The Alaska Airlines Center will open in September, but here’s what it looked like in February.
Welcome to the first edition of our new magazine, UAA Alumni Spirit.

This twice-yearly print publication, along with its regularly updated online edition, signals a fresh approach to connecting with our impressive graduates. There are 43,000 of you living and working around Alaska and across the United States. You fill roles as entrepreneurs, engineers, scientists, commercial fishermen, teachers, pilots, doctors, nurses, artists, policymakers, parents and leaders. Besides telling your amazing stories, we'll offer updates on groundbreaking work your alma mater initiates on behalf of a better Alaska and a better world. We want your Seawolf legacy to be a bright and guiding star as you advance toward your own dreams.

Our publication is influenced by a new editorial advisory board made up of UAA alumni. Thank you

Löki Gale Tobin (B.A. Psychology and Sociology ’06)
J.R. Zufelt (Journalism and Public Communications student ’01–’06),
Cassidy Davis (B.A. Journalism and Public Communications ’10) and
Dan Carpenter (B.A. Journalism ’05).

This, then, is our beginning. Help us shape a publication you want to read. Your stories are our stories. We're excited to share them.

FROM THE EDITOR

Not so long ago, Clark Middle School was just another exhausted-looking structure standing in the midst of Mountain View, a community too often used as a punchline in jokes about crime and squallor. Some of Clark’s students were lucky to have enough love and support in their lives to move them toward happy futures. But some students—too many—lived without nurturing parents, predictable meals, reassurance and discipline. Clark’s principal, Cessilye Williams (M.Ed., Educational Leadership ’02), has spent 13 years working to better the lives, education and community of 1,150 children in her care. She’s as strict at Clark as she likely was with her own children—UAA alumna Jazmine Williams, 24, B.B.A. Marketing ’13, and son Scott, 19, who attends Fort Valley State University in Georgia. (Cessilye’s husband, Timothy, is yet another UAA alumnus, M.S. Global Supply Chain Management ’04.)

She instills in students a sense of respect for themselves, for others and their still-pristine school. When Cessilye spotted a scatter of peas and broccoli on the carpet of an otherwise orderly hall, she didn’t hesitate or call a custodian. Even though she was wearing heels and perfectly creased gray slacks, Cessilye bent, scooped the spilled vegetables into her hand and disposed of them in a nearby garbage container before resuming her walk.

“I’m proud of the transformation of our school’s reputation,” she said. “I want to be a partner in our students’ learning.”

FOLLOW ONLINE: Cessilye Williams is the opportunity bridge to successful achievement for her talented students. Read more at greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/alumni-spirit/profiles/
For alumni who want to come back to campus, but aren’t sure where to start, your alma mater has your back. In February, we opened the doors to the new Alumni Center at UAA. Tucked between the UAA/APU Consortium Library circulation desk and Kaladi Brothers Coffee, the glassed-in space sees thousands of students pass by every week.

“This is a beautiful home for alumni where we hope you’ll come visit us,” said Assistant Vice Chancellor for Alumni Relations Rachel Morse (M.B.A. ’08).

“Beyond this great space, though, what we’re excited to offer you is a dedicated staff of Alumni Relations professionals and a dynamic Alumni Association board who are all committed to helping you connect with each other and with the vibrant student community.”

Alumni Association board member Leverette Hoover (B.S. Technology ’96) sees his service on the board as a great way to give back to UAA and help give a leg up to UAA’s next generation of graduates. The new Alumni Center gives them a home for outreach activities.

“I would like the board members to volunteer at least 4–8 hours a month, having open-door discussions with any student who would like to stop by and network with industry leaders to learn about different businesses,” Hoover said. He sees board members and UAA’s alumni network as great resources for students who want to know more about hiring practices, get an insider’s perspective on their résumés, receive mock interview coaching or just learn what to expect after graduation.

“My counselors and professors, as well as industry partners and other students, were very engaged to ensure my success,” he said. “When I graduated, I made a commitment to myself that someday I would do whatever I could to make a difference in supporting others’ academic adventures, and hoped that I could make a difference.”

The university repurposed the Alumni Center real estate from an alcove of little-used lockers and pay phones to create the dedicated space for alumni.

If you’ve been looking for a good excuse to come back to campus, a visit to the new Alumni Center might be just the thing. If it’s been awhile since your last visit, friendly staffers can talk to you about ways to reconnect and give you the inside scoop about what’s happening on campus.

