

# Arctic Frontiers Conference

Jan. 23-28, 2011

## Structural Changes in Higher Education Across the Circumpolar North

### Alaska's Experience - State Higher Education System





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# University of Alaska System Created in 1987

## Why?

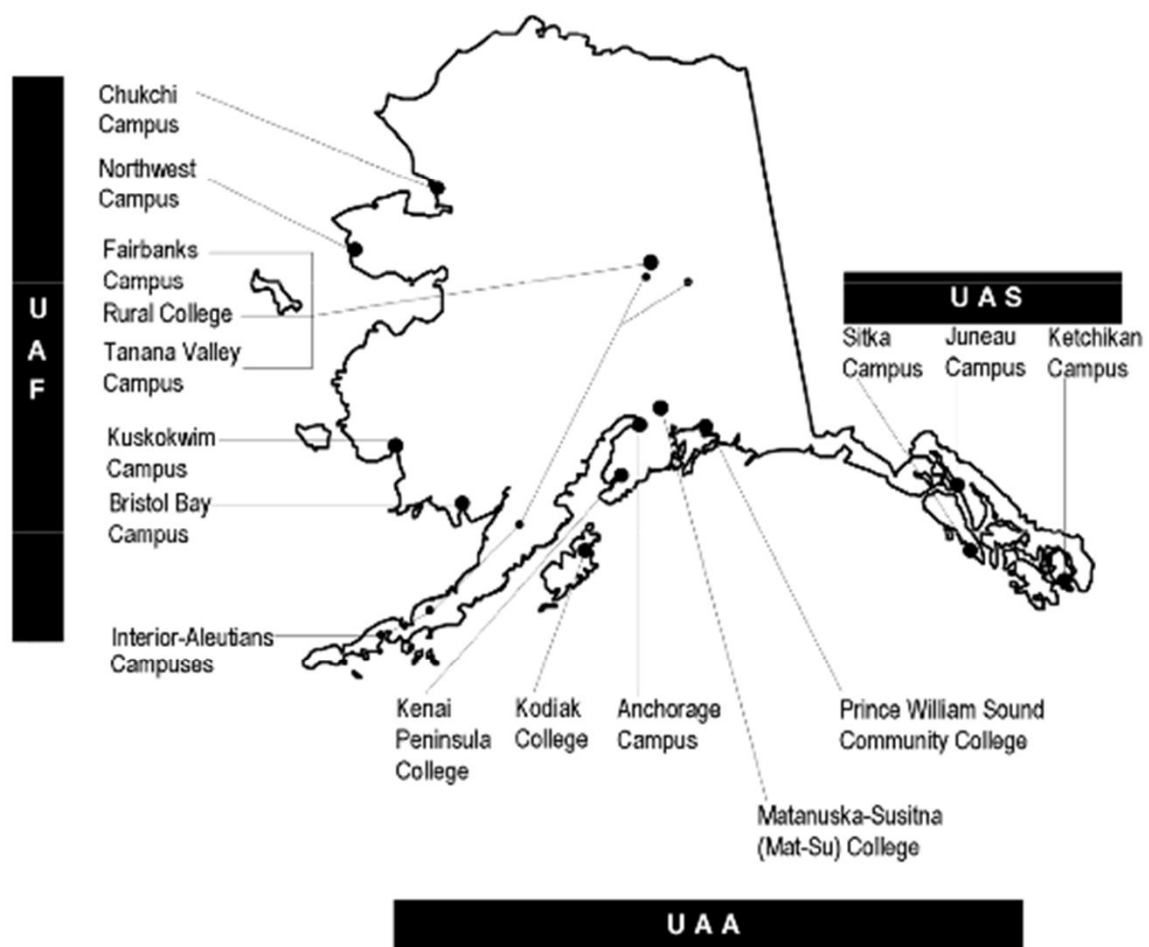
- Financial Crisis in the State
- Desire for better coordination
- Capture economies of scale – many small institutions

