

AURORA

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

What's new at 'the U'

Commencement is held in person again,
athletes have a good year and scientists keep
exploring the Earth and places beyond.

*Above: UAF graduates celebrate receiving their
degrees on April 30, 2022, at the Carlson Center in
Fairbanks. UAF commencement photos by JR
Ancheta unless otherwise noted.*



Celebrate Commencement 2022

This year's commencement was held for the first time in two years at the Carlson Center on April 30. The ceremony, UAF's 100th, was split into two sessions to allow for a little more distance.

You can view the [Facebook album](#), and watch videos of the [morning](#) and [afternoon](#) sessions.

This year, UAF awarded 1,122 degrees, certificates, occupational endorsements and educational licensures to 1,076 students. Graduates ranged in age from 18-75, with an average age of 31 and a median age of 28.

At an April 29 ceremony, **Dermot Cole '79**, Sarah James and Mike Williams Sr. received honorary doctorates, while **Anna Atchison '01**, Susan Henrichs, Aaron Schutt and **Ann Tremarello '57** received awards for meritorious service. UAF also saluted its 32 Ph.D. recipients on April 29.



Olga Skinner '98, '09 receives a Ph.D. in Indigenous studies during UAF's commencement weekend formal hooding ceremony April 29, 2022, in the Davis Concert Hall. UAF photo by Todd Paris.



Phil Sua'luaq Kugzruk Jr. '92 strikes a pose during a 2022 commencement ceremony at the Carlson Center. Kugzruk earned a master's degree in One Health.



Gwich'in Elder Sarah James poses for a photo before the April 29 ceremony in the Regents' Great Hall at which she was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. UAF photo by Todd Paris.



B'Neika Tashelle McCleary '13, left, and Cynthia Hoffer '15 smile as they change their tassels during the afternoon commencement ceremony at the Carlson Center.



UAF Chancellor Dan White, left, and UA Regent Ralph Seekins present Ann Tremarello with a Meritorious Service Award during UAF's 2022 commencement honoree ceremony April 29 in the Davis Concert Hall. As longtime registrar, Tremarello guided the university through many transitions, shifting from paper records to computers and the internet. UAF photo by Todd Paris.



Leif Van Cise poses with his parents after receiving his bachelor's degree in business administration at the afternoon commencement ceremony at the Carlson Center.

Background photo: Flanked by faculty members on each side, graduates leave the Carlson Center during Commencement 2022.



My Alaska summer podcast

Emily Charash, owner and operator of the podcast production company Charash Sound, spent summer 2021 taking UAF classes and exploring the Fairbanks area. From that experience, she created [six podcast episodes](#). She shared this brief Q&A with us.

First, tell us a little about yourself. Where are you from? Do you travel a lot or was this a new thing?

I am from New York City. I love traveling, but this was my first time in a northern area!

Why Alaska? Why UAF?

Alaska is actually my dad's favorite place in the world. Growing up, I always heard stories of his adventures throughout the state, and it's somewhere I always wanted to experience for myself. I chose UAF in particular because they have some of the most interesting course offerings I've seen. The course offerings are highly specific, interactive and so unique — perfect qualities for a podcast!

What was the first thing you noticed when you arrived?

A bright sun at 11 o'clock at night.

Not everything makes it through editing; what are some of your favorite weird, funny or interesting details or experiences that didn't quite fit in the podcast?

