



# SEE @ STORIES



Closing out fall programs. Lessons learned in 2022. Updates. News. Highlights.

2022 was a good year for See Stories. We added two new educators to our staff. Our board hosted great fundraising events from a Cake Walk & Silent Auction to Truthsgiving. We traveled to Angoon and Chevak for our film workshops and the students produced some amazing films that were chosen for the Anchorage International Film Festival. There were many milestones, awards, people, and projects we are so excited to look back on and celebrate. To start, here are 3 lessons from 2022 we are carrying with us into 2023.

# 3 LESSONS

from 2022  
to 2023



Sunrise at The Chevak School this past fall. (Photo by Seth Bader)



01

**Work with brilliant people who've dedicated their lives to one thing.**

**Go big cause you don't know if you just might get what you ask for.**

02



03

**Our former students are our current and future teachers.**

1. We had the pleasure to work with actor, comedian and educator Keith McGill who brought Romeo and Juliet to life for students at McLaughlin, and with Tayy Tarantino who translated Shakespeare into contemporary hip-hop for our Shakespeare & Hip-Hop Workshop. We also had the joy of bringing Keith to Anchorage and saw his work in action.
2. We recently received a grant from the National Endowment on the Arts and from the National Historic Publications & Records - federal grants can seem impossible for a small nonprofit but aren't! We are also so excited to have won the Sony Create Action Grant where we will receive \$50,000 in Sony Electronic Products, along with \$50,000 to go towards our mission!
3. Rafael Bitanga started as a 7th grade student, and now teaches on contract for us, and Iqlas Dubed started as a student and is now an intern and support teacher.

# Year End Review

## WRAPPING UP OUR FALL PROGRAMS

With the addition of our new staff, this fall we had the pleasure of teaching workshops in Anchorage and throughout Alaska. In Anchorage, we had podcasting workshops at Wendler Middle School and Bettye Davis East High School with some of our biggest classes we've had! We also had the joy to work with Keith McGill and Tayy Tarantino with our Shakespeare & Hip-Hop Workshop at McLaughlin School. Seth joined Marie in teaching film workshops in Angoon and Chevak leading to some of our most powerful student-produced films to date.



## Angoon Media Arts Film Workshop



Unangas Elder Barbara Shangin being interviewed by students in Angoon.

There were a lot of magic projects, but Angoon really stood out as Barbara's family's internment story from Atka to Angoon during WWII resonated with Angoon's bombardment story, and everyone worked on their own personal and collective healing. When Barbara shared her and her family's personal story with youth in Angoon, there was one particular student who lit up.

Cheyenne Kookesh decided to highlight Barbara's healing journey. Barbara and Cheyanne experienced a strong bond in that their communities had both suffered atrocities at the hands of the US military, but they were both working on healing. This is an example of the type of connections that were formed between youth and elders through the Angoon Youth Media Arts workshop. The entire community came together to share as many stories as possible with Barbara so that she could find peace with what happened to her family. You can watch Cheyanne's film here:

**HEALING JOURNEY BY CHEYENNE KOOKESH, ANGOON WORKSHOP**

## Angoon Media Arts



During our time in Angoon there was a ceremony where Tlingit master carver Wayne Price dedicated a dugout canoe he had carved with help from Angoon High School students. This canoe was significant because it was the first canoe that was created in Angoon in 140 years, when all but 1 canoes were destroyed by the US Navy during the Angoon Bombardment. Local journalists and political representatives were in Angoon for this important day. Another significant moment was witnessing Barbara's adoption ceremony into the community of Angoon. Barbara was given the Tlingit name "Anya".

*The Angoon Media Arts Project was funded by Sealaska, the Alaska State Council on the Arts, RurAL CAP, The Charlotte Martin Foundation, and The Rasmuson Foundation. View the rest of our student produced films from Angoon here.*

**WATCH OUR ANGOON STUDENT PRODUCED FILMS**

# Chevak Student Films featured at Anchorage International Film Festival



Two of our students from our Chevak workshop are now award winning filmmakers! Lawson and Benaiah Pingayak submitted their films for the Anchorage International Film Festival and we were elated to watch their films premier at The Anchorage Museum this past December. 5th grade students in our Chevak workshop each made a film about their favorite place in Chevak in November 2022. Watch their respective films below, "The Lake of the Ircinraq: The Little People" and "Fish Camp"

