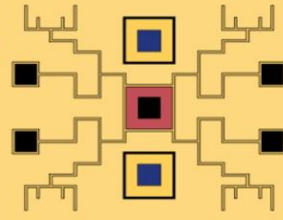




Aaniiih Nakoda College



Aaniiih Nakoda College: Priorities for the 118th Congress (February 2024)

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. Unfortunately, federal education completion metrics fail to consider the unique nature of TCUs and our students. Federal completion rates focus on first-time, full-time students. But success at TCUs is defined holistically and most students attend part-time or are transfer students. Our shared vision: Strong Sovereign Nations through Excellence in TRIBAL Higher Education.

Aaniiih Nakoda College FACTS:

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2023/Fall 2023) : 148/142 (-4%)
- Affordable Tuition: 14-15 credits = \$1,540.00
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 1/10
- Part-time/Full-time: SP23- 52 PT/ 92 FT
- Retention Rate: 76%
- Highest level of degree/program available: Bachelor of Science
- TRIO Programs: Student Support Services (SSS)
- Native American Career and Educational Program (NACTEP)



Aaniiih Nakoda College offers its students free lunches, a food bank, and free mental health counseling. We also offer free professional clothing for students, in-person peer tutoring, and tutor.com. Through Project Success we are able to offer Emergency Aid assistance and paid internship opportunities, as well as paid internships through various other grants.



Aaniiih Nakoda College 1994 Land-Grant Programs

1994 Land-grant Institutions: The Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act created the “1994 Land-grants” more than 25 years ago. Since then, funding for the 1994 Land-grant programs and resources have remained inadequate to address the growing agricultural needs and opportunities in Indian Country.

Aaniiih Nakoda College’s Extension Program promotes greater food sovereignty, healthier lifestyles, sustainability, and self-sufficiency for the Aaniiih and Nakoda nations of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Each year, hundreds of community members – from Head Start children to elders – visit the Extension Program’s demonstration garden and greenhouse to learn about organic gardening, traditional medicinal plants, nutrition, healthy diets, beekeeping, and much more. Through tours, workshops, individual consultations, and special events like the annual “we dig, you pick” potato harvest, the program provides informal education and outreach programs that enrich the lives of participants and foster greater community well-being.

REQUEST: \$40 million TCU IT Service Fund

USDA – Rural Utility Service

The ongoing pandemic has exacerbated the digital divide and underscored the lack of broadband access across Indian Country. To address these deficiencies that could leave Indian Country – and AIAN students – behind the rest of the U.S. for generations, Congress must act to establish a *permanent TCU IT Service Fund* within the **USDA-Rural Utilities Service Program**. An annual \$40 million set-aside for TCUs, which are 1994 land-grant institutions served by USDA, would help cover rapidly increasing network, connectivity, and equipment costs, maintenance, infrastructure expansion, and IT staffing.



Aaniih Nakoda College: Broadband and IT Progress & Challenges:

- Internet Speed: ANC has increased internet speed from 200MB to 1GB; purchased new router to accommodate the upgrade.
- Student Technical Access: ANC provided students with laptops, technical assistance, and the Moodle delivery system to facilitate remote learning during the pandemic.
- Network and Fiber: ANC requires an upgrade to our network switches & the fiber backbone between buildings-estimate \$1,000,000.
- Cyber Strategy: Create the ANC Cyber Information Strategic Plan; how to meet current needs while anticipating future needs.
- Cybersecurity: Recent expenses associated with cybersecurity upgrades ~\$10,000.
- Hardware: ANC required \$153,000 in hardware updates during COVID.

REQUEST: \$3.2 billion TCU Construction Fund

DOI – Bureau of Indian Education

A July 2021 AIHEC survey of TCUs revealed many chronic unmet facilities and infrastructure needs, including lack of student and faculty housing, inadequate classroom space, insufficient libraries, and outdated laboratories.

- TCU deferred maintenance/rehabilitation: \$400 million (total)
- TCU completion of master plans: \$2.7 billion (total)
- TCU operation and maintenance: \$20 million (annual, recurring need)

AIHEC strongly urges Congress to fund dedicated TCU facilities programs through DOI-BIE to modernize current facilities and build safer 21st century campuses.



Aaniih Nakoda College: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

The pandemic brought to the forefront the deficiencies in the campus, not only accommodations but also technology and infrastructure issues. For institutions such as ours, no funds have been available for construction since 2012. A new building is estimated to cost a minimum of \$5,000,000.

- Small classrooms: Out of all our classrooms, less than five can seat 20 students comfortably. This is a significant barrier as we look to expand our program offerings.
- Lab Space: ANC has expanded to offer a Bachelor of Science in Aaniih Nakoda Ecology. A computer lab was remodeled to a science lab (~\$500,000) but the labs are small and only accommodate twelve students at a time. This requires additional sessions to be offered and taught by instructors which creates scheduling conflicts.
- Lack of office space: Faculty and Staff are doubled up in offices. There is not enough space for new hires or a place for interns to work.
- Study Space: ANC has few spaces on campus for students to relax and/or study between classes. We have computer cubicles in some areas, but it is insufficient for the number of students who spend most of the day on campus. Possible funding idea would be to purchase a modular space to be used as a student study/tutoring area.
- Free Lunch Program: ANC uses COVID funding to provide soup/sandwich lunches to students for free (~\$50,000/yr for supplies and part-time staff) but we have limited space for the students to sit and eat their lunch.
- Cleaning: We have added air purification systems along with additional maintenance and staff expenses.