



UAA

ALUMNISPIRIT

Spring 2015 • ISSUE 03

Enriching culture | Alumni ParTee: 9 in the Spine | Alumni spotlights



Fans are riveted on the action at a recent gymnastics meet at the Alaska Airlines Center. The Seawolves' Division I gymnastics team hosted the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Championships in their new digs on March 21.



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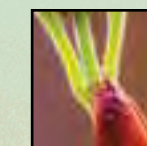
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The online magazine can be found here: tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.



ON THE COVER

The artwork featured on the cover is a detail of a photo titled, "Emerging Spring" by Carl Battreall. He and other Alaska photographers shot the Percent for Art images lining the hallways of the newly renovated Beatrice McDonald Hall. Each image reflects an academic department housed in BMH, such as geography, anthropology, aquatic ecology and botany. Read more on page 10.

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The newly refurbished Beatrice McDonald Hall.

FROM THE EDITOR

Happy spring, and welcome to our third edition of *Alumni Spirit* magazine. It has been a newsy winter and spring, and we have much to share.

First, I want to personally thank award-winning Alaska photographer Carl Battreall for the beautiful image gracing our cover. It's a detail from "Emerging Spring," his photo of unfolding elderberry leaves captured on a hike toward Near Point in Chugach State Park. This lovely crimson bud enlivens a wall in Beatrice McDonald Hall, newly reopened after a massive, multi-year, energy-efficient, student-friendly "do-over." Color and light, smart classrooms and great study-group seating have transformed one of the oldest buildings on campus.

I mentioned news. Alaska's ongoing budget challenges are having an effect at UAA. Also, even before oil prices plummeted, UAA faculty and staff evaluated programs and services to find which no longer fit the mission. Learn more in this issue about both important developments.

In other stories, you'll meet more of UAA's amazing alumni, catch some golfing in the Spine, and learn how Newhalen residents and a UAA professor are collaborating to save local culture.

Thank you for reading!

Kathleen J. McCoy
Kathleen McCoy, *Editor*



FROM AN ALUMNA

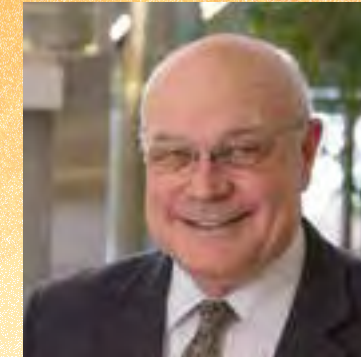
Spring is here! And with it, more daylight, blooming flowers and the promise of a beautiful and adventurous Alaska summer. It is a time for renewal and growth, which for many UAA seniors is signified by their final transition from college student to college graduate. The UAA College of Engineering Alumni Chapter, along with our fellow UAA alumni chapters, commit to supporting our newest graduates. Alumni chapters build opportunities for students and alumni to communicate, collaborate and stay connected—to each other and to UAA, whether it's within our neighborhoods or on campus. We applaud the efforts of those students taking their first step into a larger world.

Congratulations to the UAA graduating Class of 2015!

Sincerely,

Virginia J. Groeschel

Virginia J. Groeschel
President, College of Engineering Alumni Chapter
University of Alaska Anchorage



FROM THE CHANCELLOR

I always welcome this chance to connect with UAA alumni in this magazine. Alaska depends on critically thinking citizens to help us navigate our unsettled future. With more than 32,300 of you working and living in Alaska, UAA alumni have the power to effect change during turbulent times. Your state needs you. Your university needs you.

Here at UAA, we're preparing for a challenging road ahead. You'll read about our evaluation of all academic and support programs to ensure they still fit the mission to best serve our students and state. As a reduced operating budget moves through legislative channels to Gov. Bill Walker's desk, UAA will be ready. We are preserving quality higher education for Alaskans by strategically directing energy and resources.

Change can be difficult, but I deeply believe limits can make us even more creative. Together, let us envision Alaska's great future.

Tom Case
Tom Case, *Chancellor*

WITHOUT QUESTION, EVERY UAA SPORTS TEAM HAS BENEFITED FROM

the improved strength training, conditioning and sports medicine facilities in the Alaska Airlines Center. One team in particular exemplifies the AAC's impact on UAA Athletics—our Division I gymnastics team.

Ask a team upperclassman and she'll tell you that as recently as last year, she would hear, "UAA has a gymnastics team?" That stings when you're putting in sweaty hours daily to achieve and maintain elite status. But it's understandable, considering team members practiced off-site and competed on the road more than they did at home.

That all changed last year when the team moved into its custom-built practice facility. No one is more energized by the improvements than Coach Paul Stoklos, who has been with the team for 31 years. With more time and space for practice, his athletes have all upgraded their routines.

"We can throw more difficulty than ever before, in part because we can train more in that gym," he said. "The in-ground foam pits allow the girls to work skills and take

landings they wouldn't walk away from in our old gym. It gives the girls more confidence in what they're doing." A look at floor routines shows the team's transformation. Last year, one person did a double back on floor; now nine have.

The new facility has attracted about 25 percent more volleyball fans and doubled the crowds for basketball. "We're way up in season ticket sales," said Keith Hackett, UAA's director of athletics. "We're way up in single-game sales." Ticket sales revenue for volleyball is up 115 percent over last year. Shootout revenue is up 66 percent.

"People want to come here," he said. "We have a destination restaurant upstairs. Even if there's not a game, come and eat at the restaurant, walk around the track. It feels so much more friendly." Hot tip: The Varsity Sports Grill's window seats are a great place to catch a game while you enjoy dinner, but call ahead or arrive early—those "ring-side" seats tend to fill up fast.

Don't miss some of the great spring and summer events they have planned. Visit www.alaskaairlinescenter.com for the full slate of athletics and community events.

AAC CHANGES THE GAME FOR SEAWOLF SPORTS



Thousands of fans came to cheer the Seawolf women vs. Point Loma in the NCAA West Regional Championships.

