OVERVIEW OF AIHEC

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium:
Tribal College & Universities

February 26, 2014
At Least 1,500 Distinct Languages

10 Million People
Centuries of Oppression: 1492-1900s
And so it was all over.
I did not know then how much was ended. When I look
back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see
the butchered women and children lying heaped and
scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as I saw
them with eyes still young.
A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.
And I, to whom so great a vision was given in my youth,—
you see me now a pitiful old man who has done nothing,
for the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no
center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead.”

- Black Elk, Oglala Sioux
400 Treaties

1 billion acres exchanged for binding promises

Forced onto Reservations

Sovereign Powers Remain Ours
Importance of Education: Included in Most Treaties

Education is the Ladder - tell our people to take it
– Navajo Chief Manuelito

Let us put our minds together and see what world we can make for our children – Lakota Chief Sitting Bull

With education, we are the white man’s equal - without it, we are his victim – Crow Chief Plenty Coups
“Kill the Indian, and Save the Man”
TRIBAL Determination: *Strengthening Sovereign Nations Through the TRIBAL Higher Education*

We asked the parents, ‘How do you want your schools?’ That was the day something happened.”

Guy Gorman
TRIBAL Self Determination...
37 TCUs – More than 75 Campus in U.S. – 15 States

Serving 88,000+ American Indians in 15 states through academic and community education programs.
34 TCUs are chartered by their respective Tribal governments; 3 are chartered by the U.S. government
**UNIQUE MISSIONS:**

Broader than Academic Education & Employment

- Comprehensive Education Systems:
  - Head Start
  - Dual Credit
  - STEM Retention: Participatory Research

- Preparing Professional Workforce:
  - Nursing: 2 TCUs lead Nation in AIs
  - Teaching: TCUs lead Nation

- SUSTAINING TRIBAL CULTURE & WAYS of KNOWING/BEING:
  - Native Language Restoration
  - Land and Water Sustainability
  - Food Sovereignty
  - Cultural Traditions

- Economic Impact & Civic Development:
  - ND TCUs = $182M to State's Economy
  - Student Leadership & Voting

**Building Tribal Nations**
Most TCUs have DEGREE programs in:

- Human Services (22)
- Business (32)
- Tribal Studies (29)
- STEM & Natural Res. Management (34)
- Education (34).

All have Native Language and Native Studies programs and Unique World View.
TRIBAL Self Determination...
Tribal College Students

- 13 TCUs offer 4-year degrees; 5 approved for Master’s degree
- Ave. Age: 16-24 years; FT Males up 34% in 7 yrs
- Typical 1-way commute: 30-100 miles
- Financial support: 78%
- In past 8 years, Completion up 32%, Degrees up 17%

TCUs Achieve Success While Being the Most Poorly Funded IHE in the US!
Post-Secondary Ed Challenges

Lack of Academic Preparation: 60-80 percent Developmental Ed; Behavioral & General Health Issues: Suicide, Depression, Gangs, Alcohol, Violence, Diabetes, Obesity

Lack of Fiscal Resources: First cut are Student Support Services, GED preparation, Child Care, Student Opportunities

Faculty & Staff Wear Multiple Hats. Development, Release Time, & Research Opportunities are rare. Jobs are complex: Academic, Community, AND Cultural Responsibilities

Geographic, Infrastructure, and Socio-Economic Challenges & Barriers: 7 of 10 poorest countries have a TCU; 73 percent of students = 1st generation; several TCU reservations are larger than some states
TRIBAL Colleges: Most Poorly Funded IHE in US

- **$5,865:** Federal Operating Funds Per ISC, 26 TCUs
- **$22,000:** Federal Operating Funds, Howard University
- **$4.4 M:** USDA, Annual TCU-1994 land-grant Extension (33)
- **$300 M:** USDA, Annual State-1862 land-grant Extension (50)
- **$1.8 M:** USDA, Annual TCU-1994 land-grant Research
- **$243.7 M:** USDA, Annual State-1862 Research
- **$52.5 M:** USDA, Annual HBCU-1890 Research (17)
- **$10.5 M:** Federal TCU STEM Funding, 2009
- **4.2 BILLION:** Federal IHE STEM Funding, 2009

