



CELEBRATING TCU SUCCESSES





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Cover page: Photo is from the Spring 2017 United Tribes Technical College graduation. Front row, left to right, BS Business Administration graduates include: Meldina Iron Cloud, Rosebud Sioux Tribe; Melvin Miner III, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe; and Dustin Milk– Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

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PREFACE

How *Celebrating TCU Successes* Came About

Funded with support from the Lumina Foundation, this publication is a compilation of some of the work with the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) that was completed between 2015 – 2018. As part of our grant agreement with the Lumina Foundation, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) planned to produce a publication about our work with the TCU boards of trustees and college and tribal leaders. Working in partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), and through its Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS), ACCT provided trustee education and materials for TCUs to focus on boards' policymaking roles and evidence-based decision making.

Included in *Celebrating TCU Successes* are articles and personal stories demonstrating the progress. There are analyses from the detailed student cohort "data reviews" in addition to "progress checks" by the TCUs conducted at the GISS institutes for the past few years. Results of these processes provide both qualitative and quantitative information about TCU progress in promoting and effecting student success at their colleges. In addition, readers will find individual student success stories and photographs written and selected by the respective colleges that exemplify and celebrate some of the individual students who attend a tribal college. Moreover, there is an interview of AIHEC President and CEO, Carrie Billy, to celebrate her dedication to AIHEC and its many accomplishments over the years under her leadership.

Both ACCT and AIHEC sincerely wish to thank the Lumina Foundation for their multi-year support. I am personally thrilled to edit this publication and all the contributions from the TCUs. We hope our readers will enjoy reading this monograph and join with AIHEC and ACCT and GISS in celebrating TCU successes.

DEDICATION



Celebrating TCU Successes is dedicated to the many hardworking trustees and presidents of the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) across the country who have actively participated in any of the five TCU Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) institutes conducted since 2015. These Tribal College leaders and policymakers have channeled their energies over the past few years to improve the lives and fortunes of Native American students and their Tribal communities.

Through their decisions and college policies, TCU governing boards and college executives have focused on providing the educational resources, support and care of the next generation of American Indians who will, in turn, honor and preserve their various Native American languages and heritages.

Striving to preserve both their Native culture and language, Tribal College and University governing boards, college presidents and executive staff have participated in board and leadership training and activities that promote student success and equity in the TCUs across the nation. This monograph is in honor of the work of these boards and leaders and is ultimately dedicated to the beneficiaries of their governance—the future generations of Indigenous students, educators and leaders.

May the articles within this publication inform, inspire and acknowledge some of the dedication, persistence and collaboration it takes to move the needle on student success for Native Americans in the Tribal institutions that they attend. We ask readers to join us in celebrating their successes.

Norma Goldstein, PhD, Editor

Celebrating TCU Successes

Director of GISS and Special Projects

Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) | Washington, DC 20036

February 2019 | *Your opinion matters. Contact: ngoldstein@acct.org*

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS LEAD TO SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS



The Association of Community College Trustees' (ACCT) partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the Lumina Foundation has enabled these organizations to help educate the governing boards of Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) across the nation about promising practices and policies to promote student success. *Celebrating TCU Successes* is testament to that collaboration.

Celebrating TCU Successes reflects the richness of these partnerships and provides an opportunity for Native American Tribal leaders to showcase their outstanding students and policies that have fostered equity and academic success. Many of the stories and articles herein reflect the thoughts and values of Indigenous peoples whose heritage and culture provide the main backdrop for successful students. In telling their stories, contributors to the monograph share in the pride of the Native communities.

Those of us involved in the community college sector recognize our colleges' value. Through the Governance Institutes for Student Success (GISS), ACCT, AIHEC and the participating TCUs have been able to focus on data-informed decision making to move the needle on Native American student success. This publication gives voice to those Tribal Colleges who prize their value to their communities and to the students they serve.

ACCT would especially like to thank the Lumina Foundation for its generous support in these efforts. *Celebrating TCU Successes* just scratches the surface of what such partnerships can offer.

J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO



AIHEC AND ACCT ALLIANCE HELPS TCU LEADERS



The partnership between the American Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is part of AIHEC's goals to strengthen the leadership of the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) across the nation.

We are at the edge of our second college movement, almost at the 50-year point. AIHEC plans to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2023. We need to train the next generation of leaders. Tribal Colleges need that training, that opportunity for boards to interact and chart the best practices by district tribes.

ACCT and the Governance Institute for Student Success is a critical part of this leadership effort.

We want to thank the Lumina Foundation for its support of the GISS institutes and look forward to more collaboration in the future. More work needs to be done.

Carrie Billie
AIHEC President and CEO





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TCU STUDENT SUCCESS IS ABOUT TRANSFORMATION: SEVERAL COLLEGES REPORT 2018 PROGRESS

by **Norma W. Goldstein, Ph.D.,**
Director of GISS and Special Projects
ACCT

Today's student success movement is about transforming our institutions of higher education to focus on student outcomes, progress and success to meet the challenges that today's emerging technologies and social changes bring. Fostered by a rich history of transformation masks, ceremonial dances and communal potlatches, the TCUs are looking at their data to transform their practices and policies to improve their students' outcomes and the institutions themselves.

Transformation, whether by mythical beings or of malleable materials, has been a persistent theme in Native American cultures, according to an art display *Life, Death, and Transformation in the Americas* at the Brooklyn Museum in December 2018. This monograph is a brief testament of the TCUs' transformative focus on student success and demonstrates the TCUs and their boards and leaders aiming to transform their institutions to reach higher forms of excellence and student success. Like gold which is associated with the life-giving power of the sun and the physical act of transformation, the articles (nuggets) in this publication aim to inform, to inspire, and to celebrate the successes in our Indigenous colleges. The goal is to celebrate their transformations.

Using AIMS data to monitor student progress, TCUs at the 2017 and 2018 GISS institutes reported the following changes and steps to progress in data-informed decision making for student success. Below is a synopsis of seven Tribal Colleges' accomplishments and goals shared at the GISS-TCU in Bismarck, North Dakota, in September 2018. Comments are verbatim from the 2018 Progress Check at the GISS.

2018 Progress Checks in Bismarck



**CANKDESKA CIKANA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
Spirit Lake Dakota Nation

Candeska Cikana Community College (ND): Understand the data and how the Board supports the faculty and staff work. We now pay attention to the data and have routine updates on enrollment, retention, persistence, graduation and completion.



Leech Lake Tribal College, (MN): We created an emergency fund for students and a Wellness Center and sponsored cultural events (like wild rice gathering). We are in the process of adopting new personnel policies including wage scales. We also adopted term limits for Board members.



Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (ND): No more late registrants. We have Friday Student Success meetings to catch students that drop early or withdraw. We opened better communication among Academics, Campus Services and Student Services, and we review data that show success or failure at regular meetings. We instituted new Financial Aid policies requiring FAFSA, admissions policies, travel policies and a sex offender policy. We promote leadership training, teacher training, and strategic planning. We drilled down with our THRIVE model and Achieving the Dream. We focus on persistence and completion rates, a THRIVE Step Plan, risk-zone indicators and pre-testing scores. Our goal is to be accessible to students and have more communication within the college, including more direct contact with the College President and Board President.

TCU STUDENT SUCCESS IS ABOUT TRANSFORMATION: SEVERAL COLLEGES REPORT 2018 PROGRESS (continued)



Little Big Horn College, (MT): We have instituted several best practices: mentoring, bridging, tutoring, job shadowing, providing emergency aid, paid internships and apprenticeships. Our polices stand as they are with a few updates. Our Board meetings occur every two months, and in between, we keep Board members informed on all activities and updates. Our data focus is student retention (measuring students returning from previous semester) and graduation rates.



Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (MI): Accomplishments include a full Board of Regents with 3 new members, new student orientation, an online orientation, new Quantway and Statway math initiatives with ATD, an attendance initiative, Title IX training, and a position for fundraising. New policies include a student and a staff travel policy, a motor pool policy, a financial aid policy, and an emergency aid fund for students. We have more transparency between the Board and President, set up an agenda policy to make staff and students aware they are welcome in our sessions. Enrollment numbers, grades, retention and graduation rates are our key data points.



Sitting Bull College (ND): We changed to competency-based math, revised our Board Bylaws and are now looking at better understanding student retention, persistence, attendance and completion rates. We revamped our first-year learning to a thematic weekly schedule and are continuing our Enrollment Management Plan. We use our own data collection to share with the Board and are monitoring a first-year learning cohort. We made revisions to student and staff policies that make the processes run more smoothly. Persistence and retention rates are becoming clear to the Board.



Turtle Mountain Community College (ND): We have reviewed our Board Bylaws with the Board of Directors and are focused on meeting student needs and offering a better appeal to the student.



United Tribes Technical College (ND): Accomplishments include mentoring programs for first-time students, updating the student handbook and student code of conduct, and instituting an Early Alert process for absenteeism. New policies include revisions to our alcohol and drug and domestic violence polices and developing a new Board policy on athletics. We have achieved our 10-year accreditation goals, and continue to look at attendance, persistence and completion/graduation rates. We have strengthened Board and President effectiveness with monthly meetings, GISS training, and with more transparency.

ANTICIPATE, ACT, ANALYZE: THE THREE A'S OF SUCCESS



by Haven Gourneau
Blowing Prayer Cloth Woman
President
Fort Peck Community College
Poplar, Montana

It is clear that institutional success is measured by student success. An institution may have all the grants and funding it requires, the best buildings, dormitories, and sports teams, but if students are not succeeding, the institution is not succeeding. Across Indian country, student success among Native students is critically low, not only those attempting a college degree but also even more concernedly are those in K-12 schools. Retaining these children is critical to their future educational successes. Some schools are seeing a nearly 50% dropout rate from middle school to high school and a further decrease up to graduation. A class that might graduate 125 middle school students may only see a high school graduation of 35-40 students.

Tribal Colleges, as well as other community colleges, are faced with a much different student demographic than the University system student. Community colleges have a much higher enrollment of nontraditional students, those who either dropped out of school or who did not do well in school. At a much higher number, students entering Tribal Colleges are not academically prepared for college-level courses, are much more likely to come from low-income backgrounds, and have families with limited knowledge and experience about higher education.

Thirty (30) years ago, I was one of these students. I was a young mother of five children with another on the way and my oldest child about nine years old. Even with my husband working, our growing family needed two incomes, and the only work locally was either waiting tables or working as a nurse's assistant. I did both for many years. Although I respect these careers, I knew that if I wanted to provide a better life for my children, I needed to do something more.

Registration Day

I remember vividly the day I walked into Fort Peck Community College's (FPCC) door. I planned only on checking the college out, but it just happened to be registration day, and I came out of the door registered full-time. I didn't remember much about how I got registered; it was a blur of activity, a ton of information, and a tremendously frightening and intimidating experience. Suddenly I was standing at the top of the stairs at the Administration building holding on to my class schedule.

I got into my 1976 light blue Toronado and burst into tears. My only thought was, "I am going to fail, and everyone is going to know how dumb I am!" My next thought was, "Well, if I just don't show up, then they have no proof that I am as dumb as I am!" Needless to say, the next morning I decided to try it out for a day, and after that I can count on two hands the days I missed class. I absolutely fell hard for education, and I am still taking classes after 30 years.





ANTICIPATE, ACT, ANALYZE: THE THREE A'S OF SUCCESS (continued)

The three A's

After I graduated from FPCC, I was hired full-time and have spent nearly three decades working mainly in Student Services. Over the years, we have seen many student success initiatives succeed, but just as many failures. Experience has revealed that student success lies in the three following A's: **Anticipate, Act, and Analyze**. Because our student demographics are so diverse, anticipating different scenarios that will prohibit student success is constantly evolving. No one person has the same needs as another. This is the conundrum. Even so, it is vitally important that our institutions meet as many of these unknown needs as possible.

Over the years, Fort Peck Community College (FPCC) has ANTICIPATED several of the most common barriers unique to our student demographics and has ACTED on developing and incorporating initiatives to provide support for students in these situations. A few of these action programs are:

- **The Gas Voucher** program which offers fuel vouchers to students who travel from outside communities to attend classes. Students receiving gas vouchers are shown to be some of the most successful students on campus.
- **The WaWoGiya (Offers to Help)** program is a program that appoints committee members to contact and assist students who are having attendance issues.
- **The Student Success Mentor** program provides all students who are taking six or more credits with a campus mentor or "friend." All staff and faculty serve as student mentors and receive support for mentor activities.
- FPCC also has programs that will **purchase books for students** who don't have the resources, **Starving Student lunch tickets** for students who are hungry, emergency **grocery vouchers for dormitory students**, **student resource closet** for personal hygiene products, coats and winter wear, free backpacks, notebooks, pens, and jump drives.
- New to the mix is the **Achieving the Dream emergency aid** program that can provide quick turnaround funds for small or big emergencies as they occur. These emergencies can be diapers for their child, a water bill, food, tires, and just about any real emergency that might pose a barrier to student success.
- FPCC also **works tirelessly with our local schools** to prepare K-12 students for life after high school, college, and beyond.
- Currently FPCC has **two Bridge grants, dual credit and early college start** programs, and a summer enrichment program that prepare students for college entry.

Assessing Programs

Lastly, having ANALYZED the impact of anticipating and acting on student success barriers provides FPCC with decision-making information. How have the programs impacted students? Do the programs need work? Are there new barriers identified? How do we measure success in activities that are very difficult to measure? FPCC has recognized that measurement and assessment are still challenges and works in progress, but the College has come a long way. Currently, all students who withdraw or who fail undergo an interview designed to discern why the student did not succeed, what barriers they encountered, and in their opinion, what FPCC could have done to better provide support for them. Also, grades, attendance, and support programs used are assessed for retention.

FPCC has much to be proud of, but one initiative stands out above the others. Since 2000, FPCC entered into a consortium with two University System institutions to offer a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education via distance learning. In partnership, FPCC has graduated over 115 Elementary Education teachers into the Montana education system. Nearly 75% of these graduates are Native American.

When I look back, this is a great advance in reservation education. In 1979, when I graduated from high school, there were no Native teachers in our school system at all and only one counselor. Now we have Native teachers throughout the reservation schools. I am most proud of the impact FPCC has made in our local schools. By continuing to develop the three A's of Success, FPCC expects to earn a 4.0 in institutional, student, and personal success!

Fort Peck Community College is a Tribal College located in rural northeastern Montana on the Fort Peck Reservation. FPCC was chartered by the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes.

AIHEC'S AIMS RESEARCH SHOWS MODEST GAINS; COLLEGE MATH, RETENTION SHOW VARYING RESULTS

by Katherine Cardell
Policy and Research Associate
AIHEC

Analysis of the data used during the Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) trainings spanning six years, 2011-2012 to 2016-2017, presents a varied picture. Improvements in percentages of successful completion in Developmental Math were the most dramatic for all of the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as much as 10% for the two-year Tribal Colleges and 16% for the colleges with enrollments of 351 to 700.

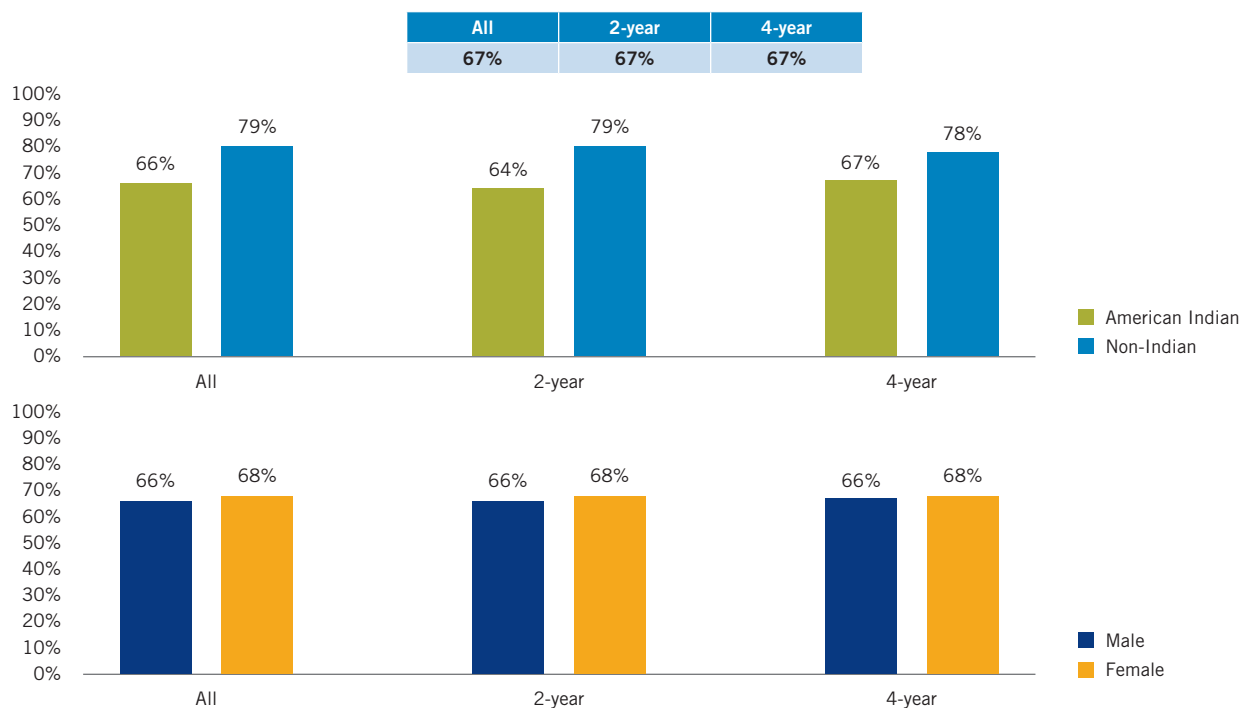
Other improvements include increased percentages in successful completion in Developmental Writing, as much as 7% for the two-year college as compared to a slight 2% decrease for the TCUs overall. For TCUs with enrollment over 700 students, there was a 14% drop in this indicator.

