As we look to the future, the horizon is illuminated with brilliant students taking on leadership roles throughout Alaska. DANSRD is pleased to welcome two new Indigenous faculty to our team. Barbara Blake and Judith Ramos will be joining us in Fall 2013. Both ladies have extensive experience working with issues important to rural Alaska and the Native communities. As they join the DANSRD team, we also offer a sincere thank you to departing faculty Dr. Ralph Gabrielli and Dr. Theresa John. Dr. Gabrielli retired after over 30 years with UAF and is enjoying the golf courses in Washington State. Dr. John, who recently earned her PhD, transferred to the Cross Cultural program where her talents in Yuktun and Yup’ik culture will strengthen the Alaska Native Language program.

Within the department, former Research Assistant, Jenny Bell Jones was hired as an Assistant Professor and further serves as the Academic Chair for DANSRD. Cathy Brooks, who is responsible for coordinating students with the Festival of Native Arts, was also recently hired as Assistant Professor. Long time faculty, Dixie Dayo, is taking a year of leave to concentrate of completion of her PhD program.

While it was difficulty to bid adieu to long time Administrative staff, Gail Staudinger and Kay Thomas, we wish them well in their retirement. As we manage the life transitions of dedicated personnel and the changes in staffing, we are pleased to welcome Lorraine Frechette, the Administrative Coordinator in the Anchorage office and Sherrie Rahlfs, Assistant to the Director in Fairbanks. We also welcome RD alumni, Crystal Frank, to the team. Crystal is offering her service as we recruit for the Administrative Generalist position recently vacated by Leah Curtiss. We wish Leah well on her adventures to the Lower 48 and thank her for her organizing our student records.

Wishing you all any blessings for success, happiness and a bright future.

Miranda Wright, Director

A Look At What’s Inside This Issue:

◊ ANS program updates
◊ Ahtna Athabascan Elder Katie John
◊ Off-Campus Library Services
◊ ANS/RD concentrations
◊ Course Registration Basics
◊ A look at the department’s exciting RD seminars
◊ Festival of Native Arts
◊ ANCSA Impact Series
◊ Alaska Native case studies institute
◊ Learning through a heritage language
◊ RD and the Peace Corps
◊ Our graduates and alumni
◊ The National Pacific American Leadership Institute
◊ University Awards for DANSRD staff, faculty, and students
◊ Staff and Faculty news
◊ DANSRD Collaboration with the School of Fisheries
Alaska Native Studies Moves Forward

If change is effective and positive, the people whom the change was intended to benefit should be able to provide examples of success. In the case of merging the Alaska Native Studies program and Rural Development programs to form the Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development our students are now providing those examples.

Catalog revision of the entire Alaska Native Studies program has allowed students to be confident about planning ahead for their coursework. Course content has been revised and updated and the “old” ANS concentration areas have been replaced with four new choices that better reflect the areas that graduates may find in the workplace and that will better prepare them for future graduate studies.

Future plans for the Alaska Native Studies program include the introduction of a master’s degree in legal studies (MLS) which is currently under development. This will provide students interested in how law and policy directly apply to Alaska Native communities an opportunity to obtain an MLS without leaving their communities.

DANSRD works constantly to develop its programs and looks forward to welcoming more students as the department’s expansion continues.

— Jenny Bell-Jones

Ahtna Athabascan Elder Katie John

Widely known and admired for her leadership throughout Native subsistence rights and Ahtna language work, Katie John has made a difference in the lives of many. She was born in 1915, and was raised to live the traditional subsistence lifestyle. In 1985, when the state did not permit John and another Mentasta Elder to put up a fish wheel at a traditional harvest site, John filed suit in federal court. That case became the precedent for all future subsistence cases.

John passed away at the age of 97 surrounded by family members on May 31, 2013 at the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage. The mother of 20 (6 adopted), John leaves behind over 250 grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

“She blessed us in so many ways through her strength and courage to fight for subsistence rights for our generation and generations to follow...her legacy will continue through her children, grandchildren, and all of us who benefit through her landmark subsistence case.”