**THE LAKE OF THE IRCINRAQ "THE LITTLE PEOPLE"**  
**BY LAWSON PINGAYAK**

**FISH CAMP BY BENAIAH PINGAYAK**

# Chevak Community Mapping Workshop



The 6th grade students in Chevak were incredibly excited to learn skills around filmmaking and digital storytelling. There was never a dull moment, especially when the students were using the recording equipment. Students were happy and eager to spend as much time as possible working on their films, many asking if they could stay late after school to keep working! The film screening to showcase the student films was amazing! It was attended by the entire k-12 school (around 300 students) and high school dancers graced the event by opening it. There were loud “ooohh” and “aahhhs” from the audience whenever a cool image of the school, Chevak, or the surrounding area appeared on the screen. The energy was more like a rock concert than a subdued film screening!

*Special Thanks to our funders: the Chevak Traditional Council, National Science Foundation, ELOKA: Exchange for Local Observations and Knowledge of the Arctic. Plus a special thanks to the educators and elders who gave their time, stories, and help for this project. View our collection of student produced films from our Chevak Digital Storytelling Workshop.*

## WATCH OUR CHEVAK STUDENT FILMS

# East Culture Podcasts Workshop



In our Anchorage programs, our podcasting workshops were in full swing at East High School and Wendler Middle School. 17 students joined us afterschool for our Culture Podcasts at East, where students chose topics ranging from first generation immigrants, what it was like to cross the Mexico border in the U.S. on foot, Inupiaq true crime stories, and the lack of Pacific Islander representation and curriculum in school. Students at East also had the chance to interview TIKTOK and American Idol Star, Paul Leti, who is also in the military and enjoys singing and sharing his culture with youth. One take away most students remember from his visit was “Credit is King.”

*The East Culture Podcasts Workshop was funded by the CIRI Foundation.*

# Wendler Podcasting our Cultures and Dreams



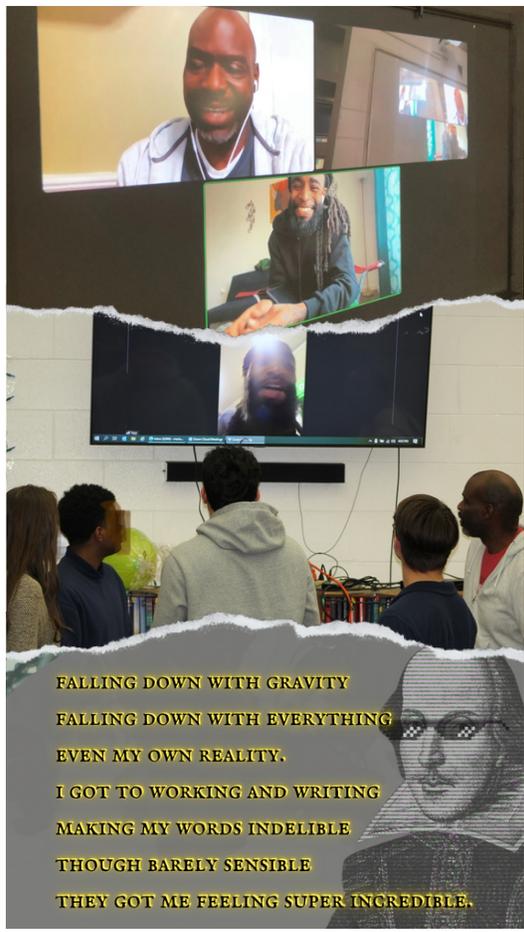
At Wendler Middle School, Alaskan Native students learned about podcasting in our Podcasting our Culture and Dreams Afterschool workshop. Each of the students prepared interview questions for Jacquii Lambert and got to hear from her about growing up in Kotzebue and her insight about their topics. The students chose topic ranging from EnuKin (the “little people” of the Arctic), adjusting from a village to Anchorage, to family game night, and volleyball. The students also worked on a community service project where they chose to prepare

food for elders. *The Wendler Podcasting our Cultures and Dreams Workshop was funded by the New York Life Foundation.*

*Podcasts coming soon to our website! You can listen to our previous student produced podcasts [here!](#)*

**[SEE STORIES PODCASTS](#)**

## Shakespeare & Hip Hop at McLaughlin



FALLING DOWN WITH GRAVITY  
FALLING DOWN WITH EVERYTHING  
EVEN MY OWN REALITY.  
I GOT TO WORKING AND WRITING  
MAKING MY WORDS INDELIBLE  
THOUGH BARELY SENSIBLE  
THEY GOT ME FEELING SUPER INCREDIBLE.

