

**Charles Wohlforth**  
Brief Biography and Curriculum Vitae  
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**Contact information**

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**Wohlforth brief biography**

Charles Wohlforth is author of more than a dozen books and numerous articles. He is a collaborative writer and writing coach, former elected official, broadcaster, and non-profit leader. His books include work about science and the environment, politics and history, medicine, travel, and as-told-to biography. His book *The Whale and the Supercomputer: On the Northern Front of Climate Change*, won the L.A. Times Book Prize in 2004. His three-times-weekly column for the *Anchorage Daily News* in 2019 won the western U.S. states' most prestigious journalism award, "Best of the West." He has worked collaboratively with governors, leading members of Congress, CEOs and business pioneers, scientists, doctors, and engineers in many fields, indigenous leaders, educators, and community activists, and many other interesting people with stories to tell.

Wohlforth graduated *magna cum laude* from Princeton University in 1986 before returning to Alaska to work six years as a newspaper reporter. He became a full-time freelance writer in 1993, publishing articles in *The Daily Beast*, *The New Republic*, *Discover* and many other periodicals. He served two 3-year terms on the Anchorage Assembly, for five years writing the city budget for Anchorage. He worked as a policy advisor, strategic planning consultant, and speechwriter for politicians and consulted on energy, transportation, and sustainability. As leader of a coalition of rural Alaska schools, he settled two constitutional lawsuits that brought hundreds of millions of dollars of new support to struggling schools and at-risk students.

**Education**

**Princeton University**, B.A. degree in English, *magna cum laude*, 1986.

**Employment**

**1989-present: Author, collaborative writer, writing coach.** In addition to writing books and articles listed in this CV, Wohlforth also supports writers as a collaborator, coach, and editor, and offers advice through his Writing Ideas newsletter, found at [AuthorCollaborator.com](http://AuthorCollaborator.com).

**2015-2019: Anchorage Daily News, Columnist.** Writer of a reported newspaper opinion

column published three times a week. The column became Alaska's most popular and won the 2019 "Best of the West" award.

**2009-2019: Alaska Public Media, Host of Radio, Podcast and TV shows.** Led and hosted Outdoor Explorer, Hometown Alaska, and One on One. Outdoor Explorer became the most downloaded podcast on Alaska's dominant public media outlet.

**2011-2015: Coalition for Education Equity / Citizens for the Educational Advancement of Alaska's Children, Executive Director.** Led a coalition for rural schools and indigenous children in Alaska, settling two major constitutional lawsuits that brought major new investments.

**2003-2009: Mayor and U.S. Senator Mark Begich, Advisor and Speech Writer.** Provided daily policy advice and led strategic planning for Begich as mayor and U.S. Senator.

**1993-1999: Anchorage Municipal Assembly, Member.** Elected to two three-year terms to represent the downtown area of the city-borough government. Chair of the Budget Committee for five years and responsible for the successful sale of the city's telephone company.

**1992-1997: POL: A Journal of Policy and Politics, Founder and Editor.** Led a subscription-supported monthly during its five-year run.

**1992-1993: Alaska Research Associates, Research Director,** Alaska Research Associates. Managed research projects, political campaigns and polling for a political consultancy and market research firm.

**1988-1992: Anchorage Daily News, Reporter.** Lead field reporter on the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill. Also covered general assignment, breaking news, and investigative projects.

**1986-1988: Homer News, Reporter.** General assignment reporter for a small-town weekly.

**1981-1982: KSKA Public Radio, reporter and production assistant.**

## Books

**Far From Home: An Alaskan Senator's Survival in the Extreme Climate of Washington D.C.** (By Lisa Murkowski with Charles Wohlforth; Forum Books, pub. date June 2025). Inside stories told by a key moderate in the U.S. Senate during difficult times of division.

**Our Story in Many Voices: A Catalog and Guide to the Alaska State Museum** (University of Alaska Press, pub. date spring 2025). Independent, authoritative study of a pre-eminent history and culture museum, with an exploration of the Alaska story.

**Courage in the People's House: Nine Trailblazing Representatives Who Shaped America** (By Joe Neguse; Simon & Schuster, 2023). Assisted the Assistant Democratic Leader of the U.S. House with a book profiling past members' acts of courage.

**How Covid Crashed the System: A Guide to Fixing American Health Care** (By David B. Nash and Charles Wohlforth, foreword by Stephen K. Klasko, introduction by Sandro Galea; Rowman & Littlefield, 2022). Award-winning co-authored book with the Founding Dean Emeritus of the Jefferson College of Population Health.

