

aurora

Spring 2016

We are



People make a university. Here are just a few of ours. Their stories begin on page 1.

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UAF photos by Todd Paris unless
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aurora



This sketch and the one on page 20 were done by Gabby Katsma, a member of the 2015 Girls on Ice expedition on the Gulkana Glacier. The story about their adventure, including excerpts from diaries of some of the young women, starts on page 16.

1 A Nanook's first year

By Kim Davis

Several students, faculty and staff illuminate their first year at UAF, while alumni talk about their first year on the job after graduation.

16 Ice teens

By Tori Tragis

The Girls on Ice program takes nine teenage girls from all over the country, puts them on a glacier in Alaska, and teaches them the science of ice, the art of observation — and about themselves.

24 A hitchhiker's guide to low-Earth orbit

By Sam Bishop

A student team built a tiny satellite and brought it to launch in October 2015. They haven't heard from their cubesat since, but that doesn't negate the accomplishment or lessons they learned.

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Submissions from alumni, students and friends

Volume 8 No. 2

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UAF is an AA/EQ employer and educational institution.



A Nanook's FIRST YEAR

Interviews by Kim Davis

In fall 2014, we asked several members of #NanookNation — freshmen, grad students, staff, faculty and new alumni — to participate in a first-year portrait project. We took their photos and asked them why they came to UAF. We checked in with them again the next fall to find out how that first year went.



2014



2015



Evon Peter '98

**Age 39, hometown: Arctic Village and Fairbanks, Alaska
Vice chancellor for rural, community and Native education**

“A year ago, I realized I had a responsibility to offer my leadership to the broader Alaska community, to build upon the work I was doing through the private company and nonprofit I started with my wife. I preferred to stay in Fairbanks, so the vice chancellor job was a great fit. I felt that it was crafted to meet my skill set, knowledge and background. I can inspire younger Alaskans to attend UAF and see directly its benefits, not only for their own life but in how their life can be a contribution to the state in a broader sense. I could also help build upon the field of indigenous studies at UAF and throughout the state.

The photo of John Fredson, the first Denaa (Athabascan) college graduate, who is Gwich'in like myself, was gifted to me by his granddaughter Diana Campbell [a staff member at the Geophysical Institute] when I was appointed to the vice chancellor position. He symbolizes the first person in the Interior and the Gwich'in nation to bridge a path between postsecondary education and our people's lives. He helped establish our tribe's 1.8 million-acre Venetie Indian Reserve. Even though he

fell ill and passed away in his late 40s, he did so much for our people and left a tremendous legacy during his short life. It's a reminder to me and an inspiration of why it's so important to pursue postsecondary education for our people and continue to have commitment of service to our people and our community.

This past year I experienced a dramatic learning curve, having to spread my wings across the whole expanse of educational, workforce development and research opportunities at the university and begin to understand all we do here. It far exceeded my expectations. One day I am meeting with climatologists, the next day geologists, the next psychologists, all in different departments and research centers, immersed in conversations about the cutting edge of the work we're doing here. The blending of the exploration of academic and workforce development, and being embedded in the management and administration of the institution, has really helped to broaden my horizons. It is an honor to serve in this capacity and help be a part of shaping the future at UAF.”

Carie Green

Age 38, hometown: Wichita, Kansas
Assistant professor of education

2014

“When I visited Alaska 14 years ago, I didn’t want to leave at the end of the summer. I got off the ferry to [Prince Rupert] twice on the way out, but I was worried about the winter with my two dogs so I eventually left. When this position came open it described me so well — my background working with indigenous communities, my research interests on place identity development and environmental education — so I applied.

I feel like I’m in a place where there’s potential to do something great, even though I don’t know what that is yet. It’s exciting. A poem I wrote in 1997 is about everything having its place and that’s how I feel.

I was able to do a really great research project this summer, taking young children from the Bunnell House [the child care center on campus] out to the forest wearing GoPros to collect and analyze their own data. I’m not sure there would have been a more perfect environment to do that sort of project anywhere else but here. UAF rocks.”



2015



Destination

By Carie Green

Everything has its place
And when taken away
It loses its face
An object occupies a space
For a limited time
In this world of disgrace
Movement is only natural
In a world of such high pace
But we can’t forget the atmosphere
That the object should appear
Because without its setting
Its meaning would disappear
As we spin around this sphere
Objects lay in disarray for years
One picked it up and moved it
And forgot it belonged somewhere
Now it seems natural
That the flower should grow here
But as we journey into the past
This blossoming seed did not appear
As time takes its path
And we migrate further and further from where
The Creator set it from his hands
And knew it would travel from there
As the decades take their toll
The objects become less whole
Sinking from reality
And depleting in their souls
As we depart further from the Creator’s face
We seem to forget
Everything has its place
But as evolve through the age
Objects are masked with a new face
In and out of ordinary space.



2014



2015

Jacob Harris

Age 20, hometown: Three Creeks, Arkansas
Sophomore standing, anthropology
(archaeology emphasis) with minor in history

“When I was seven I went to live with my current legal guardians. My life story could have been very different if I hadn’t gone to live with them. My buddies thought I was crazy and awesome for moving to Alaska so they gave me this shirt to remind me

of another state that starts with A. Maybe I’ll have a beard by next year.

I became an RA in Moore Hall this fall. Freshmen are pretty rowdy, especially when the toga dances come around [during Starvation Gulch, at the end of September] because they realize there are no parents around to restrict them. By the second semester they’re usually turned around. They realize they don’t have to make complete fools of themselves to have a good time.

My parents surprised me by visiting in August. I didn’t realize how much I’d missed them until then.”



2014

Jessica Zimmerman Mejia

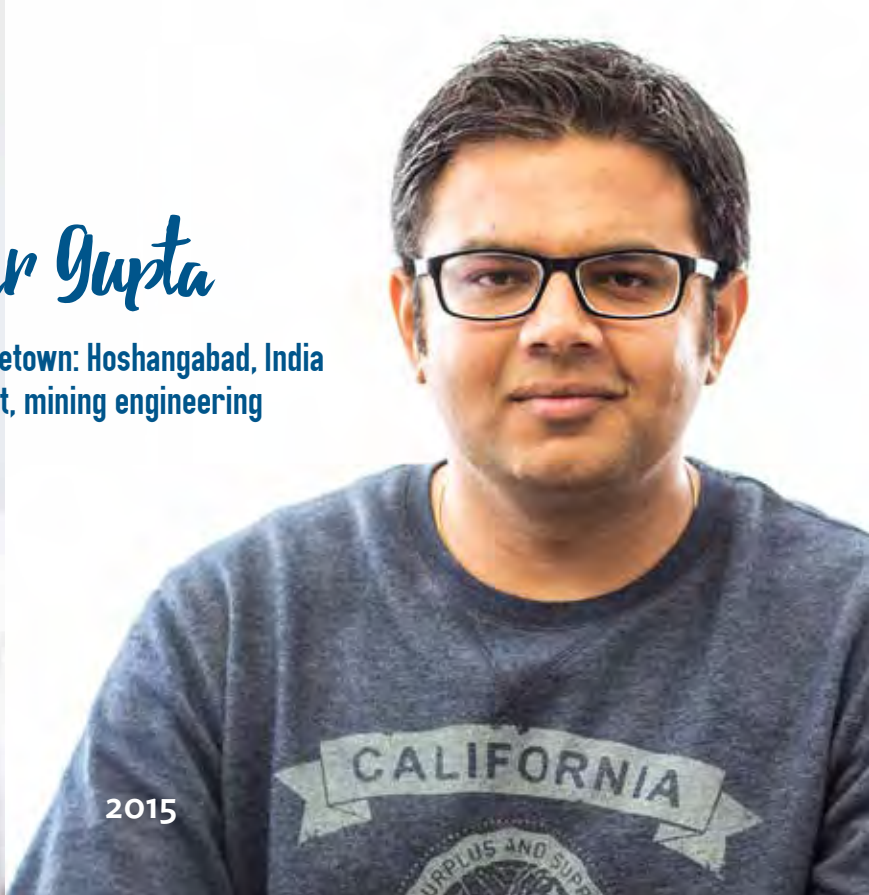
Age 23, hometown: Milford, Connecticut
Grad student, glaciology

“I came here because UAF has one of the best glaciology programs. Other universities may have only one or two professors researching glaciers so there aren’t as many options for specializing. I wasn’t sure what I’d like so I wanted as many options as possible. It’s a great program. I definitely made the right decision coming here.



Tushar Gupta

Age 26, hometown: Hoshangabad, India
Grad student, mining engineering



“I’ve been working with the coal industry in India for two years. I want to learn more about how to use low-grade coal for industrial purposes, and then I will return to India to apply what I’ve learned here.

I’d never seen snow in my life before coming here. But after two months, it’s all the same.

This is a photo of my goddess. She is in a temple 600 miles from my home. I traveled there every year and have carried her photo with me for eight years. She’s a source of inspiration and serenity. She brought me here to UAF.

My personality has completely changed over the past year. There’s a saying in India, ‘When you’re a frog in your own well, the well is your world. When you come out of the well, you realize the world is a bigger place.’ I wasn’t aware until I came here that there are bigger issues to be addressed. I’ve learned two new skills I’d never done before, cooking and driving. My family had people doing those for us in India. A lot of wisdom has come in.”

2015

I was most worried about the winter, the cold, worried whether Zeus would be OK, but we made it through just fine. I’ve had him since he was a puppy, eight years, and he’s traveled with me from Connecticut to Texas and drove up here with me from Dallas.

The people in Fairbanks are really great. I just moved into a dry cabin with my husband, so getting the ‘real’ Alaska experience.”





2014

Stanley Edwin '07, '09, '14

Age 55, hometown: Chalkyitsik and Fort Yukon, Alaska
Grad student, atmospheric science

"I first came to UAF after leaving eighth grade and getting my GED. I was too young, so I quit after about a year, joined the military, got out, went home, lived life as expected in the village but never felt like I fit in. I came back to UAF, earned two associate degrees, then my bachelor's. The key was all the support I got, all the people telling me I could do it no matter what, helping me when I stumbled.

I always wanted to be a physicist. My grandfather lived in the woods all his life. He could go outside, look around and tell you what the weather would be like the next day because he had 80 years of observation. I wouldn't be able to do that today because of all the changes, the human impact on the Earth. In Alaska, we live in the northern hemisphere, so pretty much everything that goes up into the atmosphere or that comes down from space comes down on the northern and southern poles. With climate change there's weather pattern changes so the skills of my grandfather are not attainable the way he did it. My objective is to understand the atmosphere in Alaska, so one of my projects is studying funnel clouds.

Biggest thing this past year is I almost died. I was hunting for geese and got thrown off a boat into the Tanana River. No life jacket, wearing steel-toed boots, Carhartts and a thick leather jacket. They say people don't survive the Tanana. Well, they're wrong. When I went off the boat I thought this was it. I didn't try to swim anywhere, just tried to stay afloat. The boat turned around and I was hauled out. Lucky to be here. Guess I'm not done yet!"



2015



2014



2015

Erin Rose McGowan '08, '14

Age 28, hometown: Fairbanks, Alaska

Purchasing and travel program analyst, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., Anchorage

“I was born and raised in Fairbanks, so I wanted to stay here for school. I first got an associate in process technology and worked as a mill operator for Pogo Gold Mine. The pink hardhat was given to me by a friend at the mine who died just a few months later. While I’m in an office job now, I know I can take it out to the field any time and stand out.

After two years at the mine I realized I’d need a bachelor’s degree if I wanted to get into any management jobs. I knew I wanted to stay in Alaska and work in one of our main industries — oil, gas, mining — on the coordination side of operations support. Developing my interdisciplinary bachelor’s degree helped me focus. I got a bachelor’s in technology and industry management through the School of Management. I

applied for an internship at Alyeska my senior year and got a job offer afterwards in the Anchorage office.

Anchorage is a big change but a good one. Outside my comfort zone. I told myself I’d give it a year and if I wasn’t happy I’d look elsewhere, but it’s going to work out great. I got promoted in April to purchasing and travel program analyst, and bought a condo in Anchorage, so I’m there to stay for a while. I still come back to Fairbanks as often as I can. This week I’m here to see family, and I’m taking in the garden with my mom while my dad’s out moose hunting. We’re doing lots of canning and pickling.”

Rachel Blackwell '06, '12, '14

Age 30, hometown: Marietta, Georgia
Kindergarten teacher, Ladd Elementary, Fairbanks

"I first came here as an undergrad in 2003 from Atlanta. I found UAF in a Thespian Society magazine. I chose it over other schools because I wanted to go to a school where I could do it to learn it; at most schools freshmen can't even try out for plays, and I wanted to perform right away. Plus I got a talent scholarship to come here.

Fairbanks has a very lively arts community. After I got my bachelor's in theater performance in 2006, I went to grad school in New York for a year and a half but decided to come back here. I started my MBA because I thought a business degree might give me some background to help launch my own performance business.

After my son was born in 2011, I worked at the Boys and Girls Club in the after-school program and started thinking about teaching. I decided to get my teaching certificate at UAF. It was hard to do a full year of full-time, unpaid work. Luckily my dad came up here to live with us so I wouldn't need to pay for daycare.

I got my certificate in May 2014 and started teaching sixth grade at Joy Elementary the next fall. I started my second year there this fall, but four days into the school year I got moved to kindergarten at Ladd with just a day's notice. Teaching kindergarten is a whole different everything but lots of fun. I'm way more exhausted at the end of the day with kindergarteners than I ever was with sixth-graders!"

2014



2015



Bryan Hall

Age 27, hometown: Kernersville, North Carolina

Term instructor, violin

“I was finishing my doctorate at the University of Texas-Austin when one of my teachers told me about the faculty opening up here. I’ve always loved to travel. It’s part of my adventurous spirit, and growing up I always thought Alaska sounded pretty cool. Every day someone asks me if I’m ready for winter. People are more worried for me than I am. Turns out it wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be.

The violin is on loan to me from my mentor at UT, Brian Lewis. He wanted me to have something nice to represent the

music faculty up here. It was made in 1863 by Gand Frères, a famous French violin maker.

I love it up here. I’m getting the chance to build something new in a place that already has a great musical tradition. The Music Department here is really personal, and I get free rein to build my studio. Overall it’s a very positive thing.”

