

For immediate release

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**UAA announces winning proposals for ConocoPhillips Arctic Science and Engineering Endowment**

*Projects include a test apparatus for corrosion under insulation, analyzing impacts of plastic on Western Aleutian Island seabirds, a comprehensive review of snow cover in Alaska and geophysics faculty/lab support*

Arctic Science and Engineering projects at UAA will get a significant boost thanks to the first round of awards from the ConocoPhillips Arctic Science and Engineering Fund. Created in 2008 from a $15 million gift from the corporation, the endowment is the largest in the UA System. Following an early pledge payoff, the endowment earnings became available one full year early, which means UAA can now put nearly $300,000 in accumulated funds in the hands of researchers immediately.

The four winning projects—chosen out of 29 proposals after a rigorous evaluation process by a committee comprised of UAA staff—will receive a total of approximately $280,000 for fiscal year 2016. Projects funded though the first distribution of the ConocoPhillips Arctic Science and Engineering endowment include:

* **Accelerated Corrosion Under Insulation (CUI) Test Apparatus** (Matt Cullin)

*Up to 60 percent of pipeline maintenance costs are related to CUI. This apparatus will allow UAA faculty and students to determine the mechanisms and rates of CUI under real conditions and to evaluate remedial solutions for known problem locations.*

* **The Impacts of Plastic on Western Aleutian Islands Seabirds: Detection of Phthalates in Muscle and Embryonic Tissues** (Doug Causey/Aaron Dotson)

*This research is intended to better understand how seabirds in the Bering Sea are adapting to global warming, and evaluate seabirds’ plastic exposure and its consequent effects on their health.*

* **Snow Cover in AK: Comprehensive Review**

(Gennady Gienko/Scott Hamel/Rob Lang)

*Structural engineers rely on published snow load values to calculate the forces for which their structures must be designed. For much of Alaska, this data was published over 20 years ago. This project will assemble data from various agencies to update snow load values across the state.*

* **Petroleum Geology at UAA: Geophysics Faculty and ConocoPhillips Subsurface Laboratory Support**

(Jens Munk/Jennifer Aschoff/Matt Reeves/Erin Shea)

*Funds will support the research start-up of a new geophysics faculty member and associated subsurface laboratory. These funds will improve the ability to conduct research in subsurface geophysics and educate students in myriad geology subspecialties.*

“The projects represented in these proposals show that UAA’s researchers and students are ready to tackle the Arctic’s problems and promises,” said UAA Chancellor Tom Case. “The work this endowment supports is of critical importance to the state and the nation. These projects will provide our students with valuable knowledge to make them uniquely qualified for an array of careers that will help secure a healthy future for Alaska.”

"I am very pleased that the ConocoPhillips endowment is already producing funding for Alaskan researchers and students,” said Joe Marushack, president of ConocoPhillips Alaska. “These projects could have real-life benefits to the oil and gas industry and will further our understanding of arctic science and engineering.”

The ConocoPhillips Arctic Science and Engineering Endowment will provide awards annually for winning proposals. By fiscal year 2017, the fund is expected to have approximately $380,000 available for awards. For more information about the endowment, details on the selection process and a link to the RFP, please visit https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/chancellor/conocophillips-arctic-science-engineering-award/index.cfm.

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CONOCOPHILLIPS ALASKA INC. ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc., the number one producer of oil and gas in the state, has a tradition of strong community support—including a long-standing commitment to supporting the University of Alaska system. ConocoPhillips’ historic $15 million pledge to UAA in 2008 brought the company’s total support to the University system to more than $35 million since 2000.