There is genuine solidarity amongst Native graduate students, no matter what their discipline may be. In fact, there is a newly organized group known as the Alaska Student Organization of Native Graduates, which is officially recognized by the university. UAF is on the cusp of change and transformation for indigenous scholars. They recognize and respect indigenous cultures, and have taken great strides to respect this by giving back some land so that a place can be built for future indigenous scholars. UAF has also procured fellowships for Native students. I am from the Interior, and this is where my family and people reside.

“I’m pleased to have chosen UAF to complete my graduate studies as I had the opportunity to work with noted Alaska Native scholars such as Oscar Kawagley and Phyllis Fast. My home and work are in Alaska, so it would have been more difficult to complete a graduate program outside the state. I also felt it was important to remain closer to family members like my father, James Dementi, and other family members who, during the course of my program, contributed greatly to my understanding of the culture and language of the Deg Hit’an people.”

“I know that we pollute the water and air around us, so dedicating my time and efforts on improving our knowledge of how we contaminate our environment and ways to prevent this problem is my calling in science.”
“A place where good thinking and working together would happen”

Chief Peter John of Minto used these words to describe Troth Yeddha’, wild potato hill. Alaska’s first peoples came to the hill to gather wild potatoes, and the elders met to discuss important matters and learn from each other. Today, people from all over the world come to the same hill to gather knowledge and learn from each other.

What the elders knew as Troth Yeddha’ became the site of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, but the original name has not been forgotten. Troth Yeddha’ Park, on the Fairbanks campus, honors the culture and heritage of Alaska’s indigenous peoples and adds a physical sense of belonging for Alaska Native students at UAF. It symbolizes the university’s role in developing academic and research programs that make it a model for an institutional approach to issues related to indigenous peoples.

UAF graduates one of the highest number of Native Americans in the nation. It offers 57 master’s and 17 doctoral degree programs, including an interdisciplinary program. A proposed Ph.D in Indigenous Studies will provide a strong indigenous core emphasis. UAF gives graduate students the faculty, researchers and resources to succeed academically and professionally.

From linguistics to life sciences, UAF has the programs. You have the passion. With good thinking and working together, we can make a difference.

Learn more about graduate work at UAF at www.uaf.edu/gradsch/.