

White Earth Tribal & Community College (WETCC): Priorities for the 119th 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.

WETCC AT A GLANCE

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2024/Fall 2024): 110/119
- Affordable Tuition: \$175/credit
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 25 to 1
- Part-time, Full-Time Faculty Ratio: 5 full-time, 8 adjuncts
- Persistence Rate: Term to Term - Fall to Spring 2022-23: 68%
- Highest Level of Degree/Program Available: Associate of Arts (AA)
- TRIO Program: No
- Fun Fact: The average age of WETCC students as of Fall 2024 is 30-38 years, and 95% are first-generation American Indian and Alaska Native students.



White Earth Tribal & Community College (WETCC) provides resources to accommodate students' needs and challenges. We offer students emergency aid, which covers up to \$1,000 in groceries, gas, bills, and car repairs. Students have access to computers, hotspots, mental health services, tutoring, peer-to-peer support, in-class support, school supplies, cultural and school-related workshops, and more.



WETCC: 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.

WETCC Customized Education offers training specific to the needs of the White Earth Nation. By partnering with the Tribal Workforce Center, the Maadaadizi Workforce Center, and others, WETCC offers training opportunities that drive the local economy in fields like construction, carpentry, welding, and information technology. The WETCC Customized Education program partners with the Tribal cannabis facility, Mashkiki Waabigwan, to offer a new horticulture certificate program that teaches participants how to cultivate, identify pest issues, and understand state and federal legalities. An additional partnership is with a local native-led solar company, 8th Fire Solar, which provides training in solar photovoltaic technologies, building the local skillset in community and residential solar. These programs are available to any community member over the age of 18. WETCC Customized Education plans to offer the community a nursing program and other training.

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)

WETCC 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.

WETCC promotes economic development for the White Earth Reservation through vital programs and initiatives such as:

Pathways to Prosperity Workforce Training

This program provides various services to equip adults with essential career development skills and training. It is intended for individuals aged 18 and older who are not enrolled in K-12 education. The training enables participants to acquire skills crucial for securing employment and advancing in their careers.

Customized Education Program

WETCC offers non-credit training designed to meet the needs of both industry and the community. This includes continuing education units (CEUs), workforce development, and certificate training. The program is flexible and can be delivered locally to reduce travel costs and time for participants.

Google Career Certificates

In collaboration with Google and Coursera, WETCC offers online certificate courses that equip individuals with skills valuable in high-growth fields. These certificates are offered at no cost to WETCC students, staff, faculty, and community members.



WETCC: 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.

In 2024, WETCC began construction on a new facility that will include a wellness center, a commercial kitchen, a dining center, a loading dock, and office space. This development phase represents a significant advancement in WETCC's commitment to improving the educational environment and supporting the well-being of students, faculty, and community members. The wellness center will feature state-of-the-art facilities designed to promote physical, mental, and emotional health, providing a holistic approach to wellness rooted in Anishinaabe culture and values. The new facility is expected to be completed by fall 2025, with its opening to students scheduled for the 2025-2026 academic year.