



# NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE

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## ABOUT NWIC

Northwest Indian College's main campus is located on the Lummi Nation Reservation in Bellingham, Washington — 20 miles south of the Canadian border. NWIC is the only accredited Tribal College serving the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

The College offers in-person and online classes at the main campus and six extended campus sites: Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Swinomish and Tulalip in WA and Nez Perce in ID.

We are committed to our students, the Tribes we serve and advancing Tribal sovereignty for the protection and enhancement of our homelands and future generations.

NWIC is a proud member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC).



## NORTHWEST INDIAN COLLEGE PRIORITIES FOR THE 118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

118TH CONGRESS | FEB. 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.



## CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF INDIGENOUS HIGHER ED

NWIC grew from the Lummi Indian School of Aquaculture and was officially chartered as Lummi Community College in 1983. Following accreditation in 1989, the College's name was changed to the Northwest Indian College to reflect its wider mandate to serve Native people through the Northwest.

## QUICK FACTS

- 18.5% ↑ Overall student enrollment
- 11% ↑ Applicants who enroll
- 11% ↑ Student retention
- 7% ↑ Persistence
- 4% ↑ Applications
- 2,000 🎓 Degrees & awards since '90
- 400 🎓 Bachelor's grads since '10
- 7 🎓 Years of 100+ grads
- 4 🎓 Bachelor's Programs

We support student needs for food security and mental health care by providing food pantries at each campus and an Indigenous mental



health care professional. Student support services have also put together a number of drives for clothing and household items

for students in-need. CARES Act funding has provided

**\$1.2M**

in direct student relief.



Through education, Northwest Indian College promotes Indigenous self-determination and knowledge.



## Justice Black-Williams (Lummi)

Justice is a mother and student studying Native Environmental Science. She currently works as a research assistant in the Salish Sea Research Center. "The staff does an immense job caring for the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of every student."



## NWIC Space Center

Created in-part with NASA, NWIC's Pre-Engineering program was born out of the College's award-winning hobby rocket club. Now known as the NWIC Space Center, the club focuses on engineering, rocketry, 3-D printing, robotics and other STEM projects. In 2023, the Club attended the first WA State Space Summit.



## Food Security

Established by CARES Act Funds and continued through local partnerships, the NWIC Community Food Pantry served more than 1,200 meal kits in 2023. The pantry offers fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, shelf-stable products and other home necessities.



Northwest Indian College relies on the FARM Bill's support of Tribal College research, teaching and extension.

## RESEARCH

The Salish Sea Research Center (SSRC) prepares the next generation of environmental scientists and leaders by fostering respect for Indigenous knowledge of nature, providing opportunities for students to gain a solid background in scientific methods, and encouraging critical thinking skills and self-motivation. In the last seven years, the SSCR has provided over 80 paid student internships and hired 11 of NWIC's Native Environmental Science graduates.



## IMPACTS

"We are focused on working with our Tribal partners on community-identified research that supports food and data sovereignty, and facilitates student and community engagement. Significant cuts to funding would disrupt long-term climate monitoring that is instrumental in managing coastlines, food resources, and water use data that Tribal Nations use to make management and policy decisions. Funding cuts would also interrupt programing that provides science internships to Indigenous undergraduate students that introduce them to federal and industry aquaculture workforces. 60% of our research awards are funded by the FARM bill — including funding to support monitoring of the culturally important Hooligan (Longfin smelt) fish, outreach activities to local schools and Tribal communities. These programs are funded exclusively by the FARM Bill's USDA/NIFA research program." - Dr. Misty Peacock, Salish Sea Research Center Director

## TEACHING

Teaching and learning is at the heart of Northwest Indian College. The College offers four Bachelor's degree programs, Associate's programs and Awards of Completion. The commitment of faculty to providing a supportive, culturally-relevant environment is a key part of the school's mission. This work is not only supporting the advancement of individuals, but also Tribal Nation building, as the ripple effect of investing in Indigenous Education impacts entire communities.



## IMPACTS

"Significant cuts of funding would impact our teaching significantly. Currently, approximately 50% of our faculty salaries comes from grant funding, which requires continuous management and applications. It would help tremendously if we had more sustained funds to support our faculty, and the College in general, to allow us to focus fully on mission fulfillment." - Dr. Emma Norman, Native Environmental Science Department Chair

## EXTENSION

The NWIC Cooperative Extension provides educational opportunities to students, youth and community members. The mission is to promote Indigenous wellness programming to restore balanced lifestyles and Tribal prosperity. Programming includes traditional plants and food education, financial literacy, healthy cooking, budgeting, cultural workshops, free tax preparation, summer camps and more.



## IMPACTS

"We wouldn't be able to provide free community education programming that is accessible to all ages if there were significant cuts to funding. Often, our workshops are an opportunity for elders to share wisdom and knowledge to younger participants with the hope that the historical knowledge is passed down and preserved for our future generations. Community members would not have access to free educational opportunities to learn about food systems, food security and an opportunity to learn through hands-on workshops and educational experiences." - Sunny Guillory, Cooperative Extension Financial Literacy Coordinator