

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
NOVEMBER 2021

ALASKA NATIVE SUCCESS INITIATIVE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As we build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive future, we acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of the land on which we work and live. We honor our Alaska Native peoples.

University of Alaska Anchorage

UAA recognizes and values the diversity of our unique location in Southcentral Alaska, the ancestral lands of the Dena'ina, Ahtna, Alutiiq/Sugpiaq, Chugachmiut, and Eyak peoples.

Dena'ina land acknowledgment: Dena'inaq ełnenaq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu.
"I live and work on the land of the Dena'ina."

Translation: Helen Dick, Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart, Joel Isack.

University of Alaska Fairbanks

We acknowledge the Alaska Native nations upon whose ancestral lands our campuses reside. In Fairbanks, our Troth Yeddha' Campus is located on the ancestral lands of the Dena people of the lower Tanana River.

University of Alaska Southeast

Our campuses reside on the unceded territories of the Áak'w K̄wáan, Taant'á K̄wáan, and Sheetká K̄wáan on Lingít Aaní, also known as Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka, Alaska. We acknowledge that Lingít Peoples have been stewards of the land on which we work and reside since time immemorial, and we are grateful for that stewardship and incredible care. We also recognize that our campuses are adjacent to the ancestral home of the X̄aadas and Ts'msyen and we commit to serving their peoples with equity and care. We recognize the series of unjust actions that attempted to remove them from their land, which includes forced relocations and the burning of villages. We honor the relationships that exist between Lingít, X̄aadas, and Ts'msyen peoples, and their sovereign relationships to their lands, their languages, their ancestors, and future generations. We aspire to work toward healing and liberation, recognizing our paths are intertwined in the complex histories of colonization in Alaska. We acknowledge that we arrived here by listening to the peoples/elders/lessons from the past and these stories carry us as we weave a healthier world for future generations.

CONTENTS

FOREWARD

A Commitment to Transformation, President Pitney **4**

Alaska Native Success is Good for Everyone, Dr. Brower **5**

AMPLIFYING THE INDIGENOUS VOICE

Steering Committee **6**

University Action Teams **7**

Process **8**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

University of Alaska Anchorage **11**

University of Alaska Fairbanks **13**

University of Alaska Southeast **21**

System Office **33**

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS **39**

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE **40**

Thank you to the ANCSA Education Consortium and Frontier Solutions providing a comprehensive report to the UA Board of Regents.

The knowledge you've shared will continue to inform the Alaska Native Success Initiative.

UA is an AA/EO employer and educational institution and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual: www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination.

A COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMATION

A year ago, the University of Alaska Board of Regents established understanding and addressing of racial justice and Alaska Native success as UA priorities. In response, university leadership launched the Alaska Native Success Initiative, bringing together university staff and Indigenous leaders across the state to identify barriers and opportunities to improve the recruitment, retention and success for Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

This five-year strategic plan is the result of that effort, and builds on these commitments and work already underway. I am proud to introduce this foundation as a guide for the university system to better represent the Alaska population, for all to feel they belong, and for the change to be visible and recognized. Changing the culture of our institution is challenging. The attention and focus, to date, is already producing real progress.

I know more work needs to be done, and I know we are only beginning our journey. I affirm our commitment to enhancing opportunities and positioning ourselves to be a force of educational, cultural and economic progress for Alaska Natives.

When reflecting on the process of building the plan, I am humbled by the knowledge I've gained and grateful for our universities' strength in building community. It is inspiring to see our shared interest to acknowledge and raise Indigenous voices within the three universities in our University of Alaska system.

To our Indigenous students, faculty and staff, thank you for your patience, determination, trust and guidance. To the entire university community, we honor your dedication and achievements to make the University of Alaska a place where all can realize their full potential. As you read through this plan, I hope you will be inspired to join the transformation.

Sincerely,



Pat Pitney, Interim President
University of Alaska



The Board of Regents establishes understanding and addressing racial justice issues as a board priority. As a first step, the board authorizes and directs the university president to take the necessary actions to collect data; study and understand the university climate and programming; and identify the barriers, challenges and opportunities to improve participation and outcomes for Alaska Native and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff, in particular to address diminished Alaska Native and Indigenous student and faculty recruitment, selection, retention, development, and advancement over past academic years. The president will report her findings back to the board in June 2021. This motion is effective November 6, 2020.

THIS WORK IS TO BE DONE BY EVERYONE

Alaska Native Success supports a strong university system, a strong community, a strong Rural Alaska, a strong state and beyond.

The Alaska Native Success Initiative is a bold and important move, supported by the University of Alaska Board of Regents, University of Alaska Interim President Pat Pitney, and the chancellors of UAA, UAF and UAS. In November 2020, the Board of Regents passed the following resolution, "Authorization and direction to the University President to take the necessary actions to collect data; study and understand the University climate and programming; and identify the barriers, challenges, and opportunities to improve participation and outcomes for Alaska Native and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff." Since the passage of the resolution, Interim President Pitney made it a priority to convene a group of university professionals and Alaska Native community members to steer the Alaska Native Success Initiative (ANSI) in the right direction.

One year later, we fully embrace the charge put forth by the Board of Regents and we present this five-year plan to implement ANSI. This plan, focused on transformation, commits to implementing system initiatives like training and messaging, and supports each University in the implementation of their plan which includes Alaska Native student, faculty and staff recruitment, retention and persistence, along with changing the feel of each of our institutions through signage, celebrations, and honorifics.

The work we will embark upon is not new. We give appreciation and thanks to those who came before us who blazed pathways forward for our Alaska Native and Indigenous students. We take up their efforts and continue this work.

We recognize that we must be held accountable for this important initiative. We present this plan in part to be held accountable to you – every Alaskan is our stakeholder. We also recognize that we must hold our University leadership accountable. This work is not just to be done by Alaska Natives for Alaska Natives—this work is to be done by everyone – and our President and Chancellors hear the call.

Here's to ANSI 2022-27! We look forward to continuing this journey together supporting one another and seeing the success of our students each and every day.

Quyanaqpak,



Dr. Pearl K. Brower
Senior Advisor for Alaska Native Success,
Institutional Diversity and Student Engagement





ANSI STEERING COMMITTEE

Jennifer Booz, UAA Chief Diversity Officer*

Ronalda Cadiante Brown, UAS Associate Vice Chancellor for Alaska Native Programs*

Pearl Brower, UA Senior Advisor for Alaska Native Success, Institutional Diversity and Student Engagement

Sheri Buretta, Interim President and CEO, Chugach Alaska Corporation; UA Board of Regents Chair

Karen Carey, UAS Chancellor

Emily Edenshaw, President & CEO, Alaska Native Heritage Center

Liz Medicine Crow, President and CEO, First Alaskans Institute

Joe Nelson, Board Chair, Sealaska

Tabetha Toloff, CAO, Cook Inlet Tribal Council

Richard Peterson, President, Central Council, Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

Pat Pitney, Interim UA President

Sean Parnell, UAA Chancellor

Aaron Schutt, President & CEO, Doyon Limited

Geri Simon, Tanana Chiefs Conference

Charlene Stern, UAF Interim Vice Chancellor for Rural, Community and Native Education*

Daniel White, UAF Chancellor

Michele Yatchmeneff, UAA Executive Director for Alaska Native Education and Outreach*

* Lead facilitators for university action teams serve as ex officio members of the steering committee.

