

Engagement: An Imperative for the University of Alaska Fairbanks as a Land-Grant University

***Peter J. Stortz, Anthony T. Nakazawa
Lincoln Y. Saito, Edgar J. Boone***

Abstract

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is field-testing and validating a community-based programming model that stresses collaboration and engagement of its administrators and faculty with native peoples and their elders, rural secondary education personnel, and leaders of other community stakeholder groups. These participants work together in (1) forming and engaging regional alliances or consortiums to identify and resolve critical issues that impact quality of life; (2) designing and implementing curricula that integrate research-based scientific content with native culture, and (3) adapting existing curricula grounded in natural resources education for teaching a variety of subjects in traditional and nontraditional learning contexts. This paper: (1) describes the programming processes and strategies used to interact and collaborate with Alaska's native peoples, in five rural regions (communities) to implement the three goals; (2) reports outcomes achieved to date; and (3) reports the lessons learned by UAF in its quest to apply its resources in meeting the needs of rural native Alaskans.

Engagement is a twenty-first century imperative for the nation's land-grant universities. In a series of papers prepared in the last 1990s by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, this distinguished cadre of higher education leaders issues a clarion call for state and land-grant universities to become more proactive and engaged in helping the public solve problems and address issues that threaten society's well-being. The commission acknowledges and praises the significant contributions of land-grant universities in (1) making education accessible at a level unparalleled elsewhere in the world, (2) creating a prodigious research engine, and (3) bringing the benefits of new knowledge to millions of people so that they can address and solve problems in their daily lives. However, the commission also reports growing frustration among the American

public who instead perceive these institutions as unresponsive to society's multitude of complex problems and issues. This frustration is associated with the insular and discipline-focused orientation of the nation's land-grant universities that was evident during the latter part of the twentieth century. The public's perception is that land-grant universities, despite their resources and expertise, are not oriented toward helping the public resolve problems and address issues that impact quality of life. Indeed, significant numbers of Americans and their leaders perceive land-grant university administrators and faculty as aloof, lacking an understanding of and commitment to the mission of the land-grant university, and poorly prepared to exert leadership and to cooperate in identifying and resolving public issues and problems.

"The public's perception is that land-grant universities, despite their resources and expertise, are not oriented toward helping the public resolve problems and address issues that impact quality of life."

It is in this context that the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities concludes that land-grant universities must expand their traditional approaches of outreach and service to what the commission defines as engagement. Land-grant universities must renew and reposition themselves to become fully engaged institutions. They must redesign their teaching, research, extension, and service functions to become more sympathetically and productively involved with their communities, however community may be defined.

Engagement, as envisioned by the commission, goes well beyond extension programs, conventional outreach, and most notions of public service that land-grant universities currently provide. Embedded in the engagement ideal is a commitment to reciprocity in the form of partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for ideas that each brings to the table. A land-grant university that responds to these imperatives can properly be called, by the Kellogg Commission's own definition, an "engaged land-grant university." The engaged land-grant university must accomplish at least three things:

- It must be organized to respond to the needs of current and future students, not yesterday's students.

- It must enrich students by bringing research and engagement into the curriculum and offering practical opportunities for students to prepare for the world they will enter.
- It must put its critical resources (knowledge and expertise) to work on the problems faced by the communities it serves.

To accomplish these ends, the engaged land-grant university must recognize and accept that its new and evolving student body is considerably different from its traditional student body that, for the most part, was full-time and predominantly white male. The new student body is diverse and is characterized as part-time, predominantly female, older, and often employed. Further, the land-grant university must adopt and commit to service-learning, that is, preparing students for the challenges life will place before them by helping them integrate community and academic experience. It is of paramount importance that the engaged land-grant university renew its commitment to the idea that the application of knowledge is perhaps the most distinctive and crucial contribution that it can make to the well-being of society. Primary areas that warrant the attention of the engaged land-grant university include education, economic development, health care, the environment, infrastructure, and other major areas of concern that impact quality of life.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks and Its Quest to Become a More Engaged Land-Grant University