(TCUs = 0.25 percent)
Tribal Communities: Economic Challenges…

- **$13,300-$30,000**: Average AI Family Income (7 of 10 US poorest counties have a TCU)
- **> 50 percent**: Reservation-based Unemployment Rate
- **80 percent**: TCU students receiving Federal Fin Aid
- **$2,328**: Average TCU tuition (2-4 yr degree)
- **$13,000**: Average Cost of TCU Education
- **$100,000**: Average Annual TCU tuition write-off
Faculty Salaries:
• TCU: $37,500  Mainstream: $50,000 - $200,000

 Presidents:
• TCU: $92,000  Mainstream: $251,000 (median)

TCU Faculty Job Description:  In addition to teaching 15 credits/semester… Janitorial duties: cleaning; setting up and taking down tables and chairs; moving items from one building to another; taking out the trash; Cook: prepare food for gatherings for the entire community; serve food during meal times during school hours; Campus Maintenance: Driving a bobcat to do snow removal on campus; using the tractor; mowing the lawn; gardening and lawn maintenance; Taxi Service: provide mechanical assistance to student vehicles that may break down; provide rides to students and other faculty to and from campus; drive the school bus; Advising: serving as both professional and personal counselor for students; Cultural Activities: must be able to align cultural perspective to align tribal expectations and values with higher education culture, expectations, and accreditation requirements.
Unique Mission: Native Language, Culture, Community

- Restoring, Writing, & Revitalizing Native Languages
- Culture & Curriculum: Tribal World View
- Culturally Appropriate Engagement: Students, Elders, Community 7 Tribal Values, Mores, Expectations
- Academic Structure Must Reflect Tribal Culture
- Community-based Activities
- TCU Accreditation Body Effort
People of A Place: 1994 Land Grant Institutions

**Extension Programs: Community Programs**
- Youth Outreach, Nutrition & Health, Economic Development

**Research:**
- Range Management, Water Quality, Native Plants,
  Food Science & Nutrition, Animal Sciences

**Equity & Endowment:**
- Natural Resources, Environmental Science, Land Management, Animal Sciences
Community & Economic Development

Entrepreneur Centers & Programs: Building on traditional spirit of trading and bartering for global competitiveness

Leadership, Workshops, Transport: Annual UTTC Tribal Leaders Forum, SBC Transportation Center, etc.

Community Housing & Libraries: Building homes, public libraries, health centers, community gardens
Today (40 Years), AIHEC’s role & mission is broad:
Policy/Advocacy; TA & Networking; Research & Accountability;
Outreach/Promotion; National & International Partnerships…
AIHEC Strategic Plan 2011-2015

Goals

- TCU Advancement (Funding)
- Performance Accountability
- Strengthening Communities ("Peoplehood")
- Student Engagement
TRIBAL Accrediting Body: TCU Working Group

AIHEC-AIMS: Comprehensive Data Collection
- Accurate/Relevant Measures of Student Success
- Funded by Lumina Foundation, BIE, A*CF, AIHEC

AIHEC’s Indigenous Framework for Evaluation
- Evaluation Strategies Relevant to Tribal Communities

Financial & Enrollment Management:
- Mentor-Mentee
AIHEC-AIMS Vision

This system of 120 qualitative & quantities indicators will be the foundation for systemic reform that significantly increases — and, for the first time, accurately measures — American Indian success in higher education.
AIHEC Indigenous Evaluation Framework

Developed and Implementing Robust Evaluation Processes that:

- Builds on Indigenous Values, Ways of Knowing, and Protocols
- Builds Ownership & Community;
- Establishes Training Institutes for Educators
- Contributes New Evaluation Theory
Sovereign Nations through Excellence in Tribal Higher Education.