

FINAL MINUTES OF THE AIHEC SPRING 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
The Clyde Hotel
Albuquerque, New Mexico & Zoom Web Conference
Saturday, March 4, 2023 – 8:30 a.m. MT

- I. **CALL TO ORDER & OPENING PRAYER:** AIHEC Board Chair David Yarlott Jr., President, Little Big Horn College, called the 2023 Spring Board of Directors Meeting to order at 8:44 a.m. MT.

Dr. Elmer Guy provided an opening prayer and shared briefly about the Tribes and historical significance of the region.

ROLL CALL: Erykah Wilkerson, Executive Assistant to the President & CEO, called the roll with the following results:

Directors Present

Frank Arpan
Lane Azure
Duane Bedell
Sandra Boham
Debra Bordeaux
Donna Brown
Christopher Caldwell*
Sean Chandler
Eva Flying
Dawn Frank
Justin Guillory
Elmer Guy
Brad Hall*
Anita Hanson
Dan King
Cynthia Lindquist
Robert Martin
Leander McDonald
Helen Montgomery*
Michael Oltrogge*
Manoj Patil
Tamara Pfeifer
Monte Randall
Charles M. Roessel
Paul Robertson
Cory Sangrey-Billy
Anna Sheppard*

Regular Member Institutions

Haskell Indian Nations University
Sisseton Wahpeton College
Bay Mills Community College
Salish Kootenai College
Sinte Gleska University
Turtle Mountain Community College
College of Menominee Nation
Aaniiih Nakoda College
Chief Dull Knife College
Oglala Lakota College
Northwest Indian College
Navajo Technical University
Blackfeet Community College
Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College
Red Lake Nation College
Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Institute of American Indian Arts
United Tribes Technical College
Leech Lake Tribal College
Nebraska Indian Community College
Little Priest Tribal College
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
College of the Muscogee Nation
Diné College
Tohono O'odham Community College
Stone Child College
White Earth Tribal & Community College

Lori Ann Sherman
Carla Sineway*
Russell Swagger
Laurel Vermillion
Justina Wilhelm*
David Yarlott Jr.

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University
Sitting Bull College
Ijisaḡvik College
Little Big Horn College

With 32 directors present, a quorum was established.

Directors Absent
Twyla Baker
Haven Gourneau

Regular Member Institutions
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College
Fort Peck Community College

II. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

Chair Yarlott reviewed the proposed agenda for the meeting.

MOTION:

President Dan King moved [seconded by President Donna Brown] to approve the 2023 Spring Board of Directors meeting agenda.

OUTCOME:

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

III. **REVIEW AIHEC CODE OF CONDUCT**

President Cynthia Lindquist, Member-at-Large & Peace Keeper, directed presidents to the AIHEC Code of Conduct provided in the board book for the annual review. She reminded presidents that the board adopted the Code on March 23, 2007, to articulate the practices, policies, and expected behaviors of anyone serving as a representative of AIHEC. The Code focuses on the values of integrity, loyalty, equality, respect, honor, and trust.

Chair Yarlott asked those in attendance to briefly introduce themselves, as some new president may not be familiar with everyone.

IV. **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

President Leander McDonald, Secretary, presented the Fall 2022 board meeting minutes.

MOTION:

President McDonald moved [seconded by President Guy] to approve the AIHEC Fall 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes.

OUTCOME:

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

President McDonald presented the October-December 2022 and January-February 2023 minutes of the AIHEC executive committee, included in the board book, for informational purposes.

MOTION:

President McDonald moved [seconded by President Guy] to accept the October 2022 – February 2023 Executive Committee Meeting minutes.

OUTCOME:

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

V. TREASURER’S REPORT

AIHEC Investment Report

President Justin Guillory, Treasurer, provided a brief overview of the treasurer’s report, included in the board book. AIHEC’s investment advisor, Sovereign Finance, provided a report to the Finance and Audit Committee on the performance history of AIHEC’s investments. Key points from the report include: to date, no losses have been realized¹, and the portfolio continues to outperform benchmarks; presidents are encouraged to become familiar with the AIHEC investments and to understand the benefits of being a long-term investor; and the Federal Reserve has reported the US economy is gaining strength, with a 6.4 percent inflation rate.

President Guillory next presented the AIHEC draft operating budget for fiscal year 2024. He noted two points: (1) Meeting and travel expenses have increased significantly, and the budget has been adjusted to factor in these costs. (2) In FY 2024, AIHEC will adjust the way advertisement billing in the Tribal College Journal, to be consistent with standard billing practices. Specifically, AIHEC will require customers to pay for advertisements at the time the ad is placed, rather than when the ad appears in publication. In addition to conforming to standard billing practices, the change should help address late payment issues, which are detrimental to the Tribal College Journal and require considerable staff time. To reiterate, this change will become effective October 1, 2023.

