

# *U of A System Highlights*

April 22, 2011

## ***Statewide***

### ***Academic Affairs (AA)***

#### **E-Learning**

An online demonstration of E-Learning was conducted at the BOR meeting held on April 7. Academic Affairs, in conjunction with MAU provosts, will continue the steps necessary to ensure E-Learning recommendations from the Legislative Audit of UA Distance Education released in October 2009 are carried out at UA. The next recommendation to be addressed will be e-Learning Collaboration Incentives. The Collaboration Pilot will begin in Special Education, Business, Fisheries, Psychology, and Social Work. Focus on pilot areas will see an increase in E-Learning offerings available to students regardless of their location or the offering campus site.

#### **Health Programs**

The Expanding Access for Health Programs (EAHP) Plan implementation is moving forward in two major areas. Improving UA statewide infrastructure systems that impede students' full access to health programs was addressed in a proposal recently submitted to Statewide Academic Council (SAC) for E-Learning-based collaboration demonstrations. Additionally, progress with use of clinical simulation occurred through UAA inter-professional faculty steering committee meetings. Eight health disciplines are represented and work is underway to offer students cross-discipline standardized patient simulation experiences during the next academic year. The *UAA Accolades* magazine highlighted the overall health evolution as demonstration of organizational leadership and focused on clinical simulation, from the new Health Sciences building to regional coalitions with our health industry colleagues.

The Health Information Technology (HIT) Workforce Training Program, funded by the Office of the National Coordinator to rapidly create health IT education and training programs at community colleges or expand existing programs, has eight official students as of April 2011. Limited discounts are still available for participating in this first pilot.

The AHEC (Area Health Education Center) steering committee meeting was held on April 18. Marilyn Kasmar, director of the Alaska Primary Care Association, assumed the chairmanship of the group, which guides the Alaska AHEC system in carrying out its mission to attract Alaskans from rural and underserved populations into health careers, coordinate clinical rotations in rural and underserved areas to introduce health students to the reward of practicing in such areas, and provide continuing educational opportunities for health professionals already working in these locations. The steering committee includes members from industry, government and the university. The chair serves for a period of two years.

The Office of Health Programs Development (OHPD) at UAA facilitates a variety of multi-MAU workgroups. These groups include faculty, adjunct instructors, and department chairs, as applicable. The Certified Nurse Assistant-Personal Care Attendant (CNA/PCA) workgroup met in April. This group offers support to instructors, shares news from the State of Alaska Board of Nursing, and collaborates on development of new courses and cohorts, and clinical placements. It was decided at the April meeting that there was a need for more rural PCA-to-CNA bridge courses.

Alaska awarded the second student loan repayment grants through its health care student loan repayment program, Supporting Health Care Access through loan Re-Payment (SHARP). This Department of Health and Social Services program helps recruit and retain health care providers in areas of Alaska that have a provider shortage; OHPD participates on this council. To date, this program has given \$235,715 to seven behavioral health providers, \$70,000 to one dental care provider, and \$110,000 to two medical providers. The providers are based in Anchorage, Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Healy, Skagway, and several villages in interior Alaska.

The Della Keats Summer Enrichment Program had 53 applicants this year, 18 of whom were of Alaska Native heritage. Alaska Native applicants spanned Alaska, from Adak to Point Hope, Craig to Shageluk. This program provides academic coursework, job shadows and other health-related experiences in a six week summer program held in Anchorage.

## ***Finance and Administration***

### **Facilities**

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) granted \$1M to UA to perform investment grade audits on a portion of our building inventory. The UA Plan focuses on those buildings most likely to recoup the cost of energy upgrade construction work in five to seven years. The expected schedule for completion of the audits by state-approved consultants is October/November 2011, with preliminary information being available during the FY13 budget development cycle. The expectation is that UA will either borrow funds from AHFC (paid back with energy savings over ten years maximum), or use our own funds to perform the upgrades and gain the projected operating budget savings.

## ***Human Resources***

### **Benefits**

Open enrollment is underway. This is the annual opportunity for UA faculty and staff to review their benefits and make changes for the coming plan year (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012). Packets of detailed information have been sent to employees at their home addresses. Benefits information is also provided on the benefits website. In addition to actively communicating through the website, email and home mailings, numerous group meetings have been held at campus locations to address issues and answer employees' questions concerning the health plan changes for FY12. To date, over 300 employees have participated in the meetings conducted by Mike Humphrey, Director of Benefits.

