

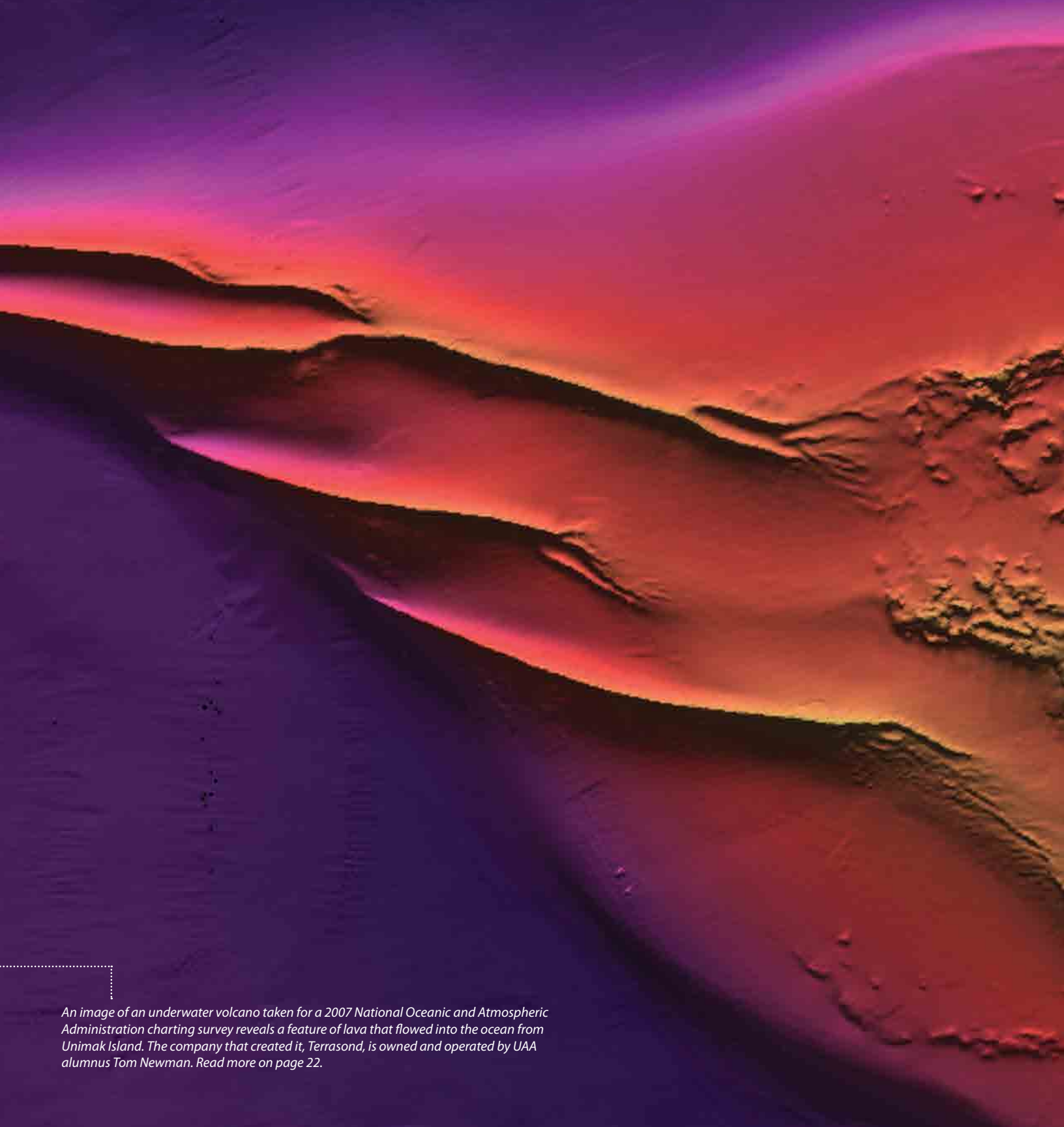


UAA

ALUMNISPIRIT

Fall 2014 • ISSUE 02

Alumni spotlights | Going green | Varsity Sports Grill



An image of an underwater volcano taken for a 2007 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration charting survey reveals a feature of lava that flowed into the ocean from Unimak Island. The company that created it, Terrasond, is owned and operated by UAA alumnus Tom Newman. Read more on page 22.



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ON THE COVER

Detail from "Assemblage and Inquiry," a Percent for Art piece gracing the remodeled Natural Sciences Building with a tiled landscape of science imagery. Created by UAA alumna Amy Baur, B.F.A. '04 and her husband, Brian Boldon.

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Amy Baur, B.F.A. '04 and Brian Boldon pose with their ceramic tile art installation in the Natural Sciences Building.

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to another *UAA Alumni Spirit* magazine; we're so glad to see you back!

On the cover, we share a detail from the new campus artwork, "Assemblage and Inquiry," created by UAA alumna Amy Baur (B.F.A. Photography '94) and her husband, Brian Boldon, a UAA ceramics program manager from 1990-95. Their Percent for Art piece graces the east approach to the walking spine over UAA Drive in the newly remodeled Natural Sciences Building.

This artwork tapped Baur's imagery and photography skills and Boldon's ceramics background. Using a process invented for Wedgwood china patterns, they printed Baur's design onto a gummed paper using electrostatic energy to transfer metal pigment. Next, they laminated over the top of the design, then fired tiles in a kiln, where heat melted the laminate and turned the pigment to glass.

A huge thank you to our alumni editorial advisory board, a group we tap for insight on what alumni would like to read. Updates on the greening of UAA and the campus climate for LGBT students are ideas that came from this group, along with campus "coming attractions" and hearing from alumni "in their own words." Thank you again to Löki Gale Tobin (B.A. Psychology and Sociology '06), J.R. Zufelt (Journalism and Public Communications student '01-'06) Cassidy Davis (B.A. Journalism and Public Communications '10) and Dan Carpenter (B.A. Journalism '05).

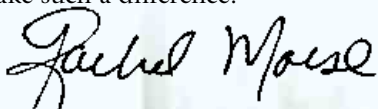
Kathleen J. McCoy

Kathleen McCoy, *Editor*

FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

As you read this magazine, UAA has settled into a wonderful new era: The stunning, community-focused Alaska Airlines Center is open and in full swing. This new home to Seawolf athletes and their fans played host to the UAA Alumni Association's fifth-annual Green & Gold Gala on Sept. 27—a black-tie affair with green and gold flair.

