



# SAGINAW CHIPPEWA TRIBAL COLLEGE

## MT. PLEASANT, MICHIGAN

### Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College: Priorities for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress

#### February 2023

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.

#### SAGINAW CHIPPEWA TRIBAL COLLEGE FACTS:

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2020/Fall 2022): +15%
- Affordable Tuition: \$60 Credit Hour
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 4 to 1
- Part-time/Full-time: 78% PT
- Retention: Overall 62%, Cohort Fall 2021 68%
- Highest level of degree/program available: Associate
- TRIO Programs: No
- 75% of SCTC Alumni are or have been employee by the tribe

SCTC is a leader in Michigan educating Native Americans-10<sup>th</sup> place ranking with universities & 3<sup>rd</sup> place ranking with community colleges



Luke Sprague, Alumni and Tribal Council Member



Jacqui Mandoka 2022 Student of the Year & Jordan Fallis, Board of Regent Chair

One of the crucial areas for SCTC students is college preparedness. With the help of the Covid funding, SCTC has been able to provide services that support the student in and out of the classroom. This has included assigning students to Supplemental Instructors, and Supplemental Instructors attending class with students. SCTC was able to hire Success Coaches who make initial contact with new students within the first week of classes and then schedule bi-weekly meetings with students. Faculty and student service staff is promoting personal contact with students that ensures they know SCTC's primary goal is student success.





## Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College: 1994 Land-Grant Program

The Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act created the “1994 Land-grants” more than 25 years ago. Since then, funding for 1994 Land-grant programs and resources have remained inadequate to address the growing agricultural needs and opportunities in Indian Country. SCTC has spent the last few years developing an agricultural component to the Land Grant office. The beginnings are small, but still impact students and the community. The produce from the garden has been dehydrated for soup bases and teas. The program has created a newfound interest in agriculture and perhaps looking at degree programs at SCTC that can partner with the Land Grant Office for internships.



### **REQUEST: \$40 million TCU IT Service Fund USDA—Rural Utility Office**

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.

### **Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College: Broadband and IT Progress & Challenges**

SCTC has made little progress in obtaining funds to make sure the broadband will meet the growing needs of staff and students.

- Salaries for qualified staff to monitor and maintain IT system
- Only two IT staff members for the college
- Wi-fi network is not encrypted or authenticated
- No Network Management System
- No full time IT instructors



### **REQUEST: \$3.2 billion TCU Construction Fund DOI—Bureau of Indian Education**

A July 2021 AIHEC survey of TCUs reveals 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 21<sup>st</sup> century campuses. An example of the need, SCTC has been in lease buildings since 2000, and only recently were able to purchase an old building that housed a nearby community college. This building has remained vacant for several years and needs to be updated. Construction funds will be used to modernize the building to ensure safety for all.

- Updated science labs
- Expanded computer classrooms
- Larger classrooms to accommodate larger classes
- Designated space for the library