

<http://alaska.edu/blast/>

Mission Statement: The Alaska Biomedical Learning and Student Training (BLaST) program has an over-arching aim to enhance capacity for undergraduate biomedical research training and efficacy for both engaging students from diverse, especially rural Alaskan, backgrounds and preparing students for biomedical research careers.

In the News



The Racial Equity Workshop sponsored by BLaST was attended by 37 participants ranging from undergraduates, graduates, faculty and staff from many departments across UAF, and featured presenter Kyana Wheeler (l), guest Inupiaq Elder Elizabeth Fleagle (m), and presenter Fran Partridge (r). (April 7, 2018)



At the 2018 Alaska Native Studies Conference BLaST Scholars (l to r): Dilool Erickson, Christina Edwin, and Sarah Maupin presented, "Young Indigenous women in research" with their faculty Charlene Stern (Dept. of Alaska Native Studies & Rural Development-College of Rural & Community Development), Juneau, Alaska. (April 13–14, 2018)



Five graduating Scholars were recognized at the BLaST BBQ (l to r): Dilool Erickson, Marsha Sousa-Student Core Director, KaCee Llewelyn, Viktorija Podlutskaya, Arleigh Reynolds-PI, Michael Castellini-Research Core Director, Mark Velasco, and Christina Edwin at the UAF Campus. (April 28, 2018)



Monthly Mentoring Discussion Group meetings focused on enhancing teaching and mentoring skills of those interested. Paul Cotter (Evalulogic), met with Research Advising and Mentoring Professionals (RAMPs), graduate students, and undergraduates at UAF Campus, Dec. 2017. Resources on mentoring focused on **Diversity and Inclusion include:** Deconstructing White Privilege - <https://vimeo.com/147760743>
Implicit Bias - https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them
Seeing White - <http://podcast.cdsporch.org/seeing-white/>
For more info contact Lead RAMP Lori Gildehaus at lagildehaus@alaska.edu.



Second year Scholar Viktorija Podlutskaya (m), with parents Natalia Podlutskaya (l), and Andrej Podlutsky (r) at UAF Commencement. (May 5, 2018)



Second year Scholar Christina Kk'odohdaatIno Edwin with College of Rural & Community Development (CRCD) Vice Chancellor Evon Peter at UAF Commencement. (May 5, 2018)

For more 2018 Graduation Info – see page 2!



Scholar Dilool Aanh Erickson with her partner and daughter at UAF Commencement. Families of scholars support their graduates throughout the year. (May 5, 2018)

Team Updates

We welcome our new additions to the BLaST Program for the upcoming 2018-2019 academic year. We look forward to learning, sharing, and getting to know all of you in your new adventures in biomedical science!

Fall 2018 – Spring 2019 Scholars

Editha Bagoyo	Laura Kromrey	Janessa Newman
Ana Carrasco	Hayley Lekanof	Ava Parrish
Melissa Clark	Shayle Lliaban	Jonilee Polanco
Anastacia Dorvall	Brianna Lu	Gwendolyn Quigley
Daniel Dykes	Tandi Marth	Michelle Quillin
Gladys Erhart	Sarah Maupin	Savanna Ratky
Mollie Fisher	Shelby McCahon	Kristian Rivera
Kendrick Hautala	Casey McMillan	Samantha Wade
Jennie Humphrey	Monica Mikes	Hannah Wing
Noah Khalsa	Harrison Moore	
Jimin "Josh" Kim	Daphne Mueller	

Faculty Pilot Projects

Angela Bowers	Cristina Hansen	Todd O'Hara
Robert Coker	Thomas Kuhn	Laura Oxtoby
Devin Drown	Andres Lopez	Jacques Philip
Carie Green	Josh Lupinek	

Fall 2018 – Spring 2019 Graduate Mentor Research Assistantships (GMRAs)

Tynan Becker	Madison Kosma	Sasha White
Sheri Coker	Yoko Kugo	Lauren Wild
Aline Collin	Marianne Lian	Kimi Yatsushiro
Carla Frare	Lisa Smith	

Summer 2018 Undergraduate Research Experience (URE) Students

Ajiel Mae Basmayor	Sydney King	Shelly Thao
Shane Bennett	James McKay	Roger Vang
Melanie Borup	Padraig New	Daniel Walker
Milbia Fuller	Zachary Nicholson	Emma Zayon
Rebekah Green	Cayla Rogers	
JD Harwell	Maggie Shields	

Congratulations 2018 Graduates!