Champagne flutes clinked merrily as more than 450 alumni, dignitaries and community leaders gathered to celebrate. We proudly honored our distinguished alumni: Ted Trueblood, Cristy Hickel and Virginia Groeschel. Together, our alumni raised \$80,000 in scholarship funds (added to \$170,000 raised in the event's first four years). A very special thank you to our gala co-chairs Carrie Lindow, M.B.A. '04, M.S. '10 and Jennifer Thompson, B.A. '00. Your support, your communication and your commitment make such a difference.



Rachel Morse, M.B.A. '08
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Alumni Relations



FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Walking through the new Alaska Airlines Center is a thrill. It represents the most recent evidence of our drive to serve UAA students, athletes and fans, and our alumni.

But this building is also for the community we call home—Anchorage. As the state's largest public university, we welcome all our neighbors to campus for Seawolf sports, theater and music, lectures and discussions, use of the Consortium Library or a showing at the planetarium. Please come for a visit, often.

We continue to harness a strong future for UAA and for Alaska, illustrated by new health and engineering buildings, unwavering commitment to a diverse and respectful campus community, and the recent vigorous and joint staff and faculty analysis of how we can best meet our commitment to students and Alaska.

Times change. Resources fluctuate. Research draws us in new directions. But one standard remains unchanged: our UAA alumni. You and your achievements are the true legacy of UAA. You move us all forward; you make us proud.



Tom Case, *Chancellor*



DON'T MISS CALENDAR ITEMS



GCI GREAT ALASKA SHOOTOUT

Nov. 25–29 | Alaska Airlines Center
Come cheer for the Seawolves as they compete in the first Great Alaska Shootout at the new, 5,000-seat Alaska Airlines Center. Held every Thanksgiving in Anchorage since 1978, the Shootout is the longest-running regular-season college basketball tournament in the nation. This year's tourney starts with the women's first-round action Tuesday, Nov. 25, and concludes with the men's championship Saturday, Nov. 29. On the women's side, UAA will tackle Yale, Boise State and Long Beach State. The UAA men's team will go up against Colorado State, Mercer, Missouri, Pacific, Rice, UC–Santa Barbara and Washington State. **Tickets and a complete schedule are available at GoSeawolves.com.**

UAA CRAFTS FAIR

Saturday, Dec. 6, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. | Student Union

Shop for homemade gifts this holiday season! The annual, juried UAA Crafts Fair hosts more than 100 crafters selling their handmade products. The fair has a strong reputation for presenting high-quality, unique items made in Alaska. It's a great opportunity to speak directly with the artists while browsing through a wonderful array of items.

CLAY BODY POTTERY SALE

Friday, Dec. 12, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. | Gordon Hartlieb Hall, Room 108

Shop the Clay Body Fall Pottery Sale for ceramic wares thrown and crafted by UAA students. Funds from the sale support student artists in two key ways: each artist makes a profit on their work when it sells and a portion of all proceeds go toward a scholarship fund. This popular event tends to sell out fast—arrive early for the best selection.

UAA THEATRE PRESENTS "TWELFTH NIGHT, OR WHAT YOU WILL"

Nov. 21–Dec. 7 | Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 3 p.m. | UAA Mainstage Theatre

Tickets: \$18 general admission; UAAitx.com or (907) 786-4TIX

Mischievous servants pulling practical jokes, lovelorn ladies and salacious suitors, music, music and more music—and one of Shakespeare's most famous "corrupter of words" cavort in the romantic comedy, "Twelfth Night, or What You Will." Laugh along as Viola pines for the melancholy Duke Orsino, who has eyes for no one but the Lady Olivia, who in turn is besotted with his messenger boy "Cesario"—poor Viola in disguise! Be sure and join us for this giddy romp filled with mistaken identity and unrequited love.

UAA DANCE ENSEMBLE IN CONCERT

Nov. 7–16 | Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 3 p.m. | Harper Studio Theatre

Tickets: \$15 general admission; UAAitx.com or (907) 786-4TIX
Baseball, butterflies, water and wind inspire acclaimed choreographers Katherine Kramer, Brian Jeffery and Becky Kendall in this collection of original dances celebrating the power and beauty of nature and change. Featuring the talents of UAA students and alumni, including the winning trio of the 2014 Big Feat Little Feet creative community challenge presented by Pulse Dance Company.

UAA CELEBRATES ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE MONTH "Share the Spirit" Celebration Wednesday, Nov. 5, 12–2 p.m. | Student Union, Cafeteria

Every November, Alaska Native Heritage Month celebrates Alaska Native and American Indian cultures, and brings people together to share traditions and contributions. The UAA festivities will kick off with this midday gathering featuring a luncheon, speakers and Alaska Native dance revue.

ALASKA NATIVE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Friday, Nov. 21, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. | Rasmuson Hall, Room 101

Come watch and learn as UAA undergraduate students present research, papers and other presentations on various topics in Alaska Native studies. For a complete list of events happening on campus and throughout the state, visit AlaskaNativeHeritageMonth.com.

Get your WOLFcard!

Whether you graduated last May or last millennium, all alumni are eligible for a free WOLFcard, as well as the benefits that come with it. Call ahead to the Office of Alumni Relations to verify your alumni status, then stop by either the Consortium Library on campus or the University Center at 3901 Old Seward Highway to pick up your WOLFcard. Benefits include:

- \$5 off UAA hockey games at the Sullivan Arena. You must appear in person at the Sullivan Arena ticket window with your valid alumni WOLFcard, one hour before game time. Advanced purchase tickets are full price.
- \$6 tickets on all athletic events at the Alaska Airlines Center. You must appear in person at the UAA ticket window with your valid alumni WOLFcard, one hour before the event.

• Bookstore: Show your valid alumni WOLFcard to receive 20 percent off clothing and general trade books, gift items and UAA insignia merchandise. Does not include: reference or text books, computers or related items. Does not include already discounted items.

- Use of the UAA/APU Consortium Library.
- Discounted fitness pass at the Alaska Airlines Center and Wells Fargo Sports Complex (including pool).
- UAA Concert Board events offer discounts during Homecoming.





UAA LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

THE WRITER AS JANITOR

Justin Herrmann is finding his way.

He steadfastly refuses to call himself a writer. “That time has not come yet,” he said over a beer at the Blue Fox.

Still, this 33-year-old, sitting there in a blue T-shirt and jeans, with a brown “Midnight Sun Brewing Co.” cap atop his casually kept hair and beard, has earned some serious bona fides as a writer.

Already he’s tackled a Master of Fine Arts degree in UAA’s low residency program and published a slim volume of 14 short stories with MadHat Press, named after one of his stories, “Highway One, Antarctica.”