More Work in Math

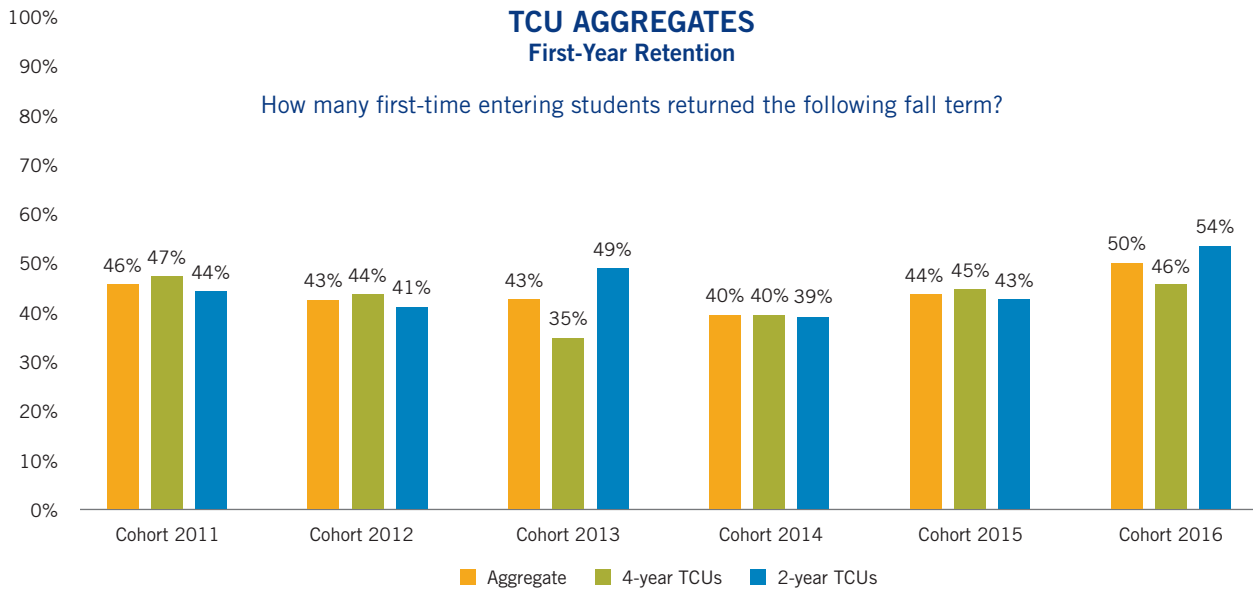
Successful completion of College Math, however, had a downward trend for the TCUs overall in every category. It is obvious that there needs to be more work in this area. The other indicators such as successful completion of English Composition and Native American Studies also had varying results, with the overall rate down two (2) percentage points for English and four (4) points for Native Studies. In some cases, for English Composition, the percentage remained the same, but the variances were slight, no more than two (2) percentage points.

Retaining students is another major issue for the TCUs. Retention as an indicator also showed improvement. Overall, first-time entering retention improved from 45% to 50% from AY 2010-2011 to AY 2016-2017. It increased by seven (7) percentage points for four-year TCUs and three (3) points for two-year TCUs.

TCU AGGREGATES
Academic Core College Mathematics Successful Completion, 2016-17



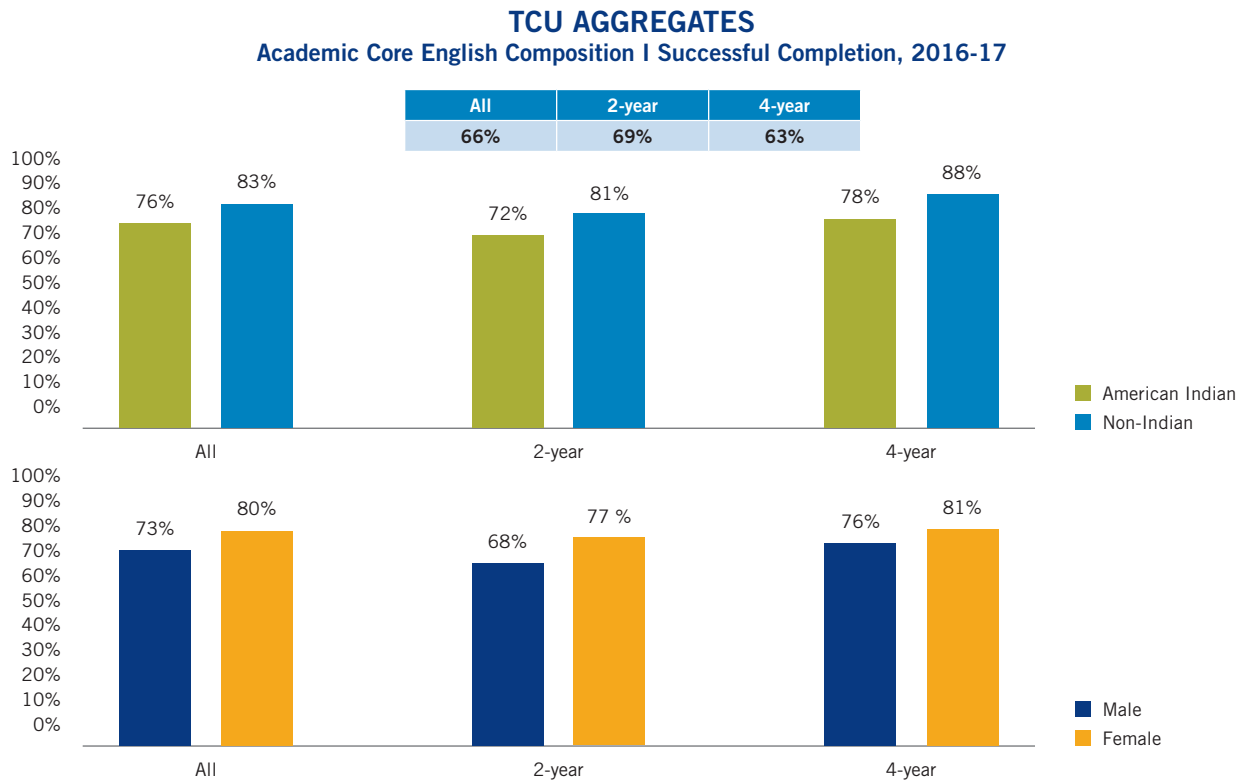
AIHEC'S AIMS RESEARCH SHOWS MODEST GAINS; COLLEGE MATH, RETENTION SHOW VARYING RESULTS (continued)



GISS Data Indicators

A total of six indicators of student progress were mutually selected by the TCUs, AIHEC and ACCT when the Lumina Foundation grant funding for this work started in 2015. These momentum points included retention plus successful completion of: Developmental Math and Developmental English, college-level English Composition/Writing (academic core), and Native American Studies. The latter course is unique to the TCUs yet core to student success as students learn to preserve and honor their Native languages and cultures across the United States.

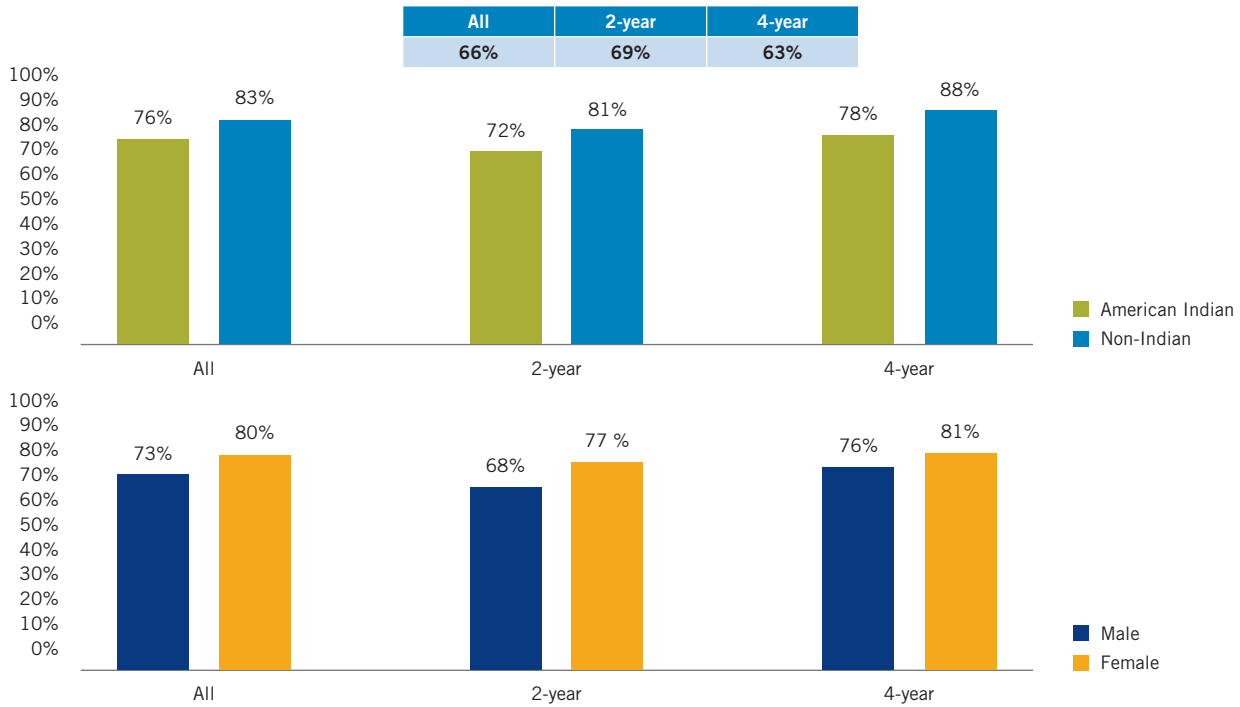
The following graphs provide a view of the modest progress made since 2017.



AIHEC'S AIMS RESEARCH SHOWS MODEST GAINS; COLLEGE MATH, RETENTION SHOW VARYING RESULTS (continued)

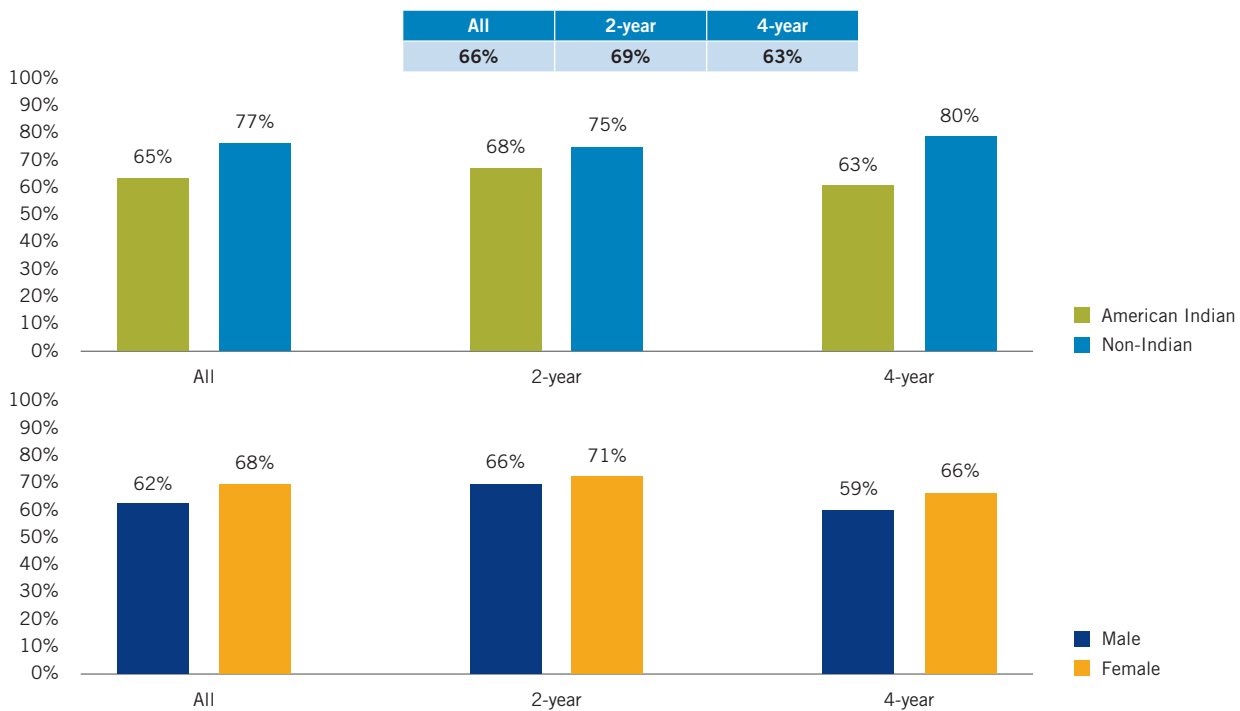
TCU AGGREGATES

Academic Core Native American Studies Successful Completion, 2016-17

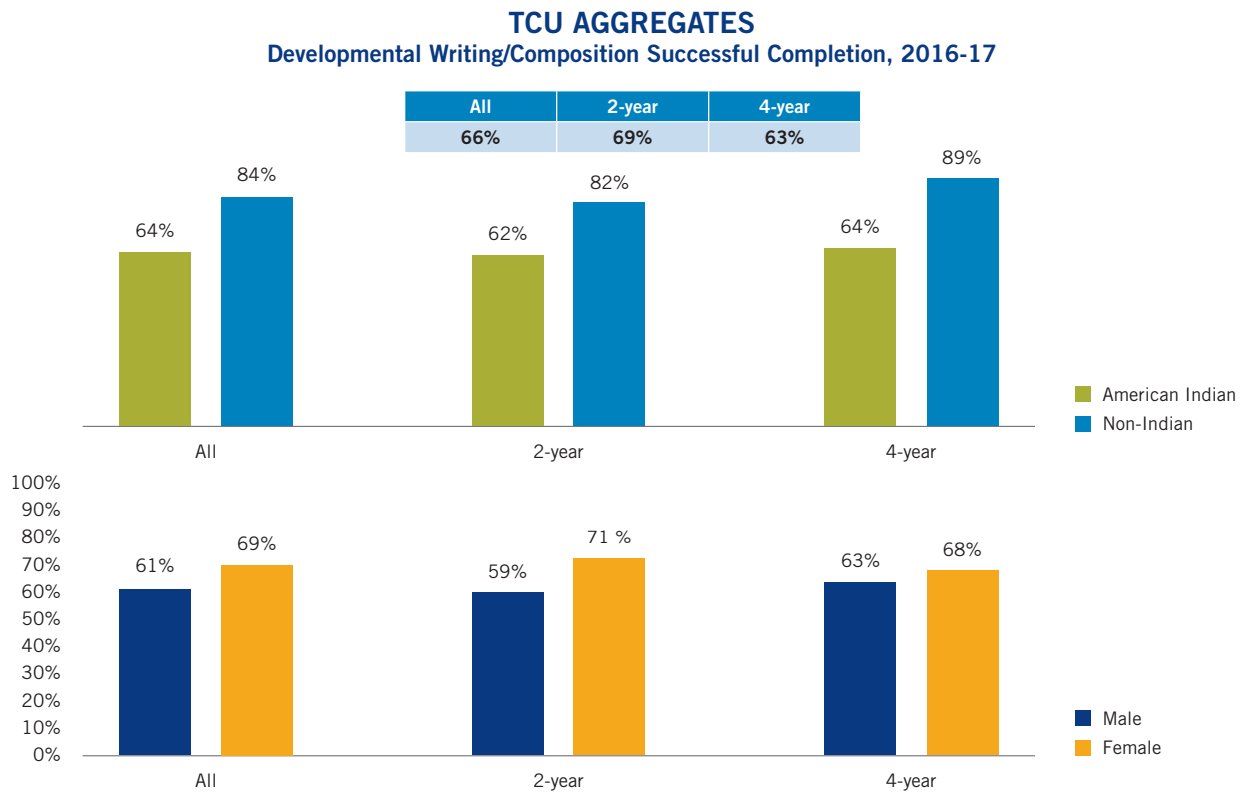


TCU AGGREGATES

Developmental Mathematics Successful Completion, 2016-17



AIHEC'S AIMS RESEARCH SHOWS MODEST GAINS; COLLEGE MATH, RETENTION SHOW VARYING RESULTS (continued)



TRIBAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- ✚ 37 TCUs operating more than 75 campuses and sites in the U.S., with a student/faculty ratio of 8:1.
- ✚ TCUs provide access to quality, low cost higher education. Average annual tuition of \$2,937 makes a TCU education the most affordable in the nation.
- ✚ Nearly 80 percent of TCU students receive federal financial aid.
- ✚ All TCUs offer associate degree programs; 15 offer baccalaureate programs; five offer master's degree programs.
- ✚ Well over half of the 573 federally recognized tribes are represented at TCUs, including AI/AN students from more than 30 states, including 14 states that do not have their own TCU.
- ✚ TCUs are a proven and solid investment: for every \$1 invested in TCUs, the return is at least \$5.20 annually, according to an independent study.



AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

In 1973, the first six American Indian tribally controlled colleges established the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) to provide a support network as they worked to influence federal policies on American Indian higher education. Today, AIHEC has grown to 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities. Each of these institutions was created and chartered by its own tribal government or the federal government for a specific purpose: to provide higher education opportunities to American Indians through programs that are locally and culturally based, holistic, and supportive.



Photos courtesy of Diné College.

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CULTURAL CONNECTIONS FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS AT ILISAĠVIK COLLEGE, ALASKA

*Iłisaġvigmi Iłisaqtuat Pıllautaguurut Iłıuuniaġusivut
Paamaaġikługich Iłisaqamin*



by Dr. Pearl Brower, President,
Dr. Birgit Meany, Dean of Academic Affairs, &
Jerica Aamodt, Coordinator of Iñupiaq Studies
Iłisaġvik College, Alaska



Iłisaġvik President, Pearl Bower, standing far right, poses with her Board and colleagues at the 2016 GISS in Las Vegas.



Iłisaġvik students and staff practicing traditional Iñupiaq dancing.

Iłisaġvik College, which in the Iñupiaq language means, “a place to learn,” is Alaska’s only Tribal College and independent community college, not affiliated with the state university system. Iłisaġvik was incorporated in 1995 with the mission to educate the residents of Alaska’s North Slope, the most northern region in the State and home to the Iñupiaq Eskimo people. Today, Iłisaġvik provides programming throughout the entire State.

The longstanding support for formal education was a priority for the first mayor of the North Slope Borough, Eben Hopson Sr., whose guiding principle was, “Education is the key to success.” Mayor Hopson realized that in order for the Iñupiaq people to compete successfully in an increasingly global world, they would need to be firmly rooted in their Iñupiaq cultural heritage as well as function in a Westernized system. With that in mind, he advocated vigorously for a localized school system that incorporated Iñupiaq culture into its curriculum.