President Guillory continued with a brief overview of the AIHEC grants and contracts, stating that AIHEC has been awarded a 5-year \$21 million award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and a 3-year \$750,000 award from the USDA.

The AIHEC FY 2022 audit is in progress and is expected to be completed by late May 2023. Additionally, AIHEC’s indirect rate increased from 12.2 percent to 34.67 percent in recent years. During the most recent indirect rate negotiations, AIHEC’s “cognizant federal agency” changed from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of the Interior.

¹ A loss is realized when an asset is sold at a value below the previous/purchase price.

President Patil stated that his college's indirect rate is 46.8 percent. This is good for the institution, he said, but higher indirect rates shift grant funding from programmatic activities to general operations. He wondered what TCUs can do to achieve both adequate funding for programmatic activities and higher indirect rates. Ms. Billy noted that some agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) provide indirect on top of the grant, which means that 100 percent of the grant funds can be focused on programmatic activities. She briefly discussed AIHEC's work with the Office of Management and Budget and Congressional subcommittees on the need to provide TCUs with indirect, or contract support, payments for Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) operating grants/cooperative agreements.

President Lindquist said Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) has been struggling to increase the indirect rate for the past 10 or 11 years. Following a discussion among presidents on indirect cost rates, President Lindquist requested a meeting with the presidents and a consultant/contractor who can help provide a clear understanding of indirect cost rates and the negotiation process. Discussion suggested this meeting take place during the summer board meeting. Ms. Billy reiterated that during AIHEC's most recent negotiations, AIHEC staff, led by Ms. Tina Cooper, AIHEC Vice-president for Finance and Administration, negotiated with federal staff for AIHEC's current rate.

Chair Yarlott suggested a networking meeting, during which TCUs could share best practices, resources, and overall experiences.

MOTION:

President Guillory moved [seconded by President Lindquist] that AIHEC's draft FY 2024 operating budget be approved.

OUTCOME:

The motion was approved by voice vote.

VI. PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD

White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities (WH Initiative)

Jason Cummins, Deputy Director of the WH Initiative, introduced the WH Initiative's new Executive Director, Naomi Miguel. Ms. Miguel said she is excited to start working to strengthen Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). Mr. Cummins shared that he is proud to be a Tribal College graduate and to have the opportunity to advocate for TCUs.

Mr. Cummins provided an update of recent meetings conducted by the WH initiative, including a meeting with Department of the Interior (DOI) staff. During the meeting, the DOI's commitment to equity was discussed. Of note, the disparity in operating funding provided to TCUs compared to other minority institutions speaks to the Administration's commitment to tribal higher education.

National Plan on Revitalizing Native American Languages

Mr. Cummins discussed various deliverables within the federal government's 10-year national plan to revitalize Native American languages, noting the plan is in draft form and presidents are encouraged to provide their feedback. The plan requires a comprehensive national study on Native American language education, which will include tribal consultation and an advisory board. With the support of Secretary Cardona, who is committed to this effort, the study is expected to be completed by 2026.

The Department of Education (ED) and DOI are reviewing federal grant requirements to determine where Native languages can be promoted within existing requirements. Mr. Cummins shared a recent discovery indicated funding for Native American-serving non-Tribal institutions was not being applied for although these funds may be used for partnerships with TCUs for language revitalization.

When appropriate, the WH Initiative will provide an update on discussions between ED and DOI general counsel offices on whether and how federal efforts to allow Tribes to consolidate grant reporting may impact TCUs.

NACIE Advisory Council

The White House Initiative continues to push to have the remaining seats on the NACIE Advisory Council filled. Applications and supporting statements from AIHEC have been submitted to the White House and are pending further action.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Initiative for Tribal Nations

A webinar will be provided to TCUs on the federal electric vehicle initiative to explore ways the TCUs can best participate in the initiative. Presidents who are involved with green energy or environmental projects are encouraged to contact Mr. Cummins or Ms. Miguel.

IPA/Internship

The White House Initiative is looking for Native leaders and scholars who are interested in educational law and Indian education and policy to participate in a fellowship or internship. Presidents are encouraged to contact Mr. Cummins or Ms. Miguel for more information.

Discussion

President Guy shared that Navajo Technical University just received correspondence from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) approving NTU's Doctor of Philosophy program in Diné studies, which will focus on Navajo culture and language sustainability. This is the first PhD program offered at a TCU. Presidents and guests gave President Guy and NTU a strong round of applause and congratulations for this historic achievement. Ms. Billy noted the achievement was even more remarkable because unlike HBCUs and HSIs, TCUs do not have a "graduate studies development and support program" funded by ED. NTU developed this landmark program without federal support similar to how TCUs were originally created.

