FIFTY THOUSAND ALUMNI

CAN THEATRE CHANGE US? | WHEN THE LANDSCAPE ShiftS | ALUMNI LIFE IN PICS
Haliehana Stepetin, B.A. ‘16, received her international studies degree this spring dressed in Unangax robes and multiple honor cords. Gold represents university and departmental honors (Haliehana graduated magna cum laude) while red, white and blue symbolizes military status (she’s a Navy vet). Three in 20 graduates in spring 2016 were connected to the military as veterans, dependents or active duty.

The atrium of UAA’s original engineering building has been refurbished as the UAA Engineering & Computation Building.
Complete text here...
50,000 STRONG

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

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

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

Today, Cheryl Wilga teaches and directs the UAA Department of Biological Sciences. Along her academic career path, she completed a B.S. and doctorate at the University of South Florida, and post-doctoral work at UC Irvine and Harvard. She also taught, did research and chaired her department at the University of South Florida, and post-doctoral work at UC. Along her academic career path, she completed a B.S. and doctorate at the University of South Florida, and post-doctoral work at UC Irvine and Harvard. She also taught, did research and chaired her department at the University of South Florida, and post-doctoral work at UC Irvine and Harvard.

RACHEL SHERCLIFFE

B.S. NATURAL SCIENCES ’15
ROCHESTER, MICH.

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

TREVOR DESATOFF

A.A. GENERAL PROGRAM ’90, B.S. MATHEMATICS ’91
ANCHORAGE

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

RANJODH GILL, M.P.H. PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE ’10

WASHINGTON, D.C.

This Air Force vet is now a senior public health analyst in the nation’s capital, with career experience (and a UAA thesis) surveying traumatic brain injuries in the military population. Wear that helmet, Ranjodh says, even on your bicycle. As an elite cyclist which recently took him to Geneva. World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers, Desiré Shepker serves as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Dakota.

DEBBIE STORRS

B.S. SOCIOLOGY ’99
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

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

XAVIER MASON

B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, MARKETING ’15
ANCHORAGE

Xavier is one busy guy! He circulates the world, speaking, lecturing, hosting radio and television shows. He has written and co-authored four books, including the recent release, “Living the Counselor’s Life.”

XAVIER MASON

B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, MARKETING ’15
ANCHORAGE

Xavier is one busy guy! He circulates the world, speaking, lecturing, hosting radio and television shows. He has written and co-authored four books, including the recent release, “Living the Counselor’s Life.”

VICTOR R. SILVER

B.S. MATHEMATICS ’91
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

First-generation college student Victor R. Silver completed his math degree at UAA. "I learned so much about myself. I made a lot of friends."

XAVIER MASON

B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, MARKETING ’15
ANCHORAGE

Xavier is one busy guy! He circulates the world, speaking, lecturing, hosting radio and television shows. He has written and co-authored four books, including the recent release, “Living the Counselor’s Life.”

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

This poet-writer is a crafter of textiles and quilts, an illustrator for children’s books, essays and reflections on family life and a skilled medical scribe. Her writing has appeared in Spontaneous Combustion (http://www.amyammeissner.com/vg4), Accosting about a Rasmuson Fellowship in 2014, Pushcart Prize nominee in 2015, an upcoming invitational exhibit for the U.S. military’s endurance bike team, he should know. For the U.S. military’s endurance bike team, he should know. For the U.S. military’s endurance bike team, he should know.

TREVOR DESATOFF

A.A. GENERAL PROGRAM ’90, B.S. MATHEMATICS ’91
ANCHORAGE

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

RANJODH GILL, M.P.H. PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE ’10

WASHINGTON, D.C.

This Air Force vet is now a senior public health analyst in the nation’s capital, with career experience (and a UAA thesis) surveying traumatic brain injuries in the military population. Wear that helmet, Ranjodh says, even on your bicycle. As an elite cyclist which recently took him to Geneva. World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers, Desiré Shepker serves as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Dakota.

