

Nov. 10, 2017

Dear UA Community –

I am pleased to announce that Dean Paul Layer will join the executive team at the UA System as interim vice president for academic and student affairs. Dean Layer is currently dean of the University of Alaska Fairbanks College of Natural Science and Mathematics (CNSM). In this new position, he succeeds Daniel M. White, who was named UAF chancellor in May.

Dean Layer agreed to serve as the interim VP to allow more time to continue the search for a permanent vice president. He is a highly regarded faculty member at UAF and someone who understands our need for increasing UA's enrollment and student achievement. He's a skilled leader with a passion for education and will be a tremendous asset as the university works with educators to create a culture of education in Alaska. We welcome him to our team and to this important role.

Dean Layer has been a faculty member at UAF since 1989 when he was hired as an assistant professor in the Department of Geology and Geophysics and the Geophysical Institute. He led the Department of Geology and Geophysics from 1995 to 2003 and again in 2007, and most recently was the dean of the UAF College of Natural Science and Mathematics. He has also been chair and is currently a member of the Alaska Geologic Mapping Advisory Board and the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources and Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys.

He has been instrumental in developing a new life sciences building, increasing undergraduate enrollment in CNSM and developing a professional veterinary medicine program in cooperation with Colorado State University. Under his leadership, the number of students earning Ph.D. degrees has increased. He has co-authored more than 120 papers and has been involved in international collaborative projects with scientists from Russia, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Sweden and South Africa.

Dean Layer received his B.S. in geology from Michigan State University and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in geophysics from Stanford University. He spent three years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Toronto's Department of Physics.

Please join me in welcoming Paul Layer to his interim role, which he undertakes on Nov. 13.

Regards,  
Jim Johnsen