

James Roland Johnsen

EDUCATION

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| Ed.D. | University of Pennsylvania, Higher Education Management, 2006. |
| A.M. | University of Chicago, Political Science, 1996. |
| B.A. | University of California, Santa Cruz, Politics, 1982. |
| Continuing | Philanthropy, Center for Leadership Philanthropy. Executive Finance, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. Adaptive Leadership, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Interest Based Negotiation, Program on Negotiation, Harvard University. |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

President

University of Alaska

2015-Present

The University of Alaska is established in the Alaska Constitution as the state's sole system of higher education. UA is a world leader in Arctic research, one of the nation's most affordable systems of higher education, and provider of over 92% of Alaska's higher education. As president and chief executive officer of the Board of Regents, I oversee three universities and thirteen community colleges, with an annual operating budget of ~\$900 million, 7,000 faculty and staff serving nearly 30,000 students in over 400 programs (on campus and on-line) granting awards ranging from occupational certificates to doctoral degrees. I advocate for higher education before a wide variety of audiences including Alaska's federal delegation, Governor, legislators, state and federal agencies, media, employers, Alaska Native and tribal organizations, and community groups across the state.

- Developed and led the Strategic Pathways process, refocusing the university system on meeting the state's higher education needs during multi-year funding reductions; cut deeper to invest in the Board's 2025 strategic goals: economic development, research excellence, workforce development, educational attainment, and cost effectiveness.
- Maintained global preeminence in Arctic research, expanded dual enrollment programs with K-12, increased on-line program offerings and degree completion programs, completed new engineering facilities, improved intercampus collaboration, and strengthened outreach to major employers.
- In collaboration with the Board of Regents and campus leaders, formulated and led the university's strategic visioning, planning and budgeting process, resulting in long term vision (Alaska.edu/UA2040), goals and performance measures (to 2025), programmatic priorities, and implementation plans.
- Led the university's proactive disclosure and system wide response to federal Title IX review, emphasizing compliance and a culture of safety for students, faculty, and staff.
- In response to 41 percent state funding cut in 2019, engaged university leaders in preparation of contingency plans involving more cost effective administrative services, academic program consolidation and reduction, and financial exigency.
- Successfully negotiated a Compact Agreement with the Governor, which reduced the cut from 41 percent in one year to 21 percent over three years.
- Lead process to diversify revenue sources and monetize physical and other assets.
- Lead federal/state effort to resolve the university's historic land grant deficit.
- Lead system-wide philanthropic efforts through the University of Alaska Foundation.
- Serve on numerous corporate, state, regional, and national organization boards:
 - National Association of System Heads
 - State Higher Education Executive Officers
 - U.S. Department of Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council
 - Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education
 - Alaska Aerospace Corporation
 - University of Alaska Foundation

**Senior Vice President, Human Resources & Process Transformation
Alaska Communications (ALSK)**

2011-2015

Alaska Communications is a leading telecommunications and IT services provider and just one of three public companies based in Alaska. As a member of the senior executive team in a period of corporate transformation, I oversaw recruitment, development, compliance, labor relations, compensation, benefits, and process improvement.

- Negotiated collective bargaining agreements necessary to enable strategic transactions with value in excess of \$300 million.
- Created highly successful leader development programs and succession plans.
- Led a lean process improvement program, resulting in increased customer satisfaction and employee engagement, and >\$2 million annual cost savings.
- Worked directly with the Board of Directors' Compensation Committee to restructure performance compensation programs (equity and cash) to strengthen market competitiveness in compliance with federal regulatory requirements.

**Senior Vice President, Administration
Doyon, Limited**

2008-2011

Doyon, Limited—one of Alaska's 13 regional for-profit Native corporations—is active in land and natural resource development, oil field services, engineering and construction, utility management, and government services. As a senior corporate officer, I led government relations, strategic planning, human resources, information technology, communications and marketing, shareholder relations, and facilities management. Annual revenue exceeded \$350 million.

- Led Board of Directors in development of 5-year strategic plan to meet corporate financial and shareholder employment and development goals.
- Led successful campaign to increase income tax credits for corporate investments in higher education, resulting in increases in private giving to the University of Alaska.
- Led creation of partnership between Alaska Native regional corporations and the University of Alaska Board of Regents to improve educational opportunities for Alaska Native people.
- Led the company's internal write-in campaign in successful U.S. Senate race and advocated before state and federal agencies and legislators.