An arching gateway connects campus across Providence Drive.



A NEW GATEWAY TO UAA

A GRACEFUL ARCHWAY LINKS CAMPUS BUILDINGS ON BOTH SIDES OF PROVIDENCE DRIVE.

The new campus landmark links the Engineering & Industry Building (opening in 2015) to the Health Sciences Building (completed in 2011), connecting two of UAA's most recent buildings.

UAA tapped the architects of Livingston Slone and the engineers of Reid Middleton to design the bridge, requesting a visual gateway that celebrated the new generation of campus. The team opted for a double-arched walkway—sleek, unique and completely rooted on campus.

The Municipality closed Providence Drive over winter break so UAA could send in the cranes. For several days, crews welded the massive steel beams into place under the glimmering holiday lights draped on trees in the median.

Visually, the span adopts design elements of both its neighbors. The steel structure matches the silvery shimmer of the health building, while the insulated metal panels carry over onto the new engineering building.

Style aside, the span is also an impressive engineering feat. Unlike other stretches of the Spine, this newest bridge is completely self-supported and structurally independent of its neighboring buildings. Much like a backyard swing set, the leaning arches provide stability against predictable wind and seismic activity.

The engineers also installed nifty neoprene insulators wherever the glass-and-steel bridge connected to the arches (think of them like giant gloves for metal beams). Thanks to the neoprene, the cold outside doesn't readily transfer to the heated glass gallery.

The construction cost an estimated \$4.4 million, which came partially from the under-budget Health Sciences construction. The walkway offers 23 feet of clearance and is entirely rooted on UAA property. Both the 230-foot bridge and the new engineering building will open for the fall 2015 semester. The span will offer safe transit to the health campus, a bright, sunny study space for students and, most visibly, a beautifully engineered landmark for UAA. Watch a time-lapse video of the bridge's installation at UAA Alumni Spirit online, tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.

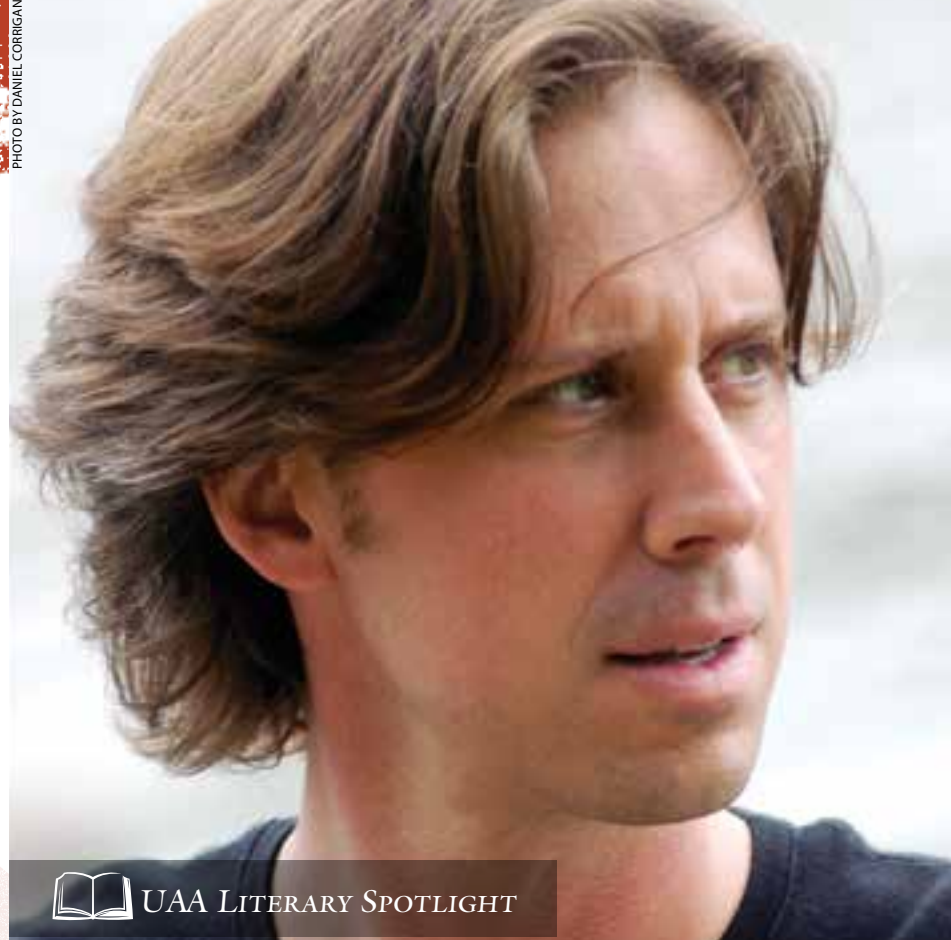


PHOTO BY DANIEL CORRIGAN

UAA LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

M.F.A. GRAD SALUTES AQR WITH “A STREET-SMART CAR NIVAL LOVE STORY”

How to capture poet Todd Boss and his creative DNA in one short story on this printed page?

Impossible. But for your sake, let me try. (And to deepen this short conversation, please visit our longer Q and A with the artist, as well as links to poems and other interviews with Boss, all found online at *UAA Alumni Spirit* magazine at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.)

Today, this Wisconsin-born former farm boy works out of Minneapolis, a place he describes as a mecca for the arts, nurtured by strong legacy support from

corporations located in the Twin Cities.

But back in the early 1990s, after graduating from St. Olaf College in Minnesota, Boss came north to UAA for an M.F.A. This was a time before that creative writing program had transformed into low-residency and while two Alaska literary heavyweights, poet Tom Sexton and fiction expert Ronald Spatz, were both teaching here.

