

# The Graduate College Northern Arizona University

Telethon Info: Spring 2010

**Homepage:** [www.nau.edu/gradcol](http://www.nau.edu/gradcol)

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**Location:** Ashurst 107

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## What Students Like About Graduate Work At NAU

### 1. Exceptional Mentorship and Professional Partnerships

Northern Arizona University is open, collaborative, and a great place to forge professional relationships while pursuing graduate study.

Students can expect one-on-one interactions with outstanding faculty and a close working relationship with their advisor. They will know their fellow graduate students well and can easily explore related fields and interdisciplinary projects.

Because of the university's strategic location on the Colorado Plateau, many organizations call upon faculty and student expertise and offer partnerships, internships, and research opportunities.

### 2. High-level Opportunities for Research, Service, and Teaching

**Research:** Innovative, scholarly, and creative research here spans more than 50 departments and 30 institutes and centers, and generates more than \$50 million in grants and contracts each year. Sponsored program support at NAU has increased more than 300 percent in the past decade.

**Teaching:** More than 300 Flagstaff-campus graduate students hold teaching assistantships and contribute significantly to NAU undergraduate education.

**Service and Outreach:** Service and outreach opportunities abound, and students find support and guidance in creating new ones regionally, nationally, and internationally.

### 3. A Diverse Cultural and Geographical Landscape

### 4. A Green Campus

### 5. Quality + Credibility in Distance Learning

## Programs Offered:

49 Master's Degrees

9 Doctoral Degrees

23 Graduate Certificates

## **Statistics:**

Approximately **5,500** graduate students: almost **1,700** in Flagstaff and more than **3,650** distance students pursuing a wide array of degrees and certificates online and on-site at more than 30 statewide locations.

Approximately

- **40%** are full-time grad students
- **80%** are master's students
- **25%** are ethnic minority
- **70%** are women
- **2%** are international

### **Graduate Degrees/Certificates Awarded Last Year: approximately**

- 1,720 master's degrees
- 105 doctoral degrees
- 165 graduate certificates

### **In a recent survey of graduate alumni,**

- **99%** rate their NAU experience as either good or excellent
- **98%** would recommend their graduate program to others
- **95%** would start over again at NAU

## **Suggested Contribution Designations**

### **1. Graduate Student Fellowships and Scholarships:**

#### **Graduate College Education fund (with note designating it for scholarships)— #04567**

Financial assistance for graduate students is far more limited than for undergraduates. And graduate students often have families of their own or care for elderly parents while seeking a graduate degree.

Full-time graduate study at the Flagstaff Mountain Campus costs approximately \$20,000 annually for academic and living expenses. To be competitive, most universities offer internal scholarships and fellowships to grad students that help cover tuition and academic expenses, plus provide a stipend for living expenses. Thanks to private gifts received two years ago, the NAU Graduate College now can offer its first two internal scholarships.

The vast majority of NAU graduate students do not receive any scholarship or fellowship assistance. We would like to do much more, especially during such rough economic times, to help our students succeed and to become competitive in recruiting the very best applicants to our graduate programs at NAU.

### **2. Graduate Student Travel Awards:**

#### **Graduate Student Travel fund — #5227**

The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) has started a travel fund to support student travel to attend national and regional conferences, present scholarly papers, and compete in award competitions. These opportunities are crucial for completing major research projects, building resumes, professional networking, and enhancing learning.

## Why Your Gift to Graduate Students is Critical:

Support targeted to graduate students is becoming increasingly important nationwide. In a recent report, the Council of Graduate Schools warned that America's economic leadership is eroding and our primacy in global competitiveness is threatened.

"The consensus is that strengthening graduate education—the backbone of American competitiveness and innovation—is key to a prosperous and secure future" for our nation.

"The work of graduate students contributes directly to our sustained economic growth and prosperity. Graduate students conduct ground-breaking research in universities, national laboratories, and private industry."

Graduate education has a vital role "in ensuring that the knowledge creators of tomorrow have the cultural awareness, skills, and expertise to compete effectively in a knowledge-based economy."