Regarding Native languages, Chair Yarlott suggested Mr. Cummins and Ms. Miguel meet with AIHEC to discuss the literature review and research that has already been developed and that they learn more about AIHEC's Native languages, which is developing a status update on Native languages at TCUs and a national plan for the TCU role in sustaining our languages.

President Charles M. Roessel expressed frustration over the lack of federal support for TCU programs, particularly Native languages programs. He said that the federal government took our languages away and now should be responsible for providing the funding to restore our languages. Discussions of an initiative that would provide funding to support TCUs is needed, as opposed to discussing an initiative with no mention of the funding necessary to ensure the programs are successful.

Chair Yarlott reiterated the importance of working with AIHEC to find available resources and explore strategic partnerships. Ms. Billy pointed out that AIHEC has a proposal for the type of program President Roessel mentioned. The Secretary could include funding for the initiative in his FY2024 budget. This would be a strong indication of commitment by the Department.

President Sandra Boham shared that her institution, Salish Kootenai College, has a language apprenticeship program that has been available for the past two years. The apprenticeships were created in partnership with the community; the program provides a full immersion experience for cultural apprenticeships and language apprenticeships. President Boham is willing to share what she and her staff have learned and suggested having a convening to share information amongst TCUs, as opposed to starting from scratch. President Boham discussed a previous two-day mentoring articulation event that was hosted in Montana that consisted of the deans of academics, registrars, and financial aid staff. A discussion on TCUs, Native languages, and the daily role that TCU presidents have in leading Native languages programs, at home and nationally, occurred.

MOTION:

President Boham moved [seconded by President Lindquist] that AIHEC convene the 2nd Annual National TCU Native Language Summit with TCU presidents as thought leaders in designing and supporting the convening.

OUTCOME:

The motion was approved by voice vote.

Ms. Billy shared a brief history of AIHEC's Native languages grants, beginning with the *Reclaiming the Words of Our Peoples* grant funded by the Wells Fargo Foundation to review TCU Native languages programs and conduct research on best practice among Native language programs (including a literature review and bibliography), followed by a multi-year grant from the Mellon Foundation to develop a national TCU plan for the TCU role in sustaining Native languages. The plan is based on a comprehensive TCU needs assessment and developed by working one-on-one with TCU Native languages faculty and through regional convenings. Due to the lack of federal funding for Native languages programs and the

tremendous need among Tribes, AIHEC has sought only private sector funds for programs in this area. The Mellon Foundation award supports a national TCU convening each year, and this year, AIHEC will host the first in-person event. Preparations for the second annual National TCU Native Language Summit, led by Mary Johnson and Jurgita Antoine, are underway with an anticipated early fall date.

President Lindquist said that during the covid-19 pandemic, the graduation requirements for Dakota Language and Culture at CCCC were suspended due to the lack of available instructors. Although the pandemic is coming to an end, CCCC still has no instructors available. There are elders in the community who are fluent speakers, but they are not able to teach as they do not have the technical and formal teaching skills and may be unwilling to commit the time required to work with language learners. In depth conversations are needed to determine how to address the issue, including strategies for sharing information/resources and continuing efforts within current staff and faculty workloads.

President Lindquist continued by discussing the Dakota Tribal College Alliance that consists of Sisseton Wahpeton College (SWC), Fort Peck Community College (FPCC), Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC), and CCCC. Part of the dream for the alliance is to create the space and opportunity for TCUs to share resources in addition to providing outreach to other Dakota communities in the United States and Canada. Ms. Billy urged specific conversations between CCCC and SWC regarding language challenges as SWC is the recipient of a major award from the National Science Foundation in Dakota Language revitalization and might be able to assist her college.

Ms. Billy continued that increased funding is critical; and along with the funding, an informed plan for strategically and effectively spending the funding is essential if our languages are to be saved. AIHEC's research has shown that to be successful in retaining our languages, basic building blocks - or text corpora - for language sustainability must be in place, including complete dictionaries, syntax structures, comprehensive sequential assessment, and more. Many Native languages lack these basic building blocks, particularly assessment. Others have incomplete or outdated dictionaries and other materials. Additionally, the advisory board to AIHEC's Native languages initiative, along with AIHEC staff, have been exploring how artificial intelligence and machine learning might be used in Native language restoration. AIHEC is currently having discussions with TCU faculty and the Department of Homeland Security on potential strategies – and risks – for using AI in language programs. Presidents are encouraged to be more involved with the Native language initiative and to ensure their colleges have in place the basic building blocks needed for successful programs with clear outcomes. Once those are in place at all TCUs, we need to take our work to scale nationally and internationally.