— Bernice Joseph, former Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean for the College of Rural and Community Development
Off-Campus Services with the Rasmuson Library

The Off-Campus Library Services with the Rasmuson Library on the Fairbanks campus is focused on bringing library services to all students who are taking distance classes, with a special focus on rural students.

By contacting the Off-Campus Library Services, distance students can describe the books and other library materials needed to complete their course or research work. The Off-Campus Library Services will then check out any requested library materials to the student and send it to their mailing address.

For more information about this wonderful program for distance student, please visit the Off-Campus Services website at http://library.uaf.edu/offcampus or call them at 907.474.7406 or 1.800.478.5348.

2013 Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development Concentrations

Alaska Native Studies

◊ Alaska Native Education
◊ Alaska Native Forms of Cultural Expression
◊ Alaska Native Language
◊ Alaska Native Law, Government and Politics

Rural Development

◊ Community Business and Economic Development
◊ Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge
◊ Land Resources and Environmental Management
◊ Rural Health and Human Services Management
◊ Tribal and Local Government Administration

Basics of the Course Registration Process

1. Review your registration request form
2. Meet with your academic advisor
3. Turn in your registration request form
4. Log on to the secure area on UAOntline to search for and add classes
5. If there are any registration errors with your courses on the UAOntline, follow the directions on the error message or contact your academic advisor
RD Indigenous Leadership Symposium and Seminar

Nothing can start the new school year better than leaders coming together to share the experiences that brought them to where they are today and prepare for where they can go in the future. The RD600/492 RD Indigenous Leadership Symposium and Leadership Seminar is offered during the fall semester. It begins with weekly audio conferences on different leadership styles progressing to a week-long symposium/seminar with tribal Elders and state indigenous leaders. Recent seminars have included Mr. John Borbridge, Jr., Mrs. Alice Petrivelli, Senator John Sackett, Mr. Emil Notti, Mr. Willie Hensley, and many leaders from the different ANCSA corporations.

RD Legislative Seminar

The RD program also participates with the first legislative session of each year. Students travel to Juneau for a week-long seminar to learn about the legislative process and the influences present in that process.

Students meet with a wide array of policy makers in addition to members of the legislature. Students and the legislatures have the chance for a reciprocal learning experience, where knowledge, experiences, and beliefs on rural and urban issues are shared from Native and non-Native perspectives.

RD student Vernae Angnaboogok of Wales shares that the legislative seminar is “such a rewarding experience, both personally and academically… (and) the diversity of the class adds character.”

Find more photographs at https://www.facebook.com/DANSRD!
Continued Partnership with the National Park Service

In spring 2010 the National Park Service, Alaska Region agreed to a third five-year partnership with DANRSD. Over the past fifteen years, that partnership has provided RD bachelor and master degree students an opportunity to explore the relationships between federal managers and indigenous peoples; as well as helping students learn about possible internships or employment opportunities with the NPS. The NPS/DANSRD partnership paved a way for a spring semester course starting with classroom instruction and leading towards a week-long seminar at a National Park in Alaska. Dr. Terje “Ted” Birkedal has been part of every seminar since 2002. He has been the main NPS liaison with DANSRD from 2004 until his retirement at the end of May 2012.

In addition to championing the partnership and pushing through the cooperative agreement between NPS and UAF each year, Ted participated fully in each of the seminars by working on the planning committee, coordinating with park staff, making presentations, and writing “Questions of the Day” to allow students to reflect on the seminar’s daily events. As DANSRD faculty member Dixie Dayo pointed out at the goodbye gathering for Ted during the 2012 seminar at the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska, “Ted has also gone the extra mile on every seminar by carrying bags, transporting students, keeping track of students and faculty determined to resist being herded, and doing it all with enormous good will.”

Ted will be greatly missed in future DANSRD seminars. Rachel Mason, Senior Cultural Anthropologist at the Alaska Regional Office of the National Park Service, will now serve as the primary liaison for the partnership. Theresa Thibault, Chief of Resources for Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, will also serve as a NPS liaison.

“Ted has gone the extra mile in every seminar.”
-Dixie Dayo, DANSRD Faculty

DANSRD students at the 2012 seminar in Skagway

Dr. Burkedal, Manager, Cultural Resource Team, NPS Alaska Regional Office
Festival of Native Arts Celebrated 40 Years!