UA's requests for proposals (RFPs) for life insurance, long-term disability, COBRA and flexible spending account administration have concluded. The new rate for life insurance will save the university about \$125,000 and the new rate for long-term disability \$45,750. For COBRA and flexible spending account

administration, there were no significant savings, but the university believes the vendors selected will provide enhanced customer service.

### **Labor and Employee Relations (LER)**

The Alaska State Employees Association (ASEA) has been actively present at various campuses during the last month. Some employees and supervisors have raised concerns about union organizers interrupting the work of employees. A formal letter was sent to Jim Duncan of ASEA requesting compliance with the requirement that there be no such disruptions. As a result, ASEA filed an ALRA charge against UA alleging unfair labor practices.

The Alaska Public Employees Association (APEA) has submitted a Request for Information (RFI), asking for data relating to exempt and non-exempt employees and supervisory and confidential employees as defined by statute. Labor and Employee Relations (LER) is working with the campuses to ensure that they have completed the required Banner designations defining supervisory employees. LER will respond to the RFI before the May deadline.

The University of Alaska Federation of Teachers (UAFT) and UA have entered into a formal tentative agreement, which will next be presented for ratification by UAFT and the Board of Regents in the near future.

The tentative agreement between UA and United Academics (UNAC) was reached on Feb. 7. The union's ratification ballots were counted on April 16, and the contract was ratified. A meeting will be scheduled for the BOR to consider ratification of the tentative agreement.

### **Operations**

UA has numerous employees who are permitted or assigned to work outside the state of Alaska. Depending on the length of the employment, UA may be required to comply with the tax and employment related laws of other states when this occurs. HR Operations is working with all of the MAUs to become compliant with these requirements.

The Web-time Entry (electronic timesheet) and Grant Effort Reporting project is progressing well. The web timesheet/effort certification for non-exempt employees is in development and a pilot is scheduled to begin in August. If the non-exempt pilot goes well, the exempt web leave/effort certification development is anticipated to begin in September with a pilot to follow in early 2012.

### **Training and Development**

UA has entered a three year contract renewal with SkillSoft for online professional development, following approval by the Business Council. The contract, supported by all of the MAUs, is now extended until Jan. 30, 2015. An upgrade will provide enhanced features. Employees will still log-in through UAOnline or through an internet option using their UA credentials. Demonstration sessions on the new look and navigation will be provided during the summer. Any regent who would like to access SkillSoft lessons and need access or navigation assistance may call Anne Sakumoto at (907) 786-1432 or email Anne at Anne.Sakumoto@alaska.edu.

National Administrative Professional Week is April 24 (Sunday) – April 30 (Saturday). A number of events are scheduled for UA employees at the Butrovich Building on April 25. Other events will be held in Anchorage and Juneau. All are welcome to attend the following events via e-Live or video conferencing:

9:15 - 10:15 am - Scott Keys - Retirement Plan Basics - E-LIVE

1:00 - 2:30 pm - Skip Via - Professional Uses of Social Media – video conferencing

2:45 - 4:30 pm - Wendy Tisland - Lead from Where You Are - E-LIVE

## ***MAUs***

### **UAA**

On May 1, UAA will celebrate the 2,270 graduates of the Class of 2011, our largest class ever, at a [commencement ceremony](#). Stacie Meisner is this year's student commencement speaker. The following will be awarded honorary degrees: Edwin "Ed" Crittenden, Doctor of Humane Letters; Sandy Harper, Doctor of Fine Arts; John Hoover, Doctor of Fine Arts; and Senator Daniel Inouye, Doctor of Law. UAA is also pleased to recognize community leaders Carla Beam, Michael Carey, Mary Epperson and Richard Neubauer with meritorious service awards for their dedicated service to UAA and the community. A reception will be held in their honor on Saturday, April 30.

### **Students and Student Services**

Seawolf Debaters continue their winning season: Thanks to the squad's international success, the Seawolf Debate program has received a personal invitation to send two of its top debaters to the prestigious Madison Cup tournament. Vasillios (Akis) Gialopsos (senior, Political Science) & Brett Frazer (junior, Biology) will join teams from Harvard, Yale, Rutgers, and Cornell.



UAA Debater Brett Frazer was named a Truman Scholar this year, our 5<sup>th</sup> Truman Scholar in the last 6 years.

UAA is also the winner of the inaugural University of Alaska Ethics Bowl, hosted by the UAF Socratic Society. The victory at UA's internal competition qualifies a UAA team for participation in the regional Ethics Bowl where, if they're successful, they may be one of the 32 teams selected to compete in the national Ethics Bowl sponsored by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics.

