2015 Champion for Kids Award Recipient

Cynthia Erickson
August 25th, 2015

Cynthia lives in Tanana, Alaska and was instrumental in starting the Tanana 4-H club and founding the nonprofit youth group “Setsoo Yeh, My Grandma’s House”, created to battle youth suicide and encourage healthy activity. Community support systems have been shown to be an important factor in promoting resilience in children; Cynthia has exemplified community support through her work in all aspects of her life. While 4-H clubs have traditionally focused on leadership and life skills, Cynthia created hers to double as a safe space for Tanana children to discuss the harder aspects of village life, including child abuse. By refusing to stay silent about these issues, she has empowered her club members to utilize their own voices to bring awareness regarding the challenges that are faced in their community. She is very active in her community through her church; she organizes healing ceremonies to deal with tragedies and opens up her home to youth who need a safe place. She is an incredible example of the power of community.