The Festival of Native Arts (Festival) provides cultural education and sharing through traditional Native dance, music, and arts. The Festival continues the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) student-led tradition that began in 1973 of bringing together artists, performers, and performance groups in a celebration of Native cultures. Festival currently hosts a three-day celebration open to everyone. The final “product” of this event is the creation of a strong, unified, community throughout Alaska and celebrating the diversity that makes Alaska unique.

For the 38th Annual Festival in 2011, students added a film component. Two films featuring Ray Mala were shown on the last day with a goal of identifying Native actors who were not given credit for their work.

Daytime workshops were brought back during the 2012 39th Annual Festival. Students, community, and dance group volunteers lead workshops on languages, dance motions, beading, storytelling, and akutaq making.

The 40th Annual Festival took place on February 21-23, 2013 on the UAF campus. The theme was “Unity Through Cultures: Celebrating 40 years.” The 2013 Festival featured a film celebration in the Salisbury Theater, daytime workshops in the Wood Center, and community performances—in addition to the evening performances and artisan vendors. To honor the 40th year, the stage committee put together a “Heartbeat of the Drum;” where drummers from each of the dance groups came together on the last night to drum as one. Another committee also made it possible to have an Eskimo donut/frybread hour on each night of the Festival.

The support from DANSRD as well as other businesses and organizations help provide this opportunity for students to apply their education as they offer a first-class cultural celebration in Fairbanks, Alaska. Preparation and planning are already taking place to hold the 41st Annual Festival of Native Arts which will be held on February 27, 28, and March 1, 2014 on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus. Hope you can join us!

Look for more Festival photographs, including historical photographs on the Festival Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/festivalofnativearts

Help Festival identify those in the old photographs too!
ANCSA Impact Series
By: Director Miranda Wright

DANSRD recognized the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act through a series of public lectures held on the UAF main campus. Alaska Native leaders Byron Mallott, Willie Hensley, Emil Notti, John Borbridge, Jr., and others who advocated for the passage of ANCSA in the late 1960s through passage in December 1971 led these discussions.

Reflection on that era of the land claims struggle reminds us that the men and women who led the struggle for land claims and Indigenous rights were but college students at the time. John Sackett, Willie Hensley and Ruby Tansey were first generation college students called upon by the Elders to “fight for the land.” These young people put aside traditional leadership practice, of deferring to the Elders for their knowledge, as they rose to the challenge when the Elders passed the torch to them. The battle they were about to enter required the ability to read write, and converse in a “new” language.

The ANCSA Impact Series discussions are captured on CD’s and available through the Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development.

Alaska Native Case Studies

In 2013, DANSRD hosted the Alaska Native Case Studies Institute. The primary focus of this institute is to raise awareness about and encourage the use of Alaska Native Case Studies as an educational tool.

This institute helps identify the range of educational benefits and opportunities that case studies offer, reviews the multiple approaches to teaching case studies, encourages those in the educational arena to pursue case studies that focus on Alaska and the Alaska Native populations, cultures, and issues, and teach key information and resources that will help guide those interested in writing and using case studies.

The 2013 institute included participants from UAA and APU, as well as Native case study advocates Barbara Smith and Linda Moon-Stumpff from Evergreen State College: Enduring Legacy Native Cases Project. This open-access project is available at www.evergreen.edu/tribal/cases.

Case Studies are an inquiry-based learning tool that lends to problem solving and high engagement. They help promote understanding of issues from multiple perspectives and result in interdisciplinary and integrative thinking.
In recent years, DANSRD began offering ANS/ED 461 Native Ways of Knowing and ANS/RD 401 Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders using Yugtun as a medium of instruction. DANSRD is an applied field distance program where the students can enroll from different places. These students are traditional and non-traditional students enrolled in diverse university discipline programs.

To enroll in the DANSRD Yugtun classes, students are required to have proficient Yugtun language fluency and writing standards. These courses are conducted primarily in Yugtun. Their course reflective journals are posted on the blackboard weekly and their assigned research papers are written in their heritage language.

