

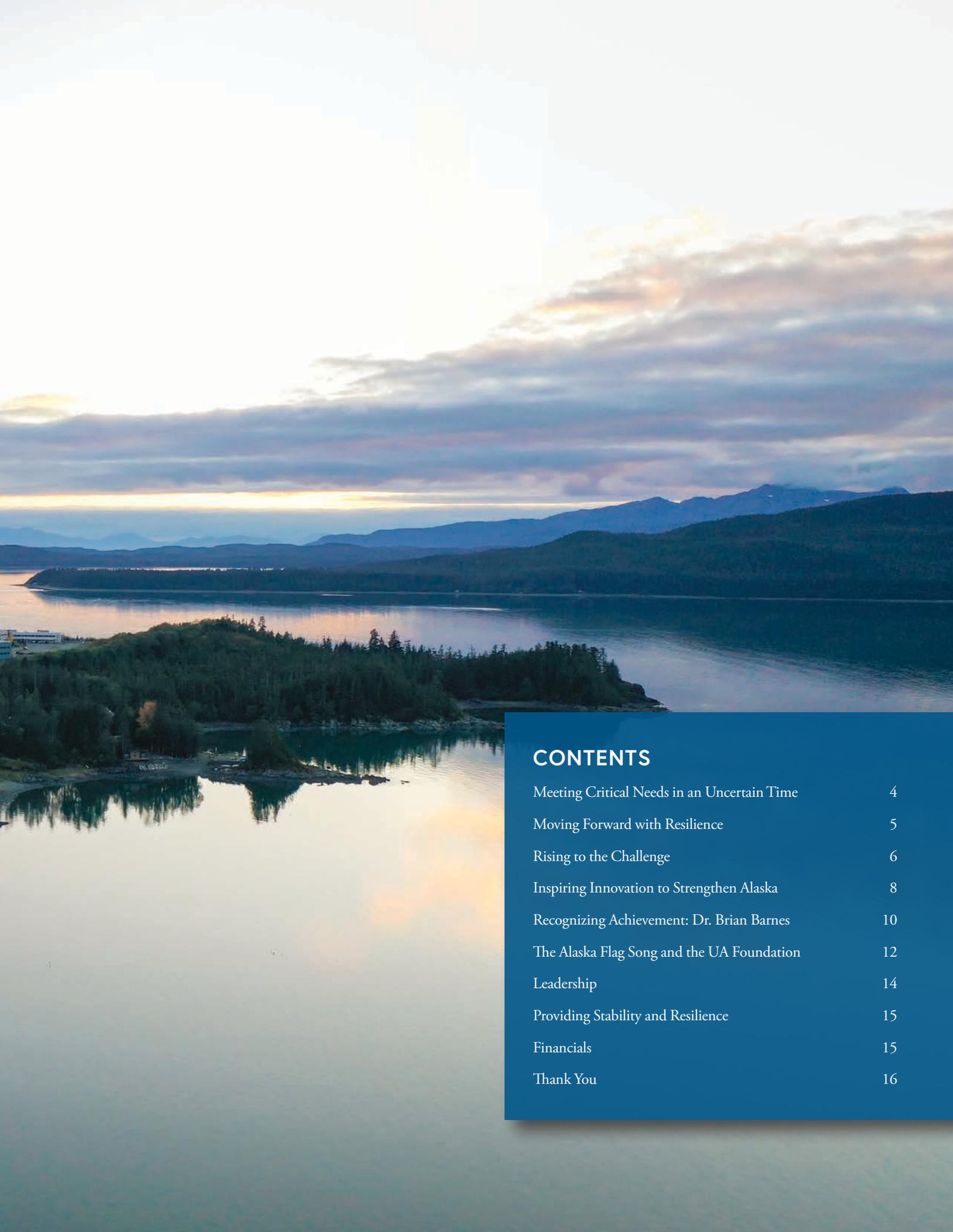


UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
FOUNDATION REPORT 2020



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
FOUNDATION





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MEETING *critical needs* IN AN UNCERTAIN TIME

Students are the lifeblood of any university and ensuring that students—all students—have a clear path to success is fundamental. Classwork, internships, and hands-on learning experiences are all part of student life, with graduation as the ultimate goal. Yet many students have to make hard choices, balancing and often sacrificing their educational pursuits to meet work and family demands.