President Hall agreed that the efforts should be led by the presidents and continued by sharing that Montana recently had several convenings that included Class 7 certified teachers and other language professionals. However, due to there not being a sustainability plan in place,

efforts have come to a standstill. The Class 7 certified teachers in Montana are among the most neglected in regard to professional development.

In closing, Mr. Cummins shared that ED is developing a Native American Language Resource Center that will be funded by \$1.5 million allocated from Congress. The resource center will serve permanently within ED as an online resource. Additionally, Secretary Cardona has made numerous budget requests, as he continues to advocate for multilingualism and education.

BREAK: Chair Yarlott thanked Mr. Cummins and Ms. Miguel and announced a 10-minute break.

Bureau of Indian Education, US. Department of the Interior

Dr. Katherine Campbell began by sharing that she is preparing a spreadsheet of reports the BIE requires the TCUs to submit along with compliance status. The list, which will indicate what each TCU has submitted, will be provided soon. She reminded presidents that third quarter enrollment reports are due the third week after students are registered. To assist, Dr. Campbell will add annual deadlines to the spreadsheet she is preparing.

Due to a system error, endowment payments from last summer are now being awarded in the amount of approximately \$6,055 for each participating TCU. The grants.gov system does not have the capability to award two different grants simultaneously, and this created a problem for several TCUs.

The \$16 million Facilities Improvement and Repair (FI&R) (construction) funding for TCUs will be released upon internal approval. However, a specific date has not been provided. Additional funding of approximately \$783,000 will be awarded to Title I TCUs and Diné College through AIHEC, due to an overpayment to one TCU in academic year 2021. (Note: AIHEC will distribute the FI&R funding to the TCUs lacking cooperative agreements with BIE, including IAIA and Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. AIHEC will distribute the AY 2021 overpayment to all Title I TCUs and Diné College.)

Dr. Campbell has been in discussion with the Bureau of Land Management about their strategic planning for community engagement with hopes of initiating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) supporting TCUs. Additionally, the MOU with the National Park Service and AIHEC is nearing the final stages as NPS staff are reviewing direct hire authorities.

In follow up to the discussion about language and culture preservation, Dr. Campbell shared that she oversees a \$7.9 million dollar contract with Native Forward that offers a scholarship called "Loan for Service," which includes language instruction. TCU faculty and staff are encouraged to apply for scholarships, which are open to teachers and faculty who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes interested in earning language degrees. Additionally, a science postgraduate scholarship fund is available that will give TCUs the

opportunity to host BIE-funded professional development workshops for teachers in STEM fields.

Lastly, Dr. Campbell discussed the construction guidance she received related to American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funds, as presidents were previously told the funds could be used for covid-19 related construction. Dr. Campbell will forward this written confirmation to presidents.

Ms. Billy clarified that ARP funds (third grant) were the last of the federal covid-19 relief funds. When each of the covid-19 relief funding bills was enacted (CARES Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), and ARP), any remaining funding fell under the rules of the newest legislation. Thus, ARP rules apply to all remaining BIE covid-19 relief funding held by the TCUs, as of the date of enactment of ARP (March 11, 2021).

Chair Yarlott questioned whether TCUs needed to go through an approval process to use the funding, like they are required to do for ED funding. President Manoj Patil (LPTC) said his institution recently went through the ED approval process. LPTC used ED-MSI funding to pay for the first half of the project and the remaining funding came from the BIE. No special permission was needed to use the BIE funds, as BIE seems to follow the same rules as ED. Dr. Campbell will provide specific guidelines on that point.

President McDonald shared that UTTC used ED funding for student emergency aid and HVAC repair/replacement to spend down that funding since ED guidelines were clear from the beginning. However, UTTC held BIE funds for further guidance as UTTC was not aware if an approval process would be required.

In response to a question posed by President Guillory regarding when the FI&R funds would be available, Dr. Campbell said \$16 million will be distributed evenly amongst the TCUs and is expected earlier than operating funding. Additionally, Dr. Campbell responded to President McDonald by sharing that some TCUs have used their BIE covid-19 relief funding on renovations and repairs while others have decided to save the funding for later use. Dr. Campbell closed by stating that she continues to share within the department the importance of TCUs, along with TCU construction needs.

