

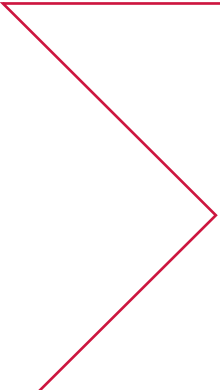
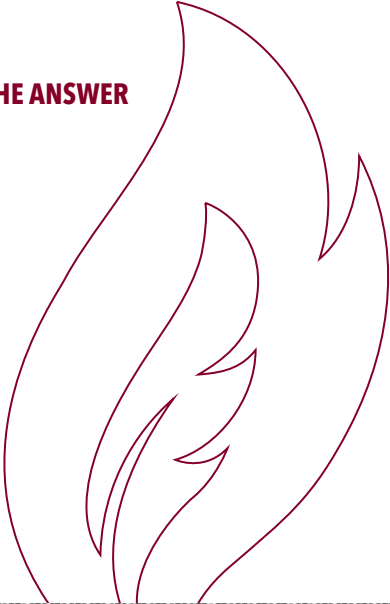
AMERICAN INDIAN  
COLLEGE FUND  
EDUCATION IS THE ANSWER



# ANNUAL REPORT

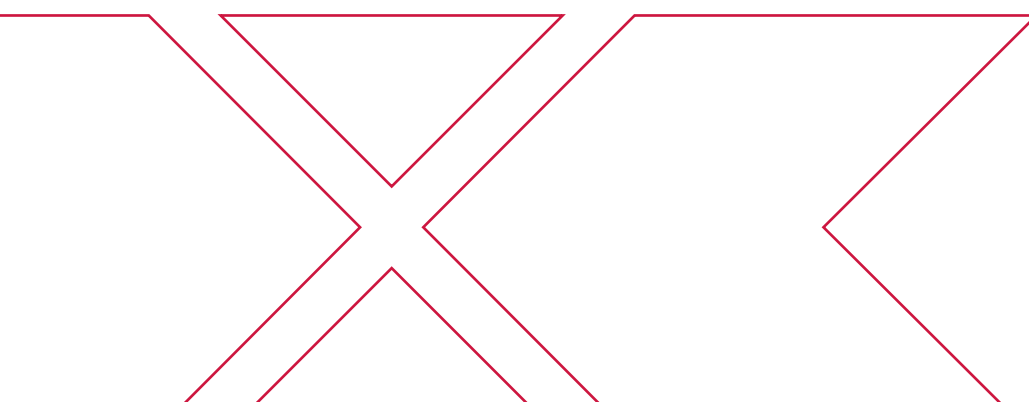
2017-2018

**EDUCATION IS THE ANSWER**



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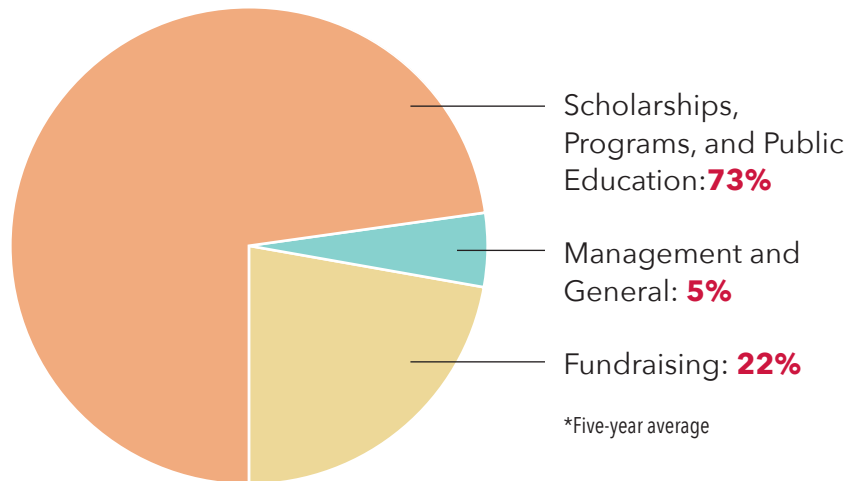


# OUR MISSION

The American Indian College Fund invests in Native students and tribal college education to transform lives and communities.

# HOW YOUR DONATIONS ARE USED\*:

## Fulfilling Our Mission



## OUR COMMITMENT

For more than 29 years, the College Fund has been committed to transparency and accountability while serving our students and communities. We consistently receive top ratings from independent charity evaluators.

- We earned the "Best in America Seal of Excellence" from the Independent Charities of America. Of the one million charities operating in the United States, fewer than 2,000 organizations have been awarded this seal.
- The College Fund meets the Standards for Charity Accountability of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.
- The College Fund received a Gold Seal of Transparency from Guidestar.
- The College Fund consistently receives high ratings from Charity Navigator.

