



UAA

ALUMNISPIRIT

Fall 2016 • ISSUE 06

FIETY THOUSAND ALUMNI

CAN THEATRE CHANGE US? | WHEN THE LANDSCAPE SHIFTS | ALUMNI LIFE IN PICS



The atrium of UAA's original engineering building has been refurbished as the UAA Engineering & Computation Building.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

6 50,000 STRONG
UAA graduates are leaders in the arts, sciences, medicine, engineering, business and entrepreneurship, higher education and K-12, government, politics, aviation and more. If Alaska faces challenges, their collective qualifications make it possible to say, "Bring it!" They are ready to build a bold future.

FEATURES

14 WHEN THE LANDSCAPE SHIFTS
Thought leaders offer viewpoints on grappling with change.

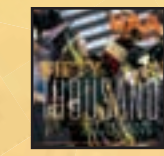
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Two doctoral dissertations will measure impact on audiences and actors after the production of *Stalking the Bogeyman*.

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Pulling for education's vibrant future happens in many different ways.

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The online magazine can be found here: tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.



ON THE COVER
Haliehana Stepetin, B.A. '16, received her international studies degree this spring dressed in Unangax robes and multiple honor cords. Gold represents university and departmental honors (Haliehana graduated magna cum laude) while red, white and blue symbolizes military status (she's a Navy vet). Three in 20 graduates in spring 2016 were connected to the military as veterans, dependents or active duty.

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*Anchorage School District Superintendent
Deena Paramo, M.Ed. '96, visits classrooms across
the district during the first week of school.*

FROM AN ALUMNA

Every fall, our schools come alive with students—it's such an exciting time for our community!

With more than 130 schools and programs, our families and students have an excellent array of educational choices. As the largest school district in the state and one of the 100 largest in the nation, we are strong, and as we move through the school year, we'll work toward continued strength and academic growth.

The Anchorage School Board, district leaders and I are having great conversations on how we can best support students to be college and career ready. We're now working to prepare them for 21st century jobs that may not even exist yet.

As a University of Alaska regent and Seawolf alumna, I see the value of partnering K-12 and university efforts.

I am excited to be a part of this community, and honored to be ASD's new superintendent.

Dr. Deena Paramo, M.Ed. '96
Superintendent, ASD
UA Regent

FROM THE CHANCELLOR

This fall issue of *UAA Alumni Spirit* has two themes.

The first is excellence, recognizing our alumni as they move along their professional and personal paths. Each of the 50 spotlights on these pages pays tribute to a truly significant milestone: We now have 50,000 UAA graduates!

These capable, engaged, innovative alumni are doing much to improve the communities they call home. In the majority of cases, that community is Alaska, as 60 percent of them live and work in our beautiful state.

The second theme is change – and our alumni's potential and talent is a source of tremendous opportunity.

Education prepares us to be nimble and adapt, and call upon the very best version of ourselves as we work our way forward. In this I take heart as Alaska's future remains bright, no less for the fact that UAA alumni are playing a part in shaping a promising future.

Tom Case, Chancellor



Chancellor Tom Case

50,000 STRONG

If UAA's 50,000 alumni all joined hands, the line they formed could stretch fingertip to fingertip a distance of 500 kilometers—or 310 miles. That's nearly the distance between coastal Anchorage and interior Fairbanks.

Or how about this? UAA's grads could nearly populate the cities of Juneau and Fairbanks, combined (each have about 30,000 residents). The point is, 50,000 is a lot of success, and we're proud of it. So let's take a look! Here's a peek at just 0.1 percent of our graduates—what 50 Seawolves are up to, all over Alaska, and all over the world.



CHERYL WILGA, A.A. GENERAL PROGRAM '90, ANCHORAGE

Today, Cheryl Wilga teaches and directs the UAA Department of Biological Sciences. Along her academic career path, she completed a B.S. and doctorate at the University of South Florida, and post-doctoral work at UC Irvine and Harvard. She also taught, did research and chaired her department at the University of Rhode Island. Her passion is animal behavior; she's an expert on sharks.



EZRA LOCKHART A.A.S. HUMAN SERVICES '13 BARROW

After an Anchorage car crash blinded his mother, Ezra left his IT career in Barrow to care for her. That experience led him to work as a direct service provider and, eventually, into the classroom at UAA. He studied autism at University of Sydney, earning a master's of health science, and now helms the North Slope's only residential youth treatment center.



AMY MEISSNER, M.F.A. CREATIVE WRITING AND LITERARY ARTS '04 ANCHORAGE, PAKISTAN IN 2017

This artist-writer is a crafter extraordinaire—of textiles and quilts, illustrations for children's books, essays and reflections on family life and creativity. Find her writings at *Spontaneous Combustion* (<http://www.amymeissner.com/blog>). Accolades abound: a Rasmuson Fellowship in 2014, Pushcart Prize nominee in 2015, an upcoming invitational exhibit in Karachi, Pakistan and a solo exhibit at the Anchorage Museum in 2018.



WILL BOARDMAN, A.A.S. PROFESSIONAL PILOTING '00, B.S. TECHNOLOGY '00 TALKEETNA

Will's found the good life in Talkeetna. As one of the town's only licensed helicopter pilots, he takes tourists, scientists and homesteaders to whatever glacier or lake they desire. After work, he and buddies may fly to a distant gravel bar for a bonfire campout. "Everybody is here because they love small-town Alaska, big mountains and flying," he said.

RACHEL SHERCLIFFE B.S. NATURAL SCIENCES '15 ROCHESTER, MICH.

Rachel's medical career started this fall at Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine in Rochester, Mich. The newly accredited school is committed to reversing regional physician shortages. To prepare, she became a skilled medical scribe, provided companionship for the dying through No One Dies Alone (NODA) and traveled to rural Alaska to teach kids how to ski.



