



DINÉ COLLEGE

THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION OF THE NAVAJO

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS (FEBRUARY 2024)

Diné College, as the first tribally controlled institution established in 1968 provides rigorous post-secondary education and research opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives and other rural community residents. Diné College recognized that our students were faced with insecurities stemming from pandemic recovery such as food, economic, and housing and that these all have an impact on their success in college.

AY 2022-23 to AY 2023-24, 100% tuition grant and student fees, 100% room & meal-fees, and up to \$700 book vouchers offered for all registered students.

Quick Diné College Facts

- Enrollment Trends : +18.45%
- Affordable Tuition: \$1,410.00/ year
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 13:1
- Part-time/Full-time: 988/826
- Highest Completion Rate: (Diné Persistence Rate is 55 %)
- Highest level of degree available: Masters of Biology (MS)

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.

Through the Diné College Land Grant Office there is a coordinated effort to incorporate Extension Education (USDA TCU Extension Grant), create research based on community concerns (USDA TCU Research Grant), and connect the two with developing and enhancing undergraduate curriculum for college students (USDA TCU Equity).

Through Extension Education we have supported farmers and ranchers to improve upon their operations and establish alternative markets. These community efforts also allow for the gathering of resource concerns that allow for the establishment of research.

A few successes were made such as Bachelor's in Agriculture, College student interest in Ag Careers and advancing into those fields, and providing informal education to the Diné people.



**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.



2G Dedicated Internet Access build to Tsaile, AZ for campus housing is currently underway. 2G Dedicated Internet Access upgrade builds to both Shiprock campuses are currently underway. 1G Dedicated Internet Access build to Aneth, Utah campus & Newcomb, NM Campus is currently underway.

\$180,000 per year



**Hardware
update costs**



**Cybersecurity
expenses**

Diné College Broadband & IT Progress & Challenges:

Diné College took opportunities to enhance internet access for students in rural areas such as upgrading broadband bandwidth at our North and South Shiprock Campuses, micro-site in Aneth (UT) and Crownpoint Center (NM). Since 2020, over 1000 students were assisted with laptop loaners and wi-fi hotspots to increase access for our students in rural communities.

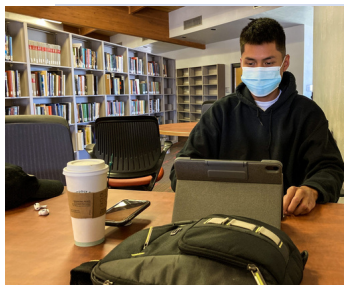
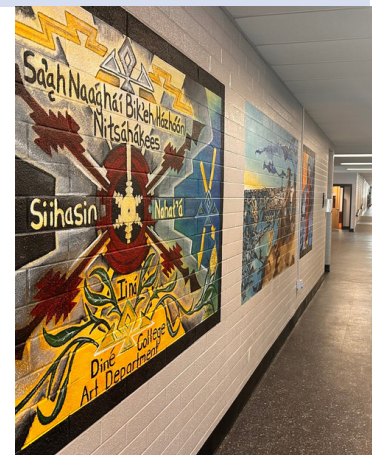
A challenge we face as an institution is finding an Internet service provider that can handle the growing broadband demand of our student population, which is why we partnered with Frontier as part of a two-year plan to upgrade network bandwidth for our campuses and micro-sites (2023-2024) made possible by our IT department whom obtained part of the monies via NTIA funding through the Connect Navajo grant (\$2.9 million).

**REQUEST: \$3.2 billion TCU Construction Fund
DO - 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.



Diné College: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

Diné College was constructing/renovating 158 projects prior to the pandemic for needs such as academic buildings, 34 structures needed renovation, housing, and fire-safety updates. completing these projects would have allowed more research program development, and student enrollment at all sites.