UNIVERSITY ACTION TEAMS

University of Alaska Anchorage

Kal Bacon, Coordinator, Alaska Native, Indigenous and Rural Outreach Program (ANIROP)
Jennifer Booz, EdD, Chief Diversity Officer*
Eric Carlson, PhD, Associate Professor, Library Science
Sara Childress, Director, Office of Equity and Compliance
Emily Edenshaw, President & CEO, Alaska Native Heritage Center, community member
Libby Eufemio, Kodiak College, Assistant Professor, Alaska Native Studies
Annmarie Iya, Undergraduate student, Native Student Council club president
Panigkaq Agatha John-Shields, PhD, Term faculty, School of Education
Paula Jones, Coordinator, Native Student Services (NSS)
Claudia Lampman, PhD, Vice Provost for Student Success
Benjamin Morton, Dean of Students
Joe Nelson, JD, Board Chair, Sealaska, community member
John Nofsinger, PhD, Interim Dean, College of Business & Public Policy
Stephanie Sanderlin, Student Success Facilitator, Recruitment and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing (RRANN)
Sondra Shaginoff-Stuart, Chair, Alaska Native Studies
Herb Schroeder, PhD, Vice Provost and Founder, Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program (ANSEP)
Mary Sherbick, Academic Advisor, ANSEP Acceleration Academy
Haliehana Stepetin, Term Faculty, AKNS
Christina Stuve, PhD, Associate Professor of Counseling, Kenai Peninsula College
Valerie Svancara, Assistant Director, NSS
Aleesha Towns-Bain, Executive Director, BBNC Education Foundation
Cheryl Turner, Office Manager, NSS
Jessica Saniguag Ullrich, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work
Michael Ulroan, Director, ANSEP
Maria Shaa tlaa Williams, PhD, Professor, Alaska Native Studies
Michele Yatchmeneff, PhD, Executive Director, Alaska Native Education and Outreach*
Rebecca Young, Clinical-Community Psychology PhD student, 2019 cohort

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Barb Amarok, PhD, Director, Northwest Campus
Jessica Black, PhD, Associate Professor, Alaska Native Studies and Rural Development
Courtney Carothers, PhD, Professor, College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences
Reverend Anna Frank, PhD, Elder advisor
Owen Guthrie, Director, eCampus
Carlton Hautala, Advisor, Rural Student Services
Margaret Rudolf, PhD student, Interdisciplinary Studies
Gabrielle Russell, Manager, Indigenous Student Services
Geri Simon, JD, Tanana Chiefs Conference
Charlene Stern, PhD, Interim Vice Chancellor for Rural, Community and Native Education*
Sean Asiqluq Topkok, PhD, Associate Professor, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies
Brooke Woods, Student, Fisheries & Ocean Sciences

University of Alaska Southeast

Gloria Burns, Tribal Council President, Ketchikan Indian Community
Dionne Cadiante-Laiti, Tribal Education Programs Director, Douglas Indian Association
Joseph Nelson, Chairman of the Board, Sealaska Corporation*
Richard Peterson, President, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Louise Brady, UAS Sitka staff
Sara Tomczuk, PhD, UAS Sitka staff, Title III, Sitka Campus
Ronald Cadiante Brown, Associate Vice Chancellor*
Dannielle Carlson, Rural Admissions Counselor
Mischa Jackson, Assistant Professor, Alaska College of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, Secondary
X'unei Lance Twitchell, PhD, Associate Professor, Alaska Native Studies and Alaska Native Languages
Joe Hillaire, Nang Skat' áas, student
Lauryn Framke, student
Sarah Peele, student

* Lead facilitators for university action teams serve as ex officio members of the steering committee.

THE PROCESS

November 2020

UA Board of Regents authorizes and directs the university president to improve success for Alaska Native and Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

January 2021

Alaska Native Success Initiative kicks off

February 2021

ANSI steering committee meets to confirm shared goals

March 2021

Systemwide baseline measures established and shared

May 2021

University action teams share baseline findings

June 2021

Universities present baseline data and action plans with Board of Regents

August 2021

Dr. Pearl Brower is named Senior Advisor for Alaska Native Success, Institutional Diversity and Student Engagement

September 2021

System Office shares system plan with Steering Committee

November 2021

Five-year strategic plan shared with Board of Regents



ACTION TEAMS LEAD THE CHARGE

Since inception, the Alaska Native Success Initiative depended on momentum and guidance from the action teams of UAA, UAF and UAS.

From November 2020 to the finalizing of this strategic plan, the action teams held frequent intercampus and interuniversity meetings to discuss findings and progress. The outcomes of these meetings informed — and will continue to inform — ANSI actions.



MISSION FIRST

University of Alaska Anchorage

The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) transforms lives through teaching, research, community engagement and creative expression in a diverse and inclusive environment. Serving students, the state, and the communities of Southcentral Alaska, UAA is a comprehensive, open access, public university established on the ancestral lands of the Dena'ina, Ahtna Dene, Alutiiq/Sugpiaq, Chugachmiut, and Eyak peoples.

University of Alaska Fairbanks

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a Land, Sea, and Space Grant university and an international center for research, education, and the arts, emphasizing the circumpolar North and its diverse peoples. UAF integrates teaching, research, and public service as it educates students for active citizenship and prepares them for lifelong learning and careers.

University of Alaska Southeast

The University of Alaska Southeast is a student-centered university that provides instruction in liberal arts, professional, and technical fields. On the homelands of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples, we serve the coastal environments, cultures, economies, and communities of Alaska, through interdisciplinary education, workforce development, and scholarship, research, and creative activity.

PEOPLE ALWAYS

The following pages contain each university's ANSI strategic plan. Guided by UA missions, each priority places people at the center of all actions — **increased potential and success of Alaska Native students, faculty and staff creates a thriving university.**

UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

UAA

Increase Alaska Native student preparation, recruitment, retention, and graduation rates

Increase recruitment and retention of Alaska Native faculty and staff.

Create a culture of belonging for Alaska Native students, faculty, staff, and community organizations.

UAF

Expansion of Indigenous and rural student serving programs and places

Recruit and hire Indigenous staff with a goal of employing a UAF workforce that reflects Alaska's population (approximately 20% Alaska Native/American Indian)

Set a priority of recruiting, retaining and promoting successful tenure and promotion of Indigenous faculty that reflects Alaska's population

Launch a campaign to increase Indigenous visual representation across UAF campuses including signage and art

Become a leader in Post-Secondary Indigenization Initiatives

UAS

Increase attraction, retention, and graduation attainment rates of Alaska Native Students

Increase attraction and retention rates of Alaska Native Staff and Faculty

Support of Institutional change through vision, leadership, messaging, measured growth, and increased diversity

System Office

Develop Racial Equity & Cultural Safety Training

Increase Indigenous Visual Representation

Develop an Annual Report on Alaska Native Success

Increase Awareness of Institutional Change in Messaging

Establish a Cabinet-level Alaska Native Position within the Office of the President



UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE™

**ALASKA NATIVE SUCCESS INITIATIVE (ANSI)
STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

October 2021

This Alaska Native Success Initiative (ANSI) Strategic Plan Executive Summary is a guide to building a strong and holistic Alaska Native community within UAA. Alaska Native people have historically been tasked with the process of addressing systemic inequities that profoundly impact them. That approach has had limited success as it does not address systemic inequities in a manner that includes the entire institution. This plan requires all of UAA, including administrators, faculty, staff, and the student body to work together to create the systemic change that is needed to foster Alaska Native student, faculty, and staff success and create a place of belonging. A more detailed plan can be found in the UAA ANSI Strategic Plan.

