



Senate Education Committee
SB 139

2/21/2014

Response to questions for regional training centers and institutions receiving TVEP funds, per AS 23.15.835(d):

1. How long have you been in operation?

Yuut Elitnaurviat (YE) was incorporated in 1992.

2. What is your governance structure?

YE is an independent 501(c)(3). Our “owners” or governance is made up of the Chief Administrators of 10 employers from our region. Those employers are: The Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp; Association of Village Council President, Inc; Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority; The City of Bethel; The Lower Kuskokwim School District; Orutsaramiut Native Council (Bethel Tribe); The Kuskokwim Campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks; The Bethel Community Services Foundation; Calista; and The National Guard.

3. What manner of public/private partnerships do you share?

YE is very involved in many public and private partnerships, and we have many MOU's and MOA's articulating those relationships- from the University, School District to private foundations as well as private employers. One example is the STEM Ready program which came out of a need identified collectively by YE, the Rasmuson Foundation and the Lower Kuskokwim School District. Rasmuson funded the initial pilot program- which YE facilitated. The program is now funded by the school district, and YE partners with them on providing housing and some coordination. This is just one way that YE works creatively with its partners to address the workforce development and education challenges in our region. Most everything listed #4 is delivered in partnership with one or many other partners.

4. What specific training programs do you offer?

We categorize our programs into 7 different areas. They include: Drivers Education which includes Class D Driving (permits, licenses and defensive driving) and Commercial Driving (Class C, B and A training and testing); Adult Basic Education (GED); Construction trades and Apprenticeships (Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, Maintenance, Welding, etc); Health Care (First Aid/CPR, PCA, CNA, Nursing; Dental Assisting, DHAT); College Readiness (STEM Ready, Aviation Ready); Public Safety (TPO/VPO and VPSO); and Career Guide Services.

5. How many participants do you currently have in those respective programs?

Because we primarily are working with employers to deliver on demand training, this is kind of a moving target. Today, we have 4 students in the Commercial Driving Class A program, 12 Students in the Facility Maintenance Technician Certificate program, 10 students in the CNA program, 5 in the DHAT program, 5 students in the Aviation Ready program, our career guides are in villages providing services and the ABE center generally has around 100 students registered and working towards their GED. YE will be delivering Crane Operator training and a weatherization and energy efficiency classes this spring as well.

6. What do you offer in the form of degrees and/or certificates in these programs?

Class D License, Class C,B and A commercial driving, GED certificates, PCA and CNA certificates, NCCER certificates at many levels, Certificate in Facility Maintenance, Boiler Certificates, Water and Wastewater certificates., Welding certificates, Journeyman Electrical, Plumbing and Carpentry, as well as Industry endorsements.

7. How many certifications have you issued and in what training fields, since you began operating?

Just last year alone we trained and tested around 350 individuals for their Drivers Permit, graduated 230 folks with their GED, tested and passed 97 Class D drivers Licenses (regular Driver License) and 30 CDL licenses, trained 30 CNA students (some waiting to test). There have been hundreds of NCCER certificates issues over the years, many of which were dual credit with the University.

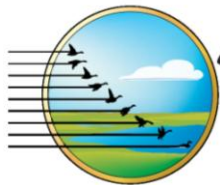
Since beginning to receive TVEP funds?

The start of the TVEP program coincided with the development of our program (though we were created for other reasons- the timing was similar). Initially, TVEP was a major portion of our operating budget. When TVEP was last increased, it coincided with the opening of our main administration and classroom building. Our TVEP increased, but so did out training. TVEP now represents less than 25% of our operating budget.

8. Describe the demographic profile of your student body.

Our Student Body is demographically similar to our region, with 92.5% of them being Alaska Native (primarily Yup'ik) and the other 7% being from many different ethnic backgrounds.

9. What are the technical and vocational labor demands in your region and how successful are you in satisfying that demand?



Yuut Elitnaurviat

PEOPLES LEARNING CENTER

Striving to prepare local workers for higher wage jobs through career preparation and employment training programs

YE serves the whole YK-Delta, which is the same as the Calista region- an area the size of the State of Oregon. We have workforce demands from just about every type of labor you can imagine- from Mining, Health Care, Welding, Fish Processing, Heavy Equipment, education and career prep, and so on.

I believe that YE is uniquely situated to be knowledgeable and responsive to the needs in our region based on the structure of our governance. For industries that do not sit our board, we are constantly reaching out to assess their needs and meet their demands.

YE has the infrastructure to meet much of the demand. Convincing industries to invest in developing the local workforce is where some of the struggle lies.

10. What is your annual budget? What other sources of funding do you have besides TVEP?

YE's budget is roughly \$4,500,000 annually. We receive funding through federal program grants as well as through facility use by private entities. When an employer has the required skill set to train their own staff, we often partner to provide the training space. We also deliver a few small state grants from the DOL and the Denali Commission. Many of our programs are paid for, at least in part, by the employer. When possible, we leverage State, Federal and Employer dollars to deliver the best value to the student and employer.

11. What annual level of TVEP funding have you received historically and to date?

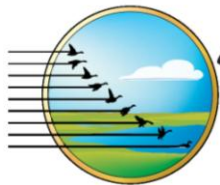
I believe initially we received 4%. When the formula was changed and the program was reauthorized, we received 9%. The dollar amount has varied greatly over the years depending on the funds available for the program.

12. What specifically do TVEP funds pay for at your training center?

YE uses TVEP funds to cover overhead. This allows us to provide our services for a reasonable cost to the end user. I believe the ability for us to use TVEP in this way is one of the greatest strengths of the program. This allows YE to deliver more training opportunities to more people.