That connection proved significant in 2012 when Boss found a fresh way to celebrate the 30th anniversary of *Alaska Quarterly Review*, the literary magazine

long-hosted at UAA, for which graduate student Boss once labored as an editor. But more on that in a minute.

As Boss explains in the Q and A, Sexton’s and Spatz’s literary lessons took deep root in him. While he accepted many different jobs after his M.F.A.—and mindfully added many new skills to his job quiver—the young poet eventually catapulted to the national scene, anchored by W. W. Norton’s publication of his two award-winning books of poetry, *Yellowrocket* (2008) and *Pitch* (2012). He landed in *The New Yorker* with a poem inspired by Alaska’s topography, “One Can Miss Mountains,” on page 9. Now he’s crafting a third book for Norton, due out in a few years.

But the printed page is only a piece of Boss, now 46. In 2008, he co-

founded (with animator Angella Kassube) a nonprofit company called Motionpoems, delightfully creating tiny films that only begin with the print version of contemporary poems.

He also envisions and executes public art. In 2012, to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the I-35W Bridge collapse, he anchored 35 oversize life rings in the Mississippi River in downtown Minneapolis and published a 35-part poem in the *Star Tribune*. Last October, he created and installed a film projection on the façade of St. Paul’s block-long historic Union Station.

But back to the poetry. Motionpoems works with major publishers and star-powered musicians and filmmakers in a dedicated effort to broaden poetry’s audience. Each year, Motionpoems creates about a dozen works; seasons 1-5 are a delicious excursion archived for viewers’ pleasure at www.motionpoems.com. Indulge!

In our online *Alumni Spirit* magazine at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit, we share the story of one particular Motionpoems collaboration, “The Ring-Toss Lady Breaks a Five,” written by Wisconsin poet Mark Kraushaar and made artfully cinematic by Stefan Lessard, acclaimed bassist for the Dave Matthews Band, and his filmmaker friend, Fred Schroeder. This motionpoem is a direct connect between Boss and his old friends at *AQR*. As he writes:

One Can Miss Mountains

and pine. One

can dismiss
a whisper’s

revelations
and go on as

before as if
everything were

perfectly fine.
One does. One

loses wonder
among stores

of things.
One can even miss

the basso boom
of the ocean’s

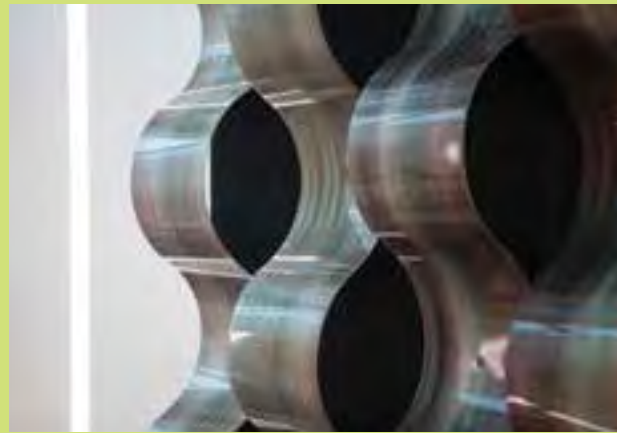
rumpus room
and its rhythm.

A man can leave
this earth

and take nothing
—not even

longing—along
with him.

Todd Boss
Inspired by his time in Alaska.
Published in *The New Yorker*



Let there
be light!

AIRY ATRIUM, BRIGHT COLORS, COZY SEATING ENTICE STUDENTS TO LINGER

Prior to its recent renovation, the Beatrice McDonald Hall was a dimly lit outpost on the original campus quad. Now, following a long renovation process that completely gutted the original building, it's no longer an academic cave.

In fact, it's positively glowing—the walls, the art and even the furniture are illuminated. Coupled with a signature sun-soaked three-story atrium, the new McDonald Hall is a testament to the powers of renovation.

Beatrice McDonald Hall—one of UAA's original campus buildings—went under the knife in 2013 and reopened this spring with new windows, new electric systems, new boilers, almost new everything.

"It was basically a new building," noted Patricia Baum, UAA's project manager on the renovation.

As a professional interior and lighting designer, Baum was the perfect person to take on the low-slung building's renovation. Now, everything is illuminated. Office doors have half windows, so sunlight can carry into interior hallways. Tall LED columns

are built into the wall, flooding the foyers with light. Even the benches—which dramatically increased student gathering space—are internally lit.

Most eye-catching are the photographs lining the walls. Each image was shot in state by an Alaska photographer as part of the project's Percent for Art budget and become a part of UAA's public art collection.

The photos are mounted on resin panels and internally lit by LED light, and each image reflects an academic area taught in BMH. These include

topics such as geography, anthropology, aquatic ecology and botany.

Beatrice McDonald's portrait is back home now, reinstalled opposite the grand entrance. The image of the 1950s business professor welcomes students.

"I think this is a good example of what we can do with the rest of the 1970s buildings on campus," Baum said of the renovation process. "You don't have to tear them all down, you can basically make them into a new building and have it be a really nice building that people want to be in."



Illuminated prints from Alaska photographers add an extra splash of light to the building. More photos at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.

Baby cradle, Lower Kenai Peninsula
Berlin Ethnologisches Museum

Enriching Culture

NANWALEK LEADERS, UAA PROFESSOR
COLLABORATE TO PRESERVE HERITAGE

“In one grave there was a woman and a child. Hard as I tried to preserve them I did not succeed, and I came away with only the woman’s skull and the child’s cradle... We were not the first visitors here, for the collector from the Smithsonian Institution had preceded us.”

The person who wrote that passage, Johan Adrian Jacobsen, had been, from 1881-1883, exploring Alaska and America’s Northwest Coast. He discarded the “almost completely decayed” remains of that mother and her infant at their lonely Kenai Peninsula grave, took the woman’s skull and brought her baby’s moss-lined sealskin-and-wood cradle to Germany’s Royal Berlin Ethnological Museum.