**Beyond Earth: Our Path to a New Home in the Planets** (By Charles Wohlforth and Amanda Hendrix; Pantheon/Knopf, 2016). Co-authored book with a planetary scientist

looking at climate change as a motivator for space colonization. Also published in Korean, Chinese and Turkish.

**From the Shores of Ship Creek: Stories of Anchorage's First 100 Years** (Todd Communications, 2015). Official history of Anchorage for the city's centennial.

**To Russia With Love: An Alaskan's Journey** (By Vic Fischer with Charles Wohlforth; University of Alaska Press, 2012). Biography of a founder of Alaska state government, spanning his escape from Hitler and Stalin to work in Russia after the Soviet Union fell.

**The Fate of Nature: Rediscovering Our Ability to Rescue the Earth** (Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, 2010). Humankind's capacity for environmental restraint examined through the lenses of history, anthropology, science, and personal stories.

**Alaska Day by Day** (Wiley, 2010). An illustrated travel guidebook on Alaska.

**Saving for the Future: My Life and the Alaska Permanent Fund** (By Dave Rose as told to Charles Wohlforth; Epicenter Press, 2008). Biography of an Alaskan pioneer politician and his role in creation of Alaska's enormous oil wealth savings account.

**The Whale and the Supercomputer: On the Northern Front of Climate Change** (North Point Press/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004). Indigenous and scientific perceptions of Arctic climate change. Winner of multiple awards and still in print after 20 years.

Published in French as **La baleine et le supercalculateur** (Paulsen, 2008).

**Frommer's Alaska** (Wiley, 1996-2011). Fourteen editions of a leading travel guidebook covering all of Alaska.

**Alaska For Dummies** (Wiley, 2003-2011). Five editions of a travel guidebook covering Alaska.

**Frommer's Family Vacations in the National Parks** (Wiley, 1999-2004). Three editions of a guidebook covering travel, natural history, and culture in 15 national parks and seashores.

**Crisis in the Commons: The Alaska Solution** (By Walter J. Hickel; Institute for Contemporary Studies, 2002). Assisted former Alaska governor and Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel in writing philosophical memoir.

**Spectacular Alaska** (Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 1998; revised edition, Universe, 2012). Alaska history and geography essays in a coffee table photography book.

### Selected consulting assignments

**Climate Central.** Advisory work, research, writing, editing, and partnership journalism nationally, for science and climate communication NGO in Princeton, New Jersey. 2019-present.

**Consulate-General of Japan.** Advisory to the Japanese foreign ministry regarding energy issues and the Alaska business and political landscape. 2019-present.

**AuthorCollaborator.com – Coaching.** Mentoring and developing numerous writers through assignments including from book-length projects and responsive reads of manuscripts. 2019-present.

**Vanguard Group for Leadership.** Advised and led sessions for a firm offering leadership training to CEOs and other executives. 2019-2023.

**Greater Newark Lifecamp.** Wrote a communications plan and oversaw production of a video for a camp serving inner-city children in New Jersey. 2023.

**Alaska State Museums.** Drafted labels and advised curators on mounting the permanent exhibit for a new \$100 million state history museum. 2015-2016.

**National Energy Policy Institute.** Reporting to former Governor Tony Knowles, drafted and presented a final report for the institute, including a holistic carbon reduction program that consolidated policy papers by a team of academics. 2013.

**U.S. Senator Mark Begich.** Developed a strategic plan and led leadership discussions on legislative priorities. 2009.

**Municipality of Anchorage, Office of the Mayor.** Oversaw transportation issues, including passage of the city-state Long-Range Transportation Plan. Strategized electric utility issues, including a merger initiative and power plant construction. 2003-2009.

### Work Included in Books or Anthologies

**Made of Salmon: Alaska Stories from the Salmon Project**, edited by Nancy Lord (University of Alaska Press, 2016)

**Alaska at 50: Past, Present, and the Next Fifty Years of Statehood**, edited by Dr. G. W. Kimura (University of Alaska Press, 2009).

**The AMS Weather Book: The Ultimate Guide to America's Weather**, by Jack Williams (University of Chicago Press, 2009).

**The Last Polar Bear: Facing the Truth of a Warming World**, by Steven Kazlowski, et al. (Braided River/The Mountaineers Books, 2008).

**The Future of Nature: Writing on a Human Ecology from Orion Magazine**, selected and introduced by Barry Lopez (Milkweed Editions, 2007).

