

At A Glance

271 PITAAS Scholarships Awarded

27%	students from Juneau
50%	students from rural Alaska
23%	from urban centers
72%	female
28%	male
17%	students under the age of 20

256 Degrees Awarded • 81 Graduates

Some students earned more than one degree with PITAAS support

Associate of Arts	10
Associate: Early Childhood Education	20
Bachelors of Arts	9
Bachelor: Early Childhood	3
Bachelor: Elementary Education	86
Bachelor of Arts: Social Science	15
Bachelor of Liberal Arts	43
Bachelor of Science	7
Master of Arts in Teaching: Elementary	13
Master of Arts in Teaching: Secondary	18
Master of Education: EdTech	5
Master of Education: Leadership	16
Master of ED: Special Education	10

The PITAAS program has offered scholarship assistance and support to Alaska Native college students in the following degree programs:

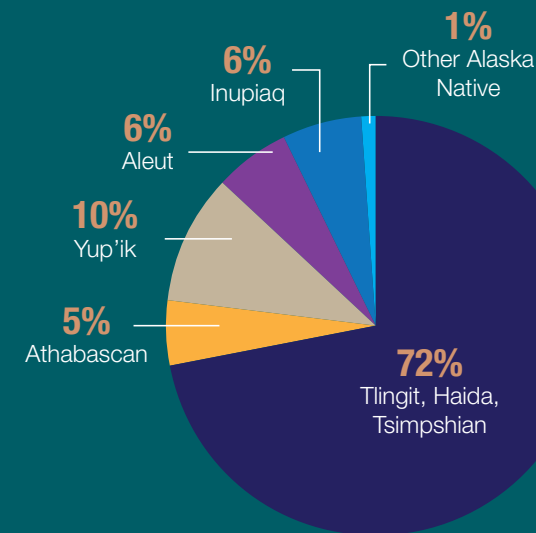
- Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education (BA)
- Bachelor of Liberal Arts (Secondary)
- Master of Arts in Teaching: Early Childhood, Elementary or Secondary (MAT)
- Associate of Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education (discontinued in 2011)
- Master in Educational Leadership, Educational Technology, Special Education, Reading Specialist, Mathematics Education (K-8)

Once accepted into the PITAAS program students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Alaska Native graduates are earning proportionately more master's degrees, graduate licensures, and occupational endorsements compared to the entire group of UAS graduates.

— UA Database, spring, 2014

Native Alaskans in PITAAS



Nemasia Moala, her husband Barry (and daughter Zion) graduate with Bachelor's degrees, May, 2014



PITAAS students listen to presentation in Education Foundations course



Starla Agony, 2015 Outstanding Senior, Ketchikan campus



PITAAS student mentors: UAS Learning Center



Tlingit Elder and PITAAS Advisory Committee member Marie Olson visiting with NRSC Coordinator Kolene James

Notes of Appreciation

John Pugh, Chancellor
Richard Caulfield, Provost

PITAAS Directors over the program's history:
Scott Christian (2000 – 4 months)
Marla Brownlee (2001–2002)
Rhonda Hickok (2002–4)
Joe Nelson (2004–6)
Gordon Jackson (2006–7)
Jacque Tagaban (2007–11)
Ronalda Cadiente Brown (2011–present)

A PITAAS Advisory Board was established to provide guidance to the PITAAS Director and advocate for program initiatives.

PITAAS Advisory Board Members have included:

Marie Olson, Nora Dauenhauer,
David Katzeek—Elders

Ed Thomas

Rhonda Hickok

Barbara Cadiente Nelson

Cathy Thomas

Jeffrey Loftus, Alberta Jones—UAS Faculty

Phyllis Carlson, Chris Simon,

Alaska Department of Education

Kolene James

Elaine Hopson, Marilyn Taylor, Larry Harris, Deb Lo
Deans of UAS School of Education

Martha Stackhouse

Jacque Tagaban

Vicki Orazem

Rosita Worl

Sharon Early

Albert Rinehart

Bernice Tetpon

Terry Baines

Mary Foletti, Gloria Anderstrom, Aluki Brower, Amanda
Bremner, Joe Yates – Students

Dr. Annie Calkins

PITAAS Evaluator, 2000–2015

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You can support the PITAAS program. Donations may be made in support of the PITAAS program through the University of Alaska Foundation PITAAS Endowment Fund (20413)



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PITAAS

Preparing Indigenous Teachers & Administrators for Alaska Schools

The PITAAS program at the University of Alaska Southeast

supports Alaska Native students pursuing careers in K–12 education.

