



April 16, 2021

The Honorable Click Bishop  
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Alaska State Senate  
Capitol Building, Room 516  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Co-Chair Bishop:

Thank you for having the University of Alaska present before the Senate Finance Committee in consideration of Senate Bill 10. I am pleased to follow-up on questions raised by Senators during the hearing on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

**1. What is the current capacity and waitlist for the university's nursing programs? What is UA doing to address the waitlist?**  
(*Sen. von Imhof*)

On average, the school of nursing admits just under 250 students at the undergraduate level annually and has enrollment of approximately 500 students.

An estimated 700 students in the UA System have declared pre-nursing as a major. Noteworthy: Not all of these students qualify academically for admission or will ultimately choose to enter the RN program as they explore academic options. UA provides academic guidance counseling to students who are applying to the School of Nursing for admission. Pre-nursing students not admitted often reapply or also discover and pursue other health certifications in areas such as phlebotomist, med lab tech, diagnostics imaging, and surgical tech.

Important: There is no "official waitlist" for the RN program. While there is no waitlist for the program, opportunities for clinical training have been a limitation for the number of students the school of nursing admits. Training in a clinical setting is a critical and time intensive component of RN preparation. It instructs students in hands-on health care practices and requires them to demonstrate necessary proficiency in nursing. Currently on-site openings in hospitals have reached a saturation point as has the capacity of the school's lab facilities.

What is being done to address this?

UA is considering expanding clinical opportunities into evening and weekend sessions.

Federal funding or private partnerships may also expand facilities and faculty resources.

In addition, UA health programs have been developing innovative partnerships to fast-track new professionals into health jobs and careers including: stackable certifications, apprenticeships, and on-the job training models.

Make no mistake: Growing Alaska's health care workforce is a priority for the University of Alaska.

Please see April 13, 2021 email sent to Senate Finance committee members and staff from Chad Hutchison for more information. Also referenced by President Pitney in the CTE Senate Finance committee discussion on April 15, 2021.

**2. What percentage of nursing graduates stay in state? (Sen. von Imhof)**

The research shows that 88.7% of registered nursing graduates are working in Alaska within a year of graduating. See:

[https://www.alaska.edu/research/wd/Health\\_UAWorkforceReport\\_Final\\_1-6-21.pdf](https://www.alaska.edu/research/wd/Health_UAWorkforceReport_Final_1-6-21.pdf).

Additionally, 93.5% of certified nurses aide graduates are working in-state within one year of graduating. See *Id.*

UA has 15 nursing program delivery sites across the state. There is a high correlation between the location and where RN students are employed.

**3. What percentage of nursing and WWAMI graduates serve rural Alaska? (Sen. Olson)**

The best statistics available at this time demonstrate UA clinical health program graduates work in the following regional areas:

- Northern Alaska - 2.6%
- Southwest Alaska - 2.2%
- Southeast Alaska - 9.7%
- Interior Alaska - 16.7%
- Gulf Coast - 9.4%
- Anchorage/Mat-Su - 59.4%

Additional information can be found here:

[https://www.alaska.edu/research/wd/Health\\_UAWorkforceReport\\_Final\\_1-6-21.pdf](https://www.alaska.edu/research/wd/Health_UAWorkforceReport_Final_1-6-21.pdf)

WWAMI information can be found here:

<https://education.uwmedicine.org/alaska-wwami/>.

See also:

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/wwami/>.

**4. Has the university considered using federal or private funds to establish an endowment for funding the WWAMI Program? (Sen. von Imhof)**

While there is no endowment for the WWAMI program at this time, UA is willing to consider ideas for long-term stability for our university and its programs. Future guidance

from the U.S. Department of Treasury will help inform the parameters of how federal COVID-19 response funding may be utilized.

Important: The University of Alaska continually pursues philanthropic and other streams of funding to provide for our academic programs. Support for our health programs takes the form of private scholarships as well as donations from Alaska hospitals. UA recently launched the university system's first-ever comprehensive fundraising campaign to endow and advance support for our educational mission.

Additional background on philanthropic support of the University of Alaska can be found here:

<https://uaf.edu/provost/awards-recognition/peoples-endowment.php>

<https://www.uas.alaska.edu/about/press-releases/2019/190816-endowment-akcoe.html>

<https://alaska.academicworks.com/opportunities/14333>

<https://www.universityforalaska.com/>

**5. How many students from the Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program go on to become UA students? (Sen. Hoffman)**

During the past four years, 98% of students who have participated in ANSEP's Acceleration Academy program have enrolled at the University of Alaska.

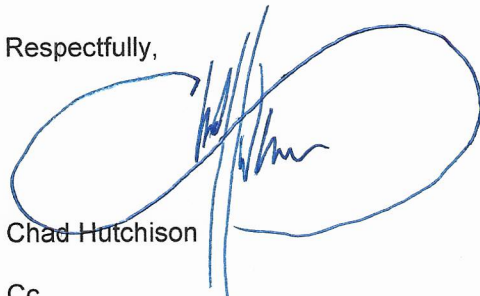
Additional statistical information can be found at:

<https://cdn.ansep.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2019-UAA-ANSEP-Graduation-Study-04MAY19.pdf>

More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Please let me know if we can provide any additional information to the committee.

Respectfully,



Chad Hutchison

Cc

Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair - Senate Finance Committee

Senator Tom Begich

Michelle Rizk, VP University Relations