TREVOR DESATOFF A.A. GENERAL PROGRAM '90, B.S. MATHEMATICS '91 ANCHORAGE

Trevor manages Costco on DeBarr Road. He started there in college: "They always worked with my schedule." The year he graduated, the company opened its DeBarr store. Trevor became a supervisor and landed in management. His school skills—programming, Excel spreadsheets, computer modeling—helped him stand out. Now it's been almost 30 years. "I very much enjoy what I do."



DESIRÉ SHEPLER, A.A.S. HUMAN SERVICES '04, B.A., PSYCHOLOGY '08, M.P.H. PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE '11 PALMER

Growing a culture that supports children is Desiré Shepler's passion. She became the first Mat-Su Health Foundation scholarship recipient to go on to employment with the foundation. Now, she directs the foundation's R.O.C.K. Mat-Su (Raising Our Children with Kindness) collaborative, bringing together people from diverse organizations and providing them with research insights that help them enhance family resilience and combat child abuse in Mat-Su.



RANJODH GILL, M.P.H. PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE '10 WASHINGTON, D.C.

This Air Force vet is now a senior public health analyst in the nation's capital, with career experience (and a UAA thesis) surveying traumatic brain injuries in the military population. Wear that helmet, Ranjodh says, even on your bicycle. As an elite cyclist for the U.S. military's endurance bike team, he should know.



DEBBIE STORRS B.S. SOCIOLOGY '89 GRAND FORKS, N.D.

First-generation college student Debbie Storrs quit school because she didn't like studying business. Sociology lured her back. She earned a bachelor's at UAA and completed a master's and doctorate from the University of Oregon. After 16 years at the University of Idaho in faculty and leadership roles, she now serves as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Dakota.



XAVIER MASON B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, MARKETING '15 ANCHORAGE

Xavier is one busy guy! He circulates a nonprofit inspirational children's magazine in Alaska, greater Washington, D.C., and eight African countries, 20 orphanages and various NGOs. Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz named him an Anchorage Sister Cities commissioner and he runs the Anchorage hub for youthful leaders in the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers, which recently took him to Geneva.

**HEATHER MACALPINE, B.A. JUSTICE '12
ANCHORAGE**

With nearly 100 spoken languages, Anchorage is among the country's most diverse cities. And, as director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, Heather makes sure everyone feels included here, connecting minority-owned businesses to civic projects, involving diverse voices at City Hall and working to accommodate all those languages. "It's a challenge here in Anchorage," she said. "I find that really exciting."



**JONATHON TAYLOR
B.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE '16
JUNEAU**

Beginning Aug. 1, UAA's former student body president and spring 2016 student commencement speaker joined Alaska Gov. Bill Walker's communications team as deputy press secretary. He crafts speeches and emails in support of the governor's work. His advice for future alumni? Don't undersell what you did in college. Writing papers, serving student groups—it's all "super important."



**CATHERINE BODRY
M.A. ENGLISH '06
ALASKA AND BEYOND**

Whether she's riding motorbikes in Thailand or ferrying to Unalaska, Catherine works hard to find the right details on the right places. As a travel writer for Lonely Planet, BBC, TravelAlaska.com and more, she credits her adventurous career to luck and perseverance. "If it's your dream job, go after it," she says, "because it was my dream job, too."



**MICHAEL KARCHERE
B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, GLOBAL
LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT '06
HILO, HAWAII**

If you're flying back from Hawai'i, odds are you have Mauna Loa macadamias in tow. Thank Michael, its purchasing manager. After his logistics degree took him to the frigid North Slope, he moved to Hawai'i with his wife to enjoy off weeks in the tropical sunshine. Now, he's full time in Hilo, helping make Mauna Loa nuts a must-have vacation souvenir.



**DANIELLE DANCE
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING '14
ANCHORAGE**

Two years ago, Danielle Dance started working as a civil designer for Hanson Professional Services. Her first assignment? A project she worked on during her senior design class at UAA. She's also helped design projects in Chicago, including conceptual phases of a high-speed rail project and tollway interchanges and filling a lead design engineer role on a smaller road and intersection project.



**MUNKH-ERDENE TSEND-OCHIR, B.A. JUSTICE '13
ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA**

After graduation, Munkh returned to his hometown of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's capital city, to work for the Department of Justice, providing assistance with the extradition and transfer of convicts. In 2015, Mongolia's president appointed him to a judgeship with the country's First Instance Criminal Court. (In the photo below, Munkh, left, meets with the president of Mongolia.) He is married to fellow UAA graduate Tumenkhishig "Michelle" Goolio, A.A. '12, B.S.W. '13.



**ALEXANDER FOSTER
B.S. SOCIOLOGY '12
ANCHORAGE**

Alex was a high-school dropout. Today, he's in his fourth year of medical school with WWAMI. UAA, tenacity and personal faith pulled him through. One example: His first round of medical school applications all failed. Instead of quitting, he sought advice on his weaknesses and corrected each one. Round two, he got in! He plans a career in ophthalmology. (See Page 21.)



**MISTY NELSON, B.A. EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION '08
ANCHORAGE**

Misty is in her third year of teaching at Lake Otis Elementary but her eighth year teaching in Alaska (she spent five years at Chevak School). In addition to her UAA degree, she's earned master of education degrees in the UA system in cross-cultural education and K-12 reading and is on her third semester as an adjunct professor for UAA's education department.



**ELISE ADAMS
B.S. BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES '14
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZ.**

Elise loves to sing and also has a passion for science. She cultivated both at UAA, joining UAA Glee Club and graduating with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences. Until she left for graduate school at Northern Arizona University, she worked with otters, foxes and other creatures in the husbandry department of the Alaska Zoo. "I'm a zookeeper," she said. "It's amazing."