College of Business and Public Policy economics student, Cristina Gaina, is traveling to Kamchatka, Russia, to conduct economics experiments with local villagers as part of the National Science Foundation (NSF) project that will eventually compare the Russian results to similar experiments conducted in western Alaska. She will be headed to Russia with a UAA-led research team, which also includes scholars from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and the University of Washington.

The UAA University Wind Ensemble conducted by Mark Wolbers performed the program "Masterworks for Band" in the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts on April 9, and then performed a joint concert with the Mat-Su Community Band and Palmer High School Band in Palmer on April 11, 2011.

MAP-Works, Making Achievement Possible, was introduced to UAA in fall 2010 as a comprehensive student retention and success program for 2,300 first-year students. UAA experienced a noticeable increase in fall-to-spring persistence after the implementation of MAP-Works. Comparing similar pre-MAP-Works cohorts from fall 2009 to the pilot cohorts from fall 2010 shows MAP-Works has contributed to persistence gains in the following student pilot cohorts:

- Alaska Native (+2.0%)
- Undeclared baccalaureate degree-seeking (+2.3%)
- On-campus Residential (+6.0%)
- UA Scholars (+1.7%)
- Students enrolled in College Survival Skills (+5.0%)

### **Faculty and Staff**

Institute of Social and Economic Research's Scott Goldsmith was invited to testify in Washington D.C. before the U.S. House subcommittee on Energy and Power on April 13, on the subject of "The American Energy Initiative."

The National Science Foundation awarded a grant of \$48,303 to UAA for "Climate Ethics Works-in-Progress Workshop," under the direction of Raymond Anthony, Associate Professor of Philosophy.

Joy Chavez Mapaye (Ph.D., 2010) won the national BEA's 2011 Harwood Outstanding Dissertation Award for her dissertation, "Viral Viewers: Examining the Role of Parasocial Interaction on Local TV News Web site Visitors' Loyalty and Commitment."

Nalinaksha Bhattacharyya, Harold T. Caven Professor of Business, was awarded the Best in Track Paper Award for Education in Finance at the Academy of Finance Conference in Chicago.

### **Research**

UAA received 29 awards totaling more than \$2.9M between March 30 and April 15. The awards were received in five different areas, including Research (13 awards with a sum total of \$607K) and Public Service (10 awards totaling \$1.9M). Instruction (\$90K), Academic Support (\$144K), and Other Sponsored Activity (\$245K) rounded out the award categories.

Virginia Fay, Assistant Professor of ISER, and Tobias Schwoerer, Research Associate, received three research awards totaling \$153K to continue their work with the Chaninik Wind Group and other entities. They are working closely with the Chaninik Wind Group and a small number of rural utility companies with the express goal of examining the feasibility of emerging energy technologies appropriate for this region, analyzing the cost structure of the technologies and the utility companies, and then creating a collaborative business plan for the utilities. A collaborative plan will enable the companies to work together and create cost efficiencies, share resources and parts, update current grids to meet the new needs of the communities, create new rate structures, and ultimately build the companies into financially stable and sustainable long-term, successful utilities so they are less prone to fiscal emergencies and able to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

Thomas Ravens, Professor and Chair of Civil Engineering, received research awards totaling \$157K. Funding from the North Pacific Research Board will enable a close examination of the shoreline change on Sagavanirktok Delta, which is on the North Slope near Prudhoe Bay. The Kenai Peninsula Borough awarded monies to Professor Ravens to research changes that are occurring on the western Kenai Peninsula shoreline.

UAA's Center for Human Development received slightly more than \$1.3M from a variety of public service awards during the past two weeks. The Center (CHD) received a significant core infrastructure grant of \$542K, which establishes the CHD as a Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Service and Research in the area of human development. The CHD is the only University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities in the state of Alaska, and the monies will be leveraged to support approximately 40 community training, interdisciplinary education, technical assistance, and information dissemination projects.

State of Alaska Health and Social Services (HSS) awarded two public service awards totaling \$583K to Richard Kiefer-O'Donnell, Associate Professor and Associate Director of CHD. The funding will be used to build an evidence-based model to address challenging behaviors and provide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) training to schools and agencies who work closely with youth who experience emotional issues and behavioral health challenges.

Two additional grants were awarded to Karen Ward, Director of CHD. HSS provided \$135K to conduct annual outcomes evaluations of families enrolled in the state's early intervention and infant learning programs. An additional \$70K was given by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development to continue the Alaska First Program, which is a Teacher Industry Externship. Externships are awarded to a small number of teachers, who are then able to attend a series of job shadows aimed at exposing them to different facets of health care. This is intended to expand upon their knowledge in the health and behavioral health areas, which will, in turn, benefit their students.