Gifts such as the generous grant provided by the ECMC Foundation help ease the burden of these demands. The mission of the ECMC Foundation is: *“To inspire and to facilitate improvements that affect educational outcomes—especially among underserved populations—through evidence-based innovation.”* With a focus on student populations such as first-generation college students and adult learners, the ECMC Foundation grant helps meet the basic needs of students including food and housing, childcare, mental health, and transportation.

The ECMC Foundation’s gift in 2020 couldn’t have come at a better time. As the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the university system was suddenly faced with tremendous transitions and costs. When the ECMC Foundation asked what was needed, the resounding answer across all universities was student support. The ECMC Foundation’s generous grant was given unrestricted for immediate use, allowing each university to meet their students’ needs.

■ STUDENT SUPPORT FUND

At UAA, the gift was administered through the Student Support Fund. The assistance from ECMC Foundation provided 20 students with critically needed funds to help them make ends meet after pandemic-related reductions in job hours or loss of employment, so they could stay in school.

For Christine Bishop, a student in her second year of the Physical Therapy Assistant program in UAA’s College of Health, the Student Support Fund offered an enormous amount of relief. Her partner lost his job in the airline industry due to the pandemic, and Bishop was faced with choosing between school or survival. “I applied for and received funding and was able to pay for two months’ worth

of groceries and a medical bill. The remaining went to utilities and our mortgage. It’s just been so, so helpful; we’ve literally been counting pennies,” said Bishop. “It’s nice to be heard and awarded something from people who don’t know me but are willing to be generous to students.”

■ FIRST GENERATION SCHOLARSHIPS

UAS awarded 19 scholarships thanks to the ECMC Foundation. Each UAS recipient selected was a first generation-college student within 20 credits of graduation, and the scholarship provided vital support to help them stay the course toward degree attainment.

Janelle Williams, a business major with an emphasis in accounting, shared this message of thanks to ECMC Foundation: “I am currently a senior carrying a part-time load while working full-time and plan to graduate in the spring of 2022. Thanks to you, I am one step closer to that goal. Your generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me.”

In addition to the critical need for student funds in response to COVID, the ECMC Foundation gift also supports student programs that mirror their mission: to inspire and facilitate improvements that positively affect educational outcomes.

■ NANOOK BROTHERHOOD PROJECT

One such program is UAF’s Nanook Brotherhood Project, which aims to improve men of color’s educational outcome. As part of the Nanook Brotherhood Project, UAF established a chapter of the national Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) organization. The SAAB Brother 2 Brother chapter, also known as a B2B chapter, is open to students of all ethnic backgrounds and serves as a peer community for young men of color on campus. Community leaders and chapter advisors mentor the members.

The flexibility of ECMC Foundation’s gift empowered each university to provide critical student support, in their own unique way, to meet the needs of students when it mattered the most.



MOVING FORWARD WITH RESILIENCE

COVID-19 changed lives around the world. The pandemic forced the University of Alaska system to close campuses and make rapid transitions from traditional classroom instruction to online learning. Students faced numerous challenges, from the closure of campus housing to job losses, affecting both their own and their families' incomes.

The Annual Giving Program, led by the UA Foundation on behalf of UAA, UAF, and UAS, quickly narrowed its fundraising focus to help students in need. A collaborative fundraising initiative was launched to help the Student Support Emergency Funds and Student Food Pantries at each university.

In March, the foundation worked with each university on a targeted email appeal sent to alumni and friends. In May, the foundation allocated resources and coordinated the launch of a crowdfunding event held in conjunction with #GivingTuesdayNow (May 5, 2020). The combination of these targeted fundraising efforts resulted in nearly \$70,000 raised from more than 280 donors providing critical support during a very uncertain time.



