

UAS Sitka Newsletter | May 2019



Kitty LaBounty, Amelia Budd, Crystal Duncan, Will Ortiz, Audrey Beam, and Jeanette Farah-Bucher vacation in the Student Success Center to celebrate the summer sun and the end of spring semester. Photo by: Angie Hilsman

37 Sitka Campus students celebrate commencement

3 May

After graduating high school in 1998 and struggling through a couple of college courses, Heather Albertson didn't feel quite ready for higher education. She took a 10-year break from schooling before reconsidering, she said.

Since then, she's worked as the Sitka Campus student accounts technician while also raising a family and taking one course per semester. On May 3, Albertson gathered in the Student Success Center with 36 other

Sitka Campus graduates, readying to walk the stage for the University of Alaska Southeast's 48th commencement ceremony.

"It was exciting getting ready, and seeing all the students in the SSC, all trying to get our caps on and stay on. Everyone was friendly and happy," Albertson recalled. She received an Associates Degree in Business Administration and an Accounting Technician Certification.



UAS Sitka Student Accounts Technician Heather Albertson readies to walk at the 2019 Commencement Ceremony on May 3. Photo by: Angie Hilsman

"Sometimes you took classes, and you don't do so well. I worked through the discouragement, worked through the issues, and I finished," Albertson said, applauding her family for their constant support. "It's achievable — working, having a family— to even just take one class a semester. Eventually you will get there, like I did. I'm glad that I stuck with it and did it."

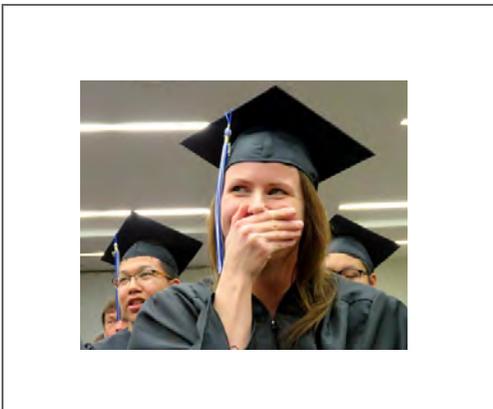
Albertson was one of UAS' 177 graduates, which included students as far away as Scammon Bay, Alaska and Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts. She will begin pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration through UAS this fall.

"Maybe one day it'll help me get a better job, maybe it won't. But it just feels good to have," she said.

Alongside Albertson were colleagues Emy Roles and Crystal Duncan. Roles completed her AAS in Business Administration, her third associate's degree. The first two included an AAS in Computer Information and Office Systems and a general AA.

"I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up," said Roles. She shifted tracks from counseling to computers to business administration before finding her way. "I love learning new things. I have just about all the associates and endorsements that Sitka Campus offers," laughed Roles. She plans to graduate with a Bachelor's in Business Administration with an emphasis in Human Resources and a certificate in small business management in Spring 2020.

Crystal Duncan received her Master's Degree of Business Administration through the University of Alaska Fairbanks.



Sitka Campus Director Leslie Gordon welcomed students from Kenai to Ketchikan during the May 3 celebration, as well as local veterinarian Burgess Bauder. Bauder was awarded for meritorious service.

Thirty years from now, you'll remember that I wore pink, joked Bauder.

Also visiting for the celebration were Richard Caulfield, chancellor; Karen Carey, provost; Jeffrey Lofthus, professor for the Alaska

College of Education; Paul Layer, University of Alaska vice president of Academics, Students, and Research; Cody Bennett, manager of IT Help Desk; and Trisha Lee, registrar.

Sitka Campus' class of 2019 included 89 occupational endorsement completions, 26 certificates, 19 associate's degrees, seven bachelor's degrees, and nine master's degrees.

The Ketchikan and Juneau campuses celebrated commencement on May 4 and 5, respectively.

Visit UAS Sitka Campus on Facebook for photos from commencement. Email Angie Hilsman (ahilsman@alaska.edu) for original photos.

Meet Online & eLearning PEP: Morgan Denton

16 May



Morgan Denton comes to UAS by way of Singapore, where she taught high school and university history courses. After years of living on the equator, she has found a new appreciation for the cool temperatures and extended twilight of Sitka reminiscent of her childhood in Buffalo, New York.

Morgan completed her Ph.D. in Modern European and Gender History at the University of Buffalo in 2012, where her dissertation explored how gender and sexual norms interact with, and are shaped by, political states. She is excited to explore Alaskan history and culture and sees this study as integral to her new role at UAS

with its mission to embody and respect the diversity of each individual's culture.