The course discourses represent high-level thinking, strong cultural language, knowledge and identity. Students share cultural values and principles in the classroom that they had learned from their grandparents, Elders and colleagues in the community. The students appreciate the opportunity to express themselves verbally and in writing using their own heritage language, history and local social activities.

The local cultural based texts are written in Yugtun and in English which are Qanruyuteput Inruugut: Our Teachings are Medicine by the Yup’ik Elders and Quiritat Qanemcit-lлу Kinguvarcimalriit: Stories for Our Future Generations by Dr. Paul John. The context of these books were research, gathered and published in collaboration with the Southwestern regional Yup’ik Elders, Indigenous scholars and cultural anthropologists and published by the Calista Elders Council (CEC), a non-profit entity of the Calista Corporation and the Alaska Native Language Center.

One Yup’ik college student, Ryan Abraham, a young fluent Yugtun speaker from the village of Chefornak, was lucky enough to be able to take college classes in his heritage language in the fall 2011 semester. He is the first UAF student that had an opportunity to take three upper division Yugtun classes. In collaborative effort with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Yup’ik Language Program, our vision is to provide more Yugtun classes, specifically to meet the diverse needs of our heritage language speakers.
DANSRD MA degree program is advancing every year. The RD MA degree program emphasizes international study, indigenous leadership development, and management of programs and projects in a dynamic, cross-cultural environment; for this, DANSRD’s partnership with the Peace Corps Master’s International Program (MIPC) is a great fit. Students enrolled in the RD MIPC program have the opportunity to combine their MA studies with the Peace Corps two years of required service. The UAF Graduate School provides a 12 credit tuition waiver during the two-year Peace Corps service period.

DANSRD also partners with the Peace Corps on the Paul D. Coverdell Fellowship. Paul Coverdell was a U.S. Senator from Georgia who served as Peace Corps director from 1989-1991 and in the U.S. Senate from 1992 until his death in 2000. The Coverdell program encourages colleges and universities to provide an annual graduate assistantship, a stipend and a tuition waiver to students who are returning Peace Corps volunteers.

The first recipient of the Coverdell Fellowship at UAF was Jackie Rahm. Rahm volunteered as a teacher, through the Peace Corps, in Nepal from 1987-1989. After she received her master’s degree in community psychology at UAF in 1995, Rahm returned to Nepal to research indigenous psychologies and traditional healing. “My time in Nepal awakened something I carry forward: a vision for a peaceful, healthful and sustainable world,” said Rahm.

The fellowship provided funding for the Indigenous Studies doctoral student’s dissertation work for 2011-2012. Rahm is working on a project to help define Alaska Native peoples’ perceptions of health and wellness. In addition, her work aims to explore ways to integrate those perceptions into the health care system.

Hillary Presecan accepted the UAF Coverdell Fellowship for the 2012-2013 school year. Presecan joined the Peace Corps after completing her undergraduate degree, and shared that the two years she spent in Morocco guided her towards the development field with a cultural and artistic focus.

Presecan’s UAF/Peace Corps Coverdell fellowship project is with DANSRD’s Festival of Native Arts. The project was to collect all known UAF Festival videos, digitize them, and begin the process of sharing the preserved footage with Alaska Native communities that have taken part of Festival. Inspired by Festival’s growing sense of community, Presecan has chosen to make the “Festival of Native Arts Cultural Database Project” into her master’s project focus, and will continue the project throughout her second year with the Coverdell fellowship.

UAF is one of 69 universities that participate in the fellows program, which was created to help initiate the third intention of the Peace Corps, for volunteers to share the benefits of their experiences back in the U.S. DANSRD is pleased to have had Jackie and Hillary with us to share their unique experiences.
DANSRD Graduates!

DANSRD celebrated many graduations over the seven campus in Alaska. This also included the Honorary Doctorate of Law degree recipients of 2011 and 2013, Ahtna Elder Katie John and Senator John Sackett.

