

Alaska Anthropological Association Newsletter

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Check out the AkAA Facebook page to stay current on news and events in Alaska anthropology!



National Park Service to host the 47th Annual Meeting



Start Planning for the 47th Annual Meeting of the
Alaska Anthropological Association in Fairbanks!
February 26-29th, 2020

President's Message

Dear Members,

Bands of burnt umber rolling across the tundra and the call of sand hill cranes overhead allude to crisp autumn days and the start of fall endeavors. Summer 2019 proved a busy season with many AkAA members engaged in fieldwork, community-based projects, and hopefully a few warm days spent fishing and gathering berries and greens. In Nome, several AkAA members joined high school students from around the region to explore the application of indigenous technologies and skills during the 5th Annual Nome Archaeology Camp. Hands-on activities during the camp included a staged caribou drive, construction and firing of clay seal oil lamps, and examination of heritage items in the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum and the Katirvik Cultural Center. The students' final poster projects will be presented during the 2020 AkAA Annual Meeting in Fairbanks.

The Alaska Anthropological Association adopted an Anti-Harassment Policy on June 12, 2019. The Policy outlines expected behavior during AkAA-sponsored meeting and activities and how to obtain assistance during these events if needed. Many thanks to the Board of Directors who contributed countless hours to the development of this Policy. The Policy is a living document and we welcome your feedback: <https://www.alaskaanthropology.org/alaska-anthropological-association-an-tiharassment-policy/> Additionally, the AkAA Board will host an open forum during the 2020 AkAA Annual Meeting to promote discussion on the Policy as well as foster dialogue about issues of harassment and safety within our academic and work environments.

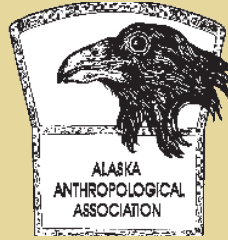
The fall conference season is now upon us with invaluable opportunities to share, connect, and be inspired. I recently enjoyed participating in the 2019 Museums Alaska – Alaska Historical Society conference in Kodiak with conversations focused on the timely themes of facing our history and reshaping our organizations based on principles of inclusion and diversity. I encourage you to take advantage of other conference programs such as those of the American Anthropological Association, Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums, or Inuit Studies Conference, and share new understandings with your fellow AkAA members.

AJA Volume 17(1&2) of 2019 has been published and mailed to members. Congratulations to all of the featured authors! Please check your membership status if you did not receive this latest issue.

The 47th Alaska Anthropological Association host committee has been planning an outstanding meeting in Fairbanks that will run from February 26-29, 2020. Association members are invited to submit proposals for sessions, papers, and poster presentations as well as round tables, hands-on workshops, demonstrations, pop-up exhibits, or other creative avenues to share projects and encourage conversations. Please reach out if you would like to discuss an idea. The call for session abstracts and other group presentations is now open on the AkAA website!

Whether home base is a university, state or federal agency, museum or cultural center, thank you for all the good work that you do in promoting and sharing deeper understanding about the rich and living cultures of Alaska.

With best wishes,
Amy Phillips-Chan



President

Amy Phillips-Chan

Board Members

Morgan Blanchard

Joshua Lynch

Phoebe Gilbert

Sam Coffman

Britteny M. Howell

Other Association Officials

Ann Biddle, treasurer

Liz Ortiz, student intern

Dougless Skinner, newsletter editor

The purpose of the Alaska Anthropological Association is to serve as a vehicle for maintaining communication among people interested in all branches of anthropology; to promote public awareness and support for anthropological activities and goals; to foster knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of Alaska Native and circumpolar cultural heritage; to work in collaboration with Indigenous communities on all aspects of research and education; and to facilitate the dissemination of anthropological works in both technical and non-technical formats.

Learn more at: www.alaskaanthropology.org

Submissions to the newsletter should be emailed to the Dougless Skinner (dskinner2@alaska.edu)

Current Research in Alaska Anthropology

Dougless Skinner, Alaska Anthropological Association Newsletter Editor

This newsletter focuses on current and upcoming research conducted in Alaska Anthropology.

The section provides researchers a chance to offer an overview and update about their work.

Updates on current research will be welcome in future newsletter additions as well.

Email dskinner2@alaska.edu to submit yours.

