

UAF Rural Council signs pact with Soviets for cooperation

FAIRBANKS — Representatives of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Rural Council and the Foundation for Social Inventions in the USSR have signed an agreement calling for the development of cooperative ventures between universities, institutes and teachers' colleges in Alaska and the Soviet Far East, according to UAF.

The agreement places special emphasis on the Soviet Union's institutions in Magadan and Anadyr, the Gertsner Pedinstitut in Leningrad and the Soviets' universities in Novosibirsk. Other institutions in the Soviet Union and Alaska may also participate in the agreement.

"Our college emphasizes work with the indigenous people of Alaska and the circumpolar north," said Dr. Gerald Mohatt, dean of the UAF Rural College. "We see this agreement opening doors through which we can develop specific projects focusing on

issues such as rapid social change, innovation, Native language development and teacher education by and for indigenous people."

Among the goals of the agreement is the exchange of information and research regarding innovative teaching methods and settings.

"Specifically, we expect some student exchanges between Siberian Yupik groups and our Nome campus of the college," Mohatt said.

"We have begun two sets of discussions — first, to identify an excellent Soviet teacher of an indigenous group to receive a Kohl International Award for Teaching Excellence and to bring youth from Soviet Native groups to UAF's Rural Alaska Honors Institute. Second, we will discuss a trip to visit the teacher education college of the Soviet Far East, which concentrates on Native education," Mohatt said.