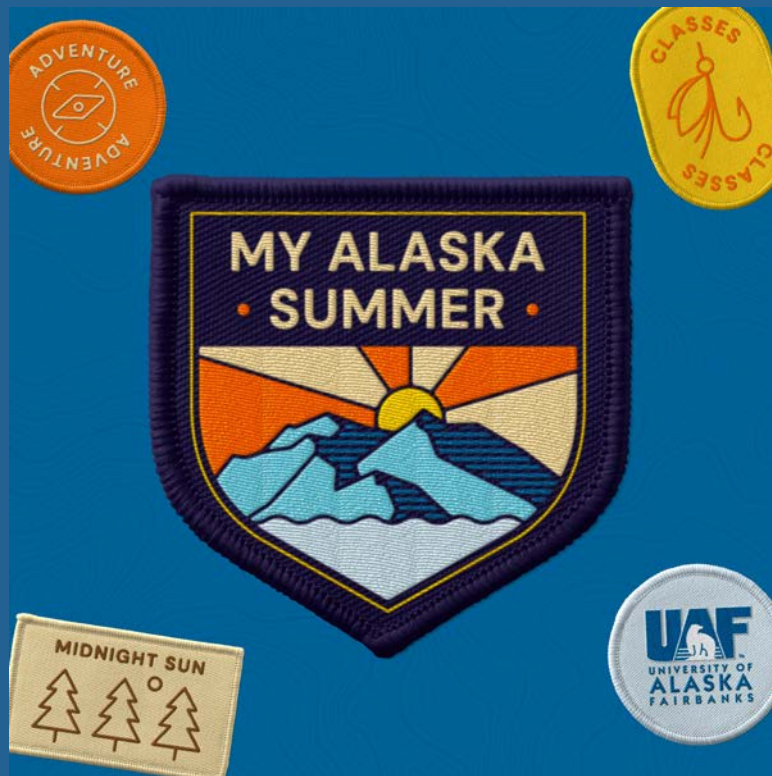
I actually did interviews with each friend I made in Alaska. They recounted a lot of memories and inside jokes which were fun for me to hear but wouldn't make sense to a larger audience.

What were some of your favorite spots on campus?

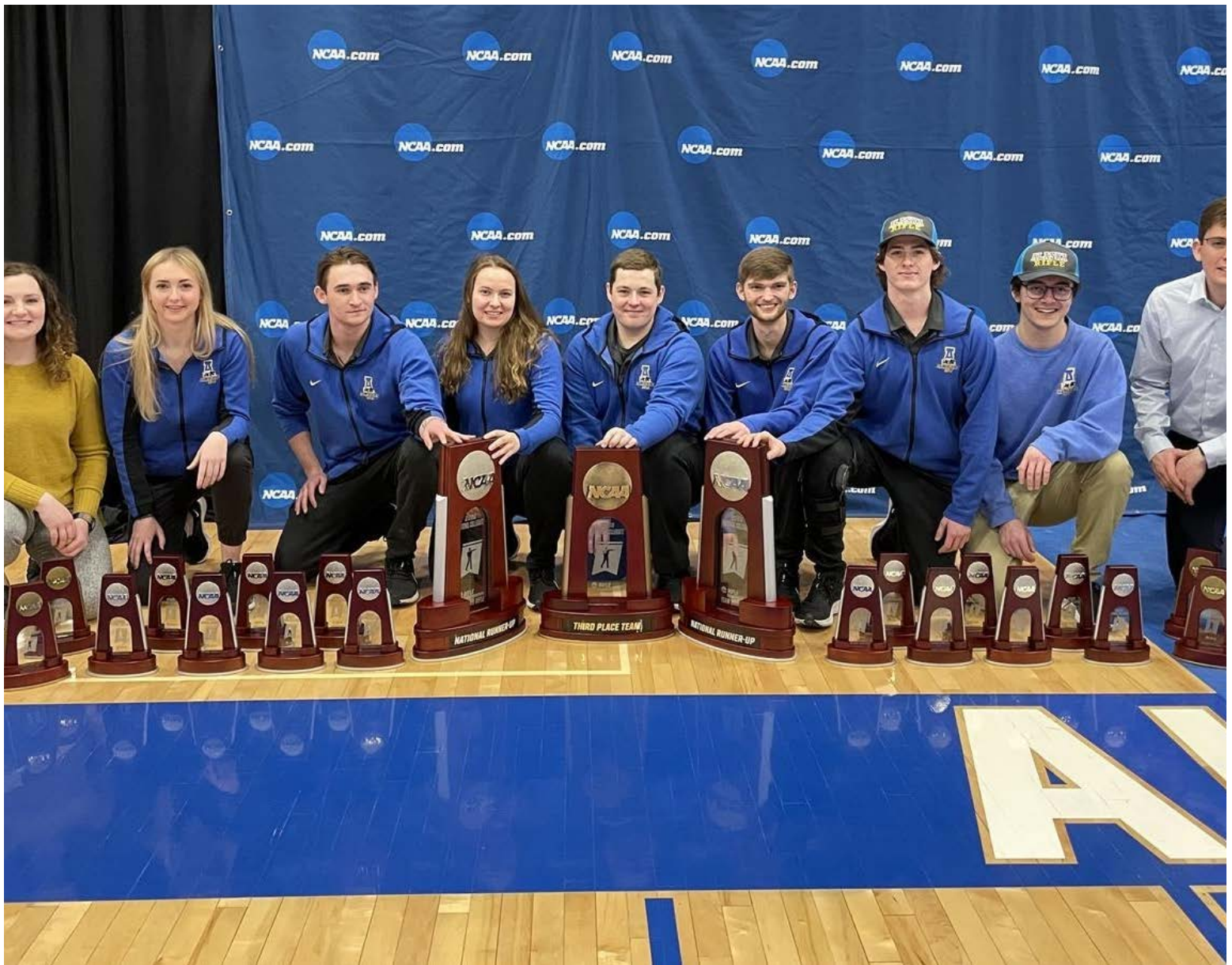
The trails that wind throughout campus. I loved going there for a run or to walk at the end of the day. Also the Museum of the North. I live in New York City, and can unequivocally say the Museum of the North tells the most comprehensive and compelling story of any museum I've been to.