“One of the great things about working on campus is the energy students bring and the excitement young people figuring out their lives have,” Morse said. “That excitement goes by our door all day, every day. Who wouldn’t want to hang out here?”

FOLLOW ONLINE: Read more about a new era of support for UAA’s alumni.
Alumni Association www.uaa.alaska.edu/alumni/
aaa-alumni-association.cfm
Alumni Relations www.uaa.alaska.edu/alumni/
Excerpt from ‘To Know a Place’

This morning I climbed down from the loft and looked out at gray sky and water; the cabin still in the mountain shadow that sunrise washes toward the shore. By midsummer, this hillside is a dense green too thick to hike, except for a crater of exposed rock from an old landslide that carried tub-sized boulders a thousand feet to the beach. A caramel movement caught my eye. A bear sat on the ridge. Both of us taking in the view.

Who else has shared this view? Watched the sun set in June as if it was following a game trail along the mountains across the bay? A disappointed gold miner who left dishes and a rusted bed frame that we hauled from the creek. Alutiiq families who gathered the shells and bones that sift and settle under my garden beds and raspberry patch.

Uyak is surrounded by five thousand years’ worth of Alutiiq settlements—a reminder that we live by our bellies. People stayed here for the food that washed in with tides and seasons, for the traffic of otters, seals, sea lions, whales and fish.

To the west, millions of salmon once returned to the Karluk River. Halibut and cod wander beneath rockeye and humpties skipping into the air and up the bay. Daily, the sea steps back with a waiter’s flourish. Butter clams, octopus, littleneck clams, cockles, mussels, whelks, urchins, chitons. A salad of seaweed is strewn along the beach—brown, popweed, bull kelp and ribbon.

There’s an old saying on Kodiak: When the tide is out, the table is set.

FOLLOW ONLINE: Listen to Sara Loewen read an excerpt and enjoy a Q & A along with the full narrative.

UAA LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

Sara Loewen earned her M.F.A. in creative nonfiction from UAA in 2012. In this excerpt from her book of essays, Gaining Daylight: Life on Two Islands, published in the Alaska Literary Series by the University of Alaska Press in 2013, we witness a morning window on life at Uyak Bay, her family strict site on the west side of Kodiak Island. Read more of her work online at the UAA Alumni Spirit website, including a Q & A on her work and life and an excerpt in her own voice.

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ED MIGHELL

FOR THIS CERAMIC ARTIST, IT’S ALL ABOUT THE STORY
By: Kathleen McCoy

Artist Ed Mighell knows the power of story. Every ceramic tile he shapes, presses and fires using his own special clay recipe from Booledge Cove is part of his story.

For a decade now, this UAA alumnus (B.S. Civil Engineering ’92; B.F.A. Printmaking ’96) has been selling his art at local markets and by commission. But Mighell says buyers want more than something beautiful. “They buy the story” behind the work, he says. His education and career choices have shaped an evolving tale of artistic quest enriched by the power of story. Every ceramic tile the artist creates reflects the story behind the work, his focus on creating an enduring narrative with his art.

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RACHEL MORSE
Assistant Vice Chancellor (907) 786-1278 rmorse@uaa.alaska.edu
General office email uaa_alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu

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Whether it’s fun at the April 3–9 in the Spine” Alumni ParTee (yes, that was golfing in the above ground walkways at UAA!), or the growing success of the Green & Gold Gala raising scholarship funds for our students, these are times of momentum around UAA alumni just keeps growing.

New chapters are signing on every week. Nona Gunn, with UAA Alumni Relations, is guiding the emerging interest based on geography and academic or professional interest.

UAA has long enjoyed active participation from two existing chapters:
• College of Engineering
• Aviation

Just since January 2014, seven others have come on board, approved by the UAA Alumni Association Board of Directors in February:
• UAA Alumni Chapter of Houston, Texas (this chapter, for now, also includes a lone alumna in Dallas)
• Scandinavians (student-athletes)
• University Honors College
• Juneau Area Alumni
• Alumni for the Advancement of College Health Professionals
• Justice Alumni
• D.C. Area Alumni

In the works are four more chapters:
• Seattle
• Music
• San Antonio
• ANSEP

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The work of two UAA scientists, Frank von Hippel and Loren Buck—collaborating with community members and an advocacy organization—may finally link environmental contaminants to diseases and defects that have plagued the St. Lawrence Island community of 1,500 for decades.

