

July 1, 2016

Dear Colleagues,

I'm pleased to announce the appointment of Dana L. Thomas as interim chancellor of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Dr. Thomas will begin on Aug. 14, succeeding outgoing UAF Interim Chancellor Mike Powers.

After reviewing dozens of comments you sent in via the web-based feedback form, and discussions with university governance and community members, I am convinced Dana's long association with the university as a highly regarded faculty member and as a leader both at the campus and in the statewide office, coupled with his passion for higher education and commitment to Alaska, make him the ideal person for this important role.

The work ahead at UAF will be significant. We face severe budget challenges, and our most pressing issue is the education imperative for Alaska - driving more Alaskans to seek a college degree and creating a culture that understands and embraces higher education. Dana's thoughtful yet decisive approach to leadership will help keep UAF moving forward in that effort, as well as mainline UAF's status as America's leading Arctic university.

I also thank Interim Chancellor Mike Powers for his leadership of UAF during the past year, his authenticity, his commitment to Title IX compliance and his many years of service on the UA Board of Regents. People trust and admire Mike Powers, and his genuine goodness and commitment.

Jim Johnsen, President
University of Alaska