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation awarded \$144K to Herbert Schroeder, Director of the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP), for an Academic Support initiative entitled Extending Success to Graduate School. The initiative will promote graduate education at the Master's and Ph.D. levels to Alaska Native students who have formally been admitted into advanced science and engineering degree programs and are enrolled in the ANSEP Graduate Success Program. Successful graduate students will be awarded a minimum of \$30K to advance their education. The UA Foundation provided an additional \$235K for ANSEP's Summer Bridge program and general support.

## **Academic Programs**

The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) turned 50 years old on April 13. [Visit their website](#) to read a history of ISER, to see the commendation from the Alaska State Legislature and how the institute will mark this milestone year.

## **Public Square**



Students from the justice class at Mat-Su Career and Technical High School in Wasilla met with Justice Center faculty and toured the Justice Center on Monday, April 18.

Dr. Marny Rivera, Justice faculty, is the principal investigator for an Anchorage Underage Drinking Survey. The results will inform strategies designed to reduce underage drinking in Anchorage. A final report is anticipated by summer 2011. This study is funded by Volunteers of America, Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol, through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

"[Violent and Property Offenses in Anchorage, 2003–2009](#)", the most recent issue of [Justice Center Research Overview](#), presents crime rates and number of offenses for violent and property crimes in Anchorage known to police from 2003 to 2009. Data for Anchorage was also compared with that for five cities of similar size in the western U.S. — Spokane, Salt Lake City, Portland, Colorado Springs, and Boise.

## **Development**

Donors and scholarship recipients were honored at the 6th annual scholarship celebration April 1 at the Lucy Cuddy Center. This yearly event allows donors to meet with scholarship recipients, share a meal and have their photos taken. The university awarded more than 450 scholarships this year to more than 300 students. UAA has more than 200 privately funded scholarships, with 11 new ones created just this year.

Susan Bramstedt of Alaska Airlines received the inaugural Seawolf Service Award from Dr. Steve Cobb at the 2011 Seawolf Donor Appreciation reception on April 15.

Commencing with the 2011 University of Alaska Anchorage's Athlete of the Year Awards Banquet on April 17, the department's annual top award for student-athletes will be named the Bill MacKay Athlete

of the Year Award in honor of William L. (Bill) MacKay — a longtime supporter, corporate partner and advocate for Seawolf Athletics and the University in general . MacKay is Alaska Airlines Senior Vice President for Alaska.

On March 28, College of Fellows members, our leadership donors, were invited to have a “Taste of the Arts,” starting off with a private demonstration and discussion in the Ceramics Studio by UAA’s talented Head of Ceramics, Steve Godfrey.

### **Community Campus Reports**

Kachemak Bay Campus staff and faculty hosted the campus’s first “I’m Going to College Day” on April 15. Seventy-five 5-6<sup>th</sup> graders were on-campus for the day, taking four classes from faculty in math, psychology, history and biology. It is part of the annual statewide project funded by the Alaska Commission on Post-Secondary Education to familiarize children with college and financial aid opportunities.

KBC’s faculty and information technology staff have installed the “River Otter Cam” at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/UAF Kasitsna Bay lab’s dock. During April, BIOL A116 and BIOL A373 students, and instructor Debbie Tobin, with support from Kenai Peninsula College service learning funds, will conduct a mini-research project on otter behavior at the Kasitsna Bay Lab.

Kodiak College Assistant Professor of Business/Accounting Kathryn Hollis-Buchanan recently taught a community class in Ouzinkie on how to write an effective business plan. With 30+ participants, the community is now able to determine the feasibility of starting a coffee shop or other small business opportunity.

Kodiak Archipelago Rural Regional Leadership Forum is scheduled for April 27-29 at Kodiak College. At the economic forums, rural community members explore best practices to develop relations between communities and agencies, and work with partners to identify strategies and opportunities to support community plans. Kodiak College will host a panel discussion including students on April 29 “How to Successfully Prepare for College.” In its’ 6<sup>th</sup> year the Forum is hosted by Kodiak College and funded by Kodiak Island Housing Authority.

Prince William Sound Community College student Margarita Zembzycka placed 21<sup>st</sup> at the US Collegiate Archery national indoor championships. Margarita shot her personal best in the Tulare, CA West Region last month. From a field of 95 competitors, Margarita’s score of 916 earned her the 21st spot in national indoor collegiate women’s recurve standing.