For more ratings and information, please visit [www.collegefund.org/aboutus](http://www.collegefund.org/aboutus)



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



With all of the news in the United States about identity and place, I've had many opportunities to reflect on what it means to me to be able to identify as a Sicangu Lakota woman.

There is an "American identity" story that emerged with the founding of the United States. Retold for generations, the American identity story's message is that with the establishment of the United States as a country, all differences with regard to languages, cultures, traditions, and more were unnecessary. We were one country, one people, an homogeneous melting pot, assimilating all people into one shared identity.

In keeping with the beliefs of many of the nations that colonized lands throughout the western hemisphere that Native Americans were savages to be "tamed" along with the land, the incredible diversity of indigenous societies, including Native languages and place-based ways of living, were identified using labels and ideas not of our choosing. "Taming" meant obliterating our cultures, languages, traditions, and spiritual practices for the benefit of colonization.

My identity and the terms by which I name who I am have become even more important to me in today's current environment. I understand and value that I have the freedom to name myself as a Sicangu Lakota woman.

At the American Indian College Fund, we understand the self-affirming power there is for Native people in celebrating our identity—and the direct impact it has on Native students' success. Being rooted in one's identity reinforces the connection we have with our ancestors and the land, empowers us as individuals and as citizens of tribal nations, and celebrates what makes us unique.



American Indian College Fund President Cheryl Crazy Bull, center left, with tribal college president Dr. David Yarlott, center right, accepting the National Education Foundation's prestigious First National Bank of Omaha Award for Outstanding Service to Public Education on February 9, 2018 in Washington, D.C.

Our scholars say that attending a tribal college means they learn details about their tribal histories and learn their languages for the first time. When they speak their Native languages, understand their histories, honor their ancestors, and shine a light on their true identities as Native peoples, they are given the opportunity to be their true selves. It is liberating to be proud of who you are. With that freedom, confidence blossoms. And with that freedom, our students do better academically. They fulfill their dreams of making a difference in their communities through their education.

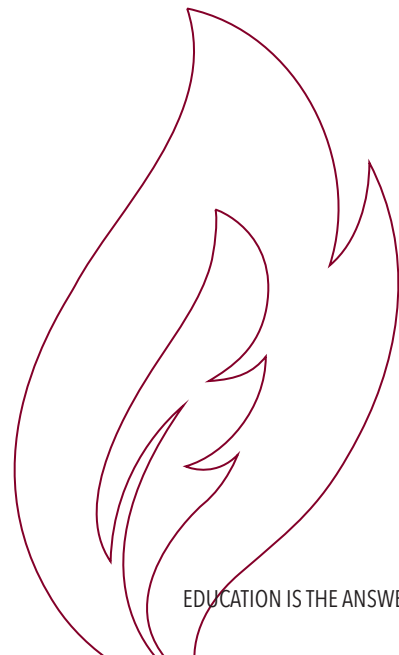
Our students are succeeding at a time in our country when we are witnessing challenging social upheaval which appears to be rooted in the American story. We at the American Indian College Fund do not believe that to be one nation all people must share the same beliefs, languages, and prayers. We value our diversity and our unique identities and ways of knowing.

I want to thank you for your continued support of the College Fund. Our work provides thousands of Native American scholars the opportunity to discover their true potential through higher education. So many of our students have shared with me how validating that support is. I ask you to continue to support us in the year ahead as we work to ensure the visibility and contributions of Native peoples, languages, cultures, and customs through education. We know that sharing our unique voices and perspectives as Native Americans will help to create a better society for all of us.

