**For immediate release**

**March 20, 2017**

**Media contacts:**

**Kirstin Olmstead, UAA, 907-786-1435, 907-748-1682 (cell), kbolmstead@alaska.edu**

**Rebecca Lynch, Alaska DHSS, 907-269-3495, 907-351-7269 (cell), rebecca.lynch@alaska.gov**

**UAA lactation pod will support breast-feeding mothers**

Nursing mothers at the University of Alaska Anchorage now have a dedicated, private space to feed their babies or pump breast milk.

The Alaska Division of Public Health awarded a group of UAA faculty, staff and students an Alaska Workplace Breastfeeding Support Project grant through its section of Women’s, Children’s and Family Health. The project aims to help Alaska organizations implement workplace policies and spaces to accommodate breast-feeding mothers.

Organizations could apply for one, two or all three options for assistance. These include placement of a Mamava lactation pod in the organization’s facilities; $1,000 scholarship to create or improve an existing lactation space; and technical assistance to develop a workplace breast-feeding accommodation policy based on Fair Labor Standards Act and Affordable Care Act requirements. Federal funding from the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials financed the grant.

“This grant will help UAA support employees and students who breast-feed their children,” said Corrie Whitmore, assistant professor of health sciences and a breast-feeding mother. “Improving access to campus lactation spaces is one way the university can encourage nursing mothers to continue their education or career.”

The university is the sole Alaska recipient of the lactation pod, valued at $15,000, which features seating, shelving, and electrical and USB ports. UAA also received one of 15 $1,000 scholarships to designate additional campus lactation spaces.

The university and state signed a three-year memorandum of understanding regarding use of the lactation pod and implementation of a workplace breast-feeding accommodation policy. If the university meets its conditions, the state may donate the pod to UAA.

The lactation pod is located on the first floor of the Student Union. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the pod will be held Friday, March 24, at 2:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served; free onesies will be available to the first 50 guests. The ceremony is open to the public.

For more information about lactation support at UAA, contact the Human Resource Services Department at 907-786-4608 or the Dean of Students Office at 907-786-1214. Visit mamava.com to learn more about the lactation pod.

# # #

UAA LACTATION POD, 2 OF 2

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE  
*The University of Alaska Anchorage is Alaska’s largest university, educating more than 18,000 students annually and offering programs in more than 150 areas of study. UAA’s mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. Learn more at uaa.alaska.edu.*

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
*The State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services promotes and protects the health and well-being of Alaskans. We help individuals and families create safe and healthy communities. For more information, visit dhss.alaska.gov.*