No matter. His modesty persists: “It’s nice to have a book and individual pieces published here and there. But I have never thought of myself as a writer. I work in the janitorial field.”

You heard that right. Herrmann has made cleaning up after others his paycheck path through life. He’s worked four seasons at McMurdo Station in Antarctica (hence the book title) and today manages extensive janitorial operations for a nonprofit in Kotzebue—two weeks on, two weeks off. With one book down and a life partner and baby daughter in his nest, his life strategy seems to be working.

Along the way, Herrmann has gathered serious encouragement from writers who see promise in his work.

David Stevenson, director of UAA’s Department of Creative Writing and Literary Arts, says Herrmann knows his audience—millennials.

Nancy Lord, Alaska’s 2009 writer laureate who teaches in the program but was not Herrmann’s writing mentor, reviewed “Highway One, Antarctica,” for *Alaska Dispatch News* 9-28-14.

“What the individual stories have in common is young male narrators struggling to find purpose in life and to relate to others, especially women.

Always interesting, always surprising, often very funny, these characters are less pathetic than endearing.”

Writer Rich Chiappone, who also teaches in UAA’s program and mentored Herrmann, says: “One thing I really like about Justin’s prose is the self-effacement his narrators possess when recounting their own questionable actions and choices, with little of the self-pity or equivocating we sometimes find in minimalist stories like these. They just say, ‘Here’s what happened. Make of it what you will.’

“That takes courage in a writer.”

TALKING WITH JUSTIN HERRMANN

(Edited from a longer interview)

Where are you from?

I’ve lived a lot of places. I was born in Buffalo, New York. My mother was in the military, so we did a lot of moving around.

The M.F.A. program brought me up here for a little portion of summer, and I fell in love with Alaska and I fell in love with a young lady also in the program.

How did writing enter your life?

I graduated from high school in 1998, I started taking college classes, but I flunked out. But I’d come back and try again. I was taking political science and philosophy classes and we were writing a lot of essays. It was tough and I felt out of my element. So I looked through the course catalog to see what I might enjoy. I found creative writing. It wasn’t about critical thinking; it was about making (stuff) up.

I took one (creative writing) class and didn’t do so well. I took some more, and then got some encouragement from that university. It was Southern Illinois at Carbondale. I got an English degree there.

How did you become a janitor in Antarctica?

My first janitor job was as an undergrad. I worked overnight at Kmart. I liked it at the time, so I kept picking up other janitorial jobs. And eventually people said, ‘You are good at this. Do you want to supervise the other janitors?’

Later, when I started working at this terrible fun park in North Carolina, 50 hours a week of pizza and birthday parties, I thought ‘There’s no creativity in my life.’ Something like (UAA’s M.F.A. program) sounded creative. But shortly after I got accepted into it, I got the job in Antarctica. I loved both.

Between 2008 and 2012, I went four times to McMurdo Station for about six months at a time.

Now my life is here, our baby is 16 months old, I’m a dad. That’s going to keep me here for a while.

What was your first piece to be published?

One of the stories in the book, “Crayon Way Outside the Lines.”

I wrote it in an advanced fiction writing class in Carbondale. We had one-on-ones with the professors to go over stories we’d submitted. The professor said she thought the story was strong, and with some polishing, it could get published. And it was, but in a different form. It was the coolest feeling, even though it was an online journal that only about 10 people ever saw.



Justin Herrmann, 33, has made a living as a janitor, writing for pleasure along the way. He published a collection of short stories after finishing UAA’s low-residency M.F.A. program.



LGBT STUDENTS, STAFF, ALLIES REMINISCE ABOUT THEIR LIVES AT UAA

On a rainy June afternoon, a group of people gathered for a parade in downtown Anchorage. Their signs said they were gay and proud, but marchers all wore conspicuously unfestive brown paper bags or hoods over their heads.

In 1978, walking in that parade without a disguise opened the possibility of losing your job or home, getting attacked or even losing your life.

“One man says he was so severely beaten by his neighbors that he was hospitalized,” an *Alaska Advocate* story

explained of the marchers’ choice to cover their heads. “His car windshield was smashed and ‘queer’ was written on the side of the auto.”

Discrimination on sexual orientation still exists, even though same-sex couples may now legally marry in Alaska and UA’s Board of Regents added sexual orientation as a protected class to its nondiscrimination policy in 2011.

The culture of Anchorage and UAA has changed dramatically since that long-ago parade.

“I didn’t know a lot of students who were out,” said Annie Route, UAA’s director of Student Life and Leadership. “I remember having a videoconference in 1990 about being a gay or lesbian professional in higher education. I thought it might be a good way to open the conversation at UAA.”

Route printed fliers and put them up around campus.

“I got a couple of calls from people who said, ‘Why are you doing this? This is a state institution, what are you using our money for?’ But it was a topic we thought would be relevant.”

‘They were there with

In 1978, Anchorage residents who publicly marched for gay rights felt they needed to hide their faces to be safe. (Photo by Patricia Jelley.)



No more hiding

Melissa Green found a job in 1990 at the UAA Justice Center.

“I had decided I don’t want to live in a closet at my job, that I was going to have stuff in my résumé to indicate I was affiliated with LGBTQ [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning] stuff,” she said. “If sexual orientation was going to set them up against me, I was going to get that over with instead of hiding.”

It wasn’t a problem. “Those people were there for me when I fell in love with my partner, when we brought our child up to Alaska, when we had a horrendous breakup and when we came back together again. They were there with me all the way.”

‘Our voice is strong’

J.J. Harrier always felt he was different from other boys.

“I remember going to see *Star Wars* when I was 6 or 7 and thinking how handsome Han Solo was,” he said.

He came out at age 21, though he didn’t know other gays at the time. In 1993, the LGBTQ community existed at UAA and in small silos, and events like Gay Pride and the annual picnic were “sort of hidden,” Harrier said.

“I remember going to a rally against Jerry Prevo at UAA and meeting a crowd of activists my age,” he said. When Harrier first arrived at UAA, organizers executed a Pride and AIDS awareness march on campus.



me all the way

“I remember calling my mom thrilled to be a part of the energy,” he said. “Then Matthew Shepard [University of Wyoming student, 1998] got murdered and everyone felt vulnerable.”

The Family organized a candlelight vigil for Shepard. “Fifty people showed up, but it felt like 5,000,” he said.

A safer place to learn
Maria Bonifacio, UAA associate director and residence coordinator, grew UAA’s SafeZone to help LGBTQ students find acceptance. “What if a student is struggling and someone here at UAA could have made a difference?” she said.