As a Personal Education Planner, Morgan is looking forward to supporting UAS students successfully complete their educational goals by providing a friendly and accessible point of contact.

She loves dancing, karaoke, and kind of secretly wishes the world were made of cheese.

Email Morgan at mpdenton@alaska.edu, call (907) 747-7772, or visit her in Room 228C.

Checking in with distance student, Shaleena Bott

23 April



On the east side of Baranof Island, overlooking Chatham Strait and other mountainous islands, a salmon hatchery pulls water from the lake seated in the mountains overhead.

It was at Hidden Falls Hatchery that Shaleena Bott first saw an advertisement for the University of Alaska Southeast's Fisheries Technology program. The Utah native had first moved to Alaska to work at the hatchery, run by Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA), in 2014.

"I thought, 'I'm working in the field. I might as well get the degree,'" said Bott, recalling the cardboard postcard reading "Earn a higher education in fisheries."

Despite having a spotty history with education, Bott enrolled part-time at Sitka Campus in 2016. She had had some college experience and a GED, but she had struggled in class settings since her parents had pulled her out of school in the fifth grade, she said.

Born in South Korea, Bott was adopted and raised in Brigham City, Utah. She was the only adoption and the only girl among seven children, brought up by two religious parents who chose to homeschool their children. She helped run the family business instead of continuing her education, she said.

At 17 years old, Bott lied about her age to land a nanny position in New York. The East Coast culture exposed her to history, arts, and values she had not been exposed to in the west.

“Back east, education is a huge priority. [My employer] told me that if I wanted to get into college, she would help me. I just needed my transcript,” said Bott. “Because I didn’t finish high school, I didn’t even know what that was. That lit a fire in me.”

Bott hid a dictionary in her room and secretly studied its content to improve her reading and comprehension skills. Thanks to her Long Island employer, she connected higher education with more opportunities, although she never disclosed that she lacked a high school degree.

Instead, Bott enrolled in a GED program in Utah, after moving back upon her mother’s request. She finished the program two months after giving birth to her son, Gabriel, in 2002.

“Your kids make you realize that you have to provide for them,” said Bott. That logic motivated her enrollment at Utah State University the following year. However, Bott struggled to balance various customer service management jobs and single parenting and felt discouraged by the faculty who seemed impatient with her lower literacy level, she said. She dropped out shortly after starting.

Bott tried another approach. Eleven years later, she made the heart-wrenching decision to leave Gabriel with his father. She instead followed her boyfriend Benjamin “Benji” Burbank, a fish culturist for NSRAA, to pursue work at the Alaskan hatchery, she said.

“Salmon fisheries is great. You get to work on your own, be outdoors, see Alaska in all its beauty, and you’re not responsible for anything except maybe 7.5 million fish,” said Bott.

Bott began classes in 2016. All of Bott’s classes were online, except for the fish pathology lab. She explained the convenience of the program’s iPads, complete with the lessons and assignments already downloaded. University staff send the iPads to students, who then return them when they finish the course.

“When you live remote, you don’t always have internet,” Bott explained. “You do your work, and when you have internet, it uploads everything you’ve done.”

Bott recognized faculty Reid Brewer and Joel Markis for their engaging lessons. She also acknowledged Financial Literacy Specialist Joy Klushkan for sharing funding opportunities and Academic Advisor Amelia Budd for being empathetic to her circumstances.

"There's that connection, and it's great even though you don't get to meet these people," she said.

Bott and Burbank transitioned to Neets Bay Hatchery in Ketchikan in 2016. They later found work in Haines, where Bott currently manages the Aspen Hotel while also finishing an Associate of Applied Science in Fisheries Management. She hopes to finish her degree by Spring 2020 and transition back into the field.

"We loved providing for the fisheries to keep the economy growing," she said. "I'm a strong believer in experience over education, but there are things I never would have gotten to experience without education."

Looking forward, Bott is also cheering on her son as he approaches high school graduation. "I don't want him to be 40 and to go through life like me," Bott said. "He knows education is super important to me." Gabriel is currently considering a B.A. in psychology at the University of Utah.

Grad student ties assignment to Alaskan resource

8 May



Will Ortiz first heard about Learning Express while visiting Juneau for the Alaska Library Association's 2019 Conference last February.

Learning Express, an online resource database available to all Alaska residents, includes educational material such as practice tests and tutorials.

"A lot of people don't know that this is available to them. I want them to know about it, how to get to it, and how to use it," said Ortiz.

When the Library & Information Science graduate student was assigned to create an informational video on how to navigate an academic database (such as the ones you find in libraries, chock full of research papers), he decided to apply it to Learning Express.

