

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.
– Helen Keller

University of Alaska Anchorage

September 2025



Spotlight

April Alvarez- Lopez
UAA Staff Council Vice President

My name is April Alvarez- Lopez, and I was born in Texas and raised in Alaska. At 18 I moved back to El Paso, Texas and I earned my Bachelor's degree in Multidisciplinary Studies from the University of Texas at El Paso, where I also met my husband. During that time, we welcomed our first son, and we have now been married for 14 wonderful years. Recently, we were blessed with our second son, making this season of life especially meaningful.

This academic year, I will graduate with my Master of Public Administration from the University of Alaska Southeast, a milestone that reflects my commitment to education and leadership. Professionally, I serve as the Administrative Manager and Building Manager for the College of Business and Public Policy (CBPP) at the University of Alaska Anchorage. I am passionate about supporting my team and am inspired by the growth and innovation happening across our college.

In addition to my work at CBPP, I am actively engaged in university governance. This summer, I was nominated to serve as the Vice President of the UAA Staff Council, an honor that reflects my dedication to strengthening staff engagement, improving processes, and fostering a positive workplace culture for the UAA community. Outside of work, I enjoy playing soccer with my long-time soccer team through Soccer Alaska and spending quality time with my friends and family.



Spotlight

Brandon McKinney
UAA Staff Council President

I'm Brandon, I was born and raised in Texas, where I graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University with a degree in Business Management and, most importantly, met my wife. My biggest joy is being a dad to an energetic 5-year-old daughter who makes every day an adventure. I've always embraced challenges and enjoy pushing my body to new limits. That drive has taken me across finish lines in eight marathons, including iconic races like New York, Boston, Disney World, and my hometown Dallas Marathon. Each one has been less about running and more about testing what's possible. Next up: Mount Marathon!

Professionally, I've had the privilege of a diverse and rewarding career. One of my proudest accomplishments was earning an Emmy Award during my time at MLB Network in New York City, blending my love of sports and storytelling on one of the biggest stages. I currently have the honor of serving as UAA's Staff Council President, advocating for colleagues and working to strengthen the campus community. Before these chapters, I proudly served in the United States Navy, an experience that shaped my character, discipline, and commitment to service.

Away from work and competition, family is everything! We're a big Disney family, from regular park trips to the unforgettable moment when I proposed to my wife in front of Sleeping Beauty's Castle at Disneyland. Disney continues to spark memories and traditions we love sharing with our daughter. Fun twist: my wife and I competed together on HGTV's Flea Market Flip while living in New York.

Staff Events

Friday, Sep. 26th @ 6pm: [UAA Spirit Run](#) - AAC

Saturday, Sep. 27th @ 7pm: [UAA Faculty & Staff Appreciation Night](#) - AAC

Saturday, Sep. 27th @ 7pm: [UAA Seawolves Volleyball Game](#) (Seawolves vs Saint Martin's) AAC

Friday, Oct. 3rd @ 7pm: [Seawolves Hockey Game](#) (Seawolves vs Bemidji State) - AAC

Friday, Oct. 24th @ 8:30am: [PEAKS \(Professional Excellence and Knowledge Summit\)](#) - W. Williamson Auditorium

Tuesday, Oct. 28th @ 3pm: Leadership Through Listening - SU Den

Your participation helps strengthen our UAA community—join in!



Kudos to these Staff members who make UAA great!

Kendra McPheters (UAA Athletics)



"Kendra makes a huge impact in the gym and across campus putting students first, creating energy and community at home meets and team events."

Boro Zorigtbaatar (ANSEP)

"Boro has gone above and beyond in helping our students. This last month, she has put in extra effort in order to help our students get their textbooks. She is such a fun coworker and her dedication to helping our students succeed makes an impact on our program."



Stay Informed. Stay Engaged. Here's What Staff Council is Working On.



Accreditation: Staff and faculty are encouraged to attend accreditation events, especially the Staff Forum on October 9 at 10 AM in Library 307.

Parking Updates to Come! Staff Council representatives have raised concerns regarding the parking fee increases and lack of consultation. We have proposed a tiered parking fee system based on salary, which Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services Ryan Buchholdt expressed openness to. Snow removal contracts and other auxiliary costs are also under review, which could impact future parking fees.

Chancellor Open Forum: Open forums for the Chancellor search are currently underway. Join us for the remaining forums on September 12, 16, & 18 at 9 AM in Library 307 or on Zoom. Feedback forms are provided each, please don't forget to fill them out!

Supervisor trainings: In January 2026, a new supervisor training program will launch. The training will include a foundational 14-hour pathway to be completed over the course of 6 months, plus annual refreshers. A 63-page Supervisor Handbook is in development. There will be optional intermediate and advanced training pathways available.

Attend Staff Council's next Meeting: October 2, 2025 via Zoom or In Person in RH 309

If you need any questions or concerns for Staff Council please visit our website