



UNIVERSITY OF
ALASKA
FAIRBANKS

Drumbeats Alaska: Place-Based Solutions for Alaska Native Food & Energy Sovereignty (2024-2027)



2024-2025

Annual Evaluation Report

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Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03** Executive Summary
- 06** A Short History of Drumbeats
- 07** Accomplishments: Objective 1
- 10** Impact of Change in University Enrollment Policy
- 11** Accomplishments: Objective 2
- 13** Support for Nontraditional Students
- 14** Accomplishments: Objective 3
- 16** Role of Elders in Drumbeats
- 17** Project Outcomes
- 20** Looking Forward
- 22** Appendix A: Fidelity of Implementation Analysis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For over 20 years, the Drumbeats Alaska Consortium has advanced and supported place-based food and energy sovereignty on the traditional lands of Alaska Native people with the support of the USDA National Institute of Food & Agriculture. This report summarizes the results of the first project year of a three-year USDA NIFA ANNH award 2024-38470-43416.

STUDENT IMPACT SNAPSHOT

792

Students received financial support to take college courses

In addition to tuition, students also received the following direct support



Course materials



Travel funding



Mentorship & leadership opportunities

Tuition dollars given to college students

\$147,082

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Drumbeats Alaska Consortium

The Drumbeats Alaska Consortium unites academic and community outreach initiatives from five Alaska Native-Serving Institution campuses within the UAF College of Indigenous Studies (CIS). Each campus drives a critical component of the Consortium's focus on pioneering research, hands-on instruction, and community-driven outreach to advance and support place-based Food and Energy Sovereignty (FES). Through diverse collaborations across the state, Drumbeats increases access to academic courses, experiential learning, and leadership development. A new approach to advance leadership in FES will be the design and implementation of an Indigenous Scholars Program (ISP) that will engage both Drumbeats students and faculty in Alaska Native leadership and community outreach principles.

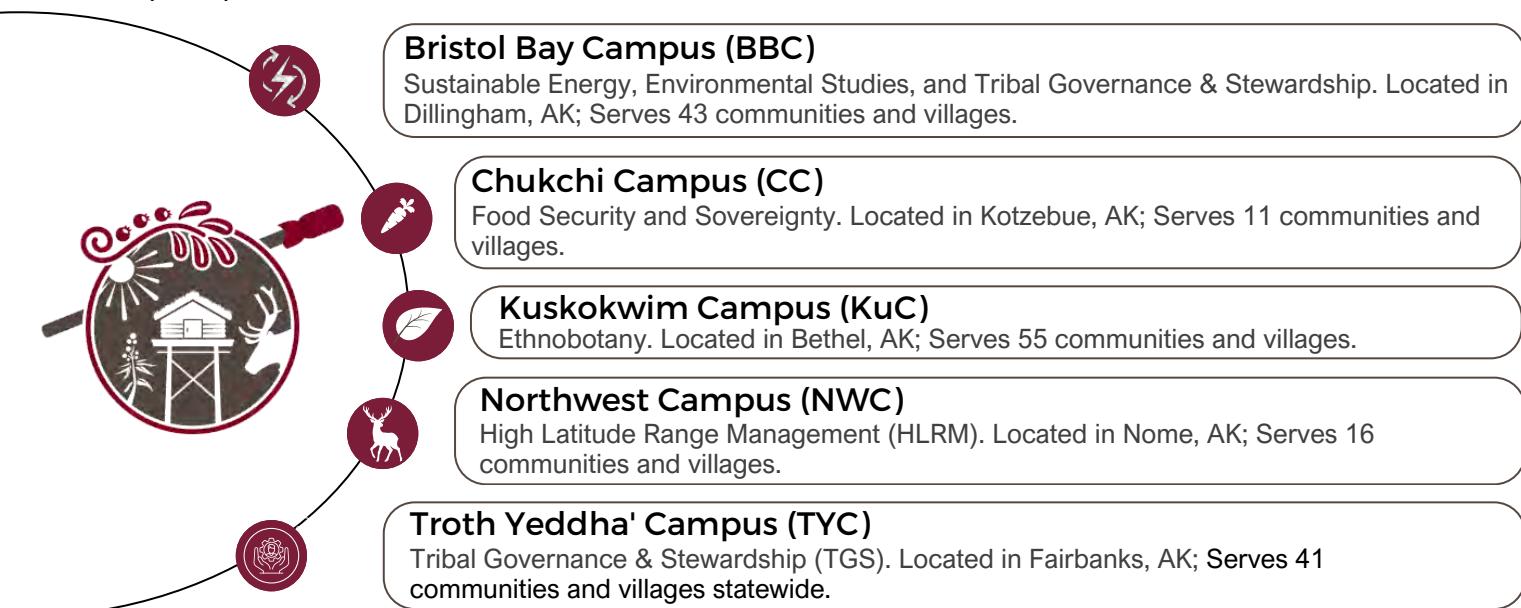


Fig. 1. UAF College of Indigenous Studies Map of Community and Rural Campuses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Student Impact Story: Jacob

After returning to Unalakleet with years of solar work, Jacob chose to deepen his skills through Drumbeats' Sustainable Energy courses at UAF's Bristol Bay Campus. With accessible classes, mentoring from Professor Chandler Kemp, and scholarships, he excelled in three solar train-the-trainer intensives and was invited to teach Photovoltaic Systems in Bethel as an adjunct. Jacob keeps enrolling in regional courses and helps families power homes and fish camps safely and affordably. For him, Drumbeats turned experience into leadership—empowering him to build local capacity and advance energy sovereignty in rural communities.