RISING TO TH

Ensuring student success was a key focus of UA's Giving Day 2020 in October. The first-ever system-wide giving day, promoted as *49 Hours for the 49th State*, raised more than \$672,000. Each university selected fundraising initiatives and promoted them through social media platforms and university and local media outlets.

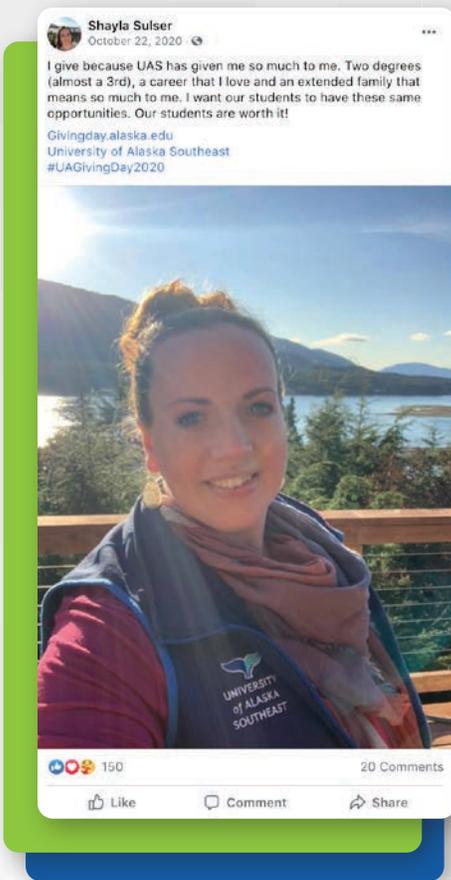
The wave of support that spread across social media was inspiring. Alumni, friends, and businesses shared their enthusiasm for UA and encouraged others to give. The excitement was contagious, and the call for action was answered.

Long-time donors Kes Woodward and Dorli McWayne were inspired by what they saw. "It was fantastic to be able to watch it unfold online over the two days," said Woodward, a UAF professor emeritus. "I was flabbergasted with how many people made gifts. Seeing those names and seeing other people make contributions, it makes you want to do the same."

Woodward had planned to honor his first wife's memory through an endowed scholarship, just as Dorli had done in memory of her first husband. "Giving to organizations and the university was very important to us," McWayne said. "So, it was a fitting way to honor him."

Woodward had taken the initial steps to create an account to endow a scholarship, and as the wave of excitement for Giving Day rose, he told McWayne it seemed like a good time to make it happen. Their gift established the Marianna "Missy" Boaz Woodward Memorial Scholarship was celebrated by the UAF College of Liberal Arts during the final hours of UA Giving Day 2020.

More than 38 long-time community supporters, alumni, directors, and administrators lead the efforts of Giving Day by providing match and challenge gifts to encourage gifts to some of their favorite programs at the university. The challengers included UA Regent and foundation board member Mary K. Hughes with



E CHALLENGE

“Educating Alaska’s Educators” to help Alaskans majoring in education; long-time supporter Usibelli Coal Mine with two challenges to benefit both Nanook Athletics and the UAF School of Management, and former UAA Chancellor Cathy Sandeen, who joined UAA deans and directors in a participation challenge for UAA to encourage alumni giving.

Members of the UA Foundation Board of Directors also made challenge gifts. Dr. Cary Keller and his wife, Mrs. Sarah Keller, supported both Nanook Athletics at UAF and the Alaska College of Education based at UAS through their challenges. And to tie into the theme of the initiative, foundation board member Jennifer Schrage offered a challenge in honor of her 49th birthday. Schrage, an alumna of the UAA ski team, called upon all Seawolf alumni to give back and “unlock” her challenge gift for the UAA Ski Team.