Dr. Amy Phillips-Chan

Alaska Anthropological Association President



In September 2019, the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum in Nome received a generous donation of Inupiat cultural items and artwork originally acquired by teachers and missionaries Tom and Ellen Lopp in Wales from 1892 to 1902. Among the two hundred items in the collection are bentwood bowls, skin scrapers, ivory figures, animal carvings, and grass baskets. Twelve descendants of the Lopp family traveled to Nome to donate the collection in person and visit the Seward Peninsula where their grandparents once lived. The museum plans to partner with the Native Village of Wales to reconnect the collection with the community and develop a hands-on resource that explores applied and creative use of indigenous science, design, and cultural heritage.

Dr. Britteny M. Howell

Alaska Anthropological Association External Affairs

I spent the summer teaching health science classes at UAA as well as developing curriculum for a new gerontology course that I'm currently teaching this Fall. I also ran a research project out of my UAA Healthy Aging Research Laboratory on a health needs assessment in a low-income, diverse, retirement community of older adults in East Anchorage. This needs assessment and project development has been incorporated into the gerontology course, so that health sciences and physical education students get hands-on experience delivering a health promotion project to seniors in Anchorage as part of their coursework. My lab also completed work on our healthy aging concept mapping project, published in the Senior Voice, and began phase II of the research. Lastly, my co-authored book chapter on supporting older adults and people with cognitive differences in research was published this summer.

Current Research in Alaskan Anthropology

Joshua J. Lynch

Alaska Anthropological Association Secretary

Experimental and Use-Wear Investigations of Ancient Beringian Projectile Points.

It is an exciting time for experimental research in the field of Alaskan archaeology! Our active experimental and use-wear research joins other recent studies investigating the morphological variability, adaptive contexts, and functional roles of projectile point forms unique to northern latitudes at the end of the last ice age. In 2018-2019, I completed an experimental testing regime in which replicated osseous, lithic bifacial, and composite points produced from caribou antler inset with microblades (modeled on archaeological examples from Paleolithic context across Beringia) were hafted and deployed as part of three proposed Beringian weapon systems: atlatl and dart, bow and arrow, and hand-thrusted spears. Analysis of experimental results is ongoing, though clear differential efficiency (in penetration, durability, and wound morphologies) suggests that particular projectile point morphologies are associated with specific delivery methods. The next phase in this research will be a more complete documentation of projectile point morphologies from western Beringian contexts housed in Russian collections, as well as comparisons of experimentally generated use-wear patterns with organic projectile points from Alaskan and Siberian Paleolithic site assemblages.



Sam Coffman,
Alaska Anthropological Association Publications

The University of Alaska Museum of the North (UAMN) in partnership with Lake Clark National Park and Preserve and Nondalton Tribal Council (NTC) conducted the first of a three year multi-faceted project consisting of archaeological survey of two lakes located in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve and documenting native placenames and stories associated with these lakes. Year one focused on surveying Kontrashibuna Lake.

Kontrashibuna Lake is a thirteen mile long lake that is both glacially and fresh water fed with a direct drainage into Lake Clark. Prior to our survey, only six archaeological sites (n=4 historic (one is a district); n=2 prehistoric) had been documented around the lake. Field personnel consisted of three individuals from UAMN, two from NTC, and one Park Service representative. Project personnel spent four weeks in the field, surveying and testing along the lakeshore. Eight new archaeological sites (n=3 historic; 5=prehistoric) were documented with multiple tephra samples collected. Samples are still being processed, but this research will assist in building a tephra chronology for the lakes and adjacent areas and continue to build on the cultural chronology for the Lake Clark region. The cultural aspect has conducted a literature review and identified individuals to be interviewed. This project is made possible through Cooperative Agreement P18AC00921, between the NPS and UAF Museum.



2019 field crew at Kontrashibuna Lake, Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.

