ALASKA, A2



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FINAL

Alaska lost another 9,000 jobs in 3rd quarter

Oil sector hammered with a 26 percent drop, as state endures 4 quarters of decline.

Alex DeMarban

Alaska lost 9,000 jobs in late summer 2016 before, the biggest decline yet in the current recession as low oil prices continued to shred the economy.

The job losses, reported by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development on Friday, extended from July to September. Some decline is normal in that period, as tourists leave and salmon fishermen put up their nets, but other factors made the job

picture much worse.

Employment cuts across Alaska have mounted monthly since late 2015, leading to four straight quarters of job decline as Alaska remains mired in recession with the nation's worst unemployment rate.

The oil and gas sector was particularly hammered in the three-month period, according to from the number of people employed the year the report. The industry employed 3.640 fewer jobs compared to third quarter 2015, a 26 per-

While health care and tourism-related jobs were once again bright spots, the loss of higher-paying petroleum positions drained other sectors as oil companies thinned their ranks of contractors and workers spent less at restaurants and shops

The state expects to see the oil and gas

Apprenticeships: New programs aim to train Alaska workers amid tough job market. A6

losses slowing soon, in part because producers and explorers have already made giant cuts.

The industry's record employment of 14,800 jobs in March 2015 sagged to 11,700 positions in December, a preliminary estimate.

The industry averaged 8,000 jobs in the late 1990s, said Caroline Schultz, Labor economist.

"They are very dramatic losses and it's happened very quickly," she said. "But in the last five years we had very dramatic gains in the oil and gas industry."

Statewide, employment during the quarter

See A13, JOB LOSSES

Alaska average monthly jobs **All industries**

Month	2015	2016	Change	change	
January	322,455	318,647	-3,808	-1.2	
February	326,731	322,698	-4,033	-1.2	
March	329,104	324,381	-4,723	-1.4	
April	334,307	329,950	-4,357	-1.3	
May	346,765	340,585	-6,180	-1.8	
June	353,091	345,849	-7,242	-2.1	
July	354,227	346,163	-8,064	-2.3	
August	355,538	347,133	-8,405	-2.4	
September	353 279	343 350	-9 929	-28	

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Developr Research and Analysis Section

Walker won't say if he voted for Trump but wants his help

New King Cove road and development of ANWR could be nearer for Alaska.

Nathaniel Herz

Donald Trump's campaign and transition have proven politically vexing for Alaska's congressional delegation, which has faced tough questions about support for Cabinet appointees and Trump's divisive executive actions in his first 10 days in office.

But Gov. Bill Walker, a former Republican who won election as an independent working with the Alaska Democratic Party, never gave or withdrew an endorsement of Trump or Hillary Clinton. He won't say which candidate got his vote and so far has been careful about criticizing any of Trump's executive actions, including the one on immigration.

Instead, Walker says after two years of clashes over natural resource policies with former President Barack Obama that he's looking forward to working closely with Trump's appoin-

"Who I voted for is not as relevant as my relationship with the new administration," Walker said in an interview. "I know we're going to have a different opportunity with this administration than we did the last.'

With Trump working alongside a Republican Congress, Alaska politicians are suddenly much closer to winning long-sought concessions from the federal

See A12, WALKER



Isabelle Dyment has worked as a nontraditional classroom teacher in the Lower Kuskokwim School District and is one of a handful selected to be paid while going to college full-time to earn her teaching degree.

Kuskokwim schools make push to create homegrown teachers

Bethel-centered district invests \$500K to educate local staff to battle turnover at its 27 schools

Lisa Demer Alaska Dispatch News

ETHEL — When teacher Isabelle Dyment found herself in front of a classroom of kindergartners five years ago, she felt nearly as much at a loss as the scared, crying children just starting school.

She came with skills and knowledge. She's a mother of seven and a fluent Yup'ik speaker. But she had no college degree, no regular teaching certificate, no teaching experience.

"I had to learn everything on my own. I didn't know what to do," Dyment says. With help from her teacher aide and a fellow teacher, she quickly grew more confident and

more comfortable. Yet she wanted

Now both Dyment and her employer, the Lower Kuskokwim School District, have sights on higher goals:

The Bethel-based school district wants a certified teacher in every classroom and expects to spend \$500,000 to support those in college this budget year alone. It's the latest configuration of a long-standing effort across Alaska to create more homegrown teachers and address a worsening teacher shortage.