2014



2015





2014



2015

Kilah Thom

Age 19, hometown: none (military dependent)
Junior class standing, psychology and fire science

“I moved here from Virginia, but I like to say I’m from Arizona. My father (Maxie Thom ’90) was military, so we traveled a lot. People in Virginia were shocked that I would go all the way to Alaska by myself. Not having fear of being out on my own has played a huge part in my life and who I am. My father said I could go to school anywhere in the U.S. so long as it had reasonable out-of-state tuition. When I learned about UAF, I proposed

it to my father, and he said, ‘You can’t go to school in Alaska.’ Even though he had gone here! But he couldn’t say no when he found out how much it cost for dependents of alumni.

The past year I finally realized I’m an adult now. Can I return my membership? My parents used to handle so many things, and now if I need help, I need to ask for it. They don’t just automatically do stuff like they used to. Super trippy but in a good way.

In February I got to go to Burbank, California, and meet my childhood heroes — the entire main cast and crew of the ‘Xena: Warrior Princess TV show.’”



2014

Kinsey Laine '11

Age 27, hometown: Silver Lake, Washington
Assistant coach for Alaska Nanooks swim team

“I swam here as a student and was assistant coach the year I graduated. That was difficult because I was coaching former teammates. I left to work for a money management firm in Anchorage, but it didn’t suit my personality. Current athletes treat me like a coach, a much better dynamic.

Fairbanks is a pretty special place, and I want my swimmers to have the same experiences I had and come away with lasting friendships, good memories and a degree.

The biggest change over the past year has been dealing with university budget cuts, figuring out how to stay positive and sell the program to new girls. It [the program] is going to be different than before, but there are

Wylie Rogers '08, '14

Age 30, hometown: Fairbanks, Alaska
CEO, Wylie Inc., www.thewyliepost.com

2014



“Fairbanks is my hometown. I left home to play hockey my junior and senior year of high school in Michigan so I could pursue my dream of playing collegiate and pro hockey. Of all the schools on my list, I knew I could play as a freshman at UAF and make an immediate

impact, so I came back home.

I played pro hockey for five years after graduation, returning every summer to work at a landscaping business. While playing in Europe I was pushed into the goal post by another player, resulting in a head injury. I wanted to help my team, so I continued to play through my injury. Eventually I was forced to look beyond my career as a hockey player.

still a lot of incredible things about being part of a college athletics program. We’re trying not to let them see how the coaches are struggling with what’s going on.” 📱

Kim Davis, Aurora’s managing editor, has called the Fairbanks campus her second home for more than 30 years. She really enjoyed getting to know all of these wonderful people and hearing their stories.

2015



Since then I’ve been focused on a new, safe and efficient way to anchor hockey nets to the ice. When I started my MBA, I welded a prototype to show my professor, Ping Lan. He saw the potential right away, really pushed me to make the Wylie Post safe and usable for everyone. It’s been patented.

This past year has exceeded by far where I thought the post would be by

now. I had no idea this was coming last year but we unveiled it in April [2015] at the American Hockey Coaches Association, and we’ve had an overwhelmingly positive response at all levels of the game. I could not have done any of it without Dr. Lan and the MBA program.”

Web extra: Read more about the Wylie Post at <http://bit.ly/WyliePost>.

2015



BRIEFLY



Photo by Suzie Teelink, courtesy of School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, NMFS research permit #14296.

HUMPBACKS LOVE FAST FOOD

Four humpback whales in Southeast Alaska have their own fast-food restaurant. They're eating juvenile chum and coho salmon at hatchery release sites near Baranof Island, which could have a substantial effect on revenue for the region's fisheries.

Ellen Chenoweth, a Ph.D. student at the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, is studying the phenomenon. If she can pinpoint why certain whales are choosing the hatchery fish when it's time for a meal, she can work with hatchery managers to suggest release strategies so hatcheries aren't creating all-you-can-eat buffets for hungry whales. There's more to chew on at <http://bit.ly/uaf101436>.



ANCIENT INFANT DNA

The remains of two infants from an 11,500-year-old grave in central Alaska have revealed connections to two ancient lineages of Native Americans.

UAF archaeologist Ben Potter '97, '05 and University of Utah geneticists Dennis O'Rourke and Justin Tackney deciphered the ancient mitochondrial DNA, which showed the babies had different mothers and were descended from two distinct lineages not previously identified in the Arctic. Learn more about the site and human migration in the Americas at <http://bit.ly/uaf102822>.

HELP WANTED: STRONG LEADER FOR OUR FUTURE

UAF's new chancellor may be announced by the time you read this. Four finalists visited the campuses in March: Tony Haymet, distinguished professor of oceanography and director and vice chancellor emeritus at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego; M. Duane Nellis, past president of Texas Tech University; Sandra Woodley, past president of the University of Louisiana system; and Laura Woodworth-Ney, provost and vice president for academic affairs at Idaho State University. The new chancellor will replace Mike Powers, who agreed to serve as interim after Brian Rogers' retirement in August 2015.

UAF's new leader will arrive at a challenging time. In fiscal year 2017, which begins July 1, the Legislature likely will cut at least \$24 million from the statewide university's adjusted base budget of \$351 million in state unrestricted general funds, according to the Legislature's finance division's March 7 figures. (The division estimated the university's total statewide base spending for 2017 at \$925 million, counting \$151 million in federal funds and \$423 million in designated and other state money such as tuition and fees.) At UAF, the state cuts during the past three years already have reduced annual spending by \$42 million. UAF eliminated about 150 positions to adjust for the fiscal year 2016 cuts.

Find out more at www.uaf.edu/chancellor/search/ and www.alaska.edu/state/.

CUNEIFORM ON DISPLAY

Around 2040 B.C., some 9,450 gallons of barley left a mill in Umma, a Sumerian city in what is now southeastern Iraq. The shipment was noted in cuneiform on a 4-by-4-centimeter tablet that ended up in the Rare Books Collection at the Rasmuson Library. How the cuneiform — possibly the only one in the state — got to UAF is a mystery, but

this unusual little piece of clay can be viewed on the fourth floor of the library for the next few years. That's a long time by library-display standards but just a blip to a 4,000-year-old inventory receipt.



UAF photo by Lily Eberhardt.



GLACIERS GOING, GONE

Alaska's glaciers will lose 30 to 60 percent of their volume and contribute half an inch to 1 inch to global sea level rise by 2100, predicts a new study by researchers Regine Hock of the Geophysical Institute and Matthias Huss from Switzerland.

Depending on carbon dioxide emissions, glacier melt worldwide will cause a sea-level rise of 3 to 6 inches. Alaska's glaciers, which make up only 12 percent of the worldwide mass, would contribute a disproportionately large amount to the rise.

Glaciers also have a profound effect on the quantity, timing and temperature of river flow, which makes them critical to fisheries and hydroelectric power generation. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/uaf092810>.

BP BOOSTS ALASKA CENTER FOR ENERGY AND POWER

BP gave \$1 million at the Chancellor's Gala in February to help complete the fourth floor of the new engineering building in Fairbanks.

The floor will house the Alaska Center for Energy and Power, which develops and tests new energy systems.

The building's interior remains incomplete pending additional state funding. Raising the \$6.5 million needed to finish the fourth floor alone is one of UAF's primary fundraising initiatives as it enters 2017, its centennial year. ConocoPhillips and Usibelli Coal Mine also have each contributed \$500,000.

Read more about the center at <http://acep.uaf.edu>.



Photo by Tanja Schollmeier, courtesy of School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.

ANCIENT WALRUS COULD HELP MODERN SUBSISTENCE

Hormones stored in ancient bones are revealing how Pacific walrus populations react to environmental change. Identifying what puts stress on walrus populations is particularly important in Alaska because walruses are a subsistence resource for many coastal communities. The School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, UA Museum of the North, Eskimo Walrus Commission and Native harvesters collaborated on the research. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/uaf101510>.



SUMMIT OF SCIENTISTS

There wasn't much relaxing during spring break on the Fairbanks campus, but researchers and staff didn't mind. UAF hosted four overlapping meetings among Arctic researchers, policymakers and students from around the world, plus an all-day public forum. Some 1,000 people attended meetings for the Arctic Science Summit Week, Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials, Arctic Observing Summit and Model Arctic Council, a student-centered enterprise similar to the Model United Nations.

BRIEFLY



DENALI DIMINISHED

The Great One is 10 feet less great than previously thought. The Geophysical Institute's Tom Heinrichs was part of a survey party that climbed Denali last summer to assess the mountain's true height, now estimated at 20,310 feet. You can credit — or blame — new technology for the revision. Get the specifics at <http://bit.ly/uaf090220>.

ALASKA FIRES RELEASE MORE CARBON THAN TREES ABSORB

More-frequent forest fires have turned Alaska's Yukon Flats into a net exporter of carbon to the atmosphere. This is worrisome, researchers said, because Arctic and sub-Arctic boreal forests like those of the Yukon Flats contain roughly one-third of the Earth's terrestrial carbon stores.

Researchers often assume that present-day fire activity mirrors that of the ancient past. But scientists in a new study found that fire frequency in a 2,000-kilometer swath of the Yukon Flats is higher today than any time in the last 10,000 years.

The research team plugged their data into a computer model of carbon cycling for the study area developed by co-authors Hélène Genet and A. David McGuire '83, '89, both with the Institute of Arctic Biology, and by colleagues at UAF and the U.S. Geological Survey.

The new model more accurately reflects the history of carbon accumulation, storage and release, McGuire said.

"We interpret those results with respect to how they are relevant to the real world, to inform people involved in making decisions related to climate policy," McGuire said. Read more at <http://bit.ly/uaf102232>.

COOPERATION FOR COMMON USE

Common use of fish and wildlife "in their natural state" is enshrined in the Alaska Constitution, but managing that use can be tricky in practice, which is why the College of Rural and Community Development held a comanagement symposium in November. More than 200 people attended, including state and federal authorities, tribal representatives, Alaska Native leaders, university officials, and students interested in learning about current issues in Alaska.

KUDOS



Photo courtesy of Lawson Brigham.

Lawson Brigham, distinguished professor of geography and Arctic policy, School of Natural Resources and Extension, American Polar Society Honorary Member Polar Medal

<http://bit.ly/uaf011520>



Amy Cooper, instructor, School of Management, CPA Practice Advisor's 2015 40 Under 40
<http://bit.ly/Cooper40>



Mary Ehrlander, professor and director of Arctic and northern studies, Alaska Historical Society Pathfinder Award
<http://bit.ly/uaf100835>



Photo by Tom Walker.

Carolyn Kremers, adjunct lecturer, English Department, Fulbright scholar
<http://bit.ly/uaf082414>



UAF photo by Yuri Bult-Itto.

John Walsh, chief scientist, International Arctic Research Center, 2016 International Arctic Science Committee Medal
<http://bit.ly/WalshMedal>



DID YOU KNOW...

The community of College, just east of the Fairbanks campus, drew its name from the university but didn't stop there.

College's three main east-west streets — Shanly, Thomas and Cameron — are named for the first three graduates of the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines.

The first classes at AACSM began in fall 1922, and one student graduated in each of the next three years. They were, respectively:

- Jack Shanly, who arrived with enough college credits to graduate in one year. He homesteaded near campus, left soon after

graduating but stayed in touch with people in Fairbanks. He died in 1971 in New York.

- Margaret Thomas, who grew up in Fairbanks and married naturalist Olaus Murie. She became a nationally known advocate for wilderness in Alaska and elsewhere. She died in Wyoming in 2003.

- Jamie Cameron, who attended Kansas State Agricultural College and briefly taught in Hawaii before following several KSAC alumni to Alaska. Cameron returned to Hawaii and passed away there some time after 1982, but the exact year could not be found.

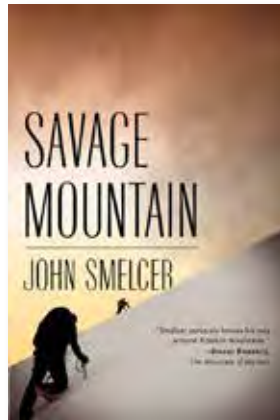
ON THE SHELF



Savage Mountain

John Smelcer '86, '87
2015, Leapfrog Press

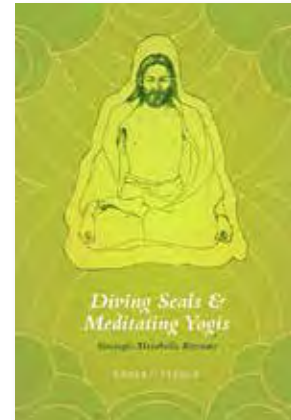
In summer 1980, brothers Sebastian and James Savage decide to climb one of the highest mountains in Alaska to prove themselves to their father, a tough and unloving man. The brothers develop different ways of coping with this rejection, but each yearns to finally have his respect. Inspired by true events, this is a story of two brothers who test their limits and realize, finally, that their worth is not dictated by their father, and that no matter how different they might be, the strongest bond of all is brotherhood. — *Adapted from publisher's description; for middle-school readers*



Surviving Bear Island

Paul Greci '14
2015, Move Books

Tom is kayaking with his father in Prince William Sound near Bear Island. When the waters turn rough and the boat overturns, Tom is stranded and alone with a pocket survival pack his father insisted he carry. But is it enough? Will he survive on the desolate island where his only company are bears, other wild animals and the harsh terrain? His dad would know what to do, but is Tom savvy enough to survive? — *Adapted from publisher's description; for middle-school readers*