Was it what you expected? Were you surprised by anything?

Definitely surprised by people's passion for their community in Fairbanks. In New York, it's easy to remain anonymous within the confines of individual apartments and stay separate from your neighbors. In Fairbanks, people celebrate their community and care for their neighbors. Definitely a different feeling!



Listen to the [My Alaska Summer](#) podcast.



Rifle team has stellar season

The UAF rifle team took third in the national championships in March after a regular season in which it remained undefeated and won the Patriot Rifle Conference championship.

During the season, team member Rylan Kissell shot a perfect score at a January match against the Air Force Academy on the Fairbanks campus.

The first-year student's perfect score was the second in the Alaska Nanooks' history and the 15th in the entire NCAA's.



First-year student Rylan Kissell shoots during the Alaska Nanooks' match against the University of Mississippi on Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022, at the E.F. Horton Rifle Range in the Patty Center. UAF photo by JR Ancheta.

The College Rifle Coaches Association named Kissell its 2021-2022 rifle athlete of the year after he finished with the highest aggregate season average in the NCAA.

Fellow first-year student Sára Karasová was named the rookie of the year after she finished with the seventh-best aggregate average.

Head coach Will Anti was named head coach of the year after he led the Nanooks to a 12-0 regular-season record in his second season at the helm.

The University of Kentucky won the 2022 NCAA championships, and Texas Christian University took second.

Read more about [Rylan Kissell's perfect score](#) and the [rifle team's third place finish](#).

Background photo: Coaches and members of the 2021-2022 Alaska Nanooks rifle team display their trophies after the NCAA championships. At far left and far right are, respectively, assistant coach Randi Loudin and head coach Will Anti. Between them are team members, from left, Jessica Boyce, Rylan Kissell, Sára Karasová, Daniel Enger, Kellen McAferty, Gavin Barnick and Andrew Pham. Photo courtesy of UAF Athletics Department.



Photo: Abdullahi Mohamed scans the court during the Alaska Nanooks' game against the California State University Chico Wildcats in the West Region finals of the NCAA Division II championships on March 14, 2022. Photo courtesy of CSU San Bernardino Athletics.

Men's basketball team goes to Sweet 16

The men's basketball team made it to the Sweet 16 in the 2022 NCAA Division II national

tournament.

The Nanooks' remarkable tournament run included a victory over the West Region's No. 1-seed, the California State University San Marcos Cougars, 70-63, on March 11. UAF's Shadeed Shabazz scored 35 points in the game.

Next, the Nanooks defeated Azusa Pacific University, 72-71, on March 12 in the second round of the tournament at California State University San Bernardino.

On March 14, the Nanooks finally fell to the region's third-ranked team, the California State University Chico Wildcats, 52-70, ending their storied season 14-15.

Shabazz and Koby Huerta were named to the 2022 West Regional All-Tournament Team. Over the course of the three games, Shabazz averaged 23 points per game, while Huerta averaged 13.3.

This was the Nanooks' third trip to the Sweet 16 and first since the 2005 NCAA Division II West Regional.

[Read more.](#)



NOVA

Alaskan Dinosaurs

Season 48 Episode 21 | 53m 32s | CC

+ My List

Watch Preview

A team of intrepid paleontologists discovers that dinosaurs thrived in the unlikelyst of places—the cold and dark of winter in the Arctic Circle. How did they survive year-round and raise their young in harsh and dark winter conditions?

