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**KBOCC Mission Statement:** *As a tribal land grant institution, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College supports and uplifts all learners to achieve their goals through holistic education, while promoting Anishinaabe culture, language, and lifeways.*

## KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Priorities for the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress (February 2025)

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) provide rigorous postsecondary education and research opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) and other rural community residents. TCUs offer higher education that is uniquely Tribal, founded on Native languages, culture, and philosophy with strong student support systems and community engagement. Through these educational opportunities, research, and industry partnerships for high-demand careers, TCUs are laying the foundation for sustainable economic development within Tribal Nations and beyond. Together, we build *Strong Sovereign Nations through Excellence in TRIBAL higher education*, empowering individuals and strengthening communities.

### KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE: AT A GLANCE

- Enrollment Trends: 267 AY2023-24; 158 Fall 2024
- Affordable Tuition: \$5,000 full-time tuition and fees (first year)
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 6:1
- Part-time/Full-time: 60% part-time/40% full-time (Fall 2024)
- Persistence Rate: 52% overall / 42% part-time/ 63% full-time (Spring 2023 – Fall 2024; credential-seeking undergraduates)
- Persistence Rate: 45% overall / 34% part-time/ 56% full-time (Fall 2023 – Fall 2024; credential-seeking undergraduates)
- Highest Level of Degree/Program Available: Associate's
- TRIO Program: No
- Fun Fact: The First Tribal College in Michigan was chartered by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community in 1975.



**Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC)** provides essential student support services tailored to individual needs, including a food pantry, free lunches, and grab-and-go snacks to address food insecurity. We offer a one-on-one laptop initiative for tech access, reduced-fee childcare with priority for students, and 24/7 mental health counseling and tutoring. On-site tutoring and emergency assistance ensure students receive comprehensive support to excel academically and personally.



### KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Strengthening Our Workforce

TCUs prepare professionals in high-demand fields, including agriculture and natural resources management, health, information technology, and building trades. By teaching the job skills most in demand within our communities, TCUs are laying a strong foundation for Tribal and regional economic growth.

KBOCC offers Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that equip students with practical skills for the local workforce. These programs include Business/Entrepreneurship, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Culinary Arts, and Welding & Manufacturing. KBOCC has formed partnerships to enhance these programs: the Copper Country Intermediate School District (CCISD) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to facilitate statewide recognition of credits earned. These partnerships aim to align educational offerings with industry standards, giving students clear pathways to employment in the local workforce.

## TOTAL ALUMNI IMPACT

**\$2.3 BILLION**

**ADDED  
INCOME**

**28,778**

**JOBS**

Job equivalents indicate jobs created by TCUs, both full- and part-time. They are based on industry-specific jobs to sales ratios. The \$2.3 billion alumni impact supports 28,778 jobs nationwide. (EMSI & AIHEC, 2015)

## KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

### Driving Economic Development

In 2015, AIHEC conducted an economic impact study to analyze the importance of TCUs in the regional and national economy. TCUs act as a catalyst for economic growth locally and regionally by enhancing educational opportunities, research, and leadership skills for Tribal and other rural students.

KBOCC serves as a cornerstone of economic development within the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) by providing culturally relevant education, workforce training, and community outreach initiatives. Through its varied academic and career-focused programs, such as Nursing, Business Administration, Tribal Management, Environmental Science, and Certified Nursing Assistant training, KBOCC prepares students for high-demand careers while addressing local and regional workforce needs. Additionally, the college incorporates Ojibwa culture and traditions into its curriculum, promoting cultural preservation alongside professional development.

As a 1994 land-grant institution, KBOCC broadens its impact beyond the classroom through community programs that emphasize sustainable resource management, public health, and lifelong learning. Strategic partnerships with universities enable seamless credit transfers, enhancing opportunities for students to pursue advanced degrees and further strengthening the Tribal community's capacity for growth.

Beneficiaries of these programs include KBIC members, local residents, and Tribal organizations. Students acquire practical skills, cultural knowledge, and access to career opportunities, while the broader community benefits from enhanced economic sustainability and a strengthened cultural identity. These efforts collectively foster the empowerment and resilience of the KBIC and its members.

## KEWEENAW BAY OJIBWA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

### Building Our Futures

TCUs are resilient, resourceful, and proud to lead the nation in many areas, including preparing an American Indian and Alaska Native workforce of engineers, nurses, land managers, technicians, and teachers. Always looking to the future, TCUs are focused on building new partnerships, advancing educational excellence, and creating economic opportunities for Tribal and regional communities.

Expanding healthcare programs at Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC) could help address critical workforce gaps in Baraga County, where access to healthcare services is limited, especially for underserved populations. With a population of approximately 8,095, the county faces notable challenges, including a declining workforce and limited access to diverse employment opportunities. The current median household income is \$48,972, below the state average, and about 15.3% of residents live in poverty.

KBOCC could enhance its existing programs, such as the Associate of Applied Science in Construction Technology, to meet the demand for skilled labor in housing construction, energy-efficient retrofitting, and infrastructure projects. This program could be broadened to include green building techniques and certification pathways for trades like plumbing and electrical work. Likewise, creating a forestry management certificate linked to the region's timber resources would encourage sustainable industry growth while safeguarding natural habitats. A comprehensive carpentry and construction program could equip students with the skills needed for local housing and infrastructure initiatives. This could address community needs for affordable housing while generating job opportunities within the KBIC.

