The Elouise Cobell Land and Culture Institute is located on the garden level of The Payne Family Native American Center at the University of Montana. The Payne Family Native American Center is the first facility in the nation built to accommodate a Department of Native American Studies and American Indian Student Services.

The Institute is named in honor of Elouise Cobell, an activist from the Blackfeet tribe who in 1985 embarked on one of the largest and most complicated class-action lawsuits ever brought against the U.S. Government. The lawsuit obtained billions of dollars in royalties owed to individual tribal members across the country.

Support for the Elouise Cobell Land and Culture Institute was provided by the Payne Family, the Murdoch Charitable Trust, the Northwest Area Foundation, the University of Montana, and the UM College of Humanities and Sciences.

For more information about the Cobell Institute, or to schedule a room, please contact Willie Brown at 406-243-5851 or willie.brown@umontana.edu.

For more information on the scheduling of Star-Gazing Round Room planetarium events, visit the Physics and Astronomy website at http://hs.umt.edu/physics/Outreach/default.php

hs.umt.edu/cobell
THE MISSION

During her lifetime, Elouise Cobell was a passionate advocate for Native American rights, inspiring the next generation of advocates to fight for the rights of others.

Founded upon this legacy, the Elouise Cobell Land and Culture Institute is dedicated to providing project-based learning and outreach using high-level tools essential to the future of Native American communities. Students and researchers of the Institute are trained in land use; resource mapping; economic analysis; history; and cultural and language preservation related to Native American issues and those of rural and urban areas of the region.

The Institute also seeks partnerships with community organizations and tribal colleges to broaden the horizons of future generations. These partnerships also include business and economic development organizations, which engage students in projects of real-world problem solving for local communities as they pursue their own education.

THE FACILITIES

Institute facilities are specifically designed to increase the engagement between indigenous peoples across miles and cultures. The Land and Culture Laboratory is equipped with GIS mapping technology that will help train students to track spatially related historical, social, and cultural issues. Utilizing the long distance video communication capabilities of the Classroom/Conference Space, students and faculty are able to participate in cultural and educational events from indigenous communities from all over the world. The audio/visual editing and file sharing capabilities of the Multi-Screen Theater Room give students the opportunity to exchange ideas with institutions from tribal communities, while the NASA-grade technology of the Star-Gazing Round Room’s planetarium immerses viewers in an interactive display of the environment and sky. With all of these tools, students and researchers can work with community partners to conduct projects of value and to solve the real-world problems facing society today.