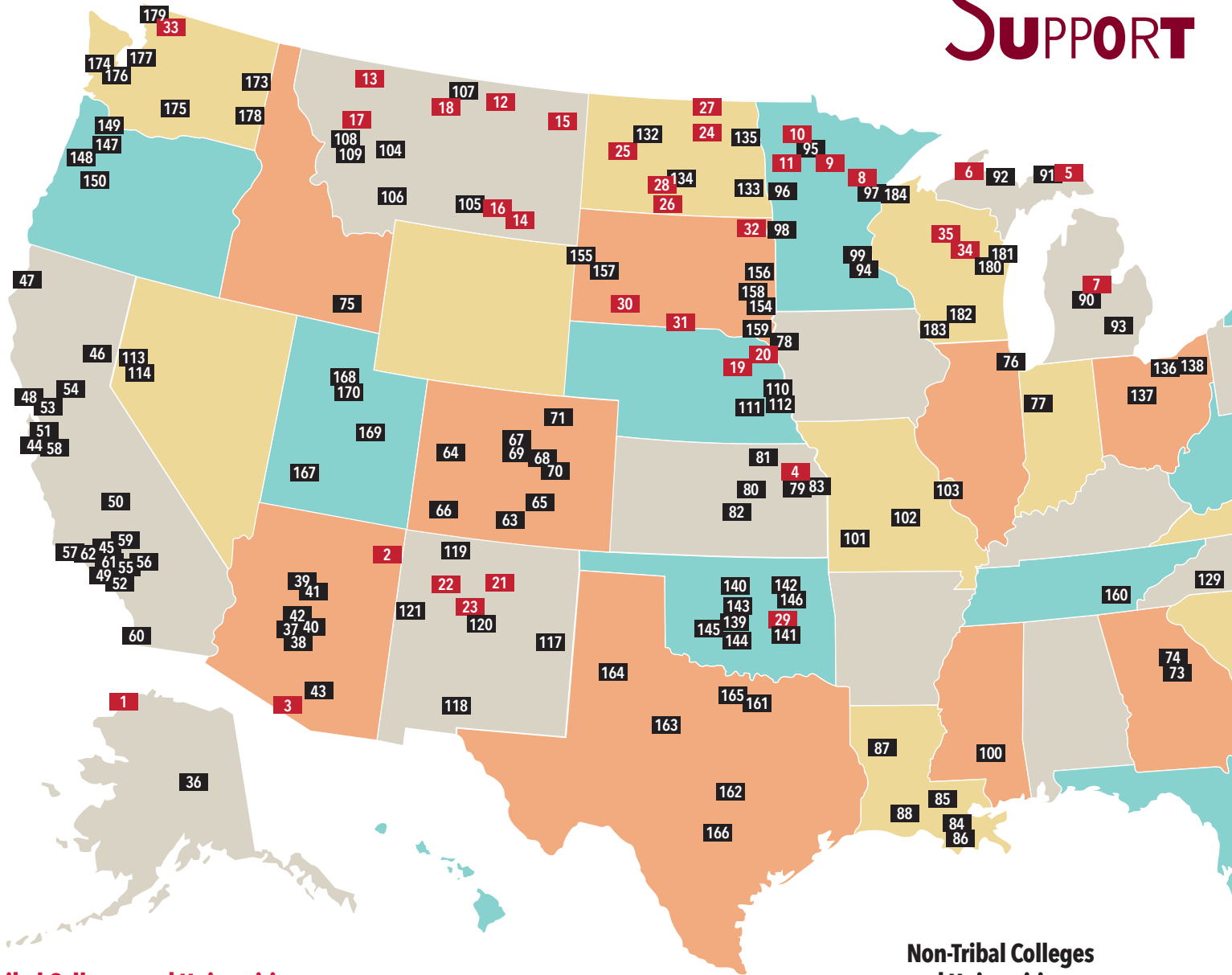
In solidarity and with love for all students and their families,

*Cheryl Crazy Bull*

Cheryl Crazy Bull  
President and CEO, American Indian College Fund



# MAP OF SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT



## Tribal Colleges and Universities

- Alaska**
- 1** Ilisagvik College, Barrow

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- Arizona**
- 2** Dine College, Tsailé\*
- 3** Tohono O'odham Community College, Sells

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- Kansas**
- 4** Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence\*

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- Michigan**
- 5** Bay Mills Community College, Brimley
- 6** Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, Baraga
- 7** Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Mount Pleasant

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- Minnesota**
- 8** Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College, Cloquet
- 9** Leech Lake Tribal College, Cass Lake
- 10** Red Lake Nation College, Red Lake
- 11** White Earth Tribal and Community College, Mahanomen

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- Montana**
- 12** Aaniiih Nakoda College, Harlem
- 13** Blackfeet Community College, Browning
- 14** Chief Dull Knife College, Lame Deer
- 15** Fort Peck Community College, Poplar
- 16** Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency
- 17** Salish Kootenai College, Pablo\*
- 18** Stone Child College, Box Elder

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- Nebraska**
- 19** Little Priest Tribal College, Winnebago
- 20** Nebraska Indian Community College, Macy

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- New Mexico**
- 21** Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe\*\*
- 22** Navajo Technical University, Crownpoint\*\*
- 23** Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque

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- North Dakota**
- 24** Cankdeska Cikana Community College, Fort Totten
- 25** Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, New Town\*

- 26** Sitting Bull College, Fort Yates\*\*
- 27** Turtle Mountain Community College, Belcourt\*
- 28** United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck\*

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- Oklahoma**
- 29** College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee

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- South Dakota**
- 30** Oglala Lakota College, Kyle\*\*
- 31** Sinte Gleska University, Mission\*\*
- 32** Sisseton Wahpeton College, Agency Village

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- Washington**
- 33** Northwest Indian College, Bellingham\*

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- Wisconsin**
- 34** College of Menominee Nation, Keshena
- 35** Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, Hayward

\* TCUs offering bachelor's degrees.  
 \*\* TCUs offering bachelor's and master's degrees.  
 All other TCUs offer associate degrees.