2011 Graduates:

Jennifer V. Alt, B.A. Rural Development: Rural Health and Human Services Management

Dawn Michelle Bostwick, B.A. Rural Development

Roselyn Marie Hoffman, B.A. Rural Development: Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge

Charlene Patrice Lopez, B.A. Rural Development: Management-Small Business

Jaclyn Olga Reamey, B.A. Rural Development

Gwendolyn Ann Qinugan Roddy, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration

Natalie Jeanne Perry VanHatten, B.A. Rural Development

Cynthia R. Berns, M.A. Rural Development

Gail Marie Dabaluz, M.A. Rural Development **

Victoria Egoak, M.A. Rural Development

Crystal Annette Frank, M.A. Rural Development

Marie Nellie Greene, M.A. Rural Development

Adrianne Nicole Hicks, M.A. Rural Development

Edwina C. Langenberg-Miller, M.A. Rural Development *

Pearl L. Mikulski, M.A. Rural Development

Loki Gale Tobin, M.A. Rural Development

*Summer degree recipient  **December degree recipient
DANSRD Graduates!

2012 Graduates:

Virginia Ruth Baim, B.A. Rural Development: Rural Health and Human Services Management

Harriet C. Brouillette, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration

Jessica L. Dybdahl, B.A. Rural Development: Land, Resources and Environmental Management

Roselyn Marie Hoffman, B.A. Rural Development: Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge **

Kathryn Irene Martin, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration **

Bertha Rose Prince, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration **

Annie Nellie Roach, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration

Mariah Rochelle Sakeagak, B.A. Rural Development: Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge

Melissa J. Tabor, B.A. Rural Development: Rural Health and Human Services Management

Brian L. Templin, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development **

Brianna Alysse Webb, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development

Julianna Zacharof-Wagner, B.A. Rural Development: Commu-

*Summer degree recipient   **December degree recipient
DANSRD Graduates!

2013 DANSRD Graduates

Rosemary Berg, B.A. Rural Development: Community Research and Indigenous Knowledge

Harriet C. Brouillette, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration

Nicole Sara Bruckner, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development **

Brianna Rashell Cannon, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration *

Debra Deanna Naaqtuuq Dommek, B.A. Alaska Native Studies: General

Lisa Lorraine Ellanna Strickling, B.A. Rural Development: Tribal and Local Government Administration **

Bryan Milton Fritze, B.A. Alaska Native Studies

Kerilee Ivanoff, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development

Russell Nelson, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development

Sondra Lee Shaginoff-Stuart, B.A. Alaska Native Studies: Language **

Marjorie Linne Tungwenuk Tahbone, B.A. Alaska Native Studies: General

Alyce Christine Todd, B.A. Rural Development: Land, Resources and Environmental Management

Bryan Michael Uher, B.A. Rural Development: Community Business and Economic Development **

*Summer degree recipient  **December degree recipient

Senator John Sackett received the Honorary Doctorate of Laws degree in 2013. Photo by UAF Marketing
Where Are They Now?

Michelle Nutter Anderson graduated from the RD master’s program in 2005. In 2011, Anderson was named president of Ahtna, Incorporated ANCSA Regional Corporation. She is an Ahtna shareholder and had previously served in various executive positions throughout the Ahtna family of companies.

Gail Dabaluz received her Masters of Arts degree in Rural Development graduating Magna Cum Laude from UAF in December 2010. She has recently been accepted into the Ph.D program in Indigenous Studies at UAF. The competitive doctoral program admits only eight students per academic year.

Her thesis focus is the cultural significance of the 14 (h) (1) historic sites of southeast Alaska. Gail was influenced to pursue her thesis topic by her late grandfather, Judson Brown her Haida uncle, Robert Sanderson, Sr., Haida elders Claude Morrison, Woodrow Morrison, Sr., and Charles Natkong, Sr. Gail credits her mother Gerry Williams, Emil Notti, Dr. Gordon Pullar, Miranda Wright and Dixie Masak Dayo as her mentors. She has been able to achieve many personal and academic goals with the loving support of her husband, Leroy.

Ms. Dabaluz attended school and worked full-time while pursuing her education. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Cultural Anthropology conferred by the University of Hawaii-Hilo and is a National Pacific American Leadership Institute (NAPALI) fellow.

