



Dear Board of Regents,

It has been an exciting fall at UAA. We opened the doors to the new Alaska Airlines Center (AAC) in September, and thousands of people joined us on campus for one or more of the many public events that took place there in celebration of its grand opening. The AAC already hosted concerts by the Grammy-nominated Alabama Shakes and the multi-award-winning country artist, Tim McGraw. We've seen record-setting crowds attending our volleyball games, averaging more than 1,000 people in attendance. Also, young athletes from around the state competed in the AAC for the first time when we hosted the Alaska School Activities Association/First National Bank Alaska 2014 3A/4A State Volleyball Championships. The community even got to enjoy a truly unique modern-day experience when we hosted an outdoor drive-in movie screening of *Jurassic Park*. The AAC is turning out to be a very popular and important venue for both the campus and the Alaska community.

In October, we had a visit with peer evaluators from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) as part of our mid-cycle, seven-year accreditation process. We received positive feedback from the evaluators who shared excellent observations on our progress toward our seven-year comprehensive review.

The program prioritization effort continues to move forward, and it becomes increasingly more important as we need to make difficult but informed decisions about both our academic programs and administrative functions. I, along with my Cabinet, have been gathering additional information, analyzing and discussing the prioritization task forces' recommendations, and will make final decisions in December, communicate those in January, with the goal of implementation during the Spring semester.

Even amid the stress of uncertain budgets and upcoming finals, the UAA community is energized and doing incredible work. In November, we celebrated Alaska Native Heritage Month, Veterans Day, the 10th anniversary of the Foucault Pendulum in the UAA/APU Consortium Library and the 15th anniversary of Recruiting and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing (RRANN) program. As always, there are many amazing stories being written at UAA every day; I'm so pleased to share some of them with you today.

Best regards,

Tom Case, Chancellor

Alabama Shakes rocked out the new Alaska Airlines Center. The sound was great at the first concert, the audience loved the show and Anchorage now has a new "must-go-to" destination.

Championship bound

Our No. 2-seeded Seawolf women's volleyball team is headed to the NCAA Division II Volleyball Championships for the fifth time in six seasons. We are looking forward to hosting the first GCI Great Alaska Shootout in the new AAC over the Thanksgiving weekend.



Leadership transition

UAA welcomes Dr. Sam Gingerich to the leadership team on Dec. 1. Dr. Gingerich will work closely with Provost Bear Baker until Dec. 31, when Bear formally retires from UAA. During the month of December, Dr.

Gingerich will have an opportunity to learn UAA processes, get up to speed on critical projects in the Provost's Office and at UAA, and will be able to meet with deans, directors, faculty and other staff with whom he will work closely as interim provost.

Law degrees at UAA

UAA signed an MOU with the University of Washington School of Law on a 3+3 program for students that will allow qualified UAA students the opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree and law degree on an accelerated schedule, typically in six years rather than the usual seven. This program will be known as the UAA-Washington Law Accelerated Admission Program.



UAA Shaping Alaska's Future

Student achievement and success

UAA junior gymnast Simone Penker represented her native Austria earlier this month at the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Nanning, China. Penker competed in three events as she became the first Seawolf gymnast ever to appear at Worlds.

Partnerships with K-12

The Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) is expanding its Middle School Academy by 650 more students each year for the next three years, with support from a \$1 million pledge from Alaska Airlines to transport sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students from around the state to Anchorage.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly voted unanimously to accept \$463,100 in state funding to extend the paved pedestrian path from K-Beach Elementary School to Kenai Peninsula College's Kenai River Campus.

Public and private partnerships

The sixth-annual Women in Law Enforcement Recruitment Fair sponsored by the Women Police of Alaska (WPA) was held Oct. 22 at the UAA Student Union, and attracted numerous UAA students interested in law enforcement career opportunities.

Students in the Introduction to Civic Engagement class have partnered with the campus Subway store to reduce the number of plastic bags used and discarded as sandwich packaging. Thanks to this partnership, UAA Subway store will now only provide plastic bags to those who ask for one.

UAA alumni and friends raised more than \$80,000 in student scholarship funds at this year's 2014 Green & Gold Gala.

Research supporting Alaska

UAA is a partner in an NIH-funded Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD) collaborative that received an award of nearly \$31 million to develop new approaches that engage researchers, including those from backgrounds underrepresented in biomedical sciences, and prepare them to thrive in the NIH-funded workforce.

Science Nation, a video series commissioned by the National Science Foundation, highlights the research of physiology ecologist and postdoctoral fellow Cory Williams and other scientists from UAA, UAF and Michigan State. The video, "The Arctic ground squirrel sheds light on circadian rhythms," is being distributed throughout the world as part of this series.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently awarded more than \$4 million to the University of Colorado-Boulder to establish and lead the Design of Risk Reducing, Innovative Implementable Small System Knowledge (DeRISK) Center with UAA, Arizona State University, University of New Hampshire and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership. The Center will develop and test advanced, low-cost methods of reducing, controlling and eliminating water contaminants that present challenges to communities worldwide.

UAA's Center for Alaska Education Policy Research (CAEPR) has been contracted to develop a proposal for the Alaska Department of Administration that addresses compensation and benefits issues affecting Alaska's teachers, principals and school staff. The proposal will include base compensation schedules for teachers and principals, geographic cost differentials and information on different benefits that districts offer to employees. CAEPR will also explore the purpose and value of tenure, alternatives to the current structure in Alaska and the value of tenure to teachers, including how it affects the teacher labor market.

Dr. Troy Payne, Justice faculty, and Dr. Donna Aguiniga, School of Social Work faculty, have been awarded one of two College of Health grants for interdisciplinary research. Their research is titled "Space, place, and home: Mapping the social environment of Anchorage homeless populations."

Accountability to the state of Alaska

The Alaska Center for Rural Health/Alaska's AHEC signed the Alaska Forget Me Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families on Sept. 11. The agreement includes a coalition of agencies to better coordinate housing, education and health-related services for our service members, veterans and their families. AHEC's new director, Gloria Burnett, is the former dean of students at Ilisagvik College.

As a community service, the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center has converted hard copies of Alaska's uniform crime report publications from 1976 through 1999 into searchable PDF documents available on the AJSAC website: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/alaskajusticestatisticalanalysiscenter/ucr.cfm>.

The National Resource Center (NRC) for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Elders at UAA is one of three NRCs that received the 2015 Award for Excellence in Multicultural Aging from the American Society on Aging, the largest society on aging in the U.S. UAA shares the honor with its partners, the NRC for Native American Aging (University of North Dakota) and Ha Kupuna—NRC for Native Hawaiian Elders (University of Hawaii at Manoa).

UAA is one of 10 winners in the Arbor Day Foundation's "Celebrate Arbor Day" contest. UAA will receive \$500 toward the purchase of trees, two Tree Campus USA banners, five Tree Campus USA yard signs and 30 Tree Campus USA T-shirts and hats to be given away during our Arbor Day celebration in spring 2015.