


Pat Pitney  
Interim President

Butrovich Bldg, Ste. 202, 2025 Yukon Drive  
P.O. Box 755000, Fairbanks, AK 99775-5000  
Phone: (907) 450-8000; Fax: (907) 450-8012  
Email: ua.president@alaska.edu  
www.alaska.edu



UNIVERSITY  
of ALASKA  
*Many Traditions One Alaska*

Date October 18, 2021  
To Andrea Dewees, UAS Faculty Senate  
From Pat Pitney, Interim President   
CC Karen Carey, UAS Chancellor  
Paul Layer, Vice President for Academics, Students and Research  
Pearl Brower, Senior Advisor for Alaska Native Success, Institutional Diversity, and Student Engagement  
Jak Maier, Faculty Alliance Chair  
Gökhan Karahan, UAA Faculty Senate President  
Sandra Wildfeuer, UAF Faculty Senate President  
  
Re Response to UAS Faculty Senate statement regarding land acknowledgements

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Thank you for sharing the UAS Faculty Senate statement regarding land acknowledgements.

I want to affirm that land acknowledgements are important and are not political in nature. Such acknowledgments are an important step in raising consciousness and respect for the peoples of these lands.

I understand this statement may have originated as a result of a proposal by UNAC to include a land acknowledgment in its collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with the university. The only subjects that employers and unions are required to negotiate are the terms and conditions of employment; a land acknowledgment is neither of those.

Our universities have and continue to recognize the history of indigenous peoples in Alaska, and I fully support the use of land acknowledgements as part of this recognition. Both UAA and UAS include land acknowledgements in their mission statements and UAF refers to its Fairbanks campus as the Troth Yeddha' campus, recognizing the Dena name for the campus location.

Under the leadership of senior advisor Pearl Brower, we will conduct an inventory and lead discussion about how we will incorporate land acknowledgements -- in communications, signage, and documents. We intend to develop a land acknowledgment for the university system to be inclusive of all Alaska Native peoples around the state and in recognition of the lands on which our facilities reside. That process is one that must be deliberative and inclusive of multiple constituencies, not a function of faculty union negotiations.