13. What would you do if TVEP were reduced or eliminated? Increased?

Simple economics would dictate the answer to this question. Less money would mean less training, and more money would mean more training. We are truly a non-profit, with expenses pretty close to revenue every year. I do not see that changing.



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14. Do you operate a residential facility in conjunction with your programs? If so, please give some history of its construction, and current manner of operation and maintenance. Current number of residents?

YE has three dorms on our campus, that can house up to 108 students. The two smaller, family style dormitories are used by the Lower Kuskokwim School District for their "Ready" programs. The larger 68- bed bunkhouse is used by YE for our programs. Typically, our programs are delivered in intensive modules. A student comes for 10 to 20 days, returns home, and then come back for the next module. Our dorm is also used in conjunction with other trainings put on by employers of the region. We have purchased a sophisticated reservation system which allows us to manage the bunkhouse appropriately. The original dorms were purchased with Federal and Private monies, and the bunkhouse was a State appropriation. Operations and maintenance are funded with revenue that is generated by their use as well as from TVEP funds. Occupancy varies depending time of year and programs that are being delivered. Prior to the completion of then bunkhouse this fall, we were at maximum capacity most of the time. Building the bunkhouse has allowed us to put "Ready" program kids in dorms who were previously housed with host families in the community.

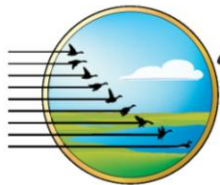
15. What is your student/teacher ratio?

This varies depending on class. In the CDL program, there is a maximum of 4 students allowed. In the TPO/VPO, there may be as many as 40. GED may have as many as 25 to 1. For the most part, our classes are about 10 to 12 students per teacher.

16. How many faculty do you employ? Describe their certification levels.

YE has 15 staff. On staff, we have two driving instructors for both regular and commercial driving. Both are certified to test CDL. The CDL instructor has 20+ years teaching and driving with over 1 million miles in a class A vehicle. Since YE delivers many industry driven classes, we have found that contracting specific instructional services is the most economical. We have contracts with instructors with varying backgrounds that can cover most every topic demanded. If an employer has the expertise, they will either use their employee to instruct in our facilities, or we will contract with that individual to contract for us. Whichever is the most reasonable for the situation. All instructors in the Construction Trades are certified and licensed at the highest level available in their respective areas of expertise. Additionally, most have been approved to be adjunct to UAF to allow for dual credit. Today, in addition to our 15 direct employees, we have approximately 15 other contracted instructors we use. Keeping an instructor on staff for a program that is only asked for once or twice per year is not economical.

17. Describe how your training center benefits your local community or region.



Yuut Elitnaurviat

P E O P L E ' S L E A R N I N G C E N T E R

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With the exception of one other entity, YE provides most all of the workforce development initiatives for the regions. YE is keenly aware of the workforce needs in our region, and are constantly reaching out to industry to assist them in meeting their needs. Every year, the YE board reviews its program priorities to assure that the needs are being met. Since the Board of YE is made up of the largest employers in the region, we are often able to see trends happening far before they do. Additionally, the facilities are often used by our partner organizations to deliver many social service initiatives that are going on in our region: Health Families, Undoing Racism, CASA, etc. Without these facilities, these programs would not have appropriate space to train, or would have to bring everyone to Anchorage at great expense.

Our region is very large, yet small at the same time. Many residents of our region have never left the State, and some have never been to Anchorage. Sending people with that background to Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sitka, or other places is like sending them to the moon. Bethel is the place where they receive healthcare, shop, etc. They often have family here, and feel safe here. We provide a drug and alcohol free environment where people can focus on what they came here to do. It's also good for Bethel. Having 20 VPO's in full uniform walk into the AC store leaves a great impression on the people of Bethel of the good things happening in our region.

Lastly, YE does not train to train. Workforce development is part of everything we do- it's in our blood. When we deliver a permit class to high school kids, every slide talks about going to work. When we are teaching adults to pass the GED, our career guides work with them to prepare for entry into the workplace. Our other students punch time clocks, and are sanctioned for being late or missing class. We have a zero tolerance for alcohol and drugs, and randomly breathalyze students. We are trying to make their experience here as close to what they can expect when he/she joins the workforce.

18. Please share any other highlights and needs of your training center.

YE is proud of the work we have been allowed to do over the last 12 years. We have grown and are continually adjusting to the needs in our region. We do, however have many opportunities. One workforce issue that YE has not been successful in addressing is Early Childhood Development. We do have a shovel ready project that would build a facility and program. Unfortunately we have not been able to secure much of the funding needed to get it going. This is a need that was identified when YE was just in early planning. With 8 school districts and many Head Start programs in our region, this continues to be an unmet need.

19. Are there other regional training centers you feel should be receiving TVEP funds?



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YE is very regionally focused. Though we know of many other training centers around the State, it would not be appropriate for us to recommend or not recommend any center that is outside our region. However, there is one other program in this region that has been successful at delivering a specific workforce training program. That program is Yuut Yaquungviat. It is a flight school based in Bethel that is meeting an industry need. If the TVEP pot were to get larger, and other entities were allowed to enter, I would recommend them for consideration.

20. Do you believe the current allocation structure for distributing TVEP funds is adequate and fair?

YE is satisfied with our TVEP allocation. The amount we receive requires us to be frugal, yet still allows us to provide services to a large number of people at a reasonable cost. YE is not aware of the criteria used to add TVEP recipient or exactly how the percentages are figured. YE's position is that there should be no additional organizations added if the TVEP allocation is not increased. YE believes that TVEP has been highly successful. Diluting the money will take a good program and make it mediocre at best.

If not, how would you recommend adjusting it?