Just 38 miles from Russia and 162 miles from Nome, St. Lawrence Island is so scrubbed by vigorous Bering Sea weather that it would seem invulnerable to modern, man-made scourges.

Not so. A legacy of two Cold War military sites abandoned in the 1970s, plus the surprising phenomenon of environmental contaminants from around the globe that drift to the Arctic, have turned this pristine and wind-whipped landscape into a repository of leftover chemistry known to be dangerous to humans.

PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) from the abandoned military sites, along with the drifting PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers, used to make furniture and electronics fire resistant) and PFCs (perfluorinated compounds, used to make fabrics stain-resistant and keep Teflon pans slippery) long have been suspected in island illnesses and deaths.

Savoonga health aide Annie Alowa sounded the alarm in the late 1970s over concern with the abandoned military site at the Northeast Cape, located close to a popular subsistence food gathering spot.

Alowa was joined by Pam Miller, founder of Alaska Community Action on Toxics, and eventually by Dr. David Carpenter, a New York medical researcher.
who had done similar work with the Mohawk Nation of Akwesasne, N.Y. They produced a study in 2002 that showed St. Lawrence Island residents had elevated levels of PCBs, with 7-9 times as many in their blood as average Americans, due to their global transport and accumulation in Arctic subsistence foods. Residents who hunted and fished near the Northeast Cape had the highest levels, showing that contamination from nearby military sites contributed to the elevated levels.

Those findings were an eerie echo of research that began in Canada in the 1980s. Researchers there were surprised to find that the Inuit women on supposedly pristine Baffin Island in eastern Canada had highly elevated levels of PCBs, pesticides and heavy metals. "That was a wake-up call for the entire planet," says Miller. "That finding alone prompted the United Nations to negotiate the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the POPS treaty)." Initially 12 chemicals were banned; that list has grown to almost 25, including certain PFCs and PBDEs that are now found on St. Lawrence Island. Since then, Miller and Vi Waghiyi, a Yupik leader, mother and grandmother from St. Lawrence Island, and others, have engaged in national and international forums to ban environmental contaminants. Indigenous peoples of the north are more at risk due to their geographic location and reliance on subsistence foods, especially long-lived, high trophic animals like bowhead whale, walrus and seals.

The two UAA scientists and ACAT used these early studies to secure a five-year, $2.2-million RO1 research grant from the NIH to fund an extended community-based research project. Their team includes village leaders on the St. Lawrence Island Working Group as well as community researchers trained in scientific sample collection. Together they are checking contaminant levels in traditional foods, household dust and human blood serum. Another component is looking at freshwater fish, the ninespine stickleback and the Alaska blackfish, found in both contaminated and control sites on the island.

The team is also doing work that wasn’t part of the original grant and may yield significant findings, including an investigation of how contaminants affect gene expression in stickleback on St. Lawrence Island. Humans share 70 percent of their genes with bony fishes. If researchers locate the particular genes affected by the contaminants, they can quickly find out if humans also have those genes, a tool that became available only a few years ago. “Then we have a target for how these contaminants are affecting human health [which] could lead to therapies,” von Hippel said. The research team plans to report results to the working group this summer.

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SEAWOLVES

UAA Athletic Director Keith Hackett calls the new 197,000-square-foot Alaska Airlines Center (AAC) taking shape on campus a “communiversity” project. The new $109-million home for Seawolf Athletics will host hundreds of athletic competitions, concerts, dances, meetings, conferences, youth camps and commencements, annually. Although the doors won’t officially open until August 2014—and all signs point to an on-time, on-budget opening—UAA staffers are already fielding calls from community groups eager to stage their events in the new 5,600-seat performance arena and 500-seat auxiliary gym. Here are some reasons alumni may want to come calling this fall:

1. **You are a UAA super fan.**
   Fans are assured a great view in both the performance arena and the auxiliary gym.
   “There isn’t a bad seat in the house,” Hackett said.
   “This will be the premier facility for Division II athletics in the NCAA in the entire country,” Hackett said. “There is no place that will have a better venue to host Division II basketball and volleyball and Division I gymnastics—nowhere close to this.”