ANSI VISION

Build an Alaska Native community within UAA and be a global leader in Alaska Native student success, teaching, and scholarship.

PRIORITY 1: ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS

Increase Alaska Native student preparation, recruitment, retention, and graduation rates.

Goal 1: Eliminate the need for remediation and reduce the time to earn their degree for graduated high school students.

Goal 2: Have 15% of the total enrolled students be Alaska Native.

Goal 3: Increase Alaska Native retention and graduation rates.

Strategy:

- UAA Administration will work with all Departments and Programs to develop, implement, assess, and update unit-level plans to increase Alaska Native student preparation, recruitment, retention, and graduation rates.

Assessment:

- UAA shows an increase in the percentage of Alaska Native students that are prepared, recruited, retained, and graduating.

PRIORITY 2: ALASKA NATIVE FACULTY & STAFF

Increase recruitment and retention of Alaska Native faculty and staff.

Goal: Increase the percentage of Alaska Native faculty and staff from 3% to 20%.

Strategies:

- UAA Administration will work with each Department and Program to develop, implement, assess, and update unit-level plans to increase Alaska Native faculty and staff recruitment and retention.
- UAA works to retain and promote a majority of the qualified Alaska Native faculty to tenured positions within seven years from their start dates.
- UAA identifies current qualified Alaska Native Term and Adjunct Faculty and converts these to tenure track or tenured positions.
- The promotion and tenure process is overhauled in the Faculty Evaluation Policies and Procedures (FEPPs) and the Faculty Evaluation Guidelines (FEGs) to make it equitable for Alaska Native faculty.
- UAA commits to hiring qualified Alaska Native staff into leadership positions.

Assessment:

- UAA shows an increase in the percentage of Alaska Native faculty and staff that are recruited and retained.

PRIORITY 3: INSTITUTION (Internal & External)

Create a culture of belonging for Alaska Native students, faculty, staff, and community organizations.

Goal 1: Resource Alaska Native Academic Departments and Student Support Programs.

Goal 2: Increase Alaska Native representation both internally and externally.

Goal 3: Improve Human Resources' policies and practices.

Strategies:

- Resource Alaska Native Academic Departments and Student Support Programs with adequate funding and space needed to successfully implement their work.
- Increase the amount of Alaska Native artwork and location names across all UAA campuses.
- Highlight Alaska Native students, faculty, staff, and alumni so that our Alaska Native students can see role models on the UAA website, social media, announcements, billboards, and advertising campaigns.
- UAA strengthens its relationships with Alaska Native organizations to get feedback, create partnerships, and build community.
- Develop inclusive hiring policies and practices.
- Implement an annual Racial Equity & Cultural Safety Training.
- Implement a new employee onboarding process to include Alaska Native information.

Assessments:

- Ensure Alaska Native Academic Departments and Student Support Programs are adequately resourced with funding and space needed to successfully implement their work.
- UAA shows an increase in Alaska Native artwork, location names, and website representation.
- An external council of Alaska Native organization leaders is created and meets regularly with UAA leadership.
- UAA has improved Human Resources' policies and practices, implemented Racial Equity & Cultural Safety Training, and implemented a new employee onboarding process that includes Alaska Native information.

Completed:

- Hired a cabinet-level Alaska Native position: Executive Director of Alaska Native Education and Outreach.



Introduction:

The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) has a long history of offering academic programs and support services that are responsive to the needs of Indigenous and rural students. These include Rural Student Services, the Rural Alaska Honors Program, the Alaska Native Language Center, our five rural campuses and learning centers, as well as degree programs in Alaska Native Studies, Rural Development, Tribal Governance, Rural Human Services, Indigenous Studies, etc. UAF's second strategic goal (2019-2025) is to "strengthen our position as a global leader in Alaska Native and Indigenous programs". As part of that effort, a committee was organized and tasked with providing guidance and direction to UAF on recommendations to achieve that goal. Simultaneously in January 2021, UAF also began actively participating in the Alaska Native Success Initiative (ANSI) which is a system-wide effort guided by a statewide steering committee and action teams at each of the respective University of Alaska (UA) universities.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the members of the UAF Action Team for their input and dedication to the development of this vision.

Dr. Reverend Anna Frank, *Elder Advisor*

Dr. Charlene Stern, *Interim Vice Chancellor for Rural, Community & Native Education*

Dr. Barb Amarok, *Northwest Campus Director*

Dr. Jessica Black, *Associate Professor of Alaska Native Studies & Rural Development*

Dr. Courtney Carothers, *Professor, College of Fisheries & Ocean Sciences*

Dr. Sean Topkok, *Associate Professor, Center for Cross-Cultural Studies*

Owen Guthrie, *Executive Director, eCampus*

Carlton Hautala, *Rural Student Services Advisor*

Margaret Rudolf, *PhD Student, Interdisciplinary*

Gabrielle Russell, *Indigenous Student Services Manager*

Geri Simon, *Tanana Chiefs Conference*

Brooke Woods, *Student, Fisheries & Ocean Sciences*

A key question that routinely emerged around the ANSI initiative is: What is UA prepared to do to make the changes necessary throughout the system to make our universities a great place for Alaska Native students, faculty and staff? It is critically important that moving forward, strategies to increase Alaska Native success focus on systemic change needed on the part of UA.

UAF Priorities:

1. Expansion of Indigenous and rural student serving programs and places
2. Recruit and hire Indigenous staff with a goal of employing a UAF workforce that reflects Alaska's population (approximately 20% Alaska Native/American Indian)
3. Set a priority of recruiting, retaining and promoting successful tenure and promotion of Indigenous faculty that reflects Alaska's population
4. Launch a campaign to increase Indigenous visual representation across UAF campuses including signage and art
5. Become a leader in Post-Secondary Indigenization Initiatives



Priority 1: Expansion of Indigenous and rural student serving programs and places

As of Fall 2020, 19.6% of UAF's student body self-identified as Alaska Native/American Indian. UAF currently offers a number of highly effective programs that are designed to serve Indigenous and rural students. We propose to build and expand upon best practice models to increase recruitment, retention and graduation rates.

Indigenous and rural student serving programs:

Rural Student Services (RSS): Currently RSS operates with a staff of (4) full-time advisors and a Indigenous Wellness Coordinator. These advisors advise an average of 500 students (over 100 students per advisor) which is double the national best practices ratio (50 students per advisor) for similar comprehensive advising support programs to be impactful. Over the past five years, the number of contact hours between RSS advisors and students has increased (0.9 hours per student per year) while the number of RSS advisors has remained the same. Despite this, the RSS advising model has a positive impact on both retention and graduation rates of Alaska Native/American Indian students. Increased investment in RSS would go further toward increasing these rates.

