UAS Prof. Hayes Wins American Book Award

University of Alaska Southeast Asst. Prof. of English Ernestine Hayes is a winner of the 28th annual American Book Awards for 2007 for Blonde Indian, an Alaska Native Memoir. Past winners include such well-known writers as Russell Banks, Gerald Vizenor, and José Antonio Burciaga.

Since its publication in 2006, Hayes’s memoir has earned regional, national, and international acclaim. It was a finalist for the Kiriyama Prize and a creative nonfiction finalist in the PEN Center USA Literary Awards. It has been called a “rewarding, evocative, ultimately uplifting view of Native life,” by Booklist and “one of the most important books to come out of Alaska,” by the Anchorage Press.

Arizona Press describes the book as blending folklore, metaphor, and a richly textured description of the Alaskan landscape. Blonde Indian offers a unique window into the challenges, rewards, and ambiguities that one woman of racially mixed heritage experiences both within and outside her native Tlingit community.

The American Book Award was established in 1978 by the Before Columbus Foundation to recognize outstanding literary achievement from America’s diverse literary community.

UAS and KTOO: Getting Alaskans on The College Track

UAS hosted the premiere of Alaska College Track 2 on Oct. 17th, the night before it aired on statewide television on Alaska One. The showing was followed by an open discussion about the transition from high school to college, with panelists UAS Chancellor John Pugh, Juneau Douglas High School Counselor Frank Coenraad, UAS Director of Admission Joe Nelson, and UAS student and documentary subject Amanda Bremner.

The panel discussion will air in combination with the documentary on 360 North several times over the next few months.

The Alaska College Track series began in 2004 as a local companion to a national PBS College Track series, which explored equal access issues in the American educational system on the 50th anniversary of the landmark BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION decision. The local version was told through the viewpoint of first-generation college students from Yakutat, Craig, and Hydaburg as they made their transitions from villages to college campuses.

Alaska College Track 2 reacquaints viewers with the students from the original series. It shares how one student used the heartbreaking loss of her brother to reassess her goals and get back on the college track. The documentary takes viewers from UA campuses in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks to show how cultural identity and traditions are helping rural students stay in school. The documentary raises issues such as the High School Qualifying Exam, cultural differences, and the expectation gap between high schools and post-secondary educators.

Alaska College Track 2 is a KTOO-TV production. Katie Bauser served as Writer and Producer with UAS’s Kevin Myers working as Associate Producer. Funding came from First National Bank Alaska, and the University of Alaska Foundation using funds provided by BP/ConocoPhillips.

Evening at Egan Canceled due to Assassination Attempt on Lecturer

The Oct. 12th installment of the UAS Evening at Egan lecture with Judge Zuhair Jumma Bash Al-Maliki, Legal Advisor of Finance and Rule of Law Issues in Iraq was canceled due to an assassination attempt on his life before he left Iraq. Judge Zuhair’s house was firebombed as he was preparing to leave Iraq for his four-city tour of the US. He and his family were not harmed in the attempt, but his home and most his possessions were destroyed.

Judge Zuhair wrote the following in an e-mail to lecture organizer Kevin Myers, “While these actions will not sway me from continuing my work on the Rule of Law, they have forced me to temporarily postpone my trip to the United States in the month of October. As soon as I am able to ensure the security of my family and process new travel documents, I will reschedule my visit. In the meantime, I wish you the very best and apologize for this terrible inconvenience.”

Judge Zuhair is considered a cornerstone of the post-Saddam Iraqi legal system. He served as an Investigative Judge with the Central Criminal Courts of Iraq beginning shortly after the invasion and was elevated to Chief Judge by Paul Bremer in 2004. He was born and raised in Baghdad and attended Baghdad University where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature. From 1988 until 1999 Judge Zuhair worked successively as a translator for the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observation Group, a Foreign Relations Administrator for the Arab Union Scientific Research Council, and as an Administrator for the Arab Federation Food Industry. After careers in both government and private industry, Judge Zuhair returned to Baghdad University to attend law school.
**UAS Sitka Campus featured in Journal of the American Water Works Association**

An article titled, “Distance Learning Helps Alleviate Workforce Issues in Alaska,” was featured in the August edition of Journal of the American Water Works Association. AWWA is the authoritative resource for knowledge, information, and advocacy to improve the quality and supply of drinking water in North America. AWWA is the largest organization of water professionals in the world.

The article features UAS faculty overcoming geographic challenges to help train the workforce in the sparsely populated state. The article credits the UAS Faculty with turning challenges into solutions, “with the can-do spirit common among the hardy people of Alaska.”

**Café Scientifique à Juneau**

The UAS Natural Science Department has initiated Café Scientifique à Juneau. The monthly gathering meets at the popular Downtown Juneau café The SilverBow. A new theme is chosen each month and faculty, staff, students, and the general public are invited to share their theories on the chosen topic. Some theories are interesting, others enlightening, and some are meant to be funny, but all the theories are used to enhance the audiences' understanding of how scientific methodology is used to gain a deeper understanding.

Asst. Prof of Physics Matt Heavner, one of the Café’s organizers said, “for the price of a cup of coffee or a glass of beer or wine, anyone can come and explore the latest ideas in science and technology. It is a forum for debating science issues, not a shop window for science. We are committed to promoting public engagement with science and to making science accountable and fun.”

In its first two months, the Café has attracted more than 100 participants.

**UAS Ketchikan Faculty & Student Honored by Cisco in Washington DC**

UAS Ketchikan Assistant Professor of Computer Networking Richard McDonald and UAS Ketchikan student Sarah Strickling attended the Cisco Networking Academy 10-year Anniversary Salute. The event marked the first decade of the Cisco Networking Academy. One professor and student were selected from all 50 states and the District of Columbia to attend the salute.

The Networking Academy provides students with valuable skills and knowledge in networking and information technology, leading to advanced academic exploration and career development. Students and graduates benefit from gaining in-demand skills, increasing their earning power and often advancing their education to aid in the development of their countries and local economies.

“We are pleased to acknowledge a select group of Cisco Networking Academy alumni and instructors at the 10-year anniversary salute,” said Gene Longo, senior manager of the Cisco Networking Academy U.S. Field Operations. “According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, five of the fastest-growing occupations for college-educated job seekers through 2014 will be in information technology. We applaud these individuals for their contributions in helping to raise awareness of the opportunities in this industry and the benefits to students and our nation.”