighting how this landmark legislation continues to shape land use, access, and stewardship across Alaska. These films are paired with free, classroom-ready lesson plans designed to support critical thinking and discussion around history, policy, and lived experience. Educators are also invited to join an upcoming free ANILCA workshop to learn how to use these resources in their classrooms. Thank you to Exhibit AK for designing the lesson plans, and thank you to Audubon Alaska and the Jeanne S. Williams' fund at Alaska Conservation Foundation for funding this project! Learn more and explore the films and lessons at seestories.org/anilca

See Stories Awarded



ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY HONORS SEE STORIES

We are so honored to receive the Contributions to Alaska History Award from the Alaska Historical Society! This award recognizes organizations and individuals who make significant contributions to preserving, sharing, and interpreting Alaska's rich history. We are deeply grateful to the Alaska Historical Society for this recognition, and to our incredible partners, educators, and youth storytellers across the state who make this work possible!

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We are delighted to announce that you can now donate to See Stories through Pick.Click.Give on your upcoming PFD! You can find us on the button below or find out how to give [here](#).

PICK.CLICK.GIVE SEE STORIES

Letter from our Director

Dear See Stories Family,



In life and work, it's the tough times that show us who we are and who our community is. Losing much of our funding in 2025 was challenging and even heart-breaking, but also reminded us that we are more than our funding. Our youth and teacher programs continue, even if in changed form. Our clarity around our mission has sharpened. We gained 42 new donors (thank you, you know who you are!) who wanted to be a part of our work through their contributions. Our board and staff worked relentlessly to make sure our impact continues. Our sense of gratitude for our students and our See Stories community has only deepened.

One moment in particular in 2025 encapsulated my “why.” At our December fundraiser in Juneau, Angoon student Angel surprised me with a See Stories’ logo she had crocheted. The care and love she put into this endeavor reminded me of why it’s vital for See Stories to continue putting the same care and love into the work we do. That care and love doesn’t change, even as funding comes and goes.

Thank you for being a part of our ever-evolving story.

Warmly, Marie

THANK YOU to our funders!

Chatham School District
Kootznoowoo, Inc.
Alaska State Council on the Arts
US Department of Education
Atwood Foundation
Alaska Community Foundation
Alaska Humanities Forum
Kodiak Island Borough School District
Block Foundation

MSU Denver Teaching with Primary Sources Western Region
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Gottstein Family Foundation
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National Historic Publications and Records Commission
Johnson Youth Center

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Email info@seestories.org to learn
more about getting involved.

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