Aired: 01/19/22 | Expires: 12/21/24 | Rating: TV-PG

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Nova highlights UAF research

Nova, the PBS science television program, highlighted UAF researchers twice in early 2022.

On Jan. 19, Nova aired “Alaskan Dinosaurs,” which featured University of Alaska Museum of the North Director Patrick Druckenmiller. The Nova crew joined Druckenmiller and colleagues at field sites on the

Colville River on Alaska's North Slope and in Denali National Park, where team members discovered fossilized bones, footprints and an Arctic dinosaur nursery.



NOVA

Arctic Sinkhole

Season 49 Episode 1

+ My List

Colossal explosions shaped the landscape, leaving behind massive bubbles of inflammable gas, mystifying phenomena as permafrost melts and releases greenhouse gas.

Aired: 02/02/22 | Expires: 02/02/22

Buy Now: iTunes Amazon

Share:

On Feb. 2, “Arctic Sinkholes” featured UAF faculty members **Vladimir Romanovsky '96**, **Dmitry Nicolsky '03, '07** and **Katey Walter Anthony '06** as they investigated and explained holes created by underground methane explosions and seeps.

The episodes can be viewed via [PBS Passport](#). They also are available on [Amazon Prime](#) and [iTunes](#).



Wood bison calves arrive at LARS

Forty young wood bison from Elk Island National Park in Canada arrived at UAF's Large Animal Research Station on April 14 for a temporary stay.

Parks Canada, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the federal Bureau of Land Management organized the transfer. The bison were

transported by truck from near Edmonton, Alberta.

LARS, a research facility that hosts reindeer and muskox for research, education and outreach, will host the 11-month-old bison for a minimum of 30 days. During that time, the bison will be checked for diseases before release.

Most of the young bison will go to supplement a herd on the lower Innoko River, where 130 bison were first released in 2015.

Background photo: Young wood bison, the same subspecies as these animals, are temporarily staying at UAF's Large Animal Research Station after arriving from Canada. Photo by Laura Whitehouse/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[Read more.](#)



Students create 'stomp quakes'

In Quinhagak, a village nearly 600 miles from Fairbanks in Southwest Alaska, a small seismometer sits on a corner counter in the classroom of Kuinerrarmiut Elitnaurviat science teacher EJ Dorsey. It quietly records the movements of the Earth's surface and of people walking nearby.

On its first day of action last year at the school, it recorded the joyous “stomp quake” of the students jumping up and down together to see the real-time computer readout of their new seismometer in action.

“We even got a few ‘aftershocks’ from the classroom next door when we made our stomp quakes,” Dorsey said.

