

School of Education Faculty represent UAF at ICASS IX

(ICASS IX Report for Cornerstone)

In June, after many Nanooks nestled in for another lovely Fairbanks summer, University of Alaska's School of Education (SOE) faculty headed to Umeå University in Umeå, Sweden to present their research. (USE this first sentence for Cornerstone email blurb.)

Over 800 scientists, researchers and stakeholders attended the 9th International Congress of Arctic Social Sciences (ICASS IX). The theme for ICASS IX was *People and Place*. Twenty-four nations were represented at ICASS which convenes every three years. The U.S. was represented by 119 delegates. Alaska was represented by 42 delegates, with 24 coming from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Five UAF School of Education faculty attended and presented at ICASS IX.



Photo by Dr. Joanne Healy

Dr. Sean Topkok presenting during opening plenary on June 9, 2017 on Education's Role in the Arctic.

One of the many highlights of ICASS IX for the Alaska delegation was Dr. Anne Fienup-Riordan receiving the IASSA Award at the Gala Dinner. From UAF's SOE, Dr. Ute Kaden presented "Preparing GeoStem Techers for the Arctic Region," the results of a three-year NSF project, *Teach GeoSTEM*, designed to increase the number and diversity of STEM teachers in Alaska. Drs. Kaden and Healy presented on results from their NSF teacher retention grant. Teacher retention rates (2009-2013) vary widely over time showing no significant trends in Alaskan Arctic Native communities. Results confirm that teacher turnover in rural districts is higher than in urban school districts. Teacher retention and attrition are multidimensional issues recommending that better communication patterns and shared responsibilities between rural school districts, local administrators, teachers, community members, and university-based teacher preparation programs be established.

Dr. Jerry Lipka chaired a session and presented, "The Center and the Beginning of Everything: Mathematics emerging from Indigenous Knowledge," which connected Yupiaq epistemology and spatial locomotive systems with standard-based mathematics instruction. Dr. Sean Topkok presented in Friday's plenary session titled,

“What is the role of education and education research in advancing understandings of the Arctic?” Dr. Topkok also presented on Cultural Atlases as pedagogical tool. Dr. Douglas Cost presented on a research project called, “Arctic Futures Makers,” which engaged Northwest Arctic Borough high school students in thinking about their and their communities’ health, resilience, and futures to 2040.

Overall ICASS IX was counted as a success as future research collaborations were built, findings from other Arctic social science researchers were learned, and pan-Arctic bridges were built amongst research, practice, and scholarship. ICASS X will take place at Northern (Arctic) Federal University in Archangelsk, Russia.

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Photo by Dr. Amy Lovecraft

Drs. Joanne Healy, Ute Kaden, and Douglas Cost of UAF’s SOE attending the ICASS IX Gala Dinner at Äpplet, Folkets Hus in Umeå, Sweden.