

LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE

OUR MISSION: "BE STRONG AND EDUCATE MY CHILDREN"

Little Priest Tribal College: Priorities for the 118th 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.

Little Priest Tribal College (LPTC) Facts:

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2020/Fall 2022): 173%
- Affordable Tuition: Tuition is Free
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 7:1
- Part-time/Full-time: Part-Time: 135; Full-Time: 76 (Fall 2022)
- Persistence: 58%
- Highest level of degree/program available: AA/AS/AAS
- At the time being we do not offer a TRIO program
- We do offer a Community Education Program, with Cultural Classes that connect people to their culture. Most of these courses they are very well attended.



LPTC worked to remove financial barriers for students to attend college. Our Student Support Services offers an array of services to students. LPTC is located in a rural area, where students commute a significant distance, almost everything the college provides is offered both in-person and remotely in case of inclement weather, or transportation issues. Services that we provide include tutoring (remote, and in-person), counseling (remote, and in-person), a study area in the Student Support Services building (in-person) with calculators, laptops, internet, and extended hours. Additionally, there is a Retention Specialist who will work with students in-person or remotely on time management, study skills, organization, problem solving, connecting to resources, and reducing any other barriers between that student and success. Throughout the semester Student Support Services provides numerous events, workshops, and "Study Nights" (During the event a meal is served, and there are instructors available to work with students on assignments) that are offered remotely and in-person that will help students succeed. As most of our students work, have families, and a life outside of being a student we offer the events at varying times and days, throughout the semester.

As a college it's not just the Student Support Services that supports students: in the academic's department most classes can be completed in-person or online, The College provides free snacks, our IT department will help students with personal laptops, in addition to school laptop, our library has extended hours, and financial aid has Emergency Aid. Additionally, the College Board of Trustees approved to continue with free tuition. The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska has "Career and Technical Education (CTE)" program and a "Higher Ed" program that provides stipends to students, child-care assistance, tuition/textbook assistance, mileage reimbursement, and additional financial assistance. Students at LPTC can apply for; Pell Grant, Federal Work Study, and the American Indian College Fund (AICF), which provides scholarships to students.

LPTC expanded efforts to high school students prior to them entering college. We offer Dual-Enrollment and have a significant increase with dual credit students. Little Priest Tribal College and the Winnebago Public Schools have a class exclusively for high-schoolers, in the high school called: "College Readiness". The class supports younger students in being ready for college, understanding what opportunities, and requirements await. Little Priest Tribal College also has occasional events with local programs such as the Boys and Girls Club, Educare (Head Start, Early Head Start, Winnebago Public Schools, and other early childhood funding sources), and the community to encourage more people too enroll and succeed in college.



Little Priest Tribal 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.

Little Priest Tribal College is very involved in helping meet the agricultural needs of our community. We, offer interactive gardens so people may learn how to garden, and offer seeds. Due to those programs alone, we have supported developing over one hundred private gardens, and when the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska wanted to create a Community Garden, Little Priest Tribal College Extension helped the Tribe get the garden established. Little Priest Tribal College’s Extension, and Equity department provides outreach to youth in the community via STEM classes. Lastly, the Outreach Education Coordinator is a member of the Food Sovereignty Task Force on the Reservation.

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.



Little Priest Tribal College: Broadband and IT Progress & Challenges:

Progress:

- Little Priest Tribal College Student Support Services and the Library have laptops students can borrow.
- Little Priest Tribal College offers education on how to use technology through College Courses, Community Education, and Student Workshops.
- Little Priest Tribal College employs a Director of IT, IT Specialist, and an Instructional Technologist that are available to help students.
- Most courses offered at Little Priest Tribal College are offered in a hybrid (Hyflex) format in which students can be in-person or on Zoom.

Challenges:

- Some of our students do not have internet access at home and can not complete assignments off of campus. (These students tend to struggle understanding how to use technology when on campus as well).



**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.

Little Priest Tribal College: Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

- While the number of students attending Little Priest Tribal College has drastically increased over the years, and the number of programs we offer has expanded, our facilities has been an area to improve. Currently, we offer numerous courses online, and at off-campus locations as we do not have the physical space available. We do have a ten-acre master plan with the following: a science building, event center with cafe, child-care program, dorms, gym, a building for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, and lastly an administration building. These facilities will make it easier for us as a college to expand the number of classes offered, services provided, and in general better support and educate our students. Additionally, it can be a struggle planning for different large events, as we do not have a large multi-purpose room. It should be noted that while we struggle having the facilities, Little Priest Tribal College currently has ten acres of land to expand on.
- LPTC plans to repave the parking lot.
- LPTC plans three more buildings built by Fall 2026.
- LPTC has also started capital campaign to raise \$1M for the science building project
- LPTC has been approved by the DOE to build the Science Building as of 11/4/22, and the Board of Trustees 11/22/22, with the funding allocated for it. We received funding from the DOE, DOI, ARPA funds, and potentially 3-5 foundations located in Omaha, NE. The building must be completed by: 06/30/2024.