Bonifacio’s partner, Dana Sample, also works at UAA. “Anchorage is not Portland or Seattle or San Francisco,” Bonifacio said. “I would not walk down the street holding my partner’s hand. But, I feel supported in the department I work in, the division I work in.”

The Regents’ 2011 decision improved the climate for LGBTQ students at UAA, she said. “A lot of the staff are more comfortable saying and being who they are, which wasn’t the case a few years ago,” Bonifacio said.

Becoming your own person
UAA’s LGBTQ students can find a home in The Family, which has elected officers, hosted a table at Campus Kick-Off and posts to Facebook. Its president, Edmar Carrillo, couldn’t find a thriving LGBTQ group when he arrived at UAA in 2011. “I had to find friends by other means, outside campus,” Carrillo said.

The Family didn’t attract him initially. Someone at UAA Residence Life suggested Carrillo give The Family another look. “I took the lead this summer, trying to get it revived,” he said. “We’re excited. Seeing an LGBTQ club on campus helps others know they’re not alone.”

Edmar Carrillo redesigned the logo for The Family, an organization for LGBTQ students at UAA. Carrillo is this year’s president. Below, from top, Dana Sample and her partner, Maria Bonifacio; Mel Green; J.J. Harrier (left).



Think

*THE LONGER EBOLA STAYS IN GLOBAL HEADLINES,
THE MORE INTERESTING ALASKA BATS BECOME.*



Like a Bat

That's because bat meat consumed by West African hunters likely created the unfortunate bridge for Ebola to enter a human host, spread to others and wreak medical chaos.

So what's the connection? Yes, Alaska has bats. No, Alaska bats don't carry Ebola. But they DO carry viruses potentially harmful to humans, like rabies; over several years, three cases of bats infected with rabies have occurred in Alaska, all in Southeast.

So the connection is this: As in Africa's fruit bats, nasty viruses in Alaska's little brown bats don't make the bats sick. They don't seem to catch what they carry. That right there is a scientific puzzle; scientists would like to understand much more about the bat immune system.

Importantly, our bats are social. They tend to live near humans in old barns, abandoned buildings and house attics and eaves. If they ever *did* carry a virus that Alaskans could catch, bats' comfortable proximity to people could be a concern.

But fear of disease transmission is not the only driver in this quest. Two ongoing threats—large numbers of wind turbine collisions between bats and blades, and a powdery white fungus

that so disturbs hibernation that bats starve to death—are drawing national scientific attention.

A few years ago, White Nose Syndrome (WNS) began walloping bat populations from New York south to Mississippi and Missouri and north to Canada. Nearly seven million bats have died since 2007.

A total of 11 bat species are disrupted by WNS, but the little brown bat, Alaska's most populous, has suffered a

major collapse in the Lower 48. Some scientists liken it to the “colony collapse disorder” seen in honeybee populations, or a fungal invader causing global declines in amphibian populations. So far, Alaska's bats don't have it.

Bats also do important work humans don't want to live without. Besides showing up as classic Halloween characters, they pollinate crops and consume hordes of insects. Those two activities amount to an economic benefit in North America of \$4 billion.



Additional photos by Veronica Padua/ADP&G



Suddenly, everybody wants to know everything about bats. And what we don't know in Alaska is plenty: their population density, whether and where they migrate, and what infectious load they carry.

That knowledge gap has catalyzed a large-scale partnership among university and government biologists across the state, led by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Besides UAA and UAF, other collaborators include Chugach National Forest, National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and large land managers like the Department of Defense, with bases and training grounds scattered throughout the state.

Beneath the new joint information-gathering endeavor is an important question: Could bats in Alaska need protection?

Of all the bats affected in the Lower 48 and Canada, the little brown bat has had a 90-100 percent mortality rate at infected winter colonies Outside. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is evaluating which bats should be considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Bats? What bats?

Alaska's little brown bats (*Myotis lusifugus*) have been flying under the radar for some time. Researchers say typical inquiries over the past decade varied from "Hey, I've got a bat in my eaves! What do I do?" to "We don't actually have bats in Alaska, do we?"

So far, no Alaska bats have presented with WNS. But depending on migratory patterns, could Lower 48 bats bring it up here? Could our bats return with it? Or could Alaska be the last safe refuge for the little brown bat?

UAA researchers like ecologist Douglas Causey and microbiologist Megan Howard, along with graduate students Jessica Faust, Veronica Padula and recent grad Nicki Bortz have all been a part of the team gathering information on Alaska's bats.

They've partnered with wildlife biologist Jessica Ilse of the Chugach Forest Service, Dave Tessler and Marian Snively of the ADF&G and Jesika Reimer of the Alaska Natural Heritage Program.

As stewards of the state's resources, university and agency biologists want to know more. Back in 2004, ADF&G's Tessler and Snively launched a citizen-science endeavor called the Alaska Bat Monitoring Project. With help from the eyes and ears of the general public, scientists hoped to gather details on the distribution, habitat use and seasonal ecology of Alaska's little brown bats.

Through 2012, reports have detailed 252 unique locations for bats in Southcentral and Western Alaska. Kotzebue and White Mountain are the northernmost locations, and the Semidi Islands in the Gulf of Alaska are the southernmost.

The hunt for information continues. All this past summer and fall, partnering research biologists and students sought out bats from Talkeetna to the Kenai through acoustic recordings of their calls. They also hoisted 30-foot-tall soft mesh nets at dusk to catch bats. Using a special Q-tip-like device, they swabbed skin surface and orifices to collect bat cells and take tissue samples. Researchers released the bats after about 10 minutes; cell samples are now frozen for further study.

UAA's Howard, a coronavirus expert schooled in the SARS outbreak of 2002, along with student research assistants, stand ready to analyze bat samples to understand—at a molecular level—what viruses Alaska bats are carrying and perhaps how their immune system evades them.

On the ground at Potter Marsh

It was 10 p.m. on a clear and calm August night along a grassy strip behind Potter Marsh, the migratory bird rest stop along Turnagain Arm. Insects abound here, so hungry bats were likely.

The steady thrum of tires on the Seward Highway drifted over as biologists and students set up for a bat night, conscious that a black bear was lurking nearby in the woods.

They positioned their tall mesh nets at either end of a long, grassy former airstrip leading toward the marsh. “When you check the nets, go in pairs,” one of the biologists advised. With lawn chairs and jackets, biologists and students settled in for a night of bat listening and catching. Rounds of a trivia game off a smartphone amused the cluster of observers as the sky grew dark.

