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Press Release

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

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I'm Going To College Program Sparks the Interest of Young Alaskans *Introducing 5th & 6th Grade Students to College Prepares Them For Success*

ANCHORAGE – May 4th, Sixth graders from Airport Heights, Lake Otis and Ursa Minor elementary schools, Alaska Native Cultural Charter School, and Begich Middle School will visit the University of Alaska Anchorage for a day of age appropriate classroom and hands-on activities. A partnership between the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) and UA College Savings Plan, *I'm Going To College* encourages students to aspire to education and training beyond high school – whether it's an apprenticeship, a one-year technical program or a 10-year professional degree sequence; by learning that it is important *and* attainable.

In the nine years since Alaska's *I'm Going To College* program was launched, it has grown from 600 students participating on five college campuses eight years ago to more than 2,300 students on 12 campuses in 11 communities across the state.

By following the *I'm Going To College* classroom curriculum and then visiting a local campus, students learn about the benefits of attending college, compare different campuses, calculate college costs, and learn steps they can take to qualify for financial aid such as the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The fun and educational campus visit gives students a sampling of college classes and lifestyle while inspiring them to include college in their future plans.

I'm Going To College alumna are more likely to discuss college preparation with parents and teachers, and to understand college is possible for them. It is an opportunity for those children whose families may not have a college-going history, to learn first-hand about the career avenues college offers and the fun of the college experience.

A 2011 *I'm Going To College* participant from Wonder Park Elementary in Anchorage said "I liked touring around the campus because I felt like I was in college." "It was fun getting the real college experience, walking to each class, sitting in the seats, and eating in the cafeteria," said a student from Fairview Elementary in Anchorage.

For more information, please contact Shelly Morgan, K-12 Specialist with the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education at 907-269-7972 or shelly.morgan@alaska.gov OR Brian McDermott with the University of Alaska Anchorage at 907-786-1543 or anbpm@uaa.alaska.edu.

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