Graduating Scholars & Degrees

Graduated either Fall 2017** or Spring 2018

Christina Edwin 2nd Year Scholar: BA Rural Development, cum laude
 Diloola Erickson: BA Rural Development, & BS Mechanical Engineering
 KaCee Llewelyn: BS Biomedical Sciences, magna cum laude (Phi kappa phi Honors Society)
 Adam Paskvan**, *: BS Chemistry, cum laude
 Viktorija Podlutskaya 2nd Year Scholar: BS Biological Sciences
 Mark A. Velasco (past URE*, and current Scholar): BS Biological Sciences, magna cum laude (University Honors Scholar)
 Katrina J. Watson*: BA Allied Health Sciences: Interdisciplinary Studies (Golden Key Honor Society)



Scholar KaCee Llewelyn at the 2018 UAF Commencement. (May 5, 2018)

Graduating Undergraduate Research Experience (URE) students

Rachel Alexander: BS Biological Sciences
 Richard Chen: BS Mechanical Engineering, magna cum laude
 Kennedy Demboski: BS Biological Sciences, cum laude
 Hannah Gerrish: BS Biological Sciences, magna cum laude (University Honors Scholar)
 Brianna Gilmore*: BS Chemistry: Biochemistry
 Tracie Haan: BS Biological Sciences, cum laude
 Sarah Hartman*: BS Biological Sciences, cum laude (University Honors Scholar, Golden Key Society)
 Kiana Mitchell*: BS Chemistry: Biochemistry, (University Honors Scholar)
 Diane Murph*: BS Civil Engineering
 McKenzie Mucha (Sweeney*)**: BS Behavioral Neuroscience: Interdisciplinary Studies
 Alexander Thompson**, *: BS Chemistry: Biochemistry
 Krysta Yancey*: MS Biological Sciences



Photo left: Congratulations to third year Graduate Mentoring Research Assistant (GMRA) Scott Jerome (r) on receiving his Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Neuroscience, pictured here with his faculty and BLaST PI, Arleigh Reynolds (I). (May 5, 2018)

* Past URE or Scholar UAF Commencement info: <https://uaf.edu/commence/>

Team Updates (continued)

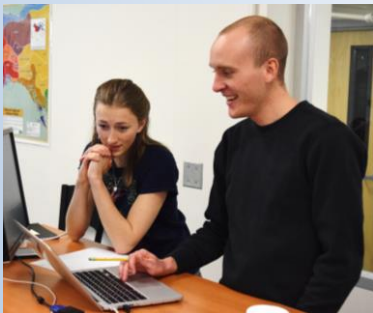
BLaST has been fortunate to gain (and lost) new staff this academic year to help advise our undergraduates and support our community-building efforts in biomedical research at UAF.



Photo left: MEET RAMP Emily Sousa! Emily grew up in Fairbanks and has a B.S. in Geography and Environmental Studies, M.S. in Natural Resources Management and Forest Sciences from UAF, and a certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Analysis from Itasca Community College-Minnesota. Her research interests focus on One Health issues such as environmental responses to climate change and landscape ecology. Emily started with BLaST in October, 2017. Emily (r), is pictured with Scholar Diloolo Erickson (l). (Jan. 2018)



Photo above: Goodbye to RAMP Joanna Green! We will miss you! She has been accepted to a Ph.D. program at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, and will continue her journey in the biomedical field, specializing in Biology. Joanna (r), is pictured with post doc Anne-Lise Ducluzeau (l) at Research Mixer. (Nov. 2018)



Thank You to Justin Thayer (r), SSS/BLaST Student Success Coordinator for your service in working with our students this 2017-2018 year! Good luck on your next chapter in your career! Justin (r) is pictured with Scholar Jennie Humphrey (l). (Jan. 2018)

More in the News



BLaST-sponsored Biomedical Exploration Experience (BEE) in collaboration with Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC - tribal clinic) and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital (FMH) was held May 7-18, 2018 as a two-week, two-credit course. This was designed for undergraduate students considering careers in medicine or science, and offers many firsthand opportunities to learn different techniques and experience environments found in the medical field. CAIHC, which is run by Tanana Chiefs Conference, and FMH are major contributors by providing guest speakers and staff to demonstrate techniques in the medical fields. The class was taught by BLaST RAMP Natalia Podlutskaya. (Photo left: BEE students & Natalia, May 2018)



BLaST is part of a national study on student experiences and career choices funded by the National Institutes of Health. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) serves as the **Coordination and Evaluation Center (CEC), along with our outside evaluator Evalulogic (Paul Cotter)** for this national effort and collects information about the experiences and career choices of a variety of students such as you. Biomedical and STEM student education nationally may benefit from your participation. Thank you for completing the surveys and reports! Your responses will help in our efforts to secure another five years of funding so we can continue to offer undergraduate mentored research experiences.