Ms. Dabaluz is the daughter of James Young, Jr. originally from Hydaburg and Goldbelt shareholder Geraldine (Brown) Williams of Juneau. Her late maternal grandparents were Judson and Selina (Fournie) Brown. Dabaluz is of the Yéil (Raven) moiety, L’uknaádi (coho) clan of Diginaa Hit from Dry Bay Village near Yakutat. Gail, husband Leroy and children Ke’alalakina (20) and Pietr (5) continue to make Juneau their home.

Where Are YOU Now?

Contact one of the DANSRD offices and let us know where you are today. Send us a current picture and some information about what you have been up to since graduation with your ANS/RD degree(s)!

E-mail: fydanrd@uaf.edu

Fairbanks office: 315 Brooks Building PO Box 756500 Fairbanks, AK 99775 Fax: 907.474.6325

Anchorage Office: 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Suite 200 Anchorage, AK 99508 Fax: 907.279.2716
National Pacific American Leadership Institute

DANSRD has an agreement with the Pacific American Foundation (http://www.thepaf.org/) in Hawaii under which we are provided one student scholarship to participate in their annual National Pacific American Leadership Institute (NAPALI). NAPALI is an eight-day hands-on participatory seminar in Hawaii. (NAPALI) (formerly the Pacific American Leadership Center) conducted its inaugural class in June 1998 in partnership with the internationally and nationally acclaimed Peter F. Drucker Graduate School of Management at Claremont, CA.

While this takes place in Hawaii, it is not a vacation. The DANSRD scholar is expected to participate in all eight days of the program, in which the group travels to different locations on the islands.

With only one scholarship provided, DANSRD selects just one student to attend. It can be either a BA or an MA student. DANSRD covers roundtrip airfare between Alaska and Hawaii where the NAPALI program covers the lodging and food expenses during the session.

Our past students have been:
2006 Gwendolyn Edwardsen, Barrow (BA student)
2007 Gail Dabaluz, Juneau (MA student)
2008 Anshia Elbie, South Naknek (MA student)
2009 Crystal Frank, Arctic Village (MA student)
2010 Hannah Loon, Selawik (MA student)
2011 Carrie Sykes, Juneau (BA student)
2012 Leona Starr, Huslia (BA student)
2013 Sharon Hildebrand, Nulato (BA student)

The requirements to apply are to:
1. Be a Spring Rural Development or Alaska Native Studies BA or MA student in good standing.
2. Be Alaska Native as this is an indigenous program experience.
3. Be able to commit to the time it takes including travel time.
4. Submit an essay to the department stating availability and interest, including what you would expect to gain from this experience. The essay should be 1-2 pages in length and is due in early February.
5. Upon completing the institute DANSRD requires the recipient to submit a paper to DANSRD about the experiences and do a presentation at a mutually agreeable time and place (could be at a seminar, class, faculty meeting, or other event).

A faculty committee will review the application essays to select a student as well as one alternate (in the event the selected student has to withdraw prior to July's institute).

Find more information on the NAPALI experience at http://www.thenapali.org/

Check them out on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/thenapali !
University Awards

Outstanding RD scholar Lisa Ellanna Strickling, Assistant Professor Jenny Bell-Jones, and Outstanding ANS scholar Sharon Hildebrand at the 2013 Awards Breakfast

Outstanding RD scholar Leona Starr and Outstanding ANS scholar Naaqtuuq Dommek at the 2012 Awards Breakfast

Festival volunteer Jordyn Montgomery received the Marion Frances Boswell Memorial Award and RD graduate Gail Denning received the Gray Tilly Memorial Award for the 2011-2012 school year.

Sarah Walker received the Fall 2011 Exceptional Student Employee Award for her work as the Festival of Native Arts Student Coordinator. Pictured here with Festival Faculty Advisor Cathy Brooks and Chancellor Rogers.

Outstanding RD scholar Kathyrn Martin, Outstanding ANS scholar Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart, and Assistant Professor Jenny Bell-Jones at the 2011 Awards Breakfast.

