New UA-wide Job Classification System: What Is It and Why Are We Doing It?

The process of developing, introducing and implementing a new classification system for the University of Alaska is now underway, and scheduled for completion over the next 18 months.

At present, there is no systemwide job classification system for staff. As a result, people who do essentially the same jobs but in different university locations may have different pay ranges.

"We don't really have a classification system now," said Jeannine Senechal, director of compensation, who heads up the project. "Instead we have more than two thousand different job descriptions. This makes it virtually impossible to compare UA salaries with marketplace salaries or to craft good career development plans."

The classification project will help change that. The new system will support the university's goals for recruitment and retention, workforce planning, performance management, career development and a review of the compensation system. It will be used across the university, providing consistent alignment of positions, structure for identifying career ladders and benchmarks for conducting external salary surveys.

In the new system, jobs will be grouped into "families." Each job family will have several groups and each group will have several levels to reflect the nature and complexity of the work. Job families will be evaluated to link each level with a salary grade. Based on this family concept, individual positions will be assigned to the appropriate family, group and level.

JEFs will go away. They will be replaced by a streamlined Position Description (PD) Form. The information on the PD will be used to match a position to a job family, group and level.

Information Systems (IS) positions were the pilot group. The IS job families were developed by a task team made up of statewide and campus Human Resources staff and representatives of several UA departments having IS positions.

For more detailed information about the draft IS classifications, go to the HR web page at www.alaska.edu/hr/classification.

IS employees will be notified (continued on back)

College Savings Plan Assets At $348 Million

Total assets under management by the University of Alaska College Savings Plan reached $348 million last week, a remarkable demonstration of success for the new program that launched in June 2001 with only $27 million.

Two years ago the Alaska Legislature passed and Gov. Tony Knowles signed into law a measure that created the college savings program. The program, formerly known as Advance College Tuition, offers Alaskans tax advantaged options for college savings. Beginning this year, due to the national tax relief measure, the earnings on these accounts will be tax-free when they are used for qualified educational expenses.

"We're working hard to provide Alaskans with the best college savings plan possible by taking full advantage of the generous new tax laws," said... (continued on back)
New Classification System
(continued)
of their job family placement next month, and implementation is planned for July. The Facilities Engineering group is nearing completion, and task teams in Finance and Research are underway.

New job families will be implemented as they are completed. It’s a little early to talk about salaries because the job family system must be completed before the compensation system can be addressed. However, initial implementation requires that positions be placed in the appropriate salary grade for the job family level. For employees, there may be some salary impact if the new job family level is at a higher grade. Here’s a summary of how the implementation will affect salaries:

--- If the grade remains the same, the salary will be unchanged.
--- If the new grade is lower, the employee’s existing salary will be maintained in the new grade.
--- If the new grade is higher, salary adjustments will be phased in using a temporary transition grade added to the existing salary grade structure. Employees would move to the closest step or transition step that is greater than or equal to current pay in the higher grade. For positions moving to a higher salary grade the phased implementation makes the proposal affordable while still moving employees to appropriate classification levels.

“At the onset of the project, President Hamilton guaranteed that implementation would not reduce anybody’s salary,” Senechal said.

A copy of the grid and more information is posted on the above-mentioned website, and Statewide HR will be holding brown bag information sessions to answer questions about the new system. One session is scheduled for the Butrovich Building on May 2. A schedule and details are also posted on the website.

College Savings Plan
(continued)
Linda Milliken, director of the program. She said they have launched a new college savings calculator on the web site for the program that is marketed nationally under the T. Rowe Price name (The UA version that includes ACT information will be available in a few months).

The new calculator allows people to calculate how much they need to save for future college costs. Users of the calculator choose a school and which portfolio they want to invest in and the calculator determines their monthly contribution amount. To utilize the calculator, go to the website: www.troweprice.com/collegesavings. For more information on the UA program, go to www.uacollegesavings.com.

Prayer Vigil in Memory of Sophie Sergie

The university community will honor the memory of Sophie Ann Sergie on Friday, April 26, with a prayer vigil beginning at 3 p.m. in Heritage Park between the Lola Tilly Commons and Mcintosh Hall on the UAF campus.

Nine years ago this week, the 20-year-old Sergie, a former UAF student who was back on campus visiting friends, was murdered. Her slaying is unsolved.

Ms. Sergie was from Pitkas Point, a village near St. Mary’s in southwest Alaska. Her mother, Elena, will be present at the vigil.

On the Move is Online

Go to: www.alaska.edu/opa/onthemove. Deadline for the next issue is Monday, May 6th by the end of the day.

ARSC On-Line Auction Supports Heart Walk

Arctic Region Supercomputing Center employees are again sponsoring an on-line auction supporting the American Heart Association’s Heart Walk on May 18.

Anyone is welcome to bid on items or put items up for bid. Last year ARSC raised $2,020 from the auction. The official bid forms are on the wall in the kitchen area of suite 108 in the Butrovich Bldg.

You can get more information about the auction from: http://www.arsc.edu/heartwalk.

This year there are lots of items up for bid. Everything from a one-month reserved parking space in the Butrovich parking lot to having a latte delivered to your office each day for a week to an upper Chena River fishing trip to handmade mittens. Visit the auction site, and we’re sure you’ll find something to bid on.

For Sale or Trade

Send your items for sale or trade by e-mail to: bob.miller@alaska.edu

From David Bunzow 479-2692:
1992 Mazda B-2200 2WD winterized P/U Truck, black with camper shell and pass thru windows, 84K miles; 4 new tires; 2 new rear studded tires. All major maintenance and repair records available. Very reliable vehicle in pretty good condition! Emissions stickers good to 1/04. Asking $2,950.

From Stephanie Held, 474-5060:
1999 Pontiac Grand Am, white, 4 door, 28K miles, power windows/locks, Am/Fm, cassette, 6 disc CD changer, Astro auto start, new Blizzak winter tires! Well taken care of, $10,900 obo.

From Jennifer Bowers at 6381:
Wants to purchase an air purifier.

From Alesia Willey at 467-1699:
Suzuki GZ250 Street Bike $2,000 obo.

From Marqi Schwartz at 488-4107:
Wants to Borrow: Metal Detector to find survey pins.

A three-man team from statewide ITS - the UACN Hackers -- was among the 87 teams that registered for this year’s annual UAF Hockey Extravaganza which benefits the UAF hockey program. Laura Letuligasenoa, a network communications specialist, is one of the tournament directors. The Hackers skated in the Men’s Intermediate Division.

Team members were Bill Gregory, director of Operations Services, Jarkko Toivanen, network communications specialist, and Mike Brase, manager of Network Control. This year’s event ran from April 8-14.

Photo above shows the UACN Hackers with Laura Letuligasenoa, one of the tournament directors. From left to right, Bill Gregory, Mike Brase, Jarkko Toivanen.

Photo at left: Is it winter or spring? With unexpected snowstorms these past two weeks, the only sign of spring has been the blooming of tulips and daffodils in the offices. We hope spring is near!