

accolades

PREMIERE EDITION

SUMMER 2002

UAA GRADUATES MEET THE CHALLENGE

On Sunday, May 5, UAA graduates Eric David, Carmen Elkins and Rebekah Miller crossed the stage to receive their diplomas and walked into the UAA history books as the first graduates of the prestigious University Honors Program.

Founded in 1998 by UAA Professor Ronald Spatz, the University Honors Program offers motivated students the opportunity to enhance their college education with intense intellectual experiences that go beyond the scope of typical

she reviewed and researched actual cases and discovered a calling for internal medicine. David and Miller were both awarded research grants for studies they completed in their senior year. The honors program graduates have earned their bachelor's degrees, but they aren't finished with their education.

David starts a Ph.d..D. program in clinical psychology at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign in the fall.

"The other recruits were from UCLA, Yale, places like that. And here I was from tiny UAA," David said of his first visit to the Illinois campus. "But I felt comfortable almost immediately. The program here has prepared me really well."

**"I'm so happy to have attended college here.
The opportunities I've had have been amazing."**

-Rebekah Miller

Elkins plans to take a year off to get married and work a little before starting graduate school.

"The Honors Program was a great opportunity for me," she said. "It was challenging and hard, but I always knew that education was my ticket to get somewhere. Education is everything to me."

Miller is waiting to hear if she'll be accepted into the University of Washington School of Medicine. She hopes to return to Alaska to practice internal medicine.

"I'm so happy to have attended college here," Miller said. "The opportunities I've had have been amazing."

That's music to Chancellor Lee Gorsuch's ears. "We are extremely proud of the extraordinary accomplishments of our first University Honors graduates," he said.

More than 77 students currently are enrolled in the University Honors Program at UAA. For more information about the program call 786-1086.



Honors Program graduates Carmen Elkins, Eric David and Rebekah Miller

undergraduate programs. David, Elkins and Miller accepted the challenge, participating in interdisciplinary seminars, customized internships and faculty-supervised research projects, in addition to completing the courses required for their degrees. As they soon discovered, the honors program creates a unique and challenging environment in which strong students can truly excel.

These graduates took full advantage of every opportunity. Psychology majors David and Elkins focused on research, both helping to produce the "Kids Count Alaska Databook" for the Institute of Social and Economic Research. Pre-med student Miller enjoyed a yearlong internship with a local physician, during which

**2002 Chancellor's
Awards of Excellence**

Outstanding Service
Viola Harrison
English
Mat-Su College

Innovative Program
Stephen Colt
Institute of Social & Economic Research

Exemplary Performance
Hayden Green
College of Business and Public Policy

Outstanding Contributions to Students
Linda Berg Smith
Counseling & Guidance
School of Education
Judith Green
UAA Consortium Library

Outstanding Research
Brian Wick
Mathematical Sciences
College of Arts and Sciences

Outstanding Teaching
Gilbert Bane
Science
Kodiak College
Claudia Lampman
Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences

Outstanding Staff
Nancy Burgh
College of Business and Public Policy
Brenda Henderson
College of Arts and Sciences

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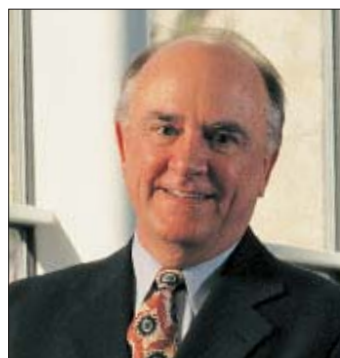
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To learn more about UAA, visit the Web
at www.uaa.alaska.edu.

FROM THE
chancellor

Welcome to the premiere edition of UAA Accolades! Remarkable things are happening at the University of Alaska Anchorage. This new publication is dedicated to sharing with you the accomplishments of our talented students and faculty, the generosity of our committed donors and volunteers, the special successes of our



alumni and the impact of our valued community partnerships.

Alaska's best and brightest students are making the University of Alaska Anchorage their university of first choice. Student enrollment is up for the fifth consecutive year. This month, more than 1,500 UAA graduates received their diplomas. Our graduates are providing a strong foundation for

Alaska's future leadership and development.