Current Research in Alaskan Anthropology

Dr. Charles Holmes

The Shaw Creek Archaeology Project (UAF Anthropology and Museum of the North) continued interdisciplinary investigations in the Shaw Creek region. Sediment coring and paleoenvironmental research were undertaken by Josh Reuther and Nancy Bigelow (UAF) to understand the history of the evolution of the surrounding landscape in the valley and environmental changes over the last 20,000 years. Bigelow, Reuther, and Mat Wooller (UAF) are close to having completed a pollen diagram for the early Holocene (≥ 8000 CalBP) part of a lake core record from Quartz Lake. Jennifer Kielhofer (U. Arizona) is writing up micromorph and organic compound (lipid) isotopic studies on soil development at archaeological sites (Mead and Swan Point) and the Camp Section near Broken Mammoth for her dissertation. Wooller has sampled the 14,500 CalBP Swan Point mammoth tusk for an isotopic study. François Lanoë (U. Arizona) with Josh Reuther, Charles Holmes, and Ben Potter (UAF) finished an article "Small Mammals and Paleoenvironmental Context of the Terminal Pleistocene and Early Holocene Human Occupation of Central Alaska" to be published in *Geoarchaeology*. Expanded survey and testing at Swan Point by Holmes and Reuther has greatly increased the estimated site area. A 12,770 CalBP hearth, associated with bifacial tools and evidence of elk processing, was exposed north of the previously known limits. Gerad Smith (UAF) directed a field school focused on the complete excavation and photo mapping of a thousand-year-old house at the Pickupsticks site. Smith and Holmes investigated two pit features at Swan Point dating to the late prehistoric period that had intruded into older, Northern Archaic, components. Excavations by Lanoë and Reuther at the multicomponent Hollembaek Hill site were expanded and a 13,600 CalBP canid specimen was recovered in context with cultural material. Lanoë, Reuther and Holmes are working in collaboration with Kyndall Hildebrant (UAF) and Dr. Ripan Malhi (U. Illinois) on late Pleistocene and early Holocene ancient canid DNA in Beringia that includes the Hollembaek specimen and a ~14,200-year-old canid from Swan Point.



Preparing to excavate the house pit at the Pickupsticks site in 2019.



Triangular biface base from 2019 test at the Swan Point site.

Nina Shultz

I am continuing work on the indigenous religious knowledge of Orthodox Yup'ik people of the Kuskokwim River Delta with a paper on social agency and the role of elders in the transmission of localized religious knowledge to be presented at the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, St. Louis, Missouri, Oct. 25-27, 2019.

Current Research in Alaskan Anthropology

Jason S. Rogers
NPS

Tuxedni Rockshelter Pictograph Site Update

In September 2019, National Park Service archaeologists visited the Tuxedni Rockshelter Pictograph Site (KEN-00229) and conducted a condition assessment update. The site, first described by Frederica deLaguna in 1932, is located on the Tuxedni River in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. Due to extremely difficult conditions of access, the site was last visited in 2003. Park pilots recently reported a rockfall at or near the site, perhaps as a result of the November 2018 7.2 magnitude earthquake that shook Cook Inlet and most of Southcentral Alaska. Park personnel, arriving on site by kayak, found a considerable collapse and fall of a large rock face approximately 30 m from the pictographs. All pictographs were found to be in good condition, with minimal or no degradation when compared to the 2003 documentation.



Raven footprint motif pictograph.

Bobbi Hornbeck
PhD Candidate at the University at Buffalo

Cultural Mound Groups in the Rat Islands

This summer I led a three-person team including senior research scientist Debra Corbett (Nanuetset Heritage), and University at Buffalo PhD Candidate Ariel Taivalkoski on archaeological survey and testing at six clusters of earth mounds on Kiska Island and Amchitka Island. We extracted nineteen soil columns using a soil probing auger and excavated two shovel test pits and two trench tests. These tests revealed stratigraphic layers indicative of episodic deposition and charcoal flakes. We identified five new cultural sites, captured aerial imagery with a drone, and collected samples for radiometric dating and soil chemistry analyses. I am testing theories about monumentality as a mechanism for conveying group-identity amongst hunter-fisher-gatherers as part of my dissertation research at University at Buffalo, "Aleut Monumentality: Hunter-Fisher-Gatherer Transformations of the Rat Islands, Alaska". This project was organized to investigate the clusters of earth mounds that occur along the coastal plateaus of the Rat Islands. Caroline Funk at University at Buffalo serves as PI on the supporting NSF DDRIG (Award #1901720). Funding is also provided by an award from the PaleoWest Foundation. More information and results can be found on the project website: www.ratislandsearthmounds.com



Current Research in Alaskan Anthropology

Odin Miller

Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC)

Over the past few years, Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC) has been conducting anthropological research on Copper River fisheries issues. AITRC is a nonprofit organization that works on behalf of tribal members from eight villages in southcentral Alaska. Its fisheries program has focused on increasing Ahtna tribal member participation in the fisheries regulatory and management processes, as well as working to secure institutional protections for customary and traditional ways of using salmon. Toward this end, AITRC hosted a salmon search conference last fall, which brought together stakeholders from throughout the Copper River basin in an effort to identify shared concerns and goals for the future, and to develop working relationships.

