

Biography of  
Elsie Sampson Vaden  
Norton Sound Health Corporation  
Self Governance Coordinator

Elsie Sampson Vaden was born in Noorvik, Alaska to the most beautiful Parents Stephen and Mildred Sampson, on March 15, 1955. Stephen, Elsie's dad worked as a Plumber and traveled all over Alaska with the construction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs(BIA)Schools, then latter part of his employment the State Operated Schools. Mildred, her mother was the homemaker and care taker of her Dad's sprint and long distance dog team.

The population of Noorvik at the time of Elsie's birth was 134. Noorvik is located 45 miles east of Kotzebue. She had 8 brothers and 3 sisters. Elsie grew up in Noorvik and went to the BIA elementary school. Elsie had never left the region, but to continue her education Elsie was sent to Fairbanks, AK. What a change, with population size, vehicles, TV and telephones. Elsie's foster family, which included 3 children made her very comfortable and challenged her ability to excel in education. Dissecting a frog, she couldn't do, but she asked if she could dissect a fish. She had to work hard to make up homework just to get her "B". It was an experience she will never forget.

After completing Alaska Business College and working in various positions in the village and the region, Elsie understood that working in a business office was where she wanted to be. Elsie has worked with the Federally Recognized Tribes and consortium associated with the Tribal entities. Elsie has been employed by Norton Sound Health Corporation since 2001. The many challenges of developing independence and maintaining the Self Governance within the Indian Health Services (IHS) has been frightening. It's the conflict between good and evil, and I believe that in the end good will triumph.

Elsie devoted her time to helping her community members and those across the state in areas of involving herself in tribal council, local, region and state school board, local and region, and statewide Friends Churches.

