

**Cook Inlet Tribal Council: HPOG Success Story**  
**Ms. CBL: A Woman Who Represents Alaska Native Traditional Balance**

Growing up in Alaska's biggest city of Anchorage where there are well over 100 ethnic groups means it can be a challenge for many people of Alaska Native descent to fit into modern American culture while learning the Native traditions of the past. Imagine the struggle for a person who identifies herself as Siberian Yup'ik and African American who has never stepped foot into the village of her ancestors, yet is expected to have an innate understanding of what it means to be Yup'ik.

Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) would like to showcase a woman who has been successful in embracing the Alaska Native traditional value of caring for Our People by working on earning a degree in the field of Nursing.

Ms. CBL's story began when she found herself at CITC wanting to earn a high school degree in a setting where she could celebrate her diversity without fear of retribution—something that was a daily struggle when she was in a regular school. She was tired of fighting with other students and being picked on because of her ethnicity. At CITC, she was able to earn her high school degree and then was introduced to the field of health care. Her Employment Specialist enrolled her in the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) training program.

After being a PCA and finding her calling in life, Ms. CBL wanted to continue to help people so she applied for the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training offered by the HPOG program. She successfully completed the training course and passed the Alaska State Board of Nursing licensing exam within three months and quickly found a CNA job working with Alaska's Elders.

CITC's HPOG program's career ladder in the Nursing field allowed Ms. CBL to enroll at the University of Alaska Anchorage and take classes while working full time as a CNA. She has weekly contact with the HPOG coordinator and relies on the support she receives from CITC to ensure she continues to succeed as a college student who is taking prerequisite courses for Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) training. Ms. CBL plans to work as an LPN and transition into the Registered Nurse (RN) training program.

Ms. CBL comes to our agency to find the additional support she needs to succeed as an HPOG student, a mother of two young girls, a CNA, a military wife whose husband is currently deployed, and a college student. CITC is lucky to have Ms. CBL in the HPOG program because she has embraced the natural leadership role of Mentor for new students who are just beginning the health career ladder process. This is an innate skill she has embraced as a Siberian Yup'ik woman living in today's society where the traditional values of family grow stronger with each life she involves herself in.

. Quyanagg' piit-lli. (Thank you very much).