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is the nation's northernmost land, sea, and space grant university. UAF's mission differs to some degree from that of other land grant universities, as evident in its designation as a land, sea, and space grant university. It is unique among the nation's land-grant universities in several ways, not least of which is the vastness of the geographical area that constitutes the state of Alaska and, consequently, the UAF's service area community. The land area of Alaska is nearly one-fifth the size of the continental United States. Other defining features include the natural terrain of the state, its climate, and the wide dispersion of its rather sparse population, particularly its rural population. Alaska's current population numbers slightly more than six hundred thousand, half of whom live in the Anchorage area, with eighty thousand in Fairbanks and thirty thousand in Juneau. The remaining 190,000 live in rural communities widely dispersed throughout the state.

Because it is the state's land-grant university, and consistent with the nation's other land-grant universities, UAF's constituents include all residents of Alaska. It is a multicampus institution with its flagship campus located in Fairbanks. Other campuses and extended centers that are part of UAF include six extended community campuses (Bristol Bay–Dillingham, Chukchi–Kotzebue, Tanana Valley–Fairbanks, Kuskokwim–Bethel, Interior–Aleutians–Interior Alaska and the Aleutian Chain, and Northwest–Nome) and cooperative extension offices and centers throughout the state. UAF provides a range of programs, including public service, research and doctoral programs, liberal and professional undergraduate and graduate education, certificate and associate degree programs, vocational education, and developmental and lifelong

learning programs—all to traditional as well as nontraditional students.

“A large number of Alaskans reside in 180-plus rural communities spread over two-thirds of the state, with the majority located in villages and in remote areas connected only by air, boat, snowmobile, and dogsled.”

Beginning with its establishment as the state's land-grant university in 1915 and in keeping with the provisions and intent of the nation's land-grant legislation (i.e., the Morrill, Hatch, and Smith-Lever Acts), UAF has increasingly endeavored to link its research, teaching, and service to community, organizational, business, and government entities to identify and meet community, regional,

state, national, and global needs. Through its College of Rural Alaska, its extended campuses, the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, Alaska Sea Grant's Marine Advisory Program, and other outreach programs in nearly all of its colleges as well as several major research institutes (i.e., the Geophysical Institute, the Institute of Arctic Biology, the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, the International Arctic Research Center, and the Arctic Region Supercomputing Center), UAF has entered into various forms of partnerships to engage in collaborative program initiatives at the community, regional, state, national, and global levels. One such issue-focused program, launched by UAF in 1990, is the 4-H Fisheries, Natural Resource and Youth Development Program. This nationally recognized interdisciplinary program targets rural

native youth at risk and is a model of engagement in UAF's non-formal educational arena. While significant results have been and are being achieved through this exemplary program and other forms of engagement, UAF remains steadfast in its efforts to continue to become more engaged and effective as a leader and a catalyst in making its wealth of knowledge and resources available to the state's people and economy.

UAF's Focus on Engagement Efforts with Alaska's Native Peoples

Alaska's native peoples constitute a major public of UAF. A large number of Alaskans reside in 180-plus rural communities spread over two-thirds of the state, with the majority located in villages and in remote areas connected only by air, boat, snowmobile, and dogsled. UAF's College of Rural Alaska is the university's principal conduit for implementing UAF's mission and goals and connecting its resources to the educational and economic development needs of native Alaskans in rural communities. Formed in 1987, UAF's College of Rural Alaska includes six extended community campuses, the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, the Center for Distance Education and Independent Learning, the Department of Alaska Native and Rural Development, and UAF's Rural Student Services. Five of the six extended community (i.e., rural) campuses are in "bush" locations (beyond the road system) and therefore are targeted in this engagement effort.

Through a comprehensive demonstration and development project titled, *The Extended University: A Continuing Collaboration between the College of Rural Alaska Extended Campuses and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Services* (hereafter referred to as UAF's Higher Education Project), funded by the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, UAF's College of Rural Alaska is field-testing and validating a community-based programming model that stresses the engagement and collaboration of UAF administrators and academic and outreach faculty with rural native peoples' elders and leaders, rural secondary educators, and other community leaders. This engagement and collaboration process, therefore, represents both public and private entities in identifying and resolving critical issues (e.g., education, economic development, health care, environment, and infrastructure) that impact quality of life. The Higher Education Project seeks to discover and develop engagement strategies and interventions that will maximize UAF's future

impact on the educational and economic development of Alaska's rural communities and that may, in turn, be useful to all of the nation's land-grant universities.