DEBBIE STORRS

B.S. SOCIOLOGY ’99
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

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

XAVIER MASON

B.B.A. MANAGEMENT, MARKETING ’15
ANCHORAGE

Xavier is one busy guy! He circulates the world, speaking, lecturing, hosting radio and television shows. He has written and co-authored four books, including the recent release, “Living the Counselor’s Life.”

VICTOR R. SILVER

B.S. MATHEMATICS ’91
GRAND FORKS, N.D.

First-generation college student Victor R. Silver completed his math degree at UAA. "I learned so much about myself. I made a lot of friends."
plans a career in ophthalmology. Each one. Round two, he got in! He sought advice and personal faith pulled him through. An example: His first round of medical school applications all failed. If you’re flying back from Hawaii, odds you have Mauna Loa macadamias in tow. Thank Michael, its purchasing manager. After his logistics degree took him to the frigid North Slope, he moved to Hawaii with his wife to enjoy off weeks in the tropical sunsets. Now, he’s full time in Hilo, helping make Mauna Loa nuts a must-have vacation souvenir.

Michelle Karcher, B.S. Management, Global Logistics Management ’06 Anchorage Two years ago, Danielle Dance started working as a civil designer for Hanson Professional Services. Her first assignment? A project she worked on during her senior design class at UAA. She’s also helped design projects in Chicago, including conceptual phases of a high-speed rail project and roadway interchanges and a lead design engineer role on a smaller road and intersection project.

Melissa Shein, B.S. Biological Sciences ’10/’20 Anchorage As a single mom, nursing was a way Melissa could support her children. It worked well for a decade. But having grown up in a family construction business, that self-determined lifestyle appealed. Now she and her daughter own and run Sheep Creek Lodge in Willow. “Come on in for a cup of coffee,” she says. “We’re more of a community roadhouse.”

Danielle Dance, B.S. Civil Engineering ’14 Anchorage Two years ago, Danielle Dance started working as a civil designer for Hanson Professional Services. Her first assignment? A project she worked on during her senior design class at UAA. She’s also helped design projects in Chicago, including conceptual phases of a high-speed rail project and roadway interchanges and a lead design engineer role on a smaller road and intersection project.

Darrin Marshall, A.A.S. Automotive Technology ’02, B.S. Technology ’13 Wasilla Darrin Marshall learned all about cars as a student at UAA, and his education never stopped. He’s still here, using his expertise to teach future auto technicians the most cutting-edge General Motors automotive warranty— he has 570 GM certifications, a GM World Class certification and Master ASE certification. “I still believe being an automotive technician is one of the best jobs.”

Michael Karcher, B.S. MANAGEMENT, GLOBAL LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT ’06 HOW MALL, HAWAI‘I

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

Melissa Shein, B.S. BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES ’10/’20 ANCHORAGE

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

Danielle Dance, B.S. Civil Engineering ’14 ANCHORAGE

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

Darrin Marshall, A.A.S. Automotive Technology ’02, B.S. Technology ’13 WASSILIA

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

Michael Karcher, B.S. Management, Global Logistics Management ’06 Hilo, Hawaii

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

Melissa Shein, B.S. Biological Sciences ’10/’20 Anchorage

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

Danielle Dance, B.S. Civil Engineering ’14 Anchorage

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

Darrin Marshall, A.A.S. Automotive Technology ’02, B.S. Technology ’13 Wasilla

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

Michael Karcher, B.S. Management, Global Logistics Management ’06 Hilo, Hawaii

If you’re flying back from Hawaii, odds you have Mauna Loa macadamias in tow. Thank Michael, its purchasing manager. After his logistics degree took him to the frigid North Slope, he moved to Hawaii with his wife to enjoy off weeks in the tropical sunsets. Now, he’s full time in Hilo, helping make Mauna Loa nuts a must-have vacation souvenir.
MADDY ALUVNIA-STIMPFLY, B.A.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ’15

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

OLIVER PETRATIS, B.A. ENGLISH AND DUAL LANGUAGES ’15
ANCHORAGE
As a Fulbright scholar, Oliver began his year two of his position teaching English in Münster, Germany. A creator of words and music, he’s released his first album. Narrow (Burning) find it on SoundCloud, YouTube and Bandcamp. During a brief home visit this summer, he made the pages of the Anchorage Press with impressive performances in the tunnel at Edelberg Park. (See Page 20.)

