

## ***CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS:***

### ***From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield***



August 28, 2015

Dear UAS faculty and staff:

The excitement of a new academic year reminds me once again of one simple truth: that in a small institution like UAS every single faculty and staff member makes a difference. This is true for the faculty member who helps an anxious new First Year student sort out her academic goals, or the instructor who ensures that an online student who doesn't even live in Southeast Alaska feels like she has full access to our student support services. It's true for a staff member who offers a friendly smile and a proactive response to meeting a student need—providing exceptionally good service. It's true of a Facilities Services employee who drops everything to repair a broken water main or who ensures that our campus environment is safe, clean, and inviting. These are but a few examples of actions I've seen in recent days that make me proud of the work we do.

I had the opportunity to address our new President, Dr. Jim Johnsen, and others in UA leadership last week about UAS budget priorities. In doing so I underscored again what I'm most proud of at UAS: our ongoing commitment to quality undergraduate and graduate education both in campus-based and online programs; our laser-like focus on student success; the personalized quality of our learning community—using our small size to ensure that no student is lost in the shuffle; our emerging efforts to provide distinctive interdisciplinary education to students and quality technology-enhanced learning; and our goal of instilling the richness and diversity of Southeast Alaska's cultures, languages, and environment in our curriculum. I was pleased to see the responsiveness of UA leaders to this portrait of UAS: they see the quality and distinctiveness that make us a 'crown jewel' in Alaskan higher education.

By focusing on continuous improvement, we make UAS a truly distinctive institution of higher learning—one that serves our students well. In a challenging budget environment, we can't afford to stand still. As Sealaska CEO Anthony Mallott reminded us during our recent UAS Strategic Planning Retreat: "if you're standing still, you're going backwards." We've got to continue moving forward with our focus on quality and innovation. Fortunately, we've got many examples of that at UAS—in our academic programs and in student services. We need to build on these in the years ahead.

You can help in this effort by reviewing and commenting on the draft outcomes from our recent UAS Strategic Planning Retreat—a document that identified six priorities for the next 1-3 years at UAS:

- Improving and enhancing UAS information technologies and services
- Strengthening faculty support in instructional design & technology-enhanced learning
- Improving strategic recruitment, marketing, and branding
- Linking strategic marketing with targeted enrollment management
- Expanding high impact learning experiences and partnerships
- Increasing diversity in UAS faculty and staff

A copy of the draft Retreat outcomes is widely available--from Faculty Senate and Staff Council leadership, from deans and directors, and from Retreat participants. Please take the time to review it and offer your comments no later than Friday, September 18, 2015. Comments can be submitted through governance groups or individually. Thank you for being part of a UAS community committed to excellence in learning, teaching, and student services!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Caulfield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.