## Non-Tribal Colleges and Universities

- Alaska**
- 36** University of Alaska - Fairbanks, Fairbanks

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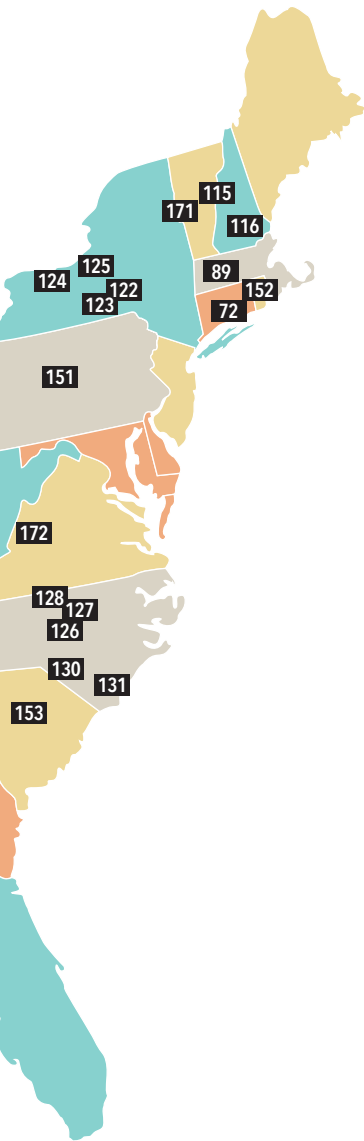
- Arizona**
- 37** Arizona State University, Tempe
- 38** Chandler-Gilbert Community College, Chandler
- 39** Coconino Community College, Flagstaff
- 40** Mesa Community College, Mesa
- 41** Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff
- 42** Ottawa University - Phoenix, Phoenix
- 43** University of Arizona, Tucson

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- California**
- 44** Cabrillo College, Aptos
- 45** Chapman University, Orange
- 46** Feather River Community College, Quincy
- 47** Humboldt State University, Arcata
- 48** Mills College, Oakland
- 49** Pepperdine University, Malibu
- 50** Porterville College, Porterville
- 51** Stanford University, Stanford
- 52** University of California - Irvine, Irvine
- 53** University of California - Berkeley, Berkeley



In addition to providing financial and programmatic support for 35 TCUs, the American Indian College Fund provides students with scholarships. This is a list of the schools our scholars attended.



- 70** University of Colorado - Denver|Anschutz Medical Campus, Denver
- 71** University of Northern Colorado, Greeley

**Connecticut**

- 72** Yale University, New Haven

**Georgia**

- 73** Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville
- 74** University of Georgia, Athens

**Idaho**

- 75** Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston

**Illinois**

- 76** Columbia College Chicago, Chicago

**Indiana**

- 77** Purdue University, West Lafayette

**Iowa**

- 78** Briar Cliff University, Sioux City

**Kansas**

- 79** Baker University, Baldwin City
- 80** Emporia State University, Emporia
- 81** Kansas State University, Manhattan
- 82** McPherson College, McPherson
- 83** University of Kansas, Lawrence

**Louisiana**

- 84** Fletcher Technical Community College, Schriever
- 85** Louisiana State University - Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge
- 86** Nicholls State University, Thibodaux
- 87** Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches
- 88** University of Louisiana - Lafayette, Lafayette

**Massachusetts**

- 89** Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley

**Michigan**

- 90** Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant
- 91** Lake Superior State University, Sault Ste. Marie
- 92** Northern Michigan University, Marquette
- 93** University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor

**Minnesota**

- 94** Augsburg College, Minneapolis
- 95** Bemidji State University, Bemidji
- 96** University of Minnesota - Crookston, Crookston
- 97** University of Minnesota - Duluth, Duluth
- 98** University Of Minnesota - Morris
- 99** University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, Minneapolis

**Mississippi**

- 100** University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg

**Missouri**

- 101** Missouri Southern State University, Joplin
- 102** Missouri University of Science & Technology, Rolla
- 103** Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis

**Montana**

- 104** Carroll College, Helena
- 105** Montana State University - Billings, Billings

- 106** Montana State University - Bozeman, Bozeman
- 107** Montana State University - Northern, Havre
- 108** University of Montana - Missoula, Missoula
- 109** University of Montana - Western, Dillon

**Nebraska**

- 110** Bellevue University (Nebraska), Bellevue
- 111** University of Nebraska - Lincoln, Lincoln
- 112** University of Nebraska - Omaha, Omaha

**Nevada**

- 113** Truckee Meadows Community College, Reno
- 114** University of Nevada - Reno, Reno

**New Hampshire**

- 115** Dartmouth College, Hanover
- 116** Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences - Manchester Campus, Manchester

**New Mexico**

- 117** Eastern New Mexico University - Portales, Portales
- 118** New Mexico State University - Las Cruces, Las Cruces
- 119** San Juan College, Farmington
- 120** University of New Mexico - Albuquerque, Albuquerque
- 121** University of New Mexico-Gallup, Gallup