We are thankful for all donors who participated in the inaugural UA Giving Day—49 Hours for the 49th State—and we look forward to Giving Day 2021!

notable numbers

\$672,000 RAISED
1,110 DONORS
400 NEW DONORS
10 COUNTRIES
50 STATES
131 FUNDS BENEFITTED



Inspiring
**INNOVATION
STRENGTHENS
ALASKA**

Throughout the UA system, research and innovation are making great strides that directly translate to the betterment of life in Alaska and around the world.

One such stride is the development of sustainable, durable, and environmentally friendly biomaterials for use in packing and shipping Alaskan seafood. The by-products of traditional insulated shipping materials such as Styrofoam create long term negative consequences for marine life and oceans and the coastal communities whose economies depend on the seafood industry.

Two UAA faculty members, public health Professor Philippe Amstislavski and Dr. Joey Yang, Professor and Chair of Civil Engineering developed biotechnology to produce thermally insulating foams that are both renewable and biodegradable. Using mushroom roots and forestry by-products, they are, in essence, growing insulation from nature.

Seed money from a UAA Innovate grant helped fund the initial work. Additional funding from a ConocoPhillips Arctic Science and Engineering Endowment award allowed the team to improve the biofoam's thermal resistance and lower its density before moving it to field experimentation. Amstislavski and Yang's collaborative research ultimately led to the establishment of Rhizofoam, LLC to bring the product to market.

Students also have the opportunity for product innovation and development. One avenue for students is the Alaska Center for Innovation, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship's (ICE) Community Challenges. Through a Community Challenge, UAF students Riley Bickford, Cory Florence, Sam Kendall, and David Woo collaborated with entrepreneur Ray Huot to develop Avy Pouch, an avalanche airbag system. The students, who are all avid backcountry enthusiasts and mechanical engineering seniors, created a new system using an alternative design from Huot's initial work. Their invention consists of a harness that allows for attachment to any backpack, weighs just 5.5 lbs. and meets the European Avalanche Airbag Standards.

The UAA College of Business and Public Policy also believes in facilitating innovation and seeks to inspire and encourage entrepreneurship through its Student Business Plan Competition.

Teams of students compete for cash prizes and must present investor-type pitches to a panel of judges. Awards categories include Most Beneficial for Alaska, Most Beneficial to UAA Student Life, Most Likely to Succeed in Business, and The People's Choice Award.

Manny Rodriguez, Matthew Vincent, and Vanessa Stadler, won multiple awards for their team's plan for Alaska Electric Scooters, which would bring the first organized fleet of dockless, electric scooters to UAA and downtown Anchorage communities. It will provide students, local residents, and tourists quicker, cleaner, easy to access, affordable transportation with zero-emission for eco-friendly transportation in areas too large to walk and too small to drive.

Awards given through UAA's Student Business Plan Competition are made possible through generous contributions from individual and corporate donors including Northrim Bank and First National Bank Alaska.

As illustrated in these examples, encouraging innovation is a hallmark of higher education. But is it necessary to wait until a student begins college to foster a spirit of innovation? The UAF School of Management doesn't believe so.

The Arctic Innovation Competition (AIC), founded by Dr. Ping Lan and launched in 2009, has expanded to include participants as young as middle school students. There is no fee to enter AIC, nor is a business plan or developed product required. The competition is open to ideas that solve a problem, fulfill an unmet need, or improve upon an existing product. Judging revolves around utility, novelty, feasibility, value, and presentation.

The winning idea in the Junior Division for ages 13-17 came from James Price. Aptly named Plug-Hug, it is a faceplate for electrical outlets that reduces the chances of accidental unplugging and freezing of cords. A sleeve shields the cord from the elements and ensures a snug fit. Aila Standlee-Strom won the Cub Division for participants age 12 and under. Her idea, Here Kitty Cat, is a cat harnesses with a tracking device that connects to an app and provides an owner with walking directions to find their cat.

