



President and Executive Committee Report

Spring Meeting: April 14, 2023

It's been a great year as President of the UAF Alumni Association. I am honored and humbled by the opportunity, and have loved being involved.

Lots has been happening as routines get back to pre-Covid structures, including a wonderful Reunion in July of 2022, energetic UAF alumni gatherings at hockey games in Colorado and Arizona. This summer's Reunion is planned for July 13-15, and I hope to see many UAF Alumni there!

After a few years of virtual legislative advocacy, in January 2023 we were able to join with alumni from UAA and travel to Juneau to meet with legislators. In the lead up, and also after the meetings, we had bi-weekly or weekly meetings to discuss talking points and develop advocacy materials. The unique stories that each alum brought to Juneau showed what a wide-ranging impact the UA system has on Alaskans throughout the state, and grateful thanks is due to our Vice President, Tom Brice, who was our inspired leader and encouraged us to meet and share our message with the statewide legislators. Our goal was to raise awareness for the critical needs of our respective universities, including unfunded maintenance, and Felicia Burud set up many meetings and coordinated our feedback throughout the two days of meetings.

Importantly, this year we have clarified some of our giving practices and strategies with our investment and benefactor funds. Over the course of several meetings led by Thomas Farrugia and aided by Chris Keyes and the UAFAA finance committee, we developed guidelines for when to splash out with large gifts, and when to be more restrictive in our giving. With recent market instability, as well as the 100th anniversary of the Alumni Association approaching (when we may want to make a large gift), having clarity on our finances is of the utmost importance. UAFAA is developing a wonderful reputation for generous giving, and we clarified the parameters of benefactor fund awards. As is the tradition each spring, Lorna Shaw lead our scholarship committee efficiently to award well-deserved scholarships to new and current UAF students.

As always, our amazing Executive Director, Theresa Bakker, has been busy in and out of the office. Giving Day in February was a record-breaking success, and she has tirelessly worked to bring on staff for a full team in the Alumni Office. With the recent hiring of Katie Straub in charge of alumni storytelling, we are at full staff team for the first time in a long time! We welcome Katie and her energy, expertise, and passion to the UAF Alumni Office.

Theresa has also led us with clarity and persistence as UAFAA transitioned from Chapters to Networks. Our bylaws were updated at the January 2023 business meeting. The new bylaw regarding the recognition and structure of alumni affinity groups will make it easier to connect with alumni and sponsor engagement. Our online platform, Nanook Network, will enable UAF alum to connect with each other far beyond the regional groupings of geographic-based Chapters.

While this is my last meeting on the Board, I know the UAFAA is in great hands with continuing members, as well as two new board members elected in our spring election. We welcome Ryan Tilbury, M. Birch Foster to board, and welcome back DeeDee Ivanoff. Thank you to Meredith Cameron, our chair for the governance committee for all her hard work this year.

And last but not least, we will be saying goodbye to a trusted board member and wonderful UAF advocate, Forrest Kuiper. Forrest and I came on the board at the same time, and I have always appreciated his insight, his steady guidance on finance and the work of the board, and his ability to work tirelessly for UAFAA, despite many demands on his time. Thank you for your many years of service and hard work that you've done on behalf of the alumni association these many years.

And now, I bid you all a fond farewell (for now). I look forward to passing the torch to another alumnus who is willing to step up and give support to the Executive Director, the UAF students and help to promote alumni engagement and be a strong voice with legislative advocacy in Juneau. It's been an honor to serve as your president. Thank you for the friendship and the memories.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary Beth Loewen". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large, stylized 'M' and 'L'.

Mary Beth Loewen