**DARRIN MARSHALL
A.A.S. AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY '02,
B.S. TECHNOLOGY '13
WASILLA**

Darrin Marshall learned all about cars as a student at UAA, and his education never stopped: He's still here, using his expertise to teach future auto technicians the most cutting-edge General Motors automotive wizardry—he has 570 GM certifications, a GM World Class certification and Master ASE certification. "I still believe being an automotive technician is one of the best jobs."



**MELISSA SHEIN, B.S.
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES '03/WWAMI '07
DIMITRI SHEIN, B.B.A.
ACCOUNTING '05
ANCHORAGE**

Melissa and Dimitri met as students at West High School and started training for their careers at UAA. Melissa became a doctor. Dimitri earned his accounting degree, became a CPA and an entrepreneur, launching "Nice Planter," a company marketing metal planters he designed. This year, their family grew from two to six children when they adopted four sisters.



**ABRAM TOOYAK
B.B.A. FINANCE '14
NEW YORK CITY**

Point Hope, Alaska (pop. 110) and New York City (pop. lots more) have little in common. Abram grew up in the Western Alaska village and now works in Manhattan as a credit analyst. A former financial intern for Arctic Slope Regional Corp., Abram now arranges multimillion-dollar commercial loans. "You're always learning new things—that's the best part of working in Manhattan."



**MELINDA CRAWFORD
B.S. NURSING SCIENCE '04
WILLOW**

As a single mom, nursing was a way Melinda could support her children. It worked well for a decade. But having grown up in a family construction business, that self-determined lifestyle appealed. Now she and her daughter own and run Sheep Creek Lodge in Willow. "Come on in for a cup of coffee," she says. "We're more of a community roadhouse."

KIERRA HAMMONS
B.A. PHILOSOPHY '15
ST. LOUIS, MO.

After editing the student newspaper and studying philosophy at UAA, Kierra promptly re-enrolled to pursue a B.A. in English; she'll take her last class online from Missouri, where she is headed for more schooling. She's worked as a web designer, donated hair-care services to foster families and modeled for a U.S. woman-owned clothing brand.



MARLA BYRD FREITAG, B.A. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION '15
ANCHORAGE

Inspiring children to learn is a lifelong goal Marla Freitag is achieving as a first-grade teacher at Scenic Park Elementary School. This fall, Marla will complete her certification in gifted education and earn a master's degree in elementary education curriculum and instruction. "The relationships that began with fellow students and professors at UAA continue to give me the confidence and support to follow my dreams."



KYLE HOOVER
A.A.S. AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL '12
PONTIAC, MICH.

Kyle came from Michigan to Alaska to study air traffic control. It helped that his uncle, Leverette Hoover (B.S. Technology '97), was here, but the program's reputation also snagged him. At just 24 years old, he's on a team that manages between 500-600 general aviation and corporate jet takeoffs and landings a day. This, he says, is his dream job.



LEDA GARSIDE
B.S. NURSING SCIENCE '83
HILLSBORO, ORE.

Migrant workers often avoid health care—with its daunting costs and English-language paperwork—until it's a dire necessity. It's a public health problem Leda tackles from a mobile clinic, visiting dozens of migrant families a day across the wine-producing Willamette Valley. For a population without ready transportation, the mobile clinic is a lifeline reaching more than 4,000 people each year.



JOHN WILCOX, B.F.A. ART '12
FORT COLLINS, COLO. (FOR NOW)

Before he switched to distilling, John apprenticed at Denali Brewing Co. You can thank him for spicy seasonal Slow Down Brown. After two years as head distiller for craft King Rogue in Newport, Ore., he's now a distilling consultant, helping breweries create craft spirits based on their longtime brews.



MADDY ALVANNA-STIMPFLER, B.A. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION '15
NOME

Maddy returned to Nome after graduation, with plans to infuse her Iñupiaq culture and language into her Head Start classroom practice. And that's what she's done. She developed a pilot partnership between Kawarek Head Start and Nome Public Schools, belongs to the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, which advocates for quality schooling for indigenous children, and is pursuing her master's in indigenous studies.



OLIVER PETRAITIS, B.A. ENGLISH AND DUAL LANGUAGES '15
ANCHORAGE

As a Fulbright scholar, Oliver begins year two of his position teaching English in Münster, Germany. A crafter of words and music, he's released his first album, *Barn Burning*; find it on SoundCloud, YouTube and Bandcamp. During a brief home visit this summer, he made the pages of the *Anchorage Press* with impromptu performances in the tunnel at Elderberry Park. (See Page 20.)



MATT MYERS
B.B.A. REAL ESTATE '88
SUVA, FIJI

Tahiti. Kiribati. Bora-Bora. No, these are not bucket-list dreams; they are business trip destinations for Matt. He is the only internationally qualified land valuer in the South Pacific. "I have the privilege of being paid to visit some of the most beautiful places on earth," he said. Matt's daughter, Jordan, graduated from UAA in 2015.



SHERI MIKSA, B.A. PSYCHOLOGY '80
TULSA, OKLA.

Sheri commuted from the North Slope to UAA. After graduation, she managed a 1,900-bed Prudhoe Bay hotel. Next came an M.B.A. from Stanford and a 30-year food service career with leading roles at PepsiCo (Frito-Lay and Taco Bell), Seattle's Best Coffee and others. Currently, Sheri is president and CEO of Mazzio's Pizza, a premium fast-casual chain with 140 locations across nine states.



YUSTIN PERDANA
B.S. AVIATION TECHNOLOGY '09
JAKARTA, INDONESIA

UAA's aviation school drew Yustin north from Indonesia, where 260 million people + 13,000 islands = 1 essential aviation industry. After graduation, he returned home to work for national airline Garuda Indonesia in international sales, finance and marketing. Now, he's branching out to start his own garment business. "My experience at UAA was amazing!"