The North Slope encompasses eight distinct communities ranging in population from approximately 200 residents in the smallest community of Atqasuk to approximately 4,000 people in the hub community of Barrow. The population in the outlying “villages” as they are known is 90% Iñupiaq. In Barrow, that percentage is considerably lower— approximately 60%. Weaving Iñupiaq culture into all aspects of college life is a primary goal of Iłisaġvik and its employees. Research suggests that for Indigenous students, programs placed in a cultural context are perceived by students to be more comfortable and welcoming.



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS AT ILISAĠVIK COLLEGE, ALASKA (continued)

How do incorporating Iñupiaq values into a college culture support student success?

Administratively Iłisaġvik College supports the incorporation of Iñupiaq values into all facets of the institution. President Brower asserts that in order for students to feel comfortable, and for the institution to truly perpetuate Iñupiaq culture, language, values and traditions as the mission states, it is imperative for everyone at the College to be committed to this endeavor. The 2016 Iłisaġvik College strategic plan articulates the incorporation of Iñupiaq culture including increasing overall enrollment of Alaska Native/American Indian (AN/AI) students to maintain eligibility as a tribal college, strengthening relevant curricula that incorporate Iñupiaq culture, language, values, and traditions and fostering the Uqautchim Uglua Program (Iñupiaq Language Nest).

In addition, Iłisaġvik College recognizes the importance of partnerships with organizations that share common goals, such as incorporating culture into curriculum and programming to support Indigenous students. In a joint-effort with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), Iłisaġvik established a career pathway by creating a certificate and degree program for the Dental Health Aide Therapist training. Iłisaġvik is also partnering with the University of Alaska Fairbanks in offering their Biomedical Learning and Student Training (BLaST) program on site in partnership with Iłisaġvik's science program to support AN/AI students with research based on local topics supporting an Indigenous worldview.

North Slope Communities

The College's administration actively supports travels to North Slope communities by all staff. These trips offer a twofold return. Iłisaġvik connects with village residents and offers programming directly in the villages; in addition, Iłisaġvik staff have the opportunity to learn about North Slope communities and their residents—the Institution's primary student population.

Iłisaġvik creates a learning environment that promotes academic rigor in the context of cultural relevance. The goal is to challenge students academically and prepare them for successful entry into the workplace and/or the pursuit of a higher-level degree, but to do so without separating the acquisition of academic knowledge from the traditional knowledge that shapes the context of students' lives: village, family, culture, values, subsistence. Thus, the College infuses the curriculum across disciplines with Native ways of knowing, Iñupiaq language, culture, and values.

Culture-based Curriculum

For incoming students encountering college life for the first time, the Aulaaqisaġunnat, translated 'Seminar for the Start,' is a one-credit course designed to help students realize that embarking on the 'hunt' for a college degree is not very different from the familiar, seasonal camping trip to hunt for caribou, ducks or geese. To be successful, both endeavors require planning, basic skills, tools, preparation, and coordination. This short course centers on career exploration, study skills, personal finances, ethics, health and well-being, and traditional knowledge, all analogous to the various steps students and their families engage in when preparing for camp.

Wherever possible, faculty utilize place-based and culture-based curriculum to help students connect and apply the newly learned concepts to their own experiences. For example, writing assignments may include reflection on local events, Iñupiaq values, the meaning of community, dance and language. As students practice the various modes of writing, drawing upon the familiar first seems to facilitate the transition to more academic, less personal topics. The math curriculum, particularly at the foundational level, uses the context of traditional activities and objects when solving problems. Calculating how much wood is needed to construct an Iñupiaq drum is more engaging than calculating the circumference and area of a circle. A recently created course explores the history of mathematics with focus on different cultures, to include the base 20 Iñupiaq numbering system.

Learning in a Culturally Relevant Context

The examples above represent specific activities that support learning in a culturally relevant context. Additionally, college faculty have developed courses focusing on culture: *Iñupiaq Internship* provides experiential learning experiences. *Culture and Management* explores strategies for integrating Iñupiaq values into teambuilding and leadership roles. *Alaska Natives in Film* analyzes the portrayal of Alaska's Iñupiaq and Yup'ik peoples, and Iñuit in Canada and Greenland, as seen in films from the U. S., Canada and Greenland. *Indigenous Sciences and Traditional Ecological Knowledge* explores how tribal peoples around the world have approached some of the classic questions of scientific inquiry.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS AT ILISAĠVIK COLLEGE, ALASKA (continued)



Student Olive Kanayurak, Atqasuk Alaska



Spring commencement ceremony – students awaiting their entrance

The very essence of Iñupiaq Studies is to perpetuate the Iñupiaq language, culture, values, and traditions, Ilisaġvik College's mission. The Iñupiaq Studies Division facilitates a number of different cultural activities (cultural history, language learning, storytelling, traditional crafts, foods, healing, values, Arctic science), and demonstrate Ilisaġvik's role as a cultural center in the community.

Incorporating Iñupiaq Values

- Ilisaġvik emphasizes the need to incorporate the Iñupiaq Values into all aspects of learning. One way for all instructors to share the importance of these values with their students, is by listing them on their syllabus.
- Every Friday for an hour, Ilisaġvik staff, faculty, and students attend the Iñupiaq Cultural Hour to share Iñupiaq language, culture, and traditions. The Cultural Hour connects faculty with local experts, so they can incorporate the Iñupiaq culture into their classrooms while also allowing others to learn more about the Iñupiaq. Learning how to pluck, cut, and prepare niġliq (geese) for soup, Iñupiaq language bingo, Iñupiaq songs and dancing, Iñupiaq Rosetta Stone language practice, and learning children's songs in Iñupiaq are only a few examples of Iñupiaq Cultural Hour topics that are covered. Participants bring home what they learned so traditional knowledge can continue to be passed down.

The Iñupiaq Studies Degree

The purpose of all Iñupiaq Studies classes is to perpetuate Iñupiaq language, culture, values, and traditions to connect students with their Iñupiaq roots. The College offers an Iñupiaq Studies Associate of Arts degree, Iñupiaq Language I & 2 Certificate, and an Iñupiaq Fine Arts Certificate. Course requirements include, but are not limited to Iñupiaq language, Iñupiaq grammar, songs, dances and drumming, drum making, traditional and contemporary skin sewing, carving, Inuit storytelling, North Slope Iñupiaq history, language, and culture, baleen art, and the Iñupiaq Land, Values, and Resources cultural summer camp.

An initiative to encourage staff, faculty, students, and guests to learn and practice Iñupiaq, is the creation of *The Iñupiaq Corner*; a flyer posted monthly around campus. *The Corner* follows the Iñupiaq cultural calendar, which illustrates activities people traditionally engage in during each month. Additional content includes associated Iñupiaq terms highlighting an Iñupiaq value, photos, and an Iñupiaq and English translation of the month's meaning. It is an effective way for people to learn about Barrow and the North Slope communities.



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS AT ILISAĠVIK COLLEGE, ALASKA (continued)

Accreditation Challenges-How to Assess Culture?

Today, there are many challenges; at Iḷisaġvik an important challenge is accreditation. It can be very hard to work within an Indigenous setting, but also have to report to a Western accreditation agency. One contributing factor to this tension is the importance the accreditation process places on quantitative data as evidence of success. The struggle that emerges is how does one quantitatively assess culture? To address this issue, Iḷisaġvik has worked diligently to align the strategic plan with the required core themes. The Board of Trustees has defined student success as students completing courses, programs, obtaining certifications, and taking courses for personal satisfaction. Personal satisfaction includes students taking courses to learn more about language culture and traditions in an effort to become more deeply connected to their cultural roots. That connection is difficult to quantify.

A second challenge is the institutional connection with the community. The concept of education has not previously been a positive force on the North Slope as a result of children having been shipped out to attend school and not able to stay home with their families and communities. A generation ago educational programs did not exist on the North Slope, and higher education has only been a concept since the early 1980s, and an option on the North Slope through Iḷisaġvik College since 1995. Many individuals who hold high positions do not have any higher education, and at times they do not look favorably on the College. Consequently, the younger generation is susceptible to these tensions. However, within the last 20 years, while Iḷisaġvik has been operating on the North Slope, those views have been changing. In addressing this challenge, Iḷisaġvik has been diligent in communications and actions to encourage potential students to the benefits of higher education.

Iḷisaġvik has taken a holistic approach to support student success, which includes creating culturally relevant curriculum, sponsoring events designed to develop cultural competencies in staff, creating a home-like atmosphere for students, and giving visibility to Iṅupiaq culture throughout campus, all evidence for institutional output. By contrast, assessing student achievement is more complex and challenging.

Quantitative data showing completion, persistence, retention, and graduation rates reveal one aspect of institutional effectiveness. However, such quantitative data is not as valuable when attempting to assess cultural identity in students. For example, participation rates at cultural events do not reflect the lens through which Iṅupiaq students view themselves and the world. To that end conducting surveys, convening focus groups, and gathering longitudinal data about students' performance in the workplace and their engagement in the community would be more appropriate and depict a more accurate picture.

Sustainability and Faculty Challenges

Administrative initiatives, such as providing a cultural environment for faculty and staff, travel to the villages, partnerships with other tribal entities are perhaps the easiest to sustain because of the inherent Native leadership of a tribal college and because these initiatives require largely logistical effort and resources. The main threat to sustainability might be lack of funding. Sustaining a culturally relevant curriculum may be more challenging because it depends upon the innovation, vision, and cultural competency of faculty who create cultural curriculum based on their understanding of the culture. Frequently, mainstream curriculum is adapted and augmented to better serve students. Staff turnover could potentially threaten the sustainability of the initiatives.

To address the challenge of finding language and culture teachers, Iḷisaġvik is working on designing an online distance language course that will be available not only for college students but also dual credit students as well. To address a part of this challenge, Iḷisaġvik hired a non-Native instructor not familiar with Iṅupiaq culture or traditions. He brought structure to the course and invited a number of Iṅupiaq guest speakers to share their traditional knowledge and stories. He recorded each speaker's stories to use for future classes; such oral histories might be an option for future classes.

It is evident that by incorporating Iṅupiaq culture, language, values, and traditions into all facets of Iḷisaġvik College, students feel more connected to the institution, more comfortable with education, and passionate about what they are doing for the future of the region. This is student success!

Please note: This story was previously published through the American Indian College Fund.

Iḷisaġvik College (IC) is a public community college in Utqiagvik, Alaska, that offers two-year Associate Degrees and certificates in vocational, academic and workforce development fields. Operated by the North Slope Borough, it is the only tribally-controlled college in Alaska and is the northernmost accredited community college in the U.S. Every program not only models Iṅupiat traditions, values, and culture, but also provides substantial career and employment opportunities in the Arctic as well as elsewhere in Alaska.

IAIA'S HAILEY SUINA RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY IN NEW ZEALAND



By Jesse Short Bull
Oglala Lakota Sioux
Creative Writing Student
Institute of American Arts
Santa Fe, New Mexico



When Hailey Suina submitted an essay to study abroad in New Zealand, she didn't realize that hers would be the one of out of 6,797 applications that would win her a full scholarship from Education New Zealand and Go Overseas to study for a semester in New Zealand, including travel and lodging.

On October 30, 2018, surrounded by family, friends, and members of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) community, Suina was presented with a check for \$15,000 from members of the Education New Zealand and Go Overseas organizations, who traveled from their offices in Berkeley, California, to the IAIA campus in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to make the award in person.

Suina, from the Pueblo of Cochiti and the Navajo Nation, developed a strategy to create a compelling narrative that stood out, but didn't sacrifice her Indigenous culture for personal gain. She worked with Jennifer Love, Assistant Professor in Creative Writing, and an IAIA alumna, to help polish Suina's writing. Love said, "She's always willing to put in that extra effort to make her work strong. She did all the research and follow-up on this application herself."

IAIA'S HAILEY SUINA RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDY IN NEW ZEALAND (continued)

Inspired by Maori culture

Suina always wanted to visit New Zealand since she was little girl, and her resolve was further solidified when her high school had a sister partnership with a high school in New Zealand. “That’s where I was introduced to the culture, the lifestyle and the people,” Suina said.

However, there is a more profound connection that links her Pueblo and Navajo roots to the Indigenous Maori people of New Zealand, almost 7,000 miles away in the Southern Hemisphere.

“Going back to our creation stories, we always look at all Indigenous people from all over the world as coming from one single people at one point in time,” said Suina. As she learned more about the Maori culture, Suina found that the cultural and language revitalization here in New Mexico could be enhanced by learning from the Maori.

Hailey Suina departs for New Zealand in February and plans to stay through the summer. She is currently a senior, and after returning to IAIA to complete her classes, she will graduate with her BFA in creative writing. She will be attending Auckland University of Technology.

IAIA president, Dr. Robert Martin (Cherokee) attended the award ceremony and said Suina represents the strength of the educational experience students receive at IAIA. “We are so proud of her. She came here and worked hard. We have a great creative writing program, and she is a reflection of that.”

This story was edited by Eric Davis, Marketing and Communications Director at the Institute of American Indian Arts. IAIA is a Tribal College located in Santa Fe, New Mexico offering undergraduate degrees in Studio Arts, Creative Writing, Cinematic Arts and Technology, Indigenous Liberal Studies, Museum Studies, and Performing Arts, plus a MFA in Creative Writing along with certificates in Business and Entrepreneurship, Museum Studies, and Native American Art History. IAIA is the only college in the nation dedicated to the study of contemporary Native arts. The school serves 495 full-time equivalent (FTE) Native and non-Native American college students from across the globe. IAIA is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is the only college in New Mexico accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. IAIA’s mission: To empower creativity and leadership in Native arts and cultures through higher education, lifelong learning, and outreach. The artwork below is from IAIA students.



LaShawn Medicine Horn (Yankton Sioux), BFA—Painting – Senior at IAIA.



Mikayla Patton (Oglala Lakota), BFA—Printmaking - Senior at IAIA.

OGLALA LAKOTA STUDENT FINDS STRENGTH IN PERSISTING WITH EDUCATION GOALS



by **Linda Scabby Face**
Oglala Sioux, Pine Ridge Reservation
Oglala Lakota College
Kyle, South Dakota



Linda Scabby Face is working towards a BS in Information Technology.

I am an Oglala Sioux Tribal member from Oglala on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Before I went to school, my life was going in a downward spiral, spinning out of control until I thought of my family and children. I changed my life and views for the better to encourage my children to go to school. It was hard and painful at times. Eventually, my aunt, who was the Director of the White Clay College Center, advised me to get back on my feet and go back to college. Now I am determined to get my Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology.

As a college student I understand the difficulties life throws at us, but I challenge myself to dig deep within myself and focus on every angle of my education to achieve my dreams. My career goal is to work in an environment where I can help a company achieve its goals and objectives while achieving my own personal growth and career development goals. In time, I want to develop my own computer company. Technology is always growing and changing, and so we need to think about future technological advances.

My family and friends continually encourage me to pursue my education because I would be the first in my family to graduate college. It thrills them that I am challenging myself to push forward for the benefit of my children and those around me. I'm proud of what Oglala Lakota College has helped me achieve so far:

- 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Student Senate and Student Organization Senator for White Clay College Center
- 2017-2018 Student Rep/Secretary for White Clay College Center Local Board
- 2017 AIHEC Knowledge Bowl Captain
- and 2016-2018 TRIO Peer Mentor.

I'd like to share some encouraging words that have inspired me. "It's hard to wait around for something you know might never happen, but it's harder to give up when you know it's everything you want."

FORMER OGLALA LAKOTA STUDENT PLANS NURSING CAREER



by **Kristina Iron Cloud**
Former Nursing Student
Oglala Lakota College
Kyle, South Dakota



Kristina Iron Cloud is pictured with her daughters Sienna and Sequoia (in her arms).

My family comes from the Mila Yatapika (Knife Chief) society in Porcupine, South Dakota. Currently, I reside in Rapid City with my two daughters. Growing up on the Pine Ridge Reservation, I developed a planning attitude towards all things big and small. From middle school valedictorian to high school national honor society and Coca-Cola Scholar, I have consistently wanted to 'do my best.' While a senior in high school I earned nine credits in College Algebra, Speech, and Freshman Writing from Oglala Lakota College.

About three years ago I applied for a small business loan from The Lakota Funds and purchased a long arm quilter. This was the beginning of my small business Emilie Elise Quilting. From this venture was my income to support my children and myself while waiting to start Oglala Lakota College's Nursing program. I still create star quilts and have a website: www.eequilting.com.

I made the 90-mile drive from Rapid City to the College for two years for class, and I don't regret a minute of it! Not even a month after my last class, I started my job at Rapid City Regional Health as a Registered Nurse in Progressive Care - Critical Care. I've obtained Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support certifications as well as Advanced Electrocardiogram Interpretation and am registered and studying to take

the Trauma Nursing Core Course within the month. Oglala Lakota College gave me a great start to my career.

Oglala Lakota College is an accredited Tribal College in Kyle, South Dakota. OLC has 1,456 students enrolled part- and full-time and serves the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which has a population of about 26,000 and covers 3,468 square miles in southwestern South Dakota.

CARRIE BILLY, AIHEC CEO, MAINTAINS PERSONAL HISTORY OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO TCUS AND NATIVE AMERICANS



by **Norma Goldstein, PhD.**
Director of GISS and Special Projects
ACCT



Carrie Billie, AIHEC President and CEO, believes in partnerships to keep the organization strong.

As President and CEO, Carrie Billy comes to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) with a great deal of legal and legislative experience. She grew up on the Navajo Reservation near Phoenix, Arizona, until high school and then the White Mountain Apache Reservation. After college at the University of Arizona in Tucson, with a major in journalism, Billy studied corporate tax law and constitutional law at Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, DC, where she received her Juris Doctor degree.

Tax law was Billy's passage to her first job at a corporate law firm in Phoenix, Arizona. "It wasn't satisfying work," she notes, but one of the clients was the Navajo Tribe and the Hopi Land dispute which generated her intense interest in Tribal affairs. "Tax laws at that time were very badly written," Billy says.

Later, she worked as a legislative assistant for the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, a U.S. Senator (1983-2013) and Democrat from New Mexico. There she worked on domestic issues such as health and education for a decade. After that her daughter was born, and in 1996, she started to work part-time for AIHEC as legal counsel.