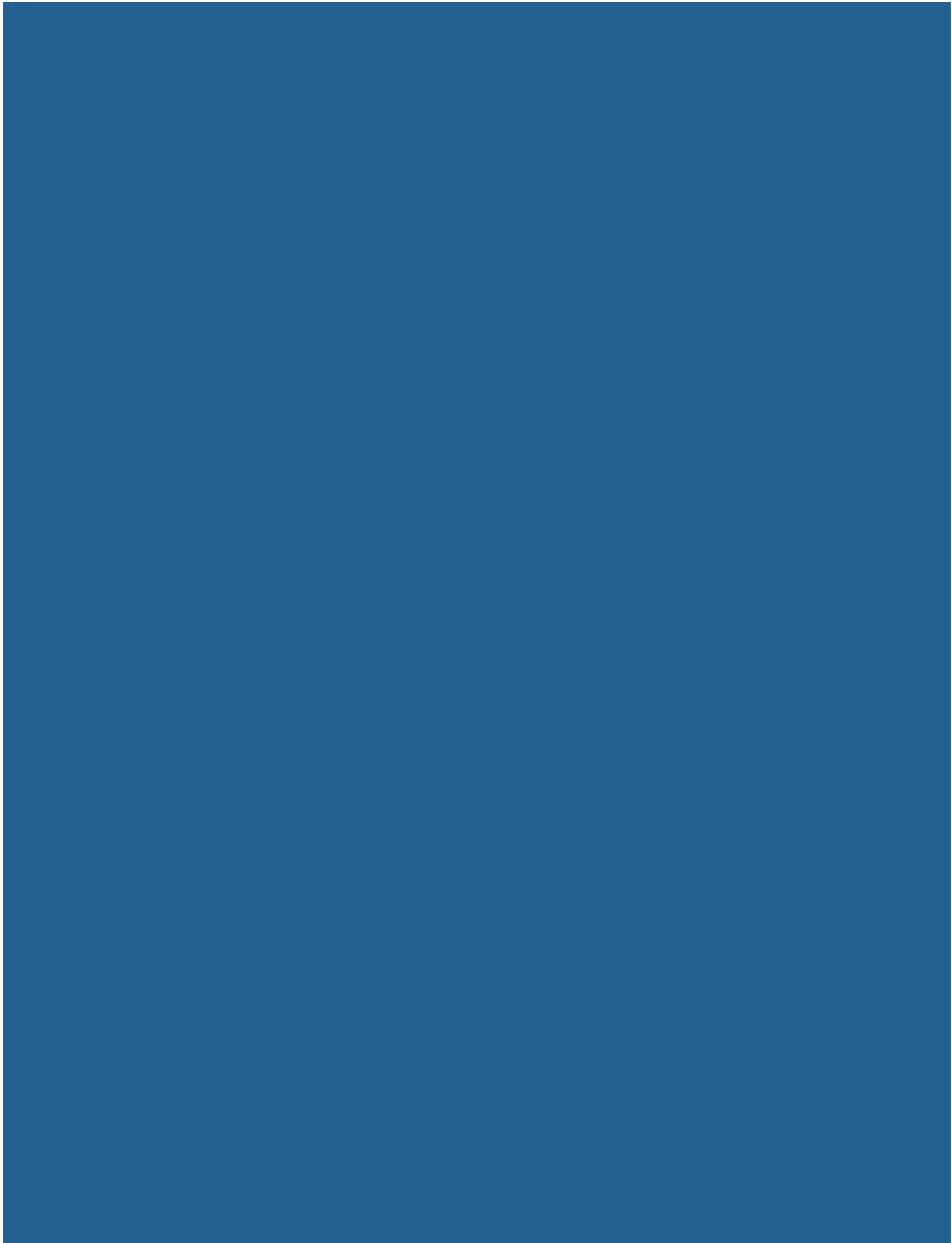
It’s all a part of [Alaska Seismology in Schools](#), the brainchild of UAF undergraduate student Gabriel Low. The aim is to get students interested not just in seismology but in science in general.

