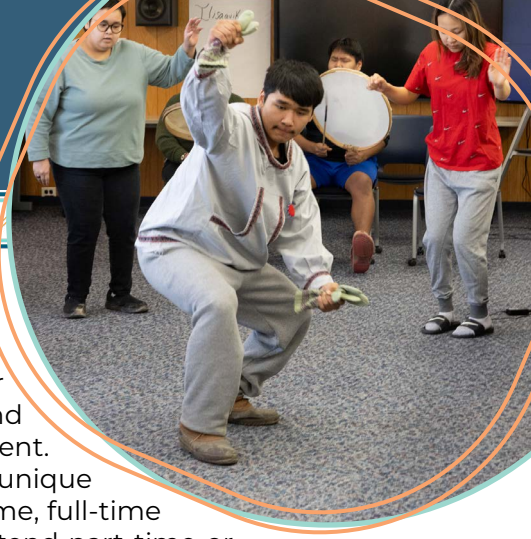




IŁISAĢVIK COLLEGE



IŁISAĢVIK COLLEGE: Priorities for the 118th Congress, 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.

IŁISAĢVIK COLLEGE FACTS

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2023/Fall 2023): 582 students taking classes for credit; 15% enrollment increase from SP '23 to FA '23
- Affordable Tuition: \$205 per credit hour; ~\$4,780 per year (est.) *Iłisaġvik also offers Tuition Waivers for qualified students.*
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 3:1
- Part-time/Full-time: 70% Part-time; 30% Full-time
- Persistence Rate: 61%
- Highest level of degree/program available: B.B.A. (Bachelor of Business Administration)
- TRIO Programs: No



Iłisaġvik College offers a variety of critical support services to students, including comprehensive academic and student service-oriented advising; free transportation to and from classes; a student relief fund for emergent needs; a laptop loaner program; a student Wellness Program and behavioral health supports; and cultural outreach and education. Iłisaġvik knows that holistic student support is the pathway to success for our primarily first-generation college students.

IŁISAĢVIK 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.

Iłisaġvik College has active Equity and Extension programs supported by 1994 Land-Grant funding programs. Iłisaġvik’s Equity Program supports science instruction at the college, including outreach and research opportunities for students. It also helps support outreach efforts by Iłisaġvik’s Student Services Department, ensuring that we reach our many students who are based in rural villages across the state of Alaska. The Equity Program ensures that our traditionally underserved student population receives access and instruction in STEM, as well as access to research opportunities.

Iłisaġvik College’s Extension Program engages in outreach to our community members and students via workshops in healthy living, Iñupiaq culture, and the cross-section of the two. Grant funds support a dedicated outreach coordinator position, materials and supplies for workshops, travel funds for our staff to visit our rural villages and offer workshops and camps, and more. This Program serves 1,000+ residents each year and benefits all ages: elementary and secondary students, adults, Elders, and more.



REQUEST: \$40 million TCU IT Service Fund USDA – Rural Utility Service

The pandemic 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.



ILĪSAĠVIK COLLEGE: Broadband and IT Challenges:

- **Connectivity Issues:** IlĪsaġvik was without fiber internet for 14 weeks due to an ice-scouring event in the arctic cutting the fiber line. Establishing a redundancy system, ensuring cybersecurity and general connectivity were issues.
- **Cybersecurity Issues:** Lack of resources, lack of trained staff to address comprehensive cybersecurity.
- **Affordability Issues:** Internet connectivity is expensive in the North Slope region of Alaska. IlĪsaġvik receives a generous bandwidth donation from Quintillion worth almost \$40K per month, but still pays almost \$10K per month. Students bear the brunt of high connectivity costs at home (\$200+/month).
- **Limited and Non-Tribal ISPs:** There are few options for high-speed internet service in the arctic.
- **Equitable Access:** Not all North Slope villages (there are 8) have high-speed internet service; access is not equitable for students, staff, and residents.



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.

ILĪSAĠVIK COLLEGE: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

IlĪsaġvik College occupies a total of 13 buildings, varying in size, age, and physical condition. Most of our facilities were constructed in the 1940s for use by the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory (NARL). We share maintenance responsibilities with our landowner, the local Native corporation, Ukpeaġvik Inupiat Corporation (UIC). Because our facilities are aging and becoming more expensive to maintain and rent, IlĪsaġvik has been working towards a new college campus. Issues involving our current campus include:

- Deferred maintenance of over \$1 million
- Erosion issues from being so close to the Arctic Ocean/Chukchi Sea—the main road to campus washes out from storms, impeding access.
- Our main campus was constructed in 1968. We experience frequent and expensive plumbing and electrical issues.