

Mission Statement: The Alaska Biomedical Learning and Student Training (BLaST) program has an over-arching aim to enhance capacity for undergraduate biomedical research training and efficacy for both engaging students from diverse, especially rural Alaskan, backgrounds and preparing students for biomedical research careers.

In the News

BLaST Orientation August 24-25-26, 2017



BLaST staff, faculty, GMRA students, UREs & guest speakers Aug. 24th (Photo by JR Ancheta)



Koyukon Athabascan & Iñupiaq Elder Elizabeth Fleagle enjoying meeting the students - pictured here with Yup'ik Scholar Kendrick Hautala (Photo by A. Topkok)



Alaska Native dance by the Pavva Iñupiaq Dancers Amy Topkok (left), Dr. Sean Asiqluq Topkok (middle), and their son Christopher Topkok (right). (Photo by T. Vertigan)



Mentor Training presenter Dr. Aida Egues (Assoc. Professor at New York City College of Technology - City University of New York) speaking with GMRA Tynan Becker (Photo by A. Topkok)



Scholar Christina Edwin speaks about her research with wild game meat and the relationship with her home community Koyukuk and Athabascan Koyukon culture. (Photo by T. Vertigan)

BLaST Laboratory Research and Teaching Technician Lori Gildehaus is recognized nationwide!

"Lori Gildehaus loves her job because she's almost always doing something different. Some days, she leads professional development sessions for undergraduate students at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF). Other days, she's weathered down in isolated communities along Alaska's coast while leading community science and outreach events..."

NIH's Biomedical Beat Article - to find out more: <https://biobeat.nigms.nih.gov/2017/09/-having-a-blast-in-alaska-and-beyond/> (map below created by Christa Reynolds, NIH)



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Faculty Pilot Project proposals – due 10/15/17

Undergraduate Research Experience applications - open 10/23/17 & due 11/19/17

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www.alaska.edu/titleXcompliance/nondiscrimination

Meet the Team

Laboratory Research and Teaching Technicians (LRTTs) are an integral part of the mentoring team and work closely with our undergraduate students through tutoring, advising, teaching classes, and leading community-building activities.



Lori Gildehaus, M.S.

Teaching Interests: Comparative Anatomy & Human Anatomy and Physiology, and biology.
Research Interests: Investigating wildlife diseases and impacts on human populations, emerging infectious diseases.



Natalia Podlutskaya, M.S.

Teaching Interests: Mentoring graduate & undergraduate students in the lab environment.
Research Interests: Studying genome stability and mechanisms of DNA repair, and Biology of Cancer and Aging.



Joanna Green, M.S.

Teaching Interests: Hands-on active learning & use of interdisciplinary techniques.
Research Interests: Studying microbial diversity and linking microbial processes to larger systems.



Emily Sousa, M.S.

Teaching Interests: Mentoring graduate and undergraduate students in the lab environment.
Research Interests: Patterning & change dynamics of a distinct forest-tundra ecotone type



Aaron Kallas, M.S., Ed.

Teaching Interests: Cellular and Molecular Biology, Biotechnology, Ecology, Environmental Science, Geology, Botany, Genetics
Research Interests: Environmental Impacts to Human Health, Comparative DNA analysis



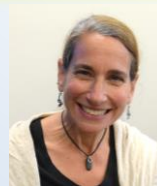
Theresa Vertigan, M.S.

Teaching Interests: Cell biology, biochemistry, analytical lab techniques, tutor for introductory chemistry.
Research Interests: Effects of disease or toxicants on molecular and cellular processes, in vitro model systems, analytical assay development.

Scientist of the Month



Sept. Scientist of the Month 2017: GMRA Sheri Coker is pursuing her Ph.D. in Natural Resources and Sustainability at UAF, and is entering her third year as a BLaST Graduate Mentoring Research Assistant. Congratulations Sheri!



Oct. Scientist of the Month 2017: UAF Faculty Ellen Lopez serves as an Associate Professor for the UAF Psychology Department and continues to contribute towards mentoring excellence! Thank you Ellen!

BLaST Events/ Announcements/ Conferences

CONFERENCES & OPEN EVENTS

- National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration** Oct 9 3-9pm Wood Center
- Diversity Program Consortium (DPC) Annual Meeting** Oct. 10-11, Bethesda, Maryland (near Washington DC)
- 5th Annual Alaska Native Health Research Conference (ANHR)** Oct. 16-18 Captain Cook Hotel, Anchorage, AK
- Elders and Youth (Alaska Native) Conference** hosted by First Alaskans Institute Oct. 16 – 18 Dena’ina Center, Anchorage, AK
- Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) Annual Conference** Oct. 19 – 21 Dena’ina Center, Anchorage, AK
- 2017 Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science Conference (SACNAS)** Oct 19-21 Salt Lake City, UT
- Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) 2017** Nov 1-4 Phoenix, AZ

BLaST EVENTS

- Stop Talking: Alaska Native Perspectives on Teaching, Learning and Difficult Dialogues Workshop** Oct. 14 9am-3pm IARC 501 – Space Limited: <https://uafblast.wufoo.com/forms/stop-talking-alaska-native-perspectives-workshop/>
- Monthly Mentoring** Oct. 17 1-2 pm Leadership, Nov 21 Goal-setting & Evaluation, Dec. 5 Conflict Resolution & Mediation 174 AHRB
- Alaska Interior Medical Education Summit (AIMES)**– Oct 21 8am-1:30pm Murie Registration required: <https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/aimes/>
- Scholar Lunch:** Oct 31 – 1-2pm 185 AHRB
- One Health Seminars:** Monday’s 4:30-5:30pm –Elvey Auditorium Oct 2 Arleigh Reynolds, Oct 9 Matt Kaeberlein (UW), Oct 16 Raymond Tarpley (Texas Tech), Oct 23 Esther Kennedy (SEATOR/STA) & Oct 30 – TBA
- Pre-Med Society** Weekly club Meetings Thurs. 1-2pm 301 Murie

Sign up for our BLaST Listserve on our website <http://alaska.edu/blast/>

The Research Mixer on Sept 26th was attended by over 70 University-wide undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty - all interested in furthering their research projects or joining a research project . Fifteen presentations were given. Food and prizes were a fun addition to this well-attended event! Thank you to the BLaST staff and especially to LRTT Natalia Podlutskaya for all your hard work!

Corrections to Aug Newsletter: Scholar Janelle Feller graduated in May 2017 in Biological Sciences; Methods in Molecular Biology (MIMB) June 2017 was also taught by GMRA Taylor Gofstein; & Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center (CAIHC) is a regional tribal health clinic funded by Tanana Chiefs Conference (major contributor to the BEE Boot camp).

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