President’s Report
2009 – 2010

Many Traditions One Alaska
This past year was a challenging one for the University of Alaska fiscally, as it was for all universities and colleges, businesses and governments across the country and world.

We emerged from these times stronger, more focused and more efficient. I reduced administrative positions at the System Office and didn’t fill others when people left. I cut administrative travel and contractual spending. All was done to hold students and faculty as harmless as possible.

Yet our university system is experiencing record enrollments, including first-time freshmen, and continues to improve retention and graduation rates. We’ve expanded programs for students because Alaska employers demanded it. We’re now the university of first choice for the majority of graduating high school students in our state.

We’re not just the University of Alaska. We’re the university for and about Alaska.

I’m retiring this year after 12 years at the helm of this institution, but I leave it in capable, caring hands. Our three chancellors are smart and savvy advocates for their respective institutions. The Board of Regents is a vigilant watchdog. Our faculty and staff will never know fully how much I admire them for all their hard work and sacrifice to better our students and our state.

With our dedicated faculty and staff, we’re providing programs that expand in-state options for students and help strengthen Alaska’s economy. The health-care industry is one example. We set out to double the number of nursing graduates back in 2000 and we’ve exceeded that goal. Along with other related health-care programs, we’ve come a long way to address critical shortages in many of Alaska’s health care professions.

We’re a university for Alaska.

Now we’re focusing on building up our engineering programs. We know we’re not meeting the current professional need for engineers in Alaska, and we want to turn that around. We identified the same concern with K-12 education—we know we must produce more teachers equipped to handle the rigors and demands of our unique state.

We’re a university about Alaska.

UA’s research sits at a crossroad; we must secure more research and laboratory space to continue our national prominence in such areas as the life sciences, biology and wildlife management. Building the Life Sciences facility has been prominent on the Board of Regents’ new construction list for many years; it’s time to build these classrooms and labs to continue producing excellent graduates and relevant research that benefits the entire state.

The next president will lead a strong, focused and respected institution. This is a great state; Alaska deserves an excellent university system.

Because of your help and support, we have one.
UA ENROLLMENT

Fall 2009

33,710

First-Time Freshman 3,588
Full-Time 13,245
Part-Time 20,465
Natural resources management major Brook Gamble collects clippings in her greenhouse management class on the Fairbanks campus. Photo by Todd Paris, University of Alaska Fairbanks.
Hamilton’s Legacy

♦ Roughly half of all degrees awarded in UA’s history have been during Hamilton’s tenure.

♦ The UA Scholars Program has enrolled over 4,700 students who earned more than 1,500 degrees through FY09.

♦ Alaska high-school graduates choosing UA has increased from 40 percent in the mid-1990s to over 63 percent today.

♦ Individual donations to the University of Alaska have increased over 120 percent since FY98.

♦ State general fund support has more than doubled since FY98.

♦ The number of degrees, certificates and endorsements awarded is up nearly 20 percent since FY98.

♦ The number of first-time freshmen attending UA reached record levels in fall 2009.

♦ The number of first-time graduate students is at record levels, with more than 500 in fall 2008 – up 70 percent from fall 1998 levels.

♦ A record number of degree-seeking students now attend UA.

♦ Freshmen-to-sophomore retention is at an all-time-high, with more than 67 percent retained in FY09, nearly 22 percent more than in FY99.

♦ The number of Alaska Native students at UA has grown more than 25 percent since fall 1998, with 4,300 Native students now attending.
Farewell, President Hamilton

UA’s 12th president will retire in 2010

University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton announced in June 2009 that he’ll retire from his position leading the 15-campus system. That announcement kicked off a search process by the Board of Regents still under way, with selection of a new president expected sometime during the spring of 2010.

Hamilton became the 12th president of the UA system in 1998. Roughly half of all degrees and certificates awarded in the institution’s history have been made during his long term as president.

“My bride Patty has shared me with either the Army or the University of Alaska for over 40 years. We’d like to spend more time together with our family, our children and our grandchildren, and our friends,” Hamilton said. “I want to spend more time in this Alaska that I love so much—to fish, hunt and enjoy the outdoors.”

Hamilton said the next university president doesn’t need to be a rock star, but must admire the faculty and staff, listen closely to the Board of Regents, and manage resources prudently. He leaves the university in good stead, with more public and private support than ever before; rejuvenated alumni organizations; a quality faculty; dedicated students; and administrative and business improvements, including performance-based budgeting. Best of all, renewed investment in the university has resulted in a reversal of young Alaskans leaving the state for education and jobs elsewhere.