Dyment, who taught four years at Bethel's Yup'ik immersion school, is one of the first to plunge in. At 45, she is a full-time college student.

The district not only covers her bills at its partner college, University of Alaska Fairbanks, it also pays her salary so she can concentrate on her studies. She was one of a handful of associate teachers selected for the

"We're putting a big investment into our people," said Josh Gill, director of personnel and student services for the district.

Urban school districts like Anchorage's generally only hire certified teachers. But in the Lower Kuskokwim district, dozens of classroom

See A12, RURAL TEACHERS

Trump officials move to restore travel ban

Meanwhile, some people from listed countries try for U.S.

Mark Landler

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - The Trump administration moved Saturday night to appeal a U.S. District Court ruling that blocked the president's immigration order, setting the stage for a legal showdown over his authority to tighten the nation's borders in the name of protecting Ameri-

Cabinet: Trump's team tries to gain a sense of order amid missteps, A8

Travel ban: Judge's stay of Trump order triggers race to enter US, **A8**

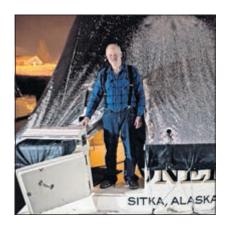
The brief notice of appeal came after a chaotic day in which the government complied with the district court's ruling by allowing the entry of refugees and travelers from seven predominantly Muslim nations, even as President Donald Trump unleashed a fusillade of criticism at the ruling and the judge who had is-

At airports around the world, small numbers of travelers from the previously banned countries began venturing trips to the United States, knowing that the judge's ruling could be overturned at any time. The State Department reversed its cancellation of visas for people from the seven affected countries — Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen — and aid groups scrambled to take advantage of what they acknowledged might be a brief window for refugees to enter the United States.

See A10, IMMIGRATION

ALASKA LIFE JUNEAU CRIBS

From apartments to boats — take a look at how lobbyists, legislators and aides live in one of the nation's smallest capitals. D1



FOOD

TIS THE SEASON FOR QUESO FUNDIDO

Nothing kicks off game day better than a big skillet bubbling with cheese and spiked with chilies. D4



SPORTS

FOR ALASKANS, THE JOURNEY TO D-1 FOOTBALL FOLLOWS MANY PATHS, B1

NATION

REPUBLICAN-LED CONGRESS **HURRIES TO SLASH OIL AND** GAS REGULATIONS, A11

ALASKA.





WALKER: Some of his positions have been at odds with Trump's vision

Continued from A1

government, like permission to build a road through a national wildlife refuge on the Alaska Peninsula and opening 1.5 million acres of another, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, to oil and gas development.

But Walker has also taken some progressive stances at odds with the vision laid out by Trump and congressional Republicans — particularly his support for expansion of the Medicaid health care program, a component of the Affordable Care Act that the GOP wants to overturn.

And some of the Democrats who have loaned Walker state-level political support say they'll be watching what he does to defend their priori-

"Some of this stuff is pretty outrageous — the Affordable Care Act affects a lot of people," said Rep. Adam Wool, D-Fairbanks. "You can't ignore the things you don't like just because there's one or two things you like."

Walker so far has extended a warm welcome to the new administration. He wrote a Dec. 1 letter congratulating Trump on his election; in it, he also suggested potential areas for collaboration and invited the new president to visit Alaska.

secretary. After Trump instead chose said. a Montana Republican congressman, Ryan Zinke, Walker sought out managers are looking forward to new the appointee for a pair of chats in Washington, D.C., during Trump's inauguration — where Walker said he learned that Zinke's wife, Lolita. once lived in Anchorage and worked at the Lucky Wishbone restaurant.

"I was very, very pleased with his attitude about states' opportunities for Medicaid expansion — could to have access on federal land," Walk-

ral resources commissioner, Andy Mack, listed several areas where the state was frustrated by Obama's policies and is looking for new cooperation from Trump's administration.