White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges

In 1993, President Bill Clinton becomes President, and Billy soon became the first Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges. She was well prepared from her legislative experience in New Mexico. "I had worked with a lot of Tribal Colleges with Senator Bingaman. In New Mexico we have all kinds of TCUs. We created legislation with a Congressional charter to set up the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA). Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) was almost out of funds, and we saved them. Navajo Crownpoint Institute of Technology, which eventually became Navajo Technical University, had no authorizing legislation or funding which we later created from Carl Perkins funds." Senator Bingaman did much land grant legislation. In 1994, the Equity in Land-Grant Status Act led to legislation which provided land-grant status to specific Indian colleges and institutions and which authorized appropriations to establish an endowment for these TCUs. "We did all that for the TCUs when working for Jeff. He was a great champion," Billy reflects.

NSF and TCUP

With Carrie Billy at the helm of the White House Initiative, Clinton's White House did even more for TCU development. She worked closely with U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard W. Riley who was supportive of Native efforts. The Domestic Policy Council established the National Science Foundation Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) which provides awards to Tribal Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native-serving institutions, and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions to promote high quality science (including social and behavioral sciences as well as natural sciences), technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, research, and outreach. Support was available to TCUP-eligible institutions for transformative capacity-building projects which brought \$250 million to the TCUs for STEM funding and which established elementary education outreach for teacher and administrator preparation programs.



CARRIE BILLY, AIHEC CEO, MAINTAINS PERSONAL HISTORY OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO TCUS AND NATIVE AMERICANS (continued)

Another program was a TCU construction initiative through Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Billy worked with HUD and the American Indian College Fund (AICF) to get funding from both private and federal funds. The Department of Education and the Department of Defense both helped to support the infrastructure of the TCUs to fund their construction. Earlier, Secretary Riley had established Title III Strengthening Institutions for TCUs. In fact, escorted by Billy and others, Bill Clinton was the first U.S. President to visit a Tribal College, Diné College in Tsaile, Arizona. According to Billy, President Clinton was “so supportive. We did a lot in a small amount of time.”

Partnerships

After the Clinton administration ended, Billy worked on a contract with EDUCAUSE who was in partnership with the Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to build technology in college infrastructure. Billy built on that concept of partnership for AIHEC. “That partnership was instrumental in transforming the TCUs. For me, it underscored the value of partnering with other organizations,” she states. “I don’t need to be an expert. I just need to know where the experts are. We got the best people to work with us.” Partnerships are a core strategy used by AIHEC today.

The impact of AIHEC partnering with EDUCAUSE was immense. EDUCAUSE was dealing with the digital divide in the 1990s. Working with the TCUs – their remoteness and socio-economic issues - was a natural fit. According to Billy, “Today there should not be a digital divide at the TCUs. Yes, in Indian country, but the colleges have been upgraded and therefore serve as real hubs for their Tribal communities.”

President and CEO of AIHEC

After a few years, Billy becomes Deputy Director of AIHEC, and in 2007-2008 becomes its President and CEO. Highlights in her tenure as CEO are many, but a few are cited here.

Financial Stability: First, organizationally, working with the AIHEC Board, Billy restructured the organization to be operationally sustainable. Previously it had a very precarious financial situation. “We have a strong foundation of AIHEC now that can endure. We went from a negative balance to sustainability now in a short time. The organization is more accountable to the Tribal Colleges, funders and the American Indian community,” Billy asserts.

Forward funding: Funding for the TCUs had always been problematic and dependent on appropriations from Congress which could easily be stalled in negotiations. This meant that the TCUs did not know when they would receive funding or even how much. “They were limping along,” states Billy. Working with Labor, AIHEC passed an appropriations bill on time. Advance funding for all TCUs became a priority. It started forward funding in the first year of the Obama administration for most TCUs.

Title I and II smaller schools were funded, but the five schools that were not funded took some time. The last two (two federal schools - Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Polytechnical Institute) received their funding in FY 2018. “If this had not been done right, these colleges with dormitories would have been shut down, sending students and faculty home and later bringing them back when the appropriations came in. Having Forward Funding made it so that the TCUs were not dependent on appropriations and took care of all those issues. Advance funding is critical,” affirms Billy.

AIHEC AIMS: In 2003, with funding from the Lumina Foundation, AIHEC AIMS, a unique database built by the TCUs for the TCUs, was developed. From the AIMS site:

AIHEC’s landmark data collection initiative, American Indian Measures of Success (AIHEC AIMS), was launched in 2004 with generous funding from the Lumina Foundation for Education. The AIHEC AIMS initiative defines measures for TCU success that are relevant to the colleges and their communities.

The AIHEC AIMS data collection instrument, AIMS Key Indicator System (AKIS), was developed based on input from AIHEC, TCUs, accrediting organizations, American Indian College Fund, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and others. AKIS incorporates unique measures of success that are not included in traditional higher education reporting requirements. (<http://www.aihec.org/our-stories/aims.htm>)

CARRIE BILLY, AIHEC CEO, MAINTAINS PERSONAL HISTORY OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO TCUS AND NATIVE AMERICANS (continued)

AIMS allows the TCUs to tell their story through their data. According to Billy, this database was before AACC's Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) and before many of the other educational dashboards and databases that were later developed.

Evaluation Framework: Billy is most proud of the *Indigenous Evaluation Framework: Telling Our Story in Our Place and Time*, AIHEC's Indigenous, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Evaluation Framework Initiative funded by the National Science Foundation. Telling their own story, evaluating their own programs, evaluating indigenous ways of knowing, the *Framework* is a comprehensive affirmation of Indian culture and values as the basis for evaluating American Indian educational institutions. Educational programs are understood within their relationship to place, setting, community and cultural context.

"It makes our programs accountable to our communities. The latest version is 2009, and AIHEC is updating it now," says Billy. "We are moving to establish our own accrediting body to focus on culturally-based higher education. We are seeking to partner with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)."



Looking to the Future

With Carrie Billy at the helm, AIHEC is looking to the future. Goals are many and include reinvesting in the infrastructure of the colleges, equity and strengthening Native American land grant programs. AIHEC plans to strengthen the TCU higher education programs, including assuring that Internet 2 and big research internet systems are upgraded. "We need to upgrade their IT and be competitive, even if remotely located," she states.

Food sovereignty: Billy believes that more equitable funding is needed for land grant programs and that the role of the TCUs in Indian country can be critically important globally. About 75% of Indian country is forested. The country and globe have food sovereignty challenges where the TCUs and Tribes can make a real contribution. "The TCUs have the capacity to be real participants in food, agriculture, natural resources that we face nationally and internationally," Billy states. "The development of crops, irrigation systems--this is an important role we should be doing in the future."

Training College Leaders: AIHEC is also making a big push to continue to train college leaders—college presidents and governing boards. "Our partnership with the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is critical to that effort," says Billy. With funding from the Lumina Foundation to strengthen the leadership of the TCUs, and through the Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS), AIHEC has been partnering with ACCT since 2015 to host national TCU governance institutes across the country. Both ACCT and AIHEC want the training to continue in new and creative ways.

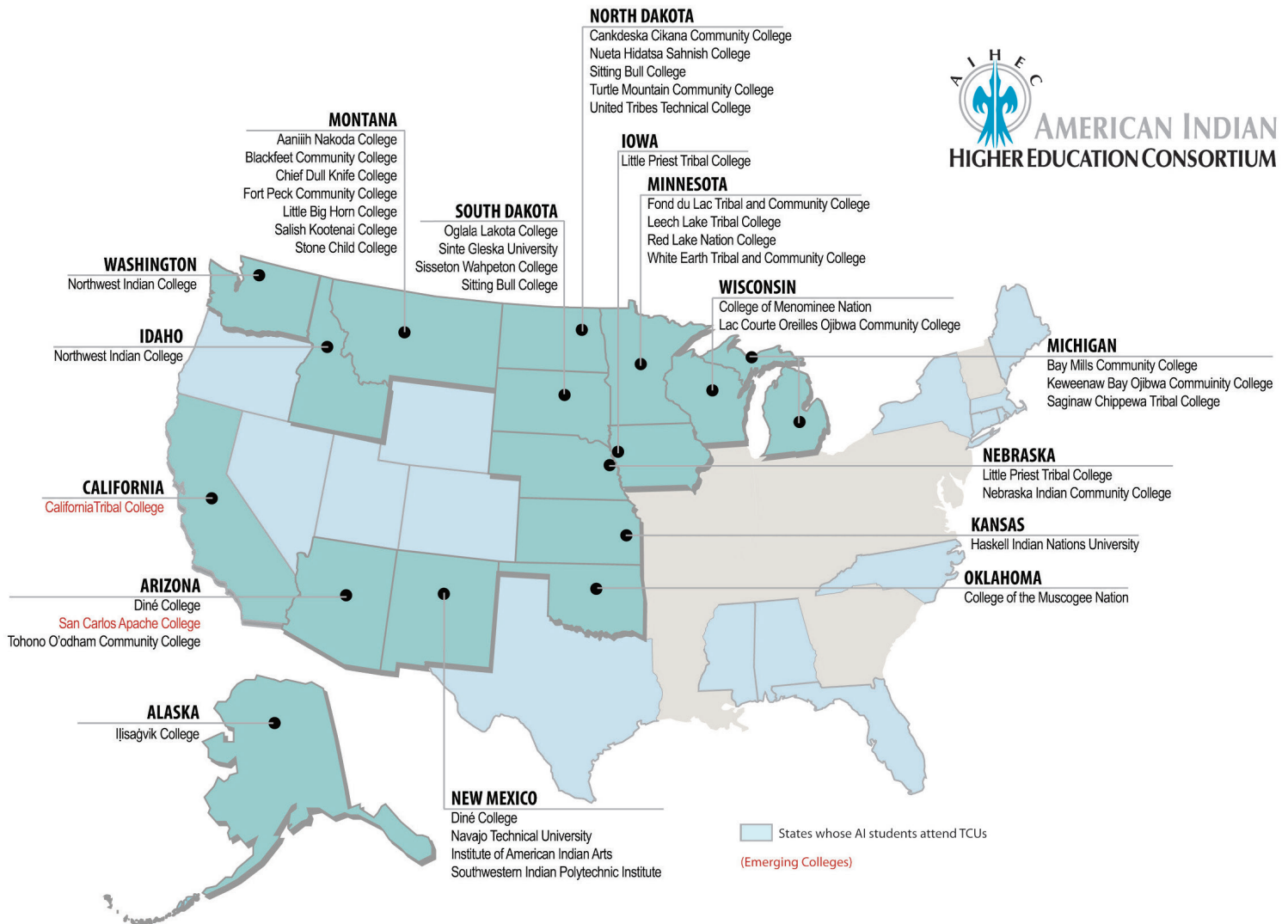
Creating, building and training the next generation of leaders continues. "We are at the edge of our second college movement, almost at the 50-year point," says Billy. AIHEC plans to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2023. "ACCT is a critical part of this leadership effort. We need that training, that opportunity for boards to interact and chart the best practices by district tribes. More work needs to be done."

CARRIE BILLY, AIHEC CEO, MAINTAINS PERSONAL HISTORY OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO TCUS AND NATIVE AMERICANS (continued)

Job Creation

Like many other communities across the country, AIHEC is focused on workforce and economic development for the TCUs. “We are not going to change the socio-economics of Native Americans if we don’t create jobs,” admits Billy. “On this edge of the second cycle, it is most exciting to see the young leadership coming on board. We have eight or nine new presidents, new ideas, lots of energy and new commitments. We have a diverse group of people, some more traditional and some looking at new international opportunities through technology and ways to get involved in new emerging industries.”

ACCT planned this monograph to assess and celebrate the successes of the many TCUs that have participated in the GISS institutes and engaged with the many activities, best practices and ideas that have been generated through them. AIHEC has participated in each one. Billy concludes, “I love to visit the schools and interact with the leaders and the students. I see the change and am encouraged. You can see the difference you are making.” Carrie Billy herself continues to make a meaningful difference.



ATD WORKS TO IMPROVE NATIVE AMERICAN ACADEMIC SUCCESS



by **Cindy Lopez**
Director of Tribal College and University Programs
Achieving the Dream (ATD)

Achieving the Dream™

America's Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are an integral part of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) Network, a group of more than 220 colleges working to help all students—particularly the most underserved—succeed academically, economically, and personally. ATD guides and supports Network colleges in offering students the postsecondary experiences that offer substantial value, including earned credentials, which help to strengthen their communities. As early as 2004, when Achieving the Dream began as an initiative, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (NM) joined the Network. Northwest Indian College (WA), Diné College (AZ), and Salish Kootenai College (MT) joined a few years later. Today, 33 of the 35 accredited TCUs are part of Achieving the Dream's Network.

Joining the ATD Network signifies that a TCU is committed to engaging in bold reforms, often whole-college transformation, to help more of its students cross the finish line. ATD helps TCUs identify and meet their students' needs through a customized coaching process continually informed and improved by research and its longstanding partnerships and practice in the field. These partnerships include the American Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the American Indian College Fund (AICF). ATD also collaborates with Indigenous Education Inc.'s national initiative to improve the collection and visibility of Native American student data.

The Work

The TCUs in ATD's Network are fully engaged in building a culture of evidence to inform their student success work. With ATD's support, TCUs are building their capacity for data-informed decision making so they can tell their story with data. This work includes identifying or hiring staff to produce and analyze data, socializing data among faculty and staff in ways that create urgency and engagement and establishing clear benchmarks and data transparency for selected indicators so everyone in the institution can monitor progress.

TCUs are now leveraging different data sources to help develop a more comprehensive picture of their students' academic experiences, progress and outcomes. They are subscribing to National Student Clearinghouse's services so that they can track the performance of their students over time, benchmark against similar institutions, and facilitate transfers for students who attend TCUs.

The 33 TCUs in ATD are using student survey data to leverage the TCU student voice when considering reforms to the student experience and building systems for data governance. They are establishing metrics to evaluate existing and new student success efforts. Simultaneously, the TCUs are testing or scaling reforms that have proven effective at increasing persistence at other institutions modifying reforms as needed to fit the TCU's culture and history. Given the unique TCU mission of nation building and intimate knowledge of context, TCU administrators and faculty serve as the experts regarding what might work at their institutions and are the drivers of building understanding and momentum for change.

ATD WORKS TO IMPROVE NATIVE AMERICAN ACADEMIC SUCCESS (continued)



2018 DREAM Scholars Kenneth, Lorrain County Community College (OH); Jenae Parker, Columbus State Community College (OH); Elda Pere, Bergen Community College (NJ); Scarlett Cortez, Institute of American Indian Arts (NM); Emery Sutherland, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (NM); Kien Truong, Portland Community College (OR); Mardwina Lasseur, Broward College (FL).



Pow Wow Dancer Stephan WhiteEagle – Southern Cheyenne at ATD DREAM 2018 Conference

Learning and Contributing

To fuel innovation and leverage knowledge, presidents, faculty and other leaders at Tribal Colleges and Universities participate in ATD learning events and convenings, often with special programming developed exclusively for TCUs. Additionally, given some of the focused needs and interests of these unique institutions, TCUs participate in an ATD TCU Student Success Community of Practice—with online and face-to-face engagement—to foster peer learning and networking, help build and sustain momentum for change, and provide opportunity to celebrate success.

TCUs contribute to Network learning through webinars and presentations at ATD's annual DREAM convening, especially on issues concerning student identity, poverty and academic achievement. They have an intimate understanding of the relationship between their Native American students' identity and success, which they use to offer services and develop relationships that contribute to their students' persistence rates. To learn more about equity and TCUs, the author collaborated with colleagues from the AICF identifying *What We Can Learn about Equity from the Tribal Colleges and Universities*.

Moving Forward

In 2018, 126 participants from 33 TCUs attended ATD's largest annual learning event, our DREAM Conference held in Nashville, Tennessee. Representatives from TCUs participated as panelists in all plenary sessions and as presenters in spotlight and concurrent sessions.

Dream Scholars is an ATD student leadership development program that selects exceptional community college students from its Network colleges to participate in a year-long experiential learning program to enhance leadership, critical thinking, and networking skills. These students attend DREAM, have opportunity to share information about their dreams and goals through poems shared during plenary sessions, and participate as panelists during DREAM's final plenary session. Two of the seven 2018 ATD DREAM Scholars, pictured above, were from TCUs.

Even though TCUs work in some of the most challenging contexts, the completion rate of Native American students from high schools located on reservations is higher at TCUs than at mainstream institutions in the United States. Mainstream institutions learn from TCUs about equity, rural education, and how to provide holistic (mind, body, spirit) support to students.



ATD WORKS TO IMPROVE NATIVE AMERICAN ACADEMIC SUCCESS (continued)

Building a Culture of Evidence

TCUs vary widely in terms of available resources—both human and financial—to build data capacity and to carry out reforms. Given TCUs' generally smaller institutional size and often already overstretched faculty and staff, building a culture of evidence, integrating and aligning student success efforts and implementing reforms that help improve student outcomes all take time and a sustained commitment. While resources are important, leadership plays one of the most critical roles for creating and sustaining the urgency for change among faculty and staff and for enabling progress. Presidents and other key institutional leaders can guide the pace, depth and institutionalization of reforms and create support for change.

Serving a resilient population

Improving student outcomes takes multiple reform strategies, innovation, and persistence. Progress is not linear. Setbacks require study, and reforms often need tweaking. The process of garnering support for and implementing reforms may also be more complex at TCUs due to the legacy of educational colonialism, the extremely rural location of many of the institutions, and the poverty of a majority of their students. While these are significant challenges, they are not insurmountable and merit a steadfast commitment from the higher education community.

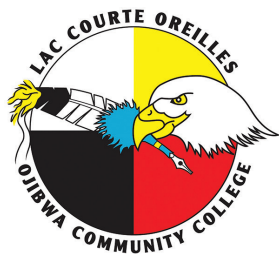
In a beautiful and humbling letter addressed to ATD's President and CEO, Dr. Karen A. Stout in 2018, Dr. Twyla Baker, president of Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (ND), expressed her appreciation and excitement for her college's reform work and engagement with ATD. She said,

"It is amazing how much we have learned and how far we have progressed, thanks to Achieving the Dream and our ATD coaches! The knowledge, expertise and skills that our ATD Coaches utilize in our planning, training and discussions, the wraparound resources, and the continual, helpful outreach efforts truly afford NHSC students, faculty and staff the opportunity to "achieve our dream!"