Drumbeats activities are funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (ANNH) Education Competitive Grants Program, which has historically provided funding to eligible institutions of higher education to improve and expand their capacity to serve Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students. Drumbeats is an integral part of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) College of Indigenous Studies (CIS), dedicated to advancing place-based, culturally relevant education for Alaska Native communities. The consortium focuses on critical areas, including food and energy sovereignty, traditional crafts and languages, and tribal governance. Leading this initiative is Carrie Stevens, a professor of Tribal Governance and Stewardship, who serves as the Principal Investigator. She works in collaboration with the Campus Directors from participating Alaska Native-serving institutions, who act as Co-Project Directors, ensuring a broad and representative leadership structure.

Highlights of Drumbeats Support in 2024-2025



Financial Support for Students

Grant funds were instrumental in advancing the education of 792 students on food and energy sovereignty.

Course Offerings on Food and Energy Sovereignty

Forty-one new or updated courses related to Alaska Native food and energy sovereignty were offered to all UAF students.

Youth Engagement

Youth engaged in food and energy sovereignty learning opportunities through dual enrollment courses and camp experiences.



LIFE Scholars Program Launch

Thirty-four applications were received for the new Leaders in Indigenous Food & Energy (LIFE) Scholars Program, and 13 Scholars were accepted for the 2025-2026 cohort.

DRUMBEATS

a short history

ADVANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Drumbeats champions education initiatives in a myriad of ways:

Curriculum Development

Drumbeats supports faculty to develop new courses and improve existing courses that meet the evolving needs and realities of tribal communities across Alaska. Courses cover (but are not limited to) Ethnobotany (KuC), High Latitude Range Management (NWC), Sustainable Energy (BBC), Tribal Governance and Stewardship (BBC, CIS), and Traditional Crafts and Native Language (CIS).

Course Delivery

Courses are delivered using multiple modalities, including distance education and place-based intensive courses to meet community and student needs.

Direct Support to Students

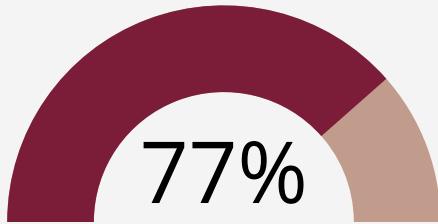
Scholarships allow students to enroll and take classes at lower cost and/or free of charge. In Year 1, this grant alone provided \$147,082 in scholarships to 792 students.

For two decades, the Drumbeats Alaska Consortium has actively championed place-based food and energy sovereignty on the traditional lands of Alaska Native peoples. The Consortium ignites this mission by uniting academic and community outreach programs from five Alaska Native-Serving Institution campuses within the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) College of Indigenous Studies (CIS).

Drumbeats empowers the next generation of Alaska Native leaders by directly funding student scholarships and supporting faculty in developing exceptional curricula that meets target students at their place of need. This work fosters culturally relevant learning experiences that weave together place-based Indigenous and Western knowledge, boosting student recruitment and retention. The curriculum spans critical areas, including food, agricultural, and natural resource systems; traditional crafts; tribal governance; and science.

Since its founding in 2005, the Consortium has consistently evolved to meet community needs. After launching its first academic programs in 2007, it expanded its focus to include agricultural and subsistence sciences in 2009. A landmark moment arrived in 2013 with the creation of the Tribal Stewardship courses, cementing the Consortium's deep commitment to centering Indigenous knowledge and leadership.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**Planned Year 1 actions
completed or in progress**

Overall, the Drumbeats Alaska Consortium made strong progress on its planned grant activities for Year 1. A summary of activities by grant objective follows, and a detailed fidelity of implementation analysis by campus is presented in Appendix A.

Grant Objective 1: Advance Alaska Native representation and leadership in regional food and energy systems through culturally-appropriate, place-based education.

Professional & Community Meetings

Drumbeats invests in its faculty's professional growth and outreach by supporting their attendance at key conferences, professional meetings, and community events. This support provides faculty with vital professional development in their content areas and empowers them to disseminate knowledge and lead crucial discussions on Indigenous and Tribally-led solutions to Alaska's food and energy sovereignty challenges. Below is a list of conferences attended by Drumbeats faculty during the project's first year.

- Alaska Federation of Natives annual meeting
- Alaska Food Security Workshop
- Alaska Forum on the Environment
- Alaska Mariculture Conference
- Alaska Reindeer Conference Planning Steering Committee meetings
- Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management
- Eastern and Western Interior Regional Advisory Council meetings
- Federal Subsistence Board
- Indigenizing Salmon Management Working Group
- Indigenous Law of the Sea Convening
- Interagency Gravel to Gravel MOU Working Group
- Intertribal Agriculture Council annual meeting
- Kawerak Reindeer Herders Association meetings
- National UNITY Conference
- North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
- Reindeer Farmers Association of America Conference
- Southcentral Foundation 2025 Traditional Foods & Gathering Conference
- State of Alaska Career and Technical Education Conference
- Tamamta Program
- USFWS Alaska Native Relations Training
- Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference
- Yukon River Panel

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Food & Energy Sovereignty Course Support

Drumbeats-supported faculty design and deliver culturally relevant, place-based curricula in regionally appropriate formats. Instruction is tailored to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities that can be directly applied to current and critical food and energy sovereignty issues in a meaningful and respectful way. Experiential learning and direct skill acquisition is incorporated into classes. Drumbeats also provides financial support to students to enroll in select courses. Below is a list of Drumbeats-supported courses during the project's first year.

