TCC keynotes urge blend of past, future

By Kevin Baird

As a young boy, Peter Demoski, of Nulato, was sent to a boarding school at the mission in Holy Cross, where he saw his traditional clothing burned in a bonfire.

Courtney Agnes, of Tanana, is known for her role in the reality television show “Yukon Man,” where she has been able to advocate and showcase her culture and subsistence life-style to the world.

Demoski and Agnes hail from different generations and places but their contrasting backgrounds proved insightful as they delivered keynote speeches on the theme of “Preserving Our Way of Life” at the annual Tanana Chiefs Conference Convention on Monday afternoon at the Westmark Hotel.

“To preserve the past, you must be tied to the past. The elders lived in the past,” said Demoski, who spoke first. “I want you to know your ancestors survived in the cold for 1,000 years. You don’t have to live like them anymore, but you can preserve like them. The Athabaskan people will live on forever.”

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