In the Main Division, for ages 18 and up, winning ideas included the Fish Wheel Salmon Selector from Todd Krieg and Safe Scent from Julie C. Hagelin and Janice M. Straley. The Fish Wheel Salmon Selector improves upon the classic fish wheel to safely returning coho and chinook salmon to the river. Safe Scent serves to lure high-profile marine predators away from hazards by releasing a natural, food-related chemical cue to guide them in a safe direction.

More than \$30,000 in cash prizes are awarded annually to winning participants. This event is possible thanks to donations from corporate and individual supporters, with Usibelli Coal Mine as the lead sponsor of the event.



RECOGNIZING *achievement*

The Edith R. Bullock Prize for Excellence is awarded each year to acknowledge a faculty or staff member, volunteer, or community leader with a sustained and consistent commitment to excellence in support of the university and its mission. Established in 1988 through a gift from the late Edith Bullock, it is the largest single annual award bestowed by the UA Foundation.

Bullock was a gifted businesswoman who loved Alaska and dedicated herself to giving back to her state. She served in the House of Representatives and the Territorial Senate and served the university through the Board of Regents and the UA Foundation Board of Directors. Edith acknowledged that the key to the university's success rests directly upon the effort of individuals.

Dr. Brian Barnes, a long-time member of the UAF faculty, is the 2020 Bullock Prize for Excellence recipient. Dr. Barnes' research and his leadership as the director of UAF's Institute of Arctic Biology have made significant advancements for the UA system, the state, and internationally.



Within the Institute of Arctic Biology's robust work, current research of note includes the study of hibernating animals, particularly the arctic ground squirrel, to determine the mechanics of changing metabolic demand and the associated biochemical pathways in mammals. The outcome of this type of research could potentially lead to a variety of advancements in human healthcare, namely, the potential to add crucial minutes, hours, or more toward recovery for patients who have suffered strokes or other disruptions to their oxygen supply.

Gifts like the Bullock award support the critically important work of individuals at the university. Providing faculty and staff recognition is imperative to recruiting and retaining employees like Dr. Barnes. Awards help foster an atmosphere of support, which is especially beneficial during trying times such as reductions in funding or during a global pandemic and help to continue the tremendous work conducted daily at UA to better Alaska and beyond.

THE ALASKA FLAG SONG

Did you know that the UA Foundation holds the copyright to the Alaska flag song? The foundation holds in trust, for the benefit of the university and the public, the copyright to both the music and verses of the *Alaska's Flag*.

Marie Drake, who wrote the first verse, and Elinor Dusenbury, who composed the music, generously donated the rights to their work in 1960. The foundation similarly holds in trust the copyright to the second verse of the *Alaska's Flag*. That verse was authored and generously donated by Carol Beery Davis.

The song is simple yet powerful in message, uniting Alaskans in pride for our great state. We are honored to protect these works for Alaskans to ensure a lasting connection to our state's history for years to come.

ALASKA'S FLAG

Eight stars of gold on a field of blue,
Alaska's flag, may it mean to you,
The blue of the sea, the evening sky,
The mountain lakes and the flowers nearby,
The gold of the early sourdough's dreams,
The precious gold of the hills and streams,
The brilliant stars in the northern sky,
The "Bear," the "Dipper," and shining high,
The great North Star with its steady light,
O'er land and sea a beacon bright,
Alaska's flag to Alaskans dear,
The simple flag of a last frontier.

A Native lad chose the Dipper's stars
For Alaska's flag that there be no bars
Among our culture. Let it be known
Through years the Native's past has grown
To share life's treasures, hand in hand,
To keep Alaska our Great-Land;
We love the northern midnight sky,
The mountains, lakes and streams nearby.
The great North Star with its steady light
Will guide all cultures, clear and bright,
With nature's flag to Alaskans dear,
The simple flag of the last frontier.