Ethnobotany

Hosted at the Kuskokwim Campus, the Ethnobotany program provides a space for students to cultivate a deep and meaningful connection between people, plants, and culture.

- *EBOT F100: Introduction to Ethnobotany*
- *EBOT F120: Introduction to Edible and Medicinal Plants of Alaska*
- *EBOT F200: Ethnobotany Seminar*
- *EBOT F210: Ethical Wildcrafting*
- *EBOT F220: Research Methods for Ethnobotanists*
- *EBOT F250: Applied Ethnobotany*
- *EBOT F397: Individual Study: URSA Project*

High Latitude Range Management

This Northwest Campus program provides instruction in high-latitude range management and reindeer husbandry; practical training in business, logistics, technical report writing, and modern meat production; and hands-on learning in traditional arts and crafts.

- *BIOL F104: Natural History of Alaska*
- *HLRM F250: High Latitude Range Management Current Topics ("Ecology Explorer," "Tribal New Beginnings," and "On the Land")*



Fig. 2. Elder teaching in EBOT F100 class.



Fig. 3. Flyer for HLRM F250 On the Land residential program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Fig. 4. Sustainable Energy students in Dillingham, AK.



Writing & the Humanities: Food Sovereignty in Alaska

WRTG F211X | 3 credits | CRN: 75271

DELIVERY METHOD

Online class (Zoom and Canvas)

DATES / TIMES

Sept. 8 - Dec. 13, 2025
Zoom meetings 8am-10am
on 9/20, 10/11, 11/1, and 11/15

INSTRUCTOR

Kathy Kyasar,
Assistant Professor of English
kryasar@alaska.edu

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE!



To register for the class, contact the campus:

907-842-5109 uaf-bbcinfo@alaska.edu

The University of Alaska (uaf.alaska.edu) is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer and Educational Institution. The University is committed to a policy of non-discrimination (uaf.alaska.edu/nondiscrim) against individuals on the basis of any legally protected status.

Fig. 5. Flyer for WRTG F211X: Writing & the Humanities: Food Sovereignty in Alaska.

Food & Energy Sovereignty Course Support

Sustainable Energy

The Sustainable Energy program at BBC provides students with training on the two pillars of sustainable energy: energy efficiency and renewable energy.

- *ENVI F120: Home Energy Basics*
- *ENVI F150: Viewpoints in Environmental Studies*
- *ENVI F180: Alaska Utility Lecture Series*
- *ENVI F220: Introduction to Sustainable Energy*
- *ENVI F250: Current Topics in Construction Trades*

Tribal Governance & Stewardship

The Tribal Governance & Stewardship program at CIS is designed to equip leaders with the tools to effectively manage and protect traditional resources for future generations.

- *RD F492P: Rural Development Seminar*
- *TG F101: Introduction to Tribal Government in Alaska*
- *TG F105: Introduction to Managing Tribal Governments*
- *TG F160: Indigenous Culture and Science Camp*
- *TG F161: Tribal and Community Leadership Development*
- *TG F205: Managing Tribal Governments II*

Writing

BBC offers place-based writing courses focused on food security and sovereignty.

- *WRTG F111X: Writing Across Contexts - Reading Climate, Writing Change*
- *WRTG F211X: Writing and the Humanities - Food Sovereignty in Alaska*



IMPACT OF CHANGE IN UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT POLICY

UAF recently required all learners to be formally admitted before registering for any course, including one-off, community, or noncredit classes. In Alaska, this extra step creates real barriers. Many prospective students live in remote villages with limited internet access, travel in for short intensives, or simply want a weekend welding or jam-making class; they don't intend to pursue a degree. The admissions process adds time (an online application plus a system delay to generate an ID), confusion about "admitted" status, and repeated re-applications after periods of inactivity. For high school and elder learners—and Alaska Native community members targeted by outreach—the result is missed enrollments, lost momentum, and damaged trust. Regional campuses report heavy staff workload to shepherd applicants, verify identities, and troubleshoot delays, all for students who may only take one class. The policy undermines the flexible, place-based access that UAF's community campuses and programs like Drumbeats rely on to serve rural Alaska.

"[Students] used to be able to come in and just take the registration form and register for a class, but now the university is asking for everyone, no matter what, to go and do an admissions application before they can do the registration form for the class and it is a killer."

