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Chancellor’s Report

In Progress

A project at the Center for Alaska Native Health Research to help villagers develop culturally appropriate ways to improve their health will continue until early 2009, thanks to a $401,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health. The project, a partnership with the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, is now in its fourth year.

What’s Next

Chancellor Jones announced he will be leaving UAF to be closer to family and to seek other higher-education opportunities. He has not set a date, but expects to leave before the beginning of the fall semester.

Aldona Jonaitis announced her plans to retire in November after 14 years as museum director.

UAF’s first Cyberinfrastructure Day takes place April 22. Events and presentations planned at the Wood Center will feature research, higher education and community outreach activities at UAF that rely on cyberinfrastructure.

The Museum of the North will host Polar-Palooza: Stories from a Changing Planet May 9. The presentation is part of a national tour highlighting the International Polar Year. Six of the nation’s leading polar researchers, including UAF’s Mike Castellini, will be presenters.

UAF’s 86th commencement takes place May 11. Author John Straley of Sitka will receive an honorary degree and deliver the commencement address.

The museum’s summer special exhibit, “Hunting and Trapping: Our Stories, Our Lives,” opens May 17. Personal narratives, historic maps, photographs and objects will introduce visitors to the legacy of hunting and trapping in Interior Alaska.

Achievements

University of Alaska Museum of the North earth sciences curator Patrick Druckenmiller was among a team of researchers who excavated a 50-foot fossil of what may be the largest Jurassic marine reptile ever found. The Norwegian research group unearthed the 150-million-year-old pliosaur specimen in Svalbard last summer.

A $437,750, three-year grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will establish a new program to enhance behavioral health care in Alaska. The project, Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care, is one of eight nationwide selected for funding. It will be administered by the Alaska Rural Behavioral Health Training Academy in the College of Liberal Arts.

The 2008 World Ice Art Championship theme of “Celebrate the North,” recognizing the International Polar Year, showcased UAF through scientist talks and naturalist programs. The Borealis Brass ensemble premiered associate professor James Bicigo’s composition “Polar Synthesis” at IPY celebration activities.

Senior Marius Korthauer won the 2008 NCAA Skiing Championship 20k classic ski race in Bozeman, Mont., March 7 — his 24th birthday. The win marked the first national championship for a UAF man. He also won the silver medal in the 10k freestyle race earlier in the week.

The Nanook rifle team won their 10th NCAA national championship March 16 in West Point, N.Y. Alaska finished with an aggregate score of 4,662, 10 points ahead of West Point’s Black Knights.

The Interior-Aleutians Campus will receive $1 million over the next three years for nutrition education in rural Alaska from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Research Initiative. The Troth Yeddha’ Nutrition Program combines education and outreach to improve the health of rural and Alaska Native peoples.
focus on: advancement and philanthropy

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS April 2008

Gifts come to UAF in many forms — each is vital and valued.

Giving is an honored tradition at UAF, and many significant gifts have been received recently. Professor emeritus Syun-ichi Akasofu and his wife, Emiko (below, center), gave two gifts totaling $50,000 to the UAF International Arctic Research Center fund and to the Geophysical Institute’s Associate’s Endowment fund. This is the 50th year Akasofu has been associated with the university, since starting here as a graduate student studying the aurora.

In addition, several former and current UAF faculty and staff members have generously contributed to UAF in recent months, including Paul and Lucy McCarthy who made an $8,000 gift to the P. Stephen McCarthy Memorial Fund to sponsor a photojournalism internship with Athletics; Barry and Dorli McWayne’s gift of $10,000 to the UA Museum of the North for photography acquisitions; Bruce Hayward, also formerly with the museum, gave $10,000 to the mammals collection; Paul and Terry Reichardt recently donated $3,000 to the Annual Giving fund; and Emma Rose “Dolly” Dieter and Grace Schaible have both been consistent and frequent donors throughout the years.

Another way of giving back to UAF is illustrated by the efforts of engineering alumnus Don Gillie (left), who joined many late-night volunteers and students to construct the 2008 ice arch.

Another alumnus who has recently embarked on a tradition of giving back is Kris Chandler (below, left), a 2003 graduate who is now a firefighter with the city of Fairbanks. He proudly supports UAF through the Annual Giving program and was featured in one of their appeals.

The Annual Giving fund has received, to date this fiscal year, almost 400 gifts (a 15 percent increase over last year) totaling nearly $170,000 (a 72 percent increase over this time last year).

The first UAF Annual Giving Leadership Reception, hosted by annual donors Dr. Michael and Ginger Carroll, was held Feb. 29. Local contributors to the Annual Giving program at the Leadership level of $1,000 and above gathered at the Carroll’s home for a presentation by Martin Robards, a doctoral student at the Institute of Arctic Biology in the Resiliency and Adaptation Program, whose research on walrus in the Bering Strait was made possible by the generosity of donors. In addition, the artwork of Abel Ryan (below, right), a graduate student in Native arts who has received two scholarships, was featured on the invitations to the event.