



## Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University : Priorities for the 118th Congress

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

### Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University Facts

Affordable Tuition: \$3,755 per semester  
 Student to Faculty Ratio: 15 to 1  
 Persistence\* average for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022: 70%  
 Retention\* average for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022: 51%  
 TRIO Student Support Services: Serves 160 students annually, addressing students holistically is vital to the success of our students.

\*All full-time degree seeking students.



In partnership with our students, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University faculty and staff continually identify opportunities to improve services and support to the University's students. Issues that surface time and again include available housing, childcare, accessible internet, and the ever growing need to support mental health and Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) counseling.



### Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University: 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.

The key focus areas of the Extension Department include: sustainable agriculture, youth and community development, research and internship experiences, and career/work readiness programs. In the 2021-2022 academic year, the department held a total of 207 workshops with 1,849 participants. The Extension Department manages a 220 acre Sustainable Agriculture Research Farm and is currently conducting variety trials and research companion cropping methods with industrial hemp in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin – Madison. From July-December, 2022 the farm hosted 11 community education workshops and served 150+ participants; presented at 8 farmers market events; and served 168 youth through in-person visits to area schools, the Youth in Agriculture Summer Program and youth visits to the LCOOU Farm in collaboration with area schools.



## 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.

### Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University: Broadband and IT Challenges

- Students do not have adequate, or in many cases, any access to adequate broadband at their residence.
- Without the technology loan program students do not have the technology they need to complete their course work.
- LCOOU purchased new firewall systems to better protect our students, staff and faculty.

## 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.



### Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

In 2019 LCOOU completed a Master Facility Plan which identified deferred maintenance and future space needs based on our Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. The plan incorporated student, staff, faculty, and community feedback on what is needed for students and the community to succeed. Areas identified include:

- Student housing
- Campus expansion as we are out growing our main campus
- New buildings for the outreach sites