

Pat Pitney, President

Butrovich Bldg, 2025 Yukon Drive, Suite 202
PO Box 755000, Fairbanks, AK 99775-5000
(907) 450-8009
ua.president@alaska.edu
www.alaska.edu



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Date May 31, 2022

To Gokhan Karahan, Chair, Faculty Alliance
System Governance Council

Through Sheri Buretta, Chair, Board of Regents *Sheri Buretta*

From Pat Pitney, President *Pat Pitney*

CC Memry Dahl, CHRO & Acting ANSI Lead
Sean Parnell, UAA Chancellor
Daniel White, UAF Chancellor
Karen Carey, UAS Chancellor
Paul Layer, Vice President for Academics, Students and Research
Michelle Rizk, Vice President for University Relations
Michele Yatchmeneff, UAA Executive Director for Alaska Native Education and Outreach
Charlene Stern, UAF Vice Chancellor for Rural and Native Education
Ronalda Cadiante Brown, UAS Associate Vice Chancellor for Alaska Native Programs
Jak Maier, Past Chair, System Office Governance Council

Re Response to Faculty Alliance Resolution 2022-22 regarding ANSI Goals

Thank you to Faculty Alliance for resolution 2022-02 “Resolution in Support of ANSI Goals” and to the System Governance Council for its resolution in support of the Faculty Alliance resolution. Your resolution calls on the administration and the Board of Regents to commit to five specific items related to Alaska Native success; this memo reflects the response of both the administration and the Board.

At the November 2021 meeting, the Board approved a five-year ANSI strategic plan, the result of a year-long engagement process led by the ANSI teams at the three universities and senior advisor Pearl Brower. That plan was designed with the intent that efforts to improve Alaska Native success were to be integrated into all functions and each university developed a plan specific to their own starting position. Because our vision is to have integration across all functions, we specifically have not focused on a singular budget or office, as suggested by resolution priorities 1 (dedicated funding for Alaska Native professorships) and 2 (centralized offices at each university). For example, instead of dedicated funding for Alaska Native professorships, we want to assure we seek out qualified Alaska Native candidates to apply for every open position. Additionally, each university has several Alaska Native focused offices, centralizing for centralizing sake will not accomplish the breadth of integration envisioned.

Regarding the recommendation for a new reporting system for anti-Native discriminatory behaviors (priority 3), I am not in favor of creating a separate reporting structure for anti-Native behavior, as we already have structures and processes for reporting and investigating discrimination in all forms through the offices of equity and compliance.

Regarding a requirement for anti-discrimination certification for all administrators, faculty and staff (priority 4), one of the system level ANSI strategic plan priorities is a systemwide training module on racial equity and cultural safety, which will be required for all employees, similar to Title IX. Beyond this baseline, the System Office and each of the universities are developing and engaging in supplemental programs for employees and students, with more intensive DEI training for leadership. This approach will provide a common baseline training for all employees across the system, with supplemental programming to meet the needs of the respective geographic locations. After our training protocols mature, we could revisit the efficacy of a 'certification' program.

We agree with recommendation that we examine the existing Native student support centers to ensure that they have adequate staffing and funding (priority 4). I want to reiterate again that we want Alaska Native student success to be everyone's priority, thus every student service office, every faculty member, every staff member and every administrator should view services with that vision in mind.

Finally, regarding the review of hiring practices systemwide (priority 5): UA's new CHRO Memry Dahl is currently conducting a broad review of HR practices. Because she has experience in diversity initiatives and because many of our ANSI goals are intertwined with HR processes and decisions, she will be leading the ANSI efforts in the interim while we search for a replacement for Pearl Brower, who recently left UA to lead the Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation. We also support the recommendation to do more targeted advertising/outreach to attract more Alaska Native applicants, and are hopeful that with Ms. Dahl's experience and increased attention systemwide on reaching a more diverse pool of applicants, that we will begin to see more Alaska Native representation in our faculty ranks.

We appreciate Faculty Alliance's continued interest in Alaska Native success across the university system. Because change happens at all levels of the organization, I encourage each of the Faculty Senates to engage at the university level with the ANSI lead to address unique university-based plans. I also encourage you to promote the ANSI efforts within your own academic departments, including through the faculty hire process and the recruitment of Alaska Native students, particularly graduate students that may become our future Alaska Native faculty.

When faculty are back on contract for the fall semester, I would also welcome the opportunity to meet with governance, the ANSI leads, and the Alaska Native Studies Council to discuss your ideas as well as report steps taken.