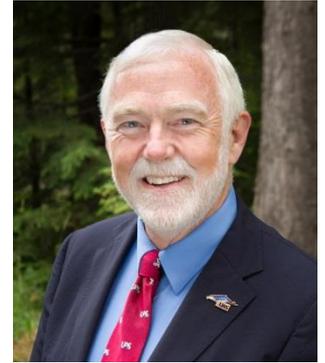


CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS:

From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield

May 4, 2017

This coming weekend we celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of over 650 students across all of UAS. Sitka's commencement is Friday evening, Ketchikan's is Saturday afternoon, and Juneau's is Sunday at 2pm. We even have a commencement event in Anchorage next weekend on May 13 for School of Education graduates from across the state.



Student learning and student success are why our university exists. This is our opportunity to honor that success. We know that higher education transforms lives; for the student, for her family, for our communities, and for our state. Students from throughout Southeast Alaska and across our entire state will be recognized for earning a master's degree, graduate licensure or endorsement, Bachelor's degree, Associate degree, undergraduate certificate, or workforce credential. As Chancellor, I have the privilege of participating in each of these events--shaking the hand of every graduate and seeing the smiles on their faces and those who've supported them.

This year at the Juneau ceremony we are honored to recognize three special UAS award recipients: Juneau teacher Lorrie Heagy and Kake Elder Ruth Demmert will both receive an honorary doctorate. Longtime Juneau community educator and activist Connie Munro will be receiving a meritorious service award. Their recognition by the UA Board of Regents highlights significant lifetime accomplishments and brings honor to our university.

As we enter into this weekend of celebration, I want to express my special appreciation to all of you—staff and faculty—whose work profoundly influences the lives of these graduates. The lead-up to commencement and the end of the semester can be stressful for students, faculty, and staff alike. It is an intensely busy time of finals, portfolio reviews, dissertation defenses, grading, confirming the graduation requirements, organizing celebratory events, and making our campuses look splendid. I know that this is a stressful and uncertain time but you are doing an outstanding job. I greatly appreciate your dedication and hard work.

In the coming weeks, we'll have several other opportunities to celebrate excellence at UAS. Next Monday, May 8, we'll hold our annual UAS Celebration of Faculty Excellence at 3pm. This will be in the Glacier View Room on the Auke Lake Campus along with video connections to Ketchikan and Sitka. On May 18 and 19 we'll hold Staff Development Day events, including a chance to recognize those who've distinguished themselves in their staff roles over many years.

I also want to highlight progress on several key initiatives:

- 1) Undergraduate Fisheries: In June the Board of Regents will act on Faculty Senate's proposal for a joint BS degree in Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, offered in partnership with UAF. I'm very hopeful that this will be approved in light of the solid proposal from our faculty and prior expressions of regents' support.
- 2) Teacher Preparation: We're moving ahead expeditiously to plan for the future "Alaska College of Education," administered by UAS. I chair the Steering Committee, made up of faculty and administrators from all three UA universities. Our foremost goal is to produce a Substantive Change Proposal to the NWCCU by the end of October that can be reviewed and approved under our accreditation. Education faculty from UAA, UAF, and UAS will be meeting together in Anchorage on May 11 to share ideas and a vision for the new College.
- 3) Business and Public Administration programs are expected to flourish in coming years even as these will be placed under the School of Arts and Sciences. We're hiring new faculty members and moving ahead with marketing. UAS offers distinctive online degrees in these areas; flexible degrees at a distance that meet the needs of students all across our state.
- 4) Enhancing the Baccalaureate: Humanities and Social Sciences faculty are engaged in an ongoing conversation about possibly streamlining our degree options, expanding high-impact learning, and enriching student

engagement in their own education. I appreciate this focus on continuous improvement in our curriculum that will make UAS offerings even more distinctive for students.

- 5) Marketing and Recruitment: Building enrollments and improving retention are at the top of our list of priorities. Our advisors and recruiters are doing a terrific job of reaching out to prospective students, and a number of faculty are going to exceptional lengths to help. But we have work yet to do. Our enrollment numbers so far are down compared to last year but there are some hopeful signs. Our first-time freshman applications are UP, as are applications from Alaska Scholars.

Successful recruitment and retention is a job for every single person at UAS. All of us are ambassadors for our university and the special educational experience that we offer, whether in arts and sciences, business and public administration, career education, or teacher preparation. Growing our enrollments and improving student retention is vital to our future. I invite your full engagement in that effort.

Again, my thanks for the excellent support that you provide to our students at this stressful but exciting time of year. Please join me in celebrating the amazing accomplishments of each and every graduate!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Caulfield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Chancellor Rick Caulfield