



RED LAKE NATION COLLEGE

Red Lake Nation College: 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.

Red Lake Nation College FACTS:

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2020/Fall 2022): RLNC had a 116% increase in student enrollment from the Spring of 2020 to the Fall of 2022.
- One of the most Affordable Tuition in the state at \$193/credit
- Part-time: 35%
- Full-time: 65%
- Persistence: 69%
- Retention/Completion Rate: 43%
- Highest level of degree/program available: AA Liberal Arts



STUDENT SUCCESS SERVICES



All RLNC students are assigned a Student Success Advisor and a Success Mentor, who can provide help and guidance whenever needed. RLNC has a certified counselor on staff who provides FREE confidential counseling to our students. Our Career Counselor can help RLNC students and alumni prepare for life after graduation with career counseling and development, financial literacy training, as well as resume, job search, and interview training. Professional Counseling Tutoring & Advising/Mentoring Career & Transfer Services Emergency Aid & Student Pantry If students experience an unexpected emergency, RLNC can provide food and/or other emergency aid. Veterans & Disability Services RLNC can provide personalized help to students who are veterans or have a disability.

Red Lake Nation 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.



Red Lake Nation College is the newest 1994 Land-grant, as of December 2018. We have started exciting new USDA-NIFA grant-funded Extension, Equity, and Research programs, and have many ideas for expansion.

Research Example: In collaboration with UMN, we set up the first ever research plots at the Red Lake Nation to study soils and cover crops. RLNC student interns worked with RLNC faculty and UMN grad student mentors to design and conduct field experiments and sampling, analyze results, and present research at the national FALCON conference. This benefits RLNC students, with broadening research experiences, and the Red Lake community, with expanded knowledge and research results. Next research will include impacts of cover crops on vegetable production.

Our Red Lake Nation College Motto: **Ji-Mino-Bimaadiziwin** (The good life for us all)



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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.



Red Lake Nation College: Broadband and IT Progress & Challenges:

- Continuing hardware refresh policies at 3 year replacement cycles on devices.
- Adding multi-gig infrastructure to support future wifi 6+ access points and devices. Switch estimated at \$10,000.
- New in classroom technology in mid deployment allowing for better distance learning opportunities through better room wide audio solutions.
- Verizon data plans for student devices to allow for hyflex learning. No alternative available outside of Verizon, monopoly caused by service area and coverage, lacking AT&T or T-Mobile coverage.
- Addition of advanced computer lab planned/in-progress, to enable high performance workloads for clubs, select programs, and extracurricular activities. (Video editing, programming, large datasets/data manipulation, eSports, artificial intelligence workloads, 3d modeling, animation, and other rendering projects) estimated \$30,000 outside of current hardware refresh budgeting.

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.



Red Lake Nation College: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation Red Lake Nation College Minneapolis Distance Learning Site will predominately serve 50,000 Native Americans who live in the Twin Cities. Tribal Colleges provide excellent higher education grounded in language and culture. This model is more successful at getting Natives to continue their education. This is an effort to bring this successful Tribal College model to the largest concentrated population of Natives in Minnesota, the Twin Cities.

- There is no Tribal College located in the Twin Cities.
- Once completed, Minneapolis and Minnesota would be home to the first Tribal College located in a major urban city in the USA.

Further, Native Americans have the worst education achievement levels, largest socio-economic gaps, and highest poverty rates of any of the major minority groups in Minnesota, and Nationally. This Native education project will be an attempt to close these education gaps and serve the “most underserved”, high-poverty community of Native Americans in the higher education field in Minnesota.

This modest investment will provide a large impact with significant Return on Investment (ROI) with students either transferring and feeding into the State system schools, or earning higher salaries after graduating.

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