Board Chair Cynthia Henry said finding the right replacement for Hamilton, an articulate and outspoken advocate for the UA system as a whole, will be challenging.

“What a magnificent run this has been,” Henry said, referring to Hamilton’s tenure. “He was hired at a time of rather low morale due to crumbling facilities and chronic underfunding. He was able to communicate with the public, elected officials and numerous other constituencies just how important the University of Alaska is for a strong state economy, especially the need to ‘grow our own’ for good jobs and careers right here in Alaska.”

Hamilton came to UA after a 30-year career in the U.S. Army, retiring as a major general.

As commander for the U.S. military group in El Salvador, Hamilton was responsible for negotiating an end to the 12-year civil war in El Salvador. In Somalia, his negotiations with warlords resulted in a period of calm that enabled the removal of the U.S. 10th Division. In Brussels, he advised the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe on NATO planning concerning the former Republic of Yugoslavia. He was twice assigned to Alaska during his military career.

Hamilton received a bachelor’s degree from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a master’s degree from Florida State University. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College, the U.S. Army War College and taught English literature at West Point.

He is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal - the Army’s highest peacetime award. He also has received the Armed Forces’ highest peacetime award – the Joint Distinguished Service Medal. The late ABC news anchor Peter Jennings featured Hamilton as a “Person of the Week” in 1993, highlighting his negotiations with the Somali warlords. Hamilton also received the national Award for Academic Statesmanship and Academic Freedom, presented by the National Association of Scholars, for his staunch defense of the right of University of Alaska professors to speak, teach and conduct research independently.
UA Scholars Program

1,913
Attending UA Fall 2009

4,768
Total Scholars Since 1999*

1,532
Degrees Earned since 1999*

463
New Scholars Fall 2009

* UA President Mark Hamilton started the UA Scholars program in 1999, providing a scholarship to the top 10 percent of students in every graduating high school class in Alaska. The program is funded through land grant income.
UA Scholar Robert Strick, from McGrath, takes a measurement during science lab.
Todd Paris, University of Alaska Fairbanks
University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton honored Alaskan Grace Berg Schaible with the President’s Medal for Excellence.

The Medal for Excellence, established in 2000, periodically recognizes individuals who have exhibited unwavering dedication, far beyond the ordinary, to the University of Alaska.

“Grace has been a steadfast supporter of the University of Alaska and this entire state for so long that it’s inconceivable for me to think how Alaska would be today, without her having touched it so tremendously,” Hamilton said.

Schaible’s contributions to public life in Alaska are many. She is the first, and so far only, woman to hold the office of Alaska Attorney General. Her University of Alaska service began in her freshman year of college, when she was named Outstanding Freshman Woman. She received a similar honor in her senior year. Later, she was appointed to the Board of Regents, and served many years on the University of Alaska Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

In addition to her passion for the university, Schaible has maintained an active interest and involvement with a variety of non-profit programs. Schaible consistently, generously and graciously lends both her financial support and her leadership for the benefit of many organizations throughout the state.

University gifts from Schaible include an endowment in the name of her late husband, medical doctor Arthur Schaible, which benefits UA students pursuing medical degrees. She donated her home in Juneau and a home and land in Fairbanks to the university, as well as gifts of fine art, ivory and paintings. Her contributions also have benefited nursing students, national merit scholars, music students and fine arts students.

University officials gathered to present the President’s Medal for Excellence to Schaible during a reception held at the Museum of the North on the Fairbanks campus Feb. 5, 2009. Past medal recipients include Elmer Rasmussen, Leo Rhode, William Wood, Ann Tremarello, Darrellene Myers, Marshall Lind, Lee Gorsuch and Syun-Ichi Akasofu.

Many people at the reception, including Jeff Cook, director of external affairs for Flint Hills Resources Alaska; Sharon Gagnon, chair of the University of Alaska Foundation’s Board of Trustees; Mike Burns, executive director of the Alaska Permanent Fund Corp.; and Abe Tsigonis, a Schaible scholarship recipient, described the high standard of public service set by Schaible.
Prepared for Extremes
Gift provides vital backup system

President Mark Hamilton and Liane Pelletier, president and chief executive officer of Alaska Communications Systems, announced a gift that will greatly enhance the university’s disaster recovery for mission-critical online applications.