**Global Climate Change**, edited by Paul McCaffrey (H.W. Wilson, 2006).

**The Alaska Reader: Voices from the North**, edited by Anne Hanley and Carolyn Kremers (Fulcrum, 2005).

**National Geographic National Parks: Atlas and Travel Planner** (publication canceled).

**Frommer's National Parks of the American West**, by Don and Barbara Laine (two editions; IDG Books, 1998, 2000).

**Frommer's USA**, edited by Bill Godwin (Simon & Schuster, 1998).

**Outside Magazine's Guide to Family Vacations**, by Frommer's (Simon & Schuster, 1997).

**Best Newspaper Writing 1990**, edited by Don Fry and Karen Brown (Poynter Institute, 1990).

**Season of Dead Water**, edited by Helen Frost (Breitenbush, 1990).

### Freelance Articles Published

**Alaska Airlines Magazine, Alaska Dispatch, Alaska Dispatch News, Alaska Geographic, Alaska Magazine, Alaska On The Move, Anchorage Daily News, Anchorage Press, Capital Eye, CJR Columbia Journalism Review, The Daily Beast, The Daily Princetonian, Discover, Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fame, First Alaskans, Forum, Global Oneness Project, High Country News, Los Angeles Times, Nassau Literary Review, National Wildlife, Newark Star Ledger, New York Times dotEarth blog, New York Times Ideas blog, The New Republic, The New Republic**

**online, NJ Advance Media, Northwest Airlines World Traveler, NPS Discovery Today, Onearth, Onearth Online, Orion, Orion Online, Outside, Outside Family Vacations, Pacific Northwest, Panoscope, Press of Atlantic City, Princeton Alumni Weekly, Queen City News (North Carolina), The Salmon Project, Scientific American online, Scope, Seed online, Sunset.**

#### **Selected Lectures Given**

#### **Non-profit Organizations**

**American Museum of Natural History, Hayden Planetarium, New York City  
Center for Alaska Coastal Studies, Homer, Alaska  
Griffith Observatory, Los Angeles  
Inupiat Heritage Center, Barrow, Alaska  
New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Massachusetts  
MOTE Aquarium, Sarasota, Florida  
Port Townsend Marine Science Center, Port Townsend, Washington  
Town Hall Seattle. Seattle, Washington**

#### **Colleges and Universities**

**Cambridge University, Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge, England  
Dartmouth College, Arctic Institute, Hanover, New Hampshire  
Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon  
Princeton University, Environmental Institute, Princeton, New Jersey  
San Francisco State University, Pacific Rim Voices/The Kiriyaama Book Prize, San Francisco, California  
University of California Los Angeles, Hammer Museum  
University of Washington Program on the Environment, Seattle, Washington  
Yale University, Peabody Museum, New Haven, Connecticut**

#### **Conferences (non-specialist)**

**Alaska Forum on the Environment, Anchorage, Alaska  
Aspen Institute Forum on the Environment, Aspen, Colorado  
Etonnants Voyageurs, festival international du livre et du film, Saint-Malo, France  
Exploratorium/ECHO Consortium, San Francisco, California  
National Association of State Treasurers, keynote address, Anchorage, Alaska  
Northwest Public Power Association, Anchorage, Alaska  
USDA Forest Service/UAA, climate change conference, Anchorage, Alaska  
World Wildlife Fund, climate camp, Homer, Alaska**

#### **Professional and Scientific Meetings**

**Alaska Historical Society, annual meeting, keynote address  
Alaska Marine Science Symposium, Anchorage, Alaska**

**American Meteorological Association**, Annual Meeting keynote address, San Diego, California

**Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S.**, Annual Meeting keynote address, Washington, D.C.

**Association of Architecture Organizations**, Anchorage, Alaska

**Hatfield Marine Science Center**, Newport, Oregon

**Monterey Institute of International Studies**, International Environmental Policy Program, Monterey, California

**National Park Service**, interpreter training, Kenai Fjords National Park

**Pacific Rim Conference on Literature and Rhetoric**, University of Alaska Anchorage, keynote address

## Awards

### 2023

**Robert L. Wears Patient Safety Leadership Award** (Jacksonville University): Team category award with Dr. David Nash for the book *How Covid Crashed the System*.

**Bugbee-Falk Student Book Award** (Association of University Programs in Health Administration): Among selections with Dr. David Nash, *How Covid Crashed the System*.