**Vice President for Administration
University of Alaska**

2006-2008

Served as the chief administrative officer of the university system with responsibility for finance, human resources, facility planning, land management, risk management, endowment investment, internal audit, procurement, college savings plan, and budget management. I served as a member of the president's cabinet and as primary liaison to the Board of Regents on all administrative matters.

- Developed system-wide process automation program, reducing costs and time to completion of numerous projects.
- Improved system office relations with campus administrative services.
- Increased integration of administrative functions with academic priorities.

**Vice President for Faculty & Staff Relations
University of Alaska**

2003-2006

Provided statewide leadership of labor and employee relations, benefits, payroll, HR systems, compensation, recruitment, and training and development. I was a member of the President's cabinet and the primary liaison to the Board of Regents and to faculty and staff governance groups and unions on human resources matters.

- Implemented new defined contribution retirement plan, with annual savings in excess of \$2 million.
- Created new flexible health benefits plan, providing employees with choices, while reducing employer cost.
- Led successful automation of transactional processes.

**Visiting Scholar
University of California, Berkeley**

2002-2003

Sponsored by Clark Kerr, President Emeritus of the University of California, I conducted research on university system leadership and change, conferred with Dr. Kerr, worked with researchers in the Center for Studies in Higher Education, and presented to faculty and graduate students at Berkeley and Stanford.

**Chief of Staff
University of Alaska**

1998-2003

Ensured the effective implementation of presidential and Board of Regents' direction through coordination with campus chancellors, provosts, and vice chancellors, and system level vice presidents.

- Key member of leadership team in period of significant growth.
- Led development of the university's strategic plan ([UA 2009](#)) and served as key interface with Board of Regents on planning.
- Developed plan for strategic investment of \$20+ million multi-year private gift.
- Founding chair of statewide research program; successfully advocated for state funding of \$1 million, leveraging additional \$9 million annually.
- Led process for engaging major employers and state agencies in development of new academic programs and other initiatives to meet state workforce needs.

**Director of Labor Relations
University of Alaska**

1996-1998

During a period of severe budgetary stress, I advised the president and the Board of Regents on labor relations, developed negotiation strategy, advocated in state agency hearings and labor arbitrations, served as chief negotiator in contract negotiations, and provided training to chancellors, provosts, deans, and other campus administrators.

- Resolved community college faculty contract amid pending strike.
- Negotiated nationally recognized first contract with university faculty union.
- Negotiated labor, trades, and crafts contract.

**Assistant Director of Labor Relations
University of Minnesota**

1992-1996

I negotiated faculty and staff contracts with numerous faculty and staff unions, advocated in state labor relations agency hearings and arbitrations, provided training in negotiation and employee relations, and managed responses to union organizing drives.

**Chief Negotiator
State of Alaska**

1990-1992

During a period of fiscal constraint, I negotiated contracts with the state's largest unions, advocated in-state agency hearings and arbitrations, and provided training for state agency administrators.

**Chief Negotiator
Alaska Public Employees Association
Oregon Public Employees Union**

1987-1990

Served as chief negotiator for state and local government contracts, including a statewide pay equity settlement for state and university employees, and advocated in arbitration and legislative and agency hearings on behalf of public employee unions.

**Adjunct Professor
University of Alaska Fairbanks and Southeast**

1987-2011

Taught undergraduate and graduate courses and served on graduate student committees in Geography, Political Science, Management, and Economics.

**Personnel Analyst
State of Alaska**

1984-1987

Developed a broad base of human resources expertise through assignments in recruitment, testing, classification, and compensation.

**Research Assistant
Department of Political Science
University of Chicago**

1982-1983

Conducted research in support of Professor Theda Skocpol's award winning history of American social policy, Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States, 1995.

**Legislative Intern
U.S. Representative Leon Panetta**

1980

Conducted research on a variety of policy issues, attended hearings, and prepared formal responses to constituent inquiries on behalf of the congressman in his Washington, D.C. office during a successful re-election campaign.

PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Member (Current Board Member)
National Association of System Heads

2016-Present

The association leads efforts to advance the interests of state higher education systems through advocacy, innovative policy and program development, and interstate collaboration.