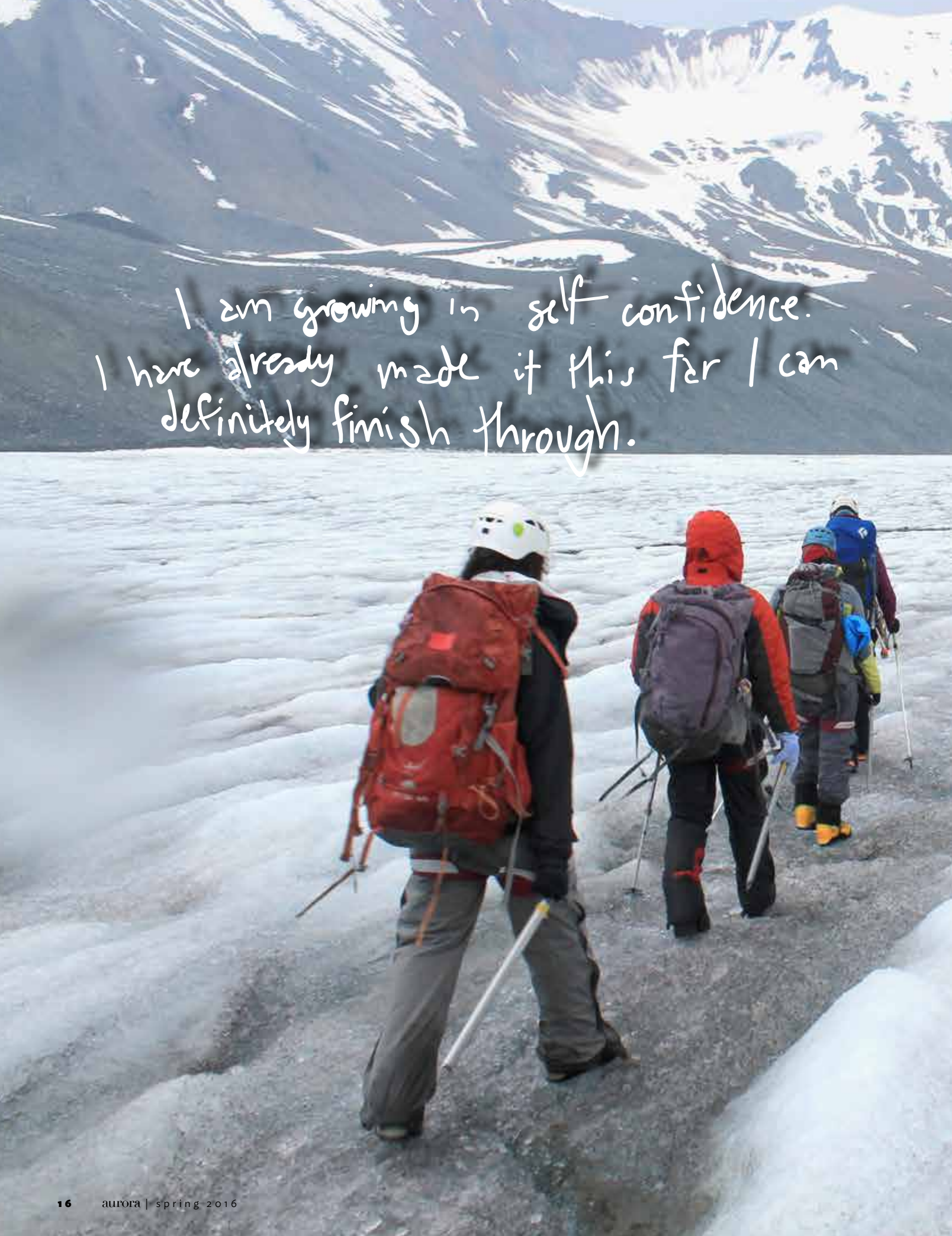


Diving Seals and Meditating Yogis

Robert Elsner, professor emeritus
2015, University of Chicago Press

The comparative physiology of seemingly disparate organisms often serves as a surprising pathway to biological enlightenment. How appropriate, then, that Robert Elsner sheds new light on the remarkable physiology of diving seals through comparison with members of our own species on quests toward enlightenment: meditating yogis. — *Publisher's description*

Book cover images courtesy of the publishers.



I am growing in self confidence.
I have already made it this far I can
definitely finish through.



Ice Teens

By Tori Tragis

Photos courtesy of Girls on Ice program

“INSPIRATION IS A BIG WORD.”

So writes a teenage girl in her journal, four days into an Alaska adventure that has taken her to a tent on the Gulkana Glacier, a thousand miles from her Oregon home.

She is one of nine young women — some still in high school, others getting ready for their first year of college — who, with three instructors and a guide, are learning about science, climbing, glaciers and art.

They are also learning about themselves.

Even though it's only days
the instructors have helped shape
my view of the environment around me.



Above: Two of the instructors discuss a crevasse on the Gulkana Glacier. Many girls wrote in their journals about the amount of mountaineering and safety training during the expedition. Inset, right: Costumes enlivened skits the girls wrote about what they were learning.

Day 4 6/22
Glaciology 101

Observations

- I'm surrounded by glaciers
- Their H₂O is fresh to drink out of
- The snow is falling in a downward motion.
- Sounds like crashing waves.
- The sun is at an angle
- Streams run from the glacier & under the ground

The girls come from Alaska, California, New York, Oregon and Washington. One is from Napaskiak, in Southwest Alaska, population 405. Another is from the Bronx, population 1.419 million. Their cultures are different, but their culture shock is the same. Many of them joined Girls on Ice thinking they knew something — about science, the outdoors, the world. By the time they went home, the sums making up the total of what they know had altered drastically.

Girls on Ice is a wilderness education camp. Two are offered each year, one in Alaska, one in Washington. For 12 days, the girls learn from their teacher-guides about glaciology and ecology, and how to use art to closely observe the natural world. They learn mountaineering and outdoor and survival skills. They learn how to pose scientific questions, make a hypothesis, test it and uncover new questions.

The 2015 Alaska group converged in Fairbanks in June, under hot blue skies that sometimes gave way to the bitter gauze of wildfire smoke. They

I think that becoming more self aware allows for building confidence and that building confidence is necessary to understand humility, but I don't think I have made these connections very strongly yet.



met their guides and instructors, four women as diverse as they: Alaska artist Klara Maisch '12, Swiss oceanographer Claudine Hauri, American glaciologist Ulyana Nadia and Canadian mountaineer Cece Mortenson. (The program is directed by Erin Pettit, a glaciologist with the College of Natural Science and Mathematics.)

The first two days were spent getting oriented in Fairbanks, which included team-building exercises and an extensive gear and clothing check. (The girls bring some gear, but much has been donated, including some by the leaders.) Then the



Main photo: Everyone was fully outfitted with mountaineering boots with cleats, backpacks, helmets, safety harnesses and hiking poles. Above: The girls learned to move carefully on the ice. One noted ruefully in her journal: "I have fallen 6 times." Inset, above: Inspecting glacial striations on a rock.



- I'm afraid I'm not seeing
what everyone else is
seeing

Awareness of things that shape your
Perception:

It's really weird to be the odd one
out in terms of where I come from.
and even though I don't really say
every single thing out loud it seems
crazy how biased my point of view is.
It only reinforces my belief that the
city creates maladaptive cognitive schemas-
I think that's everywhere though,
I just wish a different lens colored
my vision because now I just feel stuck

Daily group discussions allowed team members to share observations, questions, commiserations and funny stories. Each day featured a question for the girls to consider or answer. The questions ranged from the straightforward to the more philosophical.

group drove roughly 200 miles southeast of Fairbanks to where the Gulkana Glacier slides out of the Alaska Range. Volunteers met them there and helped them backpack in everything they'd need for nearly a week on the glacier: food, shelter, clothing, scientific equipment and art supplies.

The girls also kept journals — pages of sketches, field notes and data gathering. Impersonal observations of cloud formation and wind direction. Thoughtful observations of each other.

Cautious analysis of themselves. Sometimes quiet misgivings, and sometimes quiet pride. 📖

Tori Tragis is a writer and editor for UAF Marketing and Communications. Unsentimental by nature, even she was moved by what was clearly a life-changing experience for the young women she met.

Web extra: See more cool stuff from the 2015 trip at www.uaf.edu/aurora/.



I don't think any of us have stopped asking questions at all, ever, during this trip.

FULL
FRAME





Todd Paris '83 has been UAF's campus photographer for more than 14 years, and his photos have graced the pages of *Aurora* since the first issue in fall 2008. In April he retires after a long and illustrious career showcasing UAF's inspiring beauty. We asked him to choose his favorite photo from all of those years and tell us about it.

There's so much I like about this photo: the red legs askew and the iconic Xtratufs, the ice on the water, the expressions and colors and ages in the crowd, the textured sky, the lines of the log and shoreline guiding your eyes into the frame.


I can't say I actually planned the shot this way — so much of photography is luck — but it brings to mind the famous quote a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer once uttered when asked the secret to taking great pictures: "Set your camera to f/8 and be there." To get this shot, I had to stand for about 45 minutes in icy, chest-deep water (thanks to my friends at UAF Outdoor Adventures for loaning me a dry suit) and shoot a couple hundred photos.

This was number 177.

I feel the picture illustrates the attitude I've tried to maintain throughout my career taking photos at UAF: try something different, push the boundaries and put myself in the position to take compelling, memorable and ultimately successful photos. This image won the Best of Show award in the University Photographers' Association of America's annual print competition in 2009, an achievement of which I'm extremely proud.

Ultimately, it's been an incredible honor and privilege to serve UAF and the Marketing and Communications office as the campus photographer over the years. I hope I've helped create a meaningful and useful visual record of daily achievement and accomplishment at this unique and exemplary university.





A hitchhiker's guide to low-Earth orbit

Students snag a ride into space for their tiny cubesat, but will it phone home?

By Sam Bishop

Joe Hawkins stepped into the electrical engineering lab at 242 Duckering with an urgent question. “Has E.T. called home?” the retired engineering professor asked.

The E.T. that Hawkins had in mind was not an extraterrestrial being but a tiny cube satellite built by UAF students. It had flown into space five days earlier and hadn’t yet sent a signal home.

“No, but you’ll be one of the first to know,” said Denise Thorsen, an electrical engineering professor who followed Hawkins as director of the UA Alaska Space Grant Program.

It was mid-afternoon on Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2015. Thorsen and several students who helped build the cubesat were in the lab working on various projects — and waiting.

On a central table sat a 4-inch-square cube of anodized aluminum bars screwed together to form a frame. The cube enclosed several green fiberglass boards laced with tiny metal lines and studded with electrical components.

The cube was an early prototype of the cubesat flying at 17,450 mph hundreds of miles above the Earth at that very moment.

That cube satellite, launched from California on Oct. 8, should have been broadcasting bursts of signals at 437.565 megahertz — an ultra-high frequency that can be tracked by amateur radio hobbyists and others across the globe.

Instead: radio silence.

Thorsen and the students knew their cubesat wouldn't orbit into view of a tracking station north of Fairbanks again until the evening, so they tuned into a different passing satellite to assure themselves that their reception antenna worked.

"Whoa, really big," Thorsen exclaimed as a blob of rainbow colors pulsed on a screen, marking a transmission from the other satellite. "That's what we're hoping ours will do."

As this magazine went to press, Thorsen and her students were still hoping, although their optimism waned as time passed.

"It's common for satellites to take a while to start their routine," electrical engineering master's student Morgan Johnson explained optimistically while in the lab that Tuesday after the launch. In fact, five of the 13 cubesats sent up with theirs had not yet communicated.

Matt Pacheco, a mechanical engineering undergraduate, noted from his seat at a nearby computer that another cubesat recently launched by California Polytechnic State University finally "woke up" after three months in space.

"I don't think they ever figured out exactly why that happened," Pacheco said. "One day it started beeping."

Despite initial disappointment with the lack of communication from their cubesat, the team members described the entire enterprise as a success, given all they learned during five years of work. A progression of 36 students had just designed, built and launched the first Alaska Research Cubesat, ARC-1. From scratch.

A new student team led by Johnson has already begun to use those learning experiences to build the next cubesat.

"When I first started this project, I was basically this freshman-standard student, completely naïve about the world, didn't know anything about engineering — and was scared," Johnson said. "And now that that satellite's finished, I'm helping an entire new team of students build a new satellite."

Small is big

When the Atlas V rocket roared out of Vandenberg Air Force Base at 5:39 a.m. Oct. 8, ARC-1 and 12 other cubesats rode along in several poly picosatellite orbital deployers. These P-PODs were spring-loaded boxes wedged into places that otherwise would have held mere ballast. At the appropriate point, the P-PODs popped open and flung the cubesats into space.

Several cubesats on the Atlas V caught their rides as part of a NASA effort to promote development of these tiny satellites. The rocket belonged to United Launch Alliance, a joint venture between Lockheed Martin and Boeing, and carried a classified military project as its primary payload.

As with so much technology today, small is the big thing in satellite development.

"Using these cubesats is a great way to try using these technologies and go, 'Well, we know this works. It's been successful. So maybe you want to try using this technology instead, and you can save money and save time because it's more efficient,'" Johnson said.

ARC-1 took five years to build and cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000, but the Alaska Space Grant Program's next cubesat could be finished in two years for \$10,000 because of the groundwork laid by the students, Thorsen said.

**A PROGRESSION OF
36 STUDENTS HAD JUST
DESIGNED, BUILT AND LAUNCHED
THE FIRST ALASKA RESEARCH
CUBESAT, ARC-1.
FROM SCRATCH.**



Much of the money went to paying stipends to students, who came from multiple disciplines at UAF. Many simply volunteered.

“We use mechanical students for the structure. We use electrical students. We use computer science students. Pretty much any student who wants to play in the lab, we have room for them,” Thorsen said.

Try and try again

Working in the Duckering Building’s machine shop during the academic year and at the Geophysical Institute in the summer, students cut the cubesat’s frame from rectangular blocks of aluminum.

In the Duckering electrical lab, Pacheco held up a finished piece with several protruding knobs and threaded holes.



Electrical engineering Professor Denise Thorsen, left, and student Jesse Frey work on the ARC-1 cubesat with antistatic devices connected to their wrists. Frey, who earned a master’s degree in electrical engineering while working on the project, designed the cubesat’s directional control system.

“Everything you don’t see had to be cut out,” he said. “For most of the components, we used a vertical milling machine. It has a three-axis bed. You hold it in a vise, and you’re able to move it on the x, y plane. And then you actually lift the bed up on the z plane.”

The milling machine’s specialized bits cut not only in a forward direction, like a traditional drill press, but also sideways, like a saw.

Pacheco pulled a fistful of rejected frame pieces from a plastic storage box.

“Our tolerances are incredibly tight,” Thorsen said. “I don’t know how many times we built these things and it was like, wrong size, wrong whatever. This is just on the mechanical side. It’s not just the mechanicals but it’s the electricals too.”

Students designed the electrical circuits on computers. An Outside company then used that design to sandwich the circuits into sturdy fiberglass and epoxy boards.

The boards end up covered with hundreds of tiny blobs of solder. To those, the students attached electrical components — switches, sensors, a camera, a radio, batteries, solar cells.

“I can’t actually see some of the pieces, so I do use the microscope, but we have a couple of young guys who can do it with tweezers,” Thorsen said.