One hundred thirty-two years later, distant relatives of that woman and baby can “see” that cradle, even though it remains 4,400 miles distant from the long-ago child it held. A collaboration between the community of Nanwalek and a Hungary-born UAA anthropology professor made it possible to include and embrace that precious artifact within the cultural legacy of the Sugpiaq people.

“We can’t tell stories all the way in English because no one will understand our broken language, so we’ll just speak Sugt’stun.”

In the years after 1867, when the Russians sold Alaska to the U.S., Americans traveled here to get rich, spread their religion or simply start life afresh. Many new arrivals inflicted discrimination and dislocations on Alaska Natives, forcing Native children to attend boarding schools, barring them from businesses and neighborhoods and forcing them to sit in “Native” sections of theaters or restaurants.

Indignities even touched Nanwalek—“place by the lagoon” in the Sugt’stun language—a community of about 300 Sugpiaq people historically located on the southwest Lower Kenai Peninsula.

“[Bureau of Indian Affairs] teachers came in 1958 when they finished the new school,” said Kathy Brewster, 71, a Nanwalek elder and community health aide. “A lot of kids were whipped, forced to stand flagpole in the wintertime, had their mouth washed out with soap if they speak their language. They used corporal punishment, spanked hands with rulers. They made kids ashamed of their language.”

Life was different at home, however. “Adults didn’t quit using their language,” Brewster said. “It never changed. They spoke Sugt’stun to their kids at home.”

“My mother was ashamed to have dark skin, but to me it was beautiful and I felt some anger that she had been told somewhere by someone that it wasn’t. That has made me stronger from those kinds of acts that were made to be ashamed of being Native. I am not ashamed. This is what was given to us by God.”

The woman who wrote those words, Alma Moonin, was born in Nanwalek, the 12th child of 13.

“I am Sugpiaq and Russian,” she said, explaining that her mother referred to herself as an Aleut.

“It was confusing later on, because when I learned about the Aleuts in the Aleutian chain, we spoke nothing like them. I did not

know the Sugpiaq people had a history because there was not a lot of things like masks and dances or stories like the other Alaska Natives. There seemed to be a chunk of history we were missing.”

When she was younger, Moonin said, people found artifacts where there had been dwellings. “I remember my mom and dad would find some and dad saved them,” she said. “Some other people sold them for a very low amount to tourists that came in the summer—mostly rock, wood or bone artifacts.”

Later, Moonin heard a Paris museum possessed Sugpiaq masks. “I was blown away and happy at the same time,” she said. “That is [a] piece missing from my people and yet I was sad because I could not believe people would come and just take things for show in faraway places. Then I heard there were artifacts in Germany and Russia and I guess I just started piecing some of my own personal history and thinking those are a part of my ancestry.”

When Moonin worked as tribal administrator for the Nanwalek Council, museums would write and ask if a certain item belonged to her tribe and she didn’t know.



Daryl Kreun photographs a Russian badge found in Nanwalek.

RUSSIAN BADGE: PRAIT MUSEUM (ACCESSION #PM 1976-019-0001)

Enriching Culture

“Then I realized how...we need to preserve what little we had in our community and start getting back what belonged to us so we can piece our lost history and become aware of our Sugpiaq ways,” Moonin said.

“People of other religions would come... but the parents and older people, once they found out, we were not allowed to be around them. Sometimes when they would come into our village by plane or boat and the word got around, the priest or leaders of the community would ask them to leave because we already had the Orthodox faith established here. They were not to come and even think of trying to tell us about their religion.”

The most critical aspect of Moonin’s life in Nanwalek, she said, has been her [Russian] Orthodox faith. “It played a big role, even more than the Sugpiaq ways,” she said.

The Orthodox faith became a link between the people of Nanwalek and Medeia Csoba DeHass, an assistant professor of anthropology and Alaska

Native studies at UAA who, as a 16-year-old, saw a televised movie about the Russian Orthodox faith in Alaska and became an anthropology scholar.

Growing up under Hungary’s Communist regime had forced Csoba DeHass and her family to hide their Eastern Christian faith.

“You [could] be punished for it,” she said. “I was looking at this movie in Alaska where people are Russian Orthodox so openly and it’s celebrated and their community is completely embracing this...I think that was captivating for me.”

DeHass wanted to study religion from an anthropological standpoint.

“How do people deal with religion; what is it for, really,” she said. “How does it play into our life, because you can’t just separate out religion. You can’t say it doesn’t affect your life, because it does.”

“I worked with people there who were mostly from the [Alaska] Native communities: Nanwalek, Port Graham, Chenega, Tatitlek. People who are

Russian Orthodox there, that’s where most of them came from. There’s not a Russian Orthodox church in Valdez. I learned from them, they kept telling me if you really want to know about Russian Orthodoxy in Alaska, you need to go to a village and live in a village.”

Csoba DeHass heeded that advice from people she met while studying English at the community college in Valdez and completing research for her second Hungarian master’s degree, in anthropology. A few years later, as a Ph.D. student at UAF, she asked permission from the Nanwalek Indian Reorganization Act Council to live in the village as she conducted research for her dissertation.

“My husband and I met with the Nanwalek Council and presented, saying this is what we’d like to do, study Russian Orthodoxy. They talked about it and agreed we could come in.”

They received permission to stay for a year. “We ended up staying 15 months,” Csoba DeHass said, “then we kept going back to visit. ...Last summer, we were there for a month.”



Medeia Csoba DeHass, standing, works with elders and youth from Nanwalek and Port Graham, to review photos and artifacts as part of a heritage preservation workshop.

“I was telling stories, she was recording—stories that were passed on from my mom, what I’d see around here growing up.”

The community of Nanwalek nourished its culture by protecting its religion, speaking its language, telling its stories, gathering photos from the past.