**New York**

- 122** Cornell University, Ithaca
- 123** Ithaca College, Ithaca
- 124** Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester
- 125** State University of New York - ESF, Syracuse

**North Carolina**

- 126** Campbell University, Buies Creek
- 127** North Carolina State University, Raleigh
- 128** University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill
- 129** University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte
- 130** University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Pembroke
- 131** University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Wilmington

**North Dakota**

- 132** Minot State University, Minot
- 133** North Dakota State University, Fargo
- 134** University of Mary, Bismarck
- 135** University of North Dakota, Grand Forks

**Ohio**

- 136** Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland
- 137** The Ohio State University, Columbus
- 138** Walsh University, North Canton

**Oklahoma**

- 139** Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma City
- 140** Oklahoma State University - Stillwater, Stillwater
- 141** Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology, Okmulgee, Oklahoma
- 142** Oklahoma State University Tulsa, Tulsa
- 143** University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond
- 144** University of Oklahoma, Norman
- 145** University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, Chickasha
- 146** University of Tulsa, Tulsa

**Oregon**

- 147** Corban University, Salem
- 148** Oregon State University, Covallis
- 149** Portland State University, Portland
- 150** University of Oregon, Eugene

**Pennsylvania**

- 151** Pennsylvania State University, University Park

**Rhode Island**

- 152** Brown University, Providence

**South Carolina**

- 153** University of South Carolina, Columbia

**South Dakota**

- 154** Augustana University, Sioux Falls
- 155** Black Hills State University, Spearfish
- 156** Dakota State University, Madison
- 157** South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, Rapid City
- 158** University Center - South Dakota, Sioux Falls
- 159** University of South Dakota, Vermillion

**Tennessee**

- 160** Lee University, Cleveland

**Texas**

- 161** Amberton University, Garland
- 162** Austin Community College, Austin
- 163** McMurry University, Abilene
- 164** Texas Tech University, Lubbock
- 165** University of Dallas, Irving
- 166** University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio

**Utah**

- 167** Southern Utah University, Cedar City
- 168** University of Utah, Salt Lake City
- 169** Utah State University - College of Eastern Utah, Blanding
- 170** Utah Valley University, Orem

**Vermont**

- 171** Green Mountain College, Poultney

**Virginia**

- 172** Liberty University, Lynchburg

**Washington**

- 173** Eastern Washington University, Cheney
- 174** Evergreen State College, Olympia
- 175** Heritage University (Washington), Toppenish
- 176** St. Martin's University, Lacey
- 177** University of Washington - Seattle, Seattle
- 178** Washington State University - Pullman, Pullman
- 179** Western Washington University, Bellingham

**Wisconsin**

- 180** Saint Norbert College, De Pere
- 181** University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, Green Bay
- 182** University of Wisconsin - Madison, Madison
- 183** University of Wisconsin - Platteville, Platteville
- 184** University of Wisconsin - Superior, Superior

- 54** University of California - Davis, Davis
- 55** University of California - Los Angeles, Los Angeles
- 56** University of California - Riverside, Riverside
- 57** University of California - Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara
- 58** University of California - Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz
- 59** University of Redlands, Redlands
- 60** University of San Diego, San Diego
- 61** University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- 62** Whittier College, Whittier

**Colorado**

- 63** Adams State University, Alamosa
- 64** Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction
- 65** Colorado State University- Pueblo, Pueblo
- 66** Fort Lewis College, Durango
- 67** Naropa University, Boulder
- 68** Regis University, Denver
- 69** University of Colorado - Boulder, Boulder

# OUR IMPACT



**5896**

**scholarships** were distributed last year.

**4353**

**students** were served last year.

**36%**

of all recipients were **first generation** students.

**184**

**different schools** were attended by our scholars.

**Top 6** major categories: **BUSINESS, EDUCATION, FINE ARTS, HEALTH, LIBERAL ARTS, STEM** (in that order)

# TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2017-18

**\$7.655 million** in scholarship support was distributed in 2017-18 and over **\$201 million** in support of Native students and education has been awarded since our founding in 1989.

In 2017-18 nearly **\$5.7 million** was granted to programs and higher education institutions serving Native communities. This included grants for cultural preservation, early childhood education, leadership and research projects, and faculty development fellowships.