The first three University Honors Program graduates featured in our cover story are among our newest alumni. Eric David, Carmen Elkins and Rebekah Miller are quick to acknowledge they experienced and learned much more than they ever anticipated as new freshmen. Today, as UAA Honors Program graduates, they are equipped to compete at the highest academic levels and we're proud of their achievement.

Graduation doesn't mark the end of our academic year. This summer, we offer more than 500 courses, conferences, field study opportunities and special events on our UAA campuses. Some of the summer programs that venture out of the ordinary are highlighted in this issue. These programs not only attract national and international participants, they also have broad appeal to Alaska residents.

We wouldn't have these wonderful accolades to write about without the support of generous donors. Philanthropists like Ed and Betty Beu know and exemplify the value of education. Their recent scholarship donation will make it possible for nontraditional students to pursue their education and, in turn, become contributing members of our community. We are grateful for their vision and support.

The quarterly publication of UAA Accolades will continue to keep you informed as we work to inspire learning and enrich Alaska. I hope you enjoy learning more about the remarkable things happening at UAA.

Chancellor Lee Gorsuch

Summer in Alaska is never ordinary, but summer at UAA is often extraordinary.

Degree-seeking students and community members look to UAA to meet not only their immediate coursework needs, but to find educational opportunities that are out of the ordinary. Venture out and explore some of UAA's 500 courses offered through its Summer Sessions program.

One such program is the *Alaska Earth Systems Field School*. This two-week session takes students to the Matanuska Valley, the Kenai Fjords National Park and Kasitsna Bay for a hands-on exploration of the environment.

"The Earth Systems Field School allows students to use their skills to find the solution to ecological mysteries through a series of clues," said Frank von Hippel, who heads the field school. "It is self-discovery rather than just lectures."

Students will explore ecosystems by integrating the disciplines of ecology and geomorphology. Study topics include the ecology of soils, spruce forest, treeline, alpine tundra, intertidal zones, glaciers, lakes and wetlands.

Some of the world's most noted chemists will attend UAA's *International Conference on Emergence in Chemical Systems* in June. Conference topics include chemical pattern formation, non-linear chemical networks and the origin of life.

The conference reflects the ongoing interests in complex systems theory at the University of Alaska Anchorage and marks the contributions of UAA's Complex Systems Group toward the advancement of this rapidly developing research area.

The study of complexity produces new tools and concepts useful in understanding and managing real world activities. This emerging discipline holds promise for providing insight into such concerns as social ills, wildlife management, military strategy and artificial life.

The Summer Institute in Gerontology is a new UAA science program designed to meet the needs of an aging community and their service providers.

The 2000 Census showed that the number of elderly Alaskans rose 59 percent over the past decade.

"I think it's vital that we meet the training and educational needs of people working with seniors in our community," said Rosellen

SUMMER PROGRAMS:
VENTURE OUT OF
THE ORDINARY



Rosich, co-chair of the gerontology program. "It's about increasing the quality of people's lives. Most people think aging is a disease, but you can age in a positive and healthy way."

Several courses focused on the elderly and aging are offered throughout the summer. UAA faculty and community professionals expect courses to appeal to a broad audience with diverse backgrounds and training.

Summer Institute in Gerontology
May 20-August 10
Contact: Dr. Rosellen Rosich at (907) 786-1739

