Dear friend,

We are writing today to provide you with an update about the restructuring of some of our most important and highly attended events at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. As we approach our centennial year celebration in 2017, the university is excited to announce that we are creating a signature event — the Blue and Gold Gala. The focus will be on gratitude as we take opportunity to invite the community to join us in celebrating our donors, alumni and friends who are our strongest supporters of the university.

The Blue and Gold Gala will consolidate select annual Development and Alumni Relations events, including the UAF Chancellor’s Gala, the Celebration of Giving and Emil Usibelli Awards, and the Alumni Awards. This integrated gathering is part of our vision to further magnify the contributions of these most esteemed alumni, philanthropists, and faculty honorees, to thread in the elegance and purpose of the UAF Chancellor’s Gala, and to provide a fresh approach to community and university engagement.

In addition to our purpose to elevate our event honorees and provide a platform of thanks to our community for the depth of their support to UAF, these changes also come about because of organizational transitions at UAF and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, current fiscal challenges statewide and limits on staff capacity.

In this time of transition to a singular event, I would like recognize the tremendous impact that the UAF Chancellor’s Gala has had for both the university and our community partners and beneficiaries. We offer our sincerest thanks to the founding members, specifically Chancellor Brian Rogers and Sherry Modrow, and our past and present committee members, beneficiaries and sponsors, who have further inspired a culture of philanthropy in our greater Fairbanks community through the much-anticipated and purposeful evening.

We recognize the many ways our recent partnership with the Greater Fairbanks Community Hospital Foundation has served as a platform to raise awareness of important needs in the community. For the past two years the focus has been on mental health, and the relationships we have built have allowed us to address a critical need together. Although we face a departure from the gala as we know it, the topic of mental health continues to be a priority statewide, and the awareness brought about by our efforts in 2015 and 2016 has created the bridges that Alaskans and medical providers need to continue to address this critical topic.

For nearly 100 years, UAF has had the honor to be embedded in this great state, not only as an important educational institution but also as a community partner. We would not be here, or be the same, without you as our donors, friends and alumni. For this, we hope that you will please join us on

Feb. 11, 2017, at the Carlson Center

so that we may thank you for the incredible support that you provide and show you the tremendous impact that you have. For more information, please contact the UAF Development and Alumni Relations Office at 907-474-2619 or Emily Drygas, director, at emily.drygas@alaska.edu.

Sincerely,

Dana L. Thomas, chancellor
University of Alaska Fairbanks