To receive the cubesat’s signals, the team also built a computer-controlled, moveable antenna. The apparatus sits atop a tower on a building at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Gilmore Creek Tracking Station off the Steese Highway north of Fairbanks.

Given the interplay between the Earth’s rotation and the cubesat’s orbit, the Gilmore Creek station can only receive a potential signal from ARC-1 during 8-hour periods that come around every 12-14 hours. During each such period, the cubesat makes five or six passes, once every 95 minutes, with the strongest radio signals possible in the middle few passes.

Hitching a ride

To launch ARC-1, the team looked for a rocket that met two criteria. First, it needed a trajectory that would set the cubesat in an orbital path that rose well above the horizon when “viewed” from the antenna at Gilmore Creek. Second, the rocket needed a primary payload owner that would agree to share space with the cubesat.

After a few years of searching, they finally found a rocket that had a willing primary payload owner and that would set their cubesat on an elliptical orbit on a plane tipped 64 degrees north of the equator — almost directly above Fairbanks, which sits at 64 degrees 50 minutes north latitude.

ULA set a final Oct. 8 launch date for their launch rocket at Vandenberg.

Thorsen stayed in Fairbanks to manage the ground station. Johnson, Pacheco and fellow team members Chic O'Dell, Jesse Frey and Patrick Wade attended the launch in California.

The day before the launch, Johnson sat on a panel with other cubesat developers and took questions from the press during a live news conference fed online via NASA TV.

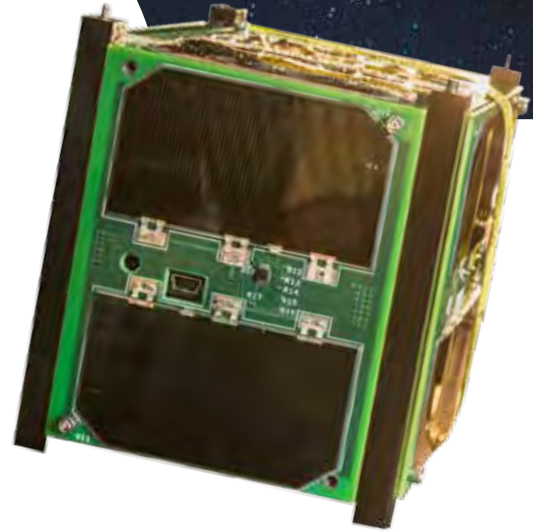
"We use cheap, off-the-shelf parts," Johnson explained to the audience at Vandenberg and viewers worldwide. "For our antenna, you can see we have a tape measure. It works for UHF connections. For the launch environment data logger, we're just using triple-A batteries. We are using a webcam for our camera, and we're also using the radios we learned to use in our wireless sensor network class."

The next morning, the team woke at 2 a.m. in their motel rooms in nearby Lompoc and caught a bus to Vandenberg, where they entered a hangar with a view of the Atlas V. Five miles away, the 191-foot-tall, 12.5-foot-diameter rocket "was kind of a pinprick," O'Dell said.

The blast-off, though, was "super bright," Johnson said.

"WE USE MECHANICAL STUDENTS FOR THE STRUCTURE. WE USE ELECTRICAL STUDENTS. WE USE COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENTS. PRETTY MUCH ANY STUDENT WHO WANTS TO PLAY IN THE LAB, WE HAVE ROOM FOR THEM."

The ARC-1 cubesat is about 4 inches square. The team cut the frame from blocks of aluminum, and the pieces were then anodized. They designed the electrical circuits that were printed on the fiberglass and epoxy boards, leaving hundreds of solder points. To those points, the students attached components such as switches, sensors, a camera, a radio, batteries and solar cells.



Pacheco recorded the sound on his cellphone and played it over his computer speakers in the Duckering lab. "It was a low rumble. It wasn't explosive," Pacheco said as the roar filled the room.

"Which I guess is a good thing," O'Dell added. "Explosive sounds are usually bad."

Control and capture

The violent launch was just what the team wanted ARC-1 to investigate.

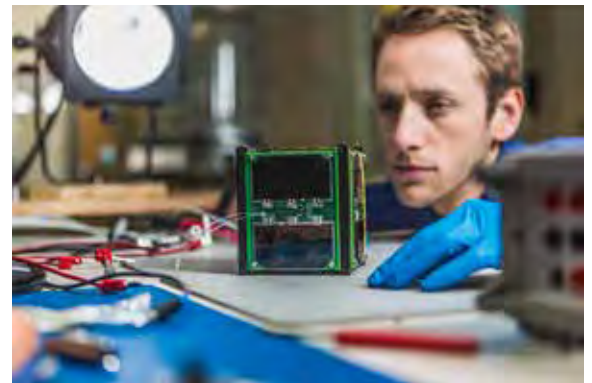
"When you are a large satellite and you are paying for your ride, you get to ride up in the nose cone, which is a nice

pristine beautiful environment," Thorsen said. "And if you're the secondary payload, you're riding underneath the primary, and you're kind of riding in coach class.

"Cubesats don't even rate that. Cubesats ride in steerage. They ride down by the motors. We're ballast weight — for weight and balance of the rocket," she said.

ARC-1's job was to document just how rough that ride was so future cubesat designers would know what their machines must survive. Johnson designed the launch environment data logger to do the job.

She started with a simplified microprocessor called a micro-controller. To it she connected a temperature sensor, an accelerometer and a gyroscope. Each device produces data that are stored on a SanDisk card like



Patrick Wade takes a close look at the completed cubesat in early 2015 before it was delivered to the launch site in California. Wade earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering with an aerospace emphasis while working on the project.

that used in a digital camera. Commands can be sent from Gilmore Creek to download that data — if the cubesat wakes up enough to talk.

The data logger was unlike most other cubesat devices in that, to do its job, it had to be powered up during the launch. That's a potential problem. The usual rocket launch rules resemble a commercial airliner's at takeoff — all devices must be turned off. So Johnson had to make a special trip to San Jose, California, for two days of electromagnetic interference testing of her data logger. It passed easily.

Her accelerometer was the key to recording how rough the ride was. The device consists of a small mass suspended between two plates in an electrical circuit, Johnson explained. The accelerometer detects changes in capacitance — the ratio between the circuit's voltage and the plates' electrical charges — as the mass bounces between the plates, thus indicating the severity of jostling during a launch.

After the cubesat is flung from the P-POD, the gyroscope records whether the cubesat is rotating and, if so, how fast. Because ARC-1 carries a camera to take pictures of the Earth, the team wants to control that rotation.

Frey got the job. He used a system invented by NASA engineer Michael Polites in 1971 and refined by Donald Mentch for his Ph.D. at UAF in 2011. The system also earned Frey a master's degree in December 2014.

Frey's system starts with 1-inch-long, 1/16-inch-thick magnetized rods of alloyed aluminum, nickel and cobalt. The rods are then coiled in copper wire and attached to electrical circuits on a board.

The rods, being magnetized, behave just like a compass needle. Because the rods are wired firmly to a board within the cubesat, the

The cubesat team used a tape measure for an antenna, an innovation devised by previous cubesat designers. The antenna was folded around the satellite and held with fishing line. According to the plan, electricity would heat a resistor after launch, melting the line and allowing the antenna to pop up.

forces generated by their compass-like interaction with the Earth's magnetic fields mechanically torque the entire cubesat, aligning it in predictable directions. To change the cubesat's direction, bursts of electricity are sent to the coils.

"When you pulse a current through that coil, you can flip the direction that the magnet is polarized in," Frey said. Flipping the polarization reverses the effect of the magnetic fields and therefore turns the cubesat. Several coils were needed to dampen oscillations.

"We're looking to sort of explore how that works and how well that works in orbit," Frey said.

At its apogee, above the northern hemisphere, the cubesat is about 484 miles from the Earth's surface. At its perigee in the southern hemisphere, it is 292 miles high. At those elevations, the atmosphere is still present but is extremely thin.

"There is very little friction and very little that's pushing our satellite, so we don't need to push very hard to turn it," Frey said. "And the goal for this mission was just to point the satellite at the ground, so we're not making quick movements."

Earlier systems have controlled the direction in which cubesats face in a similar way by running power through coils, with no magnets, to create fields that interact with the Earth's. But those systems only produce torque when current is flowing. Frey's system, by using only occasional pulses, leaves more power for other functions on the satellite.

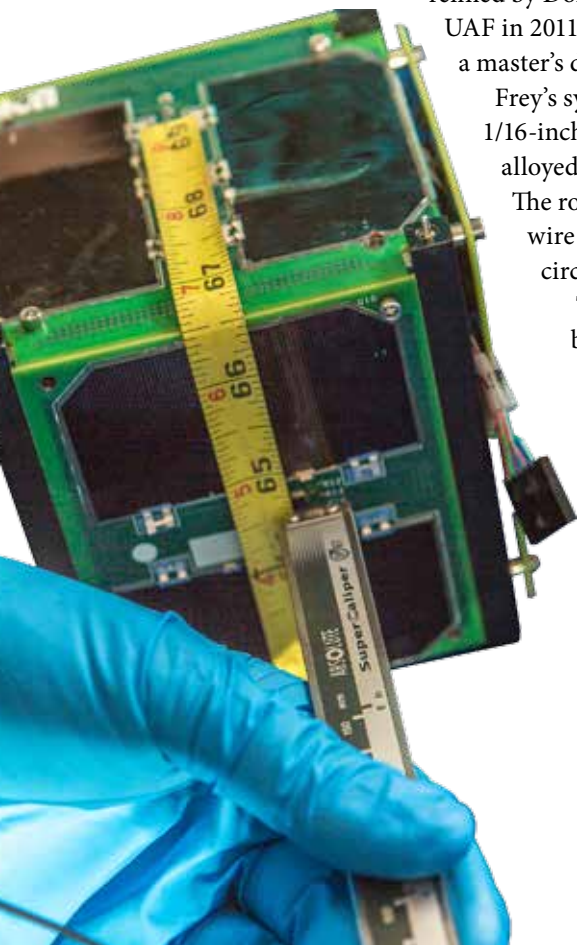
"You're trying to use the power the most efficient way possible to do the science you want to do," Frey said.

Troubleshooting

After the launch at Vandenberg, the UAF students met a few engineers from The Aerospace Corp. who also had a cubesat on the Atlas V. The Aerospace engineers were skeptical of ARC-1's antenna design, the students said.

Pop-up tape measures are common on cubesats, but the Aerospace engineers didn't like the fishing line that the Alaska team used to keep it folded out of the way in the P-POD.

"It ties down to a resistor, and when the resistor heats up, it melts the fishing line that we used to tie it down with," Johnson explained.



“The Aerospace guys said that was a terrible idea,” O’Dell said.

Many other complications could explain the cubesat’s silence, though.

No one actually saw the cubesat after it went into the P-POD in March. “They close it up. They bolt it down. No more touchy,” said Pacheco, who was there for the delivery.

So the cubesat’s rechargeable batteries could have faded during the seven-month wait. The tiny solar panels on the cubesat’s surface might require a long time to recharge the batteries.

Other challenges could have arisen on the trip into space.

“The thing shook really, really hard, right?” Thorsen said in October. “We have mechanical switches that need to release in order to turn the satellite on. Have those switches actually released or are they jammed a little bit?”

As they investigated the potential problems in the months following the launch, the team strapped a prototype cubesat to a vibration table at the Geophysical Institute. The shaking jammed a spring-loaded switch — the very one designed to turn on the power when the cubesat launches from the P-POD.

“We believe we have the smoking gun,” Thorsen said in early February.

“THE AEROSPACE GUYS SAID THAT WAS A TERRIBLE IDEA.”

Even so, the cubesat could still awaken as temperature changes in space stress its frame. “There’s still the off chance that thermal cycling will eventually release that pin,” Thorsen said.

Learning by trying

“We’re not an industry that’s done this for 50 years,” Thorsen said. “So every step forward we find things that we don’t know and then we have to figure them out.”

Thorsen became director of the Alaska Space Grant Program in 2008, taking over from Neal Brown and Joe Hawkins before him. Thorsen and the first students began working on the satellite project in 2009.

Many of the cubesat’s components could have been purchased off the shelf, but “that’s not who we are,” Thorsen said. “We’re an engineering college, and I’m training engineers. We are about training our students to design and build space hardware, not just put Legos together.”

The cubesat work gives students a type of instruction not found in textbooks and lectures, she said.

“There’s the technical aspect of being an engineer,” she said, “but there’s this larger organic aspect of actually fulfilling what needs to be fulfilled for a particular project.”

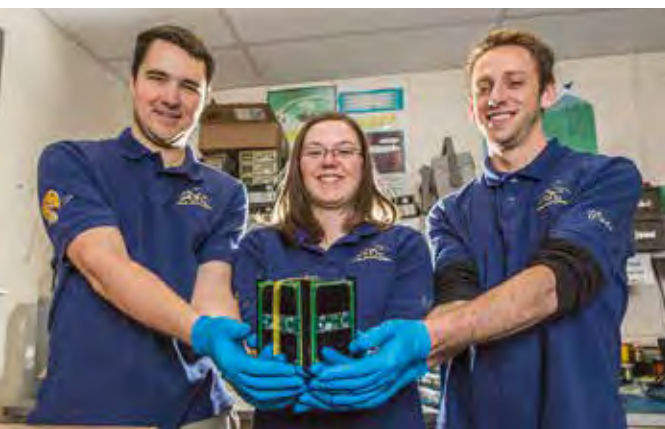
Across the five-year span, the students also have fulfilled her hopes for them, she said.

“They go out and they’re like, ‘Wow, there’s this really cool thing here, what if we do this?’” she said. “And I’m like, ‘Wow, I didn’t know anything about that. Teach me, how does that work?’

“And the act of them teaching me teaches them.” 📺

Sam Bishop is a writer and editor at UAF Marketing and Communications. Born and raised in Alaska, he worked previously as a newspaper journalist for 27 years in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau and Washington, D.C. This story reintroduced him to terms he first encountered while earning an amateur radio license at age 11, after which his knowledge steadily regressed.

Web extra: Watch the cubesats pop from their P-PODS on the Atlas V rocket after the launch on Oct. 8 at <http://bit.ly/ulalaunch>. For more about the latest in cubesat work at NASA, visit www.nasa.gov/multimedia/videogallery/.



