

# **Annual Report on Programs to Increase Enrollment, Retention, and Support for Students who are Tribal Members in Compliance with SDCL 13-53-54**

Submitted by the South Dakota Board of Regents to the South Dakota State Legislature  
July 1, 2022

## **REPORT BACKGROUND**

SDCL [13-53-54](#) requires the Board of Regents (BOR) to provide an annual report on the progress and actions “to develop programs to increase enrollment and improve retention and student supports for any student who is a member of one of the nine federally recognized tribes in South Dakota at state institutions, including exploration of tuition assistance or waiver programs.”

## **DATA NOTES**

For many years, the Board of Regents student information system did not have the functionality to track a student’s tribal membership. In 2019, the BOR migrated to a new student information system that allows tracking tribal membership for students that disclose that information. While BOR institutions collect tribal membership during the application process, data is limited due to the timing of when the new system was implemented. For the purposes of this report, students that have self-identified an ethnicity/race of American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN), multi-racial where at least one race was American Indian/Alaskan Native, or self-identified as a member of a federally recognized tribe are considered AIAN to measure the effectiveness of programs implemented to improve outcomes for American Indian students. As more students complete the application and provide tribal membership data, future reports will include information specifically addressing outcomes for students who are members of the nine federally recognized tribes in South Dakota.

## **SYSTEM LEVEL EFFORTS**

### **FAFSA Completion Portal**

The BOR system recognizes the need to improve recruitment, retention, and degree completion by students who are members of the nine federally recognized tribes in South Dakota. Research from the National College Attainment Network (NCAN) has shown, students who complete the Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are more likely to seek higher education.<sup>1</sup> In addition to being an indicator of a student’s willingness to pursue postsecondary education, FAFSA completion is also an eligibility requirement for federal financial aid and many of South

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<sup>1</sup> DeBaun, Bill, “News: Data, Research & Evaluation: Survey Data Strengthen Association Between FAFSA Completion and Enrollment”. National College Attainment Network, April 2, 2019, <https://www.ncan.org/news/456025/Survey-Data-Strengthen-Association-Between-FAFSA-Completion-and-Enrollment.htm>.

Dakota's need-based and academic-based grants and scholarships.

To support college access and postsecondary pursuit for tribal members and other rural and diverse populations across the state, the BOR partnered with the South Dakota Department of Education to develop and implement the FAFSA Completion Portal to provide high school counselors with the information needed to identify and assist students who have not completed and/or submitted the FAFSA.

The BOR implemented the pilot phase of the Portal Project in August 2021 in nine school districts. Todd County was included as one of the pilot school districts. The BOR hosts the Portal and paired each of the participating school districts with a representative from one of the six public universities within its geographic region. The objective of the Portal Project is to increase awareness and educate about the benefits of FAFSA completion. The campus representatives encouraged the use of the Portal and provided support to the counselor(s) and students in the districts. The BOR will rollout the FAFSA Completion Portal to all school districts during the 2022-2023 academic year.

### Our Dakota Dreams Coalition

In October 2021, the BOR launched the Our Dakota Dreams Coalition. The coalition is funded by a national grant through the South Dakota Department of Education and coordinated through the Board of Regents. The coalition includes representatives from the Board of Regents' central office and institutions, the South Dakota Department of Education, South Dakota Board of Technical Education, and Mapping Your Future. The coalition is designed to support South Dakotans who choose education after high school.

The coalition launched [OurDakotaDreams.com](https://OurDakotaDreams.com) to provide information for South Dakotans pursuing postsecondary education and includes information on FAFSA completion, the value of higher education, and available scholarships. In the upcoming year, additional content will be added to the site, such as details about the postsecondary opportunities available at Board of Regent and Board of Technical Education institutions.

### Dakota Dreams Career Exploration Summer Camps

In summer of 2022, the BOR launched the Dakota Dreams Career Exploration Camps. The Dakota Dreams Career Exploration Summer Camps are a partnership of the BOR, South Dakota Board of Technical Education, South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), and South Dakota businesses and industry. The camps were funded with federal dollars available to DOE through the American Rescue Plan Act.