The Alaska Peninsula road through the Izembek refuge, de-Cold Bay's jet runway, is one top pri-

So are opening ANWR and scheduling oil and gas lease sales in federal waters off Alaska's Arctic coast, Mack said. Walker's administration also has other, lower-profile goals, like resolving lingering disputes with federal land managers over control of rivers in Alaska.

"Where we were frustrated, we'll Walker also encouraged Trump go back to the table with, in many be curtailed. to appoint an Alaskan as his interior cases, often an identical ask," Mack

While the state's natural resource openings under Trump, the prospects are less certain for health care. At a legislative hearing last week, Walker's health commissioner, Val Davidson, suggested that Trump's plans to repeal the Affordable Care wreak havoc on Alaska.

"Fifty thousand Alaskans now In an interview, Walker's natu- have some kind of coverage either tially issued a three-sentence statethrough Medicaid or through marketplace plans. So, how are those folks going to be covered now?" Davidson asked. "What's going to happen with the economic impact?"

Walker sent a letter to the U.S. House's GOP leadership last signed to ease King Cove's access to month asking them to "move forward carefully" on health care reform, and he said he plans to work with the National Governors Association to make sure the state's interests are represented in Washington.

But Walker didn't bring up health care in his December letter to Trump. And in a radio appearance Tuesday on "Talk of Alaska," he sounded resigned to the idea that the Knowles. expanded Medicaid program could

can't afford that anymore, I guess what I would have to do is just celebrate the fact that we had 27,000 Alaskans that had better health coverage for a period of time," he told host Lori Townsend. "And so I'll take that as a good thing for Alaska - and hopefully, it'll be able to continue on."

Walker also was careful about Act — which included the provisions registering objections to Trump's executive action closing U.S. borders to refugees and people from seven predominantly Muslim nations. He iniment Monday saying that he was "paying close attention to national events while working to ensure a stable fiscal future for Alaska.'

He then told Townsend on Tuesday that the border closure wasn't 'well thought out" and caught people off guard.

Walker's early responses to Trump may not satisfy Alaska's Democrats and those offended by the new president's policies, but they make sense politically, said David Ramseur, who worked as chief of staff to former Democratic U.S. Sen. Mark Begich and, before that, as an aide to former Democratic Gov. Tony

In a phone interview, Ramseur cited Trump's volatility and his tenden- Contact Alex DeMarban "If it reached the point that we cy to "hold grudges" against critics.

"As offended as I think most Alaskans are by these executive orders, it seems to me the raw politics are that it's not in Walker's interests to take Trump on over those issues," Ramseur said. "I think he's more wise to keep his powder dry and pick

One particular risk Walker would face by publicly criticizing Trump is Alaska's share in the president's promised infrastructure program, said Gerry McBeath, an emeritus political science professor at University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Lawmakers in states less dependent on federal revenue — like Washington, where Attorney General Bob Ferguson, a Democrat, is suing Trump over his immigration order - have more political flexibility, Mc-Beath said.

Walker, McBeath said, is not going to say anything "that would prejudice the fiscal interests of the state." He's also likely to be eyeing re-election, which is less than two years away, McBeath said.

"And that means paying close attention to making sure the state is solvent — and is not being written off," McBeath said.

with a better base of knowl-

As the district require-

ments increased, UAF set up

an extensive support system

guide students. It sends fac-

of rural life.

that includes rural advisers to

ulty to village schools each October. Classes fold in aspects

UAF is not the only campus

working for more homegrown

teachers. At the University of

Alaska Southeast, any Alaska

edith, with the state education

time, is one of four associates

Kuskokwim district pays both

'That was the genius of

in the new program called "two and done." The Lower

Dyment, the Bethel associate teacher now in school full-

Native student who wants

to become a teacher gets a full-ride scholarship, said Mer-

at alex@alaskadispatch.com

RURAL TEACHERS: Yup'ik fluency, cultural knowledge are assets for district

 $Continued\ from\ A1$

teachers have just a high school degree — and proven proficiency in Yup'ik. They also either passed a basic test similar to the old high school exit exam or have a couple of years of college behind them.