CYNTHIA TEMENTE-MATSON, M.B.A. BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ’99
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
As the second president of Texas A&M University-San Antonio, Cynthia leads one of the fastest-growing universities in Texas. She has more than 20 years’ experience in higher education, including serving as a vice chancellor at UAA. An avid reader and bicyclist, she is also deeply involved in the San Antonio community and serves on numerous national higher education associations and boards.
MICHAEL MCGEE, M.E.D., EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP '15
ANCHORAGE
Teaching small children at Polaris K-12 school in Anchorage has been the focus of Mike McGee’s life since he received his teaching certification from UAA in 2005. He returned to UAA to earn his master’s degree and now is using his new expertise in teaching the university’s introduction to early childhood education class. “I enjoy working with and learning from older students,” he said.

SAM KITO
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING ‘18
JUNEAU
Rep. Kito (D-Juneau) says he’s committed to solving Alaska’s fiscal stranglehold, including adding new taxes: “I don’t see how we get to a solution without doing that.” He still works in engineering consulting. His personal test for the value of his UAA degree? Passing the licensing exam on his first try, in a field where 60 percent of first-timers repeat.

CRASTLYNN LEMIEUX
B.S. HEALTH SCIENCES ‘15
KANALOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA
Exploring her indigenous heritage is crucial for this Tlingit student from Haines who earned a UAA health sciences degree last year and also won a 2016-17 Fulbright award. In September, she began an eight-month-long online cultural identity project with students at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia.

KRISTEN THURSTON
B.A. HISTORY ‘14
SRI LANKA, ANCHORAGE
After completing her bachelor’s degree (with minors in French and political science) Kristy freelanced for the Anchorage Press for a year before the Asia Foundation selected her as a LankaCorps Fellow. For six months at Verité Research in Colombo, Sri Lanka, she helped disseminate research and shift public policy on important issues in that country. Oh, and she co-founded Alaska Quidditch.

DANA GORDON
B.A. ENGLISH ’96, M.ED. COUNSELOR EDUCATION ’99
DELRAY BEACH, FLA.
As a professional beach volleyball player, Diana starts her day bump-set-spiking in the sand as the sun rises over Florida’s coastline. And as a professional copywriter, she works 100 percent remotely (good thing, since she’s traveling to pro tournaments half the year). “I really do live the dream life in many ways,” she said the former UAA nursing and volleyball athlete.

JEAN BARDARSON
A.A.S. DENTAL HYGIENE ’80
SEWARD
As mayor of Seward, Jean serves as the face (and welcoming handshake) for her community whenever governors, ambassadors and even President Obama come to town. But, in a perfect glimpse of small-town city hall life, Jean still works two days a week as a hygienist at the local dentist’s office.

JEN BOSTIN
B.A. THEATRE ’93
RICHMOND, VA.
What hasn’t she done? From Vietnam-era stagehand (JUL 1988), regional and national honoree to Lenny in Of Mice and Men (Perseverance Theatre 2012) to Al in Fire in Fezwater (Film, 2013 Lordshipgate). Did someone say college professor? That, too! But she is a professor and senior acting teacher at Virginia Commonwealth University. She opens this spring in The Gun Show, and is busy writing. (See page 23.)

BRAD KERLEY
A.A. GEN. STUDIES ’04, B.A. ANTHROPOLOGY ’13, B.A. ARTS ’15
KALAMAZOO, MICH.
Brandi grew up in Ketchikan among a family of salmon, halibut and herring fishermen. “I miss the water” she says. Working now as developmental advisor at Kenai Peninsula College, Brandi is pursuing her fourth degree—a master’s in Artic and Northern Studies from UAF. She completed her first solo art exhibit—celebrating salmon—this summer at the Kenai Fine Art Center.