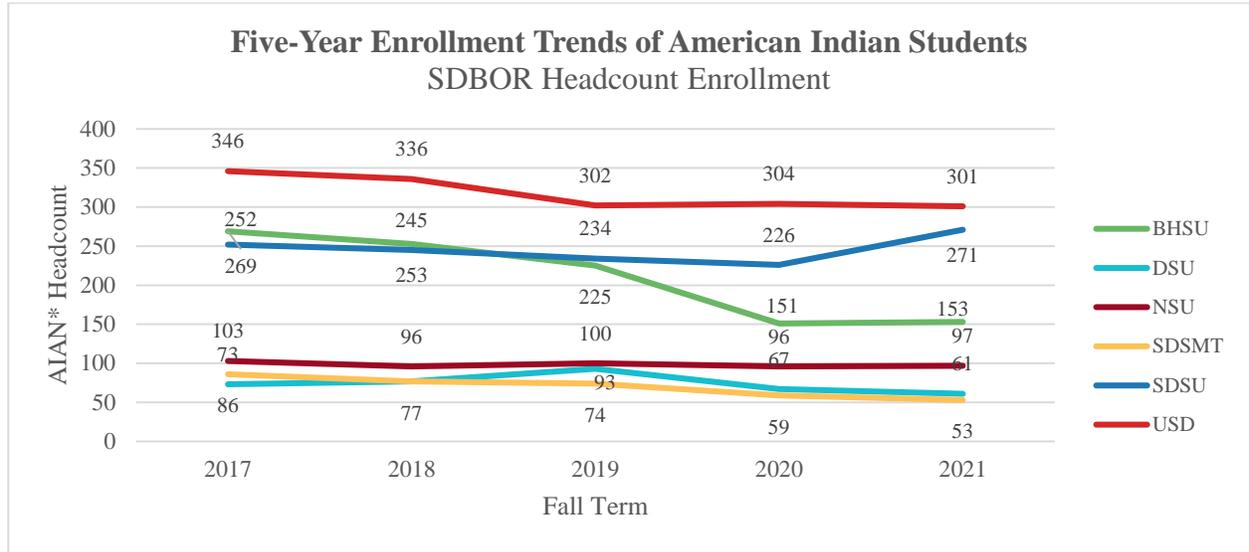
The residential summer camps are open to South Dakota incoming 7th and 8th grade students with priority given to campers from high need school districts. The campers will stay five days at one of the BOR institutions engaging in hands-on learning and career exploration. During the camp they will spend time on university and technical college campuses and visit area businesses and industry. By the end the camp, campers will have a better knowledge of their career interests and

how their education will prepare them for their future professions.

Initially, three institutions were to pilot the career exploration camps with 150 campers in 2022. However, due to an overwhelming demand the pilot was expanded to four institutions and 300 campers. Of the 300 campers **15.6%** (47) self-identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN) or multi-racial where at least one race was American Indian/Alaskan Native.

## ENROLLMENT DATA

From Fall 2017 to Fall 2021, system-level headcount enrollment<sup>2</sup> fell 7.8 percent for all students, from 33,057 in Fall 2017 to 30,460 in Fall 2021. During the same timeframe, the percent of total enrolled students that identify as AIAN\* fell from 3.12% (1,031) to 2.82% (858).



Fall Term	BHSU		DSU		NSU		SDSMT		SDSU		USD	
	AIAN * #	% of Headcount										
2017	269	6.59%	73	2.23%	103	3.01%	86	3.12%	252	2.04%	346	3.43%
2018	253	6.43%	77	2.31%	96	2.96%	77	2.92%	245	2.06%	336	3.39%
2019	225	5.90%	93	2.87%	100	2.93%	74	2.93%	234	2.05%	302	3.09%
2020	151	4.31%	67	2.13%	96	2.92%	59	2.39%	226	2.00%	304	3.27%
2021	153	4.44%	61	1.91%	97	2.93%	53	2.20%	271	2.38%	301	3.23%