## How?

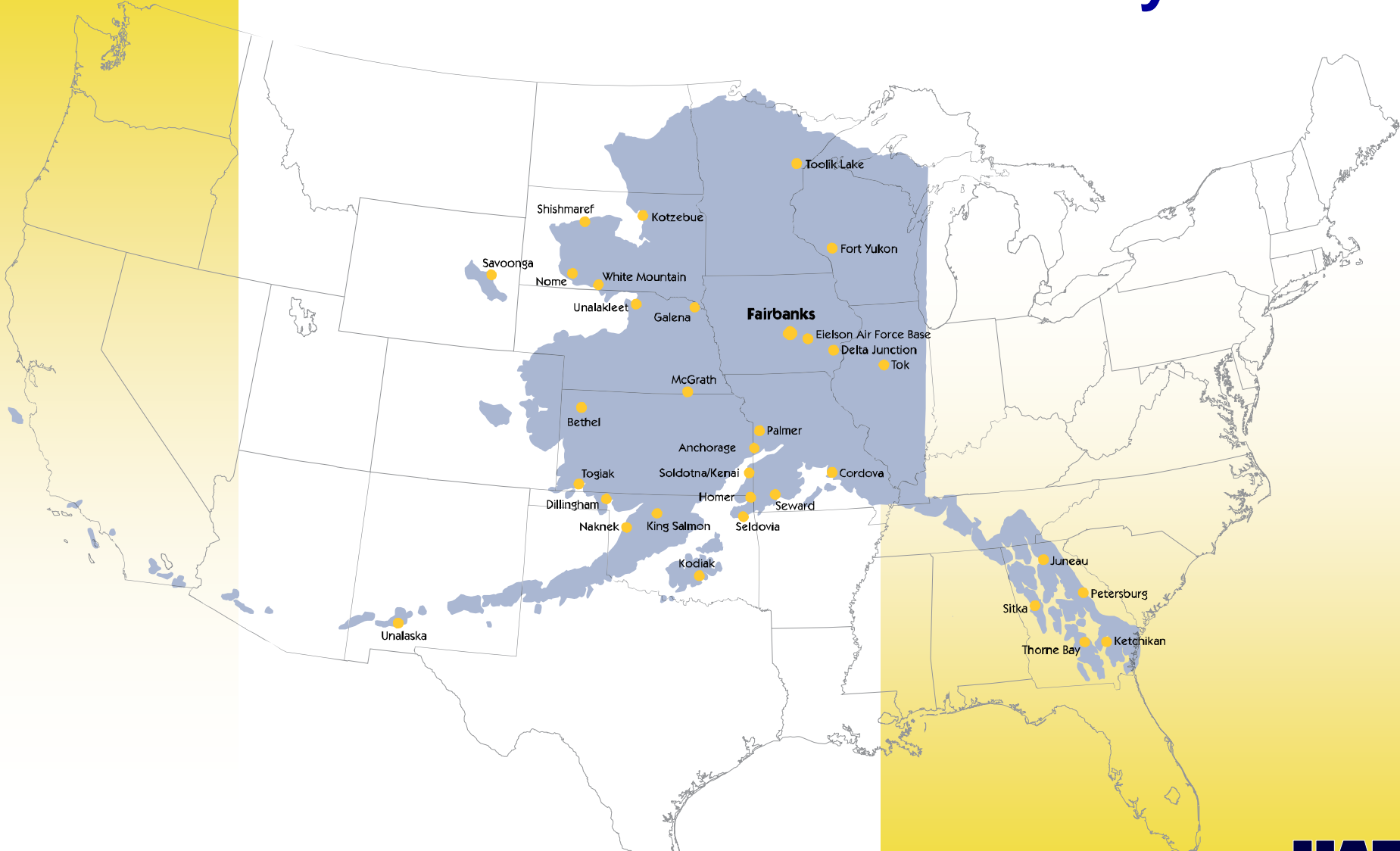
- Regional Education Delivery – south central, interior & northwest, southeast
- Consolidate Research - State Public Service mission at UAF
- 11 Separately Accredited Institutions – consolidated into 3 (UAA, UAF, UAS)



University of Alaska  
Statewide System of Higher Education  
University Campuses, Community College,  
and Rural Sites



# Great Land...Great University



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# University of Alaska System – 24 years later What Has Worked?

