

# CHANCELLOR'S REPORT *On Philanthropy*

UAF CHANCELLOR DANIEL M. WHITE

FALL 2018

## LEADING A FAMILY'S LEGACY

The Cook family has a tradition of serving the community personally and professionally. Most recently, Jeff and Sue established the Cook Family Endowment in honor of his parents Earl and Pat Cook. The endowment provides unrestricted support to the UA Museum of the North. The Cook family, including Jeff and Sue's five siblings, four children, and extended relatives, came together to honor Earl and Pat, realizing Jeff's vision of philanthropy.

The Cook family has strong roots in Fairbanks. Jeff got to know the community through operating his own commercial real estate firm and serving on several highly regarded committees and boards, including the UA Board of Trustees and the UA Board of Regents. Above and

beyond his impact throughout the state, Jeff recently expanded his reach to a national level. His determination to make a difference was apparent when he was named the top national fundraiser for the American Cancer Society's 2017 Real Men Wear Pink campaign. He raised an incredible \$117,780.

When asked what motivates his dedication to philanthropy, Jeff said, "It's leaving this world a better place than we found it; it's lifting up other people; it's feeling good at the end of the day that you're helping to make a difference; it's about going outside yourself."

The continued generosity of Sue and Jeff Cook to honor their family members, combined with their



Jeff and Sue Cook

commitment to making a significant impact, is a hallmark of Alaskan fortitude.

We extend the most heartfelt gratitude and well wishes to the Cook family.



Melissa Downes  
Photo courtesy of Bob Downes

Melissa Downes was a devoted wife and mother, a loving grandmother and an exceptional teacher. She also adored music, and it created a lasting bond between her and the community.

Although she graduated from UAF with a degree in psychology and was named Psychology Student of the

## A TRIBUTE TO MELISSA'S LOVE OF MUSIC

Year, Melissa knew her true passion was music. She pursued a bachelor's degree in music education with an emphasis in voice, was named the Music Student of the Year and went on to serve the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District for over 20 years. Beyond her work in schools, she continued developing Fairbanks' music scene with fervor, establishing several choirs and enriching the lives of countless Fairbanksans.

Sadly, Melissa passed away Jan. 28, 2018. To honor her legacy, Bob Downes, Melissa's husband, and Amy Tallerico, her daughter, established the Melissa Ann Downes Memorial Music Scholarship, ensuring her legacy of supporting students in the community would continue. The scholarship will support sophomores, juniors or seniors studying music at

the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and particularly those students who focus on vocal music studies and who display a natural talent and ability.

This memorial was recently celebrated at the College of Liberal Arts Convocation on Oct. 2, 2018, attended by Bob and Amy. Dean Todd Sherman noted that, "This scholarship is a wonderful remembrance of Melissa. We were delighted Bob and Amy were able to join convocation and have an opportunity to witness the audience's appreciation of their generosity and Melissa's remarkable legacy."

For information on establishing scholarships, visit: [uaf.edu/giving/ways/scholarships.php](http://uaf.edu/giving/ways/scholarships.php).

## Alumni Relations Director

The university welcomes Theresa Bakker to her new position as UAF alumni relations director and executive director of the UAF Alumni Association.

Theresa has been with UAF since 1996 and has called Fairbanks home for more than 20 years. She began her new role on Sept. 10, following Kate Ripley's resignation from the position in May.

For more information on the UAF Alumni Association, please visit: [uaf.edu/alumni/](http://uaf.edu/alumni/).



Theresa Bakker,  
UAF Alumni Relations Director  
and executive director of the  
UAF Alumni Association

## SAVE THE DATE

UAF Blue and Gold  
Celebration ~  
Feb. 16, 2019

Visit [www.uaf.edu](http://www.uaf.edu) for updates  
and details!

## USIBELLI COAL MINE SUPPORTS NANOOK ATHLETES

Usibelli Coal Mine (UCM) recently made a gift of \$75,000 toward the continued improvement of the Patty Center's athletic training facilities. This contribution was announced at the Nov. 13 Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce luncheon by Lisa Herbert, Vice President of Public Relations for Usibelli Coal Mine, and gratefully accepted by Chancellor White. UCM's commitment will continue to enhance the training space with updated equipment, branding and renovations that demonstrate Nanook pride.

UCM is a fourth-generation family-owned and operated business with a proud connection to UAF. In addition to hiring UAF graduates and supporting scholarships, the Emil Usibelli Awards, the UA Museum of the North, the Combined Heat and Power Plant and many capital projects across campus, UCM now supports all the student athletes who dedicate their time and energy to representing UAF.

An unveiling of the completed space will be scheduled soon to honor those who made this space possible.



A preview of the future weight room.

For more information on the different ways you can make an impact at UAF, please visit: [www.uaf.edu/giving/ways/](http://www.uaf.edu/giving/ways/).

## TROTH YEDDHA' GATHERING

On Aug. 21, 2018, friends of UAF gathered at the home of Troth Yeddha' Initiative Co-chair Aaron Schutt and his wife, Marissa Flannery. This event raised awareness of the important UAF initiative with supporters in the Anchorage area and raised \$13,750 through the generous support of friends.

Attendees heard from recent UAF graduate Diloola Erickson about the importance of the initiative. Diloola double-majored in Mechanical Engineering and rural development, and now has a career revitalizing and modernizing access to Alaska's Native languages. Evon Peter, vice chancellor for rural, community and Native education, also encouraged momentum for the initiative. More than \$1.6 million has been given by 87 donors, and it continues to be one of the top fundraising priorities of the university.

UAF is proud to be a state leader in Alaska Native studies and is on track to become a global leader in Indigenous studies. Completing the Troth Yeddha' Initiative is crucial to increasing program impact, attracting prospective students, helping to revitalize Indigenous languages and restore cultural knowledge, further integrating cultural knowledge into research and Arctic studies, and providing a welcoming place for Alaska Native students, elders and peoples of all cultures. For more information on the Troth Yeddha' Legacy Initiative, please visit: [www.uaf.edu/trothyeddha/](http://www.uaf.edu/trothyeddha/).

## Achievements

This report reflect gifts and donations totalling \$25,000 or more to the University of Alaska Fairbanks between July 16 to October 25, 2018.

### CORPORATE

**CONOCOPHILLIPS ALASKA** gave to the ConocoPhillips UAF Engineering Endowment.

**HALIBURTON FOUNDATION** gave to GeoFORCE Alaska.

**NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH** gave to the Chukchi Consortium Library Support fund.

**THE POLLOCK CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE**, comprised of

Trident Seafoods, Glacier Fish Company, American Seafoods Company, and Starbound, gave to the Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center Endowment.

**WELLS FARGO** sponsored the UA museum of the North's Military Appreciation Program.

### INDIVIDUAL

**CHARLES '74, '88 AND**

**GERALDINE COLLINS '74, '87** established the Charles Malcolm & Geraldine Vrbka Collins Geology Scholarship.

The estate of **JAMES D. PRUITT, '73** gave to the UAF School of Management.

The estate of **GRACE BERG SCHAIBLE, '49** gave in support of the UAF Geophysical Institute, the UA Museum of the North's Fine Arts

Conservation, and the Schaible Geophysical Institute Fellowship.

### FOUNDATION

**RASMUSON FOUNDATION** gave to the University of Alaska Fairbanks "Cry in the Wilderness" mural project, the Cook Family Endowment in honor of Earl and Pat Cook, and the Troth Yeddha' Initiative.