

NYO NYO

NYO

NYO GAMES  
ALASKA

MEDIA KIT 2022

LOWER ALASKA  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
2019 BND  
ALL STARS

WAS  
PR



# Creating a stronger, healthier community built on traditional values.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Native Youth Olympics (NYO) Games is to promote:

- Healthy lifestyles, positive self-esteem, and leadership skills
- Appreciation of Alaska Native traditions
- Good sportsmanship through friendly athletic competition
- Cross-cultural understanding

## INTRODUCTION

For thousands of years and countless generations, survival for Alaska Native people depended not only on individual strength, skill and knowledge, but also on the ability to work together toward common goals.

Traditional athletic contests and games helped develop these and other skills critical to everyday life in the challenging Alaska environment. Today's NYO Games Alaska carries on in this spirit by encouraging young people to strive for their personal best while helping and supporting their teammates—even other teams.

Today's world is very different than when these games originated, but the skills and values they instill are just as important now as they were then.

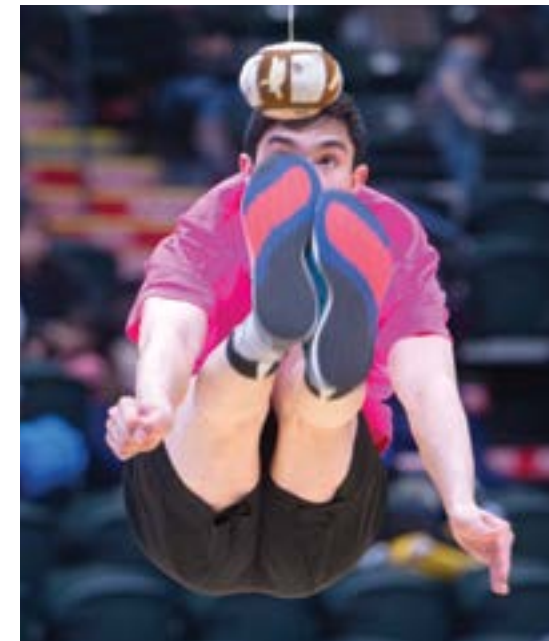
## HOST

Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC) is proud to host the NYO Games in cooperation with communities throughout the state, as has been our practice since 1986. CITC looks forward to continuing the tradition of celebrating the rich cultural history of Alaska through Native sports.

CITC provides the following services in production of the NYO Games: scheduling and renting site venues; fundraising; budget development and management; staff and volunteer services in the planning and production of the Games; partnership with the JNYO Games Alaska and SNYO Games Alaska and Games Advisory Committees; preparation and administration of team and participant registration; information dissemination to the participating communities and general public; production of the NYO Games Alaska Manuals; and maintenance of Games records.

# 2022 Sr. GAMES

ALASKA AIRLINES CENTER, UAA CAMPUS | ANCHORAGE | APRIL 21-23



NYO is a year-round program that has a quantifiable positive impact on more than 2,000 youth each year.

In a survey emphasizing NYO's impact, 43 NYO athletes in grades 7-12 who competed in the 2021 Sr. Games offered the following insight:

- **63%** credited NYO as an incentive to **stay in school**
- **79%** expressed **increased determination** by participating in NYO
- **58%** expressed a **greater sense of well-being**
- **85%** see themselves as a **role-model** for future NYO athletes
- **93%** learned about **Alaska Native culture** and values
- **91%** **developed new friendships** with other athletes, coaches, and teachers
- **65%** indicated they practice **4-6 hours** per week

NYO Games Alaska & Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.