15 Year Overview

The story of the PITAAS program details what it really takes to recruit, support and prepare Alaska Native students to be effective educators. Throughout its fifteen year history this program and its associated research has been important to UAS and to the statewide UA system as well, as each campus addresses similar challenges in meeting the University of Alaska Vision and Strategic Plan.

As programs and opportunities grew within the UAS School of Education over the last fifteen years, new options opened within PITAAS. In 2006 its original name, PITAS — “*Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaska Schools*”— was changed to reflect this growth: PITAAS— “*Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools.*”

2000-2003 GRANT I

Preparing Indigenous Teachers for Alaska Schools — PITAS

29 Scholarships Average/Per Semester

PITAS locations: Southeast Alaska communities and Lower Kuskokwim School District. PITAS students were on campus for the first time in fall, 2001.

Recruitment

PITAS High School Program (2002–10): Mentor teachers provided support to high school students interested in teaching. Seventeen Mentor teachers worked with 75 students in ten communities in after school clubs.

2002: Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association surveyed Native teachers in the region, provided training to math and science teachers and offered a regional gathering for Native teachers.

Retention Strategies

Summerbridge (2002-2010): A two week Summer Institute, with classes in Study Skills, College Math, College Writing, Native language, cultural studies, and Learning Styles/Psychology was required for high school students entering PITAS program. The 2005 Summerbridge program was the largest, serving 18 students.

Peer Tutoring in Math and Writing was available to PITAS students.

Cultural Responsiveness

UAS convocations (2002-3) included Cultural Diversity Panels to “assist UAS educators understand the significant historical experiences, cultural patterns and diversity of experiences, cultures and individuals.”

2002: PITAS students participated in the Southeast Alaska Native Summit, hosted by the Southeast Alaska Native Educators Association, and solicited strategies to meet the needs of Native students in K – 12 learning, higher education, adult education and family/partnerships. Alaska Native teacher pre-service preparation was a priority.

UAS Diversity Work Group (2001 – 2005) with administration/staff/faculty, Native organization representatives, and community members met to discuss broad range of issues affecting student academic success at UAS.



2002-2005 GRANT II

PITAS locations: Southeast Alaska communities and Lower Kuskokwim School District

Recruitment

Brochures, posters, and a PITAS Handbook for Mentor Teachers were developed and disseminated to schools. Mentors taught a high school credit course entitled Introduction to Teaching.

A PBS College Track TV show featuring UAS and Southeast Alaska was aired across the region.

Retention Strategies

PITAS implemented a nationally recognized program for improving math with four trained PITAS tutors and a Math Specialist, with special focus on Mathematics and Physics. The Math Specialist and PITAS Director created an accelerated summer high school math course, adapted from summer institute intensives.

Native Mentors and UAS faculty were contracted to work with PITAS students, providing guidance, encouragement, and support. PITAS students mentored new incoming peers.

Foundations in Alaska Native Education and Leadership course (2002-15), a required one credit course for all PITAS students met weekly. Course goals are to (1) Strengthen PITAS cohort and community; (2) Increase awareness of issues facing Native students and educators; (3) Develop understanding of their personal relationship to the history of education in Alaska; (4) Incorporate Native knowledge into college experience.

Cultural Responsiveness

2002, 2003, and 2006: Chancellor John Pugh hosted three Chancellor's Forums on the Conditions of Success for Native students at UAS. Recommendations included the inclusion of more Native knowledge, cultures and languages into course content. Forums provided a venue for discussions about the UAS Affirmative Action plan for faculty/staff recruitment and hiring procedures.

2003: Outline for Tlingit language Minor and endorsement program delivered to UAS administrators. Richard and Nora Dauenhauer contracted to work on course development, resources and training for teachers.

PITAS Cultural Curriculum Infusion Project (2003 – 2006) initiated for UAS faculty, to increase self-knowledge and awareness and develop/revise university courses to strengthen the integration of Alaska Native cultures and perspectives into course content. Fifteen UAS faculty attended a Culture Camp in Kake between 2003 – 05 to directly experience cultural and subsistence traditions.