Jessica Faust sat in one lawn chair staring into an iPhone screen. Alaska-born, she'd chosen UAA for grad school after learning of the bat project. A small black “bat detector” (\$150, Apple Store) had transformed her screen into an acoustic display. Colorful blips meant bats were around; she was seeing a few.

But as the night sky dimmed, little brown bats avoided the nets and that curious bear moved on. Biologists passed the time trading bat research stories (vampire bats can run on a treadmill—check it out on YouTube!).

Their greatest success had come finding bats near old barns and abandoned buildings. The marsh's insects seemed like a good draw, but not this time. “We're just trying to think like a bat,” Doug Causey said.



VIDEO TOUR OF THE ENGINEERING BUILDING

Progress on the new engineering building is chugging along on Providence Drive. Mike Fierro B.S. '89, M.S. '91—the project's lead structural engineer—took the time to show off the facilities where engineering students will bend, break, freeze and smash their homework when the building opens next fall. Watch the tour at tinyurl.com/EngineeringTour

ALUMNI CHAPTER UPDATE

It's been busy at the alumni office with four new alumni chapters launching since the last issue, including...

- Alaska Native Alumni chapter
- Mat-Su Area chapter
- Pacific Northwest chapter
- UAA Veteran Alumni chapter

Want to get involved in a current chapter? Interested in starting a group to match your own area or interests? Contact the alumni center to see how you can get involved with the growing UAA Alumni Association.

Office of Alumni Relations

Call: (907) 786-1942

Email: alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu

Connect: [Facebook.com/AlumniUAA](https://www.facebook.com/AlumniUAA)

GREEN & GOLD GALA

The 2014 Green & Gold Gala was a record-setting success. This year's event—held on campus for the first time—was the most well attended to date, and raised \$80,000 for the UAA Alumni Scholarship fund. This year's Alumni of Distinction recipients were:

- Alumni of Achievement: Ted Trueblood, M.S.'80
- Alumni Humanitarian: Cristy Hickel, B.Ed.'86, M.S.'89
- Alumni Emerging Leader: Virginia Groeschel, B.S.'06

Go online to read more and see photos from the black-tie affair (with green and gold flair) at tinyurl.com/GalaRecap.

ATHLETICS ALUMNI CHAPTER HOSTS REUNION

The athletics alumni reunion was a rip-roaring success—one Hall of Famer even drove up from Mexico with a fresh Seawolf logo tattooed on her leg. The September event—organized by the Seawolf Athlete alumni chapter—brought athletes and coaches from the past several decades back to campus for the grand opening of the Alaska Airlines Center. The weekend included campus tours, happy hours, barbecues and more. Now it's your turn! Come back and experience the new arena as the Seawolves kick off the next era of athletics at UAA.

The Seawolf Athlete alumni reunion outside of the new Alaska Airlines Center.



More than just recycling, sustainability is a commitment to the long-term health and vitality of economic, ecological and social systems for future generations. UAA strives to build and maintain a sustainable model for a Northern university and its community through research, action and collaboration. Students, staff, faculty and alumni all play a significant role in creating a greener UAA.

GOING GREEN



Meet the Spring 2014 members of the Green Fee Board. UAA students pay \$3 per semester (the “green fee”) toward the Green Fee Fund. Students who pay the fee are eligible to use those funds for projects that further sustainability in the university community. Approved projects so far include: seasonal bike share program, movie screening and discussion, recycling competitions in residence halls, replacing dishes and silverware for the Daily Den with all recyclable or compostable products and a comprehensive energy study of the Spine.



Walk through campus today and it’s hard not to notice all the new construction happening. Less obvious is the amount of work going into older campus buildings. Take note though: Recent renovations (better heat and air ventilation systems, upgrades for efficient electricity and water usage, to name a few) have greatly reduced the footprint of longstanding buildings such as the Natural Sciences Building, Beatrice McDonald Hall and Wendy Williamson Auditorium. A renovated lab in the Natural Sciences Building is furnished with recycled benches and cabinets.



If you had a car as a student, you might remember what it was like trying to go from East Campus to West Campus in fewer than 15 minutes, lest you be late for class. Lots of traffic, few prime parking spots. Now, thanks to the student-driven Green & Gold Bike Share Program, members of the campus community can check out cruiser bikes (late spring through early fall) to traverse campus without wasting all that gas.



New light bulbs in the Wendy Williamson Auditorium cut down the lighting wattage by 67 percent. The old 1970s-era bulbs in place before used 70,000 watts when lit. Now, the combination of fluorescent and LED lighting uses just above 20,000 watts.

To read more about UAA’s ongoing green initiatives, visit <http://tinyurl.com/UAA-Green>



How does a grilled chicken sandwich with melty Brie, crisp bacon and lettuce, juicy tomatoes, fresh basil and avocado on a toasty brioche roll sound (\$12.95)? Mouthwatering, right? Or, maybe you're leaning vegetarian and in the mood for the Stilton and Fig Pizza (\$10.95), with house-made fig jam, caramelized onions, Stilton cheese, toasted pine nuts and rosemary. Yes, please. Oh, and you should probably pair that with a local craft beer or a nice glass of wine. After all, you want to relax while you take in the court-side view from the newest U-Med District restaurant.

Chef Matt Little Dog, area chef for NANA Management Services (NMS), who's worked in the restaurant industry for more than 30 years, has settled on fresh and tempting lunch and dinner menus. He was excited to invite Anchorage to try his creations when they opened the doors to Varsity Sports Grill in mid-October.

CHEF MATT LITTLE DOG BRINGS HIS A-GAME TO VARSITY SPORTS GRILL



Chef Matt sees Varsity Sports Grill as a mix of local eateries: "It's a combination of Bear Tooth, Simon's and maybe Muse, possibly Glacier Brewhouse, too, with the pizza."



SEAFOOD WITH A VIEW

Original plans for the Alaska Airlines Center at UAA called for on-site catering facilities, but in an evolution of good ideas, that idea evolved into a dine-in restaurant serving lunch six days a week and dinner five evenings a week, year-round.

The restaurant can seat about 100 people inside where full-length windows look down onto the performance arena below. Diners can also watch the action on flat-screen TVs while they enjoy their Kenai Smoked Chicken Pot Pie (\$12.95) and a Seawolf Green & Gold Salad (\$5.95). The patio, which will be generously stocked with heaters and open as our Alaska seasons allow, from early spring to late fall, offers a great view of the Chugach Mountains with your dinner of Seward Citrus Soy Glazed Salmon (\$23.95) or the Homer Alaskan Amber Battered Cod & Fries (\$15.95).