The Higher Education Project's Goals, Rationale, and Implementation Strategies: The focus of the Higher Education Project is to help UAF become a fully engaged land-grant university and function as a change agent in rural Alaskan communities. The goals of the project include:

- **Goal 1:** At the regional level, to be a leader and catalyst for change and to bring together all segments of the community to begin and perpetuate a focused discussion on the comprehensive educational and economic development needs of people in each of the five rural regions that are served by UAF's College of Rural Alaska and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. The envisioned outcome is that all segments of the region (i.e., community) will bond to form a consortium or alliance that will embrace and foster a spirit of collaboration to address and resolve critical issues that impact the quality of life of residents in each region.
- **Goal 2:** To enable the College of Rural Alaska's extended campuses and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service to network and partner with rural secondary schools in designing and implementing curricula that integrate research-based, scientific content with native culture and that can be used to teach mathematics and science using phenomena unique to the students' culture and region.
- **Goal 3:** To adapt and modify existing curricular materials grounded in natural resources education for teaching a broad range of subjects to secondary education students in rural schools in traditional and nontraditional learning contexts, including the Internet; such subjects include mathematics, science, technology, history, Alaskan native culture, and language arts.

The importance of goal 1 is embedded in the need to renew and rebuild the concept of community in rural Alaska, community in which people are empowered and provided with opportunities to develop and use their innate leadership abilities within their cultural environment. A concomitant need is for the people and the myriad of community-based organizations and agencies (public and private) in rural communities to learn to work together in

identifying critical issues affecting the community and, importantly, in bringing to bear their combined resources in developing and implementing programs to resolve these issues. The College of Rural Alaska's extended community campuses and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, working together in each of the five rural regions, are ideally positioned and equipped with the knowledge and process skills to function as leaders and catalysts in bringing together all segments of the community to begin and perpetuate a focused discussion on the educational and economic development needs in the region. Moreover, they are able to provide technical and other forms of assistance to these regional alliances/consortiums for the development and implementation of collaborative programs to respond to these needs.

Goal 2 is nested in the need for rural public secondary schools, as active members of their respective consortiums/alliances, to help their students obtain an education that will empower and motivate them to acquire further education and to become gainfully employed. Of particular significance to rural public secondary educators is the critical need to help high school students (grades

9–12) improve their understanding of basic mathematics and science concepts. Thus, curricula that integrate research-based, scientific content with native culture and ways of knowing must be designed and used. While the greatest need is for the design and development of curricula that will enhance these students' understanding of mathematics and science, attention should also be given to the development of user-friendly curricula

“The focus of the Higher Education Project is to help UAF become a fully engaged land-grant university and function as a change agent in rural Alaskan communities.”

in the humanities and social sciences. Further, students should be provided opportunities for enrollment in advanced placement courses in mathematics, science, and other disciplines that allow dual credits to be earned toward high school graduation and post-secondary education. UAF's extended community campuses and cooperative extension service are both positioned to network and partner with rural secondary school administrators and faculty in enhancing the education they provide their students and, particularly, in integrating mathematics and science in curricula using

natural resource content. Moreover, they are positioned to introduce the resources of UAF's academic and research communities, thus effecting connections to help rural secondary administrators and faculty enrich curricula in mathematics and science for their students.

Goal 3 has its genesis in the need to adapt and modify existing curricular materials that utilize region-specific environmental and natural resources, and a local knowledge base to teach students a broad range of subjects, including mathematics, science, technology, history, Alaskan native cultures, and language arts. UAF, its rural extended community campuses, and the cooperative extension service possess the expertise needed to work with educators in identifying, adapting, and modifying curricular materials for use in both the traditional classroom and nontraditional contexts, including the Internet.

