

James R. Johnsen, Ed.D.

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May 6, 2020

Dear UA Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that Matthew Cooper will become the university's next General Counsel following the retirement of UA's current General Counsel Michael Hostina at the end of June. As the chief legal officer to the Board of Regents, statewide administration and all campuses throughout the university system, the General Counsel is a vital part of my leadership team.

It is a privilege to have Matt as lead counsel and we are extremely fortunate he has agreed to take on this important role. My experience working with him over the years leaves no doubt about his capacity, intelligence, and dedication to serve as legal counsel and to lead our legal team.

Many of you know Matt and have had the opportunity to work with him in many key areas -- university athletics, contracts, facilities management among just a few.

Before joining us in 2011, Matt was in private practice in the Fairbanks and Anchorage offices of Guess & Rudd. You also might know him from his service on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly where he serves as presiding officer. Matt will resign that role effective May 31, but he will remain an assembly member.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank General Counsel Mike Hostina for his tireless dedication and excellent service to the university for more than 20 years. Mike led the university through some of the most difficult times in UA's history, providing steady counsel and guidance. Mike's thoughtful legal analysis and exemplary writing skills consistently improved the way decisions, communications, and plans were framed such that the university's students, staff, and faculty welfare were always the first consideration.

Please join me in congratulating General Counsel Matt Cooper and thanking Mike Hostina. We wish them the very best of health, prosperity, and many good years ahead.

Best regards,
Jim Johnsen