



## Press Release: Inaugural UArctic Chair

[For immediate release]

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*University of the Arctic (UARctic) introduces the first UArctic Chair, Professor Jeffrey Welker, as a collaborative appointment between UArctic, the University of Oulu and the University of Alaska Anchorage. The inaugural position is hosted by the University of Oulu.*

“I am grateful and honoured to become the first UArctic Chair. UArctic is an enterprise of ambitious, caring, dedicated and talented undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral scientists, researchers, faculty at all professional stages, and support staff from across the Arctic. This diversity and the multidisciplinary aspect is the key to our collective future, as we can use our accumulated wisdom, the energy of youth and the passion that is pervasive in our community to unlock the mysteries and the secrets of the Arctic and its complexity,” Professor Welker says.

He emphasizes the need for collaboration and interdisciplinarity in order to understand the changes in the Arctic that are taking place much quicker than expected, with consequences reflecting globally and requiring adaptation from people and their communities.

“The Arctic as prior generations knew it is no longer the same, and it will be much different in five or ten years,” he points out. “Understanding the Arctic today, including the interactions between the marine and terrestrial coastal systems, are one of the key areas of emerging interdisciplinary research. In addition, documenting the changing nature of the Arctic water cycle, sea ice distribution and thickness as well as the fate of carbon in permafrost in expanding periglacial landscapes are challenges that require collaborations between nations and the use of advanced technologies. The importance of the health and economic welfare of Arctic citizens, including the Native communities, and their resilience and adaptations to rapidly changing conditions are trajectories of research that merit significant investments and international cooperation.”

Strengthening the collaborative nature of Arctic research, the interdisciplinary needs of studies and the mentoring of the next generation of Arctic researchers will be Professor Welker’s priorities in his new role. He is also dedicated to support the array of existing Thematic Networks of UArctic, and the formation of new networks as foundations for new collective endeavors.

*UARctic Chairs are highly qualified academics who will serve as academic drivers in a broad problem area of relevance to the Arctic. They implement and drive collaborative actions among UArctic members and Thematic Networks; develop research cooperation, including undergraduate, graduate, PhD and postdoctoral scientist training; and build partnerships with the broader Arctic community.*

*The University of the Arctic (UARctic) is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, research institutes and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the North. UArctic builds and strengthens collective resources and collaborative infrastructure that enables member institutions to better serve their constituents and their*

*regions. Through cooperation in education, research and outreach we enhance human capacity in the North, promote viable communities and sustainable economies, and forge global partnerships.*

**For more information:**

Jeffrey Welker  
Professor, UArctic Chair  
[jmwelker@alaska.edu](mailto:jmwelker@alaska.edu)

UArctic International Secretariat  
[secretariat@uarctic.org](mailto:secretariat@uarctic.org)