In 2018, the 33 TCUs in the ATD Network identified data-informed priority areas on which they will focus over the next few years and are making progress in these areas. Implementing reforms in any institution of higher education is an iterative process that takes time and requires monitoring and adjustments to maximize impact. TCU urgency to improve student livelihoods and build Native Nations will help sustain momentum for this work. Achieving the Dream's support will help institutionalize change.

LAC COURTE OREILLES OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE USES DATA FOR A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT PROFILE

Geshki'ewiziwi-gikinoo'amaagozijig



by Amber Marlow, Dean of Continuing Education,
Dr. Annette Roberts, Dean of Institutional Research &
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Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College
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Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC) was chartered by the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Governing Board in 1982. The mission of the College is to provide Anishinaabe communities with postsecondary and continuing education while advancing the language, culture, and history of the Ojibwa. The College offers 10 associate degree programs and eight certificates. Located in northwest Wisconsin, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College serves additional tribal communities of Bad River, Lac du Flambeau, Red Cliff, and St. Croix through outreach sites.

“The College infuses Ojibwe culture in its innovative and resourceful approach to education,” stated James Schlender, LCOOCC Board of Regents Vice-Chair. This article is about the College’s use of data to promote student success.

SENSE Tool

The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) is a tool that asks students to reflect on their earliest experiences (academic and services-related) with the College. The following are the six SENSE benchmarks for the 2017 Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College Freshmen:

- Early Connections
- High Expectations and Aspirations
- Clear Academic Plan and Pathway
- Effective Track to College Readiness
- Engaged Learning
- Academic and Social Support Network

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College ranks above the SENSE Cohort, 266 institutions from 41 states and the District of Columbia, in five of the six categories measured.

Student satisfaction is only one component; data has become a key driver in improving the College’s retention and degree completion rates. To that end, we looked at the 10 courses with the highest enrollment in the 2017-2018 academic year. As the College concentrates on strategically increasing student support in these classes, in turn, we will increase the student success rate, thereby increasing overall retention and degree completion.

LAC COURTE OREILLES OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE USES DATA FOR A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT PROFILE (continued)

TOP 10 ENROLLED CLASSES WITH BREAKDOWNS BY CLASSES 2017-2018

(Please note: A-C represents passing grades for successful completion. Listed are the 10 most populated courses offered.)

	Total Enrollment	A-C	A-C Rate	A-C Rate		A-C Rate		A-C Rate	
				Female	Male	Native	Non-Native	Full-time	Part-time
EDC 110	88	47	53%	72%	28%	81%	19%	74%	26%
ENG 108	80	47	59%	66%	34%	74%	26%	83%	17%
NAS 100	73	38	52%	82%	18%	63%	37%	50%	50%
CPS 101	63	35	56%	69%	31%	80%	20%	77%	23%
MTH 113	58	31	53%	65%	35%	71%	29%	74%	26%
ENG 112	55	34	62%	82%	18%	79%	21%	68%	32%
ENG 109	53	22	42%	64%	36%	59%	41%	82%	18%
SOC 111	42	10	24%	80%	20%	80%	20%	90%	10%
MTH 146	36	26	72%	77%	23%	73%	27%	73%	27%
SCI 102	35	18	51%	83%	17%	67%	33%	89%	11%
Average			52%	74%	26%	73%	27%	76%	24%

BREAKDOWN OF FEMALE/MALE AND NATIVE/NON-NATIVE SUCCESS RATES 2017-2018

	A-C		Interpretation		A-C		Interpretation
	Full-time	Part-time			Full-time	Part-time	
Females n = 404	Native	116 29%	70% of the full-time, Native, female students enrolled in these courses were successful.	Males n = 179	Native	53 30%	88% of the full-time, Native, male students enrolled in these courses were successful.
		50 12%				7 4%	
	Non-Native	42 10%	71% of the full-time, non-Native, female students enrolled in these courses were successful.		Non-Native	17 9%	74% of the full-time, non-Native, male students enrolled in these courses were successful.
		17 4%				6 3%	



LAC COURTE OREILLES OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE USES DATA FOR A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT PROFILE (continued)

Summary

According to LCOOCC's institutional researchers, "This data tells us where we need to increase support. As we increase the success of students enrolled in these courses, we will increase student success overall, increase retention, and thereby increase enrollment." From this data, we determined that Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College's average successful full-time student is –

- A Native American female who is approximately 32 years old,
- Takes 14 credits per semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.04, and
- Majors in Business, Liberal Arts, or Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Impact of this information

Understanding the data of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College's average successful student assists the College in planning strategically and appropriately for recruitment efforts, marketing strategies, and student support programs. The data have also assisted in creating an action plan for the College's participation in Achieving the Dream (ATD), a comprehensive non-governmental national reform movement for student success. ATD has worked with LCOOCC to identify targeted priorities:

- Increase student participation in services and activities while decreasing the number of students who withdraw within the first four weeks of each term; and
- Increase the course completion rates from 60% to 65% by 2021 through implementation of planned academic and student support strategies.

"As we move forward, institutional research will provide the College with the evidence we need to make data-driven decisions to best serve our students in meeting their educational goals," says Dr. Russell Swagger, President of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College.

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College is a liberal arts Tribal Community College for the Hayward, Wisconsin, area. The college is one of two Tribal Colleges in the state of Wisconsin. Enrollment averages 350 students. LCOOCC has a main campus in Hayward, and the LCOOCC mission is to provide Anishinaabe communities with postsecondary and continuing education while advancing the language, culture, and history of the Ojibwa.

CHECKING IN ON TCU ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2018 GISS PROGRESS CHECKS



A total of five GISS-TCU institutes were held across the country since 2015: San Diego, CA (2015); New Orleans (2016); Orlando, Florida (2017); Bismarck, North Dakota (2018); and Chandler, Arizona (2018). At each institute, as an annual “progress check,” participating Tribal Colleges and Universities are asked to identify their accomplishments and progress since the last year or the last GISS-TCU attended. (See related stories on GISS-TCU institute summaries.)

GISS institutes focus on healthy board functioning, data-informed governance, and sharing best practices. As reported by the respective colleges at the 2018 GISS in Arizona, the chart below is a synopsis of interventions and strategies related to student success that have proven effective, new polices that TCU governing boards have adopted, specific ways boards and presidents have been effective to increase student success, and examples of boards using data to make decisions and policies. The following is a sampling of college responses (verbatim) from the last GISS-TCU institute in December 2018 in Arizona.

2018 Progress Check – GISS-TCU- Chandler, Arizona	
1. What has been accomplished since last year or since the last GISS you attended? What interventions and practices related to student success have been proven effective?	
Diné College, Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refined our onboarding training for new regents • Scheduled a Board orientation with more focus on students and student success • Set up a one-stop shop for student services • Personalized student relations • Minimized obstacles for student admission and class enrollment • Implemented Board assessments and Board goals • Audit to zero findings
Chief Dull Knife College, Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand my role as chairman of the Board. • More communication with staff, Board, and President • We use more data for the Board and the College. We joined the Achieving the Dream initiative which has helped the staff focus on student success. • We established a new Office of Development. • Strategic plan: 7 objectives, including assuring the culture is integrated in all curricula including STEM
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly hired president • New board member • New process for decolonizing teaching and learning • Changing classroom instruction • New Arts & Agriculture building-processing wild rice, deer
Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired a president • Added/”seated” a male and female elder (non-voting) to the Board • Placed eagle staff outside college two years ago and colors added to staff and replaced eagle feathers • Budget formulation • Budgeting for student transportation • Monthly board meetings • Purify the entire campus at least annually

CHECKING IN ON TCU ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2018 GISS PROGRESS CHECKS (continued)

Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration and communication across the organization • Improved College finances. Stabilized finances and moved off cash monitoring • Monitoring of student grades; adopted intervention action plans to address students not doing well • Brought on a counseling program to help support students • Require each student to have a student success plan and financial aid success plan
Red Lake Nation College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Tribal College has attained candidacy status for accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. • Providing more tutors and advisors to assist the student • Started a student support program • AIHEC did a site visit, and we had no checkmarks in our program. • We are constantly doing improvement checks. • Helping students that fall behind to catch up • Ongoing training reinforces what colleges is doing right: focus on data and maintain an awareness of key higher education issues
2. What new polices has your Board adopted this past year?	
Diné College, Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalizing Code of Conduct for Board members. • Revised charter and bylaws • Presidential evaluation • Board self-assessment (introduced by GISS) • Implemented and revised IT policy and manual; comprehensive technology policy and personnel policy • Established a College Foundation • Student recruitment • Onboarding orientation for new Board members • Distance Learning
Chief Dull Knife College, Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising and adding policies to our Board policies • Having reports made by each department to the Board • The Board allows the administration and faculty to institute programs that lead to student success.
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New course in partnership with mainstream university • Sharing best practices, journeys, etc. • Professional development • Cultural integration/ grounding
Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moratorium of terminating employees based on Minnesota “at will.” We developed our own “at will” policy. • Focus on developing a stronger working relationship between the President and the Board • Enacting and enforcing Higher Learning Commission actions
Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowered number of credits to graduate in certain degree programs • Made changes to the number of credits accepted when a student transfers to the College • Accepted letter grade of “D” for some transfer credits • Require students take Student Success course
Red Lake Nation College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Harassment Prevention policy • Conflict of Interest policy • We completed all the policies required by AIHEC for accreditation.

CHECKING IN ON TCU ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2018 GISS PROGRESS CHECKS (continued)

3. In what specific ways have you strengthened Board and President effectiveness to increase student success?	
Diné College, Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic planning in plan with percentage of progress • Board orientation focus on students • Created an orientation packet for new regents • Board self-assessment • Presidential evaluation • Organizational assessment via data • Researching best practices • Feedback to Chair of the Board • Transparency among Board members • Created and refined goals for the President and the College • Intentional about strengthening the relationship between the Board and President • Fundraising for College Foundation • Chair leadership with feedback on a weekly meeting
Chief Dull Knife College, Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff reports to Board on student success topics • Promoted student involvement with Student Senate • Met with College counsel. In process of developing/updating Board policies.
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board took the leadership in hiring a new president. • The Board was the deciding factor instead of accepting previous succession hires.
Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the GISS teambuilding exercises • Planning a possible Board retreat • Asking the president to give weekly reports to the Board • Getting reports <i>prior to</i> the Board meetings • Communication between the President and the Board Chair has been strengthened. • The Board has listed the things to be accomplished and its goals. • Student-oriented programs
Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased communication efforts • Increased Board inclusion efforts as part of the planning process • Completed Presidential Evaluation using a 360-feedback process • Sent Board and President to GISS training for better understanding of their respective roles • Using data to make decisions
Red Lake Nation College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the President to make decisions with his administrative team without micromanaging • We talk about accountability and have new policies to ensure programs that are effective. • Backing the President with his ideas • Engage in college activities for students—attend and speak at graduation and other events

CHECKING IN ON TCU ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2018 GISS PROGRESS CHECKS (continued)

4. Is your Board using data to make decisions? Which indicators of student progress and completion are you using?	
Diné College, Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data indicated safety was an issue; provided safety trainings for everyone. • Installed blue lights around campus • Identified via data that we have a high number of students with debt. • Established a Foundation for student scholarships to help • Strategic Plan made decisions, i.e. student scholarships
Chief Dull Knife College, Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board gave the leeway to student services to use data from students. • Data derived from numbers provided by Student Services
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation rates • We learned not to focus too much on incoming numbers. • We will use more indicators in the future to be more effective and increase enrollment.
Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are attempting to use more data, but it is hard to retrieve at times. We requested budgetary data and student retention and graduation data on a monthly basis. • Data is something that is still being worked on. We are hoping to bring in more students by offering other avenues of education such as trade employment. • We hope to move into actually developing student success at the Board level and community level.
Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, as more data are collected, analyzed and reported, but we need to do more in this area. • We are establishing an Institutional Research Office soon. • Reviewing course catalog, transfers • Speeding up matriculation process • Every student must have student success plan and financial plan
Red Lake Nation College, Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a dashboard about student success. • Student success rate identified • Strategies for retention and persistence • Pay closer attention to the students that go on to a four-year college and students who are having hardship and what can be done to help. • Where students succeed • New objectives for each classroom/course • Yes, the VP of Academic Affairs and the Assessment Coordinator provide status reports to the Board periodically.

Progress reports show transformations

Such responses indicate the success of the Governance for Student Success institutes' focus on using data to inform policy making. Comments from the TCUs cited above indicate fairly strong transformations toward a more transparent and more collegial relationship between college presidents and their boards. Clearly indicated, too, is the Board emphasis on student success. Student success and success data have become the Board's main business.

CREATING A COMMUNITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

MIINO-OZHIGAAGE GIINKINOMAAGANEG

(S/He builds a good place for our students)



by Carla Sineway
President
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

It is important that the student success effort at Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (SCTC) is supported at all levels, including the governing board, college administration, student services and in the classroom. This is accomplished through policy, staff support, encouragement and professional development.

As with many community colleges and Tribal Colleges across the country, an area of great concern at SCTC is the completion rates of college-level English and college-level math courses. The data indicate that, while persistence has remained steady for the most part, the number of students successfully completing both college-level English and college-level math courses in their initial year is well below a threshold that would indicate timely, continued persistence toward completing a degree program. Of the 154 students in cohort years 2013-2017, only three (6%) students completed both college-level courses in their initial year.

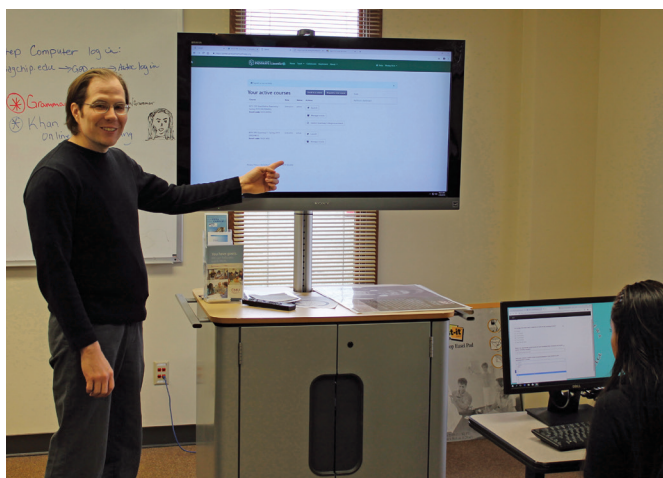
Using Data to Gain Insight on Students

Among these same students, 87 (56%) persisted from year one to year two. Students who persisted from their initial year to their second year earned an average of 16.5 credits at the conclusion of their first year. This implies that, on average, these students would need nearly four (3.75) years to complete the requisite 62 credits needed to earn an associate's degree.

From this data, with the support of the SCTC Board of Regents, the administration and faculty came together to discuss the direction that would best promote student success. The group considered the following issues and conclusions:

- The completion of college-level mathematics is a well-known barrier to persistence. Many students require developmental-level coursework, adding to their time-to-completion challenges.
- The completion of college-level coursework in English, despite having not been viewed (institutionally) as ubiquitous a barrier to persistence as mathematics, appears as an equal challenge to persistence and time-to-completion.
- Across the aggregate, the average SCTC student is highly likely to require at least one developmental-level course in the topical areas above. Developmental courses impact time-to-completion and likeliness to persist.
- Institutionally, SCTC would benefit highly from instituting a program or programs aimed at assisting students toward earning college-level credit in math and English in their first year.
- There is a need to identify early indicators of student success and persistence and to engage students at these momentum points in order to encourage persistence.

CREATING A COMMUNITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS MIINO-OZHIGAAGE GIINKINOMAAGANEG (continued)



Saginaw Chippewa instructor, Dr. Wesley Rich, gives pointers on GED Preparation and access for students on their course schedules.



Math Professor Earle Crosswait, an Academic Skills Specialist at Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, engages students through media in a computer lab setting.

Implemented Changes

English: From these conclusions, SCTC implemented the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) model for English courses. The ALP students placing at the developmental level would register for college-level coursework with a co-requisite lab featuring supplemental instruction. This enables them to earn college-level credit without an additional semester of developmental coursework.

Math: For math, the Quantway/Statway Model-Method of preparatory instruction developed by the Carnegie Institute aimed at completion of college-level mathematics for students pursuing the quantitative analysis and statistics tracks would be implemented.

Best practices: In addition, we implemented the identification and tracking of 'early indicators' at the course level to inform Early Alert and Intrusive Advising initiatives.

There are many aspects to student success. The Board of Regents, administration, staff, faculty, and students all participate in this effort. Being a small Tribal College gives us the flexibility to implement new initiatives. Additionally, it affords easy access to data that will enable modifications and adjustments to continue to promote student success. It's exciting to be able to participate in programing that is supported from the top down for our students.

Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (SCTC) is located in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. The establishment of Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College in 1998 in the Union Township was an important step in an educational empowerment process that seeks to preserve and maintain the Saginaw Chippewa tribal culture. With approximately 150 students, the college strives to provide a quality learning experience and environment designed to sustain the cultural continuity of the Tribe from past to future generations. SCTC is a public community college that provides educational opportunities reflecting Anishinaabe values.

TOHONO O'ODHAM KEKEL HA MAŞCAMACUĐ

2018 Student of the Year – Diana Antone



by Ben Jose, Research Assistant
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Tohono O'odham Community College
Sells, Arizona



Diana Antone was student speaker at Tohono O'odham's May 2018 Commencement.

Diana Antone, a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation, is a single mom to five children who reside on the Tohono O'odham Nation in Southern Arizona. Antone completed the AAS degree in Early Childhood Education in May 2018 and is currently finishing up a second degree in Liberal Arts at Tohono O'odham Community College (TOCC).

Antone was selected as TOCC's Student of the Year for 2018. In her Commencement address, she spoke about connecting with the younger generation. "Pay attention to the little ones," she says. "Take care in introducing the world to children—how you see the world, they'll come to see it that way, too." As TOCC's Student of the Year, Antone was honored at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Student Conference in Bismarck, North Dakota, where she received a scholarship from the American Indian College Fund.

Today, Diana Antone works part-time as a student intern in the college's Student Success Center. She shares that her experiences have enabled her to communicate as a peer mentor, assisting students to overcome their challenges. She helps students find direction and support. Members of the TOCC community have spoken highly

of Antone as a welcome asset to the College.