- Over a 5-year average (2015-2019), the **retention** rate of Alaska Native/American Indian students served by RSS (52.9%) is **8.2%** higher than Alaska Native/American Indian UAF students who are not served by RSS (44.7%). The overall retention rate for Alaska Native/American Indian UAF students is 46.3%.
- Over a 5-year average (2015-2019), the **graduation** rate of Alaska Native/American Indian students served by RSS (16.7%) is **4.6%** higher than Alaska Native/American Indian UAF students who are not served by RSS (12.1%). The overall graduation rate for Alaska Native/American Indian UAF students is 13.6%

Being able to hire more advisors and decrease the current caseload per advisor would allow more time with each student to assure that we are truly providing a wrap-around approach that is more holistic in supporting our students' needs. The additional time spent with each student would go further toward positively impacting graduation and retention rates.



Examples of additional strategic investments in RSS could include financial support for:

- **Degree completion advisor** - Over the past five years, a significant number of our students who have completed some college but have not earned a degree or certificate and discontinued taking classes is significant. In one advisor's case load of 110 students, 14 students have discontinued their degrees with less than five classes left to graduate. This is a focus that needs to be addressed quickly before more time passes. A degree completion advisor could focus their efforts in helping students return to finish up.
- **Degree completion scholarship support** - Scholarship support is not only an incentive but helps to offset the costs for students returning to school for degree completion. In many cases, students that have "stopped out" become ineligible for federal and tribal scholarships.
- **Wellness and outreach programming** - Recently RSS hired an Indigenous Wellness Outreach Coordinator. Though the position has only been in existence for six months, the requests for more programming to meet the needs of our students and the community have already become overwhelming. An assistant and more funds to help arrange programming logistics and materials would free up time for the Wellness Coordinator to meet individually with students.
- **Peer mentoring development and academic coaching support** - RSS student feedback surveys and direct students requests have identified advising needs for help with the

following: resume writing, individual homework assignments, helping students to identify what is needed in each class, ordering books, and helping complete scholarships. These requests could be addressed with peer mentoring or academic coaching positions.

- **Tutoring services** - The importance of having paid professional tutors has become increasingly apparent over the years. While RSS has partnered with Development Education faculty to volunteer hours during our RSS Study hall cohort, the demand for in-person tutoring exceeds the availability. RSS has students who require tutoring as part of their weekly schedule to assist with completing assignments and some students often rearrange their schedules and childcare in order to meet with the same tutor weekly. More consistent and robust tutoring services would better help to meet the needs of our students.
- **RSS Cohort/Study hall** - In the past, RSS was able to arrange a RSS Cohort and Study Hall for first year students which included funding for textbooks ahead and scholarship incentives for completing the fall semester in good standing (earning 12 credits with 2.5 GPA or higher). At that time, 100% of participating students met the requirements and registered for the following spring semester. Once, however, the scholarship incentive was not an option, the number of students who met the same requirements the following semester dropped to 45%.
- **RSS sponsored student clubs/organizations** - As part of the effort to provide and build a sense of belonging and community, RSS offers programming including Positive Connection Nights as well as through Alaska Native Student Organizations such as: Alaska Native Education Student Association, Alaska Native Social Workers Association, American Indian Science & Engineering Society, Native Alaskan Business Leaders, UAF Beading & Sewing Club, Iñu-Yupiaq Dance Group, Native Student Union of UAF, Native Games, Troth Yeddha' Dance Group, and Festival of Native Arts. The ability to provide funding for such activities and support for student clubs/organization events helps to maintain their presence and participation on the Troth Yeddha' Campus.

Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI): Currently, RAHI receives an average of 100 applications per year, yet is only able to accept approximately 50% of applicants. The majority of students who attend RAHI are Alaska Native (81%) and Alaska Native participants who attend RAHI are nearly twice as likely to obtain a bachelor's degree in the UA system than those who do not attend (19% vs. 10%). RAHI's goals are to increase application acceptance rate to 80% annually, which aligns with the UAF Retention Teams priority to expand summer bridging programs, and to increase support for their alumni as they pursue their degrees. The expected outcomes of these goals are the preparation of more students across the state for college success and an increase in the rate of degree attainment among Alaska Native students.

Examples of additional strategic investments in RAHI could include financial support for:

- **Scholarships to RAHI alumni attending UAF, UAS or UAA** - Current scholarship funding includes \$5,000 (one \$2,000 award and two \$1,500 awards) for first-time students attending any UA and \$25,000 (eleven \$2,000 awards and two \$1,500 awards) for first-time students attending UAF. There is currently no financial support for continuing students.
- **A non-represented faculty position that could also serve as an academic advisor for RAHI students and alumni** - Such a position could teach core courses during RAHI and provide academic advising to students at UAF during the academic year.

- **A college success coordinator position for RAHI alumni** - Such a position could support alumni pursuing a degree regardless of where they are enrolled through financial aid, career, and program application assistance as well as coordinate alumni outreach and events
- **Care packages** - Funding for care packages for RAHI alumni would help to provide a sense of support to active students.



Indigenous and rural student serving places

Troth Yeddha’ Indigenous Studies Center - UAF’s number one capital goal is to construct the Troth Yeddha’ Indigenous Studies Center. A site was officially designated on the West Ridge of campus between the Museum of the North and the Reichardt building and a conceptual design was completed for a 34,000 square foot facility and an outdoor Legacy Park. The fundraising campaign has raised \$1.8 million to date. UAF is currently working with Bettisworth North to revise the design to expand the administrative space from 28 offices to 45+ offices to accommodate program growth. Advancing to the next phase of pre-development would require schematic design.

Additional residential housing options on campus for Alaska Native and rural students -

Currently, the College of Rural and Community Development operates the Eileen Panigeo MacLean House on the Troth Yeddha’ Campus. Eileen’s house was established to provide students from the Arctic region and other rural areas of Alaska with a safe, inviting, and supportive community environment that would be helpful in the transition from small, tight-knit rural communities to university life in the city of Fairbanks. The current capacity of Eileen’s House is 20 students (10 male and 10 female spaces). Each fall there is a waitlist for students who want to get a room at Eileen’s house and the demand for additional residential housing with the same mission and focus would allow us to expand this same level of residential and transitional support to more of our incoming students.

Priority Two: Recruit and hire Indigenous staff with a goal of employing a UAF workforce that reflects Alaska’s population (approximately 20% Alaska Native/American Indian)

As of Fall 2020, 9.7% of UAF staff self-identify as Alaska Native/American Indian. Having a workforce that reflects Alaska’s population is critical to meeting UAF’s goals of diversity, equity and inclusion. With a student body that is 19.6% Alaska Native/American Indian, we recognize the importance of employing Indigenous staff throughout the university system who can help students (often non-traditional and first generation students) to successfully achieve their post-secondary educational goals. As an employer, UAF is committed to fostering diversity and would utilize strategic investments to “grow our own” workforce to better serve Indigenous students.

Priority Three: Set a priority of recruiting, retaining and promoting successful tenure and promotion of Indigenous faculty that reflects Alaska’s population

Currently, 5% of UAF faculty self-identify as Alaska Native/American Indian. Research has demonstrated that educators of color can help close access and opportunity gaps for students of color while being vital to the well-being of students of all races. By ensuring more Indigenous faculty in UAF classrooms, Indigenous students will have greater opportunities to see themselves represented which leads to numerous positive outcomes. Lundberg and Lowe (2016) found that higher quality relationships between Indigenous students and faculty were positive predictors of academic competence. Strategic investments in this area would help to expand faculty and course offerings in high demand areas including Alaska Native languages, Tribal Governance, and Indigenous Studies as well as in disciplines where Indigenous faculty have been historically underrepresented.