President Lindquist thanked Dr. Campbell for continuously supporting and advocating for TCUs and shared that her institution decided to save the BIE funds for a new covid-19 related construction project. However, with construction being a moving target and the economy being uncertain, there are many factors to consider, including total costs. President Guillory said his institution used funding for projects such as the parking lot repair, storm water drainage repair, and other maintenance needs connected to covid-19 or pandemic relief.

President Donna Brown, Turtle Mountain Community College, asked whether covid-19 relief funds would be affected or if there would be limitations on what the funds can be spent on in the future. Dr. Campbell has not heard any discussion on limitations.

There was discussion on DOI inquiries into overall TCU construction needs. (Some meeting participants referred to these inquiries as originating from the DOI Inspector General's (IG) office .) Ms. Billy shared that the question posed to AIHEC by DOI specifically related to how AIHEC's \$3.2 billion TCU construction need was estimated. However, there was no indication that the request came from the office of the IG, as opposed to the Assistant Secretary's office.

Regarding ED covid-19 relief funds, commonly known as HEERF funds, Ms. Billy reminded presidents that they can request to negotiate a longer period to spend the ED HEERF funds, so long as this is done before June 30, 2023. The goal should be to request a reasonable date as far out as possible, as ED has stated no additional no cost extensions will be allowed.

American Indian College Fund

American Indian College Fund (College Fund) President and CEO Cheryl Crazy Bull provided updates on several projects:

Scholarship Opportunities:

- Full Circle Scholarships: Open until May 31, 2023
- TCU Scholarships: Offered all year-round.
- High School Student Support:
 - [Native Pathways](#): Works with 90 high schools who are on or near reservations to help students and their families navigate the college experience.
 - [Exploration Guide](#) : Provides a summary of what each TCU offers, for high school students.

Culture at the Heart: Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM)

The College Fund recently received a \$39 million gift from the Lilly Endowment with most of the funds scheduled to be distributed among the TCUs.

Currently, the College Fund is working on the Cultivating Native Student Success program that focuses on strategic enrollment management with five TCUs (Diné College, Oglala Lakota College, Siting Bull College, Turtle Mountain Community College, and United Tribes Technical College). This funding is from the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies. The TCUs will be available to serve as mentors to the 25 TCUs who enter the new program, helping to identify ways in which the institutions can implement basic data systems. Webinars will be offered between March – July with applications being accepted beginning in August.

Program Highlight: Native Students Stepping Forward

The College Fund has a high school equivalency program that helps TCUs strengthen GED and HiSET programs while creating a community of practice where ideas on best practices are shared, giving TCUs the opportunity to learn from each other.

Spring 2023 Research Briefs

The College Fund has been engaged with a research project involving several TCUs, and the following briefs are scheduled to be released over the next few weeks:

- *Whatever It Takes*: Creating pathways for student success at tribal colleges and universities.
- *Seven Generations*: A framework for ensuring tribal college and University sustainability.
- *Assuring the Quality of Academic Programs at Tribal Colleges and Universities*

A discussion occurred regarding institutional review board approval for the reports.

President Crazy Bull urged TCU presidents to stay engaged with the College Fund. For example, the work being done by TCUs is now being used by the College Fund to help develop an understanding of what it would take to develop computer science initiatives at each TCU.

Other Items

- AICF 2023 TCU President Honoree: President Michael Oltrogge.
- The National Endowment for the Humanities and operating endowment funds are expected to be distributed in early April.
- All TCUs must register for electronic fund transfer as the College Fund will be going paperless soon.

Election of American Indian College Fund Board of Director Members

With President Yarlott' s term ending and President Carla Sineway stepping down from the College Fund Board of Directors, there are two vacancies for three-year terms to be filled, effective July 1, 2023.

Nomination: President Lori Ann Sherman nominated President Duane Bedell to be recommended to serve on the American Indian College Fund Board of Directors.

Acceptance of nomination: President Bedell accepted the nomination to recommended to the board.

Motion:

President Guillory moved [seconded by President McDonald] to close nominations.

Outcome:

President Duane Bedell was recommended by acclamation (unanimous consent) to serve a three-year term on the American Indian College Fund Board of Directors.

Nomination: President Guy nominated President Monte Randall to be recommended to serve on the American Indian College Fund Board of Directors.

Acceptance of nomination: President Randall accepted the nomination to be recommended to serve on the board.

Motion:

President McDonald moved [seconded by President King] to close nominations.

Outcome:

President Randall was recommended by acclamation (unanimous consent) to serve a three-year term on the American Indian College Fund Board of Directors.

Written Reports: The following reports are included in the board book, as follows:

- USDA-1994 Land-Grant programs, page 107
- FALCON, pages 125-126
- AIHEC Tribal College and Universities Librarian Association, pages 129-138

The Southwest TCU presidents distributed the sand painted clocks that were purchased by AIHEC in 2020 to honor TCU presidents for their support and commitment.