In her community, she shares that her TOCC education has opened up a different side to life. She is more involved in the needs of the community and takes the effort to make positive changes needed to maintain wellness. She is a firm believer that her role is to care for the community environment and to educate the young by allowing them to discover life and express themselves in a positive, healthy way.

In spring 2019, Antone will start her Bachelor's program of study in two areas, Early Childhood Education and the Early Childhood Special Education programs at Prescott College, a private liberal arts college in Prescott, AZ. Her plan is to complete the online program through Prescott and acquire a position as a teacher with the Tohono O'odham Nation's Head Start program. Antone says that her journey is all about sharing the knowledge and skills she gains through higher education with the future of the Tohono O'odham Nation. In the end, she would like to make a positive impact in the lives of young children.

Tohono O'odham Community College is a regionally accredited, publicly supported Community College in Sells, Arizona. TOCC's student body is 88% American Indian/Alaskan Native. Tohono O'odham Community College serves over 216 students.

Tohono O'odham Community College, the southernmost tribal college in the United States. TOCC is in the heart of the great Sonoran Desert, home to the Tohono O'odham (Desert People). Like its 36 sister colleges in the tribal college movement, TOCC provides quality "mainstream education" plus an experience rich in culture, language, and tradition. TOCC offers open enrollment, meaning that all are welcome, and it offers students on and off the Tohono O'odham Nation the opportunity to earn accredited certificates and degrees that are fully transferable to four-year colleges and universities.



DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS

In the past two years of GISS-TCU institutes, 2017 and 2018, AIHEC's Research and Policy Associate, Katherine Cardell, has provided the participating Tribal Colleges with detailed data reports regarding the following data points:

- Retention from fall to fall,
- Successful completion of developmental mathematics
- Successful completion of developmental writing/composition
- Successful completion of academic core mathematics
- Successful completion of academic core English Composition
- Successful completion of academic core Native American Studies

The last indicator is the most unique from other two-year colleges and is one of the most relevant. Sustaining their cultural heritage and language is most important to the TCUs and essential in the academic core of Native American education.

During the colleges' review of their respective data at the TCU GISSs, two questions were posed to the participating Tribal Colleges to provoke analysis and data-informed decision making:

- What does your data say to you?
- How do you respond?

These questions were intended to help the board members and college leaders to use student data and data-informed governance to solve problems and develop solutions. What story does the data reveal? Reviewing such data in an institute focused on best practices allows participants to integrate their learnings at the GISS with colleagues from other TCUs around the country.

Primary concerns

The next five pages chart a series of important data points that the Tribal Colleges identified in their efforts to focus on student success. The chart also indicates an array of possible solutions, both in board policies and college practices.

As with other college leaders and boards, primary concerns are student progress in math, both developmental math and college-level math. Other issues, cited in order of magnitude of concern, include retention, particularly of first-time students. (At the GISS-TCU institutes in 2018), at least 10 TCUs noted the relationship between low math pass rates and retaining students.) In addition, completion of English composition, the discrepancy between male and female completion rates, and completion in general were the next level of concern. Enrollment and lacking sufficient data were also issues for a few colleges.

DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS (continued)

Primary solutions

The Tribal Colleges offered a number of promising practices and board policies to counter their concerns. Among the suggested solutions are the following:

- Identifying the causes, the obstacles and barriers as well as the strategies that work best
- Surveying and talking more with students systematically
- Providing more financial aid and emergency aid to retain students
- Increasing student support services such as tutoring, writing and math labs, student study groups and peer mentoring
- Making stronger connections with the high school (re: math curriculum) and the community

Many suggested different math pathways, new teaching strategies and more faculty with diversified teaching portfolios, particularly in math.

Policy Solutions

Board members at the GISS-TCU institutes identified the following policies as potential solutions:

- Implementing an Early Alert system
- Declaring a major earlier
- Establishing a writing lab
- Establishing an emergency aid program
- Conducting annual surveys of students
- Doing a gap analysis to identify achievement gaps.

Below is a chart of some of the actual responses collected in 2017 and 2018 at the GISS. Participants were asked to choose two different data points and identify the problems, possible solutions and the policy/action and resources needed by the college to promote change for improvement. Comments are verbatim.

What does your data say, and How do you respond?					
COLLEGE	DATA POINT	PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	POLICY/PRACTICE NEEDED	RESOURCES NEEDED
Candeska Cikana Community College (ND)	Math successful completion in 2015-2016 (38%) to 72% in 2016-2017	Not a problem but what are we doing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the work and processes involved • Reward, acknowledge the good work 	Identify what we are doing differently to get such high improvement	Board/College acknowledgement of progress
	Decline in successful completion for English Composition	Steady decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify the decline to the college • Investigate what we are not doing 	Identify what we can be doing differently to get progress and improvement	
Diné College (AZ)	Developmental math completion rate compared to other two-year TCUs	Flatlining on success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-paced math tutoring • New teaching strategy - Carnegie method 	Assessment with demographics to formulate a plan to address decline	Data, surveys
	Retention of first-time evening students	Non-existing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing Early Alert system • Declare major earlier 	Evaluate prerequisites to reassess career interests for students	Trend data

DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS (continued)

What does your data say, and How do you respond?					
COLLEGE	DATA POINT	PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	POLICY/PRACTICE NEEDED	RESOURCES NEEDED
College of the Muscogee Nation (OK)	Females score higher than males on all data points for academic core English Composition	Raising the scores of male students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage male and female students to attend the learning center for tutoring Develop a writing lab 	Writing lab and assistance should be available to all CMN students	Computers, writing software, writing tutors and instructors
	Percent of students completing college math	Increase academic core math success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math faculty with different math curriculum to teach Math tutoring by students (team peer approach) 	Organize a math support group including a math club to assist students needing tutoring.	Math software, tutoring assistants
Fort Peck Community College (MT)	Cohort 2012 is missing data	No data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide data Don't leave data empty 	Make sure that data is taken and properly recorded	Process/office to record data properly and fully
	Keep retention rate	Bring students back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify why students do not return Get more faculty 	Conduct a scholarship drive to provide emergency aid to students	More faculty and advisors
	Recruitment	Need more students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit from local high schools Community involvement 	Hire a person to do recruitment only	Human Resource development
Institute of American Indian Arts (NM)	Native American Studies male completion drop from 81% to 33% in 2015 to 2016	Completion rate less than in all other areas. Also, heavy writing and research component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer tutors Plan B if peer tutors not available 	Increased academic support for males in particular	Funding for tutors
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (MI)	Successful completion in college math	Steadily decreasing success rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research staff turnover in the department Hiring instructors able to teach in different ways such as visually, hands-on Review high school math preparation courses to assure students are better prepared Should we consider Statway math? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve faculty hiring and teaching methods Provide professional development for faculty and staff Unite with the high schools for better math preparation Find more effective class presentation methods Make this an integral focus of the Board and College 	Teaching expertise, money for professional development
	Retention of first-time entering students	Lack of graduates in 2014/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assure accuracy of data being entered Are we providing support for students to stay? Are we proactive ensuring students do not struggle? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have President review accuracy of submitted data Advisors are connected with students before next semester Follow up if student is missing or does not sign up 	<p>Data Review processes</p> <p>Mentors that bond!</p>

DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS (continued)

What does your data say, and How do you respond?					
COLLEGE	DATA POINT	PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	POLICY/PRACTICE NEEDED	RESOURCES NEEDED
Leech Lake Tribal College (MN)	2015 retention rate is 3 percentage points lower than other two-year colleges	60% of students did not return in Fall 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit students who did not return Require participation in one event/activity for first-year classes Provide student support to students with barriers Identify the obstacles and work on out-of-the-box initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a retention policy Regular meetings with student counselors/instructors for first-year students 	Financial support Staff
	Male successful completion of English Composition was 64.5% vs 82.8% for women in 2015-16.	Achievement gap between men and women in college English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review individual students and what caused the difference Provide tutors for men 	Increase student support services	Time and money to increase human resources
	Rates of completion in developmental math	Success rates of males as compared to females	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change teaching methods Ask students why they are not succeeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop support systems, class schedules and assistance that reflect student needs Look at student graduation GED, how long out of school 	Time and effort
Little Big Horn College (MT)	Non-Native successful completion of math and English vs Native completion of these courses	Math and English gaps between Native and non-Native students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop methods to compare/contrast these populations equally Assign tutoring 	Institutional research Keep them working	Data, analysis
	Successful completion of math, developmental and academic core	Less than 50% are successful; Females succeed more than males	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek alternative applications: Ed Ready, etc. Establish study groups 	Gain faculty buy-in for changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$\$, software, faculty professional development
	First-year entering student retention	Decreasing rates of returning students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting Early detection of struggling students Identify needs of a younger population Student Services needs to get more involved with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring more advisors Providing more student supports Strengthen tutoring and mentoring programs Have more focused retention activities Get students involved in more activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for more advisors and staff people More training Involve students in student and community services

DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS (continued)

What does your data say, and How do you respond?					
COLLEGE	DATA POINT	PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	POLICY/PRACTICE NEEDED	RESOURCES NEEDED
Little Priest Tribal College (NE)	Retention of first-time entering students	Low percentage of returning students in the following fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify causes and develop and implement new strategies • Meeting with their students and get reasons why they left and did not return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gap Analysis – Strategy development and implementation – Talking and surveying stakeholders, students, staff and faculty – Increase student engagement activities, plus supports 	Combination of physical, financial, technology and human resources
	Core math and English outcomes overall and the discrepancy between success rates of males and females	Appears that overall performance is peaks and valleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify causation through a Gap Analysis • Meet with students to get their views 	Same as above	Combination of physical, financial, technology and human resources
Navajo Technical University (NM)	Math, English, Developmental Math and Writing	Continue to make goal progress to 100% completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with assessments among students and staff to increase success • Base decision making on data. • Continue to use data for improving student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase student support hours before and after class – Develop strong recruitment strategies with public and local high schools 	Increase student support.
Nebraska Indian Community College (NE)	Low persistence and retention rates	Retaining students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of high school students in college vs those who enroll and persist 	Need current data closer to real-time to make meaningful decisions	More current data
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (ND)	Successful completion of English Composition	Lower completion rates and completeness and quality of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school scores to assess readiness for entering students • Motivation: writing competitions, etc. • Writing Across the Curriculum • Practical examples of technical writing 	Analyze the data and ensure quality of the data	Institutional Research Office/person Funding for support for composition students
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (MT)	Low percentage of success in developmental math and English	Developmental Math rates below average. Gap in education, i.e. the age of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the delivery of curriculum • Modify the curriculum; mesh developmental math or English within a college credit class • Quantway and Statway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Co-requisite math and English instruction – Provide more student support and tutoring – Achieving the Dream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Resources for tutoring students – Faculty professional development
	First-year retention	Low retention rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out why through a survey and what works • Tutoring • Drop-in support/tutoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annual survey of students – Exit survey to gather information about why they did or did not return 	Surveys

DATA REVIEWS AT GISS-TCU INSTITUTES PROVIDE TIME FOR REFLECTION, ANALYSIS AND POLICY ACTION PLANS (continued)

What does your data say, and How do you respond?					
COLLEGE	DATA POINT	PROBLEM	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	POLICY/PRACTICE NEEDED	RESOURCES NEEDED
Salish Kootenai College (MT)	Low math scores in the academic core; low developmental math completion rates	Low math scores—50% completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation at different levels • Identify which students are nontraditional • Quantway/Statway implementation • Lab requirement 	Institutional and board review of student cohort data We have lab and other math strategies in place for fall 2018.	Registrar
	First-year retention	Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out why students did or did not return through exit surveys or other surveys 	Implement annual surveys	Regular assessment
	Remedial skills instruction is expensive for progress attainment	College readiness for making change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-requisite remediation 	– Redesign developmental math and English teaching – Provide professional development for faculty, staff and students	Faculty professional development
Sitting Bull College (ND)	Enrollment data	Only one non-Native in the data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop promotional activities 	Organize a comprehensive marketing campaign	Public relations
	Math and English completion rates	Underprepared students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to competency-based math • Link developmental English with College English 	Purchased laptops for students – how to get financial aid to cover the cost	Professional development; more faculty methods;
Tohono O’odham Community College (AZ)	Retention of first-time returning students	Low retention rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More financial aid • Advertise Pell • Enhance advising, enrolling process 	Develop a comprehensive advising, mentoring and support program	Need an institutional team to develop and carry out the above
United Tribes Technical College (ND)	English Composition success rates	Cultural competency: Biased testing through process -ignores Native language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental courses • Attendance requirements 	– Policy to implement developmental courses – Cultural competency—our culture and majority society	Literature review Need more data and analysis

Do You Remember ...your last board retreat?

If it's been more than a few years, you probably have work to do.

An annual board retreat can support team building, strategic planning, and good governance.

Community college governing boards are increasingly being held accountable for the success of the institution and its students. ACCT's Retreat & Workshop Services are designed to help trustees effectively carry out their responsibilities in an increasingly complex and litigious world. ACCT is committed to assisting boards by enhancing their capability to provide effective lay governance and leadership to strengthen the capacity of community colleges to achieve their mission on behalf of their communities.

Retreats can strengthen communication and understanding among board members, which can lead to a stronger, more effective working group. When a board engages in training and professional development, it is also a model for the rest of the institution.

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Our service derives its strength and uniqueness from the following:

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- A 35-year history of outstanding and recognized service to boards of trustees in colleges and districts throughout the United States and abroad.
- A range of board retreat and consultative services that set the stage for long-term success.
- A range of services that can be customized to a board's exact needs.
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Classic Topics

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- Strengthening the Board/President Relationship
- How to Implement Policy Governance
- Board Ethics and Standards of Good Practice
- Board Planning and Goal Setting
- The Role of the Board in Strategic Planning
- The Role of the Board in the Accreditation Process
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution
- The Board's Role in Advocacy
- The Board's Role in Fundraising
- New President Transition
- New Trustee Orientation
- Board Self-Assessment and Presidential Evaluation

For more information or to schedule a retreat, contact Colleen Allen at
callen@acct.org / 202.775.6490.

UTTC HOSTS FUNDRAISING SUMMIT & TRADE SHOW: LEADERSHIP EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION



UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

by Liza Azure, Ph.D.
Vice President of Academic Affairs &
Leander R. McDonald, Ph.D., President
United Tribes Technical College
Bismarck, North Dakota



United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) has developed a national model of a dynamic community builder and fundraiser. The Tribal Events Week begins with the United Tribes Tribal Leaders Summit and Trade Show followed by the Legends Softball Tournament, UTTC Golf Tournament, Thunderbird Run, Youth Basketball Tournament, and ends with the UTTC International Powwow. The week-long annual event is held at the Bismarck Event Center in downtown Bismarck, North Dakota, a few miles from the UTTC campus.

All profits from the Events Week are dedicated to assisting students through educational scholarships. According to UTTC President, Dr. Leander McDonald, the Events Week ended with a \$58,000 profit that will be split between the Spring 2019 and Fall 2019 semesters. “Seventy percent (70%) of our student population are Pell grant-eligible and first-generation students; thus, these funds are critical to ensuring they have enough funds to complete their education.”

GISS-TCU institute Held During Summit

The Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) attended the Tribal Leaders Summit as a sponsor and conducted a governing institute (GISS) for about 30 participants (board members, college presidents and executives) from seven (7) colleges on September 5th, 2018, in one of the major presentation rooms at the Events Center. For the most part, the participating colleges and board members were from the northern central part of the country.

Interspersed with keynote addresses from major Tribal leaders, the Tribal Leaders Summit program was structured around several major themes: justice, culture, healthcare, governance, workforce and economic development, child protection services, human trafficking, behavioral health, and education.

The Summit has been integrated into the syllabi for all programs of study as a cultural component as a tribal college and university. Students along with their faculty are mandated to attend the Summit to assist in building networks and to hear best practices for addressing Tribal issues. The creative and dynamic program not only builds community engagement, but also continues to raise funds for student scholarships as part of the overall Tribal Events Week.

TUITION WAIVER POLICY PROVES A SUCCESS AT UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE



**UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

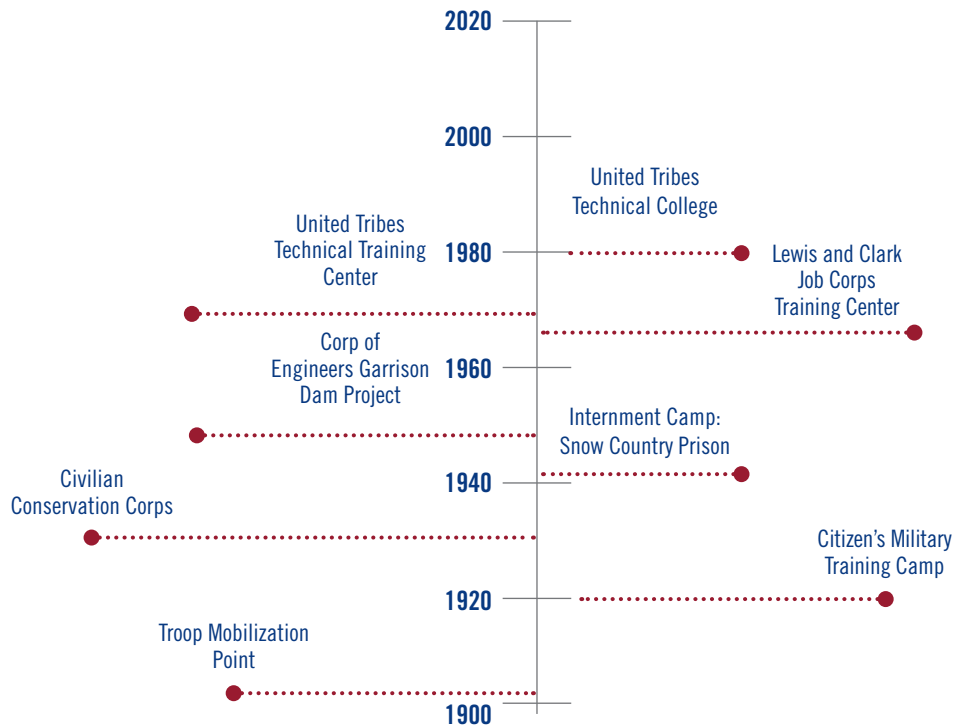
by Leah Woodke, Ph.D., Institutional Research Director &
Lisa Azure, Ph.D., Vice President of Academic Affairs
United Tribes Technical College
Bismarck, North Dakota

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) is one of the oldest of the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the United States. Established in 1969, UTTC is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, in 2019. UTTC is owned and governed by the five Tribal Nations located wholly or in part of North Dakota: the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, the Spirit Lake Nation, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, the Three Affiliated Tribes (Arikara, Mandan & Hidatsa), and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa.

