The Home Flight Scholars Program is designed to address the unique cultural and academic challenges or barriers that American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) students often experience, incorporating wrap-around services that support student retention and graduation through complementary financial assistance, improved counseling and academic services, and professional development. UO developed the program after consultation with the UO’s Native American Advisory Council, a group comprised of tribal leaders from the nine federally recognized tribes of Oregon. The Council’s guidance, along with input from other tribal citizens at the UO, helped to establish several key priorities for the program.

The Home Flight Scholars Program will help remove the financial challenges to attending college that AIAN students face—once state and federal options have been exhausted, the UO will waive remaining tuition and fees for Oregon residents who are enrolled citizens of the 574 federally recognized tribes. Second, the program will wrap these students in support, advising, residential community, and educational experiences that will help them persist, thrive, celebrate their culture, and establish strong connections on the way to graduation. Finally, the program seeks to strengthen ties and opportunities with these students’ home tribes, so that when they graduate, they will return home well prepared to contribute and lead fulfilling lives in their sovereign nations.

The scholars program establishes a new AIAN Academic Advisor position, provides faculty and peer mentorship opportunities and continues academic support for students living in Kalapuya Ilihi Hall via the [Native American and Indigenous Studies – Academic Residential Community](https://housing.uoregon.edu/communities/native-american-and-indigenous-studies) (NAIS ARC), which provides a strong residential academic support system for students’ academic and social needs, and connections to community and cultural traditions.

The scholars program incorporates a wide range of activities to help new students adjust to life on campus and in Eugene. Orientation programs will help students familiarize themselves with the campus and classrooms. Professional development is an integral part of the UO experience, and the Home Flight Scholars Program will provide a number of opportunities connected to their heritage. These include professional conferences, tribal job and internship fairs, and the [Future Stewards Program](https://graduatestudies.uoregon.edu/funding/awards/future-stewards-program) within graduate studies.