The social science staff has also conducted a series of ethnographic interviews with local experts on Copper River fisheries issues, which it is currently analyzing. Results from this project will be shared back with Ahtna communities, and will eventually be compiled as a general-audience publication that will:

- Present local-traditional knowledge of Copper River salmon and fisheries
- Identify key information needs for future sustainable fisheries, as identified by tribal member and other local experts
- Offer a palatable breakdown of regulatory/management structures, suggesting key points for effective intervention

AITRC also has a fisheries biologist on staff, and has collaborated with organizations such as Native Village of Eyak and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game on recent research initiatives. For more information on the AITRC fisheries program, please contact our office at 907.822.4466, or e-mail Odin Miller, AITRC Social Scientist, odin@ahtnatribal.org, or Karen Linnell, AITRC Executive Director, karen@ahtnatribal.org.

Brooks Lawler and Kate Yeske

Center for the Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML)

CSU CEMML 2019 Fieldwork in Donnelly Training Area

This summer, field crews from Colorado State University's Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML) focused on performing Determinations of Eligibility (DOEs) for existing archaeological sites in Fort Wainwright's Donnelly

Training Area near Delta Junction for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. A number of sites yielded positive results and new data about prehistoric use of the Delta Junction area. Two sites, XMH-01153 and XMH 01361, stood out with several

interesting finds. This black chert microblade core was recovered from a 1 m x 1 m excavation

unit 7 cm below the surface at XMH-01153. This site is located on a high hill of a glacial moraine with a 180° viewshed between Windy Ridge and Jarvis Creek. Other artifacts that were located at the site on the surface, in shovel tests, or in the excavation units include two additional flake cores, bifaces, a uniface, expedient tools, and flakes made of a variety of materials such as siltstone, chert, basalt, and rhyolite.



XMH-01361 is located on a small hill in a glacial moraine landscape with a 270° viewshed, overlooking Butch Lake in the Donnelly Training Area.

Over 100 artifacts were collected and mapped from the two excavation units shown in the photo. These artifacts consist of associated lithics, including a chalcedony microblade fragment, oily charcoal, calcined bone, and fire modified rock, mostly between 8 and 11 cm below the surface. Several basalt flakes and an obsidian flake were also recovered from shovel tests at the site. The charcoal from this site will be radiocarbon dated and the obsidian will be sourced via x-ray fluorescence spectrometry in the upcoming months. Though these finds are not extremely unusual, they are exciting when they do appear, as they are relatively rare and can add important details to the prehistoric narrative on the interior Alaskan landscape.



Current Research in Alaskan Anthropology

Robert King

BLM-Alaska State Archaeologist,

I served as a BLM educator for archaeology and paleontology at the recent World Scout Jamboree held July 21-Aug. 2, 2019. This was held at the National Boy Scout Outdoor Adventure Center at the Summit Bechtel Reserve, near the New River Gorge north of Beckley, West Virginia. I was among a group of BLM educators, including two other BLM archaeologists, who staffed a learning station within a large Department of Interior (DOI) tent exhibit area, which was located in the center of the Jamboree event. Over the course of 12 days, many thousands of the nearly 45,000 Scout attendees (male and female) from 168 nations stopped by to learn about archaeology and paleontology, including why they are important fields of study. By visiting all of the five learning stations within the DOI tent (with the other 4 stations offered by other DOI agencies), Scouts earned a special patch blending the Scout fleur de lis with the DOI bison and sunrise design. In 1997, I began my educational work at National Boy Scout Jamborees, which are held every four years. But this was his first World Jamboree Scouting event, and it proved to be the most amazing one of all.