This year, we had the pleasure of working with both Tayy Tarantino and our newest instructor, Keith McGill. Our Shakespeare & Hip Hop workshop is a time of healing. where the students explore themes in Romeo and Juliet and relate them to their own lives to explore how they can make better choices and grow from their struggles. They are also healing through musical expression and some of our students really connected with writing their own raps, even if they were skeptical of their abilities. Each student produced a song (hip hop or otherwise) inspired from a theme in Shakespeare’s romeo and juliet that resonated with them. In previous years students have gravitated towards the theme of betrayal, but this year they gravitated towards the theme of love. One student who had never rapped or made music before amazed everyone with his song and his captivating lyrics.

*We are excited to offer the Shakespeare and Hip Hop Workshop again at McLaughlin this Spring. This project is funded by Arts Midwest Shakespeare in American Communities: Juvenile Justice grant. You can read more about the workshops we offer on our website [here.](#)*

# See Stories News

UNVEILING SEE STORIES' NEW WEBSITE!



See Stories new website features a central hub for storytelling and curriculum resources available to teachers.

Over the past year, See Stories has been working with Social Good Studio to update and overhaul our website to include so many cool features like curriculum resources, access to current workshops, podcasts, and more! As we have grown, we knew we needed a website that reflected our growth and that made all the amazing student films and podcasts user-friendly to teachers, students, and community members throughout the state. Read more about our new website below, including the story behind our new look working with design students from The School of Visual Concepts.

SEE OUR NEW FEATURES

STORYTELLING THROUGH VISUAL DESIGN  
BY EMMA TOMEO



## TRUTHSGIVING AT THE WRITER'S BLOCK

See Stories and our board put on Truthsgiving at the Writer's Block this past fall to explore ways to decolonize Thanksgiving and how to move forward in the world we all live in, holding both the truth of historical trauma and also creating space for healing and rebalancing. We have an amazing panel to explore conversation around decolonizing Thanksgiving from Kaneyo Hirata (educator and activist), Ziona Bronlow (food activist & founder of Food for Thoughts Alaska),

Warren Jones (a Yup'ik philosopher on culture, awareness and identify), and our moderator & Board Member, Naaq Robertson. We were graced with a musical performance by the amazing Witty Youngman and entertainment from our board president and DJ Pleasspin! So much gratitude to our board who aim to uplift BIPOC voices and The Writer's Block for hosting us! We are thankful to all of you and more.

# Thank you, Lauren!



Lauren has gifted See Stories this past year with her organizational prowess, her unrelenting work ethic, and her creative energy.

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unrelenting work ethic, and her creative energy. She started as Story Coordinator and our very first employee to the See Stories team in 2021, and her talents quickly shifted to Grants Manager, a role in which she brought in over \$175,000 for our programs & mission in the last year. She has moved on from the See Stories team and is nurturing her own amazing creative ventures. We wish Lauren well on her journey and we are forever grateful for what she brought to See Stories during her time with us!

# Welcome Kaitlin!



Kaitlin Armstrong (she/her) is a writer and sound artist, raised and currently residing on Dena'ina land (Homer and Anchorage, Alaska). This past year See Stories collaborated with Kaitlin to lead youth podcast workshops and on her upcoming podcast "Unsettling Alaska." Kaitlin has now taken on the role of Grant Writer for See Stories, and we couldn't be more delighted with the quality of her writing and thinking. Please join us in welcoming Kaitlin!

Save the date

## SEE STORIES SUMMIT

May 4, 2023  
BP ENERGY CENTER  
3:00-7:30 PM

JOIN US FOR FILMS, FOOD & FUN!

- Help Us Envision See Stories' Future
- Build Community
- Raffle Prizes
- Entertainment from DJ PleasSpin!

Free Registration  
Click Here!

Emcee'd by collaborator Alice Qannik Glenn of the Coffee and Quaq Podcast

Special performance by collaborator Tavy Tayantino

Funded by the Alaska State Council on the Arts' Community Arts Partnership Grant

What do our supporters say?

"See Stories empowers and equips Alaskans to share their true experiences for everyone to see and connect with."  
See Stories Contractor

"See Stories not only teaches students, but it nurtures students to grow as people who will continue the mission of empowering others."  
See Stories Student

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