TESIA FORSTNER, B.S. ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY '15
UTICA, S.D.

Tess found her intellectual gold mine in the world of shorebird biology. As an undergraduate, she collaborated on research with black turnstones netted on the Yukon Delta, earning the Fran Ulmer Transformative Research Award. Now, she's on the Missouri River studying piping plovers as part of a Virginia Tech project. Next up? A master's degree focused on shorebirds.



GENE TILL, B.B.A. ACCOUNTING '94
HOUSTON, TEXAS

Gene came to Alaska the summer after his junior year in college to work, and stayed for 24 years. "I met a wonderful Alaska woman, and we raised a family,"—four sons. He finished his degree at night while working days at Alyeska Pipeline, then moved into finance management and operations. Today he works for ConocoPhillips and lives in Houston.



CYNTHIA TENIENTE-MATSON, M.B.A. BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION '99
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

As the second president of Texas A&M University-San Antonio, Cynthia leads one of the fastest-growing universities in Texas. She has more than 20 years' experience in higher education, including serving as a vice chancellor at UAA. An avid reader and bicyclist, she is also deeply involved in the San Antonio community and serves on numerous national higher education associations and boards.

**MICHAEL MCGEE, M.ED., EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, '15
ANCHORAGE**

Teaching small children at Polaris K-12 school in Anchorage has been the focus of Mike McGee's life since he received his teaching certification at UAA in 2005. He returned to UAA to earn his master's degree and now is using his new expertise in teaching the university's Introduction to early Childhood Education class. "I enjoy working with and learning from older students," he said.



**SAM KITO
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING '88
JUNEAU**

Rep. Kito (D-Juneau) says he's committed to solving Alaska's fiscal stranglehold, including adding new taxes. "I don't see how we get to a solution without doing that." He still works in engineering consulting. His personal test for the value of his UAA degree? Passing the licensing exam on his first try, in a field where 60 percent of first-timers repeat.



**CRYSTALYN LEMIEUX
B.S. HEALTH SCIENCES '15
KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA**



Exploring her indigenous heritage is crucial for this Tlingit student from Haines who earned a UAA health sciences degree last year and also won a 2016-17 Fulbright award. In September, she began an eight-month-long online cultural identity project with students at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia.

**NITHYA THIRU
B.A. HISTORY '14
SRI LANKA, ANCHORAGE**

After completing her bachelor's degree (with minors in French and political science) Nithya freelanced for the *Anchorage Press* for a year before The Asia Foundation selected her as a LankaCorps Fellow. For six months at Verité Research in Colombo, Sri Lanka, she helped disseminate research and shift public policy on important issues in that country. Oh, and she co-founded Alaska Quidditch.



**JEROME ROSS
B.S. NURSING SCIENCE '15
ANCHORAGE**

Jerry was a champion runner on UAA's cross country team who went on to compete three times in the Boston Marathon. Then, his heart rate began soaring after training runs. Two surgeries corrected the issue—a congenital heart problem—and Jerry found a new career trajectory. He received his bachelor's degree in nursing science last year.



**KIRA BUCKLAND, B.A. LANGUAGES '07
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.**

For most fans, anime is a hobby. For Kira, it's a career. As a voice actor, she's dubbed English translations for Japanese animations on dozens of shows and video games, giving life to characters she knows and loves. Her language skills, technical training and genuine fandom have won her a loyal following of anime fanatics... just ask her 16,000 online followers.



**RICK KURTZ
B.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE '89
PORTSMOUTH, OHIO**

As president of Shawnee State University in southern Ohio, Rick knows the challenges facing his 4,400 students. A first-generation and nontraditional student at UAA, he went on to earn a Ph.D., chair the political science department at Central Michigan University, and publish and present extensively on crisis management surrounding oil spills and pollution.



**JEAN BARDARSON
A.A.S. DENTAL HYGIENE '80
SEWARD**

As mayor of Seward, Jean serves as the face (and welcoming handshake) for her community whenever governors, ambassadors and even President Obama come to town. But, in a perfect glimpse of small-town city hall life, Jean still works two days a week as a hygienist at the local dentist's office.



**DIANA GORDON
B.A. ENGLISH '06,
M.ED. COUNSELOR
EDUCATION '09
DELRAY BEACH, FLA.**

As a professional beach volleyball player, Diana starts her day bump-set-spiking in the sand as the sun rises over Florida's coastline. And as a professional copywriter, she works 100 percent remotely (good thing, since she's traveling to pro tournaments half the year). "I really do live the dream life in many ways," said the former UAA running and volleyball athlete.



**BOSTIN CHRISTOPHER
B.A. THEATRE '93
RICHMOND, VA.**

What hasn't he done? From Vietnam-era *Tracers* (UAA 1988, regional and national honors) to Lenny in *Of Mice and Men* (Perseverance Theatre 2012) to Al in *Frozen Ground* (film, 2013 Lionsgate). Did someone say college professor? That, too. Bostin is a professor and senior acting teacher at Virginia Commonwealth University. He opens this spring in *The Gun Show*, and is busy writing. (See page 23.)



**BRANDI KERLEY
A.A. GEN. STUDIES '08, B.A.
ANTHROPOLOGY '13, B.A. ARTS '15
KENAI**

Brandi grew up in Ketchikan among a family of salmon, halibut and herring fishermen. "I miss the water," she says. Working now as developmental advisor at Kenai Peninsula College, Brandi is pursuing her fourth degree—a master's in Arctic and Northern Studies from UAF. She completed her first solo art exhibit—celebrating salmon—this summer at the Kenai Fine Art Center.