Processes and Strategies Being Used to Implement the Project:

The Higher Education Project is an integral component of UAF and its College of Rural Alaska and is designed to model, demonstrate, and facilitate collaboration between the college's extended community campuses that serve rural areas and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. Implementation of the project's three goals requires that its leaders exhibit considerable creativity and flexibility as they become more informed about and acquire additional experience in interacting with community leaders, elders, and stakeholders of existing programs, organizations, and agencies that serve Alaska's native peoples. An initial undertaking by the leaders of the project was not only to design and organize it, but also to develop strategies to facilitate its functioning. The project is unique in both its organization and in its elements of collaboration.

The leadership and management of the Higher Education Project accentuate its collaborative nature. It is led by a project team that includes the director of the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, the director of the Chukchi Extended Campus, and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service's natural resource specialist. These three principal investigators are assisted by native Alaskan professional educators who are content and process specialists in programming, learning, instructional and curriculum design, community development, coalition building and partnerships, team building, group processes, and program evaluation and accountability. Project team audio conferences and minutes of meetings indicate that consensus is sought among the three project leaders and their staff in major program and management decisions.

Importantly, considerable effort is expended in maintaining open and continuing communications among the members of the project team.

The project team is committed to inclusiveness in ensuring that major stakeholders and significant others within and external to the UAF community are kept informed about and, as appropriate, involved in decisions and program initiatives. An advisory committee has been formed to provide counsel and advice as well as to serve as a sounding board for the project team on matters concerning the operations and future direction of the Higher Education Project.

The advisory committee's principal roles are to advise the project team on major educational and economic development issues that warrant attention at regional and state levels, to offer suggestions that will strengthen the impact of the project, to encourage and facilitate collaboration among agencies and community groups in the region that may share resources to resolve major issues, and to plot future directions for the project.

“An initial undertaking by the leaders of the project was not only to design and organize it, but also to develop strategies to facilitate its functioning.”

The membership of the advisory committee includes educational leaders and faculty members representative of UAF and its College of Rural Alaska, Alaska's public secondary education system, and the Alaska Rural Educator Preparation Partnerships Program. An initial meeting of the advisory committee was held in mid-year, 2002, and subsequent meetings of the committee are planned for 2003 and 2004. The initial meeting provided opportunities for the committee to become more knowledgeable about the Higher Education Project, acquire an understanding of the committee's role, and acquire a sense of ownership and commitment to the project. Significantly, the advisory committee in its first meeting began to envision the project's potential to strengthen UAF's engagement in the affairs of rural Alaskan communities.

The programmatic strategies used to implement the project's goals are collaborative in nature and emphasize the involvement of the project team, directors and faculty of extended campuses, secondary education administrators and teachers, and other rural community leaders in planning and implementing activities within

each of the strategies. Community-based programming strategies provide technical and consultative assistance to the directors of UAF's rural extended community campuses and other key leaders in each of the rural regions in forming and/or strengthening existing regional alliances/consortiums. These strategies emphasize community, inclusiveness, empowerment, linkage, networking, leadership development, and collaboration of community stakeholders in pooling resources to address and resolve community issues. Such strategic elements are designed to yield alliances/consortiums that will enable and encourage the people and community agencies and organizations to work together in solving problems that impact the quality of life of people in these regions.

“One strategy invites secondary educators . . . to apply for minigrants to fund innovative teaching/learning projects that promote understanding of science and mathematics through natural resources (subsistence agriculture) education.”

The provision of technical assistance to secondary education administrators and teachers in helping them explore and develop curricula that integrate mathematics and science into natural resources education and that are user-friendly requires project leaders to experiment with and use a number of ingenious teaching, coaching, and mentoring strategies. One strategy invites secondary educators in the five rural regions as well as UAF faculty to apply for minigrants to fund innovative teaching/learning projects that

promote understanding of science and mathematics through natural resources (subsistence agriculture) education. Initiators of these proposals are encouraged to include hands-on applications that promote secondary students' understanding of mathematics and science concepts using phenomena unique to Alaska and the students' specific regions.