## American Indian College Fund

### Statement of Activities Year Ended June 30, 2018

Support, Revenue and Gains	
Contributions . . . . .	\$ 23,125,557
Cy pres contribution . . . . .	824,000
Contributed public service announcements . . . . .	1,411,555
Net investment return . . . . .	3,454,918
Other revenue . . . . .	1,833
Gross special events revenue . . . . .	487,191
Less cost of direct benefits to donors . . . . .	(216,692)
Net special events revenue . . . . .	270,499
Total support, revenue and gains . . . . .	<u>29,088,362</u>
Expenses and Losses	
Program services expense	
Scholarships and grants . . . . .	16,505,466
Public education . . . . .	2,838,603
Total program expenses . . . . .	<u>19,344,069</u>
Supporting services expense	
Administrative . . . . .	1,284,216
Donor development . . . . .	5,084,871
Total supporting services expenses . . . . .	<u>6,369,087</u>
Loss on uncollectable promises to give . . . . .	13,702
Total expenses and losses . . . . .	<u>25,726,858</u>
Change in Net Assets . . . . .	3,361,504
Net Assets, Beginning of Year . . . . .	76,038,735
<b>Net Assets, End of Year . . . . .</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 79,400,239</u></u></b>

To see and download the 2017-18 audited financial report, please visit [www.collegefund.org/financials](http://www.collegefund.org/financials) or request a mailed copy by emailing [info@collegefund.org](mailto:info@collegefund.org) or by calling 303-426-8900.

# WE CREATE A PATH FOR NATIVE STUDENT SUCCESS

The American Indian College Fund provides the proven financial and program support to Native students and tribal colleges necessary for success, from cradle to career.



Our programs **put students first** to increase the graduation rate through:

- Scholarships;
- Other financial aid support;
- Tutoring and mentoring;
- Infusing Native tradition, culture, and language into curriculum to ground and support students in their identities;
- Developing leadership qualities; and
- Creating internships and career readiness.

Our work fosters an environment that prioritizes and prizes **higher education for Native students** to make higher education the norm. We build upon Native cultural traditions of learning to create modern higher education opportunities to:

- Educate individuals and communities;
- Enhance modern learning environments with Native principles and traditions;
- Engage children, families, and communities in early childhood education;
- Guide high school students and associate degree-earners to further their educations;
- Strengthen Native community education capacity; and
- Support tribal college faculty and staff development.

We work to **amplify Native voices** in national education conversations by tracking and improving Native scholar data in:

- Majors and degrees pursued;
- Graduation rates;
- Enrollment at community colleges and mainstream, four-year universities;
- Representation at minority-serving institutions;
- Internship and job placement; and
- Employment access and readiness.

Unfold here.





**1.** Our ancestors dreamed that their descendants, cultures, languages, and traditions would continue. Those dreams **laid the foundation** for the establishment of tribal colleges and universities.

**2.** In 1968 the Navajo nation **established a college** to deliver a modern curriculum while centering teachings on Navajo values. It was the first higher education institution of its kind—a college with Native-focused curriculum serving and located on an American Indian reservation. Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) were born.

**3.** TCUs sprung up nationwide. Today the American Indian College Fund (the College Fund) supports 35 TCUs **servicing indigenous communities.**

**4.** In 1989 the American Indian Higher Education Consortium created the American Indian College Fund to **raise funds for the tribal colleges and universities** and for student scholarships.



**5.** The College Fund's **scholarship programs** allow students to focus on their studies without working and to participate in campus and community events that shape well-rounded professionals. Scholarships also allow students to graduate without incurring a large debt.

**6.** The College Fund provides assistance with navigating **financial aid and scholarship applications.**





## 10. Early childhood education

programs and centers prepare the next generation of college students for success by rooting them in culturally based learning experiences—while also training cohorts of Native teachers to serve the community as future role models in the classroom.

**11.** Student internships give Native students **job training** and experience in their career fields in their own communities, allowing them to give back in their student years.

**12.** **Peer tutoring** centers ensure students thrive academically and build a base of knowledge for furthering their education, ensuring the next generation of college-educated professionals creates sustainable communities and serves as role models.

**9.** All **35 TCUs** offer certificate programs for workforce training and associate degrees; seven offer bachelor's degrees; and four offer master's degrees.

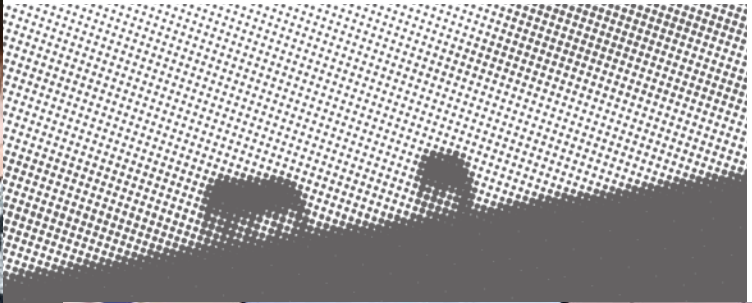
**8.** The College Fund supports development of programs at the TCUs to **provide leadership development,** science, business, and other opportunities.

**7.** The College Fund helps TCUs keep tuition costs low by providing students with **financial support** for capital and program expenses, including new construction and new curriculum development.