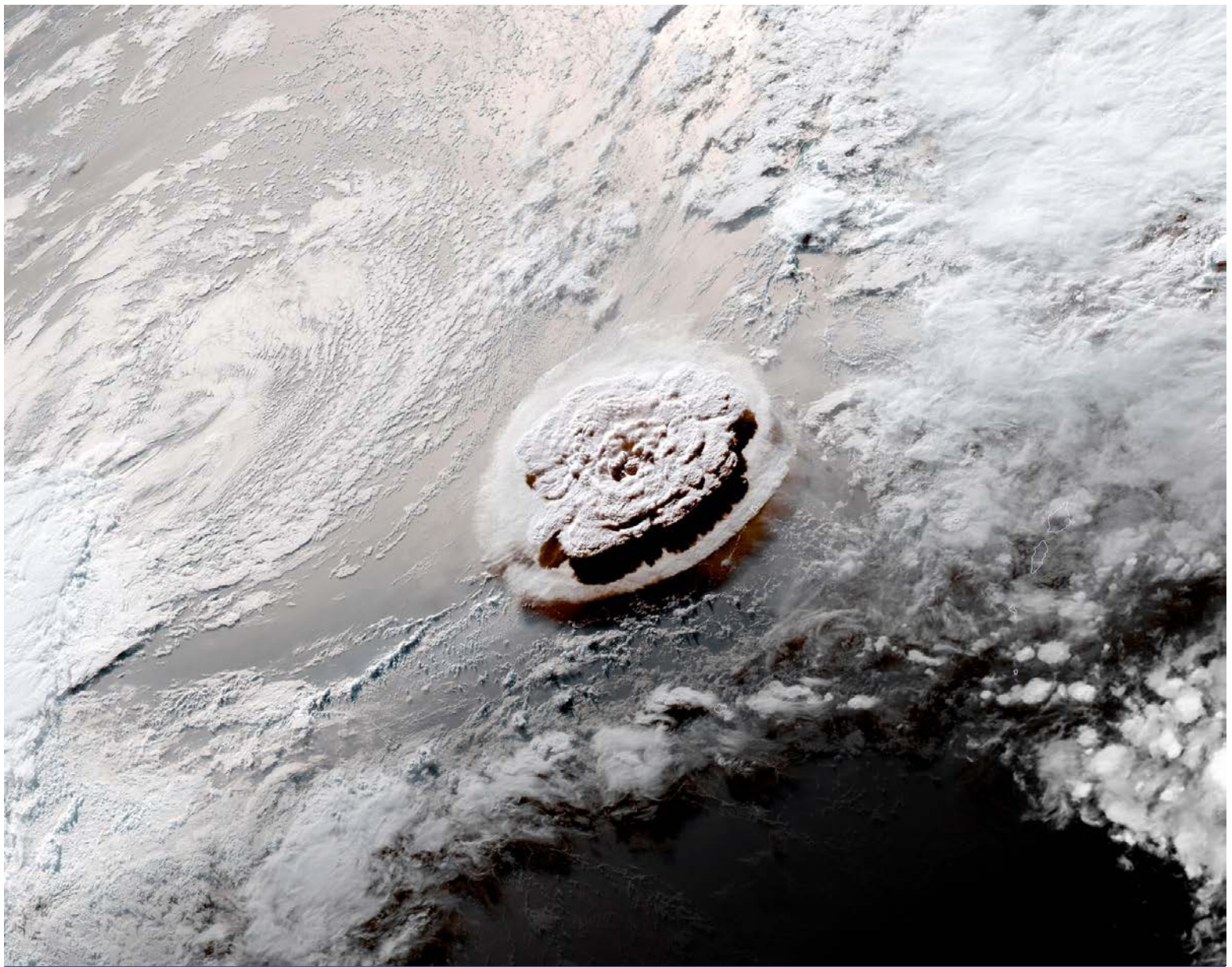


Gabriel Low talks about earthquake facts and information to a group of West Valley High School students in Fairbanks during a presentation by the Alaska Earthquake Center on Monday, March 6, 2022. UAF/GI photo by JR Ancheta.

Background photo: West Valley High School students in Fairbanks simulate an earthquake by jumping up and down next to a Raspberry Shake seismometer Monday, March 6, 2022. UAF/GI photo by JR Ancheta.

[Read more.](#)