Sarah Walker received the Fall 2011 Exceptional Student Employee Award for her work as the Festival of Native Arts Student Coordinator. Pictured here with Festival Faculty Advisor Cathy Brooks and Chancellor Rogers.
Staff and Faculty News

Kay Thomas

After over 23 years of advising and mentoring students through college, Kay Thomas retired in early spring 2012. A retirement celebration was held for Kay at Rural Student Services in the Brooks building on the Fairbanks campus January 31, 2012. Friends and colleagues took turns sharing appreciative stories about their experiences with Kay.

“There are moments when words are inadequate to describe a person blessed with the gift of humility, grace and compassion.” -DANSRD Director Miranda Wright

“Kay’s name is synonymous with patience and understanding but also complete competency.” -Former Executive Dean/Vice Chancellor Bernice Joseph

Ralph Gabrielli

Starting his UAF career at Nome’s Northwest Campus, Dr. Ralph Gabrielli has brought distinctive teaching, research, and public service throughout his 30 years with the university. Dr. Gabrielli has shown to be a strong advocate for higher education in rural Alaska, and is known for always putting students and community members first. He was integral in the merging of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development departments and helped to expand the rural development graduate program.

In an effort to express deep appreciation for the many contributions to the University, Dr. Ralph Gabrielli was awarded with the Professor Emeritus title during the spring 2012 commencement.

Gail Staudinger

After 30 years of service to DANSRD, Admin Coordinator, Gail Staudinger retired in 2011 as the longest serving DANSRD employee. Originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, Gail worked out of DANSRD’s Anchorage office. She spent countless hours coordinating seminars and making things happen for the department and students.

“As a Bristol Bay fisherman, I know the way an anchor keeps a boat in place and protects it. Gail has been our anchor - for the faculty, staff and the students as they chartered their academic career.”

-Mike Davis, Associate Professor, Bristol Bay Campus

“To say that Gail is a “support staff” person is a vast understatement. Thank you Gail for all you have done for us!”

- Dr. Gordan Pullar, Associate professor, DANSRD
Staff and Faculty News

Sherrie Rahlfs

Sherrie Rahlfs was born and raised in Portland, OR and has lived in Alaska since 1991. She has worked at UAF for 4 1/2 years and was recently hired as the Assistant to the Director at DANSRD. Sherrie will have her AA in Applied Business Management in Spring 2014.

Outside of work, Sherrie has three grown sons living in South Korea, Colorado, and her youngest attending UAF. She enjoys the community theater, summer gardening, crochet, and cross stitching.

Judith Ramos

Judith Ramos, a graduate student in the Indigenous Studies Ph.D program at UAF kwaan/Kwaashki’kwaan clan from Yakutat, and the granddaughter of a hereditary chief. She is active in the Mt. St. Elias Dancers, where her father is the dance leader. Ramos is also active in the Alaska Native Sisterhood and subsistence gathering.

Barbara Blake

'Wáahlaal Gidáak (Haida)-Barbara Blake (English) is the newly hired Assistant Professor for the Department of Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development. She is of Haida, Tlingit and Ahtna Athabascan descent and belongs to the Yahkw 'Láanaas (Raven/Shark House) clan.

She received her Master’s degree from UAF in Rural Development. She also received her undergraduate degree(s) at UAF with a BA in Rural Economic Development and an AA in Tribal Management. She also holds a certificate in Tribal Governmental Business Law from Seattle University.


Lorraine Frechette

Lorraine Frechette is a UAA alumni and works out of DANSRD’s Anchorage office as the administrative coordinator. As the admin coordinator, Lorraine does many things for DANSRD, such as purchasing, procurement, travel arrangements, and coordinating seminars.

Outside of work, Lorraine enjoys any outdoor activities, taking classes, and reading. Lorraine looks forward to DANSRD’s continual growth and progression to meet the demands and needs for student success.

She took leave from her job at Yakutat Tlingit Tribe as the Realty and NAGPRA officer to return to college, and is an IGERT - Resilience and Adaptation Fellow (RAP). Ramos has lived in Canada and worked for Assembly of First Nations and Council for Yukon First Nations. She has also visited Aotearoa and the Sami in Norway.

Ramos’ research is based around the seal hunting traditions in Yakutat, and is part of an interdisciplinary team documenting historic and pre-historic seal hunting campsites and hunting tradition.