-UAF regional campus student services manager

The screenshot shows a three-step registration process:

- Step 1:** "Just want to take a class?" (yellow button) and "New and continuing students" (yellow button). Text: "If you just want to take a class without applying to a degree program or financial aid at UAF, follow these steps. Courses you take can still count towards a degree later. If you registered as a nondegree student at any UAF campus within the last two years, you may skip to step 2." A yellow "Apply for admission" button.
- Step 2:** Text: "Once you have an active UA username and password, login to UAOnline to register for classes. Not familiar with UAOnline? Check out our [directions](#) on how to register for classes." A yellow "UAOnline" button.
- Step 3:** Text: "Pay your tuition and fees before the deadline and start attending class. For additional information contact the Office of the Bursar at [uaf-bursar@alaska.edu](#) or the Office of the Registrar at [uaf-registrar@alaska.edu](#)." A yellow "Payment Deadlines" button.

Fig. 6. Screenshot from UAF's course registration information page: <https://www.uaf.edu/reg/register.php>.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Grant Objective 2: Provide Alaska Native educational opportunities for youth to engage in leadership roles in food and energy sovereignty through academic and community-based partnerships.

Academic and Community-based Partnerships

Drumbeats supports the development and implementation of educational opportunities for youth to engage in leadership roles in food and energy sovereignty through academic and community-based partnerships. A sample of these opportunities is described below.

- *First Alaskans Institute Elders and Youth Meeting (Oct. 2024).* Drumbeats students participated in this leadership opportunity organized by the First Alaskans Institute and presented at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage. The event centered Elders and youth in Native ways of knowing and being. Food security was an integral part of the meeting discussions.
- *Alaska Federation of Natives Convention (Oct. 2024).* Drumbeats students attended this convention, which serves as the principal forum and voice for the Alaska Native community in addressing critical issues of public policy and government.
- *Intertribal Agricultural Council (IAC) Regional Youth Summit at Alaska Pacific University (July 2025):* Drumbeats-supported faculty and staff 1) facilitated a HLRM workshop on the chemistry of reindeer jerky, providing youth attending this leadership summit with the opportunity to learn about the potential of reindeer herding and harvesting to support the food sovereignty of Alaska Native peoples; and 2) presented on TGS and youth participation in advocating for, and continuing the practice of, traditional hunting and fishing to feed and care for their communities.

Drumbeats students supported by this grant also benefited from partnerships with the Federal Subsistence Board, North Pacific Management Council, Tlingit Haida Regional Housing Authority, and Yukon River Panel.



AGENDA

Atwood Center, Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage, Alaska

Thursday · July 24, 2025

Please wear your Alaska Youth Summit T-shirt today for a group photo!

Breakfast · 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Games and Activities · 9:00 am - 9:15 am

Tribal Governance and Stewardship · 9:15 am - 10:15 am
Corrie Stevens, Associate Professor & Chair of the Dept of Tribal Governance at the College of Indigenous Studies, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Jerky Taste Testing: The Chemistry of Food Production · 10:15 am - 11:15 am
Dr. Jacqueline Hrabok, Joint Faculty Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Institute of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Extension, College of Indigenous Studies, High Latitude Range Management Program & Bonnie Suage Scheele, Program Manager, University of Alaska Fairbanks, College of Indigenous Studies, High Latitude Range Management Program, Indigenous owner of the Midnite Sun Reindeer Ranch & Davis Reindeer Herd

Jerky Taste Testing: The Chemistry of Food Production

Jacqueline Hrabok, PhD
Bonnie Suage Scheele, HLRM
PROGRAM MANAGER

Fig. 7, 8. Presentation on reindeer jerky at the IAC Regional Youth Summit agenda and attendees.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Direct Learning for Youth

Drumbeats supports UAF faculty to design and deliver direct learning opportunities for youth in food and energy related opportunities, including dual enrollment courses. Below is a sample of these opportunities.

- *High Latitude Range Management (HLRM) F250 3-credit intensive “Ecology Explorer.”* This residential program for youth ages 13-17 years old was held during the summer 2025 semester and addressed food sovereignty topics including subsistence harvesting (fish and berries) and reindeer husbandry. The program was delivered in partnership with 4-H Nome Northwest District.
- *HLRM F250 2-credit intensive “Tribal New Beginnings.”* This two-week program held in Nome during the summer 2025 semester featured an Inupiaq and Central Yup’ik language workshop focused on plant gathering traditions and vocabulary from Alaska’s Seward Peninsula and berry harvesting and preservation. The Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC), a joint venture of the Bering Strait School District (BSSD) and Nome Public Schools (NPS), was a key partner with UAF NWC for this intensive. Drumbeats provided student support in addition to faculty / staff salaries.
- *TG F160 “Kuskokwim Science & Culture Camp.”* This residential camp in Bethel provided high school students with exposure to career opportunities in fisheries and wildlife sciences, and the opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills in the biological sciences and spend time with Elders sharing traditional knowledge. The Orutsararmiut Native Council and Lower Kuskokwim School District partnered with UAF KuC and CIS to offer this camp.



Fig. 9. Youth harvesting berries in “Tribal New Beginnings” intensive.



Fig. 10. Outdoor learning at the 2025 Kuskokwim Science & Culture Camp.



SUPPORT FOR NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS

Drumbeats succeeds with nontraditional college students by meeting them where they are and reflecting who they are. Culturally relevant instruction validates lived expertise—"it validates their knowledge...that they absolutely are, can be, or should be, leaders in food [sovereignty]"—and opens doors to new life pathways. Instructors flex around subsistence harvest seasons and caregiving, acknowledging that "our students...have to heat their homes, pay childcare...in some very expensive places," and many are single working mothers, business owners, or holding multiple jobs. Faculty go beyond course requirements, offering mentoring that restores confidence for learners with sometimes adverse college histories.

