Chancellor’s Report

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

June 2010

Achievements

This year’s Usibelli Award recipients are Rich Boone, professor and Biology and Wildlife Department chair, for teaching; Tom Weingartner, professor of marine science in the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, for research; and Kara Nance, computer science professor and head of the Advanced System Security Education, Research and Training Center, for service.

Geophysical Institute scientist Michael Whalen is part of a team of researchers that recently struck a definitive blow in the ongoing debate over what killed the dinosaurs. In a review published in the journal *Science*, the research group reaffirmed the theory that an asteroid ended the age of the dinosaurs.

A $650,000 gift from the estate of alumnus Calvin J. Lensink will provide support for graduate students and research focusing on wildlife management and ecology. The Lensink endowment is the largest private gift in the history of UAF's wildlife biology program.

Tanana Valley Campus is pioneering a method of training aircraft mechanics throughout Alaska via two-way webcasting from the Butrovich Building. TVC's aviation maintenance technology program is the only organization in the nation approved by the Federal Aviation Administration to deliver the training via simulcast. A record 11 locations participated in the training in March.

UAF ranked first of 50 universities tracked for National Science Foundation-awarded grants in FY09. UAF's total NSF awards of $204 million from 116 grants funded research support, education and human resources, and the purchase of research equipment.

Three unmanned aircraft from the Geophysical Institute's Poker Flat Research Range supported Alaska Shield, a statewide exercise that tested Alaska's ability to respond to a major disaster. Poker Flat staff members launched and flew the aircraft in the Anchorage area.

The Alaska Center for Energy and Power and the Alaska Energy Authority hosted the Rural Energy Conference in Fairbanks in April. Representatives from more than 95 communities from throughout Alaska participated. The goal of the conference was to discuss innovative energy solutions for Alaska.

In Progress

The Alaska Sea Grant College Program is undergoing a scheduled four-year review. A federal Site Review Team was in Fairbanks in May to review and discuss the program's management and organization, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative network/NOAA activities.

A UAF-wide accreditation steering committee is drafting self-study reports that are due in summer 2011. A site visit from representatives of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities will follow in October. As the reaffirmation of accreditation process moves to a new process and set of standards, deadlines are compressed, and UAF must complete all of the seven-year cycle and reports by fall 2011.

A $2.8 million National Science Foundation grant will help UAF bring climate change research to Alaska classrooms and prepare graduate students to be better teachers. The grant will fund a project to pair 10 UAF graduate students with elementary and high school teachers and their classes, using the theme of climate change to teach scientific methods and concepts.

The annual Summer Sessions whirl is underway with several series of lectures, movies and concerts, the Alaska Book Festival, craft and home-building workshops, academic courses and travel adventures. One of the special events will be a lecture by Neal Conan, host of National Public Radio's *Talk of the Nation*, with a free public lecture Monday, Aug. 2.

What's Next

Alaska arts organizations will enliven the Fairbanks campus this summer with Fairbanks Shakespeare Theatre putting on *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Measure for Measure* at Townshend Point, and the Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival offering more than 120 classes, some of which include UAF academic credits.
The birth in April of a 10-pound male reindeer calf at the School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences’ Fairbanks Experiment Farm made worldwide agricultural history: It marked the first successful birth of a reindeer whose mother was impregnated by artificial insemination using semen that was frozen and then thawed. The procedure will be a tool to help reindeer producers introduce genetic diversity into their herds.

Photos, clockwise from left

Cindy Cao of Dining Services serves treats at the UA Museum of the North’s Chocolate Bash April 10. The popular event was a fundraiser for the museum’s exhibits, research and education programs.

Civil engineering major Craig Smith concentrates on making precision cuts while manufacturing components for this year’s steel bridge competition.

Master of fine arts graduate Lacie Stiewing with several pieces from her recent exhibit, “Fabulaskana.”

Karen Nanseth is working on her master’s degree in special education while interning with the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District’s autism outreach program.

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