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Mr. Louie Flora
Office of Representative Seaton
State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Mr. Flora:

Thank you for your questions regarding the UA Scholars program. I am pleased to provide the following information.

Of the roughly 2,100 UA Scholars enrolled at the University of Alaska (UA) in aid year 2007-08 (fall 2007, spring 2008, and summer 2008) about 74 percent (1,332 students) took the UA Scholars scholarship. The university tracks UA Scholars for eight years regardless of whether scholarship funding for the student has been exhausted.

The highly successful UA Scholars program costs about \$3.6 million each year, and is solely funded by the university with earnings distributions from UA's Land Grant Trust Fund. High school graduates designated as UA Scholars must commit to attend UA by the fall semester following graduation to redeem the eight-semester award. The university does not set aside funds for eligible high school graduates who do not accept the award.

The number of eligible UA Scholars attending UA has increased over the past three years and as the number of scholars increase, the cost of the program will increase accordingly. In fall 2008, 41 percent of the eligible 1,062 Alaska high school seniors (434 students) went on to attend UA after graduation. In fall 2009, 1,072 Alaska high school seniors are eligible for the scholarship and, based on the 5-year average, 42 percent (450 students) are expected to attend UA. With this upward trend the cost of the program could reach \$3.8 million in FY10.

The University receives information on the residency and employment of UA Scholar graduates through the State Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Employment data* for 2008 indicates that of the 271 UA scholars graduating in 2007, 100 percent remained in state in 2008 and of those 230 (85%) were working in state in 2008.

It is important to note that the UA Scholars scholarship is no longer sufficient to provide the amount of financial aid students need to complete their degree(s) at the University of Alaska. In aid year 2007-08, in addition to the UA Scholars scholarship, 620 scholars (30%) received other types of scholarships, 582 (28%) took out loans and 54 (25%) received grants, waivers or participated in work study.

Please let me know if you would like any further information.

Sincerely,

Gwen White

* Does not consider self-employed professionals, military personnel, or Federal civilian workers.