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ASTAC donation expands reading program in North Slope schools

Utqiagvik, Alaska – Arctic Slope Telephone Association Cooperative (ASTAC) has donated another \$15,000 to the North Slope Borough School District’s Battle of the Books program. This is ASTAC’s fourth year sponsoring the region’s reading competition and during that time the number of participants has grown by nearly 20 percent. About 243 students took part in the program last year. Schools in all eight North Slope villages will compete against each other during the upcoming academic year and ASTAC’s donation will cover the cost of books and recognition awards.

“ASTAC’s continued strong support of Battle of the Books has led to increased participation because there is a constant funding source for purchasing the books. Continuity builds a program,” said Brian Freeman, Coordinator of Grants, Foundations and Partnerships for the North Slope Borough School District.

Battle of the Books is a reading incentive program for students in grades three through 12. Goals of the nationwide program include encouraging and recognizing students who enjoy reading; broadening reading interests; increasing reading comprehension and promoting academic excellence.

“The Battle of the Books program makes reading fun and competitive for the kids, promoting comprehension which is a key building block for learning well in to the future,” said ASTAC General Manager and CEO Jens Laipenieks. “We are thrilled to continue our partnership with the NSBSD in promoting academic excellence.”

ASTAC, headquartered in Anchorage, is a member-owned telephone utility cooperative providing telecommunication services to residents on the North Slope Borough of Alaska since 1981. Services include Broadband Ethernet and Internet services, 4G Wireless, local and long distance service. For more information, visit www.astac.net.

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