@CITCAlaska #NYOGames

CITCAlaska

## THURSDAY | APRIL 21

- 9 a.m. *Coaches' meeting*
- 10 a.m. *Registration*
- 12:30 p.m. *Cultural Performance: Kingikmiut Dancers*
- 1 p.m. **Opening Ceremonies**
- 2 p.m. **Wrist Carry & awards**  
**Kneel Jump & Scissor Broad Jump\***  
*\*in auxiliary gym*
- 3:30 p.m. **Alaskan High Kick & awards**  
**Kneel Jump & Scissor Broad Jump\***  
*\*in auxiliary gym*

## FRIDAY | APRIL 22

- 9 a.m. *Coaches' meeting*
- 10 a.m. **Eskimo Stick Pull & awards**  
**Kneel Jump & Scissor Broad Jump\***  
*\*in auxiliary gym*
- 1 p.m. *Academic Excellence awards*
- 1:15 p.m. *Blanket toss; Celebration of Graduates*
- 2 p.m. **One-hand Reach & awards**  
**Kneel Jump & Scissor Broad Jump\***  
*\*in auxiliary gym*
- 3:30 p.m. **Two-foot High Kick & awards**  
**Kneel Jump & Scissor Broad Jump\***  
*\*in auxiliary gym*

## SATURDAY | APRIL 23

- 9 a.m. *Coaches' meeting*
- 10 a.m. **Indian Stick Pull & awards**  
Kneel Jump awards
- 12:30 p.m. **One-Foot High Kick & awards**  
Scissor Broad Jump awards
- 3 p.m. **Seal Hop & awards**
- 5 p.m. *Pilot Bread Recipe Contest winners announced*
- 5:30 p.m. *Closing ceremonies & awards*

FREE PARKING IN DESIGNATED LOTS

Dates and times are subject to change; timing of each event is estimated and dictated by length of individual contests

For more information, visit [citci.org/nyo-games](http://citci.org/nyo-games)



# QUOTES

I feel like people can come to NYO, no matter what ethnicity they are and feel like they are a part of the games. They are part of our traditions and we love teaching other people what that means.

**EDEN HOPSON -2022 SNYO ATHLETE**



Service High Students (L) Daphne Green, (Center) Eden Hopson, and (R) Antoinette Brown pose for a photo at the March 2022 NYO Games Alaska: Anchorage Tryouts

I am thankful that we can share these traditions with everyone who participates. I love the bond and connections it creates for our people and our communities. It (NYO Games) is truly impactful.

**ADELE VILLA -NYO COORDINATOR**

I will be involved in the Games some way, somehow, probably until I can't physically do it anymore because it's my passion.

**NICOLE JOHNSON -NYO HEAD OFFICIAL**

I've always enjoyed the Games and what they stand for—camaraderie, everybody helping each other to better themselves. It's not "I beat you because of this," it's "I'm helping you."

**TONY SEEGANNA -NYO OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTEER**

# NEWSWORTHY NOTES

## FROM FRESHMAN TO SENIOR ATHLETES

For many of the senior athletes, the last time they participated in-person at the NYO Games was when they were freshman.

## TRAVEL FROM AFAR

The teams that traveled the furthest for this year's SNYO games are coming from Utqiakvik (Barrow)..

## COACH KYLE WORL

Coach Kyle Worl, the 2022 SNYO Keynote Speaker, has been instrumental in the success of the NYO Games. His resurrection of the Juneau NYO teams, classes for coaches, his connection to the Worl Family scholarship, and his personal history and connection with the Games are just a few reasons that his NYO story is one that should be heard.



Kyle Worl received the NYO Healthy Coach Award two years

# JNYO VS SNYO

JNYO is where it all starts! During this time, students are also developing their character and including them in the Games provides them with exposure to the values of NYO Games Alaska such as teamwork, cross-cultural understanding, and respect.

It is a great time to train students for the Senior NYO Games because the NYO Games use different forms or muscle groups (compared to other sports). It can be difficult to correct old forms or forms from other sporting activities.

Once students enter the SNYO age group, it can be intimidating if they have not participated in the Games before. Those who did participate at a young age (JNYO) have a connection and familiarity with the games that cannot be compared.