Jesse Frey, Morgan Johnson and Patrick Wade hold the completed ARC-1 cubesat. Johnson designed the system to capture data on the conditions experienced by the cubesat during launch. Now a master’s student in electrical engineering, she is working with the next student team developing a cubesat at UAF.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



Rendezvous

More than 100 people took part in reunion activities in September, including two alumni couples from out of state who visited the Fairbanks campus for the first time since their graduations. **Paul Sander '95** and **Kate Sander '95**, from Ellensburg, Washington, met at Starvation Gulch in the 1990s and were voted most outstanding woman and man in their graduating class.

Lei Zhu '90 and **Yuqi Zhao '88** traveled from Logan, Utah, for Lei's 25th reunion. Afterward Lei wrote, "The severe storm that occurred during the reunion weekend actually helped to quickly bring back our fond memories of the winters when we lived and studied at UAF as graduate students."

At the awards luncheon in Wood Center, **Sherry Simpson '86, '95** received the Distinguished Alumnus Award, given in recognition of her literary accomplishments. She recently won the John Burroughs Medal for her book "Dominion of Bears: Living with Wildlife in Alaska." In her acceptance speech she said, "When I was in high school, our teachers pushed us to go Outside for college. But I figured that if I planned to live and work in Alaska, it made more sense to come here and learn about Alaska and Alaskans. And this turned out to be true. For me, UAF was the kind of place where professors didn't say, 'No, you can't do that' but rather 'Yes, how can we help you do that?'"

Libby Eddy '92 couldn't attend to receive her Alumni Achievement Award for University Support but asked **Tiana Elkins '15** to say a few words on her behalf: "I had no intention of working for the university for 30 years. I just got a job to pay the bills while I decided what I wanted to be when I grew up. Somehow 30 years flew by. When I started working in 1978, parking decals cost \$7.50, and when I took classes tuition was \$32 per credit."

Ann Ringstad '05, '06 was awarded the other Alumni Achievement Award for University Support and said, "I have invited my three young grandchildren here today — Kierra, Brayden and Addison — to demonstrate the importance of keeping up your advocacy efforts. These fifth-generation Alaskans and future college students are counting on you!"

All of the alumni award winner photos and bios can be seen at www.uaf.edu/alumni/awards/. Please mark your calendar for the 2016 Nanook Rendezvous, coming Sept. 23-24. We hope to see you!



New agreement reached

UAF Alumni Association and UAF officials signed a new memorandum of agreement in October 2015 as recommended by an alumni task force. It can be read at www.uaf.edu/alumni/about/moa/.

Save the date for next year!

Sept. 23-24, 2016

Photos from top: 1) Sherry Simpson '86, '95, winner of the 2015 Distinguished Alumnus Award, holds her award platter with, from left, Sam Enoka '95, Mike Sfraga '84, '97 and English Professor Derick Bureson. 2) Students enjoy the Starvation Gulch bonfires, held the same weekend as Nanook Rendezvous. 3) Tiana Elkins '15 speaks on behalf of Libby Eddy '92, a 2015 Alumni Achievement Award recipient. 4) Ann Ringstad '05, '06, a 2015 Alumni Achievement Award recipient, stands with Enoka, Sfraga and her grandchildren. 5) DeShana York '95, holds her 2015 William R. Cashen Service Award, with, from left, Shane York, Teresa Lowe '03 and Marta Mueller '95.

CLASS NOTES

1940s

“Reached 100
years August
2015.”

—Patrick O’Neill ’41, ’53, ’76H*

1950s

Ed Lewison ’51 — “Despite flunking integral calculus twice, I managed to graduate with the class of 1951. The years following were mostly kind and what I learned at U of A made a big difference in those later years. I send my best wishes to those who remember me, regrettably a diminishing number. I retired a chief engineer, married to a cardiologist (**Connie Hayes, matriculate**). She keeps me alive!”

Stuart Yaffe ’51 — “[At] age 88, continue to practice medicine after 59 years. Family physician fortunate to practice with my daughter, also an FP. The U of A was excellent in guiding me into the medical profession.”

Edward Ashby ’53 — “In the Pioneer Home in Fairbanks now, and it is great.”

Sylvia Ruscett ’57 and **Ron Ruscett ’58** — “We are both retired. We summer in Michigan and winter at Voyager in Tucson.”

Bob Taylor ’58 — “I was honored by the Simpson County Bar Association in Franklin, Kentucky, on Law Day (May 1, 2015) in recognition of my 51 years serving the community in several capacities as an attorney. I presently serve as trial commissioner for Kentucky’s 49th Judicial District and continue to operate my law office.”

1960s

Carol E. Bush ’60 — “I am a widow since July 14, 2013. Live alone in a new condo with one spoiled cat.”

Peter Lent ’60 — “From caribou and muskoxen to black rhinos it’s been a long journey. After early retirement from the federal government, I finished a book on muskoxen and spent several years working in South Africa, mostly at the University of Fort Hare, the oldest historically black university in the country. My wife, **Lesley ’74**, also served as a volunteer there. That affiliation led



to opportunities for research and conservation efforts with black rhinoceros. The final journal article (co-authored) resulting from this rhino work has just come out, exactly 50 years after publication of my first peer-reviewed paper on caribou in Alaska. Now we have settled just outside Portland, Oregon. Our daughter is nearby, and we are a bit closer to our four granddaughters, who live with their parents just a few miles from UAF.”

Sharon Boko ’61 — “Have served on the UAF Face-off Club Board of Directors for the past several years.”

Julie Folta ’61 and **Richard Folta ’61** — Julie has mostly retired from teaching and her consulting business. Richard has retired from engineering and practice of law. They retired to Haines, Alaska.

“She keeps me
alive!” —Ed Lewison ’51

Robert Leonard ’61 — “Not much new. Living in a retirement community near Sacramento, California.”

Rachel Thomas ’61 — “I’m enjoying the Osher Lifelong Learning sponsored by UAF. If you are retired and not enrolled, you are missing fantastic lectures/learning opportunities.”

Paul Hunter ’62 — “Just got home [in August] from six weeks on our boat *Chimaera*. Cruised in Washington’s San Juan Islands and Canada’s Gulf Islands, Desolation Sound and Discovery Islands. Overall weather was great. *Chimaera* is a 37-foot trawler.”

Gary Eisebraun ’63 — “After ’63 I was employed in mining for 34 years and enjoyed some world traveling. More importantly was the experience of a loving wife, four children, eight grandkids and six great-grandkids. Have been retired 18 years and live in a great town, Las Vegas.”

Clifford Wells ’64 — “Still going to work every day at NASA Goddard Space Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Met and married my wife of 49 years, Andree, in Maryland. Big plan is to retire and rest in mid-coast Maine in a town of beautiful restful views and filled with early American history. Raised two sons: one served in Iraq and Afghanistan, now retired Army major with B.S.E.E., MBA; second is a doctor of internal medicine, cardiologist, MD, Ph.D.”

Stephen J. Young ’64, ’68 — “Has been doing research in physics for the last 43 years for the Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo, California.”

“If you are retired
and not enrolled,
you are missing
fantastic learning
opportunities.”

—Rachel Thomas ’61

Theodore Bier ’65 — “Received M.S. engineering management in 1965. Would be interested in hearing from other students who attended at that time.”
(Editor’s response: Contact the alumni office at uaf-alumni@alaska.edu or 907-474-7081 for information about getting in touch with former classmates.)

Alan Eddy ’65 and **Linda Eddy ’65** — “Retired for 12 years. Traveling, gardening, and enjoying hobbies and family.”

Helen Roxana (Crabb) Ericsson ’65 — “I’m from the class of 1965 so always look for news from other classmates. My husband and I (nearing 50 years) have spent most of that in Latin countries, teaching and preparing nationally for ministry (Christian). We’ve had a wonderful life! I thank the U of A for a good firm education and have enjoyed learning from other great institutions along the way. Feeling blessed!”

Russ Redick ’65 — “Fully retired in Anchorage.”

Bette Smith ’65 — “I’m a retired educator having taught grades 1 through 11 and four semesters in the College of Education at Western Kentucky University. My master’s degree and Rank I are from the University of South Carolina and Western Kentucky University.”

*H=honorary degree

Judy Cameron '67 — “Retired high school principal, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1996. Retired co-owner of Property Management Company, Las Vegas, 2015.”

John Trent '67 and **Gerda (Wild) Trent, matriculate** — “Moved from Anchorage to a small retirement home we built in Kenai, where there are fish to be caught and Cook Inlet agates to be found. John is a retired (2012) Alaska wildlife biologist and Gerda a retired registered nurse.”

“We have experienced five glorious years on ‘permanent vacation.’”

—Tom Young '69 and Laurel Young '69

Joyce Gatlin '68 — “Retired as an elementary principal from the Hillsborough County Florida School System in 1991. I’m now enjoying life with my husband in the Florida Gulf Coast community of Steinhatchee, Florida.”

Patricia Nichols '68 — “Living on the coast of Oregon in North Bend. Visit Alaska and Fairbanks every two or three years.”

Kees Van Weel '68 — “Retired from USDA Forest Service. Living in southeast Ohio. Gardening, hiking, messing around with muzzleloaders. Fixing up an old, small sailboat and trailer. Missing Alaska.”

Allan Crawford '69 — “In 2014, I received the Thomas Jefferson Award from the National Weather Service for being a cooperative observer and also involved in the weather spotter program as well. My observations are turned in to the Anchorage forecast center by monthly reports and daily call-ins. I have done this for 37 years and have nearly completed my 38th.”

Tom Young '69 and **Laurel Young '69** — “We have experienced five glorious years ‘on permanent vacation’ — traveling (via air, land and sea in Alaska and afar), exploring Prince William Sound (fishing, shrimping, beach combing and berry picking) and enjoying time with family (two sons, one daughter, their spouses and five grandchildren). Our latest venture is planning our 50th anniversary celebration in Kona over spring break 2016.”

1970s

Eugene Ashley '70 — “My son Glenn works for the FAA in Fairbanks. I’m retired U.S. Air Force and enjoy visiting Alaska and Hawaii. It’s 4,000 miles to drive from here [Michigan] to Fairbanks, and I really enjoy doing it.”

Lynndeen Barnett Knapp '70 — “Celebrated my mother’s (**Doreen Wood Barnett '44-'45**) 90th birthday with a decade party.”

Thomas Egan '71 is an industrial appeals judge for the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals in Olympia, Washington.

Colleen (Schwienberg) Heberer '71 — “Retired after 25 years owning and operating Whatnot Consignments in Eagle River. Previously taught in Wrangell and eastern Washington before moving to Anchorage where I was an administrative assistant for Arctic Slope/Wright Schachart Construction during pipeline building boom. Daughter Lark and grandsons Blaze Shellhamer and Cruz Boseman live nearby.”

Ellen Lester '71 — “Teaching sewing classes at a local quilt store.”

Linda Rinard '71 — “I’m a retired Anchorage School District teacher but sub a lot to get money for travel.”

Thomas Ager '72 — “Retired from U.S. Geological Survey in 2012. Continuing to do research on Alaska as an emeritus scientist.”

Jerry Bowers '72 — “I remain a resident of Fairbanks. I am a Seahawks fan and will again visit Century Link Stadium in Seattle for the home games. Go ‘Hawks!’”

“Take heart, the energy sector will recover.”

—Bobby Gaddis '73

Terri Foster '72 — “I live in Happy Valley, Oregon. Have three grandchildren, all girls. They are all doing well and have lots of friends, plus a Great Dane named George and two cats. I miss Alaska greatly but when the family moved to Oregon, I also moved to stay close to them.”

Susan Braund '73 — “Homer, Alaska. Owner of Firestar Media Services (writing and editing); Sew-Tuff (mending and repairs); and Above the Bay (Airbnb).”

Bobby Gaddis '73, '74 — “Owner, Future Resources Engineering (water and energy projects). Retired lieutenant colonel, U.S. Army (2010). Take heart, the energy sector will recover. The roller coaster is due to poor U.S. policy and lack of world leadership. That can be corrected by electing better leaders. Be sure to vote in 2016.”

Robert Wilkins '73 — “In July appointed as municipal judge for the City of Philippi, West Virginia.”

Joyce Mann '74 — “**Kurt (Pfizer '75)** and I visited my mother’s first cousin and family in Krakow, Poland. After more than a century, the family was reunited.”

“I have been doing 3D facial reconstructions from skeletal remains.”

—Louise Renhard '76

Geoffrey Carroll '76 — “I retired after working for 27 years as the area wildlife biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Before that I worked for the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management. I plan to do more dog sledding, traveling and working with local youth programs.”

John Dufseth '76 — “Retired, living on coastal North Carolina.”

Linda Millimaki '76 — “After graduation [Linda] moved to San Diego, where she still lives with her husband, Bruce. She is a CPA and they own a CPA firm in San Diego. They have three daughters and four grandchildren. She loves living in San Diego!”

Louise Renhard '76 — “After U of A I joined the Peace Corps and went to Lesotho. After that I spent three years backpacking in Africa. I am now a senior crime scene analyst with Las Vegas Metro Police Department in the CSI section. I have been doing 3D facial reconstructions from skeletal remains. I teach an intro to 3D facial reconstruction class at schools ITT Tech and Kaplan College, and chemical fingerprint processing and documenting, and understanding cases of strangulation, at the CSI Academy.”

Joan Osterkamp '77 and Tom Osterkamp, professor emeritus — “Tom retired from teaching at UAF to instructing civilian and law enforcement handlers for search and rescue. His specialty is scent theory and its application in the training of the dogs. The last year saw us traveling from our home in Missouri to Maine, Alaska, Texas, California and most states in between for work with the dogs and visits with our four sons and their families.”

Leon Sanders '77 — “Manhattan, Kansas, was my place of birth 77 years ago. It is a state university town with a large Army base nearby. I am retired living in an apartment there now. Recently my faithful 15-year-old cocker spaniel passed away. I am missing him greatly. I have pleasant recall of my time at UAF.”

Timothy Smith '77 — “Now retired and living in my ancestral homeland of York County in southcentral Pennsylvania.”

Patricia Wilson '77 — “I am a retired journalist now living in central North Carolina.”

Susan Gamache '78 — “Just livin’ it one day at a time.”

Guy Urban '78 — “Recently retired from National Tsunami Warning Center. Now spending my time at the Gravity Institute of Alaska.”

