



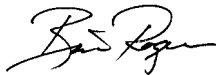
Alumni and friends,

It's September again, one of the best months of the year for watching the aurora borealis. The aurora is beautifully varied and constantly evolving. It inspires a sense of curiosity and mystery. Scientists try to capture its essence, artists its evanescence. This blending of art and science, of many strands into a spectacular whole, makes *Aurora* a fitting name for the new magazine of the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Aurora, some of you may recall, was also the name of a UAF magazine years ago, but that is also fitting: we look north to the future but we never forget the past.

We can't get too carried away by the aurora metaphor. The real aurora is elusive and fickle. It never shows up when you want to impress visitors. It flares up suddenly and brilliantly, then disappears just as quickly. UAF, on the other hand, is here to stay — constantly changing, yes, but with purpose and care. Our inspiration comes from the limitless heights of the northern sky, but our progress is firmly grounded in Alaska itself.

To our readers in Alaska, celebrate the return of the northern lights in the cool September air, then come inside where it's warm and enjoy this first issue. To our friends Outside, I hope the colorful mix of stories reminds you of the vibrancy of Alaska and its premier university. Welcome to *Aurora*.



Brian Rogers
Chancellor
chancellor@uaf.edu



Learn about Chancellor Rogers at
www.uaf.edu/chancellor/.

..... ABOUT THE COVER



Colorful sea anemones are found near hydrothermal vents in the Islands of the Four Mountains in the Aleutian chain. Researchers from UAF made more than 400 dives and explored 1,000 miles of coastline during a two-year assessment program. Story begins on page 6. Photo by Shawn Harper.