

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Alaska Joint Fisheries Seafood Maritime Workforce Forum

October 12, 2012

Dear Forum Participant,

On behalf of President Gamble and the UA Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime Initiative (FSMI) Working Group, we thank you for your participation at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Alaska Joint FSM Workforce Forum on October 2, 2012. Your feedback and engagement is critical for creation of an industry-driven workforce development plan that will build a highly-qualified workforce for these vital industries in Alaska. We were very pleased to have had representation from our legislative liaisons, Rep. Bryce Edgmon, Tim Clark, and Pat Walker on behalf of Sen. Lyman Hoffman.

As you know, discussions and feedback at the Forum were lively and candid. We heard clearly the need to expand industry engagement through an advisory committee and to develop a comprehensive workforce development (WFD) plan. We need to do so with the active engagement of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Our immediate goals are to establish membership of an advisory committee and a timeline for development of the WFD plan.

We appreciate the offer made by industry representatives at the Forum to provide industry occupational and credentialing information that is essential to a comprehensive workforce development plan. That information, and anticipated trends in future FSM employment, will help identify the greatest needs, current gaps in education and training, and strategies to address these gaps. Our expectation is that this shared effort— informed by industry data—will lead to a workforce development plan not unlike those developed by Alaska's oil and gas, construction, and healthcare industries.

We also heard from many industry and community participants at the Forum that some of the proposals presented are worthy of moving forward, even as the advisory committee and workforce plan are under development. Of these, the UA system is assessing a legislative funding request of just under \$400K to fund four programs which: (a) would strengthen existing successful programs in high demand; (b) clearly respond to needs identified in the McDowell FSMI Report and to comments provided at our two industry forums; and (c) would have statewide benefits. These programs are:

- Alaska Seafood Processors Leadership Institute
- Alaska Young Fishermen's Summit Program
- Statewide Delivery of Fisheries Technology Program
- Marine Technologies Program.

In response to feedback at the Forum, we are moving forward with a more modest request for funding in order to begin to address FSM workforce development needs as soon as possible. We are delaying a major funding request until we have completed a comprehensive workforce development plan.

Again, thank you for your continuing participation in this important initiative. You can expect further communications very shortly and you will find the Forum Proceedings and Participant List at [alaska.edu/fsmi](http://alaska.edu/fsmi).

Most sincerely,

UA FSMI Leadership Committee

We want to hear from you!

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