Matanuska-Susitna College Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society held their First Annual Banquet featuring Iditarod Musher Dee Dee Jonrowe. Ms. Jonrowe provided many interesting stories of her impressive career and spoke to the theme of Excellence. The event raised over \$3,000.

## UAF

### Students and Student Services



UAF's steel bridge team took first place at the Student Steel Bridge Competition at the American Society of Civil Engineers Pacific Northwest Regional Conference. UAF photo by Todd Paris.

The UAF steel bridge team took first place at the Student Steel Bridge Competition at the American Society of Civil Engineers Pacific Northwest Regional Conference March 31– April 2 in Anchorage. The team took first place overall and in five of six individual categories: efficiency, stiffness, economy, lightness and construction speed. UAF also placed fourth in aesthetics among the 12 teams at the competition. The annual contest requires students to design and build a steel bridge to meet that year's specifications. They must strictly adhere to a set of complicated rules in the bridge's design and assembly. With its regional win, the UAF team advances to the National Steel Bridge Competition at Texas A&M University May 20–21.

UAF won awards for best design and most improved snowmobile in the 12th annual Clean Snowmobile Challenge held March 7–12 at Michigan Technological University. Nine UAF engineering students (two graduate, seven undergraduate) competed in the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) event. The award for best design is presented to the team receiving the highest total score in the engineering design paper, oral design presentation, and static display events, after attaining passing scores in noise and acceleration events. The Aristo Intelligent Catalyst Technology Award for Most Improved

Snowmobile is presented to the team that in the opinion of the organizers has improved the most since last year.

A team of engineering students represented UAF in the 2011 Shell Eco-marathon in Houston, Texas, April 14–17. The competition challenges high school and college student teams from around the world to design, build and test energy efficient vehicles. The UAF team competed in the event with an electric-powered bicycle they constructed just two weeks prior to the event. UAF was one of 70 teams from 18 high schools and 31 universities across North America to compete in the 2011 challenge.

Men's basketball senior Parrish West was named the NCAA DII 2010-11 Ron Lenz National Player of the Year and a First Team All–American. Parrish also scored 11 points and played on the winning team in the Reese's Division II College All-Star Game in Springfield, Mass.

Nazune Menka, a doctoral student in the Resilience and Adaptation Program at UAF, was invited to give the keynote address during the luncheon April 15 at the 39th Annual Symposium on the American Indian at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla.

UAF will celebrate Earth Week with a variety of free events and activities sponsored in part by the Office of Sustainability, Sustainable Campus Task Force and Residence Life, along with local businesses, students, faculty members and staff volunteers. The community is invited to participate in these events, which will be held predominately on the Fairbanks campus. Events include films, forums, a bike fest, food, demonstrations and competitions in celebration of the Earth.

### **Faculty and Staff**

President Barack Obama announced this month his intent to appoint Theresa Arevgaq John to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education. Theresa Arevgaq John is an associate professor in the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development at UAF. John currently serves on the Alaskan State Council Arts Board and is the former chair of the Traditional Native Arts Panel. She is also the recipient of the Governor's Distinguished Humanities Educator Award. John received her BS, MEd and PhD from UAF.

School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (SNRAS) Associate Professor Susan Todd has been granted a Fulbright Scholarship to teach and conduct research on the role of tribal women in wildlife conservation in Namibia, Africa. She will travel there in July for a yearlong stay.

UAF Professor of Geography and Arctic Policy Lawson Brigham, UA Geography Program, was appointed by the NOAA to the hydrographic services review panel, a federal advisory committee that gives NOAA independent advice for improving ocean and coastal navigation products, information, data and services.

Frances M. Isgrigg, PE, is the new director of UAF's Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management division. A graduate of UAF's civil engineering program, she most recently served as the Fairbanks manager for SLR International Corp., an environmental consulting firm. Prior to SLR, she was responsible for environmental, occupational health, and safety evaluations at Eielson Air Force Base. She brings considerable experience in regulatory compliance, auditing and management systems to UAF.

## **Research**

UAF and the Marinette Marine Corp. hosted a keel-laying ceremony for the R/V *Sikuliaq* April 11 in Marinette, Wisc. The 261-foot oceanographic research ship, formerly known as the *Alaska Region Research Vessel*, will be owned by the NSF and operated by UAF. A keel-laying ceremony is a traditional milestone in the construction of a ship. When the keel is laid, the initials of the ship's sponsors are welded into the keel. The *Sikuliaq's* sponsors are Vera Alexander, dean emerita of the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (SFOS), and Bob Elsner, professor emeritus.