Even when a class enrolls only two students, Drumbeats casts a "broad net," creating opportunities that otherwise would not exist, including for learners without reliable internet. Students report they can "continue my education while in my career," connect coursework to village needs (tribal governance, grants, fisheries), and feel represented in CIS in ways unlike traditional programs—expanding access on the very lands that shaped their knowledge. Many former students return to audit new courses, and some step into teaching roles at UAF and partner institutions, demonstrating Drumbeats' success in developing the next generation of Indigenous leaders.

"It just took one Alaska Native history class to kind of change the whole trajectory of my career...The thing that benefitted me the most was those classes really opened my eyes to what I wanted to do, and it definitely shaped my entire career now, and all of the work that I've been doing, I would say in the last five, six years, I was introduced to all of that through UAF and their Indigenous studies programs."

-2025-2026 LIFE Scholar

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Grant Objective 3: Further Alaska Native leadership in decision-making and communication in food and energy sovereignty through the development of an Indigenous Food and Energy Scholars Program.

During this past year, CIS designed and launched the Leaders in Indigenous Food & Energy (LIFE) Scholars Program as a structured pathway to support and cultivate emerging and current leaders in Alaska's Indigenous food and energy systems. The program is described as "built on a foundation of respect, weaving together Alaska Native languages and Ways of Knowing with contemporary studies in food, agriculture, and natural resource sciences" (UAF 2025).

LIFE Scholars recruitment opened on August 27, 2025, followed by the announcement of the inaugural cohort by mid-October. The program received 34 applications, and a review team of 5 faculty selected the inaugural cohort of 13 Scholars representing tribal communities across Alaska. These individuals are already working to revitalize traditional food systems, champion community-owned renewable energy, and govern local resources. Scholar biographies can be found online at <https://www.uaf.edu/drumbeats/2025-2026-LIFE-Scholars.php>.



Student Impact Story: Jazmyn

Drumbeats plays a pivotal role in recruiting and engaging students. Jazmyn aligned her studies with Alaska Native stewardship and co-management. She began at UAF as a business student, but a Tribal Stewardship course with Professor Carrie Stevens shifted her focus to environmental conservation and federal Indian policy. She later earned a B.A. in Native American and Indigenous Studies at Fort Lewis College in Colorado, concentrating on Indigenous governance and environmental policy. She is a Tribal Citizen of Huslia (Koyukon/Inupiaq) and is the communications director for the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. She co-founded No Ambler Road, an Alaska Native-led campaign opposing the proposed 211-mile Ambler industrial access road. As a 2025–26 LIFE Scholar, Drumbeats continues to support her leadership development.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LIFE Scholars receive full tuition for two required 3-credit courses, a \$1,500/semester stipend, and paid travel and lodging for two in-person retreats. One of the in-person retreats engages the Scholars in the Fall 2025 Tribal Governance Symposium at UAF, a forum to build understanding, relationships, and knowledge to advance tribal self-governance for the health and well-being of all Alaskan peoples and ecosystems. In addition, Scholars will benefit from dedicated mentorship and networking opportunities with established leaders and experts in their fields.