- During 13 years of financial strain - Campuses survived
- During 11 years of relative “good-times”
  - Number of Programs Offerings Increased,
  - Offerings ‘coordinated’
  - access to programs expanded
- More relevant in the state, more students chose UA
- Consolidated Administrative and Business Functions



# Political and Regulatory Environment

- **State of Alaska is the primary funding for UA educational mission (unrestricted operating)**
  - **students pay some**
- **University of Alaska Board of Regents has significant governance power from the Alaska Constitution**
- **Federal Government is the primary source for research funding (restricted, competitive, and project based)**



# Challenges Remain

- **Homogeneous Policies vs Diverse Operations/Mission**
  - **Community & Technical College Cost and Mission**
  - **Faculty Salary/Union – Research/Instruction**
- **Campus Identity – Aspirational Model**
- **Bottom-up desires vs Top-down strategic direction**



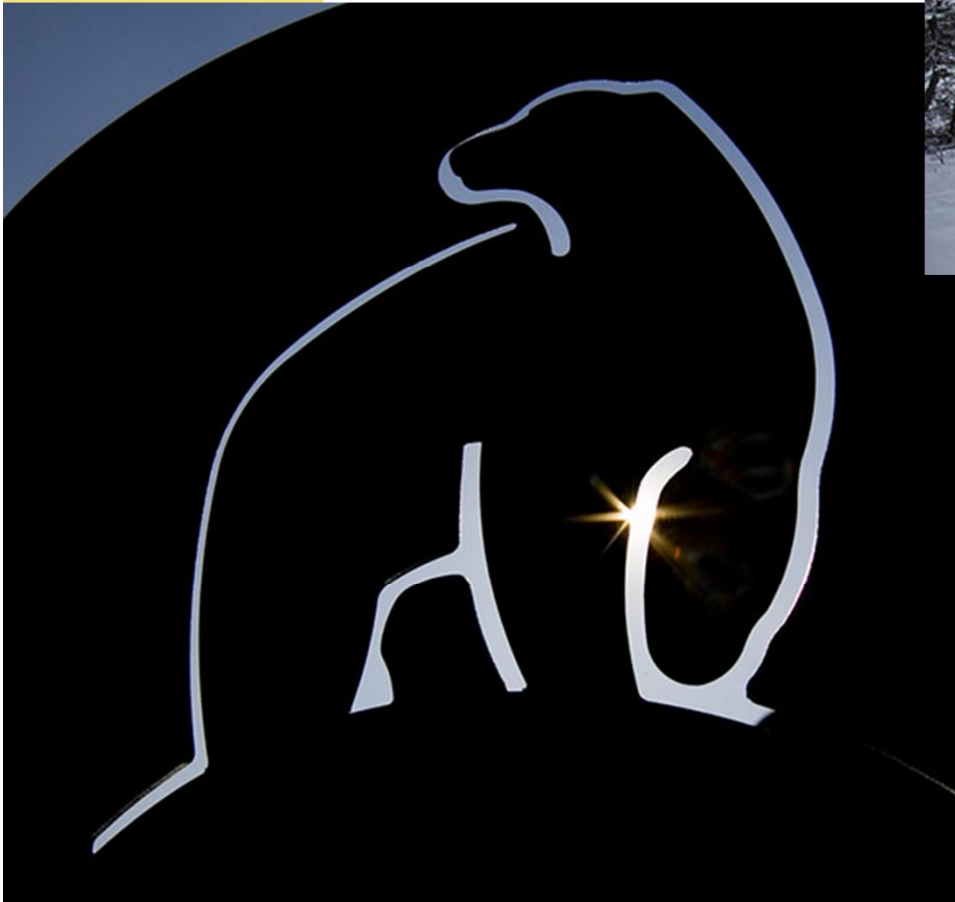


# For Your Consideration

- **What is the motivating factor to create systems – financial, legislative, access to markets,**
- **What is the operating environment – legal, funding, political**
- **Systems “Value-added”**
  - **Provide consistency**
  - **Communicate relevance**
  - **Assure trust through accountability**



**Takk**



**Thank you**

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