Their challenge: Helping people in Nanwalek and others tap that rich vein of culture and knowledge. “[Csoba DeHass] made everything easy,” Moonin said. “People felt comfortable with her because she understands our culture and the way we live and we all belong to the Russian Orthodox Church. Probably that was the strongest connection.”

Moonin said people in Nanwalek worked with Csoba DeHass in the collaborative effort to record and preserve their culture. What’s emerged is the Sugpiaq Ethnohistory project, which connects community members,

elders, cultural specialists and museum personnel to discuss and document the Lower Kenai Peninsula’s Sugpiaq heritage.

Museums Alaska, Alaska Humanities Forum, National Science Foundation’s Arctic Social Sciences Program and a UAA faculty development grant funded the heritage preservation project.

Nanwalek elder and UAA alumna (B.A. Education, ’96) Pauline Demas, 64, participated by telling stories of the past. “[Csoba DeHass] recorded some of the stories I had and she would come to my classroom where I was teaching Sugt’stun at the time,” Demas said. “The little kids, their first language is English. I tell them [Sugt’stun] is us and it’s going to disappear. It’s part of you. This is who you are. I would like to see everybody speak it more.”

“I hope this work for children and community members of Nanwalek will

[help them] have the right understanding of their language, history and heritage.

Demas’ sister, Moonin, envisions a future in which she and other Sugpiaq people, educated about their history and heritage, will fully know their identity.

The project, according to the collaboration’s website, focuses on “places that count”—currently uninhabited village sites, subsistence areas and seasonal camps.

It fills gaps in existing scientific and historical studies by collecting oral histories and highlighting its work with Homer’s Pratt Museum to organize, identify and photograph artifacts: bone needles, gut buttons, a carved stone lamp that eroded out of a seaside bluff.

The project also brings home, virtually, relics from the Sugpiaq past held in London, Paris and Berlin—the place where that cradle will remain, thousands of miles from the bones of that Sugpiaq infant it once held.

The logical argument is that the valuable fragment would have been forever unseen if Jacobsen hadn’t opened that grave.

The extended Sugpiaq family of that child, however, still laments the loss of one of its own. “The ties to our history that have been taken from us, I wish we could get them back,” Moonin said.

Despite regrets, Moonin and others in Nanwalek peer forward, toward their future.

“I hope this lets the world know who the Sugpiaq people are,” she said, “and what a rich heritage we have to share that has been almost lost forever.”



*Seining Party - 1892,
Port Graham, Alaska.*

Mat-Su alumni open new theater

The Glenn Massay Theater opened at Mat-Su College in February. The top-notch 520-seat, 34,000-square-foot venue is the first new building on Mat-Su's campus since 2003. Members of the Mat-Su Area alumni chapter reconvened on campus to serve as ushers at the theater's dedication and grand opening on Saturday, Feb. 7.



David Johnson, a Mat-Su College alumnus, holds the Blue Marble that signifies the Glenn Massay Theater design has environmentally significant features. As a student, Johnson founded the Mat-Su Carbon Crew, an environmental activist organization. (Photo by Heather Dunn, courtesy of Mat-Su College)

Alumni discount announced for Mayor's Marathon

If you've been searching for that extra bit of motivation, look no further—your discount code has arrived. All UAA alumni are invited to participate in the Mayor's Marathon events on June 20. Whether you're running the relay, the 4-miler, the half or full marathon, use the code "UAA Alumni" when registering and receive a special alumni discount. Bonus: If you run the full marathon, you'll be pounding the pavement through UAA's campus at mile 21. Register now at goseawolves.com.

Library's pendulum turns 10

The UAA/APU Consortium Library's silently swaying centerpiece turned 10 years old this fall. Anchoring the library's spiral staircase, the Foucault pendulum—presented as a gift to the university from the UAA Alumni Association in 2004—is ringed by the names of the 360 alumni and friends who made the project happen. All 360 donors were invited to an event Nov. 12 at the new Alumni Center (adjacent to the library) to celebrate the past 10 years of alumni momentum.

Chicago chapter launched

We're excited to announce the latest alumni chapter, helmed in the mighty Midwestern metropolis of Chicago. Know any Windy City Seawolves who want to celebrate Alaska on the Great Lakes? Call the Alumni Center for more information at (907) 786-1942.

Alumni night at the Alaska Airlines Governor's Cup

Alumni filled the arena for the fourth and final match of the Governor's Cup against UAF. March 7 kicked off with a UAA vs. UAF alumni hockey game at Sullivan Arena, followed by an alumni kickoff rally joined by head coach Matt Thomas and Chancellor Tom Case. Alumni received discounted tickets to the final game and—along with family and friends—filled the 100-seat alumni section with green and gold. View photos of the event at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.

Take Wing

In November, as part of its Take Wing program, the Alaska Humanities Forum arranged a UAA visit for 23 students from six communities across the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The high school students toured UAA and the aviation campus, as well as Kenai Peninsula College. On Nov. 12, a crew of UAA alumni with Alaska Native and rural Alaska roots met the students to answer questions and discuss their own experiences at UAA.

Engineers take over the library

The College of Engineering alumni chapter hosted a student-focused meet and greet in the UAA/APU Consortium Library on Jan. 30. The chapter invited first-year students to an informal event featuring engineering alumni and representatives from various professional organizations and a variety of student clubs.

Shakespeare, hip-hop, opera, ballet, jazz, Monty Python, classical guitar...

With dozens of performances throughout the school year, the arts season at UAA offers something for everyone. For the 2015–16 performing arts season, look forward to four theatrical productions, two dance performances and three big music events: Symphony of Sounds, Winter Music Fest and Jazz Week. For program and ticket links, view this story online at Alumni Spirit, tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.

All tickets for theater, dance and music shows are available at UAATix.com. Tickets for the 2015–16 season go on sale in August. Free events (lectures, workshops, student recitals) are typically posted on the UAA master calendar at least two weeks in advance.