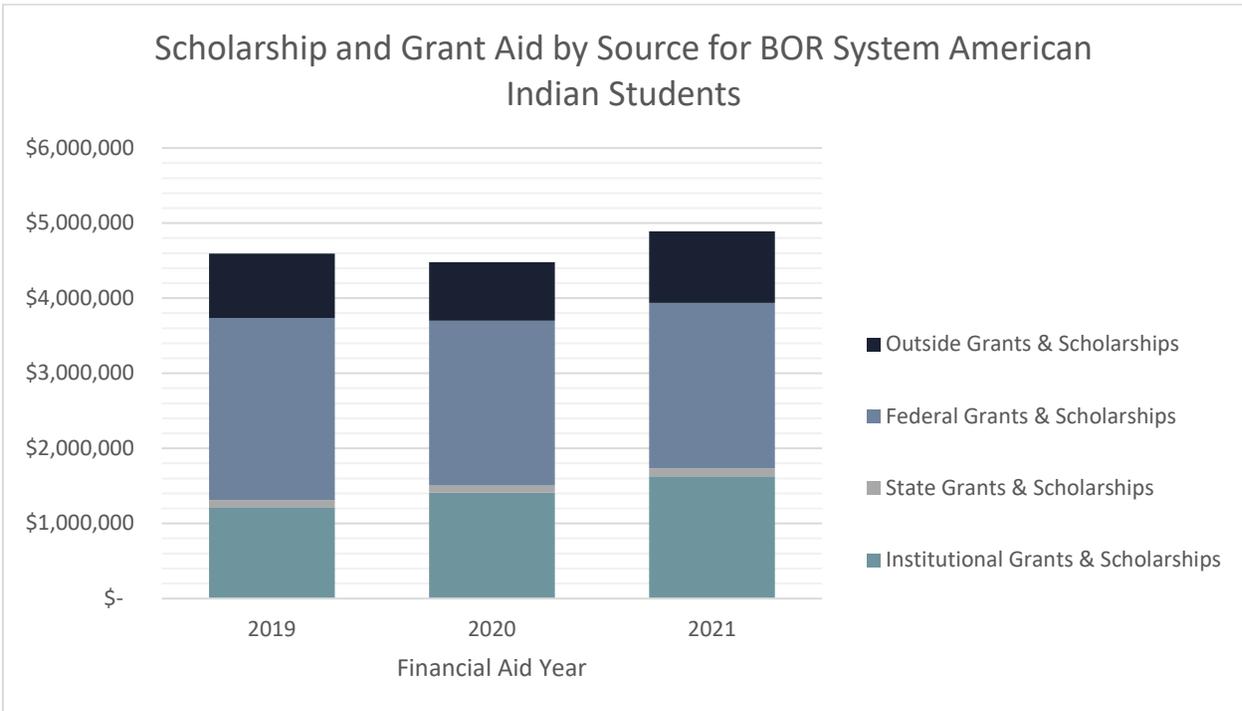
<sup>2</sup> Enrollment data was obtained from the Regents Information Systems Student Success Analytics Fall Census Snapshots for 2017-2021.

\* Students self-identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native or multi-racial where at least one race was American Indian/Alaskan Native

## GRANT AND SCHOLARSHIP DATA

SDCL 13-53-54 authorizes the BOR to explore tuition assistance or waiver programs for students who are members of one of the nine federally recognized tribes in South Dakota.

For financial aid year 2021-22, the BOR universities paid more than \$1.6 million in institutional grant and scholarship awards to AIAN\* students<sup>3</sup>. The amount of institutional grant and scholarship aid has grown steadily over the last three years, along with the percent those grants and scholarships represent for AIAN\* students' total grants and scholarship aid.



Financial Aid Year	# AIAN* Students Receiving Grants & Scholarships	Institutional Grants & Scholarships		State Grants & Scholarships		Federal Grants & Scholarships		Outside Grants & Scholarships		Total Grants & Scholarships
		Amount	% of Total	Amount	% of Total	Amount	% of Total	Amount	% of Total	
2019	580	\$1,216,644	26.5%	\$ 94,905	2.1%	\$ 2,424,040	52.7%	\$ 859,834	18.7%	\$ 4,595,423
2020	505	\$1,410,058	31.5%	\$ 93,380	2.1%	\$ 2,197,461	49.0%	\$ 779,353	17.4%	\$ 4,480,252
2021	532	\$1,628,765	33.3%	\$105,357	2.2%	\$ 2,203,362	45.0%	\$ 954,767	19.5%	\$ 4,892,251

<sup>3</sup> Financial Aid data was obtained from the Regents Information Systems Student Success Analytics FA Snapshots 2019-2021. The data includes award information for the financial aid year for students identified as AIAN\* in the Systems Student Success Analytics Fall Census Snapshot.

## INSTITUTION SUMMARIES



### BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY

**BLACK HILLS**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

With the largest percentage of Native American Students of any South Dakota Board of Regents Institution, the Black Hills State University (BHSU) persistently strives to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of its Native American students.

The Center for American Indian Studies (CAIS) was established at BHSU by an act of the South Dakota Legislature. It hosts activities and programs geared toward supporting the access and success of the American Indian student and the surrounding community.