The menu is a great blend—everything from a Spicy Smoked Tomato Buttermilk Shrimp appetizer (\$9.95 and delicious... we got a sneak preview) to hamburgers, salads, pizzas, seafood and steak—try the Gaucho Rubbed Ribeye Steak with Chocolate Demi-Glace (\$33.95).



BLENDING STYLES

Don't forget to leave room for dessert, too. Chef Matt is still tinkering with the dessert options, but chances are good you'll be able to enjoy some Berry Bread Pudding with Sabayon Sauce (\$7.95) or a slice of Salted Caramel Peanut Butter Pie (\$6.95).

A LIFETIME IN THE KITCHEN

If you'd like to know a little more about the man behind the menu, he's happy to tell you that he loves working with food. His specialty is making things run smoothly and consistently, which is good news for the soon-to-be regular visitors from UAA and Providence as well as community visitors in a hurry to grab a bite before a concert or a game.

"I began in this industry with my family," he said. "My grandparents and parents all owned restaurants and I grew up in the business."

At first, he said, working in the family restaurant was an obligation with the mom-and-dad directive, "You're part of this family, so you'll help out." But then something unexpected happened. He began to enjoy himself.

"I started baking when I was 10. I started getting paid when I was 11," he said. And he also found inspiration working beside his chef grandpa and New York's Culinary Institute of America-trained uncle.

Chef Matt has had 17 years to learn what Alaskans love, helping the kitchens at both Simon & Seafort's and Muse.

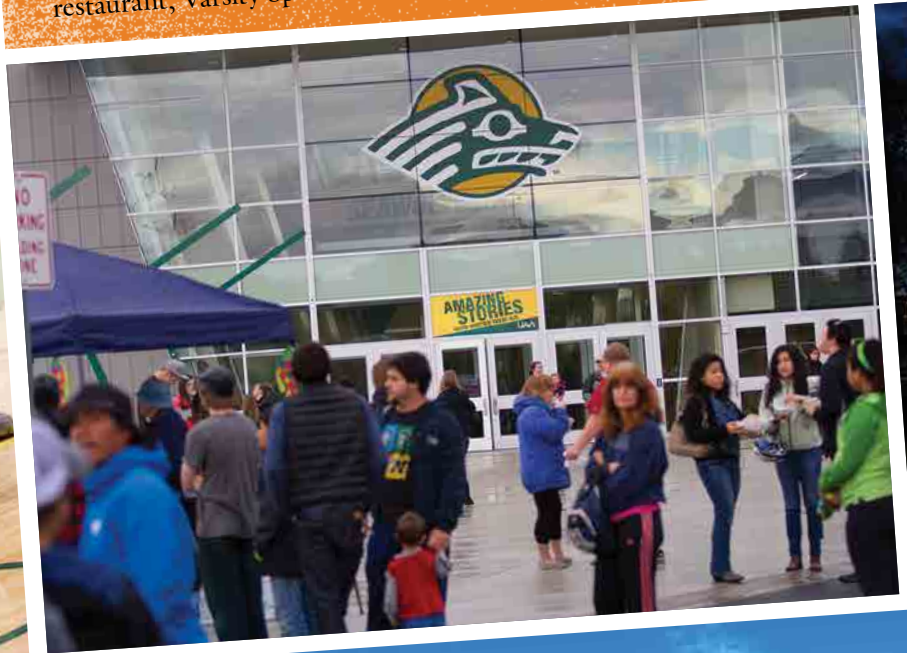
He's designed the Varsity Sports Grill menus with an eye toward U-Med regulars interested in fresh and healthy options, as well as visitors from around the state gathered for athletic events and looking to enjoy a night out with friends.

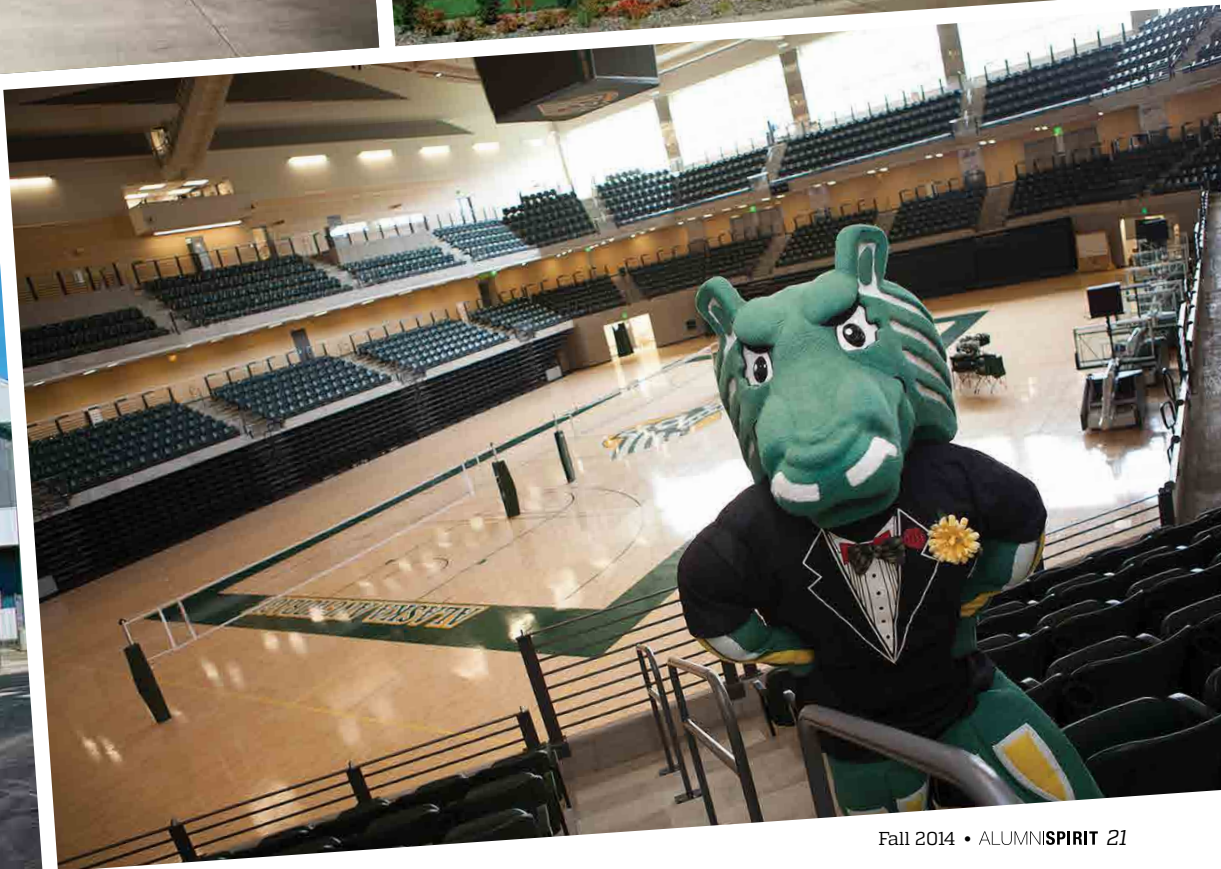
Alumni, consider this your invitation to come on over and raise a glass to your health and the health of your Seawolf colleagues. And if you need to let loose a Seawolf Howl, Chef Matt and the waitstaff will understand.