Member
U.S. Department of Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council **2015-Present**

The Council advises the Secretary on research and training issues of national interest. (Appointed by the Secretary.)

Commissioner
Denali Commission **2015-Present**

The Commission was established by Congress to coordinate federal and state agency investment in critical infrastructure in rural Alaska. (Appointment by federal statute.)

Director (Former Vice Chair)
University of Alaska Foundation **2011-Present**

The Foundation is a private nonprofit corporation, operated as a public Foundation, which solicits, manages and invests donations for the exclusive benefit of the University of Alaska.

Commissioner
Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education **2010-Present**

A federally established compact among 16 member states and territories, WICHE strengthens higher education's contributions to the region's social, economic, and civic life. (Appointed by the Governor.)

Board Member
Alaska Aerospace Corporation **2015-Present**

This state corporation seeks to diversify Alaska's economy by pursuing commercial and government funded rocket launch activities. (Appointed by state statute.)

Commissioner (Chair)
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education **2012-2015**

The Commission promotes access and success in education and through early awareness, education planning, advocacy, and financial aid. Led setting of statewide goal of 65% of Alaskans with a degree by 2025. (Appointed by the Governor.)

Director (Vice Chair)
Alaska Student Loan Corporation **2013-2015**

The corporation funds the programs of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education through tax-exempt bond sales and authorizing and overseeing investments, funding the Commission's education programs, and setting investment policies, loan fees, interest rates, and program benefits. (Appointed by the Governor.)

**Member, Board of Directors
Alaska State Chamber of Commerce**

2011-2015

The largest and most diverse group of businesses in the state, the State Chamber advocates for tax, regulatory, and public investment policies that support long-term business development in Alaska.

**Member
Alaska State Committee on Research**

1999-2003 and 2009-2015

Founding Chair of statewide research program to diversify sources of research support, extend research capacity to UA Anchorage and UA Southeast and focus research activity on issues important to Alaska. Achieved matching funds from the state legislature and leveraged 9:1 long-term funding from the National Science Foundation and other agencies.

**Chair, Government Relations Committee
Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce**

2010-2011

Developed and executed political action plan. Recognized as Alaska Chamber of the Year in 2011 on basis of our effective advocacy in the state legislature.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Alaska on the Line.” Panel on State Policy Landscape. National Conference on Trusteeship, Association of Governing Boards, Washington, D.C., April, 2020.

“Frontiers of Education.” ASU GSV Summit, San Diego, California, March 2020.

“Crisis in Higher Education in Alaska.” Annual Meeting of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities, San Diego, California, November, 2019.

“Leading on the Edge of Change: Climate, Politics, and Education in Alaska.” Center for Studies in Higher Education, University of California, Berkeley, October 2019.

“Leading on Title IX in Alaska.” National Discussion on Sexual Discrimination and Assault at America’s Colleges, Universities, and Service Academies, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, April 4, 2019.

“Developing a Competitive Knowledge Economy.” *Strive*, October-December 2018.

“Leading In Tumultuous Times.” Higher Education Leadership Conference, University of Pennsylvania, 2018.

"Accountability and Faculty Collective Bargaining." Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education, New York, New York, 2008.

"The Pension Crisis." Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education, New York, New York, 2007.

"Take the Offensive: University Responses to State Fiscal Stress." Plenary Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education, New York, New York, 2004.

"Innovations in Faculty Bargaining." Plenary Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education, New York, New York, 2003.

"Reengaging the University: A Case Study of the University of Alaska, 1998-2002." Center for Studies in Higher Education, University of California, Berkeley, and Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, 2002.

"The Restructuring of Higher Education in Alaska in 1987 and Its Implications for Faculty Relations." *Proceedings of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education*, City University of New York, 2001.

PERSONAL

Spouse:

Mary Johnsen (BA, UC Santa Cruz; Teaching Certificate, University of Alaska Southeast) Director, Hospice of the Tanana Valley (retired).

Daughter:

Greta Johnsen (BA, St. Olaf College; MS, Medill School, Northwestern University) Host/Producer of the Nerdette Podcast, WBEZ (NPR), Chicago, Illinois.

Son:

Jakob Johnsen (BS, United States Military Academy, West Point; MBA in process, NYU) Chief of Staff, Office of U.S. Representative Hal Rogers, Washington, D.C.