Another strategy focuses on building partnerships with existing regional and state-based secondary education groups that have established reputations in working with Alaska's secondary educators to create scientific-based, indigenous curriculum units. Moreover, curricular materials developed for use in public schools are required to fulfill Alaska State Content and Performance Standards as well as Alaska State Standards for Culturally

Responsive Schools. Of particular note is the experiential nature of the strategies that are used to develop learner-focused instruction to facilitate native students' understanding of mathematics and science. These strategies require inputs from both the professional community and Elders of the native Alaskan communities. In addition, adapting and modifying existing curricular materials to include a broad range of subjects (including mathematics, science, technology, history, Alaskan native cultures, and language arts) requires several learner-centered strategies appropriate to students in rural secondary schools. The challenge then is to work with teachers and other educators to provide opportunities for these students to master mathematical and science concepts by applying them in their everyday learning and world of work contexts and particularly in subsistence agriculture and related aspects.

“UAF’s Higher Education Project team, in collaboration with secondary public school educators and native elders, has developed curricula that integrate research-based, scientific content with native culture.”

Project Outcomes Achieved: Although the demonstration project is still in its initial stage, UAF has already engaged several concepts and subprocesses encompassed in community-based programming. One example of current engagement is that of strengthening an existing regional consortium, the Northwest Arctic Higher Education Consortium, that addresses educational, economic development, and health issues that impact the quality of life of residents in the Northwest Arctic region. UAF has collaborated with the consortium to design and conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. UAF has also begun assisting leaders in Alaska’s other four rural regions in understanding the community-based programming process as well as forming or strengthening existing regional alliances/consortiums. Moreover, UAF’s Higher Education Project team, in collaboration with secondary public school educators and native elders, has developed curricula that integrate research-based, scientific content with native culture. Significantly, seven innovative curricula are now being implemented in rural secondary schools. Thirteen additional ones, also developed by secondary educators and Alaska native elders, have been approved for funding and will soon be implemented.

Clearly, the Higher Education Project team has made some progress in implementing its three goals. The success achieved to date has been tempered by the amount of start-up time and effort required to organize and staff the project. Nevertheless, there is discernible movement toward implementing each of the goals.

Progress made toward goal 1:

- The project team has connected with and provided technical and consultative assistance to strengthen the Northwest Arctic Higher Education Consortium. Established by the Alaska Legislature in 1999 to respond to alleged overlap and duplication of programs and academic courses offered by the Chukchi Extended Campus and the Alaska Technical Center, this consortium has evolved into a strong collaborative alliance of community and regional organizations and is now addressing education, economic development, and health issues that impact the quality of life of the region's residents. The consortium is making a significant impact on leadership development in the region and in providing opportunities for empowerment to people from all walks of life. During the past twenty months, members of UAF's Higher Education Project team (one of whom is also the director of the Chukchi campus) have participated in the meetings of the consortium and provided technical consultation to its leaders. This assistance has led to the design and implementation of an educational needs assessment in the Northwest Arctic region. The findings of the needs assessment have been shared with the consortium, and the implications for the region are now being discussed. Attention has been focused on public education, economic development, and health care. Of particular note is the care and thoroughness with which the Consortium is recording its deliberations, program activities, and lessons learned in the form of minutes and other print material.
- Creating new alliances or connecting with existing ones in the other four regions served by UAF is under way. Dialogue initiated by the Higher Education Project team with the directors of the four extended campuses has focused on the community-based programming process and the role that these institutions can play in unifying the several segments of their respective regions to begin and perpetuate focused discussion on the educational, economic development, and health care needs of the region. Indications are that directors of the extended

campuses are encouraging the leaders of secondary school systems and other community groups and organizations to commit to forming regional alliances/consortiums to address and resolve critical community issues. The technical assistance and leadership that UAF's Higher Education Project team can provide these leaders in designing and conducting educational needs assessment is proving helpful in advancing discussions about the need for alliances and strategies for forming them.

