

Chancellor's Report

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

September 2006

Achievements

The Helge Ingstad Memorial Symposium on Arctic Change took place Sept. 8–9. Presented in cooperation with the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the symposium focused on the International Polar Year 2007–2008 and increasing collaboration among arctic research institutions.

The Geophysical Institute's Alaska Satellite Facility celebrated 15 years of downlinking SAR data Aug. 26. Attendees at the open house learned how data acquired by ASF supports research around the globe.

World-renowned biologist, UAF alumnus and honorary degree recipient George Schaller spoke to standing room-only crowds on the Fairbanks campus in July. During four decades of field research, Schaller has contributed significantly to wildlife protection efforts and the understanding of endangered species worldwide.

The Usibelli Coal Mine in July donated more than \$170,000 in support of the Usibelli Mining Scholarship and the Usibelli Honors Scholarship.

Climbers from the International Arctic Research Center and the Japanese Alpine Club installed a new weather station on Mount McKinley June 23. Since 1990 climbers have installed more robust equipment each year in an attempt to gather data about some of the most ferocious weather in the world. IARC has sponsored the annual climb to repair the equipment since 1999.

Associate Professor and UAF alumna Kelly Drew received the first Sven Ebbesson Award for Excellence in Neuroscience at the National Conference of Specialized Neuroscience Research Programs in Fairbanks, sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and UAF in May.

In Progress

Dennis Witmer of the Institute of Northern Engineering is leading a team testing a new type of battery that could make alternative energy sources more viable and cost-effective. Witmer heads the Arctic Energy Technology Development Laboratory at UAF.

A new agreement with China University of Petroleum in Beijing will allow 25 undergraduate exchange students from CUPB who have completed their first two years of college to come to Fairbanks and finish their degrees at UAF. The agreement may also open the door for UAF students to participate in exchanges with CUPB and stands to enrich cultural and intellectual diversity at UAF.

Completion of the Bristol Bay Campus reconstruction project is anticipated by Sept. 15. Phase II of the project includes finishing a 6,000-square-foot Phase I addition constructed last summer, remodeling the existing 4,600-square-foot facility built in 1981 and landscaping campus grounds. The addition will include student support offices, additional classroom space and other needed facilities.

The Hutlee Umyuarchdelee Math Focus Project, a partnership between UAF's Interior-Aleutians and Bristol Bay campuses, is now in its fifth year. The project has helped more than 75 Native and rural Alaskans on the path to success in college and future careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

What's Next

The theme for the Sept. 26 fall convocation is "We know who we are; we know where we need to go; we know what it takes to get us there."

"All Fired Up," UAF's alumni reunion, takes place Sept. 28–30. Participants will tour the ARSC Discovery Lab, archives in the Rasmuson Library and UA Museum of the North, and the University Fire Department.

UAF researchers will play an active role as the American Association for the Advancement of Science Arctic Division conference meets in Fairbanks Oct. 2–4. The conference will feature an International Polar Year kickoff session.

The 2006 BP Top of the World Classic lineup includes UAF and seven Division I teams: Centenary College, Drake University, the University of Rhode Island, Southeast Missouri State, Troy University, Utah State and Weber State. The 11th annual tournament takes place Nov. 16–19 at the Carlson Center.

The Biological Research and Diagnostics Facility is slated for completion in November with ribbon-cutting ceremonies by December. The facility will support campus-wide research activities and biological waste disposal.

musings from the chancellor

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New Academic Year

Just when we are starting off a new academic school year, we are already planning ahead for the next one. The following is intended to provide you with a brief description of what is transpiring as we launch into the future to fulfill our UAF strategic planning goals.

Great Expectations

FY08 Budget Preparation—We completed final FY07 allocations early in July and submitted our FY08 budget requests to the UA system office. We began months ago with the Planning and Budget Committee reviewing and prioritizing nearly 100 requests. We have since distilled the committee's recommendations to a final list of highest priorities, totaling some \$8.8 million, in addition to our ongoing operating budget request. We presented these Aug. 7 to President Hamilton, his staff and the collective senior teams of all three major academic units (UAF, UAA and UAS) at a daylong session here in Fairbanks. The process of request development and prioritization, and subsequent iterative modification and re-prioritization, is exhausting. We have so many needs and fertile opportunities. Most require incremental resources. By the time an item makes this final list, we are certain that it is important to our university and fundamental to our mission. We tested all requests against a full set of filters and criteria:

- UAF Strategic Plan 2010
- UA Strategic Plan 2009
- Performance Based Budgeting metrics
- UAF Academic Development Plan
- Draft UAF Enrollment Management Plan
- Potential for building legacy research, particularly associated with International Polar Year (www.uaf.edu/ipyear/)
- Contribution toward preparing Alaskans for legacy jobs, particularly those associated directly or indirectly with the gas line project
- Investment-to-potential return-ratio

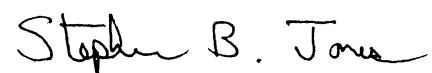
A brief synopsis of our prioritized request list can be found at www.uaf.edu/chancellor/musings/. The annotated listing, prepared by Julie Larweth, acting planning analyst,

is intended to give you a sense of what we view as most important and why, and is presented in order of priority. Our team invested a great deal of energy preparing for the Aug. 7 budget request review, and it showed. I have heard many positive statements from attendees.

Celebrate UAF

RAHI Graduation—We celebrated graduation of our 24th consecutive Rural Alaska Honors Institute class July 12. Forty-six rural Alaskans from across the state completed the intensive six-week program, which fully engages high school students in a resident university experience. Initiated in 1983, RAHI has now graduated 332 students. Their track record is admirable: 37 certificates, 84 associate degrees, 182 bachelor's degrees, 23 master's degrees, five law degrees and one medical degree! RAHI imposes rigor, and it yields results. RAHI graduates are twice as likely to earn a college degree as are their similarly defined peers who did not participate in the program. This year's class showed remarkable progress, earning a total of 374 college credit hours. Sixteen students completed the program with a GPA of 3.5 or higher; five with a GPA of 4.0. The average RAHI student's reading level rose 0.74 of a grade level in the six short weeks of this summer's program; the average RAHI student reads 1.6 grade levels above his or her peers.

I spent an hour with the class a week or so before graduation. These young people are charged and they are ready to complete high school, then go on to college. They really impressed me—they are intelligent, mature, curious, ambitious, of good humor and eager for what awaits them. Our university should take great pride in this incredible story of success. My compliments to Denise Wartes, Greg Owens and the entire RAHI faculty and staff. Again, I offer my sincere appreciation and compliments for everyone involved with RAHI, even as I offer my congratulations to 46 of tomorrow's leaders!



This is an abbreviated version of Chancellor Steve Jones' Musings from August 24, 2006. The complete text can be found on the web at www.uaf.edu/chancellor/musings/.