

UTTC: Priorities for the 118th Congress

February, 2024



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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.

United Tribes Technical College:

At A Glance

Enrollment Trends (Spring 2023/Fall 2023)

Enrollment up 67% since the pandemic (326 student Fall 2020 to 544 fall 2023)

Affordable Tuition

\$135 per credit (\$200 per credit for Bachelors)

Students Graduate Debt-Free

\$1.53 Million in Institutional Aid distributed by UTTC

Student to Faculty Ratio

11:1

Part-time/Full-time

(93%) 508 full time and 36 part time

Persistence Rate

Fall to spring 74%

Retention Rate

Fall to fall 50%

UTTC offers Certificates, Associates, and Bachelor degrees in high demand and high wage areas.

UTTC offers single-family housing as well as dorm accommodations, a cafeteria, childcare center, a PreK-5th grade elementary school, and Student Health. The Wellness program provides mental health counseling as well as a Campus Cupboard food pantry and Campus Closet that provides professional clothing from which students can choose.

According to data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, UTTC provides students with more support they need to thrive socially and cope with non-academic responsibilities than other institutions. Students at UTTC interact with faculty to discuss grades or assignments and to work on activities other than coursework more often than at other colleges.



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United Tribes Technical 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 agriculture needs and opportunities in Indian Country.

The UTTC Land-Grant department has been doing exciting work to strength and expand the Food Sovereignty movement in Indian Country. A huge move is underway to incorporate more native/tribal plant species and foods into UTTC's Land Grants multi-faceted operations. The upcoming year will yield the propagation of ten varieties of culturally important plants being grown from seed for educational and community uses. These plants will be cultivated in both the field and our new NetZero Greenhouse. As the project continues, seeds, live plants and the tools needed to successfully grow these varieties will be available to all students,

staff, and community/tribal members. In addition to plants, native meats such as buffalo, rabbit and salmon, are being utilized for community enrichment and educational events.

The UTTC Land Grant Department continues to be a recognized leader and role model for integrating the needs of the tribal community into our programing and our established Sustainable Agricultural and Food Systems Associates Degree Program. Students, communities and Tribal Nations will benefit from this work by having access to high quality education/extension along with the resources and guidance to succeed.



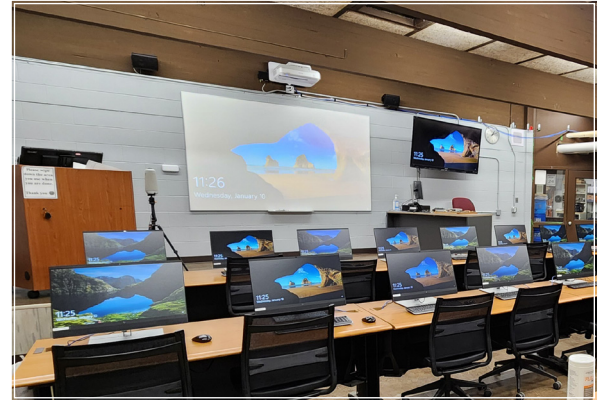
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Request:

\$40 M 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 staffing.



UTTC Broadband and IT Challenges

UTTC upgraded hard wired fiber internet connection to family housing, individual dorm units, classrooms, and computer labs. This HEERF funded upgrade increased internet speeds from 100 megabytes to 1 gigabyte, resulting in internet speeds being 10 times faster than previously provided.

This project included new switches, core switches, servers, and hardware, critical to a strong IT infrastructure.

UTTC continues to invest in Cybersecurity

and performed a risk assessment to provide a plan for future Cybersecurity features. Multi Factor Authentication for email was recently implemented to this end. UTTC is also in the process of installing a campus wide security camera system to improve safety and security across campus. This includes the interior and exterior of all buildings and Theodore Jamerson Elementary School. Badgepass was implemented as a keyless entry for offices, dorms, and building entry throughout the UTTC Campus. The cost of these investments totaled \$4,006,770.



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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.



UTTC Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

Established in 1969, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) is one of the oldest of the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the United States. The facilities themselves date back to the late 1800s, some of which have not been updated in over 50 years. Our main concern is the overall aging infrastructure of the college. From the ground up, our infrastructure needs drastic improvements. Perhaps the most important challenge we face is having adequate funding to maintain, rehabilitate, and to build up our facilities to meet modern-day standards of operating and living. An increase in funding could help us in the following areas and projects:

- A Career Technical Education (CTE) building to increase classroom size to accommodate student demand for vocations such as welding, heavy equipment operator, and automotive/diesel mechanics, as workforce demands have created employment opportunities for graduates. Estimated cost for a new building is \$33 million.

- The campus needs a field house to enhance health, physical education, and recreation, offerings and address disproportionate health disparities experienced by American Indian populations. Preliminary estimated costs for a new facility are \$25 - \$35 million.
- Paving improvement projects would assist in addressing deteriorating road conditions and greatly enhance safety conditions across campus. Preliminary estimated costs for street improvements are \$20 million.
- Rehabilitate and modernize Sakakawea Hall Dormitory to accommodate the changing student demographic of younger single student enrollment. Estimated cost is between \$8 - \$10 million.
- Land Grant and Science & Technology department expansion projects. Academic space is needed to keep up with student enrollment increases in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).



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