

FISHERIES, SEAFOOD, MARITIME INITIATIVE (FSMI)

2025-2030
ACTION AGENDA

The University of Alaska's Fisheries, Seafood and Maritime Initiative supports Alaska's maritime workforce and economy by delivering education, training, and research.



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA

Many Traditions One Alaska

alaska.edu/fsmi

Supporting the Maritime Workforce

INTRODUCTION

With vast coastlines, remote communities, and an economy interwoven with maritime activity, Alaska's economy relies on a skilled maritime workforce. The waters surrounding Alaska produce 60% of the nation's seafood harvest. Our state is highly dependent on maritime shipping for imports of food and other goods, and for exports of oil, seafood and minerals. Alaska's economy is boosted annually by hundreds of millions of dollars generated from water transport. This includes bringing visitors on cruise ships, running halibut charters, traveling on Alaska's Marine Highway, and supporting subsistence hunting and fishing.

The Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime Initiative (FSMI) was launched in 2012 as a coordinated effort led by the University of Alaska (UA), in partnership with maritime industry leaders, state agencies, and training organizations across the state. The impetus for FSMI was Alaska's pressing need for a skilled, local workforce to sustain its maritime, seafood, and fisheries sectors. FSMI now includes a myriad of educational and industry partners across Alaska, including staffing support from Maritime Works at the Alaska Workforce Alliance.

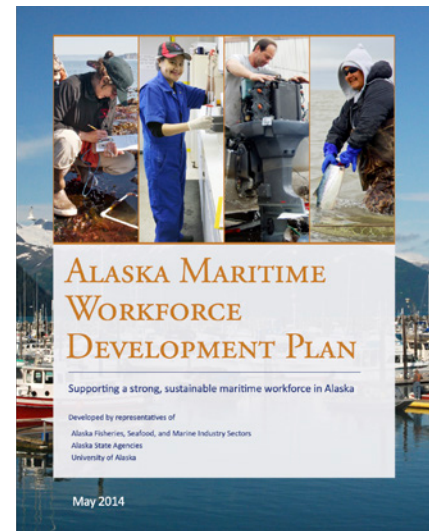
This FSMI Action Agenda plan outlines a shared strategy to guide workforce efforts

over the next five years. This plan builds on the efforts of the planning efforts described below, as well as the voices and priorities of current FSMI members and working groups.

This document builds on over a decade of collaborative efforts by partners to strengthen Alaska's maritime workforce. While this document focuses on future priorities, it is important to acknowledge progress made to date. FSMI's annual reports document the outcomes of ongoing work across the state, including the launch of new training initiatives and allocation of critical funding. These reports also include data on student program completion, as well as employment and wage outcomes for FSMI students. To explore the history of FSMI's efforts and access annual reports, visit <https://www.alaska.edu/fsmi/outreach/>.

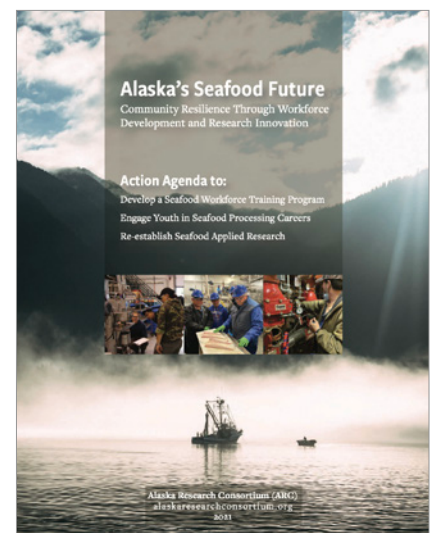
ALASKA MARITIME WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The 2014 *Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan* was created by a large group of stakeholders, including maritime businesses, industry groups, state agencies, and education and training providers. It has served for over 10 years as a call to action to enable Alaska's maritime sector to remain economically vibrant, ensure that Alaskans are qualified to fill these skilled and well-paid positions, and increase the number of Alaskans in this workforce. This plan continues to be relevant for this 2025-2030 FSMI Action Agenda.



ALASKA'S SEAFOOD FUTURE

This action agenda also builds on the vision and momentum established in *Alaska's Seafood Future* (2021), developed by the Alaska Research Consortium to identify training priorities of Alaska's seafood industry and outline next steps for workforce training. This includes aligning training with industry needs, encouraging funding for seafood workforce training, improving existing training programs, and developing new programs to fill the gaps in training needs.



ALASKA MARICULTURE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The *Alaska Mariculture Workforce Development Plan* (2023) was developed by Alaska Sea Grant as a task of the Mariculture Cluster to outline workforce development strategies for Alaska's growing mariculture sector, including shellfish and seaweed farming, hatchery operations, processing, and marketing. Like FSMI, the plan emphasizes workforce readiness, industry engagement, and training access, as the mariculture sector in Alaska develops and grows.



ALASKA'S WORKFORCE FUTURE

The FSMI Action Agenda is also a direct response to the statewide call for coordinated, inclusive, and regionally-relevant workforce development outlined in Alaska's Workforce Future (March 2025). This Action Agenda aims to translate the six shared goals of the statewide strategy into actionable projects that address critical labor shortages and promote long-term economic resilience across Alaska's fisheries, seafood processing, and maritime sectors:

- Enhance Career Awareness and Pathways
- Develop a Skilled and Qualified Workforce
- Retain Alaskans and Attract New Alaskans
- Foster Regional Workforce Development
- Improve Infrastructure and Access to Support Services
- Ensure Sustainability and Continuity of Workforce Development Efforts



PHOTO BY JAMES EVANS/UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE

OUR ACTION AGENDA

A ROADMAP FOR 2025-2030

The following plan is the result of thoughtful collaboration among FSMI partners across Alaska. It was developed through working sessions and input gathered from industry members as well as FSMI's working groups, including the Alaska Maritime Education Consortium (AMEC), the Research, Enhancement and Management (REM) working group, the Seafood Harvesting and Processing (SHP) working group, and the Mariculture working group. FSMI partners identified priorities to collectively focus on over the next five years by considering Alaska's current and emerging workforce needs, and regional opportunities. By aligning FSMI's shared goals with realistic project goals, we aim to prepare a future workforce ready to lead and thrive in Alaska's maritime industries.

PRIORITY AREA 1

Maritime Career Awareness

- Refresh FSMI career awareness materials through updates to Maritime Works' online resources and brochure content. These will include current career salary information and updating direct links to training and job listings.
- Develop a targeted social media strategy that features engaging posts, videos, and success stories. The campaign will highlight career opportunities and training pathways in fisheries, seafood, and maritime fields, especially in rural and coastal regions.
- Develop a centralized resource to help students navigate funding opportunities for training.
- Continue to develop and provide intensive maritime career awareness programming across Alaska.



UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

PRIORITY AREA 2

Seafood Harvesting and Processing Training

- Strengthen beginning commercial seafood harvester pathways and professional mentorship programs.
- Build on existing programs to include credential-bearing opportunities to meet technical workforce needs in seafood processing facilities.

PRIORITY AREA 3

Alaska Maritime Education Consortium Ashore Pathways

- Strengthen marine technician programs to include advanced content in marine diesel systems, marine electronics and electrical, and fabrication. These enhancements will be guided by industry input and designed for integration into existing training programs. Increased access will also be prioritized for rural and underrepresented populations.
- Increase access to introductory courses in outboard motor training, as a pipeline to other technician programs and other ashore pathways. Create new outboard engine training partnerships modeled after successful “train and hire” approach taken by industry members, where employees sponsor students through training and offer employment upon certification.



ALASKA SEA GRANT

PRIORITY AREA 4

Alaska Maritime Education Consortium Afloat Pathways

- Enhance collaboration among UAS-Ketchikan, AVTEC, and other training centers to support U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) credentialed programs. This includes exploring curriculum alignment, cross-campus credit transfers, and shared access to instructors and facilities. Joint training and pathways development will improve access and growth of afloat career pathways.



JAMES EVANS/UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE

PRIORITY AREA 5

Fisheries Research, Enhancement, and Management (REM) Pathways

- Develop a comprehensive fisheries website to serve as a central hub for fisheries education pathways, career information, and student opportunities. The site will offer easy access for students, as well as those who advise students.
- Establish articulation agreements to align REM-related credentials across UA Campuses. This initiative will streamline student transitions and ensure courses are mutually recognized.
- Continue to expand access to student scholarships by identifying and securing additional funding sources.



JAMES EVANS/UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE

PRIORITY AREA 6

Mariculture Workforce Development

- Coordinate mariculture workforce development activities across UA and partners. Microcredentials and internships are examples of areas where common curriculum and skill development may be coordinated and translated across programs.
- Adapt training to the needs of the growing industry through sustained industry involvement in workforce development.



ALASKA SEA GRANT

PRIORITY AREA 7

FSMI Visibility and Policy Engagement

- Strengthen FSMI's visibility by deepening partnerships with industry as champions for maritime workforce investment, policy, and student/trainee success.
- Report the economic impact of the FSMI to the Alaska Legislature through periodic reports and presentations. This will highlight workforce needs, training progress, and the return on investment from public and private partnerships in workforce development.

CONCLUSION

The FSMI Action Agenda supports Alaska's seafood and maritime industries through coordinated efforts to build a skilled, resilient workforce. By investing in career awareness, training infrastructure, and statewide partnerships, FSMI aims to empower Alaskans and strengthen Alaska's economic future.



JAMES EVANS/UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

alaska.edu/fsmi

The University of Alaska is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer and Educational Institution. The University is committed to a [policy of non-discrimination](#) against individuals on the basis of any legally protected status.