Specific strategies may include:

- Identifying current Indigenous term and adjunct faculty for rank changes to tenure track faculty positions.
- Identifying systematic barriers to tenure & promotion of Indigenous faculty and faculty of color
- Assessing tenure and promotion processes (including unit peer criteria) for inclusivity of Indigenous knowledge production and dissemination as well as opportunities for Elders and other knowledge keepers to engage in the evaluation of candidates.
- Ensuring representation from Indigenous faculty on tenure & promotion review committees as well as educating all faculty who serve on these committees on Indigenous inclusivity
- Identifying best practices for incorporating Indigenous knowledge production and community service into unit criteria across all departments
- Creating a program around Indigenous mentoring to support emerging Indigenous scholars’ contributions to their respective fields, to provide guidance with Indigenous faculty career paths by tenured Indigenous faculty and leadership, and to nurture a positive rapport with university employees, students, and communities.

Priority Four: Launch a campaign to increase Indigenous visual representation across UAF campuses including signage and art

UAF, like all UA campuses, is located upon the ancestral lands of Alaska Native peoples. As part of that recognition, UAF is planning to undertake a campaign to increase Indigenous visual representation at our Troth Yeddha' campus in Fairbanks, Community and Technical College campus, and at our rural campuses. Strategic investments in this area would help to support signage and art installations that aim to honor and uplift Indigenous peoples, languages and places in the physical campus environment.



Priority Five: Become a leader in Post-Secondary Indigenization Initiatives

Indigenization of post-secondary education is the practice of acknowledging and redressing the ways in which Indigenous Peoples, their scholarship, history, culture, and ways of knowing have been excluded from or made invisible within post-secondary institutions and post-secondary education. Post-secondary Indigenization Initiatives is less of a prescriptive plan and more of an ongoing commitment on the part of a higher education institution. The ANSI team would continue to work on identifying areas of particular importance that can help provide direction to UAF in this regard.

Examples of initiatives could include:

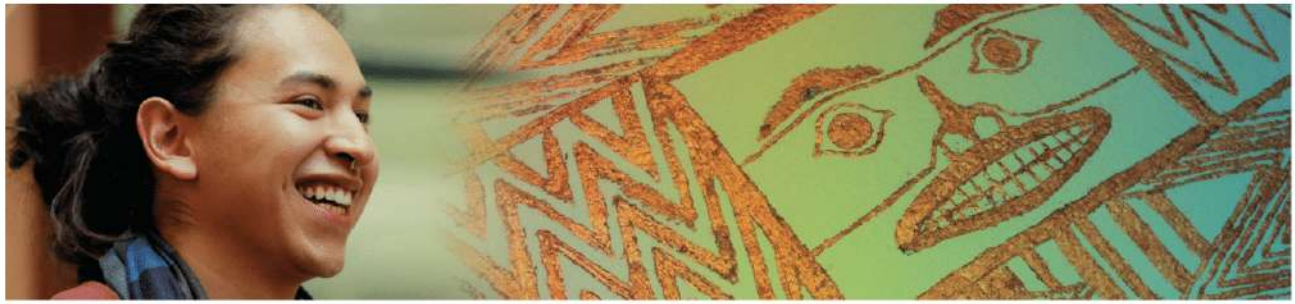
- Development of IRB protocols with working with Indigenous communities, including data management practices.
- Development of innovative co-production of knowledge practices and approaches
- Exploring how other Universities are approaching the decolonization of policies and practices
- Strategize on engaging more from the UAF community to engage in initiatives that advance equity

- Renormalization of the use and incorporation of Indigenous languages and Indigenous knowledge in academia



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Alaska Native Success Initiative



SECTION I

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING ALASKA NATIVE STUDENTS

Our Alaska Native students define diversity at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) as the primary population identified in general reporting (accreditation, enrollment reports such as IPEDs, and define partnerships, etc.). We acknowledge the historic impact on Alaska Native people with each opportunity to recognize the lands upon which this university sits. Racial implications, most recently, have been at the forefront of news, conflict, and politics. Alaska Native peoples are fully aware of the impact of race and desire a more reciprocal relationship with education systems that fully recognize the rich history and culture that shapes a worldview and expands horizons of learners. Alaska Native student engagement in higher education challenges a university system to learn from the past and pave the way by adapting to new perspectives to fully meet the expectations of the AN consumer. UAS, by recognizing the traditional lands on which it resides, is in place to further its relationship with tribes and tribal organizations for the benefit of its students.

In times of diminished enrollment Alaska Native Student Recruitment and Retention is even more critical, presents a challenge, and requires strategies to meet these challenges. Alaska Native students comprise 20% of the UAS student population. The University of Alaska Southeast has maintained the status of a Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution (NSI defined [here](#)), one of less than 100 institutions of higher education with an American Indian/Alaska Native student population of 10% or above. A recent report, *WICHE Insights: An Analysis of Title III Funding in Support of Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions' Strengthening of American Indian/Alaska Native Postsecondary Attainment* (May 2021) by Falkerstern and Roachat provided the following:

Key Findings

- Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions have a deep commitment to American Indian/Alaska Native student academic success that is evident in special programming interventions and student support initiatives.
- These efforts are largely funded through U.S. Department of Education Title III funding, which is a vital financial resource to NASNTIs.
- Support of academic success is rooted in recognition of unique cultures and experiences of American Indian/Alaska Native students.
- Increases in American Indian/Alaska Native student retention and graduation rates are associated with factors such as student belongingness, cultural engagement, and cultural awareness opportunities in student support services and academic programs.

These findings are in line with the discussions and framing of ideas put forth by the ANSI committee.

Attracting Alaska Native Students

Goals	Supporting Actions
<p>a. Identify key barriers to Alaska Native student recruitment. (e.g. location of recruitment events, outreach opportunity to engage with UAS personnel)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the UAS enrollment plan to identify strengths and weaknesses of strategies for attracting a culturally diverse profile of Alaska Native students. • Increase AN student visibility in the UAS public profile in media campaigns and the UAS website. • Schools and Departments develop and report data measures of AN enrollment by degree programs. • Expand recruitment strategies with defined targets and assessment goals and strategies including outreach to Alaska Native organizations.
<p>b. Promote UAS program supports to attract diverse students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop measurable strategies to increase Alaska Native student academic interests for first-time freshman and adult learners. • Utilizing input and guidance from the Rural Admissions Counselor, identify rural, remote, and urban student differences in interests and needs to design targeted support strategies for a successful transition into higher education. • Expand outreach and rural strategies to include urban populations. • Create a position to coordinate dual enrollment initiatives with school districts and grant initiatives.
<p>c. Increase recruitment of AN students from an average 20% of the UAS population to 25% by 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility through the website and launch a campaign to transform Alaska Native recruitment. • Increase Alaska Native community awareness of UAS higher education degree and certificate options by developing a targeted media promotion of AN engagement in UAS degree & certificate programs to communities with a high percentage Alaska Native population. • Increase personnel by adding an Alaska Native admissions counselor and advisor to work in concert with the Rural Admissions Counselor. • Assess the role of admission counselors data and input to adapt the positions based upon recommendation to include transition to college and evaluate supports for new students.
<p>d. Establish a collaboration agreement with tribal organizations for the purpose of potential coordination of recruitment efforts targeting tribal members & routine consultation with tribes, tribal councils, and ANSCA leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate possible strategies for offering tuition-free opportunities for with Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka based tribal organizations • Alaska Workforce Trends include Alaska Native Tribal organizations. (e.g., identified employer needs/job market/training priorities of tribes) • Sealaska Heritage Corporation and Institute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tlingit Haida Central Council Sitka Tribes Ketchikan/Metlakatla Douglas Indian Association Goldbelt Heritage Foundation

Retention and Attainment of Alaska Native Students

Dr. Walter Soboleff speaking on education said, *“When a student has made it this far, we will never let them fail.”* Key findings reference supportive components of Alaska Native students: Increases in American Indian/Alaska Native student retention and graduation rates are associated with factors such as student belongingness, cultural engagement, and cultural awareness opportunities in student support services and academic programs.