Kevin Corbett '79 — “M.S. geology, Texas A&M, 1982; Ph.D. geology, UCLA, 1987. President and CEO of Channel Energy in Lakewood, Colorado. We are a private equity-backed oil and gas exploration and production company.”

Kenneth Humphreys '79 — “Retired, doing New England archaeological research on pre-Columbian contacts; also a little gold panning in Vermont in White Mountains. There’s also copper and silver, not much but after all the years of no mining, flakes and small bits show up. During the Civil War, Vermont was a top copper producer.”

Karen Ladegard '79 — “I retired two years ago after 22 years with the Iditarod Area School District and moved with my husband to Wasilla. I am currently working part-time as adjunct faculty with the education department at the Mat-Su Campus.”

Bob Mattson '79, '85 and Maria Mattson '86 — “During June and July 2015, Bob and Maria returned to Finland with nine other family members from Alaska for a family reunion. They joined over 30 Finnish relatives from Bob’s father’s side of the family for a wonderful time. Bob returned to take a new position with [the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation] as Southeast regional manager for the new Prevention, Preparedness and Response Program in Juneau.”

Byron Young '79, '80 — “I have recently retired from the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers] Cold Regions Research and Engineering Lab located in Hanover, New Hampshire, after a successful career as the site environmental officer. I have attended the University of Ohio, Harvard School of Medicine and have completed another degree from the University of New Hampshire. I now live with my wife and family in White River Junction, Vermont. It all started with a summer class at UAF.”

“Age is creeping up but we still enjoy our adventurous Bush life.”

—Julie and Miki Collins '81

1980s

Phyllis Collins '80 — “I am from the class of 1980, A.A.S. in food service technology. Since then I have obtained a bachelor of technology in food service management, a master’s in education curriculum and instruction and a Ph.D. candidate in organizational leadership. I have worked at Delaware State University in Dover since 1993.”

Findlay Abbott '81 had a career building architectural and topographic scale models, carpentry and boat repair. He lives in Homer and on Yukon Island, the family homestead. They are planning archaeological work on the Yukon Island Fox Farm site. People interested in participating may write to Abbott at P.O. Box 3000, Homer, Alaska 99603.

Kenneth Coe '81 worked as an emergency hire in smokejumper parachute loft all summer [2015].

Julie Collins '81 — “My sister, **Miki (Collins '81)**, and I have recently contributed two major articles to the National Park Service. Both can be found online. Our three books are still in print, available at Gulliver’s Books and other outlets. Age is creeping up but we still enjoy our adventurous Bush life.”

Russell Klapchuk '81 — “I retired from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Dec. 31, 2014. I was a relief able seaman on the R/V *Sikuluaq* this [past] spring. I’m driving a truck on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest this [2015] summer.”

Robert Duncan '83 — “Worked for Horizon Air in Portland, Oregon, then went to work for Fred Meyer/Kroger Company for 27 years. I am now retired and living in Sun City West, Arizona, with my wife, Carol. We are enjoying our retirement.”

Lenita Sheridan Graves '83 published her second book, “Guardian of the Gauntlet, Book II,” in January 2015. She writes under the pen name Lenita Sheridan. For more information, visit www.LenitaSheridan.com.

Connie Lamb '83, '84 — “I have retired from teaching at Noorvik’s Aqqaluk High School. I taught in Noorvik for 20 years. Made a lot of friends and enjoyed my time there. I now live in Fairbanks.”

Jim Winslade '83 — “Teaching at the Environmental Resources Training Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Have been teaching water treatment and wastewater treatment to operators as adjunct instructor for the last 12 years.”

Roger Nicholas '84 — “I’ve been working for the City of Unalakleet for 13 years, five years as a general laborer and eight years as a water plant operator. I credit UAF with giving me the mindset to constantly strive for higher education and better positions.”

Jeannie Romig '84 — “Alaska-certified teacher, retired now. Taught in [Fairbanks North Star Borough] School District and Christian schools.”

Judy Smith '84 — “Taught with Fairbanks North Star Borough School District full-time 1981–1997. Taught with Adult Learning Programs of Alaska 2003–2006. Member of Fairbanks Retired Teachers Association.”

Brad Sworts '84, '85 — “Predesign and engineering division manager, Matanuska-Susitna Borough capital projects department.”

Darrell Dinges '85 — “I was a candidate for the Colorado State Senate in 2014 in Denver, Colorado.”

Sara Hannan '85 and Mark Stopha '86 — “Sara is completing a career as a high school teacher at Juneau-Douglas High School. Mark and she are plotting a retirement that includes more fishing and time at their cabins in Southeast and Cooper Landing, Alaska.”

Dirk Nielsen '85 and Amy Nielsen '86 — “Both of us are retired and living in Washington state as of 2015. Looking forward to the next chapter.”

George Wandover '85, '90 — “We have relocated our MEP design and consulting business to Port Clinton, Ohio, on Lake Erie.”

Christy Andrews '86 — “Retired in 2013 from the Anchorage School District; kindergarten and first-grade teacher.”

Michael Donnell '86 — “Wyoming P.E. (Civil) No. 5982 since 1991; do most all city engineering for Worland, Wyoming, for the past 20 years. Married to Mary Beth Donnell since 1979; three grown children: Cody (born in Fairbanks in 1981), Lori (28), Nick (26); one granddaughter Evelyn Martinez, Billings, Montana, now 2 ½. Amateur radio license AD7XI (I worked on air at KFRB, KCBF/ KTVF Channell 11, KAYY 101 in Fairbanks).”

Dorothy Goldsborough '86 — “Got my Ph.D. at age 71. Taught criminology/criminal justice at Chaminade University of Honolulu and University of Hawaii at Manoa. Still do volunteer educational work in correctional facilities and am heavily involved in civic engagement for high school and college students.”

“Got my Ph.D. at age 71.”

—Dorothy Goldsborough '86

Dick Melvin '86 — “Since 2009 my wife, Mary, and I have worked as freelance writers through online sources. We enjoy our homestead lifestyle on our 160 acres of meadows and hardwood forest in northeast Missouri. Prior to 2009, I worked 13 years as a PR person in eastern Montana and six years as editor of small weekly newspapers in northern Minnesota.”

Leslie Turner '86 — “I am a wastewater management specialist with the Washington State Department of Health in Olympia.”

Dan Alden '87 is working as a senior electrical engineer at Harvard University. He has lived in Massachusetts since moving there to attend grad school at MIT.

Colleen Behen '87 — “Been living in Homer since 1992 working a variety of jobs related to my human services A.A.S. I received an occupational endorsement certificate in medical coding from UAA in May 2015 and am looking for employment in billing and coding department of a hospital or medical clinic. Meanwhile you can find me at the Pratt Museum admit desk and store. Come visit!”

Bonnie Borba '87 — “Career in biology working as a Yukon River salmon research biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Direct from college to the field! Still love my job!”

Keith Johnson '87 — “I am currently living in Dillon, Montana. I am assistant field manager of [Bureau of Land Management] in Beaverhead. I have four children: Dustin, 25; Ben, 23 (graduate of U of M in geology); Madison, 16; and Zane, 14.”

Kevin Pauli '87 — “I am currently associate professor of management and MBA director at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. I completed my MBA and Ph.D. in management at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2001.”

“Congratulations UAF on your first 100 years!”

—Ron Miller '88

Bud Rice '87 — “I changed jobs with the National Park Service from environmental protection specialist completing [National Environmental Policy Act] documents for the server to management biologist. I track Board of Game and Board of Fisheries proposals that may affect wildlife in park areas. I also compare these with federal subsistence regulations.”

Jeff Roach '87 has been appointed as the Fairbanks International Airport manager. “Fairbanks International Airport is a vital part of the Alaska International Airport System, providing a gateway for access, while serving as an economic engine for our community, the region and the state of Alaska.”

John Keller '88 — “Burdett [New York] is on Seneca Lake, east side. Winery country. My wife and I canoe and mountain bike in the Fingers Lakes National Forest just up the road. Only one in New York. Most people know me as Jack! I'm landscaping and doing a lot of vineyard work, and some bartending of weddings!”

Ron Miller '88 — “After graduating with my M.S. in natural resources, I worked with Native American tribes across the southwestern United States. I am currently a supervisory forester on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. Our oldest daughter, born in Fairbanks, now has a master's degree of her own. I love to travel and have climbed to the highest point of 46 states. I also enjoy the Caribbean and plan on being there again this December. Congratulations UAF on your first 100 years!”

Sam Winch '88 — “Sam recently retired from Penn State Harrisburg, where he was associate professor in communications, teaching photography; moved to Lubec, Maine, where he sails and hikes.”

Renee Dreiling '89 — “I make frequent appearances at local poetry readings and was featured poet at Bayliss Public Library (Michigan; available on YouTube). Self-published chapbook, ‘Clichés on the Rocks, With a Twist,’ will be available this fall.”

Todd Heinrichs '89 was promoted to executive director from senior manager at Ernst & Young. He is a member of EY's national tax practice and has more than 23 years of experience in property taxation.

Susan McIntosh '89, '02 and **Robert McIntosh '90** — “Susan: Retired teacher and now Alaska statewide mentor. Robert: Retired teacher and now real estate agent with Century 21 in North Pole and Fairbanks.”

Cynthia TENIENTE-MATSON '89



Photo courtesy of Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

“To the great Nanook Nation:

It is with great honor I announce that I have been inaugurated as the second president of Texas A&M University-San Antonio. During my undergraduate years at UAF, becoming the president of a university was not part of the vision I had for myself. I've learned that although we may have a plan, it doesn't always play out the way we envision. I genuinely believe my pursuit of higher education at UAF prepared me for this audacious task. Although I lead the A&M-SA Jaguar family in creating a path of prosperity, I stay true to the blue and gold of UAF. I thank the UAF community who have led and paved the way for me to be where I am today.”



Kelly (Duklet) Sassi '89, '96 earned her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 2008 and is now associate professor of English and education at North Dakota State University and director of the Red River Valley Writing Project. She co-authored three books about writing on demand with Anne Gere and Leila Christenbury.

1990s

Amy Ash '90 — “Retired from the State of Alaska after 15 years as an environmental scientist. Also [U.S. Forest Service-Bureau of Land Management] Intermountain Experiment Station in northern Idaho and research assistant/TA at UAF. Spouse is a retired architect.”

Curtis Thayer '90 was named the president and CEO of the Alaska Chamber in November 2015. Previously he served as commissioner of the Alaska Department of Administration under Gov. Sean Parnell and prior to that was deputy commissioner of the state Commerce, Community and Economic Development Department.

Kelli Cardenas '91 — “Since graduating with a B.A. in history, I earned an M.A. in history in 1995 from Fayetteville State University, and in 2006 I earned a Ph.D. in history from the University of South Carolina. I am currently an associate professor of history at Fayetteville State University in North Carolina.”

Carolyn Kremers '91 — “I received another Fulbright Scholar award (my first one was for 2008-2009) and will return to teach/write at Buryat State University in Ulan-Ude, Russia, (just north of Mongolia) this September for 2015-2016.” (Note from editor: see more about her award in the Kudos section on p. 14.)

Alaska Otterbacher '91, '94 — “I continue to be an avid backcountry extreme hiker. I hike national parks around the western U.S. My next hike will be my 50th trek in Death Valley, followed by southern Utah and northern Arizona. Yes, I still live in Fairbanks. Love the extremes! I also continue to volunteer for the Red Cross on major disasters. ‘If it is the right thing to do, DO IT!’”

Susan Fisher '92 — “Retired as CEO of Tongass Federal Credit Union.”

Meranda Moran '92 — “Back home enjoying a subsistence lifestyle after 10 years of teaching. Enjoying my Native culture!”

Terri Marie Ramsey '92 — “I am currently working full-time as a social worker (protective services specialist II) for the State of Alaska, Division of Public Assistance, Work Services Unit. I have been working there for over 16 years and my current focus is working with Families First clients.”

Richard Anderson '93 — “Life in Nome is adventuresome as ever. We had a beautiful summer and lots of blueberries to pick. My son has one more year of college in Oregon, so that has been a change for me, not having him around home.”

“If it is the
right thing to do,
DO IT!”

—Alaska Otterbacher '91, '94

Eileen Dolson '94, '00 — “I am missing Alaska and UAF. I am now an intensive in-home counselor working with young people and the family unit. I buried my 103-year-old uncle; my promise to my father is fulfilled. Also I am caring for four of my grandchildren as co-parent. Regards to my ‘adopted family,’ the Charlies.”

Mary Feiler '94 — “Mary has freed herself from the traditional expectations of career fulfillment and is a homesteader in the geological wonderland of southern Utah. Her UAF experience was instrumental in forming her adventurous spirit and in cultivating a dynamic outlook on life. Thanks, UAF!”

Beth Leonard '94, '96, '07 was invited to participate as a U.S. regional peer reviewer for the 2016-2017 Fulbright U.S. Scholar program for East Asia and the Pacific. She will serve on the Australia and New Zealand Peer Review Committee.

Kelly Lincoln '94 has been the owner and publisher of the Delta Discovery newspaper in Bethel, Alaska, along with her husband, Greg, since 2004.



Inuuteq Holm Olsen '94 was a foreign exchange student who earned his degree at UAF as part of an agreement with the Home Rule Government of Greenland. Since graduating he has held a number of diplomatic positions. He is minister plenipotentiary at the Greenland Representation at the Danish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

David Hembroff '95 — “After finishing up a career in the U.S. Air Force, I now teach high school dual credit courses in physics, chemistry and AP calculus at a small private school in northwest Montana.”

Heather Juno '97 — “I received my M.S.W. from the University of Southern California in 2014 and now am a mental health therapist at Crater High School in southern Oregon.”

Deborah Krienke '97 — “I have moved six times since my stay in Alaska. When the U.S. Air Force tells the family to move, you move. I still perform the same kinds of duties I did at the School of Management, just with different groups of people. Marketing, public relations, promoting ideas and people, supporting the wellness of my community.”

Lori Learned '97, '00 moved to Spearfish, South Dakota, to be closer to family.

Janice Cobb '99 — “I am currently an adjunct professor for four schools, am active in my schools and love teaching! All that I most treasure in my life came through UAF!”

William Hainer '99 — “Regional vice president, sales, Docusign. Living in Seattle, Washington.”

Paula Rogers '99 — “We’ve moved back to the Great Land! Working as an RN at Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage.”