LUNCH BREAK: Chair Yarlott declared a lunch break at 12:12 MT, with the meeting resuming at 1:30 MT.

2023 AIHEC Student Conference

Candice Mendez provided information regarding the upcoming 2023 AIHEC Student Conference. More than 1,100 individuals have registered to attend, along with 87 exhibitor booths. Carmen Henan provided updates on the student competitions and informed presidents of disputes and questions regarding student participation in some competitions.

Ms. Billy reminded presidents that the guidelines for dispute resolutions can be found in the [AIHEC Student Conference Handbook](#), which is posted on the AIHEC website. Any recommended changes are first submitted to the AIHEC Student Conference Commission. If changes in any rules are sought, the changes will not occur prior to full consideration by the AIHEC Student Activities Committee, which must meet to discuss, deliberate, and decide whether and what changes are to be made, by committee motion, to the AIHEC Student Conference Handbook. This means changes will not occur in real time for current competitions, but disputes can be resolved, and changes made for the future, as necessary.

VII. AIHEC CENTRAL OFFICE REPORT

Honoring for Rachael Marchbanks

Rachael Marchbanks, former Publisher of the Tribal College Journal, was honored for 20 years of service to the Tribal College Journal. Ms. Billy, Brad Shreve, and Marvene Tom shared their appreciation to Rachael for her work and dedication to TCUs over the years.

AIHEC Board Report (written report included in board book)

Ms. Billy provided a brief update on highlights since the last board meeting:

- Federal appropriations for TCU programs are at record high levels for FY 2023, with nearly \$50 million in increased TCU funding, including a \$11.4M increase for Title I and Title II TCU programs, making this the largest increase that these colleges have received.

- Approximately \$8.5M in increased funding for the Higher Education Act (HEA) Title III program for TCUs, for a total of over \$51M in Title III-Part A funding, in addition to the \$30M in Part F funding.
- Funding for the NSF TCU program, which began in 2021 with \$3 million under President Clinton is now at \$20 million annually.
- The TCU-Head Start Partnership Program has grown from \$6M to \$8M.

AIHEC has now turned to FY2024 appropriations. Staff will do their best to advocate for TCUs, but continued increases are not likely with the current Congress. To secure his leadership position, Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) made significant concessions to the most conservative wing of his party, including promising to cut federal funding for domestic programs to the FY 2022 levels. In addition, Speaker McCarthy has announced that he will not allow earmarks in defense, financial services, and labor.

In 2021, AIHEC conducted a survey of TCUs construction needs, which provided an (extrapolated) need of \$3.2B. In fall 2022, the BIE and Congressional staff asked AIHEC if we would update the survey to provide current data on TCU needs, as well as a stronger justification for the original request. We sent the survey to TCUs in December, but to date, 16 TCUs have not responded. This has lowered our estimated need to \$1.8B for full implementation of TCU multi-year master plans. Ms. Billy reiterated the importance of responding to requests for information, as it is crucial in our efforts to advocate for TCUs. She noted that AIHEC attempts to make surveys as easy as possible to complete, and in this case, if there was no change in estimated need, a TCU needed only to check a box.

General higher education issues of note:

- *Student Loan Debt Relief*: Two cases are pending with the US Supreme Court that may impact existing students or faculty/staff with student loans.
- *Race and Admissions*: Two affirmative action cases are before the Court, and AIHEC has participated in amicus briefs with others in the higher education community. In the most recent brief, two TCUs were cited specifically. AIHEC continues to work with the American Council on Education (ACE) and other organizations on this and other issues.
- *Native Languages*: As a reminder, AIHEC has a legislative proposal to establish a specific Native language program for TCUs within the HEA-Title III program, eliminating the competition against Tribes and others for funding. All TCUs should be united in advocating for this program.
- *NACIE Legislation*: Senator Fischer (R-NE) will introduce a bill next week to require that at least one seat be always reserved on NACIE for a TCU president.
- *Federal Employee Health Benefits Legislation*: AIHEC met with Congressman Grijalva and Senator Sinema's staff regarding introduction of the TCU-Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) legislation, which would enable all TCUs to easily participate in the FEHB program.

AIHEC 2023 Legislative Summit Follow-up

More than 150 participants attended AIHEC's 2023 Legislative Summit held in Washington DC, February 7-10. During the summit, AIHEC and USDA signed a long-awaited and vigorously negotiated memorandum of agreement (MOA). Since the signing last month, AIHEC provided USDA with the names of eight presidents and one alternate to serve on the USDA/AIHEC leadership group. AIHEC is awaiting the appointment by USDA of its members. In addition to the MOA with the USDA, AIHEC signed a memorandum of understanding with EPA prior to the legislative summit and continues to network and build partnerships with organizations.