ARLITA JONES
B.A. ENGLISH ’95, M.F.A. CREATIVE WRITING ’98
ANCHORAGE, CINCINNATI IN 2017

GEORGE LENS
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING ‘16
ANCHORAGE
Keeping air travel safe is the focus of George Lens’s current project as an Alaska Department of Transportation engineering assistant. He’s helping repave and widen Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport taxiways. “I enjoy seeing how the construction process of civil engineering happens—how I can use that information to help better design projects in the future.”

RICK KURTZ
B.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE ’89
PORTSMOUTH, OHIO
As president of Shawnee State University in southern Ohio, Rick knows the challenges facing his 4,400 students. A first-generation nontraditional student at UAA, he went on to earn a Ph.D., chair the political science department at Central Michigan University, and publish extensively on crisis management surrounding oil spills and pollution.

NITHYA THIRU
B.A. HISTORY ‘14
SRI LANKA, ANCHORAGE
After completing her bachelor’s degree (with minors in French and political science) Nithya freelanced for the Anchorage Press for a year before the Asia Foundation selected her as a LankaCorps Fellow. For six months at Verité Research in Colombo, Sri Lanka, she helped disseminate research and shift public policy on important issues in that country. Oh, and she co-founded Alaska Quidditch.

JON ROSS
B.S. CIVIL ENGINEERING ‘88
ANCHORAGE
Keeping air travel safe is the focus of George Lens’s current project as an Alaska Department of Transportation engineering assistant. He’s helping repave and widen Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport taxiways. “I enjoy seeing how the construction process of civil engineering happens—how I can use that information to help better design projects in the future.”

JEROME ROSS
B.S. NURSING SCIENCE ‘15
ANCHORAGE
Jerry was a champion runner on UAA’s cross-country team who went on to compete three times in the Boston Marathon. Then, his heart rate began soaring after training runs. Two surgeries corrected the issue—a congenital heart problem—and Jerry found a new career trajectory. He received his bachelor’s degree in nursing science last year.

BRANDI KERLEY
A.A. GEN. STUDIES ’04, B.A. ANTHROPOLOGY ’13, B.A. ARTS ’15
KALAMAZOO, MICH.
Brandi grew up in Ketchikan among a family of salmon, halibut and herring fishermen. “I miss the water” she says. Working now as developmental advisor at Kenai Peninsula College, Brandi is pursuing her fourth degree—a master’s in Artic and Northern Studies from UAF. She completed her first solo art exhibit—celebrating salmon—this summer at the Kenai Fine Art Center.

KIRA BRADBURY
M.F.A. CREATIVE WRITING ’98
ANCHORAGE, CINCINNATI IN 2017
As the state’s fiscal situation adjusts to declining oil revenues, university leaders reflect on making our way through dynamic change.

JIM JOHNSEN
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SYSTEM
“We have the opportunity, if not the necessity, to create our own path forward for Alaska. Our actions will not only change our university and our state, they will change us. We will become leaders, confident in ourselves and in Alaska’s future.”

SAMUEL ERICKSON
UNION OF STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA PRESIDENT 2016-17
“In my experience as a student leader on campus, I have found that change—institutional and individual alike—is an opportunity. When old paradigms fall away, there is room for the new, the unexpected, and the different.

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

RACHEL MORSE, M.B.A. ’08
ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ALUMNI RELATIONS
“It is both daunting and exciting to think that the choices we make today not only define us in the present, but also shape the university we will become moving forward. As the living embodiment of what we do, what we value and what we aspire to be as an institution, it is critical that alumni have a strong voice in determining our future. When I think of the alumni who have taken up the yoke of leadership in these challenging times, I am filled with confidence.”

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

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

DIANE HIRSHBERG
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION POLICY DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR ALASKA EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH
“I know that if we handle the difficulties well, we can come out stronger on the other side. Certainly there are inefficiencies in how we operate our university — it’s a large bureaucracy. All the clichés about never waste a good crisis can be true. But only if we make change thoughtfully and intentionally, not just reactively.

