TCU Spotlight: Sitting Bull College

Sitting Bull College (SBC), located on the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota, is committed to improving the education, training, and economic and social development of its students and behavior consistent with Lakota/Dakota culture and language. College courses were first offered on the Standing Rock Reservation in 1968. The school began the accreditation process in 1975 and was fully accredited in 1984.

Between 2000 and 2012, SBC raised more than $23 million to build a new $40 million campus. It moved its entire base of operations there in 2011. The new campus includes a Cultural Center, Science and Technology Center, Family Support Center, Public Transit Center, Entrepreneurial Center, Student Support Center/Library, Finance Center, Trades Center, and Student Housing Complex. The campus is powered by two wind turbines that the school owns and operates and uses for training in its wind energy technology certification program. The school also operates two satellite campuses in South Dakota.

SBC offers seven bachelor’s degree programs in business, education, environmental science, and general studies; 17 associate’s degree programs in building trades, business fields, energy technician programs, education, environmental science, general studies, nursing, information technology, legal studies, Native American studies, natural resources management, and pre-engineering; and certificate programs in building trades, business fields; farm/ranch management; horsemanship; information technology; Native community development; and wind turbine technology.
What Is A Tribal College?

Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) are accredited higher education institutions located on or near Indian reservations. These institutions were established and are operated by American Indian tribes to educate Native people and preserve Native ways, giving students the opportunity to work towards a college degree while embracing who they are as Native people.

Diné College was the first TCU, founded in 1968 by the Navajo nation. Today there are 35 accredited TCUs across the United States.

TCU Facts

- Thirty-four accredited TCUs serve more than 30,000 Native students;
- TCUs must meet the same academic standards as other colleges and universities;
- Native culture and language are infused throughout curriculum;
- Non-Natives do choose to attend TCUs;
- Most TCUs receive no Indian casino or state tax revenue for support;
- TCUs offer programs such as NASA’s science, technology, engineering, and mathematics program, which includes prestigious internship and mentoring opportunities;
- TCUs are competitive. Leech Lake Tribal College was ranked by Washington Monthly as the seventh of “America’s 50 Best Community Colleges” in 2010. It was one of two TCUs to earn this recognition.
- TCUs contribute to the economies of their communities. The College of Menominee Nation added $37 million to the regional economy, created 404 jobs, and generated more than $833,000 in tax revenues in 2011 alone.

Tribal Colleges Are Affordable Options

Tribal colleges provide Native students with access to an affordable college education, along with important services such as GED coursework, day care, health centers, libraries, computer centers, language preservation classes, community activities, and lifelong learning programs.

Even if you think college is a distant dream, you will be surprised to learn that you CAN afford college. Thanks to financial aid packages available through your tribal college and scholarships from the American Indian College Fund, there is no need to abandon your dream of earning a degree!

The American Indian College Fund accepts scholarship online from January 1 through May 31 every year at www.collegefund.org. Apply today!

Tribal Colleges and Universities in the United States

For more information, go to www.collegefund.org/tribal_colleges_listing. There you can click on each TCU’s listing by location on the map or search for it in the drop-down menu. The site includes information about the schools and their programs, along with links to their web sites. There you can find admissions and contact information.