**ARLITIA JONES, B.A. ENGLISH '95,
M.F.A. CREATIVE WRITING '98
ANCHORAGE, CINCINNATI IN 2017**

Arlitia Jones incubated as a poet and playwright working in her family's Anchorage butcher shop, C & J Tender Meat Company. Life there inspired prize-winning poems in *The Bandsaw Riots*. Next came plays: *Sway Me Moon*, *Tornado*, *Come to Me*, *Leopards*, and more. Productions and prizes followed. Up next? Her biggest production yet: *Summerland* at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, February 2017.



**GEORGE LENIG
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING '16
ANCHORAGE**

Keeping air travel safe is the focus of George Lenig's current project as an Alaska Department of Transportation engineering assistant. He's helping repave and widen Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport taxiways. "I enjoy seeing how the construction process of civil engineering happens—how I can use that information to help better design projects in the future."

When the landscape shifts

As the state's fiscal situation adjusts to declining oil revenues, university leaders reflect on making our way through dynamic change.



JIM JOHNSEN
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
SYSTEM

"We have the opportunity, if not the necessity, to create our own path forward for Alaska. Our actions will not only change our university and our state, they will change us. We will become leaders, confident in ourselves and in Alaska's future."



SAMUEL ERICKSON
UNION OF STUDENTS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
PRESIDENT 2016-17

"In my experience as a student leader on campus, I have found that change— institutional and individual alike—is an opportunity. When old paradigms fall away, there is room for the new, the unexpected, and the different."

"Ultimately, change is a ladder. Whether one moves up or down is the only decision to make."



RACHEL MORSE, M.B.A. '08
ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR
FOR ALUMNI RELATIONS

"It is both daunting and exciting to think that the choices we make today not only define us in the present, but also shape the university we will become moving forward. As the living embodiment of what we do, what we value and what we aspire to be as an institution, it is critical that alumni have a strong voice in determining our future. When I think of the alumni who have taken up the yoke of leadership in these challenging times, I am filled with confidence."



SAM GINGERICH
UAA PROVOST

*"I have one word: **Perception**. By perception I mean there is nothing new under the sun. Too often when we are faced with change, we turn inward for all the answers. The best thing to do is to take a few deep breaths and actually look around."*

"The strategies that other institutions and systems and states have used, we can learn from. We are smart people. We will find good ideas everywhere else. We'll make them better and apply them here."



DIANE HIRSHBERG
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION POLICY
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR ALASKA
EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH

"I know that if we handle the difficulties well, we can come out stronger on the other side. Certainly there are inefficiencies in how we operate our university — it's a large bureaucracy. All the clichés about never waste a good crisis can be true. But only if we make change thoughtfully and intentionally, not just reactively. We need to ask why we do things the way we do them now, as well as whether what is being proposed is really better and not just different."



DALE TRAN, B.B.A. '15
CHANCELLOR'S ADVISORY BOARD,
CFO, KALADI BROS.

"With the necessity for change, we recognize that there are opportunities to emerge as a stronger, better institution. To effect change, we must be bold in our mindset, courageous in our action, and confident in our team."

TOM CASE, UAA CHANCELLOR

"In many ways, UAA is defined by our alumni, now some 50,000 strong. As Alaska's current and future leaders — you make us proud. Successful leaders focus not only on what is, but also on what might be. Our UAA priorities will remain the education of students for Alaska, the pursuit of research and discoveries to move our state forward, and the development of a vibrant community engaged in supporting the University now and in the future. In challenging times, change can be stressful, but I believe in the resilience of our institution and our ability to lead. Alaska is counting on us."



CAN THEATRE CHANGE US?

RESEARCH ON 'STALKING THE BOGEYMAN' WILL TRY TO FIND OUT

Between its two East Coast premieres and a run this summer in London, David Holthouse's important personal tale of child sexual assault, *Stalking the Bogeyman*, made its West Coast premiere at UAA in April. The subject matter is searingly pertinent to Alaska, a state that ranks among the highest for rates of abuse.

The spring issue of *Alumni Spirit* featured an article on UAA's staging of *Bogeyman*. Though the production had a limited run on campus, the work related to the play and its impact is still unfolding. UAA faculty and student researchers are leaning into important questions: Would showing

this production in Alaska, the very place the playwright was raped as a 7-year-old, make a difference? Could it create a space for affected Alaskans to begin to talk about this problem? To begin to heal?

Indeed, that was one serious ambition. "We want to turn up the volume on the conversation surrounding child sexual abuse in our community," said Claudia Lampman, director of the psychology department at UAA. She added, "We also want to put on a great show that is a beautiful piece of theatre and art. I think you can do both of those things."

Her academic colleague, Rebecca Robinson, an assistant professor and

three-time alumna of UAA degree programs, concurred. "The word that comes to mind is agitate. I want this project to agitate...being agitated can lead to dialogues that can help us all understand each other a little bit differently, and hopefully change and grow as people."

BRIDGING DISCIPLINES

Centered as it was at a public university, this production became the fulcrum of an energetic interdisciplinary team focused on exploring the play's full potential as a source of community dialogue and healing. For its innovative aspirations, the project won financial support from

Photos courtesy of Rebecca Robinson.



Students Brittany Freitas-Murrell, Maia Wen, Amanda Zold and Jennifer Burkhart tackled *Stalking the Bogeyman* as a path to research projects and dissertations, guided by psychology faculty Claudia Lampman and Rebecca Robinson.

a campus Innovate award. Community member Priscilla Hensley, a UAA alumna and spouse of the playwright, led a team comprised of faculty from the UAA departments of theatre and dance, psychology, art, and the campus center for community engagement.