The Varsity Sports Grill is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Monday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and closed to the public on Sundays, but available for private dining events. Parking is complimentary for restaurant patrons.

COME ON IN... TO THE NEW ALASKA AIRLINES CENTER

UAA Seawolves cut the ribbon on their newest campus and community asset in early September. Home to sports competitions, concerts and community events, this facility features a 5,000-seat arena, an 800-seat auxiliary gym, a state-of-the-art sports medicine suite and a public indoor walking track. But there's more: Try out the new beer and wine restaurant, Varsity Sports Grill, with a bird's-eye view of the sports action.





TOM NEWMAN ON STARTING A COMPANY: IF YOU NEED A REGULAR PAYCHECK, DON'T GIVE UP THE DAY JOB



Tom Newman founded TerraSond, a hydrographic, land and marine geophysical surveying and mapping company based in Palmer. TerraSond employs 60 people—35 in Alaska—operates offices in Alaska, Texas, Washington state, Brazil, Mexico and Central Africa and has worked in 19 countries.

“ I started in the engineering department at UAA but transferred to surveying because I wanted to work outside—the last thing I wanted to do was sit at a desk. I completed an AAS—all that was available at the time—and went to work for a local survey company. Five years later, I returned to school to get the new bachelor’s degree in surveying available through UAA. I went away to get my M.B.A., at the University of Washington. Now, to give back to UAA, I support the Department of Geomatics by acting as chair of the Geomatics Advisory Board.

I ended up at an engineering company in Anchorage as part of the hydrography department and felt a little stifled. One other employee and a partner in that firm founded

TerraSond with me in 1994. We left with the equipment we needed and started. We were three partners, no employees and some credit cards. Definitely not for the faint of heart!

TerraSond was started in Palmer since all three founders lived in the Valley and shop space was available. Our commutes dropped from two hours a day to fewer than 30 minutes, but our work weeks went from 50 hours to 80-plus hours. Along the way, the other two partners retired; I now run the company.

Engineers and surveyors need each other, but it’s a different business model. Surveying’s more of an equipment sport—you need lots of equipment. Engineers spend their money on people. A successful engineering company’s one with lots of cubicles, with lots of people sitting in them doing engineering. Besides the cubicles, they might each have \$10,000 worth of software. We might send out a crew of three people and they’ll have \$1 million worth of equipment in the field.

A third of our work is for the government. Our largest and longest contract is with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which has given us contracts and work for the last 17 years straight. We help collect data to bring their nautical charts up to date.

A third of our work is for oil companies, assessing the condition of pipelines and power cables, getting the data so they can design or remove them. We’ve positioned some of the jackup platforms in Cook Inlet, looking under the seafloor to make sure they don’t run into shallow gas, make sure they can navigate safely.

A third of our work is for construction or engineering. We have three dredging projects we’re working on now. The client is the dredger; we make sure they know the area they’re dredging, by doing surveys before and after.

When we started, we could have certainly used some deeper pockets behind us, but the fact that we could work almost for free for the first year and had already lined up clients really allowed the firm to get on its feet. My advice to anyone hoping to start a business is to ensure you have the resources necessary to make a go of it. If you need a regular paycheck to make ends meet, don’t quit your day job!”

SOPHIE MINICH: LIVE YOUR TRADITIONS AND THRIVE

She graduated from UAA in 1989 with a degree in finance, and started her working life as an accountant at Cook Inlet Region Inc. Throughout her 20-year career at CIRI, Sophie worked in almost every division of the company and was encouraged by her mentor and friend Carl Marrs, CIRI's president and CEO from 1996-2004, who advised her to take hold of the opportunities presented to her in life. (Photo courtesy CIRI.)



“I am UAA! My name is Sophie Minich. My mother was Elizabeth Semple, originally from Fort Yukon. My grandmother was Sophie Semple. I am Athabascan and the youngest of 10 little Indians. Currently I have the honor and privilege of serving as the president and CEO of CIRI and I am the mother of two amazing children, Madisen and Henry J.

Coming from a large family and a small community (I grew up in Seward), I often reflect on what it is that made me who I am today. What is it that makes me want to be a leader—not just of CIRI, but of my community and of Alaska? What was it that compelled me to do the best I possibly could in college and complete my degree, without any assurance of the dream job I have today?

In part, it was my culture.

I lost my mother to lung cancer when I was 12. Despite that short time with her, she ensured the fabric of our lives was woven with threads of traditional values. My life is so enriched because of the values she lived by and passed on.

What makes this amazing is my mother was not always proud to be an Alaska Native. She lost her own mother to tuberculosis. Soon she was moved from Fort Yukon to the boarding school at Eklutna. There she learned her Athabascan language and way of life were no longer acceptable. She was punished when she spoke it and sadly became ashamed of being Alaska Native. She carried that shame with her for many years.

At the time the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed, our family lived in Wyoming. My mother remained in touch with Alaska to ensure that we were all enrolled when the time came. She said she didn't know where it all would lead, but it was important that we be involved.

What I have come to realize is that my mother lived her Athabascan values

daily. She routinely and with passion and commitment showed us the value of family, sharing, respect for our elders, respect for others, importance of diversity, humor, domestic skills, love for children and humility. She truly built the foundation of our family on these values.

If she were alive today, she would be a grandmother 19 times over and a great grandmother 25 times over. She would undoubtedly be proud and truly enjoy the laughter, teasing and stories shared during our family gatherings. She would embrace the diversity that exists among her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As her child, and as a business leader, I feel the responsibility to live by those values and protect them.

To my fellow alumni at UAA, stay engaged. Learn all you can from each other, your elders and leaders. Ask questions and participate. Respect yourself and others. Your involvement ensures our communities can draw strength from our traditional values and exist for generations.

Thank you for letting me honor my mother with this story. I do my best to live our traditional values and share them with my children. I would ask that each of you do the same.”