### 2019

**Best of the West** (the most prestigious journalism award for western U.S. newspapers, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming): First place, general interest column

### 2018

#### **Alaska Press Club**

- Public Service Award, honorable mention, all media
- Suzan Nightingale Award for Best Columnist, second place, large circulation print

### 2017

#### **Alaska Press Club:** Large circulation print

- Suzan Nightingale Award for Best Columnist, large circulation print
- Best series: second place

### 2016

**Alaska Press Club:** Suzan Nightingale Award for Best Columnist, large circulation print

### 2015

#### **Alaska Press Club:** All radio and TV

- Best talk show: third place
- Best public affairs show: second place

**2014**

**Alaska Press Club:** All radio and TV

- Best talk show: first place
- Best public affairs show: first place

**2013**

**Contributions to Alaska History Award** (Alaska Historical Society): shared with Victor Fischer

**2009**

**Book of the Year** (University of Alaska Anchorage/Alaska Pacific University): Selected as for campus-wide reading and study.

**2005**

**Louis J. Battan Author's Award** (American Meteorological Society): for outstanding, newly published book on the atmospheric and related sciences.

**2004**

**Los Angeles Times Book Prize:** winner, science and technology.

**Overseas Press Club of America:** citation, best reporting in any medium on international environment issues (Whitman Bassow Award)

**Library Journal** "Best Books 2004": listed

**Outstanding Alaskan of the Year** (Alaska Library Association): Best Alaska book for 2004.

**Kiryama Prize:** one of five finalists for a \$15,000 award for nonfiction on Pacific Rim cultures.

**2003**

**Anchorage School District:** Award for Excellence. Recognition for leadership as chairman for two years of the School Bonds YES! campaign, which won voter approval of \$264 million in bonds.

**2001**

**Alaska Press Club:** Best Reporting on Health or Science, Non-Daily

**1999**

**Anchorage Assembly:** Resolution 99-136 "Recognizing the Leadership of Assemblymember Charles P. Wohlforth in the Orderly and Successful Disposal of the Anchorage Telephone Utility"

**1997**

**Government Hill Community Council:** Citation "for exceeding even his usual high standards as a public servant in the matter of Municipal Ordinance 96-209," March 3.

**1995**

**Alaska Press Club:** Best general news story, second place.

**1994**

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best coverage of the Arts, first place
- Best reporting on the environment, second place.

**1993**

**Alaska Press Club:** best columnist, third place.

**1992**

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best general reporting, first place
- Best general reporting, third place.
- Best breaking story, first place.
- Best reporting on business and economics, first place.

**1991**

**Society of Professional Journalists, US Northwest Region, large dailies:**

- Best business reporting, first place.
- Best reporting on criminal justice, honorable mention.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best breaking story, first place.
- Best comprehensive coverage, first place.
- Best lifestyles or personality feature, third place.

**1990**

**C.B. Blethen Award:** for Distinguished Deadline Reporting, second place.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best reporting on a political subject, first place.
- Best reporting on health, science, consumer, and the environment, first place.
- Best long news feature, third place.

**1989**

**American Society of Newspaper Editors:** Award for Distinguished Deadline Writing, first runner-up.

**C.B. Blethen Award:** for Distinguished Deadline Reporting, first place.

**Alaska Press Club:**

- Best reporting, non-daily, second place;
- Best comprehensive coverage, non-daily, third place.

**1988**

**Alaska Press Club:** Best breaking story, non-daily, first place.



**1987**

**Society of Professional Journalists**, Farthest North Chapter:

- Best spot news reporting, third place.
- Best series, third place.

**1984**

**Princeton University**: Special Award in Creative Writing by the Dean of the College.

**Memberships and Volunteerism**

**American Society of Journalists and Authors**, member 1998-2002.

**Anchorage Assembly**, member and committee chair 1993-1999.

**Anchorage Library Foundation**, member and committee chair 2007-2012.

**Chugach Optional School Executive Board**, officer 2000-2011, president 2005-2006.

**Cook Inlet Historical Society**, board member 1999-2000.

**Hillcrest Children's Center Executive Committee**, officer 1995-2000.

**Government Hill Community Council**, president 1992.

**Municipal Light & Power**, member, board of directors, committee chair, 2009-2011.

**Raritan Headwaters Association**, member, board of trustees, 2023-present.

**School Bonds YES!**, chair of campaign in passage of \$171 million in bonds 2010-2014;  
also \$264 million in bonds 2002-2003.

**Steller Secondary Alternative, Strategic Planning Committee**, chair 2006-2009.