The team members found a way to provide counselors at every rehearsal, and eventually at every single performance, both in Anchorage and in five other Alaska locations. They planned and helped execute talkback sessions after each show, where the audience heard experts address issues raised by the play, met actors out of costume, and had a few moments to comment publicly on the production.

Support went beyond dialogue. It included engaging interested audience members in a public art project—contributing to a glowing lamp, lit from within, its shade built from interwoven handwritten cards bearing reactions to the play.

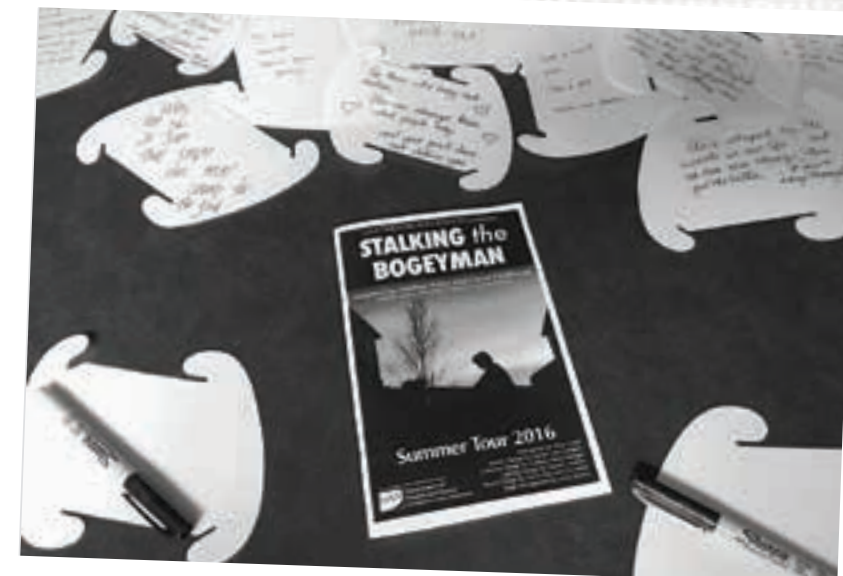
UAA's production was unusual for more than its desire to influence culture in Alaska. It featured an all-student cast tackling the troubled roles of victim and violator. Would college actors, still engaged in developing professional boundaries and resilience, be ready for these dark roles? Might they be traumatized, as well?

INVESTIGATIVE RESEARCH

To get at these questions, the psychology faculty conceived research projects that would examine the power of theatre to change audiences, and assess the impact on college actors of tackling roles as intense as those found in *Bogeyman*.

The play launched four research projects; two are complete and two are ongoing—the subject of dissertations by two graduate students in the clinical and community psychology doctoral program at UAA.

Lampman hopes Zold's work will be the basis for a "how-to" book on ways to produce socially engaged theatre on other college campuses. "It would be nice if we could hand something to another university and say, 'You can do this. Here's how.'"



Maia Wen is an undergraduate who participated last spring in an National Institute of Health (NIH)-sponsored mentorship program designed to pull minority students into the research pipeline. Wen surveyed UAA students on myths surrounding child sexual abuse, such as "Victims are always girls," or "Molesters target all nearby children." Her quantitative data show that men and people without a history of child abuse, and younger, more conservative individuals with fewer children, tended to subscribe to myths like these.

Amanda Zold is in the doctoral program at UAA. Her work filled a requirement in a program evaluation course. She or her proxy sat through every meeting and discussion, recording progress, decisions and outcomes.

TWO DISSERTATIONS UNDERWAY

The doctoral research by Jennifer Burkhart and Brittany Freitas-Murrell is still underway. They spent last spring collecting data and both served as mental health support for cast, crew or audience during the production.

Burkhart's focus is on the actors' well-being. She found sparse examples from past studies assessing impact on actors—some exploring the ethics of training theatre majors, or how directors and educators might not be prepared to recognize and address an acute traumatic reaction.

While Burkhart is still analyzing her interviews, she said preliminary results show the nine actors fared well. They

frequently cited a close and supportive connection among cast members, as well as a proactive attitude by director Brian Cook to keep the material in perspective using activities like post-rehearsal decompression games.

Burkhart was struck by the cast's commitment. "A lot of the actors talked about really wanting to make

con, that seeing the play stimulated more conversations about child sexual abuse.

Like Burkhart, her literature search turned up little: "I found lots of conjecture around theatre being a useful tool or something that could create change...but I could not find any factual empirical evidence that this had been tested in any way."

She surveyed Anchorage audiences five times during the production. She gave them a questionnaire the night of the performance just before they saw the play. A week and a month later, she surveyed them again with the same questions.

More than 300 people attended the five shows she surveyed. Of those, 267 answered the first survey. After the third survey, she had 64 respondents for all three. Now she'll analyze the results for behavior change over time. Did people talk more about child sexual abuse after seeing the production?

Burkhart and Freitas-Murrell expect to complete their analysis, write their dissertations and defend them

next spring. If successful, they'll both graduate next May with their doctorates in clinical and community psychology. They also anticipate authoring up to five different papers for submission to psychology journals.

COMMUNITY REACTIONS

Bogeyman has had significant participation by representatives from Anchorage nonprofits working with child abuse survivors. Trevor Storrs of

Alaska Children's Trust supported the project by devoting an AmeriCorps volunteer, providing funding and presenting at a post-production talkback. "This play definitely planted seeds to chip away at the silence that exists around this topic," Storrs said.

Laura Baez directs the behavioral health program at Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and serves as a community adviser to UAA's psychology program. Her agency provided funding to help the production go on tour. She especially appreciated a storyline that showed boys are victimized, too. "That's such a taboo for boys. [Holthouse] opened the door to talking about that."

