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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### **Governor Proclaims Sept. 18-24 as 'Employ Older Workers Week'**

JUNEAU, Alaska—Governor Sean Parnell has proclaimed Sept. 18-24 as “Employ Older Workers Week,” encouraging all Alaskans to recognize older workers’ contributions.

According to the proclamation there are more than 140,000 residents who are 55 and older, about 20 percent of Alaska’s population. The proclamation encourages those who are engaged in job placement, training and related services to recommit their efforts to serving older Alaskans.

“Older workers are reliable, trustworthy, have a high degree of integrity, a proven work ethic, and their dedication and skills are priceless assets to our state,” the proclamation states.

Through the MASST program – Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training – the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development is addressing the need for skills upgrades for workers who are 55 years and older.

“MASST helps Alaska retain the valuable resources of older workers while enabling them to maintain an independent lifestyle and make meaningful contributions to their communities,” Labor Commissioner Click Bishop said.

Because many older workers find themselves in need of training to compete in today’s job market, MASST promotes work opportunities for low-income Alaskans who are returning to or entering the workforce. Federally funded as the Older American Community Service Employment Program, MASST provides work experience, on-the-job training in Alaska Job Centers, workshops and skills training.

The MASST program supports training opportunities in health care, child care, education, green jobs, energy efficiency, environmental services and other available public service activities.

MASST staff work with other service providers, the Alaska Job Center Network, its partners, and the Workforce Investment Act to help meet the needs of senior workers. Both rural and urban Alaskans are able to access MASST through a Job Center or a local partner.

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**2011 September Employ Older Workers Week**

[Labor.Alaska.Gov/news/proclamations/2011-EmployOlderWorkersWeek.pdf](http://Labor.Alaska.Gov/news/proclamations/2011-EmployOlderWorkersWeek.pdf)

**Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training**

[Labor.Alaska.Gov/masst/](http://Labor.Alaska.Gov/masst/)

**Alaska Job Center Network**

[Jobs.Alaska.Gov/offices/](http://Jobs.Alaska.Gov/offices/)