## JNYO

**Athletes: Students in grades 1-6**

JNYO teams allow 3 boys and 3 girls per event, per team.

JNYO brings in an average of 650 athletes each year.

## JNYO Events

Alaskan High Kick  
One-foot High Kick  
Two-foot High Kick  
Kneel Jump  
Scissor Broad Jump  
Eskimo Stick Pull  
Wrist Carry  
Seal Hop

## SNYO Events

Alaskan High Kick  
One-foot High Kick  
Two-foot High Kick  
One-Hand Reach  
Kneel Jump  
Scissor Broad Jump  
Eskimo Stick Pull  
Indian Stick Pull  
Wrist Carry  
Seal Hop

## SNYO

**Athletes: Students in grades 7-12, or in a GED program. Max age 19.**

SNYO teams are allowed 1 boy and 1 girl, per event, per team.

SNYO brings in an average of 450 athletes each year.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

NYO Games Alaska is proud to coordinate the Worl Family Scholarship with Worl Family. This scholarship is awarded to two senior athletes who participate in the Games and submitted applications.

# A LASTING IMPACT

## 2021 SENIOR NYO SURVEY RESULTS

NYO influences our young people to improve academic performance, strengthen overall health and well-being, and instills important values, including leadership and respect—values that make strong communities and build tomorrow’s leaders.

The 2021 NYO survey emphasizing NYO’s impact was completed by athletes in grades 7-12.

- o 63% credited NYO as an incentive to stay in school
- o 79% expressed increased determination by participating in NYO
- o 58% expressed a greater sense of well-being
- o 85% see themselves as a role-model for future NYO athletes
- o 93% learned about Alaska Native culture and values
- o 91% developed new friendships with athletes, coaches, and teachers
- o 65% indicated they practice at least six or more hours per week

## HISTORY COMES ALIVE

For thousands of years and countless generations, survival for Alaska Native people depended not only on individual strength, skill and knowledge, but also on the ability to work together toward common goals.

Traditional athletic contests and games helped develop these and other skills critical to everyday life in the challenging Alaska environment. Today’s NYO Games Alaska carries on in this spirit by encouraging young people to strive for their personal best while helping and supporting their teammates—even other teams.

Today’s world is very different than when these games originated, but the skills and values they instill are just as important now as then.

## CULTURAL TIES

NYO Games Alaska is a celebration of Alaska Native values and culture. Each event is based on a traditional subsistence skill that is needed to survive the harsh Alaskan environment.

Athletes form both personal and cross-cultural understanding and respect as a result of participation in the Games.

## CONNECTION

NYO Games Alaska seeks to create stronger, healthier communities built on traditional values. The Games are open to students from all backgrounds and promotes cross-cultural understand and respect, fostering statewide relationships and connections.

Athletes, coaches, and attendees from around the state spend three days encouraging, supporting, and competing together.

NYO Games Alaska hopes to connect kids with Alaska Native culture, with their community, and most importantly, with the belief that with hard work and consistency, they can achieve their endless potential.

## HEAD NYO OFFICIAL: NICOLE JOHNSON

At her first NYO competition, a tiny, seventh-grade Nicole Johnson walked right up to World Eskimo-Indian Olympics (WEIO) gold medalist Reggie Joule and said, “I hear you’re the best, and I would like you to help me.”

Nicole got the help she wanted — advice that would help her become a record-setting WEIO athlete and Native Youth Olympian. Today, the confident little girl who went after what she wanted has chaired the WEIO, served as Head NYO Official, and coached hundreds of young athletes.

In April 2017 she was inducted into the [Alaska Sports Hall of Fame](#). She has become one of the most decorated athletes in Native sports history with over 100 medals from WEIO, Arctic Winter Games, and NYO.

Today, NYO Games is still a major part in Nicole’s life...and she’s a major part of NYO Games. They wouldn’t be the same without her. As our Head NYO Official she helps with the planning, coordination, and running of the NYO Games; in addition to her duties on the floor during the games.