PITAAS Summerbridge

2005-2008 GRANT III

Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools — PITAAS

41 Scholarships Average/Per Semester

PITAAS location: Southeast Alaska communities only

Recruitment

Outreach reflected program expansion with scholarships for AA degrees in Early Childhood and Masters in Education Administration. (Statewide recruiting for this program approved by PITAAS Advisory Board)

2006: PITAAS promotional video included interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders who described program features and its impact on students, schools, communities, and the university.

2006: New rates for scholarships included financial incentives for completion of key courses and earning higher grades.

Future Teachers of Alaska/Future Educators of Alaska (2005 – 2013) FTA/PITAAS clubs for high school students formed across the region beginning with Juneau Douglas and Mt. Edgecumbe High Schools.

Retention Strategies

Focus on Writing: Eight Writing Coaches (2006-7), recruited and contracted by the Alaska State Writing Consortium to help Alaska Native high school juniors and seniors improve writing skills in varied genres before they apply for PITAAS scholarships.

PITAAS provided support for the Native and Rural Student Center, a “home away from home” for UAS students, whose mission is to “create a student-centered inclusive environment that honors diversity, celebrates cultural traditions and knowledge, and enriches the learning experiences of students who attend the UAS.”

Cultural Responsiveness

Native Education Work Group (2005–7) replaced the Diversity Task Force and retained the focus on Alaska Native students and actions that would affect courses and student retention and success.

2009: Members of Cultural Infusion Action Team led a discussion of readings about equity and privilege during Fall Convocation.

Alaska Native Languages and Cultures Faculty Position (2005–9). Dr. Richard Dauenhauer selected as full time Tlingit language faculty position by UA President.



2008-2011 GRANT IV

PITAAS location: Southeast Alaska communities only

Recruitment

PITAAS Coordinators in Ketchikan and Sitka worked on recruitment and support for those interested in teaching.

Online courses were included in PITAAS scholarship options, in response to student requests.

Recruitment visits across the state coordinated with Office of Admissions resulted in 27% of first time freshmen at UAS in 2010 being Alaska Native.

Retention Strategies

Native Oratory Contests (2005-2015) where students compete in Dramatic Declamation, Oratory, Storytelling, and Presentations in heritage languages attracts PITAAS students to compete each year.

Wooch.een (2003-2015) —“working together”—UAS Native Student Club, plays a major role in designing and delivering cultural events on campus and in the community, including Native American Heritage Month and Elizabeth Peratrovich Day celebrations, a Native Film Fest and lectures by Native authors and scholars.

Cultural Responsiveness

Cultural Infusion Action Team (2007-10) developed its vision: “The UAS, acknowledging its unique setting in the heart of the Lingit Aani (Tlingit traditional lands) and in accordance with the University’s Strategic Plan, to work in harmony with the land and its people to establish cultural balance”.

2010: Courses for an 18 credit Tlingit Language Minor approved by Provost, were listed in course catalogue.

Eagle Totem Pole raised on campus in 2010, with funding from Wooch.een, and contributions from the Chancellor’s Fund, UA Board of Regents funds and partners such as Sealaska Corporation.

2011: PITAAS provided photographs and short biographies of Alaska Native Leaders and Elders which were hung in every classroom on the UAS campus.

2011-2014 GRANT V

PITAAS Location: Scholarships for junior, senior, and graduate students were offered Statewide.

Recruitment

PITAAS expanded scholarships for students statewide with a priority for students with junior, senior, and graduate standing, thereby substantially increasing the cumulative Grade Point Average to 3.50. Summer enrollment and scholarships increased significantly.

Promotional presentations with varied audiences were made at the local, regional, state, and national levels.

Program recruitment materials were developed, refined, and distributed, in close collaboration with UAS Admissions team.

Retention Strategies

The PITAAS application and admission criteria added a Commitment to Teaching Pledge and a required course on Orientation to the Teaching Profession, ED222.

The mandatory undergraduate course Foundations ED193 was revised to better define learning objectives while introducing students to Alaska Native Education & Leadership, Place-based Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Strategies, and Career Options in Native Education.