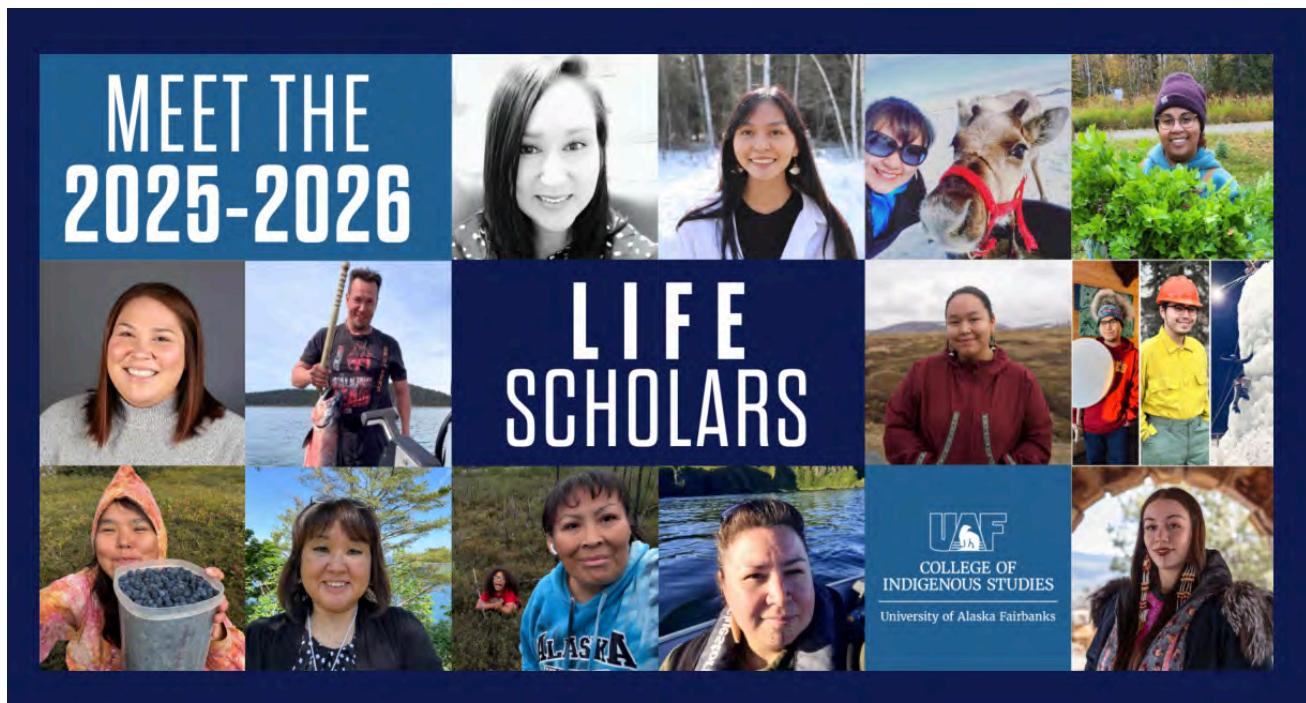


Fig. 11. Social media post announcing the 2025-26 LIFE Scholars.

Grant funds were unexpectedly frozen from March 1 to April 30, 2025. The university did not receive notification when the funds became unavailable or when the funds were made available again. Because of this, project implementation proceeded with significant caution for several months.



ROLE OF ELDERS IN DRUMBEATS

Elders are central to Drumbeats as knowledge keepers, co-educators, and culture bearers who anchor coursework in place, language, and culture. Drumbeats programs emphasize learning with Elders, who provide a “strong guiding force in the classroom,” including in Tribal Stewardship and Ethnobotany courses where students “walk the land with Elders and cultural bearers.”

Elders share with students their lifeways, including through story and song. During an interview with the Drumbeats evaluator, one Elder explained, “We are the people that bring these songs to this generation.” When discussing her involvement with Drumbeats, the Elder explained that her role is to share cultural stories and songs so that the history and traditions of Alaska Native people will not be lost. “I go in and I do my songs. I do my story... tell stories about what it was like for me growing up in the village.” Elders’ mentorship in the traditional languages of Alaska Natives is equally important, and this Elder encouraged youth to reclaim fluency through university classes and family practice.

Elder engagement is honored in the Drumbeats Consortium. Consortium administrators support Elders who give their time to Drumbeats educational activities by providing honoraria. Recently, Drumbeats leadership committed to standardizing honoraria rates for Elders, affirming the importance of Elders to all Drumbeats activities. Elders share their knowledge and, in doing so through Drumbeats, also strengthen students’ sense of belonging, validate Indigenous identities, and equip students to lead in food and energy sovereignty with humility, skill, and respect for the traditions of Alaska Native people.



Fig. 12. Elder teaching an Ethnobotany class.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Objective 1: Advance Alaska Native representation and leadership in regional food and energy systems through culturally-appropriate, place-based education.

4 out of **4**
possible outcomes
associated with
Objective 1 were
completed or in
progress



Fig. 13. Introduction to Ethnobotany course.

Outcome	Status	Metric
Outcome 1.1: Support strategic Alaska Native student recruitment and enrollment	In progress	325 students enrolled in academic courses, of which 52% were Alaska Native (Target: 653 enrolled students; 70% Alaska Native)
Outcome 1.2: Further develop appropriate curriculum inclusive of Alaska Native traditional knowledge, languages, and Indigenous pedagogies	Completed	41 new/updated courses (Target: 16 new/updated curricula)
Outcome 1.3: Continue course delivery in line with traditional harvesting seasons/cycles	Completed	100% course schedule alignment with traditional harvesting seasons/cycles (Target: 90%)
Outcome 1.4: Enhance in-person and distance course delivery to support Alaska Native involvement in food and energy decision-making arenas	Completed	At least 44% of the courses offered were online, 27% were face-to-face, and 2% were blended. The format for the other classes is unknown.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Objective 2: Provide Alaska Native educational opportunities for youth to engage in leadership roles in food and energy sovereignty through academic and community-based partnerships.

3 out of **3**
possible outcomes
associated with
Objective 2 were
completed or in
progress



Fig. 14. Kuskokwim Science & Culture Camp 2025.

Outcome	Status	Metric
Outcome 2.1: Maintain academic and community-based partnerships serving youth	Completed	100% of partnerships maintained (Target: 100%)
Outcome 2.2: Provide direct learning for youth in food and energy related dual enrollment opportunities	In Progress	20 youth participating in dual enrollment (Target: 148 youth)
Outcome 2.3: Provide food and energy related experiential learning opportunities	Completed	16 experiential learning opportunities/materials (Target: 15)

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Objective 3: Further Alaska Native leadership in decision-making and communication in food and energy sovereignty through the development of an Indigenous Food and Energy Scholars program.

4 out of **4**
possible outcomes
associated with
Objective 3 were
completed or in
progress



Fig. 15. Tribal Governance Symposium, part of the LIFE Scholars curriculum.