“We need to ask why we do things the way we do them now, as well as whether what is being proposed is really better and not just different.”

DALE TRAN, B.B.A. ’15
CHANCELLOR’S ADVISORY BOARD, CFO, KALADI BROS.
“With the necessity for change, we recognize that there are opportunities to emerge as a stronger, better institution. To effect change, we must be bold in our mindset, courageous in our action, and confident in our team.”

TOM CASE, UAA CHANCELLOR
“In many ways, UAA is defined by our alumni, now some 50,000 strong. As Alaska’s current and future leaders — you make us proud. Successful leaders focus not only on what is, but also on what might be. Our UAA priorities will remain the education of students for Alaska, the pursuit of research and discoveries to move our state forward, and the development of a vibrant community engaged in supporting the University now and in the future. In challenging times, change can be stressful, but I believe in the resilience of our institution and our ability to lead. Alaska is counting on us.”
Research on ‘Stalking the Bogeyman’ Will Try to Find Out Can Theatre Change Us?

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

The spring issue of Alumni Spirit featured an article on UAA’s staging of Bogeyman. Though the production had a limited run on campus, the work related to the play and its impact is still unfolding. UAA faculty and student researchers are leaning into important questions: Would showing this production in Alaska, the very place the playwright was raped as a 7-year-old, make a difference? Could it create a space for affected Alaskans to begin to talk about this problem? To begin to heal?

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

Her academic colleague, Rebecca Robinson, an assistant professor and three-time alumna of UAA degree programs, concurred. “The word that comes to mind is agitation. I want this project to agitate. Being agitated can lead to dialogues that can help us all understand each other a little bit differently, and hopefully change and grow as people.”

Bridging Disciplines Centered as it was at a public university, this production became the fulcrum of an energetic interdisciplinary team focused on exploring the play’s full potential as a source of community dialogue and healing. For its innovative aspirations, the project won financial support from a campus Innovate award. Community member Priscilla Hendley, a UAA alumna and spouse of the playwright, led a team comprised of faculty from the UAA departments of theatre and dance, psychology, art, and the campus center for community engagement.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

While Burkhart is still analyzing her interviews, she said preliminary results show the nine actors fared well. They...
frequently cited a close and supportive connection among cast members, as well as a proactive attitude by director Brian Cook to keep the material in perspective using activities like post-rehearsal decompression games.

Burkhart was struck by the cast’s commitment. “A lot of the actors talked about really wanting to make a difference in some way: whether increasing awareness or facilitating dialogue.” In fact, Cook is working on a journal article about how the production roused cast members to embrace socially engaged theatre.

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

More than 340 people attended the five shows she surveyed. Of those, 267 answered the first survey. After the third survey, she had 64 respondents for all three. Now she’ll analyze the results for behavior change over time. Did people talk more about child sexual abuse after seeing the production?

Burkhart and Freitas-Murrell expect to complete their dissertation, write their analysis, and defend them for further use should opportunity and funding become available.

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

Burkhart was struck by the cast’s commitment. “A lot of the actors talked about really wanting to make a difference in some way: whether increasing awareness or facilitating dialogue.” In fact, Cook is working on a journal article about how the production roused cast members to embrace socially engaged theatre.

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

More than 340 people attended the five shows she surveyed. Of those, 267 answered the first survey. After the third survey, she had 64 respondents for all three. Now she’ll analyze the results for behavior change over time. Did people talk more about child sexual abuse after seeing the production?

Burkhart and Freitas-Murrell expect to complete their analysis, write their dissertation, and defend them for further use should opportunity and funding become available.

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

Let the conversations fly.

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

Burkhart and Freitas-Murrell expect to complete their analysis, write their dissertation, and defend them for further use should opportunity and funding become available.

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

Let the conversations fly.

The following funding sources made this project possible: UAA Innovate Award, UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning, National Endowment for the Arts, Rasmuson Foundation, Alaska Children’s Trust, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and a generous anonymous donor. An additional thank you to Priscilla Hensley-Holthouse and David Holthouse. The original story may be found at: http://tinyurl.com/zzhccvf.
FIND THEM PURSING THEIR DREAMS ALL OVER ALASKA, THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD.