**13. Mentoring programs** give Native students the knowledge to navigate both college and the workplace. Mentors also serve as confidantes, helping students with career planning.



**14. College transfer planning assistance** helps students smoothly transition to another university to earn a bachelor's or advanced degree to meet their career goals.

**15.** Culture is front and center in all curriculum. Studying Native history, languages, traditions, and spiritual practices along with a **traditional curriculum** is statistically proven to give students a platform for long-term intellectual and emotional growth and strength.

**16.** Research opportunities expand the body of scientific, intellectual, and cultural knowledge about and in Native communities while giving students **high-end academic experiences** to build upon.

**17. Technology centers** give students experience with cutting-edge tools.

**18.** Leadership programs **equip students with the knowledge** and personal skills they need to make their communities sustainable.

**19.** Fellowships give students, faculty, and staff **advanced educational opportunities**, adding to communities' intellectual capital.



# TOGETHER WE FUEL NATIVE STUDENT POTENTIAL



For many Native students without adequate financial resources, getting a college degree does not always follow a straight path. Many students work while going to college to pay for tuition, books, room, and board. Yet because the gap between education costs and wages is too big to bridge, many students find themselves coming up short.

These students “stop out,” taking time to work to save enough money to get back into school to complete their degrees. Unfortunately, as the years wear on, bright people with untapped potential don’t always find their way back to finishing their educations.

Jasmine, a member of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, is one of those students. She started college in Chicago as “a bright, young hopeful 17-year-old. Unfortunately, I was also a bright, young, hopeful 17-year-old just before the 2008 financial crash. It’s hard to say if things had been different whether or not I would have managed to finish my degree in those four years. But I do know that by the time I got to my second year, it was simply too difficult on my family for me to continue.”

After stopping out of college, Jasmine took jobs to pay back her college debt. But between the financial hardship and the lagging economy, she says that “college seemed like something that was a distant dream at best... I spent ten years thinking college wasn’t going to happen.”





## AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS SAY THEIR MOTIVATION FOR GETTING A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS TO SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES.

But college did happen. Jasmine visited the College of Menominee Nation, which serves her tribe, to investigate their natural resources program. She was impressed by the opportunities for research, but money was a concern. Jasmine wrote to the school and said she was not sure she could afford to attend. They immediately responded and told her to apply; they would figure out the financial aid.

Thanks to American Indian College Fund scholarships and an affordable education at a tribal college, today Jasmine is a straight-A student working on an associate degree while participating in activities to develop her research and leadership skills. She is an American Indian College Fund student ambassador and a student intern in the College Fund's three-year, \$1.35 million Scholarly Emergence for Environmental Design and Stewardship (SEEDS) program, in which she researched the Menominee Theoretical Model of Sustainability as part of a project to design a Bachelor of Arts program.

Jasmine also enjoyed a year-long internship opportunity to work with scholars at Michigan State University on a National Science Foundation five-year grant program to study indigenous efforts around climate change. She helped create a publicly available database for both indigenous decision-makers and climate change researchers to help identify the common social impacts of climate change that are faced by tribes. The database assists indigenous communities with cultural and scientific mitigation, response, and adaptation strategies to climate change.

The opportunity to earn a higher education has helped Jasmine to develop her capacities as a scientist. "Had I not been at the College of Menominee Nation surrounded by these amazing and inspiring people who are dedicated to making me reach my full potential, I don't think that would have happened."

Jasmine's career goal is to help Native communities build their capacities to fight climate change, allowing them to "find ways to preserve the things they love in the face of a world that is rapidly changing."



87 percent of students (certificate/degree-seeking) attending TCUs received a federal Pell Grant, the barometer of financial need.\*

\*American Indian Higher Education Consortium Data (2017).

# SLAYING A FEARSOME MONSTER: HEALTH DISPARITIES



As a child growing up on the Navajo reservation, Darwyn, Diné, says his grandmother loved to tell stories. Among her favorites was a Navajo tale about monsters.

Long ago, she would say, when the earth was new, monsters roamed Dinetah (Navajo Land) killing innocent people. The Holy people noticed this disharmony and blessed the Navajo people with two brothers, Monster Slayer and Child Born for Water.

The brothers set out to terminate the monsters that haunted the land. They succeeded in killing every deadly beast. But they took pity on three monsters—Disease, Old Age, and Poverty—and allowed them to live, for they served a specific purpose in the peoples' lives.

Darwyn says at the time his grandmother told him the story he did not understand it. "It wasn't until my childhood innocence faded and the realities of the real world settled in that I began to realize that these monsters are still prevalent on the Navajo reservation and all across Indian Country," he says. "And no one has been left unscathed."

When Darwyn saw the destruction that the diseases of mental illness, chronic illness, and addiction have on Native people, he set his goal to help in his career. "I live by the mantra that every Native life matters. And if one person fails, we all fail."

