

Chancellor's Report

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

June 2006

Achievements

Museum Curator of Mammals Link Olson and an undergraduate student were part of an international team that documented the first new genus of living African primate in 83 years.

The ninth annual Scholarship and Awards Breakfast April 11 honored the 2005–2006 recipients and celebrated the generosity of donors. Donors traveled from as far away as California and Arizona to attend.

The UAF Choir of the North kicked off its 50th anniversary celebration with the Brahms *German Requiem* April 29. The celebration will continue in 2006–2007 with a series of special concerts.

At UAF's 84th commencement ceremony May 14 more than 1,000 students received certificates and degrees in what may turn out to be the largest graduating class on record.

Gary Laursen, adjunct professor of biology, will chair the national advisory board for the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. Laursen has been organizing the Alaska high school science symposium for 21 years.

The 2006 Emil Usibelli Distinguished Teaching, Research and Public Service awards were presented to Associate Professor of Chemistry Kelly Drew for teaching, Professor of Fisheries Anthony Gharrett for research and Professor of English Peter Pinney for public service.

The Tanana Valley Campus received \$70,000 from the Alaska Department of Labor's High Growth Job Training grant program to build vocational career pathways. The Interior Alaska Career Academy will allow high school students to explore technical education opportunities with a special emphasis on careers in energy-related fields.

In Progress

Groundbreaking for the new Lena Point fisheries facility in Juneau took place April 20. The ceremony marked the beginning of construction on the 28,000-square-foot building dedicated to fisheries education and research. Other construction underway this summer includes the Biological Research and Diagnostics Facility in Fairbanks, which is slated for completion in late November, and completion of the Bristol Bay Campus Student Learning Center in Dillingham.

Judyth Wier joined Advancement and Community Engagement as associate vice chancellor for development. Wier, who came to UAF from Tulane University in New Orleans, will lead efforts to build a strong development program.

The Cooperative Extension Service launched a statewide toll-free food safety hotline at 1-888-823-3663 for Alaskans with questions about anything from wild game preservation to safe canning procedures. The public can also "Ask an Expert" online at www.uaf.edu/ces/homeeconomics.

UAF will be in the forefront of transportation research through a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund a University Transportation Center. Universities chosen to participate in the program are involved in advanced and applied research and education, and are leaders in meeting transportation challenges.

What's Next

Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre will stage *Henry V* June 29–July 16 in an outdoor theater behind the Natural Sciences Facility.

Public Radio International host Michael Feldman will record a sold-out two-hour *Whad'ya Know* program live in Charles Davis Concert Hall Friday, July 7. The show is broadcast over hundreds of public radio stations across the country.

The UAF College of Fellows will host the fifth annual Goodies in the Garden in the Georgeson Botanical Garden Tuesday, July 11, from 6:30–8 p.m. Proceeds will help fund construction of a roof for the garden's Drew Amphitheater.

The Alaska Summer Research Academy for students in grades 8–12 takes place July 17–28. This year's program will offer 16 subjects including aviation, filmmaking, forensics, marine biology and robotics. Most of the classes are offered on campus but this year programs will also be offered in Denali National Park and the Kasitsna Bay Marine Laboratory.

The Tanana Valley State Fair, Aug. 4–12, will feature participation from several UAF departments. The fair will kick off with the 11th annual UAF Day Aug. 4.

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musings from the chancellor

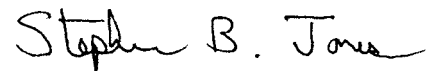
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Wrapping up a Second Academic Year

Just 24 months ago I was preparing for an early May interview at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where I'm now completing a second academic year as chancellor. What an incredible experience it's been since then! These thoughts come to me at 33,000 feet, northbound from Seattle on April 2. Although I could fill a book of pages, here are those reflections that strike me as most poignant:

- We really are America's Arctic University—nothing could possibly serve better as our brand and identity.
 - We're also Alaska's Research University—our \$140 million in 2005 research expenditures distinguish us from UAA and UAS.
 - The "university," in both designations, proclaims unquestionably that the research enterprise is undergirded by a foundation in the arts, humanities and social sciences.
 - We're also more than any of those designations, distinguishing us even more clearly from any other university anywhere—no other land grant, research university on the planet has anything like the College of Rural and Community Development attached to and integrated with it.
 - Our large research budget and the world-class faculty it enables, combined with a small student body and low student-to-faculty ratio, further place us among the nation's "best small research universities."
 - An absolute reality is that we live far away from the "Lower 48." This reality draws some people to us, even as it reminds us that others will stay only so long as UAF remains a special place to live and work.
 - I thoroughly enjoy working with our faculty, staff and students—we're in this together and we share a common vision for the kind of university we can be.
 - Fairbanks is a university town—just try to imagine the "Golden Heart" of Alaska without UAF.
 - Likewise, UAF draws great strength from the Fairbanks community—just try to imagine UAF "consumed" by a city even the size of Anchorage.
- UAF also helps define (and is defined by) the more than 30 Alaska communities where we have faculty, staff and facilities.
 - We attract some students who "settle for" UAF because they may not be "ready for" or can't afford to go Outside. We draw other students who wouldn't think of "settling for" anything less than UAF, our unique and incredible university.
 - Our goal is to retain both categories, track them toward degrees and establish them as loyal alumni—even as we connect and reconnect to our 23,000 living alumni across the country and around the world.
 - We are elevating our expectations for philanthropy, to provide a margin for excellence—alumni are a necessary, but not sufficient, element in reaching our fund-raising potential. I'll be devoting more and more time to that end.
 - Likewise, we must strategically grow the research enterprise along with more fully integrating research, education (graduate and undergraduate) and economic development.
 - Historically, state support of UAF has been inconsistently reliable—Alaska can ill afford another lapse. We're at the cusp of being the university our state deserves—just imagine Alaska without its research university!



This is an abbreviated version of Chancellor Steve Jones' Musings from April 19, 2006. The complete text can be found on the web at www.uaf.edu/chancellor/musings/.