**IN PROGRESS**

The Research Vessel Sikuliaq is making its way to Alaska waters. The ship is expected in Ketchikan and Juneau in mid-February and Seward in early March.

UAF is part of a $6 million, multi-institutional research effort to expand understanding of the Arctic Ocean’s marine ecosystem. UAF and several other universities and agencies are part of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Observing Network. The initial phase of the project will focus on the Chukchi Sea.

**Planning for the UAF centennial** is underway. The 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone will be commemorated July 6, 2015, and the celebration will begin in earnest Jan. 1, 2017.

**UAF is establishing a bystander education program** to help prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault. Initial training sessions in the Green Dot violence prevention strategy will begin in January.

**WHAT’S NEXT**

The 25th annual Fairbanks Curling Lions Sparktacular fireworks will light up the sky above West Ridge this New Year’s Eve. The event is organized by Mike Thomas, owner of University Chevron.

The Chancellor’s Gala will take place Feb. 27 in the Westmark Fairbanks Hotel Gold Room. The gala celebrates partnerships between the university and the Fairbanks community. This year’s gala will support mental health services and assistance for families in our Golden Heart City.

Gloria Steinem, writer, lecturer, editor and feminist activist, will visit UAF on June 12, 2015. Steinem’s talk is free, but UAF Summer Sessions and Lifelong Learning is taking donations to support her visit. For more information call 474-7021.

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**ACHIEVEMENTS**

UAF has received a $23.8 million, five-year award from the National Institutes of Health to launch a new undergraduate program that will engage students from diverse backgrounds, especially those from rural Alaska, in biomedical research. The Biomedical Learning and Student Training program aims to foster students’ interest and success in biomedical and health careers. The BLaST program will be funded through the NIH’s Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity initiative. It is one of 10 BUILD initiative programs nationwide.

Dartmouth College and UAF will lead a new Fulbright Arctic Initiative sponsored by the State Department. Mike Sfraga of UAF and Ross Virginia of Dartmouth will serve as distinguished scholars. The program will fund interdisciplinary work for 16 scholars from countries that sit on the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum of eight nations, including the United States.

A $1 million personal gift from longtime supporters Joe Usibelli and Peggy Shumaker will allow work to begin on renovation of the University of Alaska Museum of the North’s oldest gallery. The donation will allow the museum to begin work on a $5 million upgrade of the Gallery of Alaska.

Researcher Hajo Eicken has received a $4.2 million grant from the National Science Foundation to support environmental Arctic change research. The grant will help implement a science support structure for the interagency Study of Environmental Arctic Change, which will serve the needs of science communities and a wide range of stakeholders, including Arctic residents, the private sector, agencies and decision-makers.

George and Linda Gordon made a generous gift of more than $860,000 to establish the George E. and Linda C. Dahl Gordon Rifle Team Endowment to provide scholarships for qualified rifle team students.

Doctoral student Yekaterina Kontar has been selected to represent the United States in the Arctic Frontiers’ Emerging Leaders program held in Norway in January 2015.

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**Two Ice Age infants found at a site in Alaska** represent the youngest human remains from that epoch ever discovered in northern North America, according to a paper published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The site and its artifacts provide new insights into funeral practices and other aspects of life among people who inhabited the area thousands of years ago, according to Ben Potter, a UAF professor and the paper’s lead author. Potter’s team worked with Alaska Native tribal organizations while conducting the research. The National Science Foundation funded the work. Pictured above, Potter, at left, and Josh Reuther, UAF assistant professor, excavate the burial pit on site. (Photo courtesy of Ben Potter)
An aerial view shows progress on the new engineering facility on the Fairbanks campus. The structure, now closed in, occupies nearly all of the space between the Duckering and Bunnell buildings.

Lindsey Klueber, a junior majoring in both biological sciences and art, won the chance to light the traditional Starvation Gulch bonfires Sept. 27.

A supercooled superconductor wrapped in foil floats above a circular rail made up of powerful magnets as Professor David Newman demonstrates the “super cool” effect of quantum levitation in the Reichardt Building.

One of five shuttle buses carries a message about respect as part of an effort to communicate with students about sexual assault, sexual harassment and their rights and responsibilities under the federal Title IX law. (UAF photo by JR Ancheta)