



## UAF news and information

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UAF photo by JR Ancheta

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Anupma Prakash

April 1, 2022

— Anupma Prakash, provost and executive vice chancellor

March brought us longer days and with them a lot of fresh energy. Among other things, UAF's diverse community celebrated the [Festival of Native Arts](#) with music, dances, talks, and workshops. We played with a lot of color on [Holi](#) — a festival that emphasizes the need to forget our differences and embrace love. We watched the Nanooks' breathtaking [5-1 victory over the LIU Sharks](#), and saw [14 All-American honors](#) awarded to Nanooks rifle. For those who love playing video games, our College of Business and Security Management hosted the very successful second [eSport](#) summit. And for music lovers, our College of Liberal Arts and [Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra](#) paid a special tribute by playing the Ukraine National Anthem and a musical piece before they played William Walton (with Audrey Swank, viola) and the Franz Schubert Symphony.

For me, March is always a special month for a very different reason. It is the time when I get to review faculty files submitted for [tenure](#)

[and/or promotion](#). Each faculty member who is required or chooses to go through this ultimate evaluation process submits a large digital file of materials documenting their contributions in the areas of teaching, research and other scholarly activities, and service that includes professional, university and public service. The documentation is accompanied by many other elements such as student evaluations, peer evaluations, external expert reviews, support letters, and a narrative self-evaluation where a faculty member reflects on their vision, contributions, strengths, weaknesses and future plans. Before the file reaches me for evaluation it goes through different [levels of review](#) including review by the unit peer committee, dean and director, and a university-wide committee. I forward my reviews and recommendation to the chancellor, who makes the final decision on awarding tenure and promotion.

When I went through the process myself as a UAF faculty member, I remember the demands, the pressure, and emotions that came along with it. On the one hand there was a sense of accomplishment to see the cumulative work done over the period leading to tenure and promotion. On the other hand, there was always the lingering question of whether I missed something and how my peers and other reviewers would view the failures that came along with the successes. Would people really read what I have included? I can respond to that question with certainty. Yes, every element of the file is important and is reviewed. And when it comes to proposals and publications, the list of successes is often accompanied by a longer list of unsuccessful attempts. In fact, the Nobel Prize Inspiration Initiative has a great collection of stories that highlight this, titled, "[With failure comes opportunity](#)."

As I reviewed numerous files this year for tenure or promotion, I learned so much more about each faculty member who was going through the process. There were some whose work I thought I was already familiar with, but what I knew was just the tip of the iceberg. To read about all facets of the work of each faculty member was simply humbling. Some faculty shared stories about what inspires them to move forward with positivity each day and some shared their approaches on continuous improvement in their journey to excellence. Some shared their passion for putting students first, some focused on research achievements, and others on their strong community connections. Each person's file was unique. Reviewing the files was a powerful and rewarding experience and made me appreciate the work that faculty do even more.

Each of you put so much every day into your work. Like the iceberg, some of the work you do may be visible to others, and a lot more may not be visible. You are valued for everything you do — not just for the work that is obvious but more importantly for all the heavy lifting you do silently in the background to move the university forward. This is a lot even on a regular day, and you have done so in the extraordinarily trying times that we have seen. Words fall short to thank you for everything you do.

*Friday Focus is a column written by a different member of UAF's leadership team every week.*



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