AIHEC Program Highlights

World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC): Presidents are encouraged to use WINHEC as a resource.

- 2023 WINHEC and WINU Meeting July 16-20, 2023, Fairbanks, Alaska. (Click [here](#) for more information.)

AIHEC AIMS

Darius Taylor, AIHEC Director of Equity & Education Innovation Research, began by announcing the two new staff members to the AIHEC Native Student Success and Research team, Jana Hanson, AIHEC Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, and Wells Ling, Student Success Research Data Specialist. Jana and Wells will be taking over management of the AIHEC AIMS program.

Although the TCU response rate for AIHEC AIMS is high, there is still missing data, as some reports have not been submitted. Mr. Taylor reiterated the importance of having valid reporting data and suggested creating interest groups to support IR functions that respective TCUs that could potentially help other TCUs in inputting, retrieving, and using data.

Mr. Taylor demonstrated the new AIHEC AIMS dashboards that are being designed to give TCUs their own way of managing their AIMS data while also giving the ability to compare data between different TCUs.

The fall 2022 AIMS interim report showed:

- Of the 33 TCUs that submitted data, 23 have enrollment increases.
- Total academic enrollment is about 16,345 students
- Collectively, the TCUs offer 928 degree programs (446 associates, 134 bachelors & 18 masters programs)

Ms. Billy reminded presidents that the submission of required annual reports is a board mandate responsibility required under the AIHEC bylaws (section 4.10.d). Specifically, the AIHEC AIMS report is the member institution's annual report and must be submitted no later than January 5 to avoid becoming a member not in good standing.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- *AIHEC 50th Anniversary:* In honor of AIHEC's 50th Anniversary, a reception was held on Capitol Hill in the Kennedy Caucus Room on February 9. Throughout the year, the AIHEC 50th

Anniversary will continue to be celebrated through a number of events and activities, including the visioning process to reimagine the next 50 years of the Tribal College Movement.

- *AIHEC Summer TCU Presidents Professional Development Sessions & BoD Meeting*: The AIHEC summer board meeting that will include professional development sessions is scheduled for June 28-30 in Nashville, TN at the DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Nashville. The meeting will entail two days of professional development with teambuilding activities and one day for the board meeting.
- *AIHEC 2023 Fall BoD Meeting*: AIHEC typically hosts the fall board meeting in conjunction with the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), however, the 2023 NIEA Convention and Trade Show is scheduled to take place in Albuquerque, NM October 18-21, 2023. With the spring board meeting being held here in Albuquerque, the fall meeting could be held in conjunction with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), as their meeting is scheduled for November 12-17 in New Orleans, LA.

Ms. Billy said she is planning to host a session at the NCAI meeting for Tribal leaders who have TCUs to discuss issues such as governance and accreditation. Since the TCUs are chartered by the tribal leaders, TCU presidents should meet with Tribal leaders regularly. Chair Yarlott agreed with Ms. Billy and said it is important for Tribal leaders to understand the governance structure for TCUs. Additionally, he shared his support for having the fall board meeting in New Orleans, LA and suggested inviting the NCAI executive board to attend the AIHEC board meeting or plan a lunch or dinner meeting, like the AIHEC-NIEA sessions.

MOTION:

President Boham moved [seconded by President King] to schedule the 2023 Fall Board of Directors Meeting in conjunction with NCAI in New Orleans, LA.

OUTCOME:

The motion was approved by voice vote.

BREAK: Chair Yarlott announced a 10-minute break.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Tribal College Journal

President Monte Randall, *Tribal College Journal* Chair, reported that the committee met on January 23, 2023. Volume 34, no. 3 of the *Tribal College Journal* has been dedicated to the 50th year of AIHEC and includes articles discussing the past 50 years and the next 50 years to come. In addition, volume 34, no. 4, which is scheduled to be released in the summer, will focus on trauma and healing.

President Randall shared the final statement for the *Tribal College Journal* advertising policy: "As the quarterly publication of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, *Tribal College Journal* will requisition and accept ads that align with AIHEC's mission and goals. Ads must focus on educational and career opportunities for travel, colleges, and their students, and or must support the development of strong sovereign native nations. TCJ will not accept ads

that conflict with AIHEC's mission. Any ad outside of the scope of these terms will be brought to the advisory board for approval."

Research Committee

President McDonald provided the update for the Research Committee as the committee chair, President Twyla Baker, was not able to attend the meeting.

