



Chancellor's Report



Dear Regents,

UAA's first on-campus spring commencement took place in the Alaska Airlines Center (AAC) on May 3, with 1,353 students—among them, 22 student athletes—earning degrees in the Class of 2015. In the past year, UAA has produced 65 academic all-conference awards and an Academic All-American in basketball senior Travis Thompson. Having hosted two Commencements, numerous concerts and community events—including the 2015 Native Youth Olympics, Harlem Globetrotters, Tim McGraw, Alabama Shakes—it's hard to believe the AAC has only been open nine months.

King Harald V of Norway planned to visit UAA's Anchorage campus in late May to celebrate our ongoing partnerships with Norway and sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Tromsø. Alaska's relationship with Norway is particularly important—as is the collaborative work that can be done between our universities—as the United States is now Chair of the Arctic Council.

In June, two of our signature, nationally known conferences take place: the Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference held in Homer, June 12-16, hosted by Kenai Peninsula College's Kachemak Bay Campus and the Last Frontier Theatre Conference, June 14-20, hosted by Prince William Sound Community College. Both events show how UAA's community campuses serve not only Alaskans, but also draw participants from the Lower 48 and around the globe.

The Engineering and Industry Building (EIB) continues to "fill out" as we work toward an on-time fall opening. Work on the EIB garage has resumed, and the skybridge linking the EIB and the Health Sciences Building is nearing completion. Please save the date for a Sept. 10 grand-opening event.

Though we've been working through many of the challenges a reduced state budget presents, there are still so many amazing things happening at UAA. I'm proud to share some of them with you here.

Thank you for your continued support and all you do for UAA.

Sincerely,

Tom Case, Chancellor



Julia O'Malley, a well-known independent journalist with deep roots in Anchorage, will serve as the University of Alaska Anchorage's 21st Atwood Chair of Journalism. "Julia will be a great addition to the program given her professional experience and sense of community," said John Stalvey, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "We are excited to have her join us at UAA."

Within UAA's Department of Journalism and Communication, O'Malley will engage students in digital journalism and entrepreneurial mass communications, which she practices as a freelance reporter and writer. She will teach the introductory reporting course, Reporting and Writing News, and a course about Alaska food journalism that uses cuisine as a gateway into larger stories about the state's changing culture and climate. Before becoming a freelancer, O'Malley wrote a popular column about Alaska life and politics for the Anchorage Daily News from 2009-2014. Her work has appeared in Al Jazeera America, the Oregonian and PBS.org, among others.



Dr. Paul Deputy joined UAA on April 14 as interim dean for the College of Education, succeeding Heather Ryan. Dr. Deputy most recently served as dean of the College of Education and Human Service Professions at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Dr. Fred Barlow will become UAA's new College of Engineering dean July 15. Dr. Barlow comes to UAA from the University of Idaho, where he served as a professor and director of the University of Idaho's Next Generation Microelectronics Research Center.



UAA Shaping Alaska's Future

In May, NPR broadcast a segment about UAA's research into whether providing pregnancy test dispensers along with warning posters in bar bathrooms is more effective at preventing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder than simply displaying the posters by themselves. The segment quoted David Driscoll, director of UAA's Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, who is running the study. Advocates say the \$400,000 study could reap huge benefits, saving the state millions of dollars it could spend on healthcare, education and social services for a person with FASD over the course of his or her lifetime.



Two members of the Oxford University debate team, ranked number two in the world, visited Anchorage to compete against members of the UAA Seawolf Debate team, ranked 17th. Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/qhkoul4>.

BP donated a total of \$150,000 to sponsor five students to attend ANSEP Summer Bridge and to support the UAA Summer Engineering Academies. The Bridge program is a college and career visioning opportunity. Students will enroll in a college math course and work a paid summer internship in the engineering or science field with one of the ANSEP Strategic Partners. The Summer Engineering Academies offer a series of week-long hands-on instructional sessions designed to encourage STEM interests and exposure for students entering grades 5 through 12.



UAA's Dr. Kathryn Ohle won the 2015 Selkregg Award. She plans to use the \$5,000 award to support her efforts to enhance early literacy and Alaska Native language preservation. Ohle collaborated with Unite for Literacy to provide Cup'ik language translations of 13 children's books that families and teachers can access, for free, via the organization's website.



UAA's Justice for Fraud Victims Project has investigated 13 cases and identified \$1,444,460 in alleged embezzlements since starting its work at UAA nearly four years ago, said Soren Orley, the UAA College of Business & Public Policy professor who helped launch UAA's program.

Cody Thomas, a UAA track and field runner from Blenheim, New Zealand, received this year's Bill MacKay Athlete of the Year Award for 2014-2015. Eleven student-athletes representing all 13 of UAA's intercollegiate sports had been nominated for the award. Other nominees were Sean Alexander, Karolin Anders, Henry Cheseto, Amy Johnston, Mackenzie Kanady, Olivier Mantha, M'rcy Matsunami, Megan Mullings, Thomas, Travis Thompson and Katelynn Zanders.



Former two-time Alaska Player of the Year Keiahna Engel told the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame blog that she is transferring from Division I Boise State and will play her final season of college basketball for UAA's Division II women's basketball powerhouse.

The recent second-annual UAA Faculty Showcase celebrated the university faculty's varied research, innovation and creative accomplishments, giving them an opportunity to take part in a poster fair and deliver presentations, lectures, demonstrations and performances.

Xavier Mason was the student speaker at the Spring 2015 Commencement ceremony May 3. Mason is a Truman Scholar Finalist graduating with a bachelor's degree in management and marketing. He is a UAA College of Business & Public Policy Leadership Fellow with a passion for social entrepreneurship, a founding father of the Tau Kappa Epsilon chapter at UAA, president of the NAACP Youth Council, board member of the Chessed Alaska religious nonprofit in Anchorage and membership committee member of the Alaska World Affairs Council.



Mark Alday, Sarah Cain, Daniel Quinlan, Kolaiah Baker and Anna Hamre won Alaska Heart Institute grants. Alday studied interferon responses in HIV latency; Cain researched the effects of antibiotics and diet on body composition of arctic ground squirrels; Quinlan investigated the anti-inflammatory properties of Labrador tea extract in a certain type of white blood cell that cleans bacteria and other cellular debris from the body, and Baker and Hamre advanced the design of an ergonomic wireless mouthguard-helmet that will be used to study impacts that cause concussions in athletes.



Cyrus Mogadam won the Dr. Alex Hills Engineering Research Award for his design and fabrication of a masonry heater specifically for use in rural Alaska.