Monica Shelden '99 — “My interests include cultural and language preservation for the indigenous groups. My position has been oral historian for the past 14 years with the Association of Village Council Presidents. I work on the BIA collection of oral history for the Yup’it group in Western Alaska.”

Marisa Wolfe '99 — “I’ve settled in sunny New Mexico where I own a small yoga and body work studio. I fuel my wanderlust by leading yoga retreats in interesting and exotic locales and teaching Thai yoga massage workshops around the country. Life is pretty good right now. I use my rural development degree skills every day in running my businesses!”

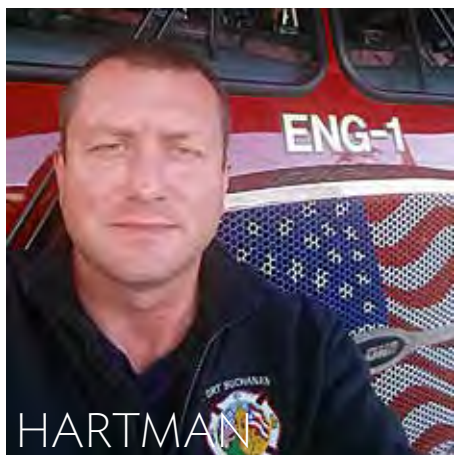
2000s

Grant Hedman '00 — “I loved my time at UAF. Made a lot of friends and loved my teachers. I got a master’s at Portland State University and regret not doing it at UAF. Say ‘hi’ to everyone!”

Laura (Princic) Moon '00 — “I work for the City of Bothell [Washington], and I’m taking online courses to complete a bachelor’s degree in graphic design. My oldest son is in the Navy as a reservist and my youngest is enlisted Navy.”

Jill Osier '00 was the 2014-2015 George Bennett Fellow at Phillips Exeter Academy. Her next collection of poetry is a chapbook due out with CutBank Books in 2016. She was an Alaska Literary Award Winner for poetry in November, awarded by the Alaska State Council for the Arts.

Matthew Coulter '01 — “I retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2013 and now work as a military contractor performing mission analysis for the GPS constellation.”



Paul Hartman '01 — “Firefighter EMT at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.”

Jonathan Johnson '01 — “Awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor of art at Otterbein University in Columbus, Ohio. I teach courses in photography, cinema and video art.”

Nathan Pitt '01 became the principal at Tri-Valley School in Healy, Alaska, in fall 2015.

Patrick Race '01 was reappointed to the Alaska State Council on the Arts by Gov. Bill Walker in September. Pat is a filmmaker, illustrator and small-business owner, as well

as co-founder of the Juneau Underground Motion Picture Society. He is also co-owner of the downtown Juneau gallery Alaska Robotics.

Emma Rombach '01 — “Emma now practices as a licensed acupuncturist in western Massachusetts, incorporating her nutrition and research learned while at UAF. She is mom to an enthusiastic, creative 14-year-old boy.”

Katie Bowers '02, '04 — “I retired after teaching Head Start for 23 years.”

Caroline Locke '03 — “I’ve obtained my M.S.W. from Florida State University and am now a licensed clinical social worker. I am working in substance abuse treatment and the mental health field. Our family misses Alaska and continues to think about our adventures there. I’ve never forgotten the culturally rich education that UAF provided to me, or my instructors. I’ve shared that knowledge with interns and other social work students I’ve encountered along the way. Thank you!”

Beverly Hugo '04 — “I am teaching Inupiaq language and culture at Hopson Middle School to sixth, seventh and eighth graders. It’s my 10th school year in Barrow, Alaska.”

Colleen Knix '05 — “Juris Doctor candidate, December 2015, University of Oregon School of Law.”

Derek Miller '05 — “I’m working for U.S. Army at Kwajalein Atoll.”

Matthew Krynicki '06 — “Physics instructor, Bay de Noc Community College, Escanaba, Michigan.”

Rebecca (Bailey) Emerson '07 married Grant Emerson Sept. 6, 2014. They have a son named Hamish Patrick Emerson. Living in Anchorage working as a geologist for BP.

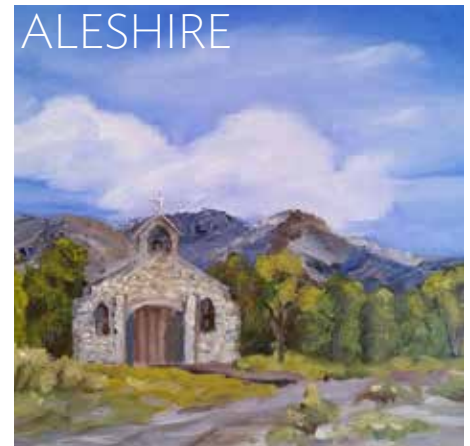


Christina Holzhauser '07 — “One of my essays can be found in ‘Crooked Letter I: Coming Out in the South,’ an anthology, from New South Press.”

John Neubauer '07 — “Working for the Disney Company for eight years now.”

Matt Rawlings '07, '08 is a Blackhawk helicopter pilot stationed at Fort Wainwright.

Troy Williams '07 — “After graduating, I started a career in electrical design. I have been successfully moving forward in my career. I just celebrated my eighth year anniversary with the company. Thank you, UAF!”



Anne Aleshire '08 — “Snowbirding in New Mexico for the winter. I love exploring and plein-air painting in the local area. I traveled to Italy with Kimberly Aragón Stewart, UAF’s instructor of Spanish, through EF Group Tours. My travel partner, Shelli, and I took advantage of being in Europe to enjoy a Mediterranean cruise and a quick trip to Cairo, Egypt. All in all, a most wonderful trip.”



Andrea Bartusch '08 participated in Miami University’s Earth Expeditions global field course in Borneo in summer 2015. She studied model community-based efforts to preserve Bornean species along the Kinabatangan River in Sabah (East Malaysia). Andrea is a student at San Diego Zoo Global in San Diego, California, and took the graduate course in pursuit of her master’s degree from Miami University’s Advanced Inquiry Program.

Susan Cushing '08 — “I have been serving as the public member on the Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault for the past six years, using behavioral health aide/rural human services lessons daily!”

Mary (Donaldson) Feldt '08 — “Still working as a human resources consultant for the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services in Juneau. My dad is **Wayne Donaldson '80**, alumni association board member, and my brother is **Shaun Kuzakin '00**. Go Nooks!”



Penny Gage '08 was named deputy director at The Institute of the North in September 2015. Previously she was a program officer at The Alaska Community Foundation. Penny will largely work with the Alaska Arctic Council Host Committee as the U.S. chairs the Arctic Council through May 2017.

Dunia Morgan '08, '10, '15 — “After graduation I rested — did subsistence fishing, berry picking and Bible study group.”

John Nichols III '08 has served as an artist-in-residence at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and the Atlantic Center for the Arts. Since graduating from UAF, he has given performances at prestigious international events such as the International Computer Music Conference, Society for Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States and Gaudeamus Musiekweek. His compositions have garnered several international awards. For more information, visit www.johnnicholsiii.com.

Jordan Springer '08 — “Working in the oil and gas industry since graduating! Can't wait for this year's [Arctic Innovation Competition]! Go UAF!”

Laura LeBlanc '09 — “Currently living in Seattle working as a high school science teacher at The Bush School. I teach chemistry, geology and environmental science. In the summers I also work as a bike guide for Bicycle Adventures and in the winter, I coach skiing and teach avalanche courses.”

2010s

Jessie Huff '12, '15 — “Working for Alaska Energy Authority as an energy development specialist.”

Tiffany Leary '12 — “I live in Japan now ... and I LOVE it here!”

Corrine Noel Knapp '13 — “Am now an assistant professor of environment and sustainability at Western State Colorado University. I also coordinate the integrated land management program in their brand new master's of environmental management.”

Katie Christie '14 — “I am currently working on a postdoc with Mark Boyce at the University of Alberta. The postdoc is on pronghorn population dynamics and habitat selection.”

Jessica Glass '14 was in South Africa last November collecting data for her Ph.D. project.

Jason Wilson '14 — “I now live in the Raleigh, North Carolina, region. I am employed as a solutions architect at the SAS Institute. I miss cross-country skiing and cool temperatures.”



Monica Combs '15 — “After graduation in May 2015, I continued to work for the School of Management during the summer until I officially left Alaska for my next adventure in South America. I taught English to high school students for five months in Medellin, Colombia, while embracing the culture and the language of the country. I thoroughly enjoyed all the new experiences I had, the gorgeous sceneries, the most fresh fruit I've ever tasted, the unique people I met, and the life I lived in a Latino culture. It was an incredible experience and exactly what I was looking for after all my years of academic hard work! I completed my contract with Heart For Change and decided to return to my home state, Texas, to start an entry-level career here. I miss Alaska tremendously and cannot wait to return for a visit this year! Go Nanooks!”

Leah David '15 — “After graduating with my tribal management certificate, I completed my accounting technician certificate. [Interior Regional Housing Authority] recently renovated my boyfriend's house that we share with our two children, and we finally have running water, a kitchen and bathroom. I'm currently working toward my associate degree in accounting.”



Brian Kerley '15 — “I am still working seasonally as a bush pilot in Tok, Alaska, as well as working on my third fiction novel and my first nonfiction novel. I will soon begin online graduate work toward an M.F.A. in creative writing.”

Nanook memory

Tedd Wallace '56 — “Living in Los Gatos, California, with wife, Judy, of 50 years. We have a daughter nearby (in San Jose) with our three grandchildren, and our other daughter makes her home in Ashland, Oregon.

Recalling my wonderful years at U of A: During Christmas vacation 1952, I, along with **Alfie Baumiester '57, Don Wilber '56, Jim Moore '56, Bob Gray '53, William Eckert, Walt Stevens '55, Roy Torwick, Loyal Burkett '57** and some names I can't recall, became members of the first U of A athletic team to ever compete intercollegiately. We left Fairbanks on the midnight flight to Seattle, stayed at the fancy (at least to us) Edmonton Meany Hotel. Our first game was with the U of Washington JV basketball team — a sobering experience. The facility was huge, the UW team was huge and so was the score against us. We traveled by bus through much of Washington and Oregon until, from sheer exhaustion, we canceled our last game scheduled at Gonzaga U and flew home. In spite of the humbling experience we returned the 'conquering heroes.' A great experience, a time to remember and just one of the many 'once in a lifetimes' the U of A gave me.”

Lucy (Rabold Murdock) O'Brien '15 — “I am the new middle school counselor at the Kodiak Middle School! I graduated in May 2015 and then got married a week later! Glad to be at the middle school now.”

Christopher Smith '15 — “I am working in Wasilla, Alaska, as an advocate for homeless youth and victims of sex trafficking, while attending school for my master’s in public administration from UAA. Loving the mountains and my life.”

Robert Spiller '15 — “I’m working as an engineer at GVEA. I’m getting married in January 2016.”

Matriculates

David Anderson — “General manager for KBBI Homer Public Radio (AM 890) since summer 2004. I sit on the Board of Directors of the Alaska Broadcasters Association.”

Dale Bosworth — “My professor of wildlife management, **Jim Rearden '05H***, has finished his latest book, ‘Old Alaska #2’ with two chapters about my life as a commercial fisherman. I recently lost two friends and classmates, **Paul Garceau** and **John Johnson '58**.”

Dale Durrwachter — “Since establishing a scholarship fund in education at the U of A, I’ve also established a similar fund at my B.A./M.A. alma mater at University of Western Washington and at my tiny K-12 alma mater country school Crescent Consolidated School, in Joyce, Washington, on the Olympic Peninsula west of Port Angeles.”

Robert Grove — “Retired in 2007 after 20 years at the Geophysical Institute. We are living on our boat in Valdez in the summer and still call Ester our home. Go Nanooks!”

Timothy James — “Promoted to lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy on Sept. 1, 2015. Received master’s degree in civil and environmental engineering from MIT in June 2012. Currently working in D.C.”

Jim King — “I first registered at U of A in 1949. My only degree was honorary in 1989 at UAS. I spent 30 years as a biologist/pilot with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska mostly doing duck surveys and duck banding, which influenced decisions about Rampart Dam and wildlife refuges established by [the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act]. My memoirs were published in 2010, ‘Attending Alaska’s Birds,’ with a foreword by **Jim Rearden '05H***.”

KEEP IN TOUCH

Send us your news at

www.uaf.edu/alumni/classnotes/ or email auroa.magazine@alaska.edu.



Alice Morrison — “I grew up on the U of A campus in the 1960s when my father, Peter Morrison, was director of the Institute of Arctic Biology. He turned 96 in November and lives in Friday Harbor, Washington. I remember watching the totem pole being carved as I walked home from elementary school. My interest in traditional old things continued and led me to end up living in a house built in 1795 near the Connecticut River in Vermont. I enjoy reading about the U of A continuing to thrive and produce graduates with their varied careers. I still miss the smell of fall in the hills around the college and the colors of the highbush cranberries in September during the Equinox Marathon.”

Nancy Ott — [From August 2015] “Just visited Fairbanks a few weeks ago! Spent a couple of weeks at the family cabin in Salcha. Thanks again, UAF, for the wonderful painting classes! I am also remembering Charles Keim, my journalism professor.”

Gerry Wahto — “At 94 there is not much going on. Thank God for memories of my years in Alaska and the many friends I met at the U of A. The years I went there (1939-1943) produced many prominent students.”

Pam (Woods) Webster — “Moved to Vancouver, Washington, in summer 2014. I have a private counseling practice in La Center, Washington, and am glad to see Alaskans in transition who have moved to the Portland/Vancouver area.”

Friends

Fenton Heitzler — “Currently writing more applications for academic jobs from Palo Alto. Have a really cool idea about how to improve organic photovoltaic cells.”

Kay Kindt — “I am a registered nurse. I have trained as a research diver. I am getting near retirement. I want to volunteer on the *Sikuliaq!*”

Dale Rosene — “After traveling with a total of over 1,000 students and 300 adults over 25 years, the project ended with the 2014 trip. For more information visit www.aglp.com.”

Jane Sandstrom — “After retiring from the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and [taking] a year off, I returned to the science classroom in Monument, Colorado. I missed the energy of the students!”