BLaST Events/ Announcements/ Conferences

Friendly Reminder: Please pay attention to your inbox! Surveys about your participation in BLaST come from Evalulogic, our outside evaluator, and the CEC with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) at least three times a year!

SAVE THE DATE: Fall 2018 BLaST-Off Orientation – Saturday Aug. 25 9am-5pm
UAF – Location TBA

For up to date information, sign up for our BLaST Listserve at <https://lists.alaska.edu/mailman/listinfo/uaf-blast-project>

BUILDING Partnerships and Community at UAF and around Alaska

The **Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference (WAISC)** was held at the Northwest Campus, CRCD UAF Rural campus in Nome, Alaska March 27 – 28, 2018: BLaST supported many students from UAF and included Scholars Kendrick Hautala, Gwendolyn Quigley, Raven Shaw, and Hannah Wing, UREs Louise Bishop, Brandaise Montgomery (Callahan), Tracie Haan, other undergraduates Taylor Poirrier, Orlin Gologergen, GMRA's Sheri Coker, Lauren Wild, and Aline Collin, Faculty Pilot project awardees Devin Drown and Cristina "Nina" Hansen, and two BLaST RAMPs, Theresa Vertigan and Natalia Podlutskaya. All presented various poster and oral presentations.



BLaST supported undergraduates Taylor Poirrier (l), Deidre Neeley (m), and Alyx Hoover (r) at their WAISC poster presentation. (March 27-28, 2018)



BLaST supported University of Alaska Sitka student Orlin Gologergen (r) and his Graduate Mentoring Research Assistant (GMRA) Lauren Wild (l) at WAISC presenting "Stable Isotope Research: Subsistence and Science." (March 27-28, 2018)



Faculty Pilot Project awardee Devin Drown with URE Tracie Haan outside the Northwest Campus (CRCD-UAF) in Nome for WAISC. (March 27-28, 2018)



Scholars Mollie Fisher and Shayle Lliaban meet in the Student Engagement Center, which has served as a community building space for students to study, connect with other students, and join in social functions enhancing their college experience. (Dec. 2017)



BLaST Collaborates with Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI): RAHI Research, a two-credit introduction to Biomedical research is May 20 to July 13, 2018. BLaST Research Advising and Mentoring Professionals (RAMPs) Emily Sousa, Theresa Vertigan, and Lori Gildehaus, and Dr. Ellen Lopez (UAF Psychology faculty) are offering the introduction course to six undergraduates. RAHI provides rural and Alaska Native students with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the college experience for six weeks. RAHI's proven record shows these students are ready for the challenge of succeeding in college.



BLaST Recognized by TRiO at UAF

The students and staff of the UAF TRiO programs invited the public at the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus to celebrate the 15th Annual National TRiO Day on Thursday, Feb. 22 and formally recognized BLaST as a major contributor of opportunities to those undergraduates categorized as low-income, first generation, and disabled. For more info: <https://news.uaf.edu/student-support-services-celebrates-15th-annual-trio-day/>



Undergraduate Research Experience (URE) student JD Harwell (l), with GMRA Tynan Becker (m), and Scholar Melissa Clark (r) working in the lab at the UAF campus. (Jan. 2018)

BLaST supported the 11th annual University of Alaska Biomedical Research Conference (UA-BRC) May 17-18, 2018 and other UA departments and colleges provided opportunities for over 90 researchers and students (6 BLaST Scholars, 4 UREs) from throughout Alaska to learn about and discuss a wide range of biomedical and One Health topics, including molecular biology, and fisheries, and everything in between. UA-BRC, held at the University of Alaska Anchorage campus, featured two days of keynote speakers, roundtable discussions, oral/poster presentations, including nearly 20 presentations from undergraduates. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at UA-BRC 2019!