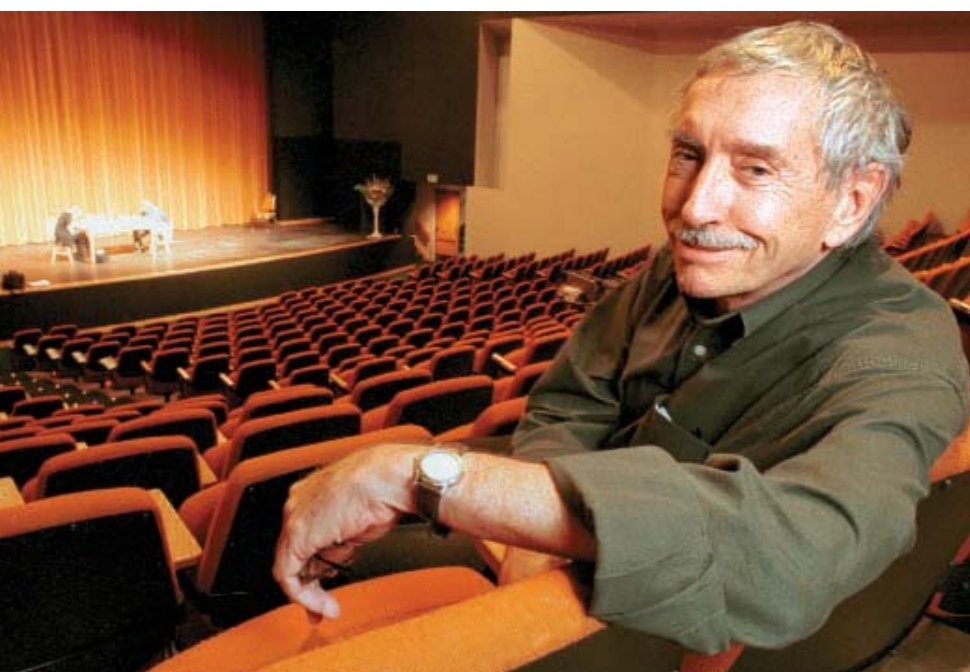
International Conference on Emergence in Chemical Systems
June 20-23
www.emergenceinchemicalsystems.com
Contact: Dr. Jerzy Maselko at (907) 786-4697

Alaska Earth Systems Field School
August 3-17
www.uaa.alaska.edu/envi/earthsys.htm
Contact: Dr. Frank von Hippel at (907) 786-4783

For more than a decade, *The Last Frontier Theatre Conference* has attracted some of the greatest talents in American theatre. This June marks the 10th anniversary of the conference, founded by award-winning playwright Edward Albee and Jo Ann McDowell, president of Prince William Sound Community College.

More than 800 people annually participate in the nationally recognized conference held in Valdez.

With the help of famed playwrights and artists—which will



Edward Albee at the 2001 Last Frontier Theatre Conference

include theatre luminaries such as Albee, Terence McNally, August Wilson and John Heard—the conference will analyze and perform the works of about 25 playwrights this year.

Playwrights from across the country compete to be a part of the conference's Play Lab, featuring staged readings by Alaska theatre companies. Anchorage playwright, Ann Stinson, was selected to compete in this year's competition. Alaska's own Molly Smith, former artistic director of the Perseverance Theatre, will join other nationally recognized directors at this year's conference.

In another special event this summer, the arts come off the stage and into the environment.

Have you ever looked at a location and wondered what happened there before you arrived? Or remembered what happened there the last time you visited? UAA Dance

UAA PARTNERS WITH NATIONAL ARTISTS

Professor Jill Flanders-Crosby and choreographer Brian Jeffery are collaborating with several community organizations and artists from across the state to create performance art that will forever change how you view various landscapes.

Aptly named *Look Again: Alaska Landscapes in Transition*, this unique project interprets the stories of six critical landscapes in Alaska through movement-based performances. The sites were chosen because each has experienced critical states of transition. Performances in Anchorage, Homer and Fairbanks are scheduled June 3-22.

The Kenai Peninsula College hosts the *2002 Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference* in Homer from June 23-27. More than 35 workshops, craft talks and panel presentations in fiction, poetry, nonfiction, publishing, script writing, children's writing and nature writing are scheduled for this annual event.

Award-winning author Russell Banks is scheduled as this year's keynote speaker. Banks has won numerous awards and prizes for his work, among them a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the O. Henry and Best American Short Story awards. More than 30 noted authors, including

Tom Bodett, Sue Henry, Dana Stabenow, Susan Brown and Velma Wallis will participate in this year's conference.

Look Again: Alaska Landscapes in Transition

June 3-22

Contact: (907) 786-1792

10th Anniversary Last Frontier Theatre Conference

June 13-23

www.uaa.alaska.edu/pwscc

Contact: (907) 834-1612

Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference

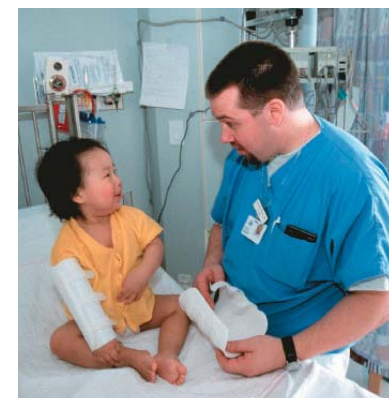
June 23-27

chinook.kpc.alaska.edu/~conference

Contact: (907) 235-7743

UAA's School of Nursing recently received a commendation from the Alaska Legislature after the exceptional task of earning a recommendation for continuing accreditation with no need for an interim progress report from the National League for Nursing.