IN MEMORIAM

Maudene “Deanie” Adams '88, '90, Dec. 30, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Gerald D. Alborn '69, Aug. 21, 2015, Dover, Delaware

Ramon Ralph Balut '75, Dec. 29, 2015, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

Charles J. Barber '92, Nov. 16, 2015, Eagle River, Alaska

James F. Bartlett, matriculate, Aug. 10, 2015, Los Angeles, California

Amanda (Rosie) Lynn Bee '09, July 27, 2015, North Pole, Alaska

Gregory J. Berger '93, Nov. 1, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Annette Bray, matriculate, Jan. 26, North Pole, Alaska

Christopher John Bringham, matriculate, Oct. 4, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Barry Lee Butler, matriculate, Aug. 13, 2015, Oregon

Cathi Carr-Lundfelt '67, '71, Oct. 10, 2015, Laramie, Wyoming

Richard Eugene Church '61, Dec. 25, 2015, Roseville, California

Beatrice H. Courtnage '64, Oct. 19, 2015, Eugene, Oregon

James Everett Cox, matriculate and former Facilities Services employee, July 8, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Billy J. Culpepper '70, July 22, 2015, Warrensburg, Missouri

Alfred A. Cunningham '68, July 7, 2015, Delta Junction, Alaska

Jacqueline J. DeCicco '71, July 5, 2015, Seattle, Washington

Barbara J. Engebretson, former employee, Aug. 25, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Jackie S. Fenno '90 and former employee, Sept. 29, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Rex G. Fisher, matriculate, Aug. 3, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Patricia Eagan Sather Franklin, matriculate, July 25, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Dorothy Marie Goldsborough '86, Dec. 19, 2015, Kaneohe, Hawaii

Linda Ann Gutoski '71, July 9, 2015, Olympia, Washington

Raymond S. Hadley '69 and former School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences employee, Dec. 24, 2015, Ester, Alaska

Stella N. Hamilton '95, July 26, 2015, Seward, Alaska

Stephen J. Harcharik '52, Sept. 19, 2015, Bremerton, Washington

Dennis E. Holden, matriculate, Nov. 14, 2015, San Marcos, California

Brian Earl Jackson '07, Nov. 22, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Gail Bakken Johnson '65, Aug. 1, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Frederick J. Kent '61, '67, Dec. 24, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Patricia A. Kling '90, Nov. 19, 2015, Spokane, Washington

Connie L. Lamb '83, '84, Sept. 28, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Marian O. Larson, matriculate and former employee, Sept. 1, 2015, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Thomas T. Maillelle '00, Jan. 23, Holy Cross, Alaska

Stephen T. McPhetres '68, Nov. 24, 2015, Juneau, Alaska

Emma Irene Mead '83, Oct. 28, 2015, Delta Junction, Alaska

Susan Merritt '69, Sept. 9, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Katherine M. Monteith, former Geophysical Institute staff member, Aug. 24, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Eva M. Nielsen-King '97, Dec. 13, 2015, South Naknek, Alaska

William Eugene Northrup, matriculate, Sept. 15, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Janice Reeve Ogle '67, Oct. 13, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Wallace M. Olson '68 and former faculty, Dec. 21, 2015, Auke Bay, Alaska

Kathleen L. Peterson '92, July 16, 2015, Juneau, Alaska

Miriam T. Polan '67, Dec. 25, 2015, Deland, Florida

Dennis J. Ponder '80, Nov. 25, 2015, Palmer, Alaska

Eva L. Saulitis '93, '99, Jan. 16, Homer, Alaska

Richard E. See '81, '82, Sept. 14, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Edward Spaulding Sisson '78, '81, Nov. 30, 2015, Ester, Alaska

Hardy M. Smith '56, '69, Dec. 1, 2015, North Pole, Alaska

John W. Smith '65, Sept. 1, 2015, Anchorage, Alaska

Claribel Snider, matriculate, Aug. 19, 2015, Belfair, Washington

Joyce H. Upham, matriculate, Jan. 28, Aiken, South Carolina

John P. Usibelli '93, Nov. 17, 2015, Healy, Alaska

Andrew Thaddeus Weaver '07, Nov. 13, 2015, Palmer, Alaska

Greg Williams '08, Nov. 5, 2015, Galena, Alaska

Elaine R. Williamson '90, Dec. 12, 2015, Fairbanks, Alaska

Merle Gregory Wilson '87, '90, Sept. 15, 2015, Bend, Oregon

Cheryl E. Yelek '79, Dec. 21, 2015, Johnstown, Colorado

*H=honorary degree



Professor Emeritus D.A. Bartlett died in Fairbanks Sept. 5, 2015. She was born in 1934 in Washington, D.C., where her father, E.L. "Bob" Bartlett, worked for Alaska's delegate to Congress.

The Bartletts returned to Alaska in 1935. D.A. spent her early years in Juneau and the Circle Mining District. In 1945, Alaskans elected Bob as their delegate to Congress, so they moved back to Washington, D.C.

After graduating with honors in history from Middlebury College in 1955, D.A. worked as a researcher and librarian at Alaska's Constitutional Convention. She completed master's degrees in English and classics, and a doctorate in English, at the University of Oregon. She moved to the Fairbanks area in 1980.

D.A. knew Old and Middle English, classical Greek, Latin and Old Norse, and studied Koyukon Athabaskan with linguist Eliza

Jones. A member of the UAF English Department for more than 20 years, she taught many courses, including composition and Alaska Native, northern and world literatures. Her excellent teaching was recognized with an award from the Honors Program. She was also part of the 50th-anniversary "Creating Alaska" celebrations.

Always interested in the life of the mind, the heart and the world, she took great pleasure in sharing experiences and ideas with others, and she had an extraordinary ability to make each person feel unique and valued.

D.A. is survived by her children and stepchildren and their families, and countless loving and beloved friends.

Those who would like to make a gift in D.A.'s honor are invited to contribute to Save the Children, the American Civil Liberties Union or the University of Alaska scholarship fund.

D.A.'s family is planning a memorial commemoration of her life June 25 in Fairbanks, with more details to come in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.



Stanton H. Patty '05H*, 89, died Sept. 2, 2015, in Woodland, Washington. He was the middle son of UA's third president, Ernest Patty, and his wife, Kathryn. During his 34 years at The Seattle Times, Stan became known as Mr. Alaska for his writings about his home state.

Stan was born in Fairbanks in 1926, four years after his father began teaching engineering at the new Alaska Agricultural

College and School of Mines. "The university was the cog, the main cog I think in making Fairbanks the civilized place it was," Stan said in a 1991 interview. His "privileged" family entertained polar explorers and other prominent visitors, he said. "It fired up things for me. I knew early on what I was going to do as a newspaperman."

Stan's father left UA in 1935 to start a gold dredging operation at Coal Creek along the Yukon River. Stan said a favorite memory was of riding sternwheelers to the mine upriver from Circle.

Stan moved to Seattle when he was in high school. His father returned to the university as president from 1953 to 1960, but Stan was already grown, married and working as a journalist. His stories ranged from the Vietnam War to a 1964 Beatles concert, but he came to focus on travel writing. After Stan retired, he donated the Patty family papers to the archives at the Rasmuson Library. UAF granted him an honorary doctorate in 2005.

Stan's wife of 67 years, Mabel, died in 2014. Survivors include daughters Kathryn Danielson and Virginia DeFreitas, and a son, Stanton Jr., all of Washington. The family plans to spread Stan's cremated remains, with those of his wife, on a bluff overlooking the Yukon River near Coal Creek.



Sidney Huntington '89H*, 100, died Dec. 8, 2015, in Galena. He was a founder of the Galena school district and a longtime member of the Alaska Board of Game. UAF granted him an honorary doctorate in 1989.

Sidney's mother was a Koyukon Athabaskan woman and his father was a Caucasian trapper and trader. They settled near the confluence of the Hogatza and Koyukuk rivers in 1919. The next year, his

mother died while his father was away. Sidney, 5, cared for his younger brother and sister for two weeks in June until they were found.

Sent away for schooling, Sidney finished third grade before returning home at age 12. His father, in poor health, soon had to move away, so Sidney, at 16, made his own living by hunting, trapping and fishing. He then mined with a company that bought his father's claims, and he worked at military bases in Anchorage and Galena during World War II.

In 1934, Sidney married Jenny Luke, and they had six children before divorcing a decade later. Sidney then married Angela Pitka. They had 14 children and adopted another. They lived first at Hog River and then Huslia until 1963, when Sidney took a job as an Air Force carpenter in Galena. He later operated a fish processing business there.

Sidney helped found the Galena K-12 school and served on its board for 21 years. He joined the Alaska Board of Fish and Game in 1972. When it split in 1975, he continued on the Board of Game for another 17 years.

Sidney is survived by his wife, Angela, many children and several more generations of grandchildren.

THE VIEW FROM BIRAUTA

Witnessing the 2015
earthquake's devastation

By Don Messerschmidt '63

The great Nepal earthquake of 2015 struck the central hill district of Gorkha at 11:56 a.m. on a balmy Saturday, April 25. The devastating tremor registered a 7.8 magnitude and lasted 55 seconds — an eternity when the earth convulses so wildly that you can't stand up. During the next six months, more than 400 aftershocks rocked Nepal, some as strong as magnitude 7.3.

The tragedy and trauma experienced in Nepal's hinterland and the capital city of Kathmandu are beyond measure. Close to 9,000 people died, another 18,000 were injured, and many are still unaccounted for. In Gorkha District, 80 percent of the schools collapsed, but because they were empty on that weekend holiday, a much higher death toll was averted. The villagers have moved on with remarkable resilience and determination to rebuild their homes, their schools and their lives.

That morning, Suman Gurung, a 16-year-old boy, was grazing the family cows in the forest. He and his friend Anil had climbed a box myrtle tree to gather kaphal fruits (bay berries). They heard a sudden roar and felt a jarring motion. Anil shouted, "Stop shaking the tree!" and Suman said, "No. You stop!" Losing their grips, they tumbled to the ground, where they clung to a sapling to keep from falling over. "I didn't know what to do," Suman recalled. "I was so scared, it felt like my heart fell out."

When the shaking stopped, the boys ran home to scenes of utter devastation. Their parents, siblings and neighbors were outside crying. Large cracks had split open the walls of their homes, slate roofs had fallen in and stored grain baskets had burst open. Because village houses are typically constructed of stone with mud mortar, many had collapsed to heaps of rubble. Fortunately, while there were some injuries, nobody died in their small village. But sharp aftershocks during the afternoon and evening prolonged their terror. Late in the day, Suman went back to bring in the cows. By then it was raining, and along the way he slipped and fell. It was a frightful time.

Suman lives in Birauta, a village of several dozen houses. A few weeks after the quake, a Nepalese companion and I went there to see the village primary school in ruins. At the school site we met members of the school committee — the middle-aged principal, the young school board chairman and an older gentleman who also served as the village headman. They showed us the destruction. The roof and parts of the walls had collapsed, most of the school furniture was smashed, and colorfully illustrated primers were strewn across the floors in a mishmash of rain-soaked pages.

A temporary school had been set up nearby under two dark, military-grade tents donated by an international relief agency. The schoolchildren greeted us cheerily from benches that had been recovered from the rubble and repaired. That's where we met Suman and heard his story.

“I was so scared, it felt like my heart fell out.”



Top photo: A temporary shelter made of tin and tarps. Bottom: What is left of one family's home after the earthquake.

Govinda Gurung, a community leader who recently retired from the Indian army as a captain, suggested we continue up the mountainside to see the rest of the village. Along the way, he pointed out damaged homes while residents greeted him with great respect.

Near the middle of the village, we rounded a corner and came face to face with an undamaged modern, two-story house made of concrete and painted white with a reddish-brown trim. When we expressed surprise, Govinda explained that he had recently built the house with his life savings and some of his annual pension from the Indian government. It was his home, he said.

How remarkable, we thought, that a house such as his, which looked like it belonged in urban Kathmandu, had been built in this remote place, and that it had withstood the quake virtually unscathed. Surrounded by so much devastation, it appeared to be the last house standing.

Govinda invited us for tea on his veranda, from which we could see more of the earthquake damage. Soon, his smiling wife appeared with a tray laden with sweet, milky chiya in fancy porcelain tea cups, a plateful of fresh, hot, sweet rice-flour doughnuts called sel roti, and spicy grilled meat called cheula. We thanked them for their generous hospitality. Had we courteously demurred, Govinda would have reminded us that serving guests was his proud duty as the village leader and as a Gurkha officer.

While we enjoyed the midafternoon snack, Govinda described his vision of the future. He would move the village to a safer location, he said, where every house would have electricity and piped water and would be constructed like his, to survive future earthquakes.

Later, as we set out for the village where we were encamped a half an hour's walk around the mountain, Govinda accompanied us to a high viewpoint overlooking Birauta. We could see many tents and tarps, some bright yellow, some blue, out on the open terraces, along with a few bamboo frame structures covered with corrugated, galvanized iron sheeting.

"That's where the homeless families now cook and eat, and sleep," he said.

"My tent is also there," he added. "It's where I sleep at night."

"Why?" we asked.

Govinda's reply reveals a great deal about his character, about the sort of leader he is, and about empathy and selflessness: "It wouldn't look right for me to sleep at home," he quietly told us, "when all my neighbors are out there in the open."

It is winter in the Himalayas now, and in Birauta and other villages many people are still living under temporary shelters in the bitter cold. For them, the earthquake is far from over.



Host and community leader Govinda Gurung.



Top: school children under a temporary shelter.

Bottom: a temporary family shelter.



Don Messerschmidt '63 lives and writes at home in Vancouver, Washington, when not leading treks and tours in the Himalayas. He first traveled to Nepal as a Peace Corps volunteer a few months after earning a bachelor's degree in education at UAF. He has worked as a development advisor, anthropologist, writer, editor and teacher. While living in Kathmandu during the 1970s and '80s, he and his wife, Kareen, raised their two children and a big Tibetan dog, which figures prominently in his award-winning 2011 book, "Big Dogs of Tibet and the Himalayas." Along the way, he earned a doctorate in anthropology from the University of Oregon. He has visited the Gorkha District twice since the 2015 earthquake to help with recovery work and documentation. He also raises money to rebuild schools through the all-volunteer, nonprofit Gorkha Foundation (www.gorkhafoundation.org). Contact him at dmesserschmidt@gmail.com.

The Nanook Nook showcases the talent of our alumni and students. If you have an original poem, essay, short story, artwork or photograph(s) you would like to share with our readers, contact aurora.magazine@alaska.edu for submission guidelines.



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