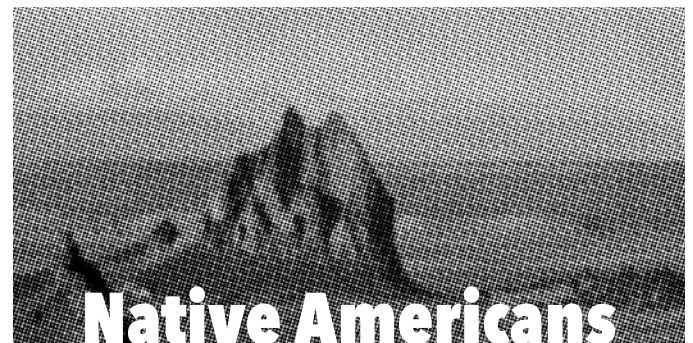
Darwyn poured himself into his studies so that he could go on to college. "The way I saw it, my education was my one-way ticket out of my hometown and into my predestined future." That determination led to scholarships to attend Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas.

"Statistically, the odds were stacked against me. I am from a single-parent, low-income family. I am a Native American male... I defied the odds because I have the support of my family and my never-ending urge to succeed. I did not let demographics determine my destiny."

As a student at Haskell, Darwyn is working toward a bachelor's degree in science. He was named to the Dean's List twice and the President's List once for high academic achievement. He completed internships at prestigious research institutes and hospitals across the country, including the Oregon Research Institute, the University of Kansas Medical Center, and Harvard Medical School's McLean Hospital and Harvard Medical School's Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Darwyn has also implemented his vision, helping others succeed. He volunteers to mentor transfer students and freshman transition to college life; helps students recovering from addiction with the Red Road program; serves as a Big Brother; and tutors fellow students in math at the Student Success Center.

Armed with big dreams and a big heart, Darwyn will have no problem slaying monsters, helping Native communities to lead healthier, happier lives. "I want to contribute to the restoration of harmony among Native people by limiting the disparities in health and health care," he says.



die at higher rates than other Americans of heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, and more. (2009-2011).\* Darwyn wants to change that.

\*Indian Health Service statistics.

# A REASON TO SMILE: AFFORDABLE, QUALITY DENTAL CARE



Sarah shares how she plans to make her community healthier thanks to the American Indian College Fund. Check out the video and subscribe to our Youtube channel at [collegefund.org/reasonstosmile](http://collegefund.org/reasonstosmile).

Many Native people do not have access to affordable dental care. Sarah, a member of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, is studying at Ilisagvik College to fill that gap.

Sarah is studying to become one of the first professionals in a relatively new field: dental therapy.

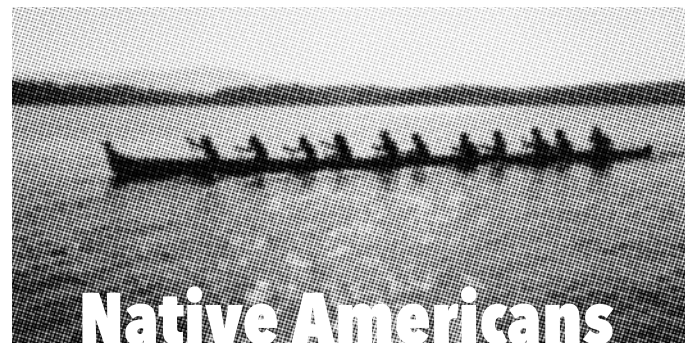
Graduates from Ilisagvik's dental therapy program work with underserved and low-income populations as oral health professionals. Without these services, many community members cannot access or afford this vital health service.

A beautiful smile is not just an adornment; it is a barometer of one's overall health. The connection between dental health and overall health is a chicken and egg scenario—neither is attainable without the other. Poor dental health can lead to serious health issues including infections of the heart lining, cardiac illnesses, and even low birthweight in babies. Studies show that Native communities suffer from disproportionate health problems as compared to other groups, including higher incidences of diabetes. Diabetes in particular can cause dental problems.

The dental therapy program is the oral health field's equivalent to the nurse practitioner program in the medical field. After completing the intensive, two-year dental therapy program at Ilisagvik College's Barrow, Alaska campus, Sarah will work for her tribe in

Washington state. She will provide cleanings and x-rays, make and replace fillings, replace crowns, and extract baby teeth.

Sarah says studies show that those patients with the most exposure to dental therapists had more preventative visits and fewer cavities and extractions. That is something that everyone can smile about. "I want to improve conditions for those struggling with their teeth and I look forward to helping children learn about the importance of a healthy life," she says.



## Native Americans

born today have a life expectancy that is 5.5 years less than other races in the U.S. (73.0 years to 78.5 years, respectively). (2009-11)\*

Sarah will provide better oral healthcare to her community, which is linked to better overall health.

\*Indian Health Service statistics.

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