**For immediate release**

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**UAA announces 2017 Alumni of Distinction recipients**

*Gravel, Williams and Sloper will be honored at
UAA’s Homecoming Breakfast Oct. 13 at Lucy Cuddy Hall*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—The University of Alaska Anchorage Office of Alumni Relations and the UAA Alumni Association are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2017 UAA Alumni of Distinction awards. These three distinguished UAA alumni will be honored for their outstanding contributions to their chosen fields and communities at the university’s Homecoming Breakfast on Friday, Oct. 13, at Lucy Cuddy Hall on UAA’s campus.

**Tim Gravel — Alumni of Achievement Award**

B.B.A. Accounting ’90

Owner, Kaladi Brothers Coffee

As owner of Alaska’s largest coffee roaster, Gravel balances big business with small connections. He’s helped grow the company—which now roasts 1.2 million pounds of coffee annually in its 17 shops and restaurants—while maintaining the quirky brand’s local focus. Under Gravel’s leadership, Kaladi demonstrates its “Catalyst for Community” motto by supporting hundreds of community events annually and donating more than a million dollars to area nonprofits through its Dale Tran New Year’s Day of Giving.

**Cessilye Williams –– Alumni Humanitarian Award**

M.Ed. Educational Leadership ’02

Principal, Clark Middle School, Anchorage School District

Williams has impacted thousands of students and families in her 14 years as principal at Clark Middle School. A 34-year educator, Williams has earned state and national recognition for her innovative and dedicated programs that support academic and social advancement in her students. Many of these programs connect students in the Mountain View neighborhood with opportunities at UAA, including discipline-specific [training academies](http://greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/blog/37485/uaa-burnishes-skills-of-young-leaders/?a), [mentorship opportunities](http://greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/blog/54692/uaa-clark-middle-school-collaboration-earns-anchorage-school-district-honor/?a) and campus visits. Williams is also a member of the NAACP and the UAA Chancellor’s Advisory Board.

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**Michelle Sloper — Alumni Emerging Leader Award**

B.A. Psychology ’08

Senior evaluation fellow, Claremont Evaluation Center

Following graduation from UAA, Sloper earned a master’s and doctorate in positive developmental psychology and evaluation from Claremont Graduate University (CGU). She now works as a senior evaluation fellow at CGU. She lives in her hometown of Haines, Alaska, while evaluating the effectiveness and benefits of youth development and character-building programs nationwide, including Feeding America and Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

These award recipients will be honored at Homecoming Breakfast, a morning event that will bring UAA alumni and friends together to celebrate alumni achievements and university successes.

The event begins with a 7 a.m. breakfast buffet followed by a presentation of the awards and a program for the alumni audience. Guests will be invited to make a financial donation to the university fund of their choosing.

For more information, contact Alumni Relations at 907-786-1701 or seawolf.forever@alaska.edu, or visit the website at uaa.alaska.edu/alumni.

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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE
*The University of Alaska Anchorage is Alaska’s largest university, educating nearly 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.*