

WICHE ICE ... *from a Student's Perspective*

Margie Thomson graduated with a BS in Therapeutic Recreation from Penn State University before moving to Alaska where she began working in the parks and recreation field. Soon, however, she migrated to working with people with disabilities and has held several different positions in the social work arena over her 20-year career.

To expand her skills and expertise, Thomson always wanted to get her Master's degree in Social Work but she could not leave Juneau where she was working and raising three children. Then a few years ago she learned about and enrolled in the four-year, part-time MSW program offered at a distance by University of Alaska Anchorage. She finally had the opportunity to pursue her dream.

Thomson had completed several courses in the program when she heard about UAA's participation in the WICHE Internet Course Exchange. At UAA, she registered for "Introduction to Assessment," an online course in social work, offered by the University of Wyoming. "It is the perfect complement for my UAA coursework that has done a good job of preparing me to be a generalist social worker. I am very interested in the clinical aspects of social work for the future, and this will provide me with some additional skills and knowledge. Next fall I will do my final practicum in Palmerston North Hospital in New Zealand, working in a Mental Health Unit with adults. This WICHE course directly prepares me for the internship, and situations that I may encounter in my upcoming semester. I am thankful to have this offered at this time in my schooling. It is a lifesaver!

"ICE provides a wonderful opportunity for students to experience different teaching styles and formats. It exposes both faculty and students to other backgrounds and perspectives and expands your thinking," says Thomson.

The University of Wyoming course is one of several ICE courses selected by the UAA social work faculty to supplement their program offerings. Students know in advance how the courses will apply to their program and can register and pay for them at their home campus where the courses will be listed on their transcripts.