Dr. Ben Fitzhugh and Hollis K. Miller
University of Washington

Excavation Begins at Ing'yug, a Sugpiaq/Alutiiq Village on Sitkalidak Island

Dr. Ben Fitzhugh and Hollis K. Miller (University of Washington) co-led test excavations at Ing'yug, a Sugpiaq/Alutiiq village near Old Harbor on Sitkalidak Island in the Kodiak Archipelago. The excavation at Ing'yug is part of the larger Old Harbor Archaeological History Project (OHARP), which explores the persistence and resilience of Sugpiaq/Alutiiq communities in and around Old Harbor as they faced economic, social and environmental challenges brought by the Russian occupation of Kodiak Island (1784-1867 CE). Ing'yug (called Ezopkinskoe in the Russian literature) was occupied prior to Russian contact until the 1830s, when a devastating smallpox epidemic led the Russian American Company to consolidate the surviving Indigenous populations into seven villages around Kodiak. Residents of Ing'yug were relocated to what is now Old Harbor. Within the OHARP, Hollis Miller is conducting doctoral research on Sugpiaq/Alutiiq daily life during the period of Russian occupation by examining diet, labor practices and products, and gendered and aged social organization and status. During our excavations at Ing'yug this summer, we sought to locate houses and middens, map the extent of the village and better establish its starting occupation date. In the end we produced maps of features and houses and sampled a well-preserved midden deposit, but found a curious dearth of stone artifacts in our 15 test units. That said, there was a high percentage of fire-cracked rock, which could be linked to the increased practice of sweat bathing. We also documented a large multiroomed house set back from the others, which we think could be a qasgi or men's/community house. We are excited to further this project and our collaboration with the Old Harbor community in the coming year, as we plan for a more extensive excavation and a week-long archaeology summer camp for Sugpiaq/Alutiiq youth! If you would like to learn more and see photos from the project, please visit <https://hollismiller.com/category/oharp-project-blog/> or check us out on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/OHArchy/>).

***47th Annual Meeting of the Alaska Anthropological Association
February 26th-29th
Fairbanks, Alaska***



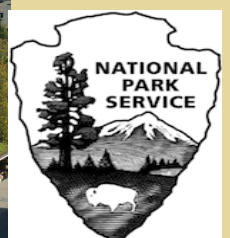
Call for Meeting Sessions Now Open!

Visit the Alaska Anthropology Association Website:
alaskaanthropology.org

Call for Presentations and Posters will be available mid-December.

Meeting will be held at the Fairbanks Downtown Westmark Hotel

Hosted by the National Parks Service



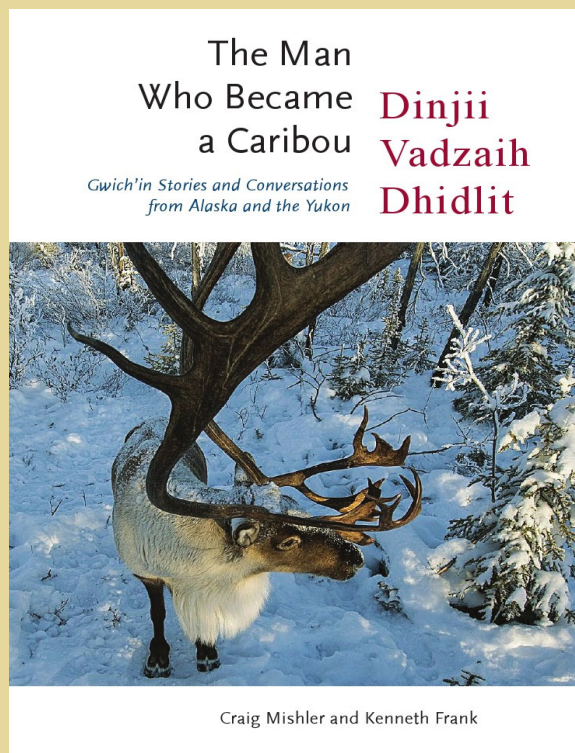
Publications

Dinjii Vadzaih Dhidlit:

The Man Who Became a Caribou

The International Polar Institute Press (IPI) announces the publication of Dinjii Vadzaih Dhidlit: The Man Who Became a Caribou. This is a new bilingual volume co-edited by Craig Mishler and Kenneth Frank, based on a series of oral interviews with nine Gwich'in elders living in rural northeast Alaska and the Yukon Territory. Richly illustrated, the book covers a wide range of topics from traditional hunting methods, processing, storage, and use of caribou from ancient to contemporary times. It also reveals traditional beliefs and taboos about caribou. The book includes a robust and detailed Gwich'in naming system for caribou anatomy, conversations about potlatches and sharing, as well as personal experience narratives and traditional stories. Funding for the project comes from the National Science Foundation and the Alaska Humanities Forum.

By Craig Mishler and Kenneth Frank



Who We Are

A short film reflecting on coastal erosion affecting Alaskan Native Villages and illustrating how art and culture connect the communities to the land. The director, Alexis Sallee, relays on Alaska Native Actors and symbols unique in the world of cinema.



Remembrances

Dennis Stanford, Curator Of North American Archaeology and Director of the Paleoindian Program



“Dennis was a beloved member of our community and could always be counted upon for a kind word and smile. He was also a gifted and passionate archaeologist.