UAA is also home to three free art galleries:

- Kimura Gallery, second floor, Fine Arts Building, brings cutting-edge contemporary art from around the world to campus. The gallery aims to visually and intellectually engage the community-at-large with recent developments and ideas in the visual arts.

- Student Union Gallery, second floor, Student Union, displays works by UAA student artists. A typical season includes eight exhibits that may include ceramics, watercolor, pen-and-ink and photography.
- Arc Gallery, next to the Alumni Center in the UAA/APU Consortium Library, showcases works by both renowned and emerging Alaska artists.

Visit their websites for season previews or check out the UAA Master Calendar for what's on display any given day.

Spring Commencement Sunday, May 3, 1–3:30 p.m. Alaska Airlines Center

Join us as we celebrate UAA's newest alumni.

Planetarium: "Exploding Universe"

Friday, April 24, 8 p.m. ConocoPhillips Integrated Science Building, Room 220

Experience the universe's ultimate blowups in this newest planetarium show! Explosive events have shaped and transformed the universe, as well as the Earth itself, into what it is today.

"William Shakespeare's Land of the Dead: A True and Accurate Account of the 1599 Zombie Plague"

April 24 and 25, 8 p.m. / April 26, 3 p.m. UAA Mainstage Theatre

Don't miss this comedy in five bites. The premiere of "Henry V" is just concluding at the Globe Theatre when a "deranged individual" bites a company member just outside the theatre. Before the evening is over, Sir Francis Bacon, Will Kemp and even Queen Elizabeth show up at the Globe, as well as throngs of deranged individuals, all pounding on the door... Has the whole town gone mad?!

Guitar Ensemble

Sunday, April 26, 4 p.m. Fine Arts Building, Recital Hall

Armin Abdihodzic directs and accompanies the UAA Guitar Ensemble in their final performance of the season. This talented ensemble explores the versatility and range of the acoustic guitar, proving that no matter the genre its sweet tones take center stage. Learn more about this show and others still to come this season at bit.ly/1BRPMHG.

PRIORITIZATION

WHAT WE LEARNED

Program prioritization may be a mouthful, but it adds up to a serious effort by staff and faculty at UAA to review every academic program and administrative service offered on the Anchorage campus. UAA learned it had areas it could trim. (Community campuses took a wait-and-see approach, giving the largest campus a chance to work through the complex process.)

This brief overview is aimed at UAA alumni who may have heard something about prioritization but don't know the scope of the effort.

Spring 2013 began with two task forces, one comprised of faculty that reviewed 313 academic programs, and one comprised mostly of staff, that reviewed 178 support services.

They created evaluation forms and rating criteria. Does this program or service fit UAA's mission? Does it need to change, or go away?

You might think of this as a prudent routine, like cleaning out the garage or going through

clothes in your closet. What haven't you worn in two years? What box sat on a shelf unopened for three years?

A book on how to do this for higher education, written in 1999 and re-released in 2010 by former college president Robert C. Dickeson, inspired UAA's determined effort. As Dickeson explained, colleges are more likely to create programs to attract students than go through the painful exercise of eliminating nonperformers. But as costs rise, the main source of new funding comes from reallocating existing resources. You might think of it as posting your unused bike on Craigslist so you can buy the skis you want. In university terms, it can mean closing programs that don't attract students so you can better support those that are growing.

UAA's two task forces completed their work in February 2015. Most further evaluations related to transforming or eliminating programs or services will be completed by June. The university expects to realize from \$1 million to \$2 million in savings. Read more at the program prioritization page on the UAA website (tinyurl.com/UAApriority).

\$109
July 2014

\$49
January 2015



(per barrel)

THE BUDGET

WHAT WE FACE

No man is an island, no public university stands alone. Especially if that institution receives upward of 40 percent of its support from the state. When that state's economy declines, so will the university.

Welcome to Alaska in 2015. Oil prices have plummeted from \$109 per barrel last summer to \$49 per barrel in January. Shortly afterward, Gov. Bill Walker opened state budget discussions, recommending an \$18 million trim in support to UA's general fund.

As our magazine went to press in late March, the legislative budget cycle was in full swing. House Finance had pared \$16 million more, for a total of \$34 million from UA's FY16 budget. For UAA, that could translate into \$13.5 million in unfunded support for next year.

In late March, the Senate's University Budget Subcommittee recommended adding back \$5 million, adjusting UAA's unfunded support to \$11.4 million. Conference committees in April will struggle toward a single funding bill. Their final number will go to the governor in May. By June, UAA will know what its FY16 budget is. The new fiscal year begins July 1. To prepare, statewide university officials have updated layoff and furlough regulations.

Many ask how UAA can build new buildings in tough financial times. Two kinds of funding come to the university from the legislature: operating and capital. Capital funds are one-time allocations to construct or improve campus buildings. Operating funds pay for utilities, personnel and programming in those buildings. Think of it this way: If you buy a house, the sale price doesn't include your utility bills while you live there, or the new roof you may eventually need.

"Increased pressure on our [operating] budget creates an environment in which very difficult decisions will be made," Chancellor Tom Case told the campus community in early February. Given looming state shortfalls, UAA's future resides with professional programs and workforce development, supported by a strong liberal arts core, he said. UAA's leadership team says it will use the prioritization findings to inform needed cuts.

Follow developments at the UAA Budget FY16 blog (uaa-budget-qna.blogspot.com).

Find a budget toolbox, including an upcoming UAA budget forum (May 15, 1-2:30 p.m. LIB 307) and review a Budget 101 PowerPoint prepared by UAA Budget Director Kelly Thorngren on the UAA website (tinyurl.com/uaabudget).



Twenty-seven alumni teams, two courses and one excellent evening at UAA. On Feb. 26, alumni returned to campus to putt their way through the Spine at the second-annual Alumni ParTee. This year's course doubled in size, with 18 student clubs crafting one-of-a-kind mini-golf masterpieces for the annual scholarship fundraiser.