After a ramp up period, the gift will allow for continuity of core university online functions should a major disruption occur. The ACS gift provides UA with a backup data center for its most important online functions at ACS’ facility in Hillsboro, Ore., along with all the necessary connectivity for the university’s core systems. This will allow UA to continue online operations that would otherwise be disrupted in the wake of a major disaster or outage including key aspects such as payroll, accounting, student loan processing, student and human resource records management and electronic teaching tools.

The gift includes the secure physical location in Hillsboro; connectivity between the university and the backup data center; and all maintenance and environmental systems required for the facility. The gift, worth an estimated $6.8 million, extends to 2015.

Students Count
Honoring employees who put students first

Mike Earnest, statewide student services manager; Annie Route, director of Student Life and Leadership at the University of Alaska Anchorage; Gabrielle Russell, academic advisor with Native and Rural Services at the University of Alaska Fairbanks; and Kolene James, coordinator and academic advisor with Native and Rural Services at the University of Alaska Southeast were the four winners of the 2009 University of Alaska Staff Make Students Count Award.

President Mark Hamilton presented the awards during the June 4th, 2009 Board of Regents meeting in Fairbanks. This year’s award winners received a plaque, $1,000 and two airline vouchers.

The Make Students Count Awards were established in the spring of 1999 to recognize university staff who have provided outstanding service to students, anywhere in the UA system, including rural campuses and extended sites. Service to students may include service as part of the job or volunteer service, either directly to students or behind the scenes.
Bachelor of Music graduates Josaphat Chambers, Amanda Kailing and Elizabeth Nash enjoy the celebratory confetti falling during the 2009 UAA Commencement at the Sullivan Arena May 3, 2009. Photo by Bill Roth, Anchorage Daily News
3,427
Degrees awarded

37
Doctorate

537
Masters

121
Licensure

1,527
Bachelor’s

298
Associate (AA)

630
Associate (AAS)

159
Certificate (2yr)

38
Certificate (1yr)

80
Occupational Endorsement
$9 million
Annual savings by eliminated geographic pay differentials

$3.2 million
Annual savings from cap on UA pension plan

$44/day
UA’s low per diem

$11 million
Costs avoided through aggressive health and retirement plan management

37 percent
Reduction in System Office travel costs in FY09
Accountability

University reports to multiple stakeholders

The University of Alaska is accountable to many entities including:

- The Board of Regents;
- The Governor’s Office of Management and Budget;
- The Alaska Legislature, including the Division of Legislative Audit;
- The Department of Defense, the agency designated to review recipients of federal research grants;
- The federal Department of Education;
- Internal and external auditors;
- Bond-rating agencies such as Standard and Poor’s and Moody’s;
- And numerous accreditation agencies for our separate institutions, schools and programs.

Accountability and transparency begins with a rigorous internal analysis. Twice annually UA President Mark Hamilton, UAA Chancellor Fran Ulmer, UAF Chancellor Brian Rogers and UAS Chancellor John Pugh pour over programs, budgets and operations in an intense series of work sessions. The president and chancellors scrutinize performance based on key areas, including high-demand degrees awarded, undergraduate retention, student credit hours, research expenditures and university generated revenue. They set performance goals. The Board of Regents reviews the university’s performance results each year.

The university must follow all state and federal laws, including the Executive Budget Act, the Executive Ethics Act, the Open Meetings Act, all procurement laws and many others. Systemwide accountability initiatives for administrative functions have saved millions in the areas of health-care, travel, finance and payroll. Our shared governance structure with faculty, staff and students provides additional input, oversight and transparency.
$152 million
FY09 Research Revenues

$5.6
Dollars leveraged for every $1 of State funding
Kyle Schumann inspects Chinook salmon fry collected from the Salcha River as part of his undergraduate research project in UAF’s School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences. Photo by Todd Paris, University of Alaska Fairbanks
The University of Alaska’s efforts to encourage students to fill out their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in 2009 resulted in more than 4,400 students doing just that last February, a 22 percent jump in FAFSAs compared to February 2008.

Financial aid managers from across the UA system for the past four years have promoted the FAFSA Frenzy, as it’s called. A FAFSA is required for all forms of state and federal financial aid, including scholarships and grants. Each year, UA students receive about $97 million in financial aid. The FAFSA can be completed at any time during the year, but filling it out early helps ensure adequate processing time.

