

## University of Idaho

# EXPANDS

## Native offerings

By Jack McNeel  
TODAY CORRESPONDENT

MOSCOW, Idaho – The University of Idaho, which sits on the aboriginal homeland of the Nez Perce Tribe and is situated midway between that tribe and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, is committed to improving its offerings to the Native American communities and has made huge strides the past three years toward that goal.

"The entire university is establishing a set of initiatives to deepen our scholarship and teaching relevant to tribal interests as well as service and outreach to the tribes," said law school dean Don Burnett. "Dr. Ed Galindo has an initiative going and is making progress in establishing an Indian graduate college that would be interdisciplinary and include law and public policy. We also have Steve Martin and Art Taylor working in tribal liaison and running the student center – new positions that didn't exist till about three years ago. This past year we've added Professor EagleWoman at the Law School."

Angelique EagleWoman hit the campus with an agenda of programs. EagleWoman, from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, has started several new programs and, in the process, impressed Burnett.

"Angelique is just a dynamo. She has accomplished more in a year than most people can accomplish in five years in terms of getting traction with

her scholarship, establishing terrific relations not only with law students but non-law students, energizing the formation of a Native American law student association, starting a Native American law emphasis, and reaching out to the tribes. She has just done terrific work for us and we're very proud of her."

The Native law emphasis allows law students within their normal three-year JD program to obtain specialization in Native American law. Angelique said there are four types of requirements that must be met to obtain this specialization.

"They must take six credits from the Native American law curriculum. They need to take two related courses offered at the law school or in a graduate studies program. They must write a substantial research paper and finally, they need to complete service hours with experience specifically in Native American law."

The program is not just for Native students but available for all law students. EagleWoman said that in today's economy this emphasis program gives law students an advantage in working with any entity that interacts with tribes whether a government agency, a private firm, or the tribes themselves when issues of Native American law arise.

"I feel strongly that every law student in a region where

## Initiatives: Native

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there's lots of tribes should have some basic knowledge of Native American law. This is one step towards that. Our numbers are gradually growing for Native American law students. We also have a solid cohort of non-Native students who are very interested in this area of law. The Washington State Bar Exam has Indian law as a testable subject and that brings students into my Native American law overview class. Many students plan on taking the Washington State Bar Exam," EagleWoman said. The proximity of the Washington border to the University of Idaho, about six miles, certainly enhances that program.

There is also a broader Native American law program available that has four components.

"There is academic emphasis, membership in the Native

American Law Student Association, working with me as the Native American law faculty member, and the fourth being in collaboration with Native American nations. We do that in a variety of ways. For example, I often have attorneys from the Coeur d'Alene and Nez Perce tribes speaking in my classes."

EagleWoman put out a call to students in October to start a NALSA chapter on campus and had 17 students respond. She reports it is now one of the most active organizations within the law school.

"One of the highlights this year was that we debuted, the first time ever for the new Idaho chapter, at the national NALSA competition. Our team placed fourth out of 44 teams and one of our team members, Kirstin Eidenbach,

won second place in the oralist award.

"We're also in the process of building a tribal law clinic. It will look at collaborative projects with area tribes. For example, things like tribal code development, working on land issues, etc."

Burnett expanded on the benefits of the Native Law Emphasis Program. "The practical experience combined with the academic side has a natural fit also with the mandatory service. There is no compensation, no credit hours, but everybody does it. A number of students have chosen to link it with their work with tribes. There's a synergy between our pro bono program and our service in tribal outreach which can be facilitated by students completing the practical side to achieve the Native American law emphasis. That will be noted on their diplomas and will be increasingly useful for law graduates seeking employment in the West."

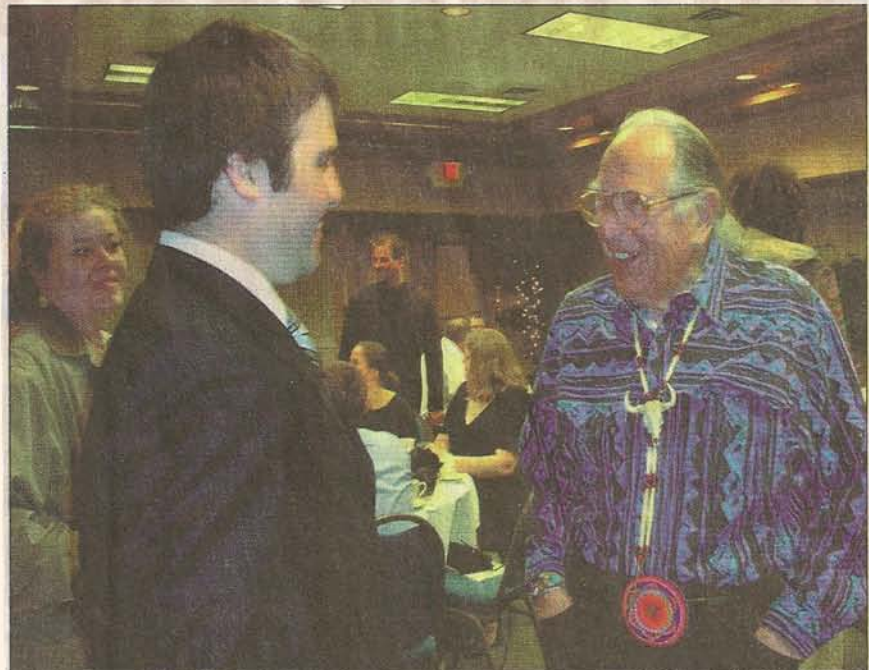


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Jaime MacNauton and Dylan Heddon-Nicely, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, spoke with Hon. (Ret.) Fred Gabourie Sr., Seneca Nation, at the Native American Law Student Association awards dinner April 24.

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