



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

The University of Alaska Board of Regents invites nominations and applications for the position of President of the University of Alaska. The Regents seek a seasoned, wise and successful leader who can maximize higher education’s power to change lives and influence the economy in strategic ways that will benefit Alaska and its people. With 16 campuses and numerous outreach centers stretching nearly 1,200 miles from Ketchikan to Kotzebue, the University of Alaska serves over 33,000 students from diverse backgrounds in a place of awe-inspiring geography and immense distances. The University’s broad charge encompasses everything from the community college mission to research intensive, post-doctoral complexity.



ALASKA

Majestic land of mountains, tundra, coastal shores and rainforest, Alaska’s land mass spans one fifth of the continental United States. Celebrating its 50th anniversary of statehood, Alaska, formed first by its Native people whose lives were closely tuned to the rhythms and resources of a challenging climate, and later by immigrants from Russia and the gold seekers of the mid-19th Century, is

today a vigorous blend of its hardy past and its present, diverse, proud Alaskans. Alaska's population has tripled in the last 50 years and now numbers almost 700,000 residents who increasingly live in the South-central region of the state. Beyond the growing urban concentrations of Anchorage with its headquarters of major oil and healthcare facilities, Fairbanks with its emphasis on research related to northern climates and Juneau, the seat of state government, smaller cities as well as remote communities make up Alaska today.

Forming Alaska's economic spine is the Alaska oil pipeline. From Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, oil flow stimulates one third of Alaska's revenues. The Federal government and a few private industries--oil, tourism, commercial fishing, mining and logging--bring in most of the new money that makes Alaska's economy grow. Federal dollars support military activities, federal



The Trans-Alaska pipeline travels over 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay to the port of Valdez.

obligations to Alaska's indigenous people, large federal land holdings (of Alaska's 375 million acres, 221 million are held by the federal government). Individual Alaskans own less than 1% of the land. (www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/UA_summ06.pdf)

While these revenue sources have reliably supported Alaska for the past 30 years, new challenges may lie ahead. Oil production is slowing. There is hope of a new gas pipeline from the North Slope, but that is likely to be influenced by national and international price of natural gas markets. The current recession may stress the Federal budget prospectively. As Alaska looks to its future, diversification of its economy offers visionary leadership great opportunity. As a major leader in Alaska, the President of the University of Alaska will be significantly engaged in bringing higher education resources to bear in shaping this state's future.

The University of Alaska

The University of Alaska includes all of Alaska's public colleges and universities in the State of Alaska. It is a statewide system of higher education that consists of the system office, three regional universities, twelve community colleges and nine outreach sites. In conformance with the state constitution, the Governor appoints members of the University of Alaska Board of Regents and the Legislature confirms them. The Board of Regents is the governing body for higher education, designated in the Alaska State Constitution. The University of Alaska's operating budget for 2010 totaled just over \$823 million dollars, including federal, state and university receipts.



Open fields at the Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station are an annual resting place for migratory birds. The Butrovich Building, home of the Alaska System Office, perches on the hillside. It features a view extending hundreds of miles to the Alaska Range and Mt. McKinley.

System Office

The President serves as executive officer of the University of Alaska Board of Regents, and as chief executive officer of the university. Chancellors of the system's major campuses, University of Alaska Anchorage (Anchorage campus, six community colleges and three outreach sites), University of Alaska Fairbanks (Fairbanks campus, five community colleges and six outreach sites) and University of Alaska Southeast (Juneau campus and two community colleges), report directly to the President.

The University of Alaska System Office is located in Fairbanks as is the President's Residence. The System Office plays important internal coordinating roles as well as external advocacy ones. Its primary ongoing responsibilities are related to maintaining the accounting and management systems including legal, financial, human resources and information technology; development of annual operating and capital budgets; leadership, coordination and policy for UA fundraising initiatives; public and governmental advocacy for the University of Alaska and coordination of academic offerings. See <http://www.alaska.edu/bor/strategic-plan-2009/>.

University Campuses

The University of Alaska was founded in 1917. The first year classes were held, in 1922, the University had just six students in Fairbanks. Today, UA is a thriving system of 33,000 students across the state. The University employs over 7,000 dedicated faculty and staff. Outstanding faculty take pride in offering over 500 academic programs both on campuses and through distance learning. The University of Alaska's mission is to inspire learning, advance and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research and public service which emphasizes the North and its diverse peoples. Led by highly able, widely respected Chancellors, the University of Alaska Anchorage, the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Alaska Southeast are separately accredited institutions, as is Prince William Sound Community College in Valdez. (<http://www.alaska.edu/about-ua/>). As the University reaches out to meet the needs of both urban and rural Alaska, the structure of the statewide system has expanded to incorporate community colleges and to establish learning centers across the state. It is a highly diverse, complex system of higher education in a state where accessibility by road is extremely limited.