2. **Indoor, two-lane jogging track and a 1,300-square-foot fitness center.**
   Maybe you’re into mall-walking, maybe you’re not. If not, here’s another indoor fitness option alumni can take advantage of. You’ll have the opportunity to purchase a membership at the new fitness center, which will be open access for current students.
   Go ahead, see if you can outrun a 20-year-old. Fair warning: We field national champion runners on our track & field and cross country teams.
4. **Wood-fired pizza, beer and wine.**

All day long those with the means to splurge can enjoy a spread of wood-fired pizzas, beer and wine. The bustling vibe of the AAC will ensure that you can find a spot to hang out and enjoy your meal or beverage. With so many options available, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

5. **Bruce Springsteen.**

OK, we don’t know if The Boss is really coming to UAA, but we can hope. UAA opted to work with a professional management company to ensure visitors to the AAC have a top-notch experience.

“We’re working with Global Spectrum. They’re owned by Comcast,” Hackett said. “What we get from Global Spectrum is probably the most prominent arena and stadium management company on the planet—over 200 venues across the world.” Management companies like Global Spectrum are affiliated with a “stable” of touring shows that are contracted to perform in the venues they manage. UAA’s Concert Board has the opportunity to work with Global Spectrum and connect with the likes of Springsteen, Jay Z, Beyoncé, Pink, Bon Jovi, Kenny Chesney and the Harlem Globetrotters.

“We worked really hard with Sparring down in Portland to make sure it was set up as a great facility for concerts, for commencement, for comedic acts and with the tweak of some buttons, it becomes a great place to have a basketball game. It’s all done digitally,” said Kevin Silver, UAA’s associate athletic director and part of the team that’s overseen the progress of the AAC from concept to reality.

6. **Pomp and circumstance might just reel you in.**

Roughly 30 years ago, UAA outgrew the Wells Fargo Sports Complex as a venue to host commencement. Starting in December 2014, UAA will move to two commencement ceremonies per year—one for spring grads and one for fall and summer grads. Both will be hosted in the AAC.

You really want to learn, once and for all, what exactly a seawolf is.

Chances are you’ve met Spirit. You may have even carried a Flat Seawolf around your neck, just to reel you in. Pomp and circumstance might just reel you in.

7. **Lucky you, your company bought a box suite.**

If you’re on the nice list at work, you just might get a chance to experience VIP viewing from one of the five box suites overlooking the performance arena. On sale now for $25,000 a year with three-year contract preference, the suites can seat 12, with full-service catering from NMS. The cost includes season passes to all home games in the arena and dibs on show-tickets as they become available.

If you ever sported an official Seawolf jersey, you’re invited to the first-ever Seawolf Athletics Alumni Reunion.

We want to welcome our Seawolf Athletics alumni back to campus Sept. 5–7, 2014. Come rub elbows with your old teammate and meet the newest generation of student-athletes. Tell them how you trudged uphill both ways in the snow to put UAA Athletics on the map and get them those state-of-the-art training facilities and locker rooms in the AAC. Say, is that an underwater treadmill for rehabbing injured athletes? Yes, yes it is.

Still undecided? Check out the web extras online for a virtual tour of the facility. A tour of even the unfinished center has changed more than one mind. Showing new student-athlete recruits around the AAC is Silver’s new favorite task.

"They look around and say, ‘Well, this really complicates my decision,’” he said with a laugh.

When the doors open, Hackett said, “People are going to know that business and intercollegiate athletics at University of Alaska Anchorage have changed.”

8. **Summer and events.**

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In month five of every snow-encrusted winter, Seawolves like to shake things up with indoor and outdoor fun. This year’s festivities were Feb. 21 through March 1, and included a first-ever winter Design Project on the Cuddy Quad.

Hermina Din, professor of art education, pioneered a 12-foot D.I.Y. “Flow of Color” sculpture made of recycled bottle caps.

Warming barrels lured visitors to the Cuddy Quad, where snow sculptures and snow painting invited personal expression.

Broomball, an ice game that borrows strategies from hockey, is the perfect way to let off winter steam during Winterfest.

Spring 2014
Outside, an army of tiny snowmen (no carrots for noses, please; too tempting for our campus moose), ice music, multi-colored frozen gloves, sculptures of all sorts.

Inside, facial hair galore at the 4th annual Beard and ‘Stache Competition.
Six months ago, Keith Hackett walked into a just-subsiding minefield that ended with UAA’s hockey coach and athletic director being fired.

