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University of Alaska President's Innovation Challenge winners announced
Teams of UAA students and Anchorage community partners awarded for innovative solutions

ANCHORAGE, Alaska— Three teams comprised of University of Alaska Anchorage students and Anchorage community partners presented to a panel of judges their innovative ideas to address top-of-mind community issues in the final phase of an innovation challenge sponsored by the University of Alaska.

During public presentations late last week, participants of the UA President's Innovation Challenge produced concrete solutions for revitalizing an Anchorage neighborhood, connecting parents with nutritional food options for children and improving safety on and awareness of Anchorage trails. Through participating in the challenge, students were able to cultivate important relationships with local community partners.

University and business leaders judged the competition, evaluating the solutions based on their innovation, implementation and relevance. Judges awarded first through third places, which included cash awards to help the teams implement their solution.

The \$5,000 first place award went to *Team Early Childhood* and members Ann Broberg, Vanessa Hughes, Colleen McCowan and Nigel Sharp, who pitched a kid-friendly cafe, bringing together a unique play area with healthy food options.

With an idea for a new app, *Team Trails* took home second place and \$2,000. As proposed, the trails app would combine user-generated data and trail maps to keep people up to date on trail safety issues, general trail tips and current trail conditions. Team members included: Cassandra Maurer, Cy Two Elk, Faith Kolean, John McManamin, Michel Ramirez and Joel Wieman.

Team Neighborhoods took home the third place \$1,000 award for its solution to clean up a neighborhood based on creating art from the trash collected. Team members included: Emma Kelly, Lyndea Kelleher, Garrison Theroux, Nolan Klouda, Randy Moore, Katrina Chertkow and Zack Archuletta.

"We were impressed by the entrepreneurship and innovation in the solutions presented to us at the showcase. The teams did not have a long window of time to work their problem, but every team developed a viable solution for the Anchorage community," said UA President Jim Johnsen. "I'm looking forward to expanding this program to other UA campuses across the state in the coming years."

The Solution Showcase judging panel included:

- Dr. Jim Johnsen, president of the University of Alaska
- Bill Popp, CEO of Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
- Katherine Jernstrom, CEO of The Boardroom
- Jon Bittner, executive director of Alaska Small Business Development Center
- Julie Decker, CEO of Anchorage Museum
- Dr. Bogdan Hoanca, interim dean of UAA College of Business and Public Policy

The University of Alaska's goal is to extend the challenge to the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Alaska Southeast campuses next year.

For more information, visit <http://www.UAPresidentsInnovationChallenge.com>.

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