



CHANCELLOR'S COMMENTS: From UAS Chancellor Rick Caulfield

June 30, 2020

Dear UAS faculty and staff:

Today is my last day serving as Chancellor here at the University of Alaska Southeast. For me, this is the culmination of ten wonderful years working as UAS Provost and Chancellor, and a total of 35 years as a faculty member and administrator in the UA system. I'm very grateful for the congratulatory comments and emails I've received from many of you, and for the virtual retirement party held last week.

I want to use this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the work that each and every one of you do in support of our students and the communities we serve. These have been challenging times given budget reductions and the COVID pandemic, but you have all stepped up to ensure that we continue to provide a quality education to students. I continue to be very proud of the incredible learning environment that we provide, and the support we provide to students whether they are on one of our three campuses or taking classes online. We can all rightly be proud of the NWCCU reaccreditation received last year, and the five commendations received. Those commendations spoke to what is special about a UAS education, including how we work together as a regional institution, the quality of our faculty and staff, our ongoing efforts to incorporate Alaska Native knowledge and wisdom into our curriculum, how we work to make our campuses a place of respect and safety for all, and how our students appreciate the genuine care and support that they receive. We can also be proud of the recent accreditation of both our teacher preparation programs and our business management degree offerings. These too speak to the quality of a UAS education.

I leave UAS with great confidence in the leadership abilities of our incoming Interim Chancellor Dr. Karen Carey, our Executive Cabinet, and our campus directors. They have been intimately involved in the many challenges we've faced, so I expect that the leadership transition will be smooth. We face a new challenge on the horizon with the Board of Regents' request for a study of perhaps merging UAS with UAF. As you know, I objected to the idea of such a study but the Board decided to approve going forward with it. It will be important to monitor the development of that project carefully so that it fully reflects the richness and special qualities of what we offer our students. The Board has promised that the study will be objective and that stakeholders will have ample opportunity to share their perspective about the idea. I expect that Interim Chancellor Carey will be following this closely and will keep you informed about it.

As we move forward into summer I wish you all the best, including for the upcoming July 4th four-day holiday. I will miss the opportunity to interact with you, but Annie and I will remain here in Juneau so I hope we will see you in one setting or another. I leave knowing that UAS will continue to offer a terrific education to our students and that the work of our university will continue with your support and engagement.

Sincerely,