The committee will be inquiring about and exploring research interests at each TCU to help drive the research agenda in the future and determine what research topics would be. While there were no motions for the full board, there was an internal motion to table discussion of federally required research misconduct policies, presented by President Guillory at the fall board meeting. Lastly, President McDonald provided information on the [Rural Community College Alliance](#) (RCCA), as he is a current board member and wanted to share the information as a point of reference for those interested.

Membership and Accreditation Committee:

President Boham, Membership and Accreditation Committee chair began by directing the presidents to page 24 of the board book for a full description of the Membership and Accreditation Committee.

Prior to the new year, AIHEC requested all presidents submit the regular member criteria certification no later than December 20, 2022. However, after multiple email attempts to request the information, several TCUs did not submit the required information in December, and three months later, staff are still working to collect information from some TCUs. Submitting the regular member criteria certification is required in accordance with the revised AIHEC bylaws and those who have not submitted the certification are considered members not in good standing. With the number of new presidents on the board, the committee extended the deadline to April 1, 2023. Presidents in need of assistance are strongly encouraged to contact AIHEC.

President Lindquist shared that the committee has discussed mentoring for new presidents, but this has not made much progress due to the pandemic. New presidents are strongly encouraged to contact one of the elder presidents for support. In addition, Chair Yarlott encouraged presidents to familiarize themselves with the AIHEC staff members to ensure AIHEC correspondence is addressed.

Ms. Billy reminded presidents of another recent change to the bylaws, which states that if two consecutive meetings are missed, the institution will be a member not in good standing. However, presidents have the option to send an official representative, and all AIHEC board meetings have a virtual option.

Student Activities Committee

President Brown, Student Activities Committee chair, shared that the committee met on February 16, 2023, with no motions to be forwarded to the full board. James Mathias, NWIC

Athletic Director, and President Eva Flying, Chief Dull Knife College (CDKC), have been selected to serve on the AIHEC Athletic Commission.

President Brown briefly discussed the AIHEC Basketball Tournament and reminded presidents to make lodging reservations and pay tournament fees. Lastly, President Brown extended a thank you to Alex Grandon, AIHEC Cyberinfrastructure (CI) Coordinator and Student Activities Committee support staff, for his assistance in ensuring the meetings were successful and extended her appreciation to the Southwest TCUs for coordinating the upcoming student conference.

Chair Yarlott encouraged presidents to nominate a student athlete or representative interested in land and different environmental aspects from land, water, traditional plants, and environment to attend the World Indigenous Games, currently set for October 19-28, 2023, in Brazil. In addition to traditional games, a variety of educational sessions will be offered. He continued by sharing examples of the games that were conducted and reflected on the value of seeing different countries cheering on their home teams. The Indigenous organizing community is hoping to gain the attention of the media regarding the games so they can share stories about the current threat to the environment and the injustices that are occurring, which are directly impacting their culture and lifestyle.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

During the summer 2022 board meeting, it was shared that the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians gifted the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) \$25M to create a hospitality and gaming program for Tribes and Tribal casinos. Chair Yarlott said many casinos owned by Native nations are not operated by Native people at the administrative level. He has had discussions with UNLV administrators interested in working with TCUs to develop a curriculum and program in Tribal casino/hotel management that would recruit and track Native students so that Tribal casinos will be managed and overseen by Native people. He inquired about other TCU involvement.

President Patil shared that over the last 18 months he has been working with the UNLV to design a curriculum in partnership, but halted the effort for financial reasons. (LPTC offers \$180 per credit hour while out of state cost is \$504 per credit hour). UNLV is working with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to determine a solution, such as requesting that the Band fund the remaining portion of the out-of-state tuition costs. Additionally, President Patil suggested some of the funds for scholarships be allocated for extra differential costs, as this would allow progress with the pending curriculum.

- Chair Yarlott said his college faced similar issues. However, there is an effort underway to try to gain support from the Board of Regents approve in-state tuition rates for Tribal students living outside of the state. Discussion indicated if recruiting from TCUs is to be done, more must be done for Indian Country due to the lack of locally available resources and the negative impacts of Westernized thinking and learning that often comes from mainstream institutions.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

President Patil moved [seconded by President Boham] that the 2023 AIHEC Spring Board of Directors Meeting be adjourned.

OUTCOME:

The motion was approved by voice vote.

Chair Yarlott adjourned the meeting at 5:08 pm MT.

Minutes prepared by AIHEC staff.

Executed and acknowledged by the undersigned being the Secretary of the Board of the Corporation.

Leander R. McDonald, Secretary
American Indian Higher Education Consortium

Date