The nursing school was noted for adapting its programs to accommodate distance delivery as a means to fulfill the needs of rural students and their communities, as well as the state, for a well-prepared and sufficiently sized nursing workforce.



ALASKA LEGISLATURE RECOGNIZES THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

The programs focusing on registered nursing practice have achieved a 93 percent pass rate over the past decade, well above the national average.

"As the state faces an increasing shortage of qualified nurses, the contributions of the School of Nursing become ever more vital," the commendation said. "The 22nd Alaska State Legislature appreciates the contributions made by the School of Nursing, commends and congratulates its faculty and staff for superlative contributions to meeting the state's need for a quality nursing workforce."

FROM THE MALL TO INFINITY

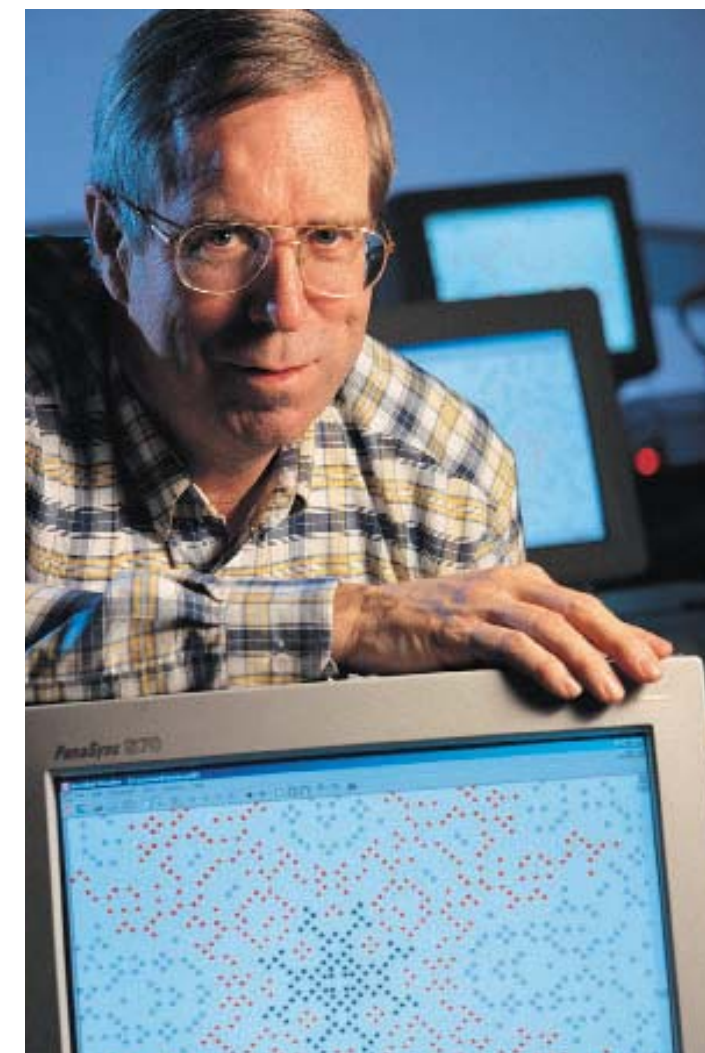
Brian Wick speaks confidently about complex planes, negative integers and math equations that would make most people's head spin. But it was a game he played as a child that won him the coveted Mathematics Association of America's Chauvenet prize as an adult.

The child's route through the mall has them jumping to the same-colored tiles from one end of the hallway to the other. Wick had those kinds of journeys in his childhood. Then he took it a little further in his adult life as a math professor at UAA. The result was "A Stroll Through the Gaussian Primes," an exploration into the distribution of prime numbers in a complex plane.

Think of it as researching computational methods and patterns needed to stay on the colored tiles from the mall into infinity, and the tiles get further apart as you go. He shares the award with Stan Wagon and Ellen Gethner.