"In the video, I was to demonstrate the [online] searching techniques that I learned in class," explained Ortiz. Search techniques account for different ways to use search terms, categories, metadata, and other behind-the-scenes database stuff.

Ortiz recognized that a video showcasing Learning Express would directly benefit his students. He said he already uses it to tutor in the Student Success Center.

"As a librarian, it is our duty to help patrons locate the information that they need, and I think this is an example of doing just that," he said. The video will be available on Sitka Campus' resource webpage in the near future.

Ortiz studies Library & Information Science through San Jose State University's online graduate program.

Sitka Campus staff recognized for crisis response

3 May



During the 2019 commencement ceremony, Sitka Campus Director Leslie Gordon recognized a staff member for a job well done in an on-campus emergency.

"At this time, I'd like to honor an employee of the Sitka Campus who went above and beyond expectations during a medical emergency we had on the campus in March," Gordon stated to a full room.

"Sitka Fire Department Chief Dave Miller commended Facilities Services Technician Chad Mulligan for his help with a stressful medical situation and commented that it is rare for a member of the

public to assist their teams in such a competent manner," she said.

Amelia Budd recognized for service excellence

22 May



University of Alaska Southeast officials recognized a Sitka Campus staff member for excellence in serving the UAS community.

Academic Advisor Amelia Budd received a plaque and a gift of one day annual leave for her service excellence during the 2018-2019 academic year. Staff Council members recognized her in front of a joint-campus conference during Staff Development Day.

Candidates for the award must consistently demonstrate the following qualities: dedication to their job, advocating for UAS,

dedication to special projects, demonstrating a helpful and positive attitude, community engagement, and improving campus culture and collaboration.

UAS faculty, staff, students, and/or community members can nominate candidates. Staff council evaluates the nominations before forwarding recommendations to the chancellor, who then makes the final determination.

Budd was one of four persons recognized. Juneau Campus recipients included Alison Krein, creative manager, and Eric Lingle, database coordinator; Ketchikan's academic advisor, Kate Govaars, was also awarded.

Budd has served Sitka Campus since Spring 2016. Alongside working as an advisor, Budd has taught writing, humanities, college prep, and yoga as an adjunct instructor.

Sitka Campus staff 'kiln it' with pottery lesson

22 May

Following a web conference with Juneau Campus, Sitka Campus staff gathered in the art lab to stretch their creative muscles. Assistant Professor of Art Liz Zacher led the group in mug design and crafting. The pottery session served as part of the campus' Staff Development Day.



Morgan Denton and Emy Roles work with clay in the art lab during Staff Development Day. Photo by: David Felts



Left, Sonia Felts. Photo by David Felts; right, John Ingman. Photo by: Emy Roles

Upcoming Events & Deadlines



Female Leaders Panel Discussion

May 29, 6-7 PM

Get inspired by Sitka's women leaders! UAF's Sarah Stanley will lead the discussion between Trish White, Tracy Sylvester, Becky Meiers, Alana Peterson, and Dani Snyder.

The panel will cover the women's career paths, obstacles they've faced, and solutions they've created. The event aims to connect and support Sitka Campus' female community; male allies are welcome.

Head to Centennial Hall, Room 6. Light refreshments included! The panel discussion is covered by Title III's college-to-career

objectives. Contact Angie Hilsman (ahilsman@alaska.edu) for more info.



Meet UAF's Sarah Stanley

May 30

Meet Sarah Stanley, or join her for the two workshops she'll lead on Sitka Campus. The first training will lead faculty and staff through using micro-affirmations to support the success of nontraditional female students. *11 AM-12 PM, Room 230.*

The second workshop is open to the entire Sitka Community, and will focus on mentoring female students. Participants will leave the workshop with a mentoring philosophy and a network of professionals equally committed to fostering inclusive and equitable mentor-mentee relationships. *1-2 PM, Room 230.*

These workshops are part of Title III's college-to-career objectives. Contact Angie Hilsman (ahilsman@alaska.edu) for more info.



Campus Closed

May 27

Enjoy your Memorial Day holiday. Gratitude to those who have fallen while serving for the United States military, and a huge "thank you" to their families.

News & Announcements



Have announcements to share?

Share your news for the June 2019 newsletter.

The Title III team hopes to keep Staff & Faculty in the loop by emailing monthly newsletters and sharing updates via social media. Contact Angie Hilsman (ahilsman@alaska.edu) for more info.

Stay up-to-date by following UAS Sitka on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Search @UASSitka.