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

PAGE 21: Coach Dan Esparza, B.A. ’09, runs practice with the Bartlett High School football team. He co-leads the team with fellow alum John Jessen, B.A. ’95, B.Ed. ’97. Alex Foster, B.S. Sociology ’12, works in Myanmar during his training to become an ophthalmologist through WWAMI.
Alumni and friends returned to campus for the seventh-annual Green & Gold Gala on Oct. 1. Former Seawolf gymnast Sara Carver-Milne, B.A. ’97—head gymnastics coach at Brown University—leads her team at a home meet last season.

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

Have pics of your life after UAA? Send them to: alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu
Help students celebrate education in Moldova by donating your graduation gown at the UAA Alumni Center.

2016 Alumni of Distinction recognized at Gala

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

Alumni of Achievement: Beth Stuart, B.B.A. Accounting ’94
Alumni Emerging Leader: Michael Rose, B.A. Political Science ’99

Psychology department holds first alumni weekend

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

Rasmussen Chair on “carbon credits” Nov. 9, 5-7 p.m. / UAA Campus Bookstore Free

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

UA Dance in Performance

Women’s basketball road trip

The women’s basketball team marched to the Division II National Championship in April. Fans were in full force at the historic game in Indianapolis. “Any time you say the words ‘national championship,’ it means a lot to anybody that’s been involved in the program,” said Stacie Cepin, B.A.’90, a former member of the team who drove in from Ohio. “Here we have this new arena, now they’re playing for a national title. It doesn’t get any better than that!” added Kelly Kowal, B.Ed. ’91, another former athlete who took three flights on two airlines through four cities to reach the game, a national title. It doesn’t get any better than that!”

Great Alaska Shootout

Governor’s Cup: UAA vs. UAF Dec. 9-10 / Carlson Center in Fairbanks, Alaska Airlines

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

Moldovans graduate with UAA flare

Hîrtopul-Mare, a small village in Moldova, held its first graduation ceremony, thanks to UAA’s Newcomers’ Program. “It was amazing, just really, really amazing,” said Bonnie Palach, B.B.A. Accounting ’94. According to the site’s lead story, Anchorage has “the country’s best school district for refugees.” Thanks to the UAA’s Newcomers’ Program, Mariana Parasca, B.B.A. ’96, in the past year, she has also raised $5,000 for the village’s first playground, helped secure a donated wheelchair and wheelchair ramp at the school and appeared on Moldova’s national news for her efforts.

Alumni educators celebrated in national news

The Anchorage School District received high marks over summer vacation from national newsmagazine Slate.com. According to the site’s lead story, Anchorage has “the country’s best school district for refugees.” The June 6 report praised ASD’s Newcomers’ Center, which blends in-classroom integration with specialized language learning classes for the district’s most recent arrivals. The story quoted Michael Rose, B.S.W. ’98, M.S.W. ’99, B.A. English ’06, another alumna of the team) Rachel Hopkins, B.Ed. ’99.

Congratulations to this year’s alumni honorees.

Alumni of Achievement: Beth Stuart, B.B.A. Accounting ’94
Alumni Emerging Leader: Michael Rose, B.A. Political Science ’99

“Working” Feb. 10-26 / Fine Arts Building Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 8 p.m. / Sunday, 6 p.m.

UAAtix.com

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

Exclusive alumni discounts on arts and athletics

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

Get lost in the movement as the talented performers experiment with a wide range of ideas and styles.

UAAtix.com

Season of the Seawolves

Great Alaska Shootout: UAA vs. UAF Dec. 9-10 / Carlson Center in Fairbanks, Alaska Airlines

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

Help students celebrate education in Moldova by donating your graduation gown at the UAA Alumni Center.
1984
Steven Elliott, B.B.A. Accounting, writes: “After a great season of life in Alaska and relocating from Wasilla to Columbia, S.C., in 2006, I’ve had the pleasure to work for two exciting and successful domestic companies and a single international company as a senior executive in finance and accounting. I’ve also had the exciting experience of adopting a son and daughter from Odessa, Ukraine, as well as remarrying after the loss of my wife to cancer in 2014. I am so thankful for the great experience and education I received at UAA and in Alaska. Go Seawolves.”

