

## IF ALASKA WERE A VILLAGE OF 1000 PEOPLE .....

We'd be :

690 Caucasians

35 African-Americans

190 Alaska Natives and Indians

40 Asians

35 Hispanic and

other races and ethnic groups

530 are male, and 470 are female.

We have some difficulty communicating with each other: 143 of us speak a language other than English at home. In addition, 128 of us (12.8%) are considered to be functionally illiterate, and cannot read or write well enough to function well in our society (Alaska Literacy Council estimate).

Nearly one third of us, 310, are under the age of 19, and only 56 of us are over age 65. We look much like the demographic profile of a third world country. We are second in the nation in proportion of youthful population, and by 2025, we'll have the highest proportion of young people in our population in the United States.

Educationally, we are very well off. 88.3% of us over the age of 25 are high school graduates, and 24.7% have bachelor's degrees or higher. One of every four persons in the village is a school age student and most are enrolled in the public school system. However, Alaska presently has the lowest rate in the nation of high school graduates going to college the first year after graduation.

Several people have died of AIDS in our village, and although we have one housing unit for every 2.4 people, in rural Alaska one house in three still lacks complete plumbing facilities.

The median household income in the community is \$51,571 (2004\$), but 134 of us live below the poverty line as determined by US government definitions, and more than half of those are below 18 years of age.

This poverty is spread over all age groups, so although wealth is not evenly spread, the poverty seems to be. Nearly 30% of all households are headed by single persons living alone, many with children, and only half by married couples. Average per capita income has dropped rapidly, and is now below the federal poverty line: \$22,660. Yet 27% of the households who are buying their homes pay more than \$1500 per month, and 8.3% pay more than \$2000 per month in mortgage payments. 16% of Alaskans have no health insurance coverage at all.

There are actually more motor vehicles registered in Alaska than there are people (801,339-DMV, 12/2004). The number of pickup trucks is nearly equal to the number of houses.

There is one state trooper, four lawyers, and eight people are either prison inmates or are in halfway houses. Virtually all these prisoners are male (92%). We also have 79 soldiers and Air Force personnel (a number which includes their dependents). There are also a large number of service veterans in our village (~110), including the largest proportion of Vietnam veterans of any state.

Health care costs becoming increasingly threatening to families and individuals in Alaska. Per person spending on health care in 2005 was \$7970. About 17% of Alaskans have no health insurance.

Subsistence fisheries take 2.5% of the harvest, and another 1% is taken by sport fishermen. The rest, the overwhelming portion of 96.5% is taken by commercial fisheries.

We typically have many more births than deaths, and in the nineties, we have increased our population by nearly 30%. We have twice the national suicide rate and die from accidents one and a half times more often than average Americans.

Each of us received \$835 in October

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2005 as the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend and each recipient has an equity of about \$54,135 in the Alaska Permanent Fund (as of 7/06). We are very wealthy compared to most of the world.

Next year, our population will be three percent more than this year. Very likely, at the present rate, at least one of those newborns will have fetal alcohol syndrome (5 babies per thousand for Alaska Natives are FAS.)

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Sources: 2000 U.S. Census,  
Understanding Alaska: People, Economy,  
and Resources ISER/UAA May 2006  
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