Progress made toward goal 2:

- UAF's Higher Education Project team has developed and is implementing a process that invites secondary educators in the rural regions served by UAF's extended community campuses and UAF's faculty to apply for minigrants to fund innovative curricular projects that integrate research-based, scientific content with native culture and ways of knowing and that promote and facilitate secondary school students' understanding of mathematics and science. Seven innovative curricular projects, designed by secondary education teachers in rural regions and UAF faculty members who were awarded minigrants, are in the process of being implemented. An additional thirteen curricular projects have recently been awarded minigrants, and implementation by their directors has begun.
- The UAF Higher Education Project has awarded funds to the Association of Interior Educators (AINE) to contract with several native Alaskan teachers to write indigenous curriculum units that will be piloted in interior school districts. A curriculum specialist employed by the AINE project's Alaska Indigenous People's Academy is collaborating with and providing technical assistance to the teachers in selecting and developing topics based on Athabascan culture learned from the elders' academies. Each unit will be aligned with the Alaska State Content and Performance Standards as well as the Alaska State Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools and will incorporate all academic components into the lessons. These instructional units will be field-tested in the classroom by the Alaskan teachers.
- UAF's Higher Education Project team has established a Web site for the project. The site's goals are to: (1) provide a widely used and recognized clearinghouse of UAF programming that accents high school student development in mathematics, science, and natural resource management; (2) communicate

results of the funded projects to secondary teachers, along with information on integrating and using them; (3) promote and market goals 1 and 2 in Alaskan communities; (4) promote collaboration in regional education and provide UAF support for such collaboration; and (5) elevate this Web site program as a major source of information on UAF programming and outreach for teachers of high school students.

- A significant outcome that is strongly connected to goal 2 but also relates to goals 1 and 3 is the establishment of the UAF Science Education Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse seeks to make all of UAF's science programs accessible to the public, to secondary education students, postsecondary education students, college and university professors, and all aspects of both the government and private sectors. The establishment of this clearinghouse is an exemplary breakthrough for UAF engagement.

Progress made toward goal 3:

- An alliance formed with the Alaska Native Knowledge Network has done extensive work in gathering and adapting culturally responsive K–12 curricula for use in rural Alaska's secondary schools.
- Funds have been provided for projects that teachers have developed to incorporate subsistence agriculture experiential learning practices in their classrooms. Subsistence agriculture and its related aspects constitute the principal means of livelihood for most rural Alaskans.

Lessons Learned in the Formative Stage of the Project: Engagement, as defined by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, is a process in which the land-grant university interacts with its current and evolving publics to develop programs that focus on those publics' needs. An essential element in the success of this engagement process is reciprocity; the commission envisions partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks, the nation's northernmost land-grant university, is committed to achieving the standards that characterize the commission's conception of "the engaged land grant university." Through its Higher Education Project titled *The Extended University: A Continuing Collaboration between the College of Rural Alaska Extended Campuses and the Alaska*

Cooperative Extension Service, lessons are being learned in working and partnering with Alaska's rural native population and their leaders and elders that may be helpful to UAF as well as other land-grant universities as they endeavor to broaden their outreach programs to connect their rich knowledge and resources to the educational and economic development needs of their state's rural communities and peoples. These lessons include:

1. Community-based programming can be a very functional and effective process and strategy for the land-grant university to become a leader and catalyst in helping people, their leaders, and community-based agencies and organizations collaborate and resolve critical issues (e.g., education, economic development, health care, environment, and infrastructure) that impact the quality of life of people and their communities.
2. The formation and engagement of alliances/consortiums that include the people, their leaders, and representatives of community organizations and agencies at the regional

“The alliance/consortium nurtures a spirit of teamwork, resolution, and optimism and encourages the people, their leaders, and stakeholder groups to combine their resources to address issues and solve problems.”

level in rural areas can be a powerful force for unifying the participants in identifying and resolving critical issues. In addition, the creation of alliances/consortiums will help to minimize the forces of fragmentation and turf wars that may exist in the region. The alliance/consortium nurtures a spirit of teamwork, resolution, and optimism and encourages the people, their leaders, and stakeholder groups to combine their resources to address issues and solve problems.

