

Unga Aleut —

Gordon Gould, APU founder, made dream a reality

By RONALD MALLOTT

In the little Alaska Native village of Unga on the Shumigan

Islands, a mother had to make a decision about what to do with her son following the death of his father. The mother wanted

to keep the child yet knew she alone could not provide the food and clothing any child required

for survival. She looked at her own past and present life as well as those other Native villagers around her and knew the only way her son could escape such poverty would be with education, another fact of life she could not offer.

The mother could either hold onto the child and give him not much more than her love, or she could let him go where he could get a glimpse of a brighter future and a better chance for survival. She then decided, both willingly and unwillingly, to release her son to the Jessee Lee Home, an orphanage at Unalaska.

This is but a small part of the true story told about Gordon Gould as he was being introduced as the principal speaker at the Spring Semester Convocation at the Alaska Pacific University. He was credited with being a doer of a dream, much the same as was Howard Rock the doer of a dream in founding the Tundra Times, Gordon Gould became a doer of a dream in founding the Alaska Pacific University.

After becoming the first Native fully ordained as a Methodist minister, Gordon Gould was sent back to Alaska in 1948 to determine what could be done to better serve the people and, remembering his mother's choice to sacrifice his companionship in favor of his education, he began to turn his dream into a reality.

It is said that as the University, then known as Alaska Methodist, began to be built, Gordon Gould supervised the construction crews to satisfy himself no trees were destroyed or rocks turned that were not necessary, that the natural favor of Alaska should remain to surround the

appearance of a modern school for Alaska people's.

As he talked to the students and faculty at today's Alaska Pacific University, Gordon Gould recalled learning at the Jessee Lee Home that the true meaning of love was concern and that today, "his love was the symbol of concern this University is here to express."

His love, it appears was for Alaska peoples who, like his self, suffered from an unmet need so he learned to give the best of himself and challenged that unmet need by creating an educational organization no longer worthy of a dream but demanding development.

There are many problems whenever one attempts to convert a dream into reality but Gordon Gould had long ago learned that "if you want your promised land, don't give up, press on." Press on he did, over all obstacles, including financial failure, until today we hear not of a dream but can stand and see with pride the results of that dream.

Gordon Gould is not a selfish Native, he passes on freely the advice he applied to himself—if you want your promised land, don't give up, press on.