Wick's students say his work in the classroom is equally enlightening.

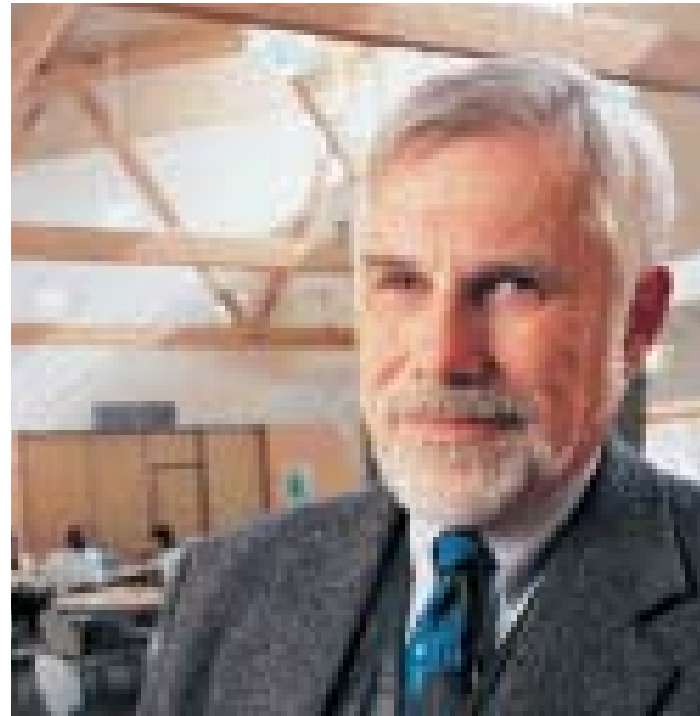
"I think of Dr. Wick as an artist," one student said. "His eyes light up when he explains challenging mathematical quandaries. He creates solutions with chalk on the board like a painter creates beauty on a canvas."



The Edith R. Bullock Prize for Excellence

Steve Haycox, University of Alaska Anchorage history professor, has been awarded the 2002 Edith R. Bullock Prize for Excellence.

The award was named for the late Edith R. Bullock, a former territorial legislator, UA Regent and university benefactor. The Bullock Award was established in 1990 by the UA Foundation to reward those in the university community who have achieved excellence in support of the institution statewide.



of Anchorage and Alaska, including those in the Alaska Humanities Forum, the Alaska Historical Society, the Cook Inlet Historical Society, the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, and the Anchorage Daily News, among others.

I have learned as much or more about how to teach and think from my community associations as I have from my continued professional research and writing, and

my relations with colleagues here and nationally.

I assume that the Bullock Prize is as much recognition of my work in the community beyond the university as it is an acknowledgement of my career within it. It is a signal honor I find most appropriate and for which I am deeply appreciative.

Professor Steve Haycox earned his undergraduate degree at Seattle University and graduate degrees at the University of Oregon before coming to UAA in 1970.

An American cultural historian specializing in the relationship of Alaska to the American west, Haycox has published widely. He has a new book in stores now, "Frigid Embrace: Politics, Economics and Environment in Alaska" and a new history of Alaska, "Alaska: An American Colony," coming from University of Washington Press in July. Both are available at the UAA Bookstore.

I am very proud, and humbled, to have been awarded the 2002 Edith R. Bullock Prize for Excellence from the University of Alaska Foundation. It is an extraordinary honor, and I am very grateful to the selection committee and to the people who supported me for the award, both within the university and in the broader community.

In my 32 years at UAA, I have always felt an obligation to share with the community—beyond the classrooms and the hallways of the university—my expertise, opportunity and good

**“UNIVERSITY” AND “COMMUNITY”
ARE SYNONYMOUS**

fortune of having a faculty appointment. A university is one of the most important cultural institutions in society. It provides both practical education and training, and thoughtful, critical analysis. It is a fundamental resource for helping to shape not just a society's economy, but its values and character.

But in my judgment, faculty and others in the university belong as much to the community as to the institution. In his seminal commentary on the idea of a university, John Henry Newman wrote in 1854 that higher education is much a mutuality. It is both a cooperation between the faculty and students within the university, who come to it from everywhere and represent every branch of knowledge, and between the institution itself and the broader society it serves. He was surely correct.

