



## UAF to unveil 'newest jewel'

### International Arctic Research Center prepares for grand opening

By JEFF RICHARDSON  
Staff Writer

After more than 10 years of dreaming, planning and construction, the International Arctic Research Center is just a week away from being open for business.

The facility will be the premier northern research center in the world, attracting 90 or more scientists from around the globe to study environmental change. The IARC project impressed the Japanese and U.S. governments enough that they agreed to share the price tag for the \$32 million facility.

Geophysical Institute Director Syun-Ichi Akasofu has worked a decade to see the mythical building come to the University of Alaska Fairbanks. But with the striking five-story facility ready to open, his optimism is guarded.

"It's sort of an anti-climax," Akasofu said during a tour of the facility. "To build the building is one thing. To get all the scientists to come here is the more difficult task."

Akasofu said the facility will be the research base for 90 top environmental scientists—30 each from America, Japan and various other countries.

The researchers have not been recruited yet, but Akasofu understands the unique draw the IARC will have on the world's scientists. He came to Fairbanks from Japan in 1958 as a curious graduate student, studied at the Geophysical Institute, and never left.

He sees IARC in the same light—a "little brother" to the Geophysical Institute that will eventually rival its sibling.

Because of its location near  
**See ARCTIC, Page A-7**



Sam Harrel/News-Miner

**COMING ATTRACTION**—Nettie La Belle-Hamer, left, is helped by her daughter, Hannah, as she takes down her poster display in the Great Hall Monday afternoon during the second day of the 49th Arctic Science Conference at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The poster sessions change each day of the conference that runs through Wednesday. LaBelle-Hamer's display featured her work on mapping the Arctic sea ice for global change research with the Synthetic Aperture Radar at the Geophysical Institute.



Sam Harrel/News-Miner

**UNIQUE CENTER**—Geophysical Institute Director Syun-Ichi Akasofu, right, standing in the entryway of the new International Arctic Research Center, points the way during a tour Monday afternoon. The facility, on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus, will be the premier northern research center in the world, attracting 90 or more scientists from around the globe to study environmental change. Tiles in the floor of the entryway have the names of those who donated money to one of the fund-raisers for the \$32 million facility. Pete Rounds, left, UAF planning project service contract manager, accompanied Akasofu on the tour.