NICK ARMSTRONG-CREWS: WORK HARD, SET YOURSELF APART

Perhaps the world's foremost Alaska roboticist. Born in Nome and raised in Fairbanks, he was in the first UAA University Honors College graduating class, receiving three distinct B.S. degrees – computer science, mathematics and natural science. After UAA, he garnered a fellowship to the Carnegie Mellon Robotics Institute. He now works at MIT Lincoln Laboratory as a research scientist, where he designs “the smarts” to power ground robots and aerial drones for the Department of Defense.

“I’m a roboticist. In particular, I build intelligent machines in order to extend the capacity and capability of humanity. My research focus is robotic *perception*—making sense of sensor data—for such tasks as tracking robot position, recognizing objects and identifying people.

Many people think giving robots autonomy poses a real and near-term threat to the human race. Of course, people always fear what they don’t understand. But it takes teams of the world’s foremost scientists years of development to give a robot even a fraction of the capabilities of a human child at age 2—it’ll be a long while before we find Arnold Schwarzenegger traveling through time to warn us about Skynet. Plus, on all the robots I build, I always remember to include an off button.

To get here, I’ve lived as a ‘perpetual intern,’ completing nine total internships at IBM, NASA and Microsoft Research. Such diverse work experience has been exciting for me personally, and provided a strong foundation of practical skills. Each opportunity also allowed me to connect with preeminent researchers in the field. That kind of networking is key to any career.

I work hard to set myself apart, and I’ve been able to cultivate a personal brand that helps me stay memorable. Being from Alaska helps—seriously, I bring it up almost every time I meet someone. I have a number of visible piercings and tattoos and I wear a funny robot-related t-shirt every day, although my coworkers typically dress much more professionally. Although initially eyed with suspicion, the evident quality of my work and dedication helped bend the “crazy kid genius persona” in my favor.

I credit my success in large part to my time at UAA. The faculty gave personal attention unparalleled by other institutions I’ve since attended. I feel strongly about maintaining close ties with UAA and I’m working with the Alumni Association to form an Entrepreneur chapter.

My own entrepreneurship enterprise, Heuristic Labs, applies the same 3D perception techniques powering Department of Defense robots. By piggy-backing on the smartphone, a device with amazing capabilities that everyone tucks into their pockets, we hope to enable game-changing improvements in everyday life. After a crowd-funding campaign, we’re now actively seeking venture capital.

Wherever I end up, Alaska will always remain my home and I hope one day to return permanently. I left for grad school only because Alaska provided limited opportunities in the emerging field of robotics; I hope that changes in the future, and I hope I can help.”



Robotist Nick Armstrong-Crews describes to a colleague how the inertial sensors of the Cheetah robot give it a sense of balance. (Photo courtesy Nick Armstrong-Crews, MIT Lincoln Lab)

CLASS NOTES

This page of alumni updates was compiled by Joey Besl of the UAA Office of Alumni Relations. Please share your moments of pride and achievement via the link at the bottom of this page, so we can note your success in an upcoming issue.



1981

Robert Wedemeier, B.A. History, writes "I retired in 2005 after 42 years of federal employment and in 2011 I moved to a sleepy little town of Santa Clara, N.M. Although retired I still felt the need to be of service to the community in which I live. So in May of this year I applied to become the alternative municipal court judge... Not saving the world, but working local issues. My point is, you are never too old to be of service."

1995

Andrea Story, B.B.A. Marketing, is Vice President of marketing and business development at R&M Consultants Inc. She served as president of the Society for Marketing Professionals chapter in Alaska and won chapter president of the year honors at this year's SMPS nationwide conference in San Antonio in July.

1996

Doreen Schenkenberger, B.B.A. Management, is owner and managing member of R&D, LLC. She also volunteers in therapeutic courts and sits on the board of directors at Partners for Progress, a nonprofit organization providing support to former offenders as they make positive, successful transitions after incarceration. She is a Peer2Peer facilitator and coach/mentor for recovery groups through Partners Reentry Center and the Alaska Therapeutic Court Alumni Group. "I really love being part of building a healthy community, contributing to our economy and our great state," she writes. "I'm proud to be an Alaskan and a UAA alum."

2003

Michael Howarth, M.F.A. Creative Writing, is currently an associate professor of English at

Missouri Southern State University, where he teaches youth literature and film studies and directs the honors program. He recently published a critical text on children's literature titled *Under the Bed, Creeping: Psychoanalyzing the Gothic in Children's Literature*.

2003

Cindy Sena-Martinez, B.A. Psychology '03, earned a doctorate in psychology in 2012. She is currently employed by the United States Air Force as an education specialist and also serves as an online course facilitator for the University of Dayton. She is recording her sixth CD of therapeutic music, and presents on healing music across the country alongside her husband.

2006

Justin Helms, B.S. Aviation Technology M.P.A. '08, served the FAA as an air traffic controller in

Wilmington, N.C. from 2007 to 2009 and has served the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency since 2009. He recently graduated from law school at St. Louis University.

2006

After graduation, Ryan Jager, B.A. Economics and Political Science, worked as a campaign manager and legislative aide in Juneau. He then earned a J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law in 2013, while his wife, Summer Engler (B.S. Biological Sciences '07), earned her M.D. from UW through the WWAMI program in 2012. They live in Seattle with their Pembroke Welsh corgi, Baxter.

2008

Khristy Parker, B.A. Justice, earned an M.P.A. with a criminal justice emphasis from UAA in 2013. She joined the UAA Justice Center last year as a

research professional with the Alaska Justice Statistical Analysis Center (AJSAC).

2012

Erick Romig received a Jefferson Fellowship from the University of Virginia. He is one of 17 recipients this year, selected after a three-day competition alongside other nominees. This highly selective fellowship covers the full cost of attending UVA where he is pursuing a Ph. D. in Spanish Literature.

2013

Alex Pierce, B.A. Music Performance, founded the UAA Glee Club in 2010. Now based in Los Angeles, he recently returned to Anchorage as part of the touring company of *Les Misérables*, which performed 12 shows at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts in October.



SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE

Do you have some news to share?
Your UAA family wants to know.
Submit your news online at this link:
<http://tinyurl.com/UAA-ClassNotes>

UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

You can get connected with UAA Alumni!
Update your information at
<http://tinyurl.com/UAA-Update> so we can
let you know about upcoming events.





UAA alumnus Gabe Harvey, adjunct dance faculty and director of the Underground Dance Company in Anchorage, performed with a hip-hop crew at the September opening of the Alaska Airlines Center.

LENS ON CAMPUS



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