The study concludes that expanded participation in graduate-level education for all U.S. citizens, especially from underrepresented minority groups, should be a priority in all fields.

-- from *Graduate Education: The Backbone of American Competitiveness and Innovation*, published by the Council of Graduate Schools, 2007

## Highlights

### NAU graduate programs specialize in:

- **Biotechnology and Health** – Arizona's focus for near-term economic development
- **Environment and Sustainable Systems** – one of four economic development priorities for Arizona
- **Teaching and Learning** – meeting the needs of K-20 for Arizona and beyond
- **Diversity and Human Connections** – particularly focused on Native American issues and service

## Recent Honors for NAU Graduate Programs

**Minority Graduate Degrees:** Annual reports by *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* magazine typically rank NAU

- in the top 20 for awarding master's degrees in all areas to Hispanics and Native Americans
- first in the nation in awarding master's degrees in education to Native Americans
- in the top ten for awarding master's degrees in education to all minorities and to Hispanics

NAU initiated a **new master's program in Climate Science and Solutions in 2010**, one of just a handful in the nation.

A collaboration between NAU and the Arizona Cancer Center for cancer prevention among Native Americans received a **\$15.7 million grant** last fall from the **National Cancer Institute**.

NAU ranks among universities in its class with the **largest number of faculty receiving Fulbright US Scholar grants** last year.

**MBA:** *The Princeton Review* regularly ranks NAU's MBA program as outstanding in its annual **300 Best Business Schools** publication.

**Physical Therapy:** For the last five years, NAU's physical therapy program has been ranked in the **top 10 percent** of all physical therapy programs in the country by *U.S. News and World Report*.

**Anthropology:** Expert reviewers in the field consider NAU's master's in anthropology **one of the top three applied anthropology master's programs in the nation**.

The **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** selected the university as **one of eight host universities nationwide** for its Conservation Fellows program for graduate students in science, medicine, and engineering.

**Distance Learning:** NAU's Extended Campuses was recently awarded a 21st Century Best Practice Distance Learning Award from the U.S. Distance Learning Association for leadership, innovation, and technology in the field of distance learning.

**Ph.D. Faculty Productivity:** In a recent study, NAU ranked in the top 20 of comparable research universities in a national ranking of faculty productivity in doctoral programs. The index measures faculty scholarly output, which includes publications, journal citations, awards, and grants received.

**A recent study in *Public Purpose* magazine**, published by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, says, "NAU researchers consistently announce findings that are distinguished, important additions to basic knowledge."

### **Recent National Awards for NAU Students**

**Lucy Mullin** (PhD Biology) was awarded a **Dept. of Energy Graduate Fellowship of \$50,000 per year for three years**. Only 4.6 percent of the 3,200 applicants were awarded fellowships. The award provides partial tuition support, an annual stipend for living expenses, and a research stipend for full-time graduate study and thesis/dissertation research.

**Robert Miranda** (PhD Biology) received an **Environmental Protection Agency Star Fellowship of \$34,000 per year for three years**, covering stipend, tuition, and expenses. The STAR graduate fellowship program supports master's and doctoral candidates in environmental studies.

**Cindy Liu** (PhD Biology) was selected for a **\$15,000 P.E.O. Scholarship**. Scholar awards are competitive, merit-based awards for women of the U.S. and Canada who are pursuing a doctoral degree or postdoctoral research.

**Larissa Yocom** (PhD Forest Science) received a **2010 National Science Foundation (NSF) Doctoral Dissertation Improvement grant**. These grants provide partial support of doctoral dissertation research to improve the overall quality of research and defray costs to participate in scientific meetings and conduct research in specialized facilities or field settings.

**Luke Evans**, (PhD Biology and Science Foundation Arizona fellow), received a **2010 National Science Foundation (NSF) Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant**. These grants provide partial support of doctoral dissertation research to improve the overall quality of research and defray costs to participate in scientific meetings and conduct research in specialized facilities or field settings.