Photo courtesy of the Nome Nugget: Nicole participating in the Two-Foot High Kick, an event where she would

# EVENTS & THEIR HISTORY

Origins for NYO's competitive events were collected by University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) students during an internship with CITC. We recognize there are a variety of origins for each game among Alaska's indigenous peoples. These histories reflect the traditional knowledge of the persons interviewed.

## ALASKAN HIGH KICK

Nicole Johnson of Nome, an accomplished NYO athlete, coach, and official, shares that the Alaskan High Kick was played inside during the winter to help develop coordination, upper body strength, and concentration.



## ESKIMO STICK PULL

Glen Solomon of Anaktuvik Pass shares that this game is practice for pulling seals out of the ice.



## INDIAN STICK PULL

Brian Walker of Anvik, former Team Alaska Dene coach, shares that this Dene game represents grabbing a slippery salmon. It develops hand and arm strength.



## KNEEL JUMP

Terenty Fratis of Barrow recalls the Kneel Jump as a game to strengthen the leg muscles for jumping from ice to ice and also for lifting dead animals when hunting.



## ONE-FOOT HIGH KICK

Barbara Fratis of Barrow remembers stories of the One-Foot High Kick signaling a successful hunt.



## ONE-HAND REACH

Nicole Johnson of Nome, shares that the one hand reach was a game played during the long cold winter months, inside to help keep you in shape, and worked on balance, agility, and coordination.



## SCISSOR BROAD JUMP

Paul J. Paul of Kipnuk shares that the Scissor Broad Jump is a game used to keep warm and to practice the balance needed when jumping on ice.



## SEAL HOP

Phillip Blanchett, originally of Bethel, has played, coached, and officiated NYO games; he shared that the Seal Hop is a variation of the Inuit Knuckle Hop. This is a game of endurance and stamina, and represents sneaking up on a seal on the ice.



## WRIST CARRY

Donna Elliot of Bethel, a long-time NYO participant and official, says the Wrist Carry shows the significance of a successful hunt, traditionally tests the strength and endurance of hunters, and shows appreciation for the animal giving itself.

## TWO-FOOT HIGH KICK

Elders report that the Two-Foot High Kick was done to communicate a successful or unsuccessful catch after hunting in the spring.



# ABOUT NYO GAMES ALASKA

## ORIGINS

The first NYO Games were held in the winter of 1971. Students attending the Boarding Home Program School in Anchorage, Alaska were unable to visit their hometowns over winter break. They were inspired to bring their traditional games to their neighbors and friends. This began a yearly tradition in which athletes from around the state travel to Anchorage to compete.

The creators of the NYO Games wanted an opportunity to demonstrate their favorite Native games in the hopes that the people of Alaska would not forget the traditional contests of their forefathers. This admirable goal is now being realized and witnessed by more Alaskans than ever before, thanks to the involvement of numerous dedicated volunteers, the attention of the media, and the support of NYO Games Alaska's generous sponsors.



Photo Courtesy of the National Archives

In the first year of competition, twelve schools participated, with student athletes traveling from Sitka and Nome. Since then, the number of athletes and enthusiasm surrounding the games has increased as the NYO Games Alaska received state and national recognition.

## KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE

Our Alaska Native ancestors developed traditional games in order to test and prove crucial abilities that governed everyday life. Competition was created with each other to hone their ability to hunt and fish for daily survival in the traditional way of life. The creators of the NYO Games wanted an opportunity to demonstrate their favorite Native games in the hopes that the people of Alaska would not forget the traditional contests of their forefathers.

## continued

This admirable goal is now being realized and witnessed by more Alaskans than ever before, thanks to the involvement of numerous dedicated volunteers, the attention of the media, and the support of NYO Games Alaska's generous sponsors.

When our ancestors had successful hunting or fishing trips, they would return to the village to share how and where they were successful.