Mutuality, of course, goes in two directions. It has been my privilege to work with many, many people in the communities

Greg Gurse is honored to spend time advocating and fund-raising for his alma mater and within the community of Anchorage.

"I feel it's the duty and responsibility of all UAA graduates to be active, not only in UAA, but with the civic organizations throughout Anchorage," he said.

It's that attitude that has helped Gurse succeed not only with the community, but in the business world, as well.

Gurse grew up in Los Angeles. At 19, he came to Alaska to study in the two-year petroleum program at Kenai Peninsula College.

**GREG GURSE:
ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR**

But after a year in the petroleum program, Gurse found his true interest lied in business management. He transferred to UAA and completed an associate's degree in business in 1987 and received in 1990 a bachelor's degree in finance.

After graduation, Gurse served as vice president of investments for Wedbush Morgan Securities, managing the assets of more than 350 individual and corporate accounts.



Last May, Gurse partnered with another UAA graduate, George Gates, to buy the financial services company Benefit Brokers. He oversees nine brokers throughout the state in working to manage 401(k) accounts and various other retirement plans, as well as the personal assets of more than 3,000 individual and corporate clients.

As a volunteer, his passions are with the university. When he talks about UAA, Gurse's speech becomes more rapid, his sentences run together. That's especially true when he talks about his involvement with the Anchorage chapter of the University of Alaska College of Fellows, a group of prominent graduates and community leaders who advocate for the university. Gurse serves as chair of this prestigious organization.

As a graduate who has demonstrated excellence in leadership and community service, Gurse earned the 2002 Alumnus of the Year award from the UAA Alumni Association.

"I see the UAA spirit and pride growing," he said. "The momentum is building. This is a great time to be a UAA alum."

G R A D S T A T S

Jay Poss and **Stella Josephine** were honored by the UAA Alumni Association. Jay was posthumously awarded the 2002 Community Service Award. He received a bachelor's degree in biological sciences in 1996. Stella was awarded the 2002 Staff Award for Excellence. She received a bachelor's in elementary education in 1983 and currently works as a program assistant in the Small Business Development Center at UAA.

Dana Stabenow and **Mary Murphy** were honored as Women of Achievement by BP Exploration and the YWCA of Anchorage. Dana received a master's of fine arts in 1985 and is a celebrated author. Mary received a master's of education in 1981 and is a teacher at Huffman Elementary School.



Dr. Betty Boyd-Beu and Edwin J. Beu Jr.

Working as a professor, Betty Boyd-Beu grew tired of students dropping her classes because they couldn't afford to attend.

"I would call to inquire as to why they weren't in class and invariably the response I received was, 'My financial aid didn't come through and I can't afford the tuition.' "

To help alleviate the problem, Betty and her husband, Edwin, established a scholarship to help students trying to balance

the pressures of work, family and education. Students attending the University of Alaska's Mat-Su College are eligible for the \$2,500 scholarship.

"Our scholarship will make it possible for young people to get an education and they in turn will play a vital role in the growth and development of their community," Betty says.

In nearly 60 years as an educator, Betty has helped students in many ways. She is noted for bringing the first University of Alaska-offered courses in 1945 to Elmendorf Air Force Base, where she also served as the Air Force Education Officer until she retired in 1973. Betty left Alaska, but continued as a public school educator in Florida, where she earned masters and doctorate degrees.

LONGTIME ALASKANS FUND SCHOLARSHIP

But Betty couldn't stay away from the Last Frontier for long. She returned in 1989 and later taught reading strategies courses at Mat-Su College. After 57 years in education, Betty retired, again, in April. Edwin is a World War II veteran, a retired real estate broker and a community volunteer.

Retirement doesn't mean Betty and Edwin also retired their commitment to education and to students.

"Our success has been the result of what we have been able to acquire at various higher institutions of learning," Betty says. "Now we have the opportunity to give back to higher institutions of learning."

Betty and Edwin Beu are two of many contributors who have established privately funded scholarships at UAA.

Please consider a gift to UAA as a way of extending your commitment to inspire learning and enrich Alaska. Contributions to any UAA campus may be designated for the program or scholarship of your choice. All gifts are meaningful and appreciated.

Thank you for your generosity.

For more information please contact:

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