The UA Board of Regents also approved two separate resolutions favoring more aid to Alaska students. One endorses Gov. Sean Parnell’s Governor’s Performance Scholarship, a merit- and curriculum-based proposal; and the second resolution supports need-based financial aid under bills introduced by Sen. Johnny Ellis and Rep. David Guttenberg.

“For various reasons, Alaska students are often reluctant to take out financial aid, but avoiding loans typically means working while taking classes. That often lengthens the time needed to complete a program or degree,” said Saichi Oba, UA’s associate vice president for student and enrollment services.

In addition to encouraging FAFSA applications, the frenzy also helps bust popular myths, such as aid only being available to full-time students. Return on investment can be high, with completion of just a single class, if targeted in the appropriate area, boosting earning power in the workplace by 17 percent. Students agree financial aid awareness is growing on UA campuses.

For more information on financial aid, the FAFSA and scholarships visit www.alaska.edu/ffafsa-frenzy.
Embedded in Iraq
UAF journalism students and professor get war-time experience

Three undergraduate students and a professor from the UAF journalism department spent nearly a month in Diyala Province in Iraq embedded with an Alaska-based Army Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

They lived, ate and travelled with the troops while filing daily articles for news organizations, maintaining a blog and keeping a Facebook page. In recent years the university has been embedding journalism students in Alaska during training exercises. It is one of the few embedded journalism training programs in the country.

Last spring university president Mark Hamilton, a retired Army major general, approached journalism students about going on a real mission to Iraq. The students brought the idea to the chairman of the journalism department, Brian O’Donoghue. He then discussed the possibility with Army officers. They helped him develop a proposal to send himself and three students into the war zone. Hamilton allocated the $35,000 needed for the mission using private funds.

The students, Jessica Hoffman, Jennifer Canfield and Tom Hewitt, were chosen by journalism professors out of a field of 12 applicants.

This opportunity was the first of its kind for the University of Alaska.

Service Oriented
UA recognized as military friendly

G.I. Jobs Magazine designated both the University of Alaska Anchorage and University of Alaska Fairbanks as Military Friendly Schools for 2010 for going above and beyond the call of duty to embrace America’s veterans as students.

Schools on the 2010 Military Friendly Schools list range from state universities and private colleges to community colleges and trade schools. The common bond is a shared priority of recruiting students with military experience. The list was compiled through extensive research starting last May during which G.I. Jobs polled more than 7,000 schools nationwide. Criteria for making the list include efforts to recruit and retain military and veteran students.

To celebrate the honor, UA President Mark Hamilton presented award plaques to both UAA Chancellor Fran Ulmer and UAF Chancellor Brian Rogers.

UAA and UAF were both listed among 50 institutions identified on www.military-friendlyschools.com and in the G.I.Edu Handbook, a military guide to higher education.

UA has long provided active-duty military with an in-state tuition discount and recently expanded that discount to eligible veterans, their spouses and children.

The move was intentionally timed to coincide with the new post-911 GI Bill, which offers eligible veterans generous benefits based on the highest in-state tuition rates in all states, a housing stipend and textbook allowance. The Post-911 GI Bill went into effect Aug. 1, 2009.
Winter sun illuminates the University of Alaska Anchorage Consortium Library, Monique Musick, University of Alaska
Big Business

$1.1 billion
UA’s annual economic impact in Alaska

1,200
Alaska businesses and vendors used by UA

8,168
Full and part-time employees

6.4 million sq. ft.
Of UA facilities

$1.9 billion
Value of UA facilities
University of Alaska Board of Regents

Gov. Sean Parnell; First Lady Sandy Parnell; Regents Kirk Wickersham, Carl Marrs, Patricia Jacobson, Robert Martin, Kenneth Fisher, Fuller Cowell, Cynthia Henry and Ashton Compton; UA President Mark Hamilton; and Regent Mary K. Hughes.

Not pictured: Regents Tim Brady and Erik Drygas.

The University of Alaska is hereby established as the state University and constituted a body corporate. It shall have title to all real and personal property now or hereafter set aside for or conveyed to it...and shall be governed by a board of regents...The board shall, in accordance with law, formulate policy and appoint the president of the university.

Alaska Constitution, Article 7, Sections 2–3

The University of Alaska is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer and educational institution.

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Golden sun and ice fog blanketing Fairbanks, as seen from the statewide administration building, winter 2009. Photo by Monique Musick, University of Alaska