Congratulations to this year's winning teams, the **Mat-Su Alumni Chapter** and **Wounded Warrior Project**. The shaking, quaking 4th Avenue Theater—created by the **UAA Marketing & Management Club**—earned People's Choice for best design. Enjoy more photos at Alumni Spirit online, tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.

You have a year to work up your putt-putt prowess before we do it all again next spring. Hope to see you there!



“A resurgence is happening”

Jason Hahn was tending bar at the Petroleum Club of Anchorage when he served a drink to a geologist who had just returned from drilling water wells for South Sudan villagers. “[We were] going through the normal banter when he told me about the Alaska Sudan Medical Project,” said Hahn, who graduated from UAA in 1998 with a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences and is now working on a Master of Public Health degree.

Hahn went from pouring Macallan single malt whisky for Petroleum Club members to helping the people of Old Fangak, a cluster of huts 8,000 miles away from Alaska.

“It is hot—that is honestly the first thing you notice,” Hahn said. “The village is on the Nile River, so it is actually peaceful and quite beautiful, in a stark way. You notice the smells, also—strong ones that pass through from the fish market, from open waste, from cattle, from bare humanity. First impressions are that it is very basic, very primitive. But the people are warm, open, friendly.”

PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENT HELPS



Jason Hahn, former program director for the Alaska Sudan Medical Project, encourages his boat launch crew in Old Fangak, South Sudan. (Photo courtesy of ASMP)

Hahn traveled to Old Fangak in 2010 and served as ASMP’s program director until very recently. “I am focusing on graduate school and will remain involved with ASMP as a board member and advisor,” he said.

Hahn says he’d thought about attending graduate school, but work was always in the way. A few years ago, he was talking about ASMP at a local Engineers Without Borders meeting when a UAA M.P.H. professor talked to him after the presentation.

“She mentioned that this program is online and would fit well with what I am doing in South Sudan,” he said. “I realized public health was exactly what I was doing, and the program would give me more tools and experience for the job.”

Hahn says ASMP makes a huge impact. “[South Sudan] is one of the most difficult places to work in the world, logistically,” he said. “Where we work, there are almost no resources: no tools, supplies or materials. We have to ship everything in and there is little room for error to get our goals accomplished.”



Jason Hahn takes a break from helping drill water wells. (Photo courtesy of ASMP)

SOUTH SUDAN VILLAGERS

ASMP finished building a new solar-powered primary care clinic in Old Fangak last year. And, volunteers have drilled water wells. “The people need basic things like clean water and more food security,” Hahn said.

Before the water wells, Hahn said, villagers drank from the Nile River or mud puddles, putting them at high risk of diseases like bilharzia and other microbes and parasites that cause diarrhea—the top cause of death in children under 5 in South Sudan.



ASMP volunteers bring water, construct latrines and enhance hygiene with hand-washing stations. They’re also focusing on expanding agriculture.

“[Agriculture] has been lost in the perpetual wars of the Sudans over the last 40 years,” he said. “A resurgence is happening. As our local agriculture program has grown, we are seeing more tomatoes, onions, okra, eggplant, bananas. They also fish to supplement their diet, but there is not enough food to go around. This area of the Nile River is immensely fertile. They just need seeds, basic tools and training to get it going. It is taking off like wildfire and is self-perpetuating.”

FROM KENAI COOKOUTS TO CAPITOL HILL



Leila Kimbrell knows the value of an Alaska network—in fact, her East Coast gig came about over hot dogs and hamburgers at a community picnic on the Kenai. A conversation with U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski that afternoon led to her current role—serving as a legislative assistant in D.C.

“To be honest, it came out of the blue,” Kimbrell said. She’d met the senator before—first while in college and paging in Juneau; again when campaigning on Murkowski’s senatorial bid during a summer break from law school. Both opportunities came about through Kimbrell’s sharp interest in staying connected to her Alaska roots.

She graduated in 2002 with a justice degree and paralegal certificate. “At UAA you were definitely a name first and foremost, and the professors knew who you were and they cared about that,” she recalled. “I think that makes a big difference in your education process.” With a keen eye for connections, she next enrolled at Willamette University in Salem, Ore.—the oldest law school in the West.

“Alaska doesn’t have its own law school, [but] Willamette has a strong Alaska connection,” Kimbrell explained, citing the school’s long history of educating Alaska’s lawyers (including, yes, Lisa Murkowski). In fact, her Willamette contacts helped secure that position on Murkowski’s 2004 campaign.

Kimbrell returned to Alaska after law school and started a career in municipal law, first for her hometown of Soldotna and later for a private Anchorage firm. Then came the picnic.

She ran into Sen. Murkowski at a citywide summer event in Soldotna and, as the two caught up, the senator informed her she was looking for an attorney to fill a position in Washington. “It was not something I sought out, but once we talked about it, it was simply an opportunity I could not pass up,” Kimbrell said.



Kimbrell, left, discusses a proposal with Sen. Murkowski in her D.C. office at the Hart Senate Building.

She interviewed and accepted and—for now—she’s traded in wide-open Kenai forests for the limitless row houses of D.C. Although based on the opposite coast, her attention is still on Alaska and she cites the semi-regular returns as “the best part about my position.”

“I do a little bit of everything—researching, advising, meeting with constituents in the areas that I cover,” she said of her day-to-day on Capitol Hill. She specifically focuses on a number of economic policy areas, including tourism, budget and appropriations and small business (an area in which she’s well-versed, having grown up helping at her parents’ small businesses in Soldotna).

Although her continued contact with Sen. Murkowski certainly helped her land the job in D.C., Kimbrell credits her achievements to a strong work ethic, gained from growing up in a family business, and a legal knack for interpreting policy, gained from her career experience in municipal law.

