

College of Menominee Nation: 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.

COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION AT A GLANCE

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2023/Fall 2023): 21% decrease in enrollment
- Affordable Tuition: \$250/credit hour. For the 2022 Academic Year (AY), 83% of CMN graduates had no institutional debt
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 5:1 (Fall 2021)
- Part-time/Full-time: 211 part-time students/ 79 full-time students (Spring 2023)
- Persistence Rate: 63% (AY 2022)
- Highest Level of Degree Available: Bachelor's degree
- TRIO Program: No



CMN offers critical student support services to help meet student needs including: traditional workshops, (language, food, teas, history, elders communication), mental health counseling (addressing anxiety, depression, conflict resolution, stress management, grief and loss, trauma, PTSD, LGBTQ+), student food pantry, transportation, gift and gas cards, alcohol and drug workshops (referrals and resources), Goodwill Industries, and assistance with financial hardships (i.e. auto repairs).

CMN receives numerous offers of employment from companies and institutions across the country. CMN's Career and Placement Coordinator assists with finding potential jobs, apprenticeships, or internship options in addition to providing resume building assistance, interest assessments, and mock interviews.

COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION: 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 a Tribal Research Grant from USDA-NIFA, CMN was able to research and identify ancient seeds being held in collections of museums throughout the Midwest. It is customary for the females within the Menominee Tribe to be caretakers of important seeds and be able to feed the community. The College sent a team to investigate the archives at these museums and then made a request to bring them back to their ancestral lands in hopes of germination and a future seed bank of seeds from these Tribal ancestors.



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 AI/AN 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 staff



COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION: Broadband and IT Challenges

- To bring CMN's cyberinfrastructure up to recommended levels, additional funds are needed to cover costs for implementing and maintaining new hardware, software, and personnel
- An increase in interconnected services the College provides has emphasized the need for improved policy and planning
- The large rise in online activities requires additional bandwidth and increased telecom costs



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.

COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

CMN needs to renovate and update existing spaces across the Keshena Campus. Assessment and redesign of older buildings are needed to continue to provide safe and efficient learning environments for staff and students. Post-pandemic planning provided better knowledge of building environment needs in spaces, bringing CMN further into discussions about proactive planning for improving facilities. It has also provided discussions about alternative learning spaces and upgrades needed to outdoor spaces. This helps in the aesthetics of the campus and the innovative ways of learning that students require. Classroom renovations continue to be a direct need, and support is needed for student support areas. Planning also includes the Green Bay Campus, which requires further development of a plan for requirements, location, and programmatic needs. Master planning is a primary goal for CMN, which will aid in facility development.

- Conduct Master Campus Planning Project
- Collaborative building purchase and upgrade for joint Tribal Enterprises/ Tribal Government Workforce Development site in Neopit
- Increasing classroom space in technical trades
- Redesigning student service areas in Glen Miller Hall
- Creating outdoor learning classrooms, updating learning trail, repaving of sidewalks