The district long has encouraged its nontraditional or associate teachers to work toward a degree and in 2013 began requiring it. But starting this school year, there is a deadline. The associate teachers — who mainly live and work in small Yup'ik village schools — must finish their college degree in 10 years.

If they don't, they will be out of a teaching job, Gill said. Lower Kuskokwim is providing financial support and working with UAF to prevent

that from happening.

Lower turnover

For a remote region where luring and keeping teachers from elsewhere is a perpetual challenge, the looming requirement for a college degree marks a huge shift.

with about 4,300 students. the Lower Kuskokwim is the biggest rural school district in Alaska. Its 27 schools are spread among communities from Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island in the Bering Sea to Atmautluak on the tundra to the Kuskokwim River hub of

This isn't postcard Alaska with mountains and glaciers. But it has its own beauty and riches with big, wild rivers, freezers full of salmon, moose and birds, and strong family and community ties.

The district has long taken advantage of a special state rule that allows those fluent in Alaska Native languages to be full-time classroom teachers without a degree.

There aren't enough college-educated teachers from the region, yet locals bring a knowledge of Yup'ik culture and language that outsiders lack, said Barb Angaiak, a district education specialist who coordinates career development for associate teachers.

Teaching the language of Southwest Alaska is another top school board goal here.

"The district is very committed to creating an opportunity for our students to be highly successful in any world they chose to be in, including this one," Angaiak said. Knowing the language is part

Other districts have allowed those with deep knowledge of Alaska Native language and culture to teach those areas — but not to be the main teacher for math, social studies, language arts or other subjects, said Sondra Meredith, state administrator of teacher education and certification.

'They are teaching to a skill set they already have," she said.

A teacher shortage being felt around the country could be amplified in rural Alaska unless more locals take to the classroom, she said.

The Lower Kuskokwim district is unique. It has kept turnover down in part by hiring locals, with or without a

college degree, Gill said. About 20 percent of its



coast. He remembers doing a

math word problem involving

a bus trip with his elementary

At first, Gill thought the

Then he realized the boy didn't

kid was messing with him.

know. Gill parlayed that into

an annual school field trip to

Seattle that taught kids about

planning, fundraising and the

Not all outside teachers

connect in that way. And not

has control of teaching meth-

academics. Why not, Gill said,

take the people already com-

Currently, there are 56 as-

sociate teachers, those with-

in Yup'ik. They are chipping

away at a degree under that

new 10-year deadline.

out degrees but who are fluent

"These for the most part

are people who are self-taught

and have learned how to teach

from observing others or just

lieve and testing it out," Anga-

for an associate: \$52,000. For a

regular teacher: \$93,000-plus.

Yet their responsibilities are

degrees will get raises, too.

its teachers-in-training to

UAF, which has had an un-

dergraduate degree program

The Lower Kuskokwim

The associates not only

learn techniques, philosophies

must study math, science and

and child behavior, they also

other areas, so they end up

geared for rural areas since

the same. Those who get their

'Two and done'

Lower Kuskokwim sends

The top end of the pay scale

thinking about what they be-

mitted to rural life and give

them the tools to be better

ods that weave real life into

everyone from the region

'What's it like to ride on the

students in the village.

bus?" one boy asked.

outside world.

teachers?

iak said.

Isabelle Dyment, right, looks on as biology professor Hector Douglas shows fellow student Kathleen Naneng a spreadsheet on plants on the Kuskokwim campus. Dyment is a teacher in Bethel and is being paid her regular salary while she goes to college full-time.



Josh Gill, district director of personnel and student services, is behind the program to pay noncertified teachers to go to college full-time to get their credentials and return to work.

almost 300 certified teachers are Alaska Native, the highest proportion in the state, he said. It also has 56 Yup'ikspeaking associate teachers.

Lower Kuskokwim still lost 15 percent of its teachers a year, on average, between 2007 and 2012, according to the most recent Alaska teacher turnover study by the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska Anchorage

That's higher than urban districts like Anchorage and Mat-Su but significantly better than a number of rural districts. Ten small districts were losing 30 to 40 percent of their teachers a year, and another, the Tanana city district, was losing half, ISER's 2013 report found.