Retaining and Attainment of Alaska Native Students

Goals	Supporting Actions
<p>e. Provide stakeholder reporting of retention data/rates demonstrating progress toward maintaining status of an Alaska Native serving institution by increasing retention and attainment rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility through the website and design and launch a campaign designed to transform Alaska Native retention and attainment. • Data review on progress; (e.g. Increase retention rates of AN students from ___ to ___ by ___.) • Website (public/transparent data) • Annual report to partners on student retention data. • Conduct exit surveys to assess reasons students leave and self-assess effectiveness of supports as interventions.(e.g. school climate, incident, family, financial) • Adjust plan annually, if needed to accommodate student input from exit survey results and Native Serving Institutions (NSI) successful practices model.
<p>f. Establish a collaboration agreement with tribal organizations for the purpose of coordination & consulting with tribes & tribal councils on retention and attainment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be intentional in working with tribes. • Tribal agreements (formalized) • Engage students with tribal organizations and services early each academic year. • Intersect with tribal programming, Title VII, Indian Ed, JOM - coordinate to support students transition and recruit • Employment, internships, mentoring. • Establish a network with community and tribal organizations to develop student engagement opportunities. • Practice subsistence with current students, local mentors, alumni, etc.
<p>g. Building a support COMMUNITY to develop community connections (belonging)</p> <p>h. *Increases in American Indian/Alaska Native student retention and graduation rates are associated with factors such as student belongingness, cultural engagement, and cultural awareness opportunities in student support services and academic programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network to promote support for UAS students and establish a process of early tribal organization engagement with UAS. • Elder/Mentor (Aunt & Uncle), Alumni connection with responsibilities; student/peer mentor with stipend • Peer led study groups, study halls, tie to NRSC possibly. (food) • Explore work and mentor experiences within the community tied to AN programs e.g. Title VII, Indian Ed, Johnson O’Malley • Cultural place-based connections with technology

Goals	Supporting Actions
<p>i. Student Supports</p> <p>Identify models to maximize AN Student Services/ Rural Services. (Alaska Native Student Council recommendation)</p> <p>Roles and relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-boarding strategies prior to the start of the first term. • Create a space of belonging • Integrate student support services with Native & Rural Student Center strategies for student engagement, e.g., early services and outreach) and relationship supports through the Wooncheen student organization with outreach to Ketchikan and Sitka students. • Restructure Student Services to align services available to meet diverse Alaska Native students. • Welcoming access to community organizations to support a network of student services. (e.g. tribal support services, SEARHC, leadership opportunities). • Early engagement with families and the identified student support network(s)
<p>j. Academic supports & access</p> <p>Academics and Beyond</p> <p>Early Interventions</p> <p>See UAF Rural Student Services - e.g. advisors, peer mentors, admission counselors (one stop)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities and access. Inclusive of all • Create a support network of staff and faculty • Further develop and support early learning opportunities • Summer readmission program with workshops, peer mentoring, credit recovery) safety net • Competition
<p>k. Create a welcoming connection for/with students.</p> <p>Early identification of students - outreach and welcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain an early connection with Alaska Native students within the campus and community to welcome and engage students. • Consider diversity among Alaska Native students, tribal, home, community, culture, size, etc. when designing supports and interventions. • First generation college attendance to adult learners • E.G. host cultural celebration. Annual Community event hosted by UAS to draw students and community together. Cultural annual event

UAS Data:

First-Time Full-Time Bachelor's Seeking Students – Degree Received

Total fall 2012-fall 2014 entering cohort of first-time full-time bachelor's seeking freshmen: 239, of which 60 received a bachelor's degree within 6 years and 89 received any degree within 6 years

Total fall 2012-fall 2014 entering cohort of Alaska Native/American Indian first-time full-time bachelor's seeking freshmen: 42, of which 2 received a bachelor's degree within 6 years and 6 received any degree within 6 years

UAS/UA Alaska Native Student Data & Resources

Kristen Handley, Institutional Effectiveness

AN Student Success Data.

Alaska Native first-time freshmen

[Alaska Native Student Data, First Time freshmen](#)

Beyond IPEDS

[Beyond IPEDS, All Students Data](#)

Alaska Native graduates in Education

(Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Southeast)

[Alaska Native Education Graduates](#)

UA Human Resources Information:

[AK Native Faculty Workforce Data](#)

UAS Retention Through Intervention (data report)

2021 (NEW - added 3/08/21)

[Retention Through Intervention \(ppt\) 2021](#)

UAS Enrollment

[IE Report](#)

Klein, Handley PPT: Retention Through Intervention & Enrollment Update

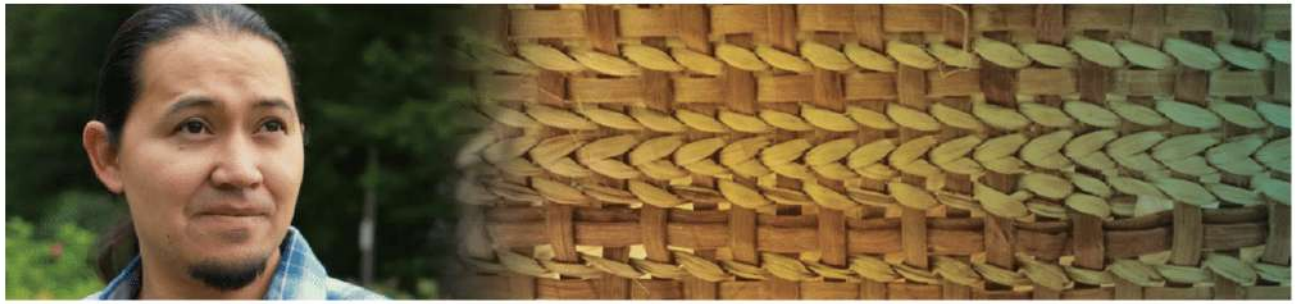
[Enrollment and Retention Project](#)

Haa Latseen: Strengthening Institutional Practices at the University of Alaska Southeast

[Presentation](#)

Student Enrollment Majors by Term

[IE Report](#)



SECTION II

ATTRACT AND RETAIN ALASKA NATIVE STAFF AND FACULTY

University of Alaska Southeast Institutional Effectiveness data document that UAS Alaska Native staff have been somewhat stable over time, with approximately 11% are Alaska Native/American Indian, while Alaska Native faculty have been documented at a lower rate of 7%. These percentages translate to small numbers. The UAS ANSI committee discussions centered on intentional efforts to engage Alaska Native employees at every stage of development, from initial outreach and on-boarding of hires to professional development as imperative to engage and retain employees. Employee hire for diversity is not uncommon for any organization. UAS will be challenged to compete by proactive efforts to be visible and viable as an attractive place of employment. Further, Alaska Native hire also will enhance Alaska Native student recruitment and retention efforts.