The research of Associate Professor Catherine Cahill and her graduate student, Jennifer Bell, was featured in the April 23 issue of *Science News*. Cahill and Bell, of the UAF College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (CNSM) and the Geophysical Institute (GI), first reported their findings at the spring meeting of the American Chemical Society. Their research shows that U.S. soldiers in Iraq breathe air that's laden with heavy metal-containing dust and fine particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs. Exposure to particles of the size collected in the study is of special concern because it can lead to chronic respiratory infections, asthma and elevated risk of cardiovascular problems.

Michael Krauss, professor emeritus, College of Liberal Arts (CLA) recently received a grant from NSF to complete the documentation and presentation of materials on the Eyak language, which became extinct in 2008 when the last Native speaker passed away. Krauss spent much of his career working with the last speakers of Eyak. The NSF funding will support the archiving of existing materials and completion of a dictionary, translation and transcription of texts and grammar. This will enable future use by both scholars and the Eyak community.

SNRAS Professor Milan Shipka accepted an invitation from the University of Uruguay College of Veterinary Medicine to present an overview of his research in reproductive biology of reindeer and muskox to faculty and graduate students in Montevideo, Uruguay. He also traveled up the Atlantic coast to see a herd of endangered pampas deer.

## **Academic Programs**

Sidney Stephens of MAPTeach, a project of the UA Geography Program, traveled to Hughes to work with teachers and school children in March. The students were introduced to Geographic Information Systems (GIS), used GPS receivers to mark waypoints in town, brought those waypoints into GIS and created maps of Hughes featuring the waypoints they chose.

UAF is establishing an office of undergraduate research and will soon hire its first director. The Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity program (URSA) will support, develop, and institutionalize a broad-based and robust undergraduate research program. At all levels, URSA aims to improve skills in critical thinking and communication and to engender a culture of life-long learning among all students, as well as to enhance preparation and training of students who will fill the needs of Alaska's 21st century workforce and society. Gov. Sean Parnell proclaimed the week of April 11 as Undergraduate Research Week.

The College of Engineering and Mines (CEM) will honor Joe Usibelli Jr., president of Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc., with this year's Outstanding Alumnus Award; and Jack Wilbur, president of Design Alaska, with the Distinguished Service Award, April 30 at Pikes Waterfront Lodge. The college will also honor outstanding students from each of the departments.

## Operations and Facilities



The groundbreaking ceremony for the new 101,000-square-foot Life Sciences Facility (LSF) was held March 30. The new site is near the Irving Building on West Ridge Fairbanks campus. Construction activities have started with site clearing and setting up temporary utilities. Excavation began the week of April 11. The design is 70 percent complete and the project is currently on schedule for May 2013 occupancy.

Adding LSF to the campus steam heating system will exceed the delivery capacity of the steam system. The utilidor to the project ensures sufficient steam to West Ridge by upsizing the system piping from the power plant to West Ridge. The new utilidor will be constructed from south of Lola Tilly Commons to the west side of the Student Rec Center (SRC). Anticipated completion date is fall 2012.

A groundbreaking for the SNRAS greenhouse takes place on April 22, at 11 a.m., at the west end of the Arctic Health Research Building construction site.

Construction of the third-floor renewal at UAF's Community and Technical College (CTC) is nearly 50 percent complete and is scheduled for completion May 31.

The groundbreaking for the Energy Technology Facility High Bay Test Modules project will take place May 12. UAF is constructing four energy systems test bays for Alaska Center for Energy and Power (ACEP).

The Skarland Hall shower room remodel project is 98 percent complete. Residence Life is scheduled to re-occupy Skarland Hall in mid-May 2011.

Work on the electrical and steam lines is continuing inside the new switchgear building for the Atkinson Power Plant. Phase 1B should be completed by June 2011, ready for the next phase. Switchgear has been purchased and will be installed September 2011.

Facilities Services took the coal-fired boilers off-line April 1 at the Atkinson Power Plant to replace the tubing and headers in the 46-year old coal-fired boilers. The boilers are expected to be off-line through May 31 and cost the campus more than \$990,000 for repairs and more than \$1M in purchased electricity. The Office of Sustainability led an energy conservation informational campaign prior to the maintenance period.

### **University Programs**

Planning is underway for a celebration of the anniversary of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), signed into law Dec. 18, 1971. Miranda Wright, director, Department of Alaska Native Studies & Rural Development (DANSRD), is coordinating a number of events around the state.