Outcome	Status	Metric
Outcome 3.1: Design and develop metrics for participation in, and successful completion of an Indigenous Food and Energy Scholars Program (ISP)	Completed	Leaders in Indigenous Food and Energy (LIFE) Scholars Program developed (Target: Model developed)
Outcome 3.2: Design and develop appropriate curriculum inclusive of Alaska Native traditional knowledge and languages for ISP, focused on leadership and communication	Completed	LIFE Scholars curriculum designed (Target: 1 curriculum)
Outcome 3.3: Deliver model Scholars cohort, inclusive of 10 students and attendance at minimum of one 3-credit course	In Progress	13 LIFE Scholars selected (Target: 10 students)
Outcome 3.4: Increased leadership skills of Scholars	In Progress	Baseline data collection in progress

LOOKING FORWARD

Sustainable Efforts

Drumbeats' sustainability outlook is strong because core activities are embedded in place, culture, and workforce needs. Culturally grounded curricula, Elder-guided instruction, and flexible course delivery allow nontraditional learners to persist and succeed. Faculty mentorship beyond the classroom, cross-campus collaboration, and partner networks further anchor offerings in community priorities and create multiple entry points to higher education over time.

Key risks could erode that trajectory. Declining enrollment at rural campuses shrinks the pool of prospective learners and raises costs. Staffing is the most acute constraint: the Drumbeats project is ambitious and requires a high-touch approach, while turnover in rural staff positions creates long vacancies and large workloads for staff who remain in place.

Finally, financial uncertainty threatens trust. When external funding sunsets, students may perceive the university or instructors as withdrawing support. That uncertainty can chill community partnerships and student recruitment. Longer-term stability in funding, such as what Drumbeats has experienced with USDA funding, is ideal for trust-building with Alaska Native communities.



Fig. 16. Plant clipping shared during Ethnobotany class



For more information about Drumbeats Alaska:

www.uaf.edu/drumbeats

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Fidelity of Implementation (FOI) Results

FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION			
Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Drumbeats Alaska Consortium			
DB1. Leaders in Indigenous Food & Energy (LIFE) Scholars Program Planning	All campuses: AY 2024-2025	Completed	The first documented planning meeting occurred in November 2024. Since then, the committee has met one to two times per month, frequency decreasing due to funding uncertainty.
DB2. Lead LIFE Program faculty will conduct outreach through established partnerships	All campuses: AY 2024-2025	Completed, remains in progress	Outreach began in July 2025.
DB3. Lead LIFE Program faculty deliver blended LIFE curriculum, distance and face-to-face component	All campuses: AY 2025-2026	N/A	Not scheduled for Year 1.
DB4. Faculty share news/success stories through project manager (PM) & College of Indigenous Studies (CIS) Marketing & Communications Coordinator	All campuses: AY 2024-2027	Completed, remains in progress	News and success stories are shared frequently through the CIS and Drumbeats social media channels, as well as local advertisements.
DB5. University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) leadership included in Drumbeats courses and events	All campuses: AY 2024-2025	In progress	Five UAF leadership attended a face-to-face consortium meeting in November 2024, including the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor, two Assistant Vice Chancellors, and the Dean of the CIS. The provost was invited but was unavailable.
DB6. Faculty participate in related conferences, meetings, events, and networking	All campuses: AY 2024-2025; AY 2025-2026	Completed, remains in progress	Faculty at multiple campuses report attending a total of more than 20 professional development opportunities, including KuC, BBC, NWC, and IAC.
DB7. Collaborate with Shaffer Evaluation Group LLC on project evaluation	All campuses: September 2024 – August 2027	Completed, remains in progress	This was done at the beginning of the project year.

Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Bristol Bay Campus (BBC)			
BBC1. Provide courses in Energy and Environment as well as collaborative energy research opportunities	Fall 2024; Spring 2025; Summer 2025	Completed	8 ENVI courses were offered during Year 1, and development of 2 new courses or workshops was supported. Collaborative research opportunities occurred with faculty at (University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) and University of Alaska Southeast (UAS), student interns, and the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association.
BBC2. Provide Tribal Governance (TG) courses that address leadership, management, and advocacy for food sovereignty	Spring 2025	Completed	BBC had seven courses and two intensives addressing leadership, management, and advocacy for food sovereignty in Year 1.
BBC3. Provide TG courses on food security and sovereignty through leadership development	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	TG 160 courses focused on food sovereignty as a priority, while other courses focused on leadership development.
BBC4. Promote sustainable energy and environmental related programs at conferences/forums	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	Faculty have participated in multiple conferences and workshops, including the Western Alaska Interdisciplinary Science Conference (WAISC) and the State of Alaska Career and Technical Education Conference.
BBC5. Provide place-based Writing (WRTG) courses focused on food security and sovereignty	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	5 WRTG courses were offered during Year 1.
BBC6. Provide courses that address leadership and government advocacy	Spring 2025	Completed	The 5 TG courses offered through BBC address leadership and government advocacy.
BBC7. Provide courses that support workforce development in FES	Spring 2025	Completed, remains in progress	All energy and writing courses at BBC contribute to workforce development. TG courses count towards a new micro-credential at BBC (Cultural Knowledge of the Bristol Bay Region), which is now a listed qualification for jobs in the region with local organizations.