Attracting and Retaining Alaska Native Staff and Faculty

Goals	Supporting Actions
a. Increase AN STAFF diversity hire with measures of progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UAS articulates within its mission to increase Alaska Native hire and promote employment opportunities within the tribal communities...e.g., UAS is a great place to work, join us! articulated goals with measures reported
b. Increase AN FACULTY diversity hire with measures of progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and inclusion goals defined and promoted. • Tribal agreements formalized. • Grow our own. (NOTE: PITAAS/SHI has supported four doctoral candidates with financial contributions toward courses, research, travel to date secure their terminal degree) • Collaboration with tribes: Coordination & Consulting with tribes & tribal councils • Promote Ph.D. attainment with tribal members
c. Human Resources Hiring Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Review (transparent) • Targeted Outreach to candidates • Improved HR Professional Development opportunities informed by place-based history and culture and orientation to the Alaska Native community and organizations

Goals	Supporting Actions
<p>d. Retention</p> <p>Opportunity for training and advancement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data review needed. Data Review (transparent) note: review UAA inclusive hiring practices here:
<p>e. Professional Development</p> <p>Grow our own by creating a pathway for staff and faculty advancement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-boarding of new hires on Alaska Native cultures and history designed by departments e.g., via materials development inclusive of place-based knowledge, tailored training, including networking, mentoring, community engagement and drawing from expertise in targeted areas like STEM, teacher education, business, etc. • Collaboration with Student Services and Native & Rural Student Center support services in support of creating a space of belonging.

Resources

Affirmative Action Summary Report to the Board of Regents 2020

[Affirmative Action Report](#)

United Academics AAUP/AFT Local #4996

[UA Faculty Union - United Academics](#)

[United Academics Embrace Antiracism and Support Black Lives Matter](#)

Approved by UNAC Representative Assembly on 03 June 2020 – United Academics Guiding Principles Statement to the UA Board of Regents

[UAA Alaska Native Studies](#)

[UAA Hiring Best Practices](#)

[UAS Indigenous Programs](#)

Alaska Performance Scholarship 2021

[Alaska Performance Scholarship 2021](#)



SECTION III INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE VISION, LEADERSHIP, AND MESSAGING

This section of the plan captures some discussion of how to improve the university system as an organization that welcomes growth and diversity in ways that are measurable and proactive.

Institutional Change

Goals	Supporting Actions
<p>a. Identify and eliminate practices of institutional racism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an articulated vision statement on anti-racism to establish an organization standard and assessment for continued growth. • Develop a process for reporting and investigating violations of standards. • Equity & Cultural Safety included in media, reporting, be visible
<p>b. Personnel Development</p> <p>UAS ensures that our populations of students, staff, faculty, and administration reflect the population of Southeast Alaska.</p> <p><i>Note the First Alaskan's 2010 Census report lists 50% of AN population is under age 22.</i></p> <p><i>ANSC: Identify areas to recruit and hire AN faculty, beginning with areas left vacant from recent departures. (2019) ANSC: The University of Alaska establishes a goal of 10% AN faculty by 2025. (2019) -ANSC Appoint faculty as special advisors to the UA President</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a mandatory training with an evaluation component for both new (on-boarding) and existing UAS personnel. (faculty and staff). • Identify commonly used terms and related resources for use by faculty and staff. • The current HR structure is housed in UA system-wide, with locally assigned staff without local autonomy to plan and implement a Southeast training and evaluation structure. • Data Review (transparent, annual report updates) • Statewide propose changes in co-governance structures with faculty senate, union, and staff council in support of training in a range of topics on culture and diversity. • Offer all Alaska Native languages at all three campuses. Encourage use of traditional languages in all print material and web development, signage, etc.

Goals	Supporting Actions
c. Coordination & Consulting with tribes & tribal councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tribal agreements (formalized) • Proactively explore a UAS tribal college and college of Alaska Native Languages, Studies, Arts with a co-governance model
d. Explore the feasibility of a Diversity, Equity office/ officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position responsibilities include developing and maintaining a process for issues that come up, including data reports related to race and diversity. • Work with tribes and Alaska Native organizations. • Link with faculty professional development (CELT) and HR to design and implement Individual/small group conversations with faculty to learn/ expand content knowledge of Alaska Native peoples and identify further learning opportunities (→ guest speakers → co-instructors → (adjunct → term → asst. prof) • With budget support, Integrate cultural safety training within the Learning Center and Native & Rural Student Center, and Student Services.
e. Academic Inclusivity Work in concert with Faculty Senate and Faculty Alliance in support of review of content of courses and programs in support of diversity and inclusion of Alaska Native peoples, histories, organizations, and languages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deans and Directors of programs and departments receive UA and UAS guidance and training on how to develop inclusivity plans and reviews. • UAS develop an annotated bibliography of materials all students should encounter. • Adapt Student Learning Objectives (SLO's) to be inclusive of Alaska Native knowledge with support through CELT and professional development opportunities to review and strengthen design of student learning outcomes. • Curriculum/instructional support position specializing in culture and diversity added to provide support for faculty, research, curriculum development and course integration – e.g. Canada has this model in many higher ed institutions.

Resources

Affirmative Action Summary Report to the Board of Regents 2020

[Affirmative Action Report](#)

United Academics AAUP/AFT Local #4996

[UA Faculty Union - United Academics](#)

[United Academics Embrace Antiracism and Support Black-Lives Matter](#)

Approved by UNAC Representative Assembly on 03 June 2020 – United Academics Guiding Principles Statement to the UA Board of Regents

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education

[Supplemental Report 2020](#)

Native Serving Institutions (Lumina Foundation & Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education)

[Native Serving Institutions Initiative](#)

[Wiche Native Serving Institutions Initiative](#)

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education

[Report](#)

Sound Practice: Audio Exercises for Equity

[Stanford Sound Practice](#)

High Country News, Education, Land-grab universities

[Land-grab Universities](#)



*The University of Alaska Southeast extends
gratitude to the Alaska Native Student
Success Initiative members for their
willingness to serve, their valuable insights,
and commitment to the highest
expectations of systems improvement.*

— CHANCELLOR CAREY

ALASKA NATIVE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

Gloria Burns, Tribal Council President, Ketchikan Indian Community

Dionne Cadiente-Laiti, Tribal Education Programs Director, Douglas Indian Association

Joseph Nelson, Chairman of the Board, Sealaska Corporation, (also on UA steering committee)

Richard Peterson, President, Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

UAS REPRESENTATIVES

Louise Brady, Staff and Sara Tomczuk, Faculty, Title III, Sitka Campus

Ronalda Cadiente Brown, Associate Vice Chancellor

Dannielle Carlson, Rural Admissions Counselor

Mischa Jackson, Faculty, Alaska College of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, Secondary

X'unei Lance Twitchell, Faculty, Alaska Native Studies and Alaska Native Languages

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Joe Hillaire, Nang Sk'at' áas, student

Lauryn Framke, student

Sarah Peele, student

Ch'áak' Kootéeyaa (Eagle Totem Pole), carved by Haida brothers and artists Joe and T.J. Young, was raised during a large community celebration on April 24, 2010. Wooch.een, a UAS native student group, helped select the crests depicted and helped promote and raise funds for the project. The UAS Juneau campus is located on the ancestral land of the Áak'w Kwáan Tlingit people.