"If we were in that 30 to 40 percent, we'd be in a lot of trouble," Gill said. That would mean hiring 100 or so teachers a year rather than 45 or so.

The Lower Kuskokwim brings in student teachers from all over the United States to give them a semesterlong taste of rural life. It sends recruiters with binders of photos of the region to teacher job fairs. And it has a multipronged effort to help the people already here become teachers.

From Napaskiak to Fairbanks

Around 70 people connected to the region are in some type of district-funded college program.

For students who are full time — and most aren't — the new teacher must commit to a year in the region for every semester paid by the district. Others must agree to a year in the region for a year of help.

"If I get done in time, it will be eight years at least," said John Sipary, 18 of Napaskiak, describing his commitment to return to Southwest Alaska. He's in his first year at UAF studying education, largely with financial help from the

Sipary hopes to follow his mother and grandmother and make a career of teaching.

"Honestly, it is just to give back to the community," Sipary said. "To keep my culture and traditions, to give back to future generations."

He is one of a handful of recent Lower Kuskokwim high school graduates the district is supporting to earn a bachelor's degree in education. He also is the recipient of a separate \$4,000 school board scholarship plus a scholarship from Coastal Villages Region Fund, a fishing group.

The Lower Kuskokwim School Board gives scholarships of \$2,000 for non-Yup'ik speakers and \$4,000 to those with the language that can be used at any school.

The district also covers UAF bills for the associate teachers, who must take at least nine college credits a year, often through video or online classes. Even that is hard for someone working full-time, Gill said. And at that pace, an associate won't have a degree within 10 years.

Many of those participating in one college program or another are Yup'ik and from the area. All have passed this test: To get the financial support, they must have lived in the

region at least five years. "Living in Bush Alaska is

not for everybody," Gill said. Southwest Alaska can seem more like another nation than part of the United States. It's a harsh yet beautiful land with its own language and customs.

In some villages, not all homes have running water, though most teacher housing does. In most villages, there aren't roads. People drive fourwheelers or snowmachines. Flights often don't make it in. Stores regularly run out of

Even veterans in the classroom can find village life challenging. For a brand-new teacher fresh from college, it can be overwhelming, Gill

Sipary said he remembers how hard it was to connect to a teacher new to rural ways.

"I was scared. Sometimes I 1972, said Carol Barnhardt, was afraid to open up to them chair of the UAF elementary because of the fact they were education department. outsiders," Sipary said. He district has a stable group of hopes to use his college education to bring his experiences top administrators committed to homegrown teachers, she into a village classroom.

Teaching the outside world

Gill first came to the region 14 years ago as a teacher in the village of Tuntutuliak, about 40 miles from the Bering salaries and college costs for selected existing employees within two years of finishing a degree.

> Josh Gill," Angaiak said. It otherwise was taking too long to get more certified

achers, Gill said. Dyment grew up in the Nelson Island village of Toksook Bay and tried college for a year and half in Fairbanks early on. Then she moved back to the region and didn't know if

she ever would get a degree. She started teaching in Bethel's Yup'ik immersion school and took college classes after hours to meet the district requirement. But it was a strain. She has a big family to

care for too. When she was offered the chance to be done in two years, she made sure her husband, Hugh, who is a teacher and dean at Kuskokwim Learning Academy, was on board. Some nights he is in charge of the kids, homework.

dinner, getting them to events. On weekends, the family often enjoys the city pool. Dyment goes too, even if she must sit out on the side doing homework at first.

She is staying in Bethel and taking classes both online and in person on the Kuskokwim campus.

In the fall semester, she took a natural history biology class that included soil testing and other fieldwork. For a project, she researched mosquitoes, where they nest, how they hibernate, why the females are the ones that bite.

"They can lay up to 300 eggs," she remembered telling the class. "If you kill one mosquito, there are another 299 of the babies.

This time around, she's ready for college, she said. She's showing her kids how important school is. She's learning new ways of teaching

"I've always considered myself a teacher. I never looked down on myself because I didn't have a degree," Dyment said.

The district may never make the goal of having all certified teachers and enough Yup'ik speakers too, Gill said. But it is getting closer.

Three new teachers this school year got their degrees with district support.

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