“I knew about the unrest, the fractures,” Hackett said. “My responsibility was to come in and keep an open mind. I was prepared for the opportunity, to try to move us forward. The past is prologue.”

The person who first thought of the adage, “A stranger is just a friend I haven’t met yet,” probably had someone just like UAA’s ebullient new athletic director in mind.

Keith Hackett knows the resonance of a caring gesture—he sends handwritten thank-you notes, Seawolf-emblazoned cards. He works in a crevice of the Wells Fargo Sports Complex, amid a soundtrack of soft bleats from his desk phone, buzzes from his cell phone and, every few seconds, a cheerful “ding” announcing another email landing in his computer’s inbox.

Hackett checks the phones, skims his cell phone and, every few seconds, a new appointment, a smile, a wave. The person he just met is just another contact. Hackett works in a crevice of the Wells Fargo Sports Complex, amid a soundtrack of soft bleats from his desk phone, buzzes from his cell phone and, every few seconds, a cheerful “ding” announcing another email landing in his computer’s inbox.

He confronts budget issues and, most critical, knitting together closer ties with student-athletes, alumni and the Anchorage community. If two gleaming Seawolf-emblazoned cards. He works in a crevice of the Wells Fargo Sports Complex, amid a soundtrack of soft bleats from his desk phone, buzzes from his cell phone and, every few seconds, a cheerful “ding” announcing another email landing in his computer’s inbox.

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Submit a class note

Did you get a new job? A promotion? Did you join the service or get deployed overseas? On the home front, have you celebrated a wedding or the addition of a new member to your clan? Your UAA family wants to know.

Any questions? Give UAA Alumni Relations a call at (907) 786-1942 or email uaa_alumnirelations@uaa.alaska.edu.

Please submit your news online at this link: greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/alumni/class-notes/

UAA’s award-winning Seawolf Debate team met Yale Debate April 20, 2014, at East High School before an audience of 600, to argue: “No public funds should go to support competitive athletics in public education.” View a video of the debate here: greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/uaa-yale-debate/2014/03/26/uaa-yale-debate-video/

LENS ON CAMPUS

2012
Bobbie Sue Wolk, B.B.A. Accounting, has moved her accounting and executive coaching business, Rosewood LLC, back to Anchorage after living in Juneau for the past seven years. She has owned and operated her business for 20 years.

1997
Dawson Moore, B.A. Theatre, runs the Last Frontier Theatre Conference in Valdez, at Prince William Sound Community College. His overnighters, with TBA Theatre in Anchorage.

1992
Jean Randy, B.F.A. Art, is completing an online Ph.D. course through the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts. She has traveled to Florence, Berlin and Paris through the program, and plans to start her thesis on the art of Winston Churchill in the next year. She writes art criticism for Town Square 49 on Alaska Public Media and recently covered the Whitney Biennial art show in Manhattan.

2004
Judy Staveley, B.S. Biological Sciences, taught several years at UAA before continuing her studies at John Hopkins University. She lives with her family in the Baltimore area and teaches biological sciences and forensics at Frederick Community College in Maryland. Judy mentored the hockey and gymnastics teams while teaching at UAA and her son, only 2 years old when they left Alaska, still skates in a Seawolves jersey on his hockey team in Baltimore. She recently launched a magazine, ThePlatform, featuring a column from UAA classmate Dr. Kristen Eastman (B.S. Biological Sciences, ’04). Her magazine is available online at theplatformmagazine.com.

2003
Nicole Borromeo, B.A. Justice, recently joined the Alaska Federation of Natives as a general counsel. After obtaining her juris doctor degree from the University of Washington School of Law, she returned to Alaska to work as a law clerk in Juneau and a legal associate in Anchorage before assuming her current role. She is a Dayton shareholder and resides in Anchorage with her husband and son.

2007
Jacinda Walker, B.A. Journalism and Public Communications, currently works as a sales representative for Staples Advantage business-to-business sales. She now lives in Beaverton, Ore. and will return to Alaska this fall for her first ultramarathon, the Resurrection Pass Ultra 50-mile race.

2008
Heather Cavanaugh, M.B.A., currently serves as director of Marketing and Corporate Communications at Alaska Communications. Additionally, she acts as president of the Public Relations Society of America, Alaska Chapter and recently earned Accreditation in Public Relations (ARP) from the Public Relations Society of America.

2014
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