3. The formation of alliances/consortiums and the assurance of their continuing engagement and collaboration to address the issues that impact quality of life is complex. The organization of the alliances/consortiums requires land-grant universities and their outreach programs, such as the cooperation extension service and other community-focused groups, to take the initiative in convincing the people, their leaders, and the community agencies/organizations in the

targeted region of the need to unite and work together as an organized group to resolve issues that require a mass of resources and sustained effort. The formation of an alliance/consortium of this nature will also require that the land-grant university (including its cooperative extension service and other university outreach groups) provide considerable and continuing technical assistance to the leaders of the alliance/consortium to help them become proficient in concepts and skills needed to organ-

“This form of engagement emphasizes reciprocity and the sharing of resources through a genuine partnership with the people and their community agencies and organizations.”

ize and sustain the alliance/consortium. Teaching the leaders of the alliance/consortium how to function will require that the land-grant university and its outreach representatives provide various forms of training, including personal consultations, mentoring, coaching, troubleshooting, formal training meetings, print materials, videos, and other forms of assistance. Alliance/consortium leaders must be taught team-building skills, conflict resolution, group consensus

skills, and, especially, how to design and implement programs that will resolve community issues.

4. Effective and viable regional alliances/consortiums whose memberships are inclusive of the people, their leaders, and representatives of community agency/organization stakeholder groups can be effective and efficient means for the land-grant university to become engaged. In connecting with and entering into partnerships with the alliance/consortium to help resolve quality of life issues that impact residents of the region, and functioning as a leader and a catalyst, the land-grant university can facilitate and effect collaboration among the leaders. Furthermore, the land-grant university is combining its rich knowledge base and resources with those of the alliance/consortium to seek resolution of quality of life issues. This form of engagement emphasizes reciprocity and the sharing of resources through a genuine partnership with the people and their community agencies and organizations.

5. It is through collaboration with regional alliances/consortiums that the full impact of the land-grant university's knowledge and resources can be brought to bear in tackling complex issues that impact quality of life, such as public education, economic development, health care, and infrastructure. All segments of the land-grant university can be involved in helping regions, through their alliances/consortiums, address these issues.
6. The membership of the regional alliances/consortiums must be inclusive. Both the public and private sectors must be involved in collaborative efforts to address and resolve regional/community issues. In every region there are numerous community agencies and organizations that have rich resources and share concern for improving the lives of their respective publics. If they are effectively involved as members of regional alliance/consortiums they will work with each other and leaders of the people in combining their resources to benefit the community.
7. The culture of the people and their ways of life, including their social organization and patterns of interaction, must be respected and become an integral part of the alliance/consortium in all of its ways of behaving and in its activities.
8. Engagement, as an integral and institutionalized function, represents a new way of behaving for the land-grant university and therefore may be difficult to implement. By organizing people, their leaders, and community agencies (both public and private) into regional alliances/consortiums, that the land-grant university can effectively and more efficiently apply its knowledge base and resources toward empowering people from all walks of life to resolve issues that impact their daily lives.
9. Opportunities need to be provided for all of the land-grant university's professional communities, including

“Engagement, as an integral and institutionalized function, represents a new way of behaving for the land-grant university and therefore may be difficult to implement.”

academic, research, and outreach faculty, to become involved in engagement activities that enable them to contribute their knowledge and resources to improving the quality of life of all people residing in the state. Every discipline in the land-grant university possesses knowledge and expertise that, if made accessible and appropriately applied, can enrich the lives of all people. However, to achieve this ideal form of engagement, the land-grant university must embrace and assume leadership in helping people, their leaders, and community groups to create alliances/consortiums. Such involvement and collaboration will inform and provide insight to all segments of the land grant university community and thus will provide direction enabling them to use their knowledge and expertise to help people address quality of life issues.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks' Higher Education Project is in its beginning stages. The expectation is that as the project continues to unfold, additional insights about engagement will be obtained. Based on experiences and lessons learned to date, there are many more lessons to be learned.