BBC8. Provide course on using local resources sustainably and enhancing food sovereignty	Summer 2025	Completed, remains in progress	All classes offered through BBC focus on using local resources sustainably.
Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Chukchi Campus (CC)			
CC1. Additional garden boxes provided for the outdoor demonstration gardens using plants that thrive in the Arctic	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC2. Deliver two non-credit Arctic Gardening courses 101/102	Summer 2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC3. Experiential Arctic Greenhouse	Summer 2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC4. Reestablish the hydroponics growing van to teach the community how to grow year-round produce	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC5. Continue to provide local gardening and food gathering workshops for community members; mentor community gardeners during growing season	Summer 2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC6. Collaborate with UAF Cooperative Extension Service	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC7. Increase capacity of the Food Security and Sovereignty (FSS) team to provide outreach to youth and other entities	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.
CC8. Increase visibility of the FSS project in villages	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	There were no grant-related activities at CC during the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Kuskokwim Campus (KuC)			
KuC1. Deliver all Ethnobotany (EBOT) courses required for the three academic milestones offered by EBOT	AY 2024-2025	Completed	All Ethnobotany courses offered by KuC meet requirements for the three academic milestones offered by EBOT.
KuC2. Provide student support for EBOT degree courses (including BIOL 190)	AY 2024-2025	Completed	Tuition and fees were provided for students to participate in multiple classes. For courses that required travel or additional supplies (e.g., EBOT F100), extra financial support was provided.
KuC3. Provide support for one Alaska Native graduate student	AY 2024-2025; AY 2026-2027	Completed	One Alaska Native graduate student was supported in her studies toward a MA in Rural Development.
KuC4. Create higher division tracks for 2 courses	AY 2024-2025	In progress	The EBOT faculty are working towards creating higher division tracks of the applied courses.
KuC5. Continue to offer dual enrollment courses at Science and Culture Camp (SCC)	Summer 2025	Completed	A science and culture camp was offered in Summer 2025 in partnership with the local tribal council and school district; 15 students enrolled.
KuC6. Alaska Gardens (AG) – Growing plants that are culturally relevant for Alaska Native peoples	AY 2024-2025	In progress	While the structure of Alaska Gardens changed with the departure of one staff member from BBC and the reorganization at CC, KuC continued its focus on culturally relevant plants through its participation in the Alaska Forum on the Environment 2025.
KuC7. Project Jukebox Ethnobotany, Ethnoherbalism and Traditional Ways of Healing (PJ EBOT)	AY 2024-2025	Completed	Seven updates were added to Project Jukebox Ethnobotany in Fall 2024.
KuC8. Yup'ik salmon skin dyeing workshop (non-credit)	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	

Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Northwest Campus (NWC)			
NWC1. Design and deliver High Latitude Range Management (HLRM) courses for secondary and postsecondary students	AY 2024-2025	Completed	Drumbeats supported faculty time in offering 3 HLRM classes offered at NWC in Spring-Summer 2025. An additional class was scheduled but had to be canceled when federal funding was frozen.
NWC2. Deliver two workshops in Bering Strait region	AY 2024-2025	Completed	A workshop was held in June 2025 for adults in Nome and a youth summit workshop was held in July 2025.
NWC3. Faculty participation in Alaska Reindeer Conferences	AY 2024-2025	Completed	In March 2025, HLRM faculty attended the conference and delivered a keynote presentation.
NWC4. Provide Student Support for three HLRM intensives	AY 2024-2025	In progress	Two of the three HLRM classes offered were funded in part by another grant. This other grant covered student support.
NWC5. Course instruction in Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island	AY 2024-2025	Not yet implemented	In-person lectures took place in May 2023 and 2024, but not during this grant period. The previous school principal resigned, and the new principal has invited HLRM to continue instruction via Zoom beginning in November 2025.
NWC6. Support Student Leadership	AY 2024-2025	Completed	Students were supported to attend the First Alaskans Institute Elders and Youth Meeting and the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in October 2024.

Implementation Tasks	Time Frame	Grant Objective Progress	Notes
Troth Yedha' Campus (TYC)			
TYC1. Deliver distance Tribal Governance & Stewardship (TGS) & TG 3 credit courses	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	2 (3 credit) TG courses were offered through TYC in 2024-2025 via distance (TG 221 and TG 205).
TYC2. Develop & deliver a minimum of 2 intensive 1/2 credit TGS courses with Tribal Partners	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	Two (3-credit) courses were taught in AY 24/25 that were developed with Tribal partners (TG 101 and TG 105).
TYC3. Develop & deliver 4 intensive 1 credit Traditional Craft and Native Language (TCNL) courses.	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	In progress	Faculty time was supported to develop and deliver 3 (1 credit) APAR courses in person in Gakona and Northway, AK, in 2024-2025 (APAR F157P, APAR F157, and APAR F150P).
TYC4. Provide student leadership opportunities through direct attendance at decision-making forums	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	Students participated in leadership opportunities throughout the grant term. An example is student participation in the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.
TYC5. Provide financial support for increased educational support	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	Several students benefited from financial support during this grant term.
TYC6. Participate in guest lectures, public talks, and working groups in related academic fields within UAF	Fall 2024; Spring 2025	Completed	The PD guest-lectured in at least 4 classes, presented to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Alaska Native Relations Training on Tribal self-governance of federal public lands, and participated in at least 6 additional working groups or meetings.