The individual character of UAA, UAF and UAS is influenced by history, mission and today's demands. UAF, a land, sea and space-grant Carnegie RU/H doctoral degree granting campus, has grown from its early founding into an outstanding center for research, particularly as it relates to Northern environments. It is home to the world-famous Geophysical Institute, which operates the Poker Flat Research Range (the only collegiate rocket range in the country), and the Arctic Region Supercomputing Center. UAF students number approximately 10,000. UAA vigorously serves over 20,000 students in the growing South-central region surrounding Anchorage. With Carnegie M-L designation, UAA is a comprehensive university offering exceptional programs in the arts and sciences as well as meeting Alaska's most pressing professional needs for nurses, engineers and business leaders. UAS provides an engaged, supportive arts and sciences learning environment for a diverse student body of 2,800 and significant distance learning opportunities across Alaska. With a Carnegie M-S classification, UAS promotes student achievement and faculty scholarship, lifelong learning opportunities and quality academic programs. The community colleges and outreach campuses in Alaska provide strong focus on work force training at the 2-year degree and certificate level of accomplishment.

There is a strong commitment to environmental issues, sustainability and diversity, particularly as it relates to Alaska Natives, on University of Alaska campuses. The next UA President will benefit from clear insight into the nature of Alaska and its people as well as the complexity and values of its higher education system.

Context of the Search

Superimpose a map of Alaska upon the Lower 48 and one will find that it stretches from California to Florida and covers most of the Midwestern states. This area includes remote communities with small populations in isolated regions noted by their mountains, coastlines and tundra. Sixty percent of the population is located in the



Alaska Native dancers perform during UAF commencement.

Anchorage and South-central region. The city of Fairbanks serves as a hub for rural communities throughout the vast Interior region of Alaska while the state capital is located in Juneau, on the state's southeastern panhandle.

Beyond geography, however, the educational needs of Alaskans also vary significantly. Students include many first generation college attendees; employed adults desiring workforce training; military families who complete undergraduate degrees; resident Alaskans, both traditional and non-traditional undergraduates; and graduate students pressing research boundaries.

Alaska also presents varying attitudes about higher education and its role. To some state residents, work force training should define higher education's key function while others seek growing emphasis on academic excellence to position the University of Alaska as the first choice for a college education among residents. Today, an increased percentage of high school graduates attend the University of Alaska, but a significant portion still leaves the state for a college education. In addition, intellectual expertise needed by Alaska based corporations is often imported. For some Alaskans, high quality research is highly valued and seen as a major contributor to the state's capacity to compete; for others, it is little known or appreciated. The University of Alaska and its President must be about the work of structuring a system of higher education that will increase the level of well-educated Alaskans who can build the economic and cultural future of the State. The following opportunities and challenges frame the search for the next President of the University of Alaska.

A University in Transition

As the University of Alaska stretches to fulfill its mission, it does so through campuses of varying degrees of academic maturation and focus. Each major campus has impressive strengths and capacity to serve within a developing system. Each desires to become the best it can be even as system leadership wrestles with adequacy of resources to support all aspirations, to protect established investments and to assure accountability to the people of Alaska.



The UAA campus is the most urban of Alaska's universities.

In-migration and a shift of population from rural to the South-central part of Alaska have elevated expectations of UAA. Conceived as an urban university, the UAA today seeks to serve broad interests in Alaska's largest city and to attract high quality faculty who come with strong research as well as teaching interests. The campus vigorously pursues partnerships to achieve larger city goals. Campus facility expansion has extended UAA's capacity to serve, but in other parts of Alaska,

there is concern that this growth comes at the cost of their regional institutions. UAA, for its part, often feels constrained in reaching its full potential by the bonds of the system regarding doctoral degree provision and perceived funding inequities.

UAF has since its founding built a solid reputation for strong research especially in its Geophysical Institute, the Institute for Arctic Biology, the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences and the International Arctic Research Center. Its research revenues, mostly awarded through competitive federal research grants, exceeded \$123 million in 2008. The campus currently is being called on



UAF is America's Arctic University.

to link undergraduates more closely to UAF's research strengths as well as to relate research efforts to economic development needs in Alaska. Additionally, new and appropriate research ventures need to be stimulated, perhaps in collaboration with strengths of other campuses. UAF is the sole doctoral degree granting university in Alaska, though there is a joint doctoral degree with UAA in Psychology. As UAA has experienced rapid growth in enrollment and facilities, UAF worries that its physical facilities needs are not being fully addressed and doctoral programs may be offered elsewhere.