The College is governed by a ten-member Board of Directors made up of the chairpersons and one delegate selected from each of the governing tribes. The Board serves as a forum for intertribal discussion of program development aimed at the perpetuation of tribal rights and economic development of tribes. UTTC is located on a site that served many historical purposes and has a rich and diverse history. Today, United Tribes Technical College is a tribally-controlled institution of higher education regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). UTTC provides career and technical education as well as baccalaureate degree programs. UTTC continues to be the only TCU approved by the HLC to offer degrees fully online.

The College’s motto of “Leadership Begins Here” exemplifies its role in providing high quality higher education for American Indian and other students. The College’s strategic goals are focused on recruitment and retention of students, commitment to student learning, and student success and completion. UTTC offers a variety of supports to promote student success.

UTTC CAMPUS HISTORY



TUITION WAIVER POLICY PROVES A SUCCESS AT UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE (continued)

New Financial Aid Option

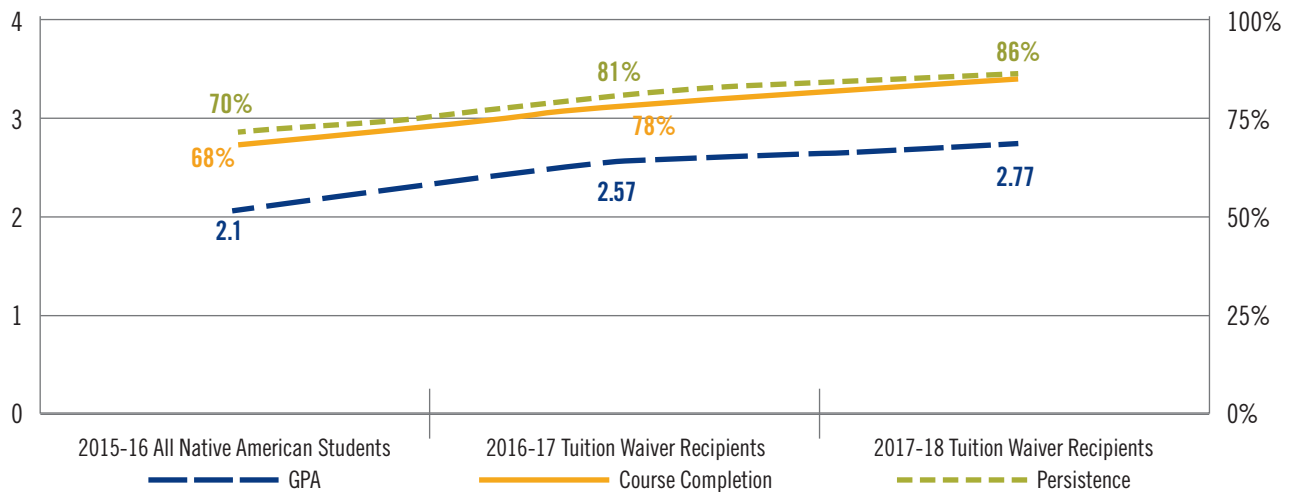
One of the newer financial aid options for students is the Native American Tuition Waiver program. In order to qualify for the waiver, students must meet certain eligibility requirements. First, students must be an enrolled member of a federally recognized American Indian Tribe. New students must have their Admissions application fully completed, including a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), by about two months prior to the semester start.

Students who are prepared for college early are more likely to be more serious about it than those who do not. Early preparation helps to ensure students' financial aid and housing needs are arranged, and it gives the college an opportunity to provide early career and academic advising. Students must be full-time, degree seeking at UTTC and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to remain eligible for the tuition waiver. Students who merit SAP warning or suspension can again become eligible for the waiver after they regain SAP. Annual application to FAFSA must be made as the waiver program is a need-based award. Returning students must pre-register for courses prior to the approved deadlines in order to remain eligible to receive the tuition waiver.

Positive Impact

The tuition waiver has appeared to impact student outcomes positively. UTTC compared cumulative grade point averages, course completion rates, and persistence rates of tuition waiver recipients with Native American students prior to the waiver program. In the first year, tuition waiver recipients' average grade point average (2.57) was 22% higher than the comparison group (2.1). Course completion rates were 10 percentage points higher, and persistence rates were 11 percentage points higher than the comparison group. Outcomes for the following year were even stronger. GPA, course completion and persistence data below comes from UTTC's Jenzabar Data System.

UTTC GPA, COURSE COMPLETION & PERSISTENCE DATA 2015-2018



TUITION WAIVER POLICY PROVES A SUCCESS AT UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE (continued)



Student Testimonials

Students who receive the Native American Tuition Waiver continue to have significantly better outcomes than students prior to the waiver program. Students who have received the tuition waiver report the impact the program has had on their ability to enroll in college, focus on their educational goals without having to worry about financing their education, and complete college debt free.

- *I was able to attend school worry free of debt. It was amazing to have the burden removed from my mind while attending UTTC. Leaving UTTC debt free after graduation has given me more options to explore in my career path.*
- *The tuition waiver motivated me to get back into school, and it helped me further my education without having to worry about how I was going to pay for it.*
- *The Native American Tuition Waiver program was offered just as I ran out of federal financial aid. I may not have been able to finish my degree without it.*

Board Approval

The UTTC Board of Directors approved the tuition waiver program as a pilot project in 2016. In early spring 2018, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to make the tuition waiver program permanent after the Board members observed improvement in students' grade-point averages and class completion.

In April 2018, in the local *Bismarck Tribune*, UTTC President, Dr. Leander "Russ" McDonald, praised his Board for the program. "We applaud the UTTC Board of Directors for the unanimous support to institutionalize a critical financial aid resource to assist primarily low-income and first-generation students to complete their education debt free."

Reference:

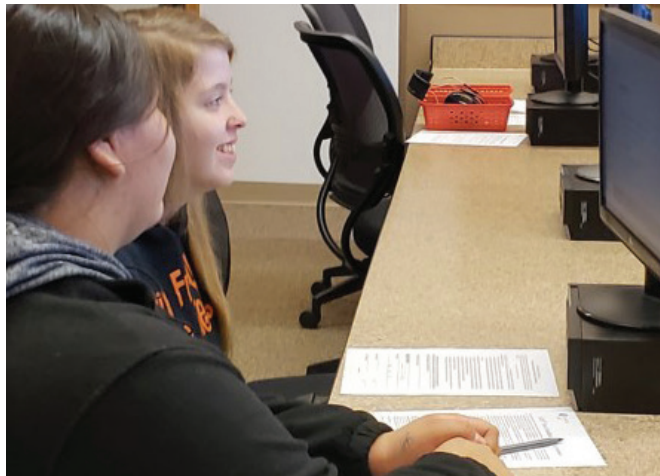
Emerson, B. (2018, April). *UTTC makes tuition waiver permanent*. *The Bismarck Tribune*, Retrieved from <https://bismarcktribune.com>.

United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) is a Tribal College in Bismarck, North Dakota, with an annual enrollment of approximately 885 students. UTTC provides quality postsecondary education and training to enhance knowledge, diversity, and leadership for all Indigenous nations. As a nonprofit corporation incorporated in the State of North Dakota and operated by five tribes wholly or in part in North Dakota, UTTC strives to build cultural, educated, and healthy leaders who empower their communities.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL



Article submitted by:
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Sitting Bull College students La'Kaya Love Joy and Alexandria Borah work together as part of the college's Pair and Share program.



Three Sitting Bull College students work intently and cooperatively on a group project.

During the first year of college, students often report difficulties in adjusting to college life and academic work. In addition, the success of students at colleges and universities is gaged by three major factors: student persistence from one semester to the next, student retention from one academic year to the next, and student graduation rates. Community colleges and Tribal Colleges often struggle to increase student retention and graduation rates.

The disparaging retention and graduations rates at community colleges and Tribal Colleges tend to be for the same reasons: IPEDS data only tracks full-time students entering in the fall, whereas community colleges and Tribal Colleges enroll higher rates of part-time students. Many enter the institutions in the spring. Lower admission standards at these institutions mean that a higher number of students require developmental education. Many of these students have work and family responsibilities that are common for the nontraditional college student. All these factors contribute to student stop-out during their educational journey.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL (continued)

At-Risk Students

Students at Sitting Bull College, a Tribal College located on the Standing Rock Reservation in North and South Dakota, tend to follow at-risk college student trends. The average age of incoming freshmen is 29, and 81% of full-time students receive a Federal Pell Grant (Statistics, 2016). Over the last four semesters, 66% of incoming freshmen needed remedial work in math; 38% of incoming freshman needed remedial work in English writing and reading (Jenzabar Data, 2017).

SBC Placement Testing Results for Developmental Education			
SEMESTER	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DEVELOPMENTAL MATH (MATH 099 & 101)	REMEDIAL ENGLISH (ENGL 099)
Fall 2015	107	67%	44%
Spring 2016	84	30%	35%
Fall 2016*	104	86.5%	40%
Spring 2017*	133	79.6%	33%

**Accuplacer replaced the ACT COMPASS exams after SP-16. The math cut scores may need to be reviewed by department faculty to see validity compared to course completion and grades.*

Not only will additional developmental courses cause students to attend college longer, but also the lack of college-level skills may contribute to student dropout or withdrawal from college.

Persistence rates in higher education are crucial for students to attain associate or bachelor degrees. A longitudinal study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) tracked students entering institutions in 2011-12 found that the most persistent groups of students were those 19 years or younger, students who were of Asian, White, or Hispanic descent, and those students who were considered traditional students. Students who were older than average, Native American, and identified as nontraditional (worked full-time, had children, among other characteristics) were the students who often did not persist (McFarland, et al, 2017).

Student Success Data Project

The Higher Learning Commission, along with the Lumina Foundation, launched a Student Success data project, which asked several institutions, including Sitting Bull College, to “test variables that affect student success” (Student Success, 2017). Armed with a purpose, first-year freshmen advisors and faculty began to brainstorm areas where retention and persistence were a problem at the College. The conversation circled around first-year freshmen and the idea of creating a transition year, not only to orientate students to the institution and college life, but also to create a focused learning community that engages students, speaks to institutional values, and reinforces campus culture.

First-year Experience (FYE)

This first-year experience (FYE) cohort planned to immerse students in effective learning skills and strategies across the freshmen curriculum. In addition, teambuilding and group work would be included to create a sense of identity and unity among the cohort group. All course themes would be cross-curricular, focusing on critical thinking and complex reasoning skills. Although the cohort group would take the same types of courses as the other freshmen (math, Composition I, Intro to Computers, and First Year Learning Seminar for a total of 12-15 credits), the students in the FYE cohort would be grouped together in classes sized no larger than 18, and all students would be in the same courses together.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL (continued)



Two first-year cohort Sitting Bull College students collaborate as part of the College's Pair and Share program.



Gavin Bird, Lloyd Stretches, and Adrien Blue Earth--discuss art at the Bismarck Downtown Artist Cooperative.

Vincent Tinto (2003) described many first-year college students' experiences as a "spectator sport" where students watch faculty lectures in a disconnected manner and do not engage in the learning process. This FYE cohort model at Sitting Bull College plans to change the way students interact and involve themselves in the academic and social life of the institution. The project started with the following research questions:

- 1. Will the FYE cohort group have better attendance during the first semester of classes than the regular group of freshmen?*
- 2. Will the FYE cohort group report stronger engagement in the institution than the regular group of freshmen?*
- 3. Will the FYE cohort group persist into the next semester of classes? Will they have a higher retention rate (fall-fall)?*

Limitations: Sample size and selection within the scope of this project was certainly a limitation of this research study. This quasi-experimental research study attempted to distinguish if students in the FYE cohort group (N=15) persisted through their freshman year in contrast to the regular freshmen students (N=56). Ultimately, the primary goal of the FYE cohort strategy was to influence positively the retention and graduation rates of students attending Sitting Bull College.

Resources: Faculty teaching the first-year students were key resources to this research project. Equipped with a skeleton structure of ideas, the FYE faculty group met periodically during the summer of 2017. The collaborative group used one drive sharing document(s) to plan interdisciplinary thematic units and to discuss how assignments in each cross-curricular discipline would fulfill both the FYE cohort learning outcomes and the individual course learning outcomes.

Other resources and training were used for the faculty group, such as emotional intelligence (EI) skill building, distress tolerance, motivational interviewing, and facilitation of group activities. During the fall semester, academic advisors were asked to help students select courses and streamline registration into the FYE cohort group. The faculty group continued to meet twice a month to flush out any ambiguity in the cross-curricular thematic units and to plan a field trip to art galleries in Bismarck, ND.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL (continued)

Faculty Resources

Faculty teaching the first-year students were key resources to this research project. The Vice President of Operations, Dr. Koreen Ressler, assembled faculty interested in teaching or planning for the FYE cohort model. The Pre-Engineering Instructor, Dr. Josh Mattes, and Director of Nursing, Dr. D'Arlyn Bauer, were instrumental in writing the proposal for SBC Curriculum Committee to approve in May of 2017. Armed with a skeleton structure of ideas, the FYE faculty group met periodically during the summer of 2017 to brainstorm activities. The group members included:

FYE Faculty	
Josh Mattes	Pre-Engineering Faculty
D'Arlyn Bauer	Nursing Faculty
Tim Krahler	Math Faculty
Henry Baang	Math Faculty
Kayla Stewart	English Faculty
Renee Froelich	English Faculty
Cora Pfitzer	Retention Coordinator & FYE Instructor
Jodi Thunderhawk	Information Technology Instructor

Data Measures and Analysis

This research study measured FYE cohort success in three ways: attendance, persistence, and survey data. Since a majority of SBC students receive Federal Pell Grants and Standing Rock High Education grants, it is an institutional practice that instructors record attendance during each course meeting date. This quantitative measure can indicate how engaged students are in their courses and how motivated they are in completing their educational goals. Below are the attendance percentages from previous years of first-time freshman.

First-Year Freshman Attendance Rates	
Semester	Attendance %
Spring-15	60.9%
Fall-15	59.3%
Spring-16	52.0%
Fall-16	68.1%
Spring-17	74.1%

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL (continued)

Comparatively, for the academic year 2017-18, the cohort group had slightly better attendance rates than did the regular group of freshman in previous years of baseline data.

First-Year Freshman Attendance Rates		
	Cohort	Other Full-time Degree Seeking Freshman
Fall-17	78.84%	74.34%
Spring-18	77.76%	69.6%

It is imperative to note that both attendance rates are higher than those in most of the previous years. This could be attributed to other student services initiatives to increase retention and persistence on campus.

During the fall semester, in an effort to balance a mixed-method study, we surveyed all first-time freshmen. The students (N=71) were asked to complete the survey in their first-year seminar class, and we received a positive survey sample of 55% of the full-time, degree seeking freshman. The survey included scalable questions asking students how SBC helped prepare them socially, intellectually, and through communication skills. The table below demonstrates that the cohort group had many more positive responses to these questions.

Please indicate how helpful SBC has helped you achieve each goal:					
		Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Slightly helpful	Not at all helpful
Social Interaction and Personal Growth	Cohort	54%	46%	0%	0%
	Regular Group	46%	42%	8%	4%
Intellectual Growth	Cohort	80%	14%	6%	0%
	Regular Group	66%	26%	4%	4%
Critical Thinking and Communication Skills	Cohort	94%	6%	0%	0%
	Regular Group	58%	24%	14%	4%

Another set of survey questions asked students how often in the fall semester they took risks, went beyond the course material, and accepted that mistakes were part of the learning process. The cohort group overwhelmingly reported undertaking these things more often than the regular group of freshmen. Additional qualitative questions queried students' expectations next semester.

FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE: A COHORT MODEL (continued)

The third measure

The third measure in this research project tracked persistence and retention rates for all full-time freshman who began in Fall 2017. Although at the time of this report retention data was not available, the persistence rates of first-time degree seeking students is below.

First-Time Degree Seeking Students		
Year	Persistence (Fall to Spring)	Retention (Fall to Fall)
Fall 09	55%	28%
Fall 10	56%	29%
Fall 11	71%	46%
Fall 12	50%	38%
Fall 13	62%	30%
Fall 14	61%	44%
Fall 15	43%	28%
Fall 16	63%	51%
Fall 17	69%	N/A
Fall17 FYE Cohort	73%	N/A

The cohort group (N=15) had a persistence rate of 73.30% from fall 2017 to spring 2018. Although this rate was not significantly higher, it was the highest rate to date. Overall, the faculty group discussed that quite a few of the students in the cohort may not have persevered due to their reserved personalities if they had not been part of the FYE cohort classes. Due to the FYE cohort model, many faculty thought the collaborative cross-curricular projects helped students adjust to college rigor and social relationships much faster.

Professional development

One unintended outcome on this research project was the opportunity for intense professional development. The faculty group involved in this FYE cohort have improved teaching pedagogies, learned new ways to differentiate instruction, and incorporated more collaborative instruction, even when it pushed faculty out of their own comfort zones. The integrated thematic units on motivation, time management, culture, healthy body and mind, goal setting, arts, group dynamics and communication, and critical thinking/ information literacy have pressed faculty to see beyond their own course outcomes to think about what the student needs to learn to be successful.

According to SBC Board Chair, Sharon Two Bears, "With the increases, it would only seem that they would continue to get higher as we move forward. Seems to have a well-received buy-in from the faculty. Keep up the good work!!" Sitting Bull College plans on incorporating the FYE cohort model across campus in the 2018-19 academic year.

References

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Sitting Bull College is continuing the cohort model this academic year and has expanded the project to their two outreach sites. Sitting Bull College is a tribal college in Fort Yates, North Dakota for over 300 students. It was founded in 1973 by the Standing Rock Sioux tribe of the Standing Rock reservation in south-central North Dakota.