WORK CONTINUES

UAA's theatre department has moved into its 2016-17 season, having put *Bogeyman* into its archives. "The production may be over," director Cook said, "but we aren't done with the issues this play raises." He noted that the set, built for travel, is in storage and ready for further use should opportunity and funding become available.

For Lampman and Robinson, though, work from *Bogeyman* is just beginning. "The only way to heal is to go right through the middle," Lampman said. "You can't go around it. You can't never talk about it. You need to deal."

Let the conversations fly.

The following funding sources made this project possible: UAA Innovate Award, UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning, National Endowment for the Arts, Rasmuson Foundation, Alaska Children's Trust, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and a generous anonymous donor. An additional thank you to Priscilla Hensley-Holthouse and David Holthouse. The original story may be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/zzhccvf>.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR GREATNESS

YOUR GIFT HELPS STUDENTS NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

UAA helped shape you into who you are. By giving back, you ensure the same kinds of transformational experiences are available for students today and tomorrow.

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A gift to the Annual Fund for Excellence goes to the highest-priority programs essential to our mission: from student support to academic programs to culture and community and more.

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a difference in some way...whether increasing awareness or facilitating dialogue." In fact, Cook is working on a journal article about how the production roused cast members to embrace socially engaged theatre.

Freitas-Murrell's work is quantitative. She seeks to find out if viewing a theatre production like *Bogeyman* affects audience behavior afterward. Specifically, she wants evidence, pro or

ALUMNI LIFE

FIND THEM PURSUING
THEIR DREAMS ALL OVER
ALASKA, THE UNITED
STATES AND THE WORLD.

PAGE 20: Oliver Petraitis, B.A. '15, plays tunes in the Elderberry Park tunnel during a brief visit home this summer from his appointment as a Fulbright scholar in Germany. Sade Topps, B.B.A. '15, stopped in Kotor, Montenegro, on a summer trip through Europe. Former ski team member Mario Roncador, M.B.A. '16, celebrated graduation with a summit attempt of Denali this summer.



Photo by Chloe Charabal/Alaska Teen Media Institute and The Anchorage Press.



PAGE 21: Coach Dan Esparza, B.A. '09, runs practice with the Bartlett High School football team. He co-leads the team with fellow alum John Jessen, B.A. '95, B.Ed. '97. Alex Foster, B.S. Sociology '12, works in Myanmar during his training to become an ophthalmologist through WWAMI.

PAGE 22: Alumni and friends returned to campus for the seventh-annual Green & Gold Gala on Oct. 1. Former Seawolf gymnast **Sara Carver-Milne**, B.A. '97—head gymnastics coach at Brown University—leads her team at a home meet last season.



Have pics of your life after UAA? Send them to: alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu

ALUMNI LIFE

PAGE 23: **Kastle Sorenson**, B.A. '06, serves up sweet treats from her Kastle's Kreations cupcake truck. **DJ Spencer Lee** (Spencer Shroyer) B.A. '09, demonstrates his party-rocking instincts. **Bostin Christopher**, B.A. Theatre '93, as Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* at Perseverance Theatre, 2012; today he teaches acting at Virginia Commonwealth University and will open this spring in *The Gun Show*.

Alumni educators celebrated in national news

The Anchorage School District received high marks over summer vacation from national newsmagazine *Slate.com*. According to the site's lead story, Anchorage has "the country's best school district for refugees." The June 6 report praised ASD's Newcomers' Center, which blends in-classroom integration with specialized language learning classes for the district's most recent arrivals. The story quoted Philip Farson, B.Ed. '93, director of ASD's English Language Learners Program. "It was amazing, just really, really amazing," said Bonnie Palach, B.Ed. '92, of the recognition. Bonnie has taught Newcomers' students since 2001.

Moldovans graduate with UAA flare

Hirtopul-Mare, a small village in Moldova, held its first graduation ceremony, thanks to the efforts of Mariana Braniste, M.P.A. '14. From 5,000 miles away in Anchorage, Mariana coordinated with school administrators over Skype, phone and email to help them

prepare. And what's graduation without robes? Last year, Mariana collected and shipped 70 graduation robes for students in her hometown (along with 105 backpacks acquired with the help of fellow Moldovan grad Argentina Parasca, B.B.A. '96). In the past year, she has also raised \$5,000 for the village's first playground, helped secure a donated wheelchair and wheelchair ramp at the school and appeared on Moldova's national news for her efforts.

2016 Alumni of Distinction recognized at Gala

The 2016 Alumni of Distinction recipients were honored at Green & Gold Gala, held at the Alaska Airlines Center on Oct. 1. Congratulations to this year's alumni honorees.

Alumni of Achievement: Beth Stuart, B.B.A. Accounting '94

Alumni Humanitarian: Sammie Pokryfki, B.S.W. '98, M.S.W. '99, B.A. English '06

Alumni Emerging Leader: Michael Rose, B.A. Political Science '09



Women's basketball road trip

The women's basketball team marched to the Division II National Championship in April. Fans were in full force at the historic game in Indianapolis. "Any time you say the words 'national championship,' it means a lot to anybody that's been involved in the program," said Stacie Cepin, B.A. '00, a former member of the team who drove in from Ohio. "Here we have this new arena, now they're playing for a national title. It doesn't get any better than that!" added Kelly Kowal, B.Ed. '91, another former athlete who took three flights on two airlines through four cities to reach the game, along with her coworker at Romig Middle School (another alumna of the team) Rachel Hopkins, B.Ed. '99.

Psychology department holds first alumni weekend

The psychology department kicked off its first alumni weekend April 14-16 with a sold-out performance of *Stalking the Bogeyman*. The psychology department had been heavily involved in the outreach efforts surrounding the UAA theatre production, and 70 psychology graduates and guests attended the exclusive Thursday night performance and talkback with writer David Holthouse. The weekend also included an alumni reception and the annual Behavioral Sciences Conference of the North.