2010
Amanda Brewer Stewlow, B.A. Dual Languages, has served as a cryptologic language analyst for the U.S. Army since 2011, based out of Kapolei, Hawai‘i. She writes that she’s leaving active Army status in June 2017 and moving back to Alaska, where she hopes to use her G.I. Bill to reenroll in graduate school at UAA.

2007
In August, Chris Robinson, M.Ed., was named the first full-year teacher-in-residence at the National Museum of the American Indian, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Formerly a teacher in rural Alaska, Chris (Eeek’/ Georgia Cherokeet/ Tlingit) will help tribal groups write content for Native Knowledge 360°, an online educational resource that aims to incorporate accurate indigenous history into the country’s classrooms. In May 2017, Chris will return to Richmond, Ky., where he’s taught at Model High School and served as an assistant professor at Eastern Kentucky University for the past nine years.

2011
Kellie Doherty, B.A. English, graduated with a minor in creative writing. Since then, she’s moved to Portland, Ore., and successfully completed Portland State University’s graduate program in book publishing. Her first sci-fi book, Finding Hekate, got picked up by Desert Palm Press and debuted in April. Finding Hekate is available at online book vendors, including Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and on the shelves at Powell’s Books on Hawthorn in Portland. She is currently working on her second novel, a continuation of Finding Hekate called Losing Hold.

2010
“Born and raised in Alaska, the day after graduating from UAA I moved to North Carolina with no idea what I wanted to do, except to get out of here,” writes Amanda (Banning) Davis, B.A. Sociology. “Well, after 1.5 years I moved back. I’m now married and have two children and am the regional manager for Batteries Plus Bulbs—a family-owned and operated business—and its three locations throughout the state.”

2010
“After a great season of life in Alaska and relocating from Wasilla to Columbia, S.C., in 2006, I’ve had the pleasure to work for two exciting and successful domestic companies and a single international company as a senior executive in finance and accounting. I’ve also had the exciting experience of adopting a son and daughter from Odessa, Ukraine, as well as remarrying after the loss of my wife to cancer in 2014. I am so thankful for the great experience and education I received at UAA and in Alaska. Go Seawolves.”

2007
In August, Chris Robinson, M.Ed., was named the first full-year teacher-in-residence at the National Museum of the American Indian, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Formerly a teacher in rural Alaska, Chris (Eeek’/ Georgia Cherokeet/ Tlingit) will help tribal groups write content for Native Knowledge 360°, an online educational resource that aims to incorporate accurate indigenous history into the country’s classrooms. In May 2017, Chris will return to Richmond, Ky., where he’s taught at Model High School and served as an assistant professor at Eastern Kentucky University for the past nine years.

2011
Kellie Doherty, B.A. English, graduated with a minor in creative writing. Since then, she’s moved to Portland, Ore., and successfully completed Portland State University’s graduate program in book publishing. Her first sci-fi book, Finding Hekate, got picked up by Desert Palm Press and debuted in April. Finding Hekate is available at online book vendors, including Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and on the shelves at Powell’s Books on Hawthorn in Portland. She is currently working on her second novel, a continuation of Finding Hekate called Losing Hold.

This page of alumni updates was compiled by Joey Besl of the UAA Office of Alumni Relations. Please share your moments of pride and achievement via the link at the bottom of this page, so we can note your success in an upcoming issue.
Show off your Seawolf spirit with stickers from the UAA Alumni Association. Whether you stamp up your kayak rack or your guitar case, your snowboard or your Subaru, we want to be part of your next adventure. Call or email the Alumni Center to receive your sticker in the mail. Then, tag us in your adventurous photos out there in #SeawolfNation.

Alumni Center | 907-786-1942 | alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu | Facebook.com/AlumniUAA