Photo by Mark Hoover

Lorraine Frechette

Photo by Mark Hoover

Barbara Blake

Photo by Mark Hoover
DANSRD Achievements

Cathy Brooks, Faculty Advisor for the Festival of Native Arts was one of the recipients of the 2011 Dennis Demmert Award

RD Student Amelia Ruerup and Assistant Professor Jenny Bell-Jones were recipients of the 2012 Dennis Demmert Award

Dr. Theresa John received the Alaska State Library Book of the Year Award for “Yupiit Yuraryarait: Yup’ik Ways of Dancing,” and was named a 2011 UAF Honored Author by the Rasmuson Library. Dr. John, Ann Fienup-Riordan, and James Barker were recognized as Alaskana of the Year 2011 for their collaboration on Yupiit Yuraryarait: Yup’ik Ways of Dancing by the Alaska Library Association.

Dr. John was also recognized by the Alaska State Council on the Arts for ten years of service as a board member.

In April 2011, Dr. John was Presidentially appointed to the National Advisory Committee on Indian Education

The first Alaska Native Studies Conference was held in April 2012 in Anchorage, AK. DANSRD and the Festival of Native Arts took part in presenting and attending the two day conference.

The second ANS Conference is scheduled to be hosted by the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) in Juneau 2014.
DANSRD Achievements

The Festival of Native Arts received the Student Organizations 2012 Exceptional Event Award for the 40th Annual Festival of Native Arts.

*Pictured here are Josh Hovis of UAF Student Orgs, Tayesia Nick-Natives For Positive Change Officer and Festival Volunteer, Festival of Native Arts Student Coordinator Sarah Walker, Cara Hollingsworth of UAF LIVE, and Jared Conrad of UAF Student Orgs.*

ANS graduate Marjorie Tahbone was crowned Miss World Eskimo Indian Olympics (WEIO) in 2010 and Miss Indian World 2011 while completing her degree at UAF and being a Festival of Native Arts volunteer.

RD student, Kelsey Wallace, was crowned Miss WEIO 2011 while completing her studies at UAF and being a Festival of Native Arts volunteer.

RD graduate, Rosemary Berg, was crowned Miss WEIO 2012 while completing her degree at UAF and volunteered with Festival of Native Arts.

Three DANSRD students were named Miss WEIO three years in a row and Festival of Native Arts volunteers.

The Kay L. Thomas Pathfinder Award was established in 2012 to honor outstanding UAF staff or faculty who exemplify the compassion and dedication to student success demonstrated by Kay. This award is open to all staff and faculty employed through the University, including UAF’s branch campuses.

Rural Student Services advisor Gabrielle Russell was selected as the 2013 recipient of the Kay L. Thomas Pathfinder Award.

Festival Student Coordinator and ANS/RD double-major Sarah Walker was selected as one of eighty 2012 Morris K. & Stewart L. Udall Foundation Scholars—and one of six in the tribal public policy category.
Fisheries BA Program now has a Community and Rural Development Concentration

The Fisheries BA has been revised to include a concentration focusing on rural & community development. Fisheries students will now be able to complete their degree using 24 credits of RD core courses and a choice of RD electives.

The Community and Rural Development concentration is a new focus that was identified through discussions with faculty in the RD program. Given the importance of subsistence fishing in rural Alaskan communities and the need to develop community leaders in these areas, the melding of these two foci is a natural union to bring together disparate expertise in a synergistic fashion. It is anticipated that this focus will be very popular with nontraditional students in rural communities and, given the distance delivery focus in both the Fisheries and Rural Development programs, this concentration would be available to students in rural communities of Alaska.

Students completing this concentration would be trained for leadership positions with borough, state, and federal agencies and organizations focusing on subsistence issues (ADFG, USFWS), Community Development Program (CDQ) groups, Alaska Native organizations, K-12 education, and the commercial fishing industry. A program of this emphasis was identified as an area of need during an Alaska industry survey completed by the UAF School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (SFOS) in 2006. The SFOS and the College of Rural and Community Development will work closely together to broadly advertise this program throughout Alaska, which is anticipated to have an enrollment of 10-20 students.

–Trent Sutton, SFOS