Athabascan residents of Alaska's Interior came to Troth Yeddha', wild potato ridge, not only to collect the nutritious roots but also to hold council. The elders would discuss important matters and learn from each other.

Troth Yeddha' became the site of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, but the original name and uses of this location have not been forgotten. Today, people from all over the world come to UAF and gather on Troth Yeddha' to share knowledge and learn from each other.

Athabascan Chief Peter John of Minto, speaking about Troth Yeddha' in 1994, said the elders endorsed this vision of the future when they gathered here for a final meeting. "They were also giving a blessing so their grandchildren would be a part of this school," he said.

In that spirit, the Troth Yeddha' Legacy will create a visible and prominent place on the UAF campus that will:

• Provide a living, lasting and functional tribute to Alaska's indigenous cultures.
• Enhance the educational experience of all students, with a focus on Alaska Native cultures.
• Welcome not only Alaska Native students but also all those who visit.

Developing the Troth Yeddha' Legacy represents a distinct opportunity to honor the heritage of Alaska's first peoples, ground the university's indigenous studies program and strengthen a physical sense of belonging for Alaska Native students, while welcoming all those who come to learn at UAF.
Honor — The Troth Yeddha’ Legacy is a key philanthropic fundraising priority at UAF. Our goal is to raise $25 million to complete the Troth Yeddha’ Legacy in two phases. In phase one, we will raise $5 million to create the Troth Yeddha’ Park and design an indigenous studies center as part of our centennial celebrations in 2017. The park will provide a central gathering place on campus for people from all walks of life and cultures to participate in activities, events and celebrations. Phase two will build the indigenous studies center within the park.

The honoring of Alaska Native cultures began with the restoration of the Lower Tanana Athabascan name for the UAF ridge. “Troth” is the wild potato, which grew on the hill. “Yeddha’” means “its ridge.” The Troth Yeddha’ Park lies between the Reichardt Building and the UA Museum of the North.

A planning committee has 15-years of history and experience with the project and an unwavering commitment to see the Troth Yeddha’ Legacy take shape. World-renowned architect Johnpaul Jones, a primary architect on the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., helped create the vision for the space.

Vision — The park and center will embrace and enhance the cultural and educational vision that Troth Yeddha’ has represented throughout its history. As a statewide academic center building on UAF’s decades of service to rural and Native students, the Troth Yeddha’ facilities will be distinct from other establishments that celebrate specific Alaska Native cultures.

The park and center will be singularly focused on Alaska’s first peoples, offering a not only an academic center but also a welcoming place for Alaska Native students and visitors. Design elements drawn from Alaska’s environment and cultures carry the vision forward. The park will feature welcoming and honoring circles and native vegetation. Alaska’s villages, rivers and mountains inspired the indigenous studies center’s form.

Legacy — As the University of Alaska Fairbanks approaches its centennial year and embarks on a new era, we reflect on the past and look ahead to the future. The Troth Yeddha’ Park will honor the past contributions of Alaska Native peoples. The academic center will anchor the university’s commitment to future studies involving Alaska Native people in areas such as language, arts, science and culture. Together, the park and center will create a welcoming place for students and visitors alike.

Troth Yeddha’ will infuse Alaska’s rich cultural history into our contemporary research institution and create a new legacy for students in generations to come.

To learn more about how you help or to make a gift, please contact:

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“Our people used to come to this hill to pick troth. They would paddle up the creek, Troth Yeddha’ No’, and camp by the lake, Troth Yeddha’ Mene’. Troth Yeddha’ was an important meeting place. The grandfathers used to come to talk and advise one another. When they learned this place would be used for a school, the university, they came here one last time. They decided that the school would be good and would carry on a similar traditional use of the hill. The hill would continue being a place where thinking and working together would happen.”

- Chief Peter John of Minto, 1994 Rural Student Summit, UAF

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Troth Yeddha’ Park

1. Tanana Chiefs honoring circle
2. Women’s honoring circle
3. Alaska Native peoples honoring wall
4. Animal and seasons recognition at cardinal directions
5. Veterans honoring circle
6. Women’s circle
7. Tea-making fire
8. Gathering circle
9. Indigenous studies center
10. Amphitheater/fire
11. Ski/trail center (future)
12. Picnic area
13. East-west campus path
14. Welcome areas - N, E, S, W
15. Interpretive entry
16. Entry from museum
17. Interpretive trail
18. Relocated blockhouse
19. Forest habitat buffer planting
20. Large area planting of berries and herbaceous plants throughout the park
21. Viewing deck