UAS, nestled near Auke Lake, is in Alaska's capital city of Juneau.

The UAS and all other campus sites seek the strong support of the University of Alaska System Office to ensure their stability and longevity. Their smaller size, yet highly important service to smaller communities, makes them a vital part of the University of Alaska's mission. UAS feels that distance-delivered education, and System support and coordination of that endeavor, is critical to

smaller campuses. UAS believes the needs of campuses in the Southeast region are very different than road-accessible, urban areas such as

Anchorage and Fairbanks. A solid appreciation of educational technology and an understanding of the very different challenges faced by off-road communities are essential for UA's next President.

These regional rivalries need to be constructively channeled by the next President of the University of Alaska. He or she will need to work closely with the Board of Regents, the campus chancellors and the body politic to formulate constructive strategies to move the service of each campus ahead in ways that are advantageous to the campuses and the overall goals of the System.

There is also expressed campus concern regarding the role, organization and size of the System Office. Striking the right balance between policy leadership at the System level with management, performance and accountability at the campuses remains a work in progress. Recommendations from a recent report on this matter have been partially implemented, but others remain for the next President's attention. (See <http://www.alaska.edu/pres/downloads/2008-02-12MACTAGGART-STUDY-FINAL.PDF>.)

The above issues will require continuing strategic thought by the University of Alaska Board of Regents. The President should have a clear understanding of organizational development of large academic systems, what works and what does not, at the various stages of institutional development. It will require that the President work closely with the Board to forge a strong understanding of strategies for change that will yield desired results.

Adaptable Leadership

The next President of the University of Alaska will benefit from being nimble and adaptable. Factors influencing higher education are in constant flux. Current budgets are solid, unlike those in much of the United States where even tenured faculty positions are at risk. However, funds that gave the current President and Board the capacity to make certain investments are now diminished. The next President should have command of strategic budgeting. New dollars will likely have to come from increased efforts to attract private giving as well as reallocation.



Workforce training provided by the University of Alaska is a vital part of Alaska's economy.

As one of the most influential and visible leaders in Alaska, the President of the University of Alaska must constantly draw the connections between higher education and the economic viability of the state. He or she must be a tireless, persuasive advocate willing to travel widely within the state, encouraging support for education and training beyond high school. He or she must be a coach for chancellors, a wise counselor for the Board and a trustworthy resource for the Legislature. The President is a crafter of partnerships that move agendas forward.

Desired Characteristics

For the leader who enjoys the challenge of moving an organization forward to even greater levels of achievement, the Presidency of the University of Alaska is an outstanding opportunity. The Board of Regents seeks a highly experienced, politically astute leader who understands how to advance agendas in higher education and to manage a system in a highly competent fashion. The next President must have the capacity to work effectively and well with Board members, chancellors, legislators, the university community, faculty, staff and students, foundation leaders and donors, and alumni. He or she must have command of strategic planning, budget and personnel issues, a clear appreciation of higher education's academic values as well as commitment to student, faculty and staff development. She or he must be comfortable working within a unionized setting and with campus governance representatives.

The next President will be an excellent communicator, convincing in speech and adept at listening. She or he will be a leader and partner in the economic development of Alaska, bringing insight and innovative thought to these issues. Familiarity with Alaska will be an advantage.

The President of the University of Alaska will join other leaders to provide the needed work force, skilled professionals and research base to take Alaska into the future. With historically low college going rates, Alaska requires a University of Alaska System leader who can reach out to the general populace to articulate the benefits of higher learning. He or she will work closely with K-12 superintendents, the Commissioner of Education and Early Development, Alaska Native leaders and Alaska business and industry.

The next President will have a capacity to create collaborative and innovative solutions to vexing problems, to think creatively and will be technologically informed. With an approachable style, a genuine respect for others and for hard work, the next President will create friends and supporters of the University of Alaska.

Application Process

Interested parties are invited to view the University of Alaska Board of Regents' website at www.alaska.edu/bor/ for more insight into the Board's work. Candidates should forward a letter of interest, curriculum vitae or resume and a list of at least five references with full contact information to:

UAPresidentsearch@academic-search.com by January 18, 2010.

Inquiries may be directed to:

Dr. Elaine H. Hairston, Senior Consultant, Academic Search:

Elaine.Hairston@academic-search.com or 740-964-0905

The University of Alaska Board of Regents will begin screening candidates immediately and the position will remain open until it is filled.