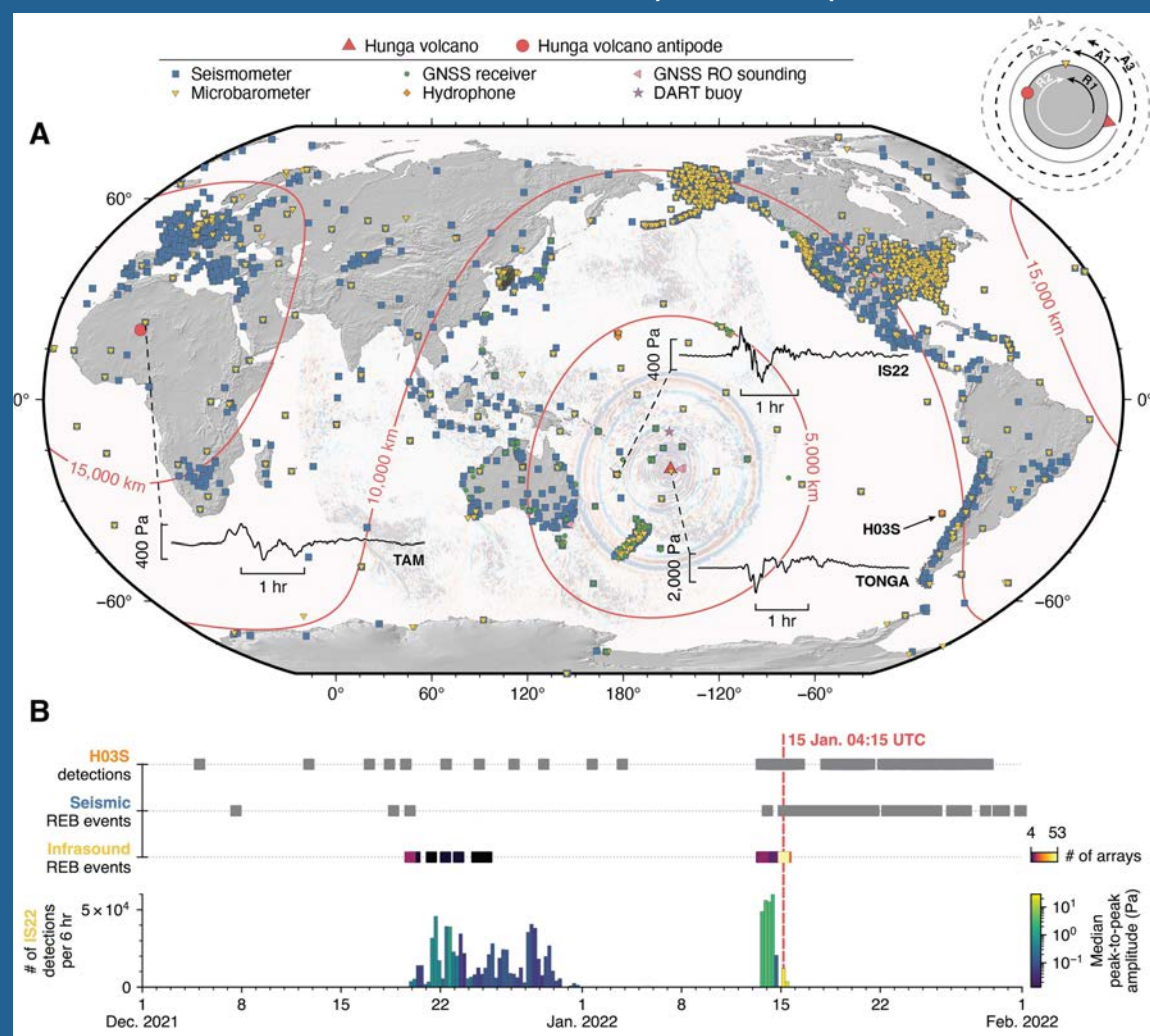
UAF scientists analyzed Hunga eruption

People in Fairbanks heard booms from the Hunga submarine volcano's explosive eruption in the South Pacific Ocean on Jan. 15, 2022, and UAF researchers quickly joined an international team that studied the event.

David Fee, director of the Wilson Alaska Technical Center at the UAF Geophysical Institute, was a leading author of a research paper published May 12 in the journal Science by a team of 76 scientists from 17 nations.

Audible sounds, the paper noted, traveled about 6,200 miles to Alaska, where they were heard as repeated booms about nine hours after the eruption. The Alaska reports are the farthest documented accounts of audible sound from its source.

UAF's dense network of barometers, infrasound sensors and seismometers in Alaska was used to analyze the eruption.



Top image shows the locations of instruments that provided data used in the research paper. Red-and-blue pattern around Hunga volcano is a time snapshot image from a weather satellite showing the atmospheric disturbance created by the Lamb wave.

Bottom image shows two months of Hunga volcano activity. Squares in the top three rows show timing of activity as determined from ocean, solid Earth and atmospheric disturbance-sensing instruments, respectively. For atmospheric instruments, (third row) squares are colored by how many stations contributed to the detection. Bottom bar chart shows the number of atmospheric detections (bar height) and strength of atmospheric waves (bar color) for an instrument 1,150 miles from the volcano.

Images courtesy of David Fee/Geophysical Institute.

Background photo: The Hunga volcano erupts Jan. 15, 2022. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's GOES-17 satellite captured the image. Photo courtesy of NOAA.

[Read more.](#)



Photo caption: A Black Brant IX rocket launches from Poker Flat Research Range north of Fairbanks at 4:47 a.m. Thursday, April 7, 2022. Photo by Terry Zaperach/NASA Wallops.

Poker Flat launches first rockets since 2000

Poker Flat Research Range launched rockets for two projects in late winter 2022, the first such activity in two years.

A NASA Black Brant IX sounding rocket soared high out of Poker Flat at 2:27 a.m. on March 5 to learn more about pulsating aurora. The effort was led by Alexa Halford, space physics researcher at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

The second project, designed to study how energy behaves during an aurora, successfully launched two sounding rockets at about 4:47 a.m. April 7. Space physicist Mark Conde of the UAF Geophysical Institute was a co-investigator.

The UAF Geophysical Institute owns Poker Flat, located at Mile 30 Steese Highway, and operates it under a contract with NASA.

Read more about the [March 5 launch](#) and [April 7 launches](#).

Find more stories in the [UAF newsroom](#).





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