UAS works to memorialize the lives of three great Alaskans

An Alaska Legacy in the Making

Memorial Scholarship at UAS to honor memory of Burke Riley and Dick Freer

Boyhood friends Dick and Burke dropped out of the University of Washington in 1938 and headed to Alaska in search of work. They booked one-way passage on the 117-foot trading boat “Discoverer,” and set off for Anchorage. Their fare was reduced to $25 by “Captain” Heinie Berger, who told the boys to pay him when they got jobs.

Less than a week after being unable to find work in Anchorage, they went to Fairbanks. By the end of their first day, Burke had a job at Northern Commercial and Dick with Charlie Ray’s Bakery. They mailed Captain Berger the remainder of their fares immediately; but a year later, when they ran into him at the Chena Bar, Berger expressed surprise the “college boys” had kept their word.

This was the beginning of their long lives in Alaska, lives that contributed greatly to the development of the 49th state, and in which their friendship was always strong.

Eventually Burke, who began his law career by clerking for U.S. Attorney Ralph River, went on to serve in the Territorial Legislature, the Constitutional Convention, the first Egan administration, and as head of the Interior Department for Alaska.

Dick’s contributions included serving as the territory’s and then the state’s first Budget Director, and as Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner of Administration -- a period of more than 20 years in which he oversaw the development of modern personnel, payroll, and accounting practices.

Burke became a lawyer without attending law school and Dick led what is now the Office of Management and Budgeting with only a few college accounting courses. Today, however, there are few opportunities for even bright and committed young people who don’t have a college degree.

To honor Burke and Dick, and to continue their tradition of service to Alaska, the two families have established the Dick Freer and Burke Riley Memorial Scholarship, a scholarship that will support Alaskan students admitted to any bachelor’s degree program at the University of Alaska Southeast. Working with the UAS Office of Development & Alumni Relations over the last five years a total of six different appeals were mailed to lists of potential donors provided by the families. The scholarship reached the minimum $25,000 endowment level on October 25, 2013.

Carroll Fader Scholarship Fund

Born in Seattle, WA in 1923, Carroll Fader served in in the United States Coast Guard during World War II from 1942-1946. Moving his young family from Pullman, Washington to Ketchikan in 1951, Carroll’s career in education began by teaching industrial arts in the Old Main School. During his lifetime Carroll served as Ketchikan Gateway Borough mayor, associate superintendent of the Ketchikan School District, director of the Ketchikan Community College and was appointed by Governor Walter Hickel to fill a seat in the House of Representatives in 1992. He passed away on October 11, 2011.

During his life Carroll was passionate about young people and vocational education. He was a big supporter of the Maritime I Marine Education program at the UAS Ketchikan Campus. The UAS Marine Transportation program offers all the United States Coast Guard approved courses needed to work in an unlicensed capacity about any vessel, including Ordinary and Able Seaman. The program also offers many of the courses necessary for a mariner to advance from an unlicensed to a license position such as Mate or Master.

The Carroll Fader Scholarship was established in 2004 to provide assistance for either part- or full-time students attending the UAS Ketchikan Campus with a minimum of 60 days sea time and who have completed at least 20 credits of the UAS Maritime program. After several appeals to the Ketchikan community and 2 fund-raising events hosted by the UAS Alumni Association – Ketchikan Chapter, the fund reached endowment level in September, 2013.
The 11th Annual UAS Student Alumni Etiquette and Networking Dinner was held on a rainy Wednesday evening in November. This popular event seats twenty-five students and fifteen community members. At the beginning each fall semester, students sign up at the UAS Office of Development & Alumni Relations, also listing their majors or fields of interest for careers. Once the student attendees have been confirmed, staff then invites professionals from the community, including alumni and donors, ideally representing the career fields related to the students’ courses of study. The presence of these community members provides an opportunity for the students to practice conversation and networking skills. It is also an opportunity for donors to stay connected with the university and for alumni to share the value of their education from UAS. Attendees this year represented career fields including business, accounting, education, communications, and marine biology.

The seven-course dinner is hosted by the UAS Student Alumni Association, and is complimentary to attendees. The lecture is fun and interactive, this year led by Lynne Johnson, Director of the UAS Office of Development and Alumni Relations. Students are led through practical experiences related to the meal served. Students learn proper table manners they may have missed as a kid – important skills for lunch interviews, impressing a date, dinner at the boss’s house, formal affairs, and more. Attendees are encouraged to offer up examples and to ask questions related to etiquette and manners. The message is that manners matter in the world of business, and that at its most basic level, etiquette is about kindness to others. Ms. Johnson created this event for UAS in 2003 as a headliner of the Preparing for Life After College lecture series, sponsored by the Student Alumni Association.

The Student Alumni Association (SAA) strives to make the student experience at UAS more meaningful through the promotion of UAS pride and tradition, cultivation of relationships between students and alumni, and enhancement of the college experience through exciting, memorable events. SAA develops the habit of paid membership, and trains future alumni association board members through experience on the SAA board.

SAA’s goals tie directly to UAS Alumni Association’s mission statement, which is to serve as a vital connection between the alumni and the University, communicate and advocate the goals and programs of UAS, and foster a continuous sense of community by establishing relationships and networking among alumni. Both groups help the University remain a vital and dynamic institution through financial support and community awareness, and provide an opportunity for alumni to help shape the future of the Alaskan educational experience.