Cultural Responsiveness

The PITAAS Program established a formal partnership with Sealaska Heritage Institute and developed faculty seminars themed “Our Cultural Landscape”. Topics included Repatriation and Reclamation, Northwest Coast Art, Traditional Medicinal Plants and Harvesting, and People, Land, and Ownership. The success of the seminars led to expansion and the inclusion of all UAS faculty and Juneau School District secondary teachers.

2014-2017 GRANT VI

34 Scholarships Average/Per Semester and increased summer enrollment continues

PITAAS Location: Scholarships for junior, senior, and graduate students are offered Statewide.

Recruitment

PITAAS, in close collaboration with Sealaska Heritage Institute, is developing a campaign for statewide television and social media.

PITAAS promotion print materials are developed and disseminated to all Alaska Native Tribes, organizations and events. Positive word-of-mouth support for the PITAAS experience by past and current scholarship recipients continues to be an effective recruitment tool.

The first PITAAS scholarship for the new Superintendent Certificate is awarded in 2015. Rural Alaska recruitment is enhanced with support for advanced degrees for para-educators.

Retention Strategies

Foundations ED193 course continues as a requirement for undergraduate students.

Partnership with Sealaska Heritage Institute collaborative training seminars continues as an on-going effort to incorporate cultural knowledge in faculty course development.

Cultural Responsiveness

“Our Cultural Landscape” seminar series continues as professional development strategy for increased cultural competence of faculty.

Speaker Series on Indigenous Education is developed in concert with PITAAS partner Sealaska Heritage Institute.

PITAAS Program financial support for NRSC and cultural events continues, contributing to a culturally rich environment for all students.

Plans are initiated for new Alaska Native Education Leadership endorsement at UAS.

“I lived in rural Alaska and left rural Alaska to pursue a higher education degree, and then found a way to return to my hometown.”

—Crystal Alstrom, MAT Secondary Education, 2014

Crystal Alstrom was hired to teach in St. Mary School District immediately after graduation. She had background/training in engineering, and was hired with a provisional certificate to teach secondary math. That experience motivated her to change careers, and with the support of PITAAS she completed the MAT program. Crystal's love and commitment to her village, Yup'ik culture and a subsistence lifestyle sustain her as a teacher and involved community member.

“I wanted to share a piece of graduation news. I am so honored to have been a recipient of PITAAS. I am blessed to say that I AM a product of PITAAS. If it weren't for PITAAS support I would not have been able to reach my dream/goal. I was recently hired at the school where I completed my student teaching.”

—Starla Agony, B.A. Elementary Education, 2015.

Starla Agony was selected as Outstanding Senior by the UAS School of Education. She will be teaching Grade 4 in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District in fall 2015

Barbara Cadiente Nelson MAT Secondary Education 2002—PITAAS first graduate—along with **Rhonda Hickok** (Masters, Educational Administration, 2005) and **Brenda Edwards** (Masters, Educational Administration, 2012) are part of the Juneau School District administrative team, working to ensure multiple opportunities for Native students to succeed. Cadiente Nelson is also a Board Member of the Sealaska Corporation.

Student Snapshots

“As I reflect on the past 2.5 years it's hard to believe that I did 5 semesters of full time Grad School, itinerant travel, teaching, coached IVB and managed to be a mom to growing boys. I will say it IS possible. Just have to remain focused, manage every spare minute, ask for help when needed. Now, onto the next goal.”

—Andrea Durny MAT, Elementary Education, 2014

Andrea Durny is a member of the Nulato Tribe of the Doyon Corporation in interior Alaska, mother to a new baby, and is a fully certified teacher in the Yukon Koyukuk School District. The District also hired **Cassandra Weter** (Masters, Educational Leadership, 2014) who is teaching in Huslia.

“PITAAS first and foremost, is unlike any other

program I have ever seen or been a part of. It gave me the confidence to be the teacher I am today and instilled within me the hope that I can be a change for the positive within the Native community. They supported my dreams of becoming a teacher, supported and encouraged my endeavor to attain my first master's degree, applauded when I attained my second master's and endorsement in math, and I am sure they will be there when I go back to school to work on my Ph.D”

—Joshua Jackson

Joshua Jackson earned a Bachelor in Education (2011), Master of Education degrees in Reading and Math (2013) and teaches in the Tlingit Culture, Language and Literacy Program in the Juneau School District. He is a new father, and part of a Tlingit language apprenticeship program developed by the Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Home Communities of PITAAS Students