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AND THE UA FOUNDATION



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PROVIDING STABILITY AND RESILIENCE

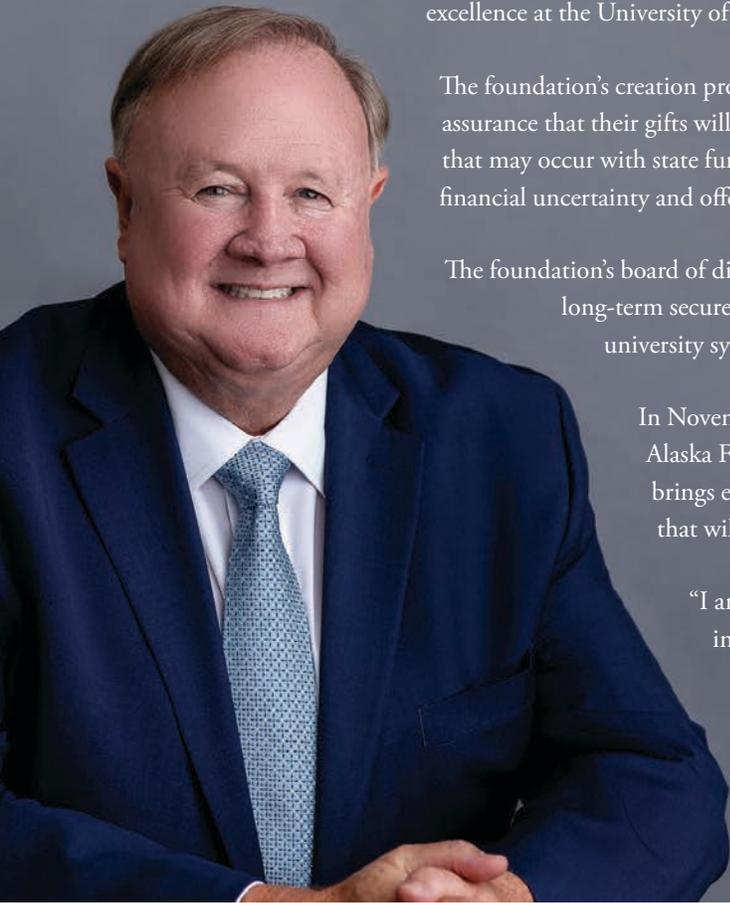
Since its beginning in 1974, the University of Alaska Foundation has served to support the University of Alaska system. The foundation's mission is to seek, secure, and steward philanthropic support to build excellence at the University of Alaska.

The foundation's creation provided many benefits, perhaps best summarized as providing donors with the assurance that their gifts will be used for their intended purpose without subjection to any reappropriations that may occur with state funds. And today, the foundation continues to provide stability during times of financial uncertainty and offers the university resilience to reductions in state funding.

The foundation's board of directors is charged with managing the investments and endowments to provide long-term secure funding sources for the university. Additionally, they serve as advocates for the university system and seek to maximize fundraising efforts on behalf of all campuses.

In November, **DR. TOD BURNETT** began his tenure as president of the University of Alaska Foundation and chief development officer of the University of Alaska. Burnett brings extensive experience in higher education and private business, a combination that will serve the foundation well.

"I am delighted to join the UA Foundation team and lead its philanthropic efforts in support of our universities," said Dr. Burnett. "I look forward to meeting with and working with our donors as we strive to advance UA's critically important mission to disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, and to support Alaska through higher education."



UA FOUNDATION NET ASSETS: **\$281,569,249**

AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

- 42% | Academic Programs
- 29% | Scholarships, Internships and Fellowships
- 19% | Public Service, Library, and Other Support
- 8% | General Campus Support
- 2% | Athletics

UA Foundation Pooled Endowment Fund Net Returns: **2.13%**

UA Foundation Distributions for the Benefit of UA: **\$12,604,489**

UA Foundation Distributions for Student Aid: **\$3,655,332**

THANK YOU

We are humbled to have your support, which helps us remain resilient during these most unprecedented times. We are delighted to share some of the great work being done throughout the University of Alaska system.

Because of you, we are providing opportunities throughout Alaska. Your gifts to the University of Alaska Foundation support innovation, groundbreaking research, and ensure that higher education is accessible to all. Because of you, we forge ahead today, preparing for an even better tomorrow.

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