Twice annually the Student RISE Board and Office of Sustainability accept proposals to support UAF's sustainability initiatives. Preference is given to projects that invest in energy efficiency programs and renewable energy projects. RISE is an associated student board. The goal of the grant program is to endorse promising student ideas for a more sustainable future. This spring, nine student-led projects, totaling \$128,140, were chosen. One of the projects enthusiastically supported was for a glass pulverizer. Glass recycling started in December, with UAF collecting over 10,000 pounds weekly. Crushed glass can be used on campus as an aggregate for use in concrete, fill material, traction control, as a decorative landscape material and in potting mixes to replace sand.

### **Public Square**

The UAF music department hosted the 23rd annual UAF Jazz Fest April 13-16. This year's Jazz Fest drew 456 middle school and high school students and 22 groups from around Alaska for performances and intensive workshops with UAF music faculty members and guest artists. This year's performances included a military appreciation concert featuring the U.S. Army Blues Band.

The Tanana District Cooperative Extension office celebrated its new location, upstairs in the Fairbanks Community Food Bank building, with eight days of community classes beginning with an April 20 open house. The series of 20 classes will cover everything from worm composting and estate planning to crock-pot cookery.

The UA Press will publish *Lucy's Dance*, a new children's book written by Deb Vanasse and illustrated by Nancy Slagle, in May. The book will be published in both English and Yup'ik editions. The story is about a little girl who encourages her grandfather to demonstrate traditional dancing in a Yup'ik village. The story incorporates traditions such as storytelling through dancing, drumming, singing, gift giving, and the use of dance fans. Readers learn Yup'ik words such as uppa, akutaq and kuspaq.

A UA Press book, *Yupitt Yuararyarait: Yup'ik Ways of Dancing*, by James Barker, has been selected for the Alaska Library Association's 2011 Alaskana of the Year Award.

## **Development**

ConocoPhillips has established a \$500,000 engineering endowment to support student academic programs and research in CEM. The company has worked with CEM to offer student internships and collaborate on research projects. "This grant continues our tradition of investing in quality training and education opportunities in Alaska," said Trond-Erik Johansen, president of ConocoPhillips Alaska.

Timeless Gratitude was the theme of the 14th Annual Scholarship and Award Breakfast held April 19. The event celebrates and thanks UAF scholarship donors and connects donors with student recipients.

Cathy Miller, Suzanne Bishop and Ross Imbler recently joined the UAF Development office. Miller is the development coordinator for the UAF Development Office. Bishop is the new strategic giving officer, and Imbler has accepted the annual giving coordinator position.

## **Community Campus Reports**

Byrd Norton retired from UAF's Chukchi Campus in Kotzebue after 27 years. Norton was recently featured in an article in the [Arctic Sounder](#).

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded the construction of two nutritional and physical assessment clinics at UAF, one at the Kuskokwim Campus in Bethel and one in Fairbanks. Design is 95 percent complete, and bidding will take place this spring. Construction in Fairbanks is anticipated between June and December 2011. Construction at the Kuskokwim campus will most likely occur between July 2011 and February 2012.

## **UAS**

### **Students and Student Services**

UAS Commencement Ceremonies take place the weekend of April 29-May 1 in Sitka, Ketchikan and Juneau. Preliminary numbers show a total of 539 students are scheduled to graduate from the three UAS campuses. That is a 42% increase of graduates over 2010. The increase is in part due to new graduates in a Masters of Educational Leadership program and an Occupational Endorsement in Law Enforcement from the Sitka campus. The Sitka commencement ceremony is April 29 at 7:00 p.m. at Harrigan Centennial Hall. The student speaker is Deborah Miller, who will be receiving an AAS in Health Information Management, with the faculty response from Leslie Gordon, Program Director, Health Information Management and Assistant Professor. The Sitka commencement speaker is Mollie Kabler, Director of Coast Alaska, Public Radio for Southeast Alaska. The Ketchikan ceremony is April 30 at 3:00 p.m. at the Ted Ferry Civic Center. This year's commencement keynote speaker is Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Ed Zastrow. The Juneau ceremony is May 1 at 2 p.m. at the UAS Rec Center. The Juneau commencement speaker and Honorary Doctorate of Education recipient is Annie Calkins. Calkins is a long time advocate for public education in Alaska. Ms. Calkins has written more than 25 federal and state grants in the last decade and has been the External Evaluator to 37 projects across the state. She is currently a force working to provide culturally sensitive and significant education to Alaska Native students. The student speaker is Grace Lumba. Lumba is also the outstanding Student in English, nominated for her consistently high quality academic work, and for her work bringing poetry and media to life on campus and in the broader community.

