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Harry Hilton, interviewee

Sally Taylor, interviewee

Stephen Lay, interviewer

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Stephen Lay said enrollment at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) is expected to top 5,000 students this fall. That is almost a twenty percent increase of the fall semester in 1981. Why are so many students coming to UAF this year. Dr. Harry Hilton, dean of students, sees a number of reasons for the expected influx this fall. He said they are seeing the results of a number of efforts on a lot of fronts. One thing is an in-state recruiting effort which has been improving yearly. It has been easier for the recruiting people because they have a good product to offer students and a comfortable good learning environment. There is a lot more acceptance of high school teachers and counselors as far as the selection of programs offered at UAF and the quality of instruction. Stephen Lay said Alaskans are seeing and responding to both an improved recruiting program and the overall improvement in the university. Admission counselor is Sally Taylor is the university's chief recruiter. Over the years she has noticed a pronounced change in the reaction to UAF by Alaska students, high school counselors and parents. No longer are Alaskans believing that they have to go to the lower forty-eight to get a quality education. Taylor said she could give statistics on what percentage of the students still go south, but there is a tremendous increase in the percentage of those coming north. One school that normally had one or two students come here will be having 50 of their graduating seniors come to UAF. Lay said a greater acceptance is coming from all parts of the state and from all segments of society. The enrollment of Alaska Natives has doubled in the last few years. And the best Alaskan students are coming to Fairbanks for their education. Taylor said they are beginning to keep in the state a larger percentage of the outstanding students. Lay said not only has UAF done a better job of recruiting students but they have also done a better job of retaining students. More than 80 percent of the non-graduating students are returning for another year of school. Hilton said there is a retention effort going back a few years to a primary goal of Chancellor Cutler. The goal was to retain the students and stop the trend of smaller returning classes. The residence halls have had almost 900 students returning. It is a statement attesting to the quality of the faculty and the fact that this university does a good job. The university's reputation is creating a demand among Alaskans for an education at home. The critical campus housing shortage may force students to look elsewhere. Taylor predicts students will look elsewhere when she notifies them about the housing shortage. There is a tremendous number of students wanting to stay in-state than ever before.