And, of course, there’s her education. “I didn’t know this was going to be the path I went on when I graduated from UAA, but I definitely think the experience I had at UAA helped shape the path where I am now,” she said.

AMPLIFYING THE CREATIVITY OF ALASKA’S YOUTH



Remember being 15 and having something important to say? Was there someone who helped you shape your ideas and encouraged you to use your voice? For Alaska’s lucky young journalists, documentarians, photographers and filmmakers, there’s Rosey Robards (B.A. Journalism & Public Communications ’05), director

of Alaska Teen Media Institute (ATMI) since 2007. Give her a few more years and ATMI alumni will be at the helm of creative content production across Alaska.

Already, they’re taking on projects for organizations and companies around the state. The Alaska Nanuq Commission and Defenders of Wildlife recently contracted with ATMI to work with local youth in Wales, Shishmaref and Point Hope. Together they created polar bear safety videos aimed at area youth—a need identified by the communities. Robards also just worked out a deal with BP for her students to produce a radio piece and slideshow for BP Teachers of Excellence this spring. And some of her youngest students are just wrapping up a PSA for Anchorage Reads at the Loussac Library—be on the lookout for reading, pun-making superheroes (find the video link at UAA Alumni Spirit online).

KEEPING EXPECTATIONS HIGH

Robards quickly learned the best feature of the ATMI office when she came on board as a volunteer in 2004: “Every student who comes here comes on their own accord. They want to be here. It’s a very positive atmosphere.”

The students keep Robards and ATMI’s assistant director, Robert Stormo (another UAA journalism alum), on their toes professionally. Each day can be different—designing something for print media, shooting a short film, brainstorming ideas for their monthly radio show, interviewing community members for a story, traveling around the state for contract work. Students are full of questions about new technologies in media production, too. The best way to give them answers? Keep working as freelancers in Alaska’s media industry.

“Robert and I both still try to do some personal projects here and there to stay relevant,” she said. “It also shows the students that I’m active in the community and I care about things—that I can produce things, not just teach them how to produce things.”

Robards’ overarching goal is to help students create high-quality, publishable media. “Robert and I both have high standards for students. That’s what Spirit of Youth [ATMI’s parent organization] is all about, too—setting high expectations and giving students the tools they need to fulfill those expectations.”

In addition to working full time as director of ATMI, Robards also serves as president of the Alaska Press Club and is a longtime member of Arctic Entries storyboard, two positions that help her strengthen ties between ATMI and Alaska’s media community. A local music lover, she also co-created LiveinANC.com, a place to keep track of what shows are happening in Anchorage. See some recent ATMI productions online, at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.



As director of Alaska Teen Media Institute, Rosey Robards connects youths with local and national media projects.

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.

1979

Penny Cordes, B.A. Anthropology, went on to earn a Ph.D. in anthropology from Stanford University in 1986. She now lives in Anchorage and co-directs the curriculum for OLE! Opportunities for Lifelong Education—a nonprofit that organizes short courses to provide continuing education for Anchorage adults throughout the year.

1993

Bridget M. M. Simpson, B.A. English, writes from Ticonderoga, N.Y., "After 22 years, I'm now a single mom, in the house I just bought on my own. I'm blending part-time jobs, which support the life I want. I finished my M.B.A. a few years ago in health services management and work as a church office admin, director of fitness for senior housing and tech consultant for a local arts

guild. I teach swimming and aqua aerobics a few times a year, swim a few open-water races and promote grassroots financial literacy. I apply my education in unconventional ways, but on my own terms. Who knows what may yet come?"

2008

Erika Veth welcomed her second baby last year. Additionally, she was promoted to director of online learning at Oregon Institute of Technology. She lives with her family in Klamath Falls, Ore.

2010

Katie Marquette, B.A. Sociology, recently accepted a position in Gov. Bill Walker's administration. She now serves as deputy press secretary for the Office of the Governor, overseeing social media and assisting with press relations from Anchorage and Juneau.

2011

Kyrstin Worthen Szewczyk, B.A. Biological Sciences, writes, "I moved to Seattle right after graduation for my master's in occupational therapy at the University of Washington. I married my physical therapy classmate, Alex, in 2013. Now I work as an occupational therapist in inpatient rehab and absolutely love it. We also enjoy kayaking and attending games. Go Seattle Reign, Sounders and Seahawks!"

2011

Rebeca E. Mosquera, M.S. Project Management, went on to New York University School of Law, where she earned an LL.M. in International Business Regulation, Litigation and Arbitration in 2013. She writes, "Thank you, UAA, for equipping me with the necessary tools and skills to come to New York City, excel,

and reach my goals one by one! I passed the New York Bar Exam on my first try, got a job with the international law firm of Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP, I was officially sworn in as a New York attorney last December and qualified as an attorney to practice before the United State District Court for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York in January. This is just the beginning and I'm glad to still have UAA's constant support."

2013

Army veteran Kenneth Bracewell, B.H.S. Human Services, graduated from UAA in three years through the G.I. Bill. He followed up his 2014 book—*A Veteran's Road to College Success*—with the 2015 release of *The Post 9/11 Student Veteran: A Resource Guide for Student Veterans*. Both books are available on Amazon. He lives in Anchorage with his wife and baby

daughter, with plans to move the family to his home state of Texas soon.

2013

Bradford James Jackson, B.A. Theatre and Dance, wrote, directed and starred in the short film *Come Back Home*, a 14th-century Scottish tale of love and war. The 15-minute movie—filmed entirely in Alaska—was selected for the Short Film Corner at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival. It was also featured by Peter Jackson's and Richard Taylor's Weta Workshop (creators of *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy). The film is available on YouTube under the account Bradford Jackson Films.

LENS ON CAMPUS



Student Trevor Jones summits an ice wall on Matanuska Glacier during the field component of a beginning ice-climbing class offered by UAA's Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. More photos at tinyurl.com/AlumniSpirit.



SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE

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

UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

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





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