Photo Courtesy of the Associated Press

Survival depended on their willingness to help each other. Today, athletes competing in NYO Games carry on the tradition of sharing their knowledge with their teammates and others. Native Games are the only sporting events in the world where athletes from different teams help each other to be successful in the games and in life.

## THE GAMES TODAY

Today, the Games ensure that Alaskan youth of all backgrounds learn essential skills for traditional Alaskan subsistence activities that still occur today. Both JNYO and SNYO bring together athletes to compete against their peers, but most importantly, to compete against who they were yesterday.

## VOLUNTEER

Are you interested, or do you know anyone who might be interested in volunteering for NYO Games Alaska? We are always looking for volunteers for a variety of roles to include

- selling merchandise
- supporting registration
- scorekeepers
- and more.

To learn more about how you can volunteer, please contact Stephanie Hubers at [smhubers@citci.org](mailto:smhubers@citci.org) or visit <https://citci.org/volunteer-application/>



## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORLD ESKIMO-INDIAN OLYMPICS (WEIO) AND NYO GAMES ALASKA?

WEIO participants must be at least 1/16th Alaska Native, American Indian, US Pacific Islander, Canadian First Nations, Indigenous Greenlandic, or Indigenous Siberian. WEIO participants can be 12 years old or older. While both WEIO and NYO host similar events, the participants, number and type of events may differ.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Students of all traditions and backgrounds may participate in the NYO Games Alaska; they do not need to be of Alaska Native descent.

JNYO Games: Students in grades 1-6 can compete in the statewide JNYO Games.

SNYO Games: students in grades 7-12, or who are currently enrolled in a GED program (max. age 19), can compete in the statewide SNYO Games.

## HOW ARE EVENTS SCORED?

An example of the NYO Scoresheets is available on page 28 of the NYO Handbook located at <https://citci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019-NYO-Handbook-Revised-1.8.20.pdf>

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE?

All athletes must be in good standing at their school/GED program. Teams that are not sponsored by their school or district must provide proof of enrollment in an accredited 7-12 grade school or GED program.

## IS THERE A LIST OF RECORD-HOLDERS FOR EACH EVENT?

A list of the Statewide Records is available on page 29 of the NYO Handbook. <https://citci.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2019-NYO-Handbook-Revised-1.8.20.pdf>

## ARE THERE INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN EACH EVENT?

Yes. NYO Games Alaska provides both written and visual instructions for proper form and execution of each event. You can locate videos and written instructions at <https://citci.org/partnerships-events/nyo-games/competitive-events/>

## PRESS INQUIRIES



Public Relations Specialist

Lexi Trainer

[pr@citci.org](mailto:pr@citci.org)

907-306-1556



NYO Coordinator

Adele Villa

[avilla@citci.org](mailto:avilla@citci.org)

281-961-4928



NYO Head Official

Nicole Johnson

[njohnson@citci.org](mailto:njohnson@citci.org)

NYO Games Alaska

General Contact

[nyo@citci.org](mailto:nyo@citci.org)

907-793-3412

## WEBSITE

<https://citci.org/partnerships-events/nyo-games/>

## SOCIAL



NYO Games Alaska



@nyogamesak



NYO Games Alaska

## OFFICIAL LOGO AND IMAGE USE

If you are looking to obtain and use a copy of the NYO Games Alaska official logo please reach out to [pr@citci.org](mailto:pr@citci.org)

Full-size images are available upon request. Photos are also provided on our social media pages. If you are using images of the NYO Games provided by CITC/NYO Games Alaska, our preferred caption is "Photo courtesy of Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc."

For more information regarding NYO games played traditionally in your area, please contact the ANCSA regional corporation for your region.

For information regarding NYO Games Alaska contact: NYO Games Alaska, Cook Inlet Tribal Council at 907) 793-3412 or email us at [nyo@citci.org](mailto:nyo@citci.org)