## **Faculty and Staff**

Clive Thomas, Associate Professor of Political Science, is retiring after more than 30 years of teaching at UAS. Thomas taught everything from Introduction to American government and political theory to Latin American politics and special interests groups. Thomas is also a prolific writer, publishing some 13 books and over 40 articles and book chapters. His most recent book *Alaska Politics and Public Policy: The Dynamics of Beliefs, Institutions, Personalities and Power* will be published by the UA Press in 2012. Thomas was also instrumental in the founding and continued success of the UA Legislative Internship Program, which pairs students with Alaska state representatives for a legislative session, giving students real-life experiences of politics and public process. More than 200 students went through this program and some went on to work for the State Legislature or even become legislators themselves. Thomas is the winner of multiple Fulbright and National Science Foundation awards and has worked as a consultant to both foreign countries and local groups.

Jane Terzis, assistant professor of Art and Humanities Department Chair is retiring after more than three decades on the UAS Juneau campus. She started at UAS in 1980 (then Juneau Douglas Community College) as an Artist-In-Residence. Her charge at the time was directing the Arts-In-The-Prisons program for the UA. This program established GED and AA degree programs in visual, literary and performing arts in all of the prisons in the state. Leaving that position in 1983, she continued on at UAS as an adjunct assistant professor in art teaching natural science Illustration and upper division drawing classes until she was re-hired as a full-time professor of art and co-chair of the art program in 2002. "I'm most pleased about the BA degree in Art that Alice Tersteeg, Jeremy Kane and I designed and implemented," said Terzis. "Ten years ago we had two program students in the art program. At last count we had 117 program students. Most are BA in Art majors. This university has an amazing cadre of smart, energetic, and fun faculty and I will miss them more than words can express. I will also miss interactions with students who have taught me so much over all these years."

Heidi Pearson will be joining the UAS faculty in fall 2011 as an assistant professor of Biology and Marine Biology. Heidi received her B.S. in Anthropology and Anatomy with Distinction from Duke University in 1998. She earned her Ph.D. in 2008 from Texas A & M. She has a strong background in teaching and is currently a lecturer at Stony Brook University. She will be teaching a wide variety of courses and intends to involve undergraduates in her research .

Dr. Lee Graham is the School of Education's choice as new assistant professor of Educational Technology. She has her doctorate in Educational Technology from Mississippi State University. She comes to UAS most recently from the University of Missouri Kansas City where she was the Instructional Designer of eLearning.

Lance Twitchell has been hired as an assistant professor of Alaska Native Languages. Twitchell completed his MFA in Creative Writing at the UAF last summer. He has many years of experience developing curricula and in teaching Tlingit language and English composition. He is also a published author of poetry, short stories, and a dictionary of Tlingit Language. His teaching demonstration showcased his mastery of multiple teaching techniques and was very well received by UAS students.

## **Development**

The Emma Marks Endowed Memorial for Alaska Native Languages recently reached endowment level with a \$5,500 gift from the Sealaska Corporation. The fund was established in 2007 to provide financial support for the study of Alaska Native languages, including, but not limited to: student scholarships, tuition, teaching assistants, adjunct faculty, curriculum development and materials. Applications are ongoing through the UAS Financial Aid Office. The current endowed balance is \$26,278.20. Linguists Nora and Richard Dauenhauer created the Emma Marks Memorial for Alaska Native Languages Fund with initial donations that were matched by the UAS. The purpose of the fund is to support the growing Alaska Native Language program, with emphasis on emergency needs. The first recipient of the scholarship was Lance Twitchell.

## **President's Comments**

My special project with the US Air Force is complete. I briefed the final report at the Pentagon on April 14. While on the east coast I made time to meet with UA Director of Federal Relations Martha Stewart.

Attended Air University's board of visitors meetings and tours at the Air Force Institute of Technology earlier this week.

At a recent joint meeting of the Statewide Academic Council (SAC) and president's cabinet, I asked the provosts to pull together faculty from their MAUs to meet with me to discuss the strategic plan process, and as part of that to explore ideas and concepts for improving retention and graduation rates. I had a productive one and a half hour meeting yesterday with Provost Henrichs, Vice Provost Dana Thomas and over 2 dozen faculty members. I plan to continue the meetings across the UA system.

Discussed strategic planning, status of the budget, metrics and other topics during yesterday's president cabinet videoconference.