Engagement, as defined by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, is an imperative that must be institutionalized and implemented if the land-grant university is to make a difference in the lives of the people it is privileged to serve. In conclusion, it is important that all professional communities in the university learn to practice engagement. It is through innovative and visionary projects such as UAF's Higher Education Project that the land-grant university can acquire an understanding of and gain needed experience in engagement and become an engaged land-grant university.

References

- Altbach, Philip G., Robert O. Berndahl, and Patricia J. Gumpert, eds. 1999. *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political and economic challenges*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Boone, Edgar J., John M. Pettitt, and Iris M. Weisman. 1998. *Community-based programming in action: The experiences of five community colleges*. Washington, D.C.: Community College Press.
- Boone, Edgar J., Dale R. Safrit, and Jo Jones. 1997. *Community leadership through community-based programming: The role of the community college*. Washington, D.C.: Community College Press.

- Boone, Edgar J., Dale R. Safrit, and Jo Jones. 2002. *Developing programs in adult education: A conceptual programming model*. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press.
- Clark, Burton. 2000. Collegial entrepreneurialism: Lessons from Europe. *Change, The Magazine of Higher Education*. January-February, 91–153.
- College of Rural Alaska. 2001. *CRA Council 2000 Report*. Fairbanks, Alaska: College of Rural Alaska, UAF.
- Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP). 2002. *The extension system: A vision for the 21st century*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.
- Firebaugh, Francille M. 2002. Land-grant mission—Why bother now? William Henry Hatch Lecture. Washington, D.C.: USDA—Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.
- First Alaskans Foundation. 2001. *Alaska native extension study: A statewide study of Alaska native values and opinions regarding education in Alaska*. Juneau, Alaska: McDowell Group.
- Johnsen, James R. 2002. *Reengaging the university: A case study of the University of Alaska, 1998–2002*. Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska System.
- Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities. 2000. *Renewing the covenant: Learning, discovery, and engagement in a new age and different world*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.
- Moore, Kathryn M. 1990. *Pioneering the land-grant university for the 21st century*. Lansing, Mich.: Office of the Assistant Provost for Lifelong Education, Michigan State University.
- Nakazawa, Anthony, and Ed Boone. 1992. *The cooperative extension service and its response to the changing needs of rural America*. Tempe, Ariz.: Arizona State University.
- Northwest Arctic Higher Education Consortium. 2002. Minutes of meetings, 2000–2002. Kotzebue, Alaska: Chukchi Campus–UAF.
- University of Alaska Fairbanks. 2001. *Strategic Plan UAF 2005*. Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- University of Alaska Fairbanks. 2002. *The extended university: A continuing collaboration between the College of Rural Alaska Extended Campuses and the Alaska Cooperative Extension Service*. Proposals to United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. Fairbanks, Alaska: University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service.

About the Authors

•Peter J. Stortz is associate professor of extension and 4-H Fisheries Natural Resources and Youth Development Specialist with the University of Alaska Fairbanks–Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. Prior to his present position, he served as district 4-H and county agent at UAF and as assistant professor

with the University of Wisconsin Extension System. Mr. Stortz received his M.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point.

- Anthony T. Nakazawa is a professor and economist with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. He has served as the director of the Alaska CES statewide system since 1998. He has also served on the faculty of the University of Hawaii. Dr. Nakazawa received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

- Lincoln Y. Saito is the director of the Chukchi Campus of the College of Rural Alaska–UAF. He has been an educator in Alaska for over three decades. Chukchi Campus is in Kotzebue. Mr. Saito received his M.Ed. degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

- Edgar J. Boone is William Dallas Herring Distinguished Professor Emeritus of the Department of Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University. At NCSU, he established and served as head of the Department of Adult and Community College Education, served as assistant director of the North Carolina Extension Service, and directed the Academy for Community College Leadership Innovation and Modeling (ACCLAIM). Prior to his tenure at NCSU, Dr. Boone served on the faculties of the University of Wisconsin, University of Arizona, and Louisiana State University. He was a Fulbright Scholar at Universiti Sains Malaysia in 1990. He has authored eight books and seventy-six journal articles. Dr. Boone is also a charter member of the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame.