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Date: August 31, 2022

To: Pat Pitney, President

From: Dawn Humenik, Chair, Staff Alliance

DS
 DAH

Re: FY24 Compensation Recommendations

The Staff Alliance fully appreciates the unprecedented situations the University of Alaska System has experienced the last several years. To be sure, it's been difficult for stakeholders at all levels - even described as "traumatic," in some instances. Yet staff have ensured business continues uninterrupted so our students can pursue knowledge and complete their studies, knowing they're well-prepared to enter the workforce. We are registering students for classes, ensuring classrooms are ready and the campuses are safe, processing student payments, hiring and onboarding faculty, staff, and student workers, planning and executing programs to engage students and provide them a first-rate college experience, and a whole host of other tasks. We are exhausted. As colleagues leave and aren't replaced, staff adjust, picking up extra workloads, because we aren't hearing that tasks can be left undone. Hours are long and often feel thankless, so morale continues to drop. We persist, because we believe in the mission, and we want students to succeed. We want the University to succeed. We also want the University to help us do the same in return.

To improve recruiting and retention of staff at all levels, Staff Alliance recommends that the University of Alaska institutes the following actions. We understand the list seems long, but it is prioritized. The top three Staff Alliance requests are listed immediately, followed by other options for consideration broken into two categories, general compensation and benefit-specific.

FY24 Compensation Recommendations

- Implement an across-the-board 4% increase for all staff. In the past five years UA staff have only received one 1% increase, and a 2% for this current fiscal year, while inflation has increased over 20% in the same amount of time. While we recognize the budget constraints on the UA System, we request an across the board 4% increase in FY24 for all staff.
- Increase the percent of the health plan costs borne by the University to limit the impact of increased plan costs on employees.
- Increase flexibility in performance bonuses, for example by adopting UAF recognition policy across the system as a baseline.

Additional Recommendations

- Reinstigate annual step increases (automatic each year).
- Provide yearly pay increases that offset inflation.
- Review position descriptions, ensuring positions are in the correct [job family](#).
- Simplify the hiring process to make it more efficient to hire additional staff. Modernize recruitment and hiring processes.
- Provide a method of compensation for staff taking on the duties of an open position that doesn't qualify for out-of-class pay.
- Educate supervisors on all compensation methods and options available to them.

- Consider childcare support for those employees affected by the rising costs of that necessary burden.
- Provide full funding for the ANSI and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plans.

Additional Benefit Considerations

- Add Roth IRA as an option for employee retirement plans.
- Re-evaluate breaks of service and how they factor into longevity in terms of recognition and retirement.
- Allow a la cart benefit options such as dental only or dental and vision only.
- Include supplemental life for spouses and partners as an optional benefit.

The cost of living has increased and continues to do so, while compensation is stagnant. Without change, the University of Alaska cannot keep or attract the talent that we need to be a high-functioning organization – to be Alaska's employer of **choice**. We respectfully ask that your office include these recommendations while building the FY24 budget. An investment in staff is an investment in the University, the students we serve, and our great state.