KEWEENAW BAY STUDENTS ADOPT A HIGHWAY



Submitted by Lori Sherman
President
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College
Baraga, Michigan

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College students take their care of the environment very seriously. In Fall 2018, students adopted a four mile stretch of highway to keep free of litter and debris. According to KBOCC President, Lori Sherman, "Fall 2018 Adopt-a-Highway cleaning was another success, thanks to the help of KBOCC students Kristen Dean, Nick Gehring, Meno Jondreau, John Lusty, Alexis Mantta, and Brent Waranka. It should be noted that most of these students are new to us this semester."

She adds, "The next cleanup will be in 2019 after the snow melts (whenever that is!)."



KBOCC CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM CELEBRATES 3 YEARS, OFFERS NEW CLASSES

In October of 2015, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College introduced the Criminal Justice Program. In the span of three years, several students have begun employment with the Michigan Department of Corrections as officers and food service staff. Many former KBOCC Criminal Justice Program students work at Baraga Correctional Facility.

"There are over 20 KBOCC Criminal Justice students who have gained employment with the Michigan Department of Corrections," said Bill Jondreau, KBOCC Criminal Justice Instructor. "That has had a tremendous positive impact in the local economy - over one million dollars in state payroll."

The Criminal Justice program at KBOCC is unique from Criminal Justice programs in other colleges. The three instructors have a combined experience of 75 years working in a maximum correctional facility. "Our instructors present a realistic approach to the corrections field, having experienced corrections from inside the facility," continued Jondreau. "Our work experience provides a unique understanding of the dynamics of corrections."

"Realism is crucial in such an important and challenging career as corrections," said Joe Bouchard, another KBOCC Criminal Justice Instructor. "I believe that this improves safety for staff, prisoners and the public. I can think of no other higher education institution in the area that offers such experience to students." New courses have been developed to help students continue their education beyond satisfying the entry level requirements. These offerings are designed for those who may wish to enhance their future chances for promotion. Also, these new courses provide wider knowledge in the corrections field.

"Juvenile Justice, Stress Management in Corrections, Anishinaabe Justice, and Policing are among the new classes," said Bouchard. "Add those to the basic courses and specialty topics of staff relations and contraband control and you have a wide variety of quality courses."

For more information about this and other KBOCC courses and programs, please go to www.kbocc.edu or call Admissions Officer Betti Szaroletta at 524-8304

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College is a Tribal community college in Baraga, Michigan. Its vision is to serve as the principal higher education institution for the L'Anse Indian Reservation and surrounding communities by providing quality academic programs rich in Ojibwa culture that empower students to fill their dreams.

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING

SUMMARIES OF GISS-TCU INSTITUTES 2015-2018



The Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) works with trustees and presidents of community and technical colleges to establish a culture of accountability and evidenced-based planning through effective governance to achieve student equity, success, and completion across the country. GISS is an initiative originally founded by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and the Student Success Initiatives (SSI) at the University of Texas at Austin and was funded by the Gates Foundation in 2009-2015.

To address the need for data-informed governance among Tribal College Boards and Universities, in 2015 ACCT entered into a strategic partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) through which ACCT provided GISS trainings and ongoing support to Tribal Colleges and Universities. The project was funded by the Lumina Foundation from 2015 to 2018.

A total of 90 participants from 30 Tribal Colleges and Universities attended the GISS-TCU held October 17-18, 2015, in San Diego, CA. Laurie Heacock, National Director of Data Coaching and Analytics for Achieving the Dream (ATD), presented information about ATD, what it has learned and the importance of cohort data. Through two panel discussions, the three Tribal Colleges associated with ATD, Northwest Indian College, Salish Kootenai College and Diné College, discussed their experiences with data-informed decision-making and student success. Justin Guillory, President of Northwest Indian College, Bellingham, WA, gave a presentation about his college's experience with ATD.

YEAR 1: BEGINNING THE STUDENT SUCCESS JOURNEY

2015 GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS – TCU

OCTOBER 17-18, 2015 - SAN DIEGO, CA



TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

Survey Responses

Over 93% of survey participants shared their thoughts on the most important learning of the day which often focused on the importance of using data at the board level. Overall there was a wide range of responses signaling that the specific learning that was important to each individual:

- To not be afraid of data – to learn from it—the importance of data and the right data
- Use the data to reform policy and decisions
- How to be an efficient college; How to get students to succeed
- Board assessments and How to better our college just from sitting as a board of directors
- Remembering to stay at policy level to support the President
- We are on the right path! Reinforce Board roles = policy and support
- Realigning Board agendas to allow time for student success information on a quarterly basis
- The whole program agenda was vital to my position as a trustee to better serve the student and institution.

When asked what they learned at the institute to use in their work to foster and sustain a student success agenda at their institutions, two participants summarized:

- Focus on student success in all aspects of college work. The board needs to be more of an advocate for student success.
- How important data information is in making strategic plans, etc. in steering the college to be responsive to student needs and Tribal communities.

YEAR 2: CONTINUING THE CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS – TCU 2.0 2016 OCTOBER 8-10, 2016, AT THE HILTON NEW ORLEANS RIVERSIDE HOTEL NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



A total of 119 participants attended the GISS-TCU 2.0 held on October 8-10, 2016, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel in New Orleans, LA. One hundred and fourteen participants (114) represented the 26 TCUs present, four were from AIHEC and one from the Bureau of Indian Education. Of this number, 86 were directors/trustees/regents and presidents.

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

Part of the GISS program included TCU data reviews of six momentum points or indicators of TCU student success. In addition, each college presented a policy action agenda of what they would do based on what they learned at the institute.

Over 95% of survey participants shared their thoughts on **the most important learning of the day** and centered their comments on the positive value of reviewing and understanding data and learning how to be a better board member:

- *Bringing data to the forefront (16 mentions).*
- *Discussions/ideas about ways to promote student success*
- *Learning what is working for others. IDEAS!*
- *Potential new strategies: Learning how the board can be very effective with the right tools.*

Key comments related to the **learning that participants would use in future work to foster and sustain a student success agenda** included:

- *Career Pathways, Early Alerts, Core principles for Transforming Remediation*
- *More decisions based on data*
- *Developing degrees that support the community*
- *The importance of presenting data to the board*
- *Contextualization of educational goals and teaching*
- *Assessment of student needs; placement in a curriculum best suited for students to learn vocations*

Other comments about what they learned that they would use in their work included:

- *It helped us to have our cabinet with us so we can go home and collaborate on our takeaways and improve our institution.*
- *Discussions and decisions for actions.*
- *Learning from other institutions and getting the national perspective*
- *We must stay on track and commit for long term.*

YEAR 3: FUTURE FORWARD GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (GISS) – TCU 3.0 2017 OCTOBER 7-8, 2017, HILTON GRAND VACATIONS AT TUSCANY VILLAGE ORLANDO, FLORIDA





TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

Tribal Colleges Commit to Student Success

To stay the course to improve educational and workforce opportunities for their Native American students, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) maintain commitment to their students and Tribal communities. About 90 board members, tribal leaders and presidents from 23 TCUs around the country actively participated in a two-day governance institute focused on data-informed decision making and student success at the Hilton Grand Vacations at Tuscany Village in Orlando, Florida, October 7-8, 2017.

Attendees focused forward on solutions to the many problems facing our nation's Tribal educational institutions and spent time at the institute learning about high-impact student success strategies and high performing boards focused on student success.

Participants from 23 colleges, 11 States

Participating TCUs included both two- and four-year colleges from 11 different states including:

- **Alaska:** Ilisagvik College
- **Arizona:** Diné College (4-year), Tohono O'Odham Community College
- **Michigan:** Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College,
- **Minnesota:** Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Leech Lake Tribal College, Red Lake Nation College, White Earth Tribal and Community College
- **Montana:** Chief Dull Knife, Fort Peck Community College, Little Big Horn College, Salish Kootenai College, Stone Child College
- **Nebraska:** Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska Indian Community College
- **New Mexico:** Institute of American Indian Arts (4- year), Navajo Technical University (4-year)
- **North Dakota:** Sitting Bull College (4-year), United Tribes Technical College (4-year),
- **Oklahoma:** College of the Muscogee Nation
- **South Dakota:** Oglala Lakota College (4-year)
- **Wisconsin:** Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College

During the institute, attendees included trustees and regents, chancellors and presidents of the 23 TCUs present, AIHEC leadership and other TCU staff such as vice presidents, institutional researchers, and other college or tribal community members or executives. For two days, they worked together and pledged continuing learning and sharing good policy ideas with each other to improve their colleges and universities.

Looking at College Data

Attendees engaged in a variety of activities including identifying success strategies for specific students, taking a board self-assessment, and exploring decision making and planning for student success policies. Participants learned about the critical aspects of being a high performing board, monitoring their student success data, and reported out their findings when working collectively.

The TCUs reviewed student data to identify gaps in student outcomes and ways to move forward. Katherine Cardell, AIHEC's Research and Policy Associate, presented each college's data, highlighting the Scorecard developed for the TCUs and the five agreed upon key AIMS indicators for measuring student success: first year retention; successful completion of Developmental Math and Developmental English, successful completion of College Math and English Composition, and successful completion of Native American Studies. Much of the data had mixed results for the colleges, but also showed that there have been gains in students successfully completing developmental math, previously a low point for many students.

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

Accreditation and Cultural Competence

Several college leaders shared high-impact policies and practices implemented by the TCUs. This particular GISS-TCU institute promoted looking at solutions to improve student success. During the GISS, Dr. Robert Bible, President, College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN), and Dr. James King, Regents Director of Institutional Effectiveness, spoke briefly about lessons learned as they recently gained accreditation status. Additionally, Dr. Robert Martin, President of the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) addressed questions and accreditation guidelines. He has served on national accrediting boards.



Dr. Pearl Brower, President of Ilisagvik College in Barrow, Alaska, shared successful retention strategies regarding cultural competence fostering student success that have helped her college move the student success needle. Through external partnerships and community connections, institutional indigenization prioritizing Inupiaq culture, language, values and traditions in the curriculum and administration became part of the College's strategic plan. See related Ilisagvik story on page 11.



College of the Muscogee Nation President Dr. Robert Bible, left, and Regents Director of Institutional Effectiveness for the College, Dr. James King, presented on the accreditation activities of their college.

TCUs moving in the right direction

Goals for the institute included launching leadership teams on the next stage of the student success journey and refining board policies and practices to take them to scale. According to one trustee participant, "All the material covered will help me as my duty as a Board member." Significantly, a few attendees assessed the overall impact of the institute, and noted that "gaining personal growth as a trustee" and discovering that the Tribal Colleges were "moving in the right direction."

Note: To best accommodate the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), AIHEC and GISS planned two smaller GISS institutes for this final year of our grant with the Lumina Foundation. Two institutes were held, the first one in Bismarck, ND, in September, and the second in Chandler, AZ, in December 2018.

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

YEAR 4: NORTH DAKOTA *LEADERSHIP EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION* 2018 GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (GISS-TCU 4.0 ND) SEPTEMBER 5, 2018 IN BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA



UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Today American Indian leaders proudly serve their communities and families as Tribal College and University (TCU) trustees as leaders educating the next generation. Such loyalty and devotion to tribe and nation are exhibited in many ways. At the United Tribes Technical College Tribal Leaders Summit and Trade Show in Bismarck, North Dakota, September 4-6, 2018, 30 college presidents, executives, and trustees from seven TCUs participated in an all-day Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS) focused on preparing board members for their governing roles. This was the fourth annual TCU-GISS institute sponsored by ACCT in partnership with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). It was funded by the Lumina

Foundation and hosted by United Tribes Technical College at the Bismarck Event Center.

Entitled *Leadership Educating the Next Generation: The Future is Now*, the institute included topics such as characteristics of effective boards, board roles and responsibilities, avoiding micromanagement, reviewing student success data, conducting annual presidential and board evaluations, and boards supporting the college's president and administration to implement student success policies. Attendees worked closely together to share new student success strategies.



Robert Rainbow from Nueta Hidatsa Sahnich College shares a laugh with United Tribes President Dr. Leander McDonald at the 2018 GISS in Bismarck, North Dakota.

The seven TCUs participating came from four Midwestern states and included:

- Cankdeska Cikana Community College, North Dakota
- Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota
- Little Big Horn, Montana
- Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, North Dakota
- Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Michigan
- Sitting Bull College, North Dakota
- United Tribes Technical College, North Dakota.

Katherine Cardell, AIHEC Research and Policy Associate, presented the colleges with student cohort data. The data tracked several years of five student success indicators (progress in developmental courses, retention, college-level math and English and completion). Participants studied their data, asked questions and identified areas for improvement.

one of the student presentations. Several board members asked the students questions about their college experiences, after which UTTC President Dr. Leander McDonald and UTTC Board Member and Tribal Chairman, David Flute, sang a ritual blessing for the students to honor them.

Highlights of the institute included a student panel of six UTTC students in various stages of their programs and a local high school student whose mother gave

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

YEAR 4: CHANDLER, ARIZONA *THE BOARD'S ROLE IN THE CHANGING WORLDS OF WORK AND LEARNING: THE FUTURE IS NOW!* 2018 GOVERNANCE INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (GISS-TCU 5.0) AZ DECEMBER 6-7, 2018 AT WHITE HORSE PASS, CHANDLER, ARIZONA

Thirty (30) participants from seven (7) Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) attended the GISS-TCU 5.0 – Arizona held December 6-7, 2018, at Wild Horse Pass Hotel & Casino in Chandler, Arizona. The institute was the fifth GISS sponsored by the Lumina Foundation as part of its TCU grant to ACCT. Key partners in the event included the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), and ACCT's former Board of Directors chair, Roberto Zarate.

The seven TCUs participating came from five Midwestern and Western states and included:

- Chief Dull Knife College, Montana
- Diné College, Arizona
- Leech Lake Tribal College, Minnesota
- Little Priest Tribal College, Nebraska
- Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Michigan
- Red Lake Nation College, Minnesota
- Salish Kootenai Tribal College, Montana.



Attendees to the 2018 Tribal College and University GISS institute December 6-7, 2018, at Wild Horse Pass Hotel in Chandler, Arizona, pose in the hotel lobby.

TRIBAL COLLEGES ENGAGE IN BOARD TRAINING (continued)

Effective Board Functioning - Policy Manuals and Codes of Ethics

Highlights of the two-day event included a special three-hour session on Board Basics moderated by Roberto Zarate who focused on the importance of data for board decision making. He detailed his talk on boards' basic roles and responsibilities for three primary areas: policy, fiscal oversight and student success.

Director of GISS, Dr. Norma Goldstein, reviewed Board best practices and the Board's role in student success. Topics included updating board bylaws and policy manuals and the board code of ethics. Attendees then assessed their performance and their board's as related to student success and the use of data for measuring and monitoring student success. Demaree Michelau, the new incoming president of WICHE, spoke about the importance of collaboration. She gave a history of WICHE's interstate compact formed 65 years ago and shared information about several initiatives in which the TCUs could be involved.

Survey participants shared their thoughts on **the most important learning of the day**. They centered their comments on the positive value of talking with other TCUs and data analysis. They appreciated the current research and data presented to them. Comments included:

- *Data, Data, Data: The importance of data-driven decisions*
- *Sharing information from other TCUs and networking. [5 similar responses]*
- *Listening to other TCUs with the same problems*
- *We need to enhance our student support systems.*
- *Board ethics using own manual*
- *How to be a more efficient and effective Board member - suggestions on policies and, strategies*
- *How to work as a team with our President, and I learned more on our data and how to use it*

Topics that participants learned at the institute that they could implement to sustain a student success agenda at their institution centered around using more data to make decisions and to view trends.

- *Creating a stronger sense of community*
- *Strengthen advising; Evaluate our student success practices*
- *More communication and more student support programs*
- *Having that data implementation across the whole institution*
- *Use Effective Boards handout at every board meeting to remind board members*
- *Data --what it really tells us about; examining persistence, retention and completion.*
- *Online early alert systems – we didn't have that.*
- *How to be an effective board and How to help students.*
- *Please host future conferences at TCUs when possible.*



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT STUDENT SUCCESS AT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES?

By Norma Goldstein, Ph.D., Editor
Celebrating TCU Successes
Director of GISS and Special Projects
ACCT

For three years, ACCT has partnered with AIHEC and the Lumina Foundation to gain a greater understanding of tribal colleges' needs and to facilitate student success at tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) through ACCT's Governance Institute for Student Success (GISS). Below is a synopsis of the primary lessons ACCT has learned from working with most of the 37 TCUs.

- **Resiliency and Dedication:** Foremost is an appreciation of the dedication and resiliency the TCU presidents, boards and tribal leadership demonstrate to sustain student success. Over the past three years, in five GISS institutes, these leaders have been enthusiastic and committed to their students, their tribal communities and to their Indigenous values. They have adapted using data.
- **Small in Size; Vast Service Areas:** Tribal Colleges and Universities are small, ranging from just under 95 students to just under 2,000 students yet operate on Indian reservations that can span millions of acres. Most are geographically remote in often impoverished, isolated areas which creates basic hardships for students and their families: limited access to an array of health and educational services, lack of transportation, and some difficulty in finding and keeping qualified faculty.
- **Different Mindset and Mission:** While the TCUs are invested in assessment and accountability as means by which to guarantee the success of their students, for the most part, they have a different mindset and world view. Their institutions' missions are not only to prepare today's learners to be tomorrow's tribal leaders, but also to honor and preserve their tribe's language, culture, and values. Different metrics and methods need to be used to assess student success; these assessments need to measure cultural relevance and tribal identity. Both qualitative and quantitative measures are important to capture a holistic view of what the TCUs consider to be student success. Student success outcomes are different for tribal colleges, and ACCT has tailored its institutes to account for these differences and measure TCU success on their own terms.
- **Culturally Relevant Curriculum:** Spirituality is essential to the Native American/Alaskan Native identity, and this spirituality is core to the TCUs and to their community's kinship with Nature and all of creation. Most effective are culturally relevant curricula to engage students to become better grounded in a tribally common worldview.
- **Restorative Power of TCUs:** Moreover, the TCUs and AIHEC have a strong belief in the restorative power of the Tribal Colleges for their communities. The TCUs are the social and economic hubs of their communities. More TCUs are partnering with businesses and industries to develop new jobs and careers on their reservations. Moreover, the TCUs are developing new curricula to provide skills to learners that help protect the land, create sustainable food industries, and teach students to be active participants and contributors in agriculture and natural resources. Through the TCUs, Indigenous history and kinship with the land can empower the tribal communities to endure and to contribute to their communities' wellbeing. TCU student success is about sustaining Indigenous identity, language, spirituality, and culture.

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