



UAF Governance

P.O. Box 757500, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7500

August 1, 2017

Chancellor Dan White, PhD
Chancellor's Office
University of Alaska Fairbanks
PO Box 757500
Fairbanks, AK 99775

Dear Chancellor White,

Staff Council would like to take this opportunity to welcome you as the new Chancellor of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. We are excited for the future with you at the helm. As we approach a new academic year, UAF Staff Council would like you to know that we are celebrating the collaborative nature and the varied components required to operate a university as great and diverse as UAF. Few things represent the Alaska frontier spirit more than working together for the greater good as individuals and as a community. It is especially important during these trying times that we each remember that we are integral components of UAF and that we are all working as a team to help ensure our students' success.

Staff members at UAF support students and faculty, but they do so much more: they ensure compliance with regulations, such as Title IX, federal and state grants, ADA, and so on. Staff working in our sea, land and space grant areas help to secure federal funding for UAF; a particularly important function. Many of us author and operate websites, databases, and other systems that are used by students, faculty, staff, and members of the public on a daily basis. Staff help support the university by directly engaging with the community, which surrounds, and in turn helps support us.

We recognize that the University of Alaska is dealing with fewer resources every year, with a brunt of the impact being felt by staff. Staff members are taking on more and more responsibilities, while budget cuts are preventing benefits such as COLA increases or the ability to feel able to take time off from work. It is important that UAF adjust to the changing times by fostering an environment conducive to recognizing and rewarding those dedicated employees who manage to keep the doors open every day.

Some areas that UAF Staff Council is excited to work with you in the future include moving forward with suggestions to improve employee engagement and morale, compensation increases for extra responsibilities, creating efficiencies in procedures to reduce burden on staff, providing appropriate recognition for exemplary performance, and identifying ways to ensure that employees are able to use paid leave with full support of departments.

UAF Staff Council would like to assert that we are hopeful for the future. While the current situation at UAF may be difficult, it is by no means insurmountable. We recognize it is precisely this type of situation in which education becomes most important. This is the time for UAF to arise as a leader; to emerge a more efficient, stronger institution in the face of adversity. In order to make this vision a reality, we must all work together. The strength comes from our diversity and the combined work of staff, faculty and students. Let us continue to work together, to thrive and innovate, and support each other as we begin UAF's second century.

Thank you for your time and myriad efforts.

Sincerely,

Kara Axx
President
UAF Staff Council

KA/nmd