After receiving his PhD from the University of Wyoming, Dennis joined the Department of Anthropology in 1972, launching a 47-year career at the museum. He became one of the best known archaeologists in North America, with a gift for communicating research to both scholarly and public audiences. At a time when Paleoindian archaeology was still in its formative stages, Dennis helped advance the field through his studies of lithic materials, especially the distinctive stone tools known as Clovis points.

His early-career fieldwork at the Jones-Miller Bison Kill Site in Colorado was an exceptionally careful excavation and study of a rich bison butchery site that dated to the Folsom period, roughly 10,000 years ago, and helped set the stage for the rest of his career. The last few decades of his research focused on the origins of the first inhabitants of North America, along with human adaptations to the changing environments as the last Ice Age was ending. He conducted fieldwork in Siberia, northern China, the western Arctic, the Rocky Mountains and, most recently, in the Chesapeake Bay region. Early on, his experimental research in using traditional stone tools to butcher an elephant that recently died, was covered by National Geographic.

During his career Dennis authored 136 publications, including several books. *Across Atlantic Ice*, which described his theory for an Atlantic route taken by the earliest Americans, was his most recent book. It was translated into multiple languages.

Dennis was generous in his service to the museum and academic community, serving as chair of the Anthropology Department from 1993 to 2000, serving as head of the archaeology division multiple times, hosting 32 fellows and serving on my dissertation committees. However, his substantial research and service accomplishments are almost outstripped by his extraordinary contributions to the archaeology collections. Dennis was the excavator/donor of 20 acquisitions totaling 475,000 objects and was the curator of record when an additional 32 acquisitions joined the collections, representing an additional 673,000 items. He will remain one of the foremost contributors to the North American Archaeological collections for decades.”

Kirk Johnson

Remembrances

Michael Edward Krauss *University of Alaska Fairbanks*



Michael Edward Krauss was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1934, to Lester Krauss, a Mount Sinai Hospital surgeon, and Ethel Krauss (née Sklarsky), first head of the Hospital Auxiliaries Organization of Ohio. A teenager with strong linguistic interests (he was known to translate his Latin homework into self-taught Greek), he entered college early, graduating in two years from the University of Chicago, at the age of 18. His education continued with a second bachelor's degree (in Romance languages) from Case Western Reserve University, followed by linguistics study at Columbia University in New York, which awarded him a master's in 1955.

Further study at the University of Paris led to work with speakers of Irish Gaelic in the Aran Islands, and by 25, Krauss had completed a Ph.D. at Harvard in linguistics and Celtic. A subsequent two years studying Norse linguistics in Iceland and the Faroe Islands earned him a third bachelor's degree, in Icelandic philology from the University of Iceland.

In 1960, Krauss was hired by the University of Alaska Fairbanks for what was officially intended as a two-year position teaching French and linguistics as a Carnegie Fellow. But his focus on the languages of small ethnic groups would help turn that appointment into a career working with Alaska Native languages.

A decade later, aided by the State of Alaska and National Science Foundation funding, he recruited a team of linguists dedicated to working with 20 Native languages and founded the Alaska Native Language Center (ANLC). With the number of Native children learning those languages from their parents declining rapidly due to culturally destructive government policies, Krauss lobbied state legislators, and the entire ANLC team worked closely with Native elders to develop writing systems and document vocabulary, grammar and folktales. Krauss also oversaw the production of language teaching materials at ANLC, as well as academic publications. A vast collection of written data, audio recordings and publications was compiled into an archive that became an independent entity in 2013, the Michael E. Krauss Alaska Native Language Archive (ANLA).

Although Krauss' work touched on most of the Alaska languages studied by ANLC, his specialty was Eyak, a language of the Copper River region, of which only six speakers remained. In 1975, he edited "In Honor of Eyak: The Art of Anna Nelson Harry," an annotated collection of folktales presented in Eyak with English translation and audio. At the time of his death, he was at work on the final editing of an Eyak reference grammar, dictionary and story collection, and although Marie Smith Jones, its last native speaker, died in 2008, material compiled during Krauss' study of Eyak continues to serve as an important resource for language revitalization efforts.

In the 1990s, Krauss stood at the forefront of an effort to realign the field of linguistics from predominantly theoretical study, toward documentation, preservation and even revival of endangered languages. In a 1991 address to the Linguistic Society of America, he delivered a clarion call for linguists' practical engagement with the richness of the world's many endangered indigenous languages, to help stem the tide of language loss.

Krauss retired from UAF as Professor Emeritus in 2000.