DON'T MISS EVENTS AT UAA

Rasmuson Chair on "carbon credits"

Nov. 9, 5-7 p.m. / UAA Campus Bookstore Free

Tim Cason joined UAA this fall as the newest Rasmuson Chair in Economics. His home institution is Purdue University, where he serves as a distinguished professor and chair in economics and directs the Vernon Smith Experimental Economics Library. In this informal bookstore talk, titled *Experimental Economics and Market Incentives to Address Global Climate Change*, Cason will discuss his research on using markets and the sale of "carbon credits" to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

UAA Dance in Performance

Nov. 17-20 / Fine Arts Building Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8 p.m. / Sunday, 6 p.m. UAAatix.com

Brian Jeffery directs UAA dancers in this popular annual show featuring original numbers by local and visiting choreographers. Get lost in the movement as the talented performers experiment with a wide range of ideas and styles.

Great Alaska Shootout

Nov. 22-26 / Alaska Airlines Center GoSeawolves.com

The oldest continuously running in-season college basketball tournament in the nation, the Shootout returns to the Alaska Airlines Center this year. Howl for the home team as UAA goes up against teams from the Lower 48, including University of Southern California, Weber State, Oakland University, Iona College, University at Buffalo and University of Portland.

Alaska Airlines Governor's Cup: UAA vs. UAF

Dec. 9-10 / Carlson Center in Fairbanks Feb. 24-25 / Sullivan Arena in Anchorage GoSeawolves.com

UAA faces in-state rivals UAF for the 24th-annual Governor's Cup. Attend one or all four games in the series as the Seawolves look to grab their first Cup title since 2009 and ownership of the golden, spinning Governor's Cup trophy.

"Working"

Feb. 10-26 / Fine Arts Building Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. / Sunday, 5 p.m. UAAatix.com

Based on the works of renowned oral historian and radio host Studs Turkel, *Working* tells the stories of people doing just that—working as a teacher, delivery person, stonemason, supermarket checker, corporate executive or trucker, to name a few occupations featured in this musical. Save the date for this folksy celebration of the everyday lives of working Americans.

Exclusive alumni discounts on arts and athletics

With a new school year in full swing, there are plenty of reasons to come back to campus. Alumni earn 20 percent off all Department of Music performances at UAAatix.com with the code Alumni16. Head to uaa.alaska.edu/ alumni to find discount codes for 12 Seawolf games across five sports (including five versus UAF). And if you're itching for theatre and dance, contact O'Hara Shipe at oshipe@alaska.edu or 907-786-1683 for 20 percent discounts on season subscriptions.



Help students celebrate education in Moldova by donating your graduation gown at the UAA Alumni Center.



CLASS NOTES

This page of alumni updates was compiled by Joey Best 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.

1984

Steven Elliott, B.B.A. Accounting, writes: "After a great season of life in Alaska and relocating from Wasilla to Columbia, S.C., in 2006, I've had the pleasure to work for two exciting and successful domestic companies and one international company as a senior executive in finance and accounting. I've also had the exciting experience of adopting a son and daughter from Odessa, Ukraine, as well as remarrying after the loss of my wife to cancer in 2014. I am so thankful for the great experience and education I received at UAA and in Alaska. Go Seawolves."

2007

In August, Chris Robinson, M.Ed., was named the first full-year teacher-in-residence at the National Museum of the American Indian, part of the Smithsonian

Institution in Washington, D.C. Formerly a teacher in rural Alaska, Chris (Creek/Georgia Cherokee/Tlingit) will help tribal groups write content for *Native Knowledge 360°*, an online educational resource that aims to incorporate accurate indigenous history into the country's classrooms. In May 2017, Chris will return to Richmond, Ky., where he's taught at Model High School and served as an assistant professor at Eastern Kentucky University for the past nine years.

2010

Amanda Brewer Stewlow, B.A. Dual Languages, has served as a cryptologic language analyst for the U.S. Army since 2011, based out of Kapolei, Hawai'i. She writes that she's "leaving active Army status in June 2017 and moving back to Alaska," where she hopes to use her G.I. Bill to reenroll in graduate school at UAA.

2010

"Born and raised in Alaska, the day after graduating from UAA I moved to North Carolina with no idea what I wanted to do, except to get out of here," writes Amanda (Banning) Davis, B.A. Sociology. "Well, after 1.5 years I moved back. I'm now married and have two children and am the regional manager for Batteries Plus Bulbs—a family-owned-and-operated business—and its three locations throughout the state."

2011

Kellie Doherty, B.A. English, graduated with a minor in creative writing. Since then, she's moved to Portland, Ore., and successfully completed Portland State University's graduate program in book publishing. Her first sci-fi book, *Finding Hekate*, got picked up by Desert Palm Press and debuted in April. *Finding Hekate*

is available at online book vendors, including Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and on the shelves at Powell's Books on

Hawthorn in Portland. She is currently working on her second novel, a continuation of *Finding Hekate* called *Losing Hold*.



"*Finding Hekate*," the debut novel by Kellie Doherty, B.A. '11, published in April.

LENS ON CAMPUS



Former Seawolf athletes Caitlin Hanson, left, and Julia Mackey returned for the volleyball team's annual Alumni Game on Aug. 20.



SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE

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Your UAA family wants to know.
Submit your news online at this link:
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UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

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you know about upcoming events.



The online magazine can be found here: tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.



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Show off your Seawolf spirit with stickers from the UAA Alumni Association. Whether you stamp up your kayak rack or your guitar case, your snowboard or your Subaru, we want to be part of your next adventure. Call or email the Alumni Center to receive your sticker in the mail. Then, tag us in your adventurous photos out there in #SeawolfNation.

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