

BHA Spotlight – Eydie Flygare

The Chugachmiut Behavioral Health Program nominated Eydie Flygare for the “BHA Rising Star” award in December 2021. They wrote “When Eydie Flygare was asked to develop a two-week sobriety camp within our region, the task seemed daunting, if not impossible.

First, all the practical logistics had to be set up, like food and shelter; then the forms, policies, and process; after that a recovery curriculum had to be set in place. When this was done, she would have to face the big question. Could we get people to come to this camp? One that required two weeks away from family? All these steps were successfully completed... Over 14 camps attendance has ranged from 1 to 11. The biggest test was the time only one person signed up for camp. Eydie and her team carried on. They held camp for that person. Needless to say, he was a little surprised.

In the years that followed the success of camp was amazing. People got sober and stayed sober. Graduates came back to subsequent camps by choice - eventually as mentors. People from the community came to camp to share their recovery stories. Other staff in the Behavioral Health department were asked to present on topics and to take part when they came to camp. Then, the pandemic hit. Plans were made for virtual camp. It was remarkably successful. Eydie just finished directing two weeks of virtual camp with eleven participants. It is uplifting, emotional and healing in it's impact on all who participate - even in the Zoom format. They meet 5 hours a day through week-ends. Almost five years into this project, there have been fourteen camps with four of them virtual.

Members of our staff say this about Eydie, "I value her cultural approach to services and her can-do attitude - to make things happen, even if it means thinking outside of the box." "She is always positive. Eydie can be very persuasive."

"Eydie is a strong role model for what Indigenous sobriety can look like. Eydie has a happy family life, a lot of respect from her job and community, and demonstrates how to have fun in sobriety. She is a true example of how to walk in life as a sober Native woman.

"My thought is that she helps people realize that cultural experiences are not only for healing wounds but she enables them to realize that culture reaffirms positive strengths and brings them to identify with their cultural or tribal identity."