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SYSTEM OFFICE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

STRATEGIES AND MILESTONES

Develop and Implement Racial Equity & Cultural Safety Training

The System Office commits to developing and implementing a systemwide training module on racial equity and cultural safety, being responsive to Alaska Native cultures. This training will be required for employees and students across the system. Universities are encouraged to supplement the training module to meet the needs of their respective populations and geographical locations. The module may be created and implemented as cumulative units, tailored for different groups within the system ie: student, faculty, staff, leadership, etc. Delivery will be through the UA Learning Library for all 22,093 students and 6,420 faculty and staff. In-person panels and forums are encouraged to be used as additional training tools, in addition to supplementary materials, produced by each university. The module materials will be designed to elevate existing Indigenous knowledge, applying this knowledge and cultural awareness to everyday practices and increase inclusivity and understanding of peoples.

Strategies

Develop and adopt shared language systemwide

Identify path to integrate ANSI training with existing UA training resources

Develop strategy for all employees to participate in training

Encourage use of existing materials produced by statewide partners

Increase offering of Indigenous themed panels/forums

Milestones

Fall 2021 - Identify task force

Spring 2022 - Connect with Alaskan agencies to determine opportunity for collaboration

Spring 2022 - Perform needs assessment

Fall 2022 - Draft curriculum

Winter 2022 - Produce, finalize

Fall 2023 - Implementation

Increase Indigenous Visual Representation

The System Office commits to sending intentional messaging of the charge to amplify and support the universities' work to strengthen a sense of place through art, signage and other visible media and to increase visual representation within System Office facilities. In addition, the Senior Advisor will work with university action teams to discuss potential system wide campaigns. With guidance from Alaska Native students, faculty and staff, the System Office will also develop a land acknowledgement for the entire system to recognize Alaska's diverse peoples and their lands. The System Office and each university will conduct an inventory of respective facilities and events to bring to light the UA System's external self-awareness, and the size of the Indigenous and colonization knowledge gap with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of celebrations and events, and their disregard of impacts and erasure of Alaska's peoples.



Milestones

Spring 2022 - Develop plan for signage to represent Alaska Native languages

Winter/Spring 2022 - Build a digital archive for Alaska Native Native, and all artists of color, created artwork and presence

Fall 2022- Alaska Native student campaign support for each university visual representation efforts

Strategies

Develop process for recognizing units/departments for increasing Indigenous visual representation in their functional areas

Identify funding for goal

Develop land acknowledgements in different forms for multiple uses

Develop an Alaska Native Success Annual Report

Working with university action team leads, the Senior Advisor for Alaska Native Success, Institutional Diversity and Student Engagement will lead the effort to develop an annual report on Alaska Native success at UA. The report will focus on qualitative and quantitative measures, as well data comparisons to prior years and accomplishments. The report will ensure transparency and will be accessible to all stakeholders.



Milestones

Fall 2021 - Present report to BoR and AFN

Spring 2022 - Identify shared measures for all universities (5-7 measures)

Spring 2022 - Work with university action teams to process for gathering data and measurements

Fall 2022 - Present annual report to BoR and AFN

Strategies

Develop ANSI climate survey biennially to include responses in report

Begin conversation with Office of Equity and Compliance to discuss the potential to incorporate ANSI questions in existing morale survey

Build short-form surveys for consistent, non-exhaustive engagement

Collect process data from universities and UA Institutional Research

Integrate survey responses and progress data in annual report

Increase Awareness of Change in Messaging

The System Office commits to promoting Alaska Native Success Initiative efforts and progress, and will proactively work with the universities to share successes within the university system and greater Alaska community. The System Office will work in partnership with each university to strengthen connections with their respective communities to include tribes, regional corporations, regional nonprofits, businesses, school districts, community partners and other community organizations around the state.

Strategies

Publish inventory of all Indigenous programs, clubs, events, etc, systemwide

Include links to universities' ANSI websites, including links to research, Alaska Native studies and other activities promoting Indigenous cultures

Integrate news from external sources to highlight System Office and university public relations/university relations' outreach

Highlight all Alaska Native success across Alaska

Develop process for consistent publishing/distributing ANSI materials

Share annual reports yearly at Elders & Youth conference and AFN conference

Deliver annual State of ANSI address

Milestones

Fall 2021 - Design online presence, determine content, implement, update

Spring 2022 - Increase donor awareness of DEI initiatives, increase giving, determine best avenues for disseminating information and messaging

Spring 2022 - Work with System Office Public Affairs to create social media presence and voice

Establish a Cabinet-level Alaska Native Position

In response, Interim President Pitney created a position to support Alaska Native success. On August 16, 2021, Dr. Pearl Brower joined the System Office leadership team. Goals for this position will include recruiting at least two additional staff, with the intent of increasing capacity to advance each area of focus: Alaska Native Success, Institutional Diversity and Student Engagement. Overall department structure will evolve to model current leadership structure within the Office of the President providing a more robust, meaningful and impactful functional area that has future sustainability.



Milestones

Spring 2022 - Develop organizational chart to integrate new department with the System Office chart

Summer/Fall 2022 - Determine need, function and scope of new positions

Fall/Winter 2022 - Draft position descriptions and recruit



Strategies

Develop structure of roles and responsibilities for functional area

Determine how positions add value to the University System & each university

Develop funding plan with the goal of departmental self-sustainability



ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Support the Establishment of a College of Alaska Native Languages

As proposed by the Alaska Native Studies Council, the universities recommend the System Office begin identifying paths to establish a college of Alaska Native languages. In collaboration with the three separately accredited universities, the system will explore models like that of the Alaska College of Education Consortium to identify possible avenues to elevate and strengthen Alaska Native language programs systemwide.

Establish a Plan for Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation

UAA, UAF and UAS shared the importance of developing a Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) plan. The System Office will explore how a TRHT plan would be developed and implemented to recognize all the diverse Indigenous cultures across the state. The intention is to increase understanding of DEI significance, and to reshape symbolic change to identity change. The process will include an audit of UA policies, procedures and regulations.

Develop System-wide Leadership Program

Designed through the concept of “grow our own,” develop a systemwide leadership program to include components of racial equity and cultural safety. The program would have tracks for faculty, staff and students.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Inspiring transformation is a living, multi-year process dependent on listening, awareness, relationships, responsiveness, intention and continuous systemic change.

As we walk down the path of Indigenizing our university, we will continue to proactively engage university, community and statewide partners. Just as key allies – from university action teams, steering committee, and Alaska Native corporation and tribal leadership – developed and shaped this strategic plan, we will rely on the same collaboration as we move toward deeper visible change.

With crucial Alaska Native leadership now in place through the Office of the President and a comprehensive plan for the UA system to follow, we will move toward increased Indigenous research, academics, support and representation in students, staff and faculty. Growing Alaska Native success is a critical need of the university, and we are responding swiftly.

We are grateful for all the support from the university community and partners, and look forward to growing relationships and making continued progress.

