



CENTRAL COUNCIL

Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hydaburg First! Week

Promoting Economic Growth In Southeast Alaska

Hydaburg, located on the southern end of Prince of Wales Island, celebrated a historical event at the end of July with the raising of four recently renovated totem poles under the Haida Totem Replication Project 2009. The energy carried over into "**Hydaburg First! Week**", August 1-4, 2009, which offered presentations, movies, and workshops focused on promoting the economic growth of the community. Hydaburg leaders, government officials, and business development professionals participated in the Hydaburg First! Week.

Hydaburg Business Center (www.myHydaburg.org) assembled the panel of speakers to promote the idea of "Sharing Knowledge to Build Community & Create Opportunity." Presenters from Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council), University of Alaska Southeast, ActionStrategy, Maharishi University of Management (Fairfield, Iowa), and Juneau Economic Development Council spoke about educational, economic and employment opportunities that are occurring in Hydaburg with a special emphasis on green jobs & entrepreneurship, and sustainable development.

Lonnie Gamble, a professor and an electrical engineer from Maharishi University, and a founder of one of the first "off-the-grid" sustainable "Eco-Village" communities presented on the idea of sustainable living. Gamble and his students gave gardening demonstrations, conducted free energy audits, and discussed ideas for community projects and businesses. A number of energy efficient light bulbs were given away. Gamble's students hosted several "movie nights" where educational movies were viewed with the public. Organic popcorn was the hit, brought all the way from Iowa. A wood fired community cooking oven and a community garden were two business ideas that inspired several of the local community members to pursue development.

Central Council's Economic Development Coordinator Laird Jones and Charles Dayton of ActionStrategy worked with the local government officials and council members to review and update the Economic Development Plan for Hydaburg using the online project management system ActionStrategy. Dayton, who also happens to be a well-known artist, did an introductory class on oil painting where students painted a portrait of a local elder.

Rick Wolk, Director of MBA Programs at the University of Alaska Southeast and Toby Harbanuk, a UAS student and a member of Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE), presented about online degree programs. They also discussed the possibility of small business start-up in a community such as Hydaburg.

Brian Holst, Director of the Juneau Economic Development Council, shared information and materials on technical assistance programs and financing options available to small businesses in Southeast Alaska.

Other topics included "Keeping Dollars in the Community: Saving Energy and Producing Energy in Hydaburg," "Sustainability, Youth, and Entrepreneurship," and "Community Scale Sustainability." Presentations emphasized the importance of keeping money in the local economy, buying from local businesses, and supporting local non-profits.

A separate track for community leaders and government officials was devoted to planning and building collaboration and covered topics like "Strategies for Improving Cooperation" and "Leveraging Partnerships: Working with External Resources to Accomplish Hydaburg's Goals."

Hydaburg First! Week brought new ideas, new faces and a new outlook to Hydaburg. Hydaburg Business Center hopes to make the event a tradition.

The Center is part of a project by Central Council aimed at creating jobs by bringing free technical assistance, business training, and free Internet access to remote communities of Southeast Alaska. Another such center is located in Angoon (www.myAngoon.org). Central Council's business centers are supported by USDA Rural Development and organizations mentioned in this press release, by Sealaska Corporation that provides interns each year, and by Rural Outreach Program for Entrepreneurs (ROPE) that sends trainers to Southeast Alaska communities.

To discuss partnership opportunities please contact Charles Peele, Hydaburg Business Center Coordinator at 907.285.3136, or Andrei Chakine, Business and Economic Development Department Manager for Central Council at 907.463.7147.

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