The CAIS serves as the administrative unit for academic programs with majors in American Indian Studies (AIS). There are currently our academic programs administered by the CAIS: the Major in American Indian Studies, leading to the Bachelor of Science degree; a general Minor in American Indian Studies; the Minor in American Indian Studies - Teaching; and an American Indian Studies Minor, Emphasis in Communications.

In addition to their role of administering AIS academic programs, the CAIS also fills the rolls of coordinating and liaison facility for issues and programs dealing with American Indian students; promotes awareness of American Indian cultures, value systems, and social problems; acts as a liaison with tribal governments, tribal educational facilities, and American Indian organizations; and assists the university in both recruiting and retaining students of American Indian ancestry.

The CAIS uses social media and email, to connect and communicate with potential, current, and past American Indian students. Although technology is a great tool, it does not make the impact of a face-to-face visit. The Director travels to area high schools to visit with students and counselors. The Admissions Team at BHSU also extends the opportunity to travel to Tribal schools for one-on-one visits, college fairs, a recruitment booth at the Lakota Nations Invitational event in Rapid City, and the Black Hills Powwow in Rapid City. The CAIS and the Admissions Team at BHSU are in constant communication when it comes to individual and middle school/high school groups visiting campus. They always make it a priority to stop at the CAIS to meet and visit the administration and current American Indian students.

BHSU's Admissions Office makes every effort to connect with high school students, school counselors, and high school teachers at tribal high schools and high schools with high concentrations of American Indian students in South Dakota and neighboring states. The Admissions team is not only visible at these schools but actively making personal connections with students and their parents about the educational and social programs that are available to support their learning and growth. The conversation also lends itself to the importance and added value a higher education degree will bring to them personally and to their communities. BHSU also participates in College Application Week, and the CAIS sends American Indian students back to their previous high schools to assist the high school counselors during this time.

Critical to the success of the 2021-2022 academic year is the one-on-one contact between Urla

Marcus, former Program Manager (Tiarra Little), recently hired .5 American Indian professional advisor (Taylor Christensen), the CAIS faculty, and our American Indian Work-Study with the individual American Indian students. Preliminary indications suggest that addressing and coordinating their needs has been very successful.

- The Lakota Omniciye Club, with a membership of 20 + students, meet throughout the Academic Year to discuss club activities, powwow planning and organization, and institutional updates and policy requirements.
- The AISES organization met monthly throughout the AY and will make it more frequent in AY 2022-2023.
- The Book Loan Program provides up to 50 students with current textbooks, calculators, and I-clickers throughout the academic year.
- CAIS continues to provide scholarship and internship applications.
- CAIS held tutoring sessions in math, writing, and science for American Indian students weekly.
- Financial Aid advising and loan counseling.
- CAIS holds scholarship writing workshops.
- Leadership and self-advocacy workshops.
- Students participate in on-campus activities such as Leadership workshops and Awards Banquets.
- Placement of two work-study positions in the Fall and three in the Spring semesters.

The CAIS wrote two successful grants that supported retention activities throughout the AY 2021-2022. A grant for the National Humanities supported five internships during the spring 2022 semester. We successfully filled four. The students worked on projects that supported their academic growth and college completion. One specifically worked on ethnobotany, another focused on art, while the final two focused on American Indian Studies. The second grant was awarded through the South Dakota Humanities. This grant supported two full-time work-study. These students worked on planning the annual Wacipi and American Indian Awareness Week.

The CAIS worked closely with Dr. Brianna Mount to identify students to participate in the GEMADARC Research Program, a five-week research and travel program held at the Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica. The GEMADARC Research Program resumed in 2022, and the CAIS faculty and staff actively recruited three students to participate in this educational experience which supported the travel to Scotland and England. The group visited Boulby Underground Laboratory in Northeast England. Boulby is the UK's deepest underground science facility. The students also toured Oxford University and had the opportunity to visit with faculty. Upon return to the US, some students interned for an additional 10-week REU program centered on underground science at the Sanford Underground Research Facility.

The CAIS, along with the Jace DeCory family, coordinates and sponsors the American Indian Feathering Ceremony, currently in its 36th year. This ceremony is held in the spring, the day before campus commencement. It celebrates and honors BHSU's American Indian graduates and the majors and minors in American Indian Studies. Enrolled Tribal members receive an eagle feather, or plume, while non-members receive a medicine wheel. There is a meal for graduates, family, and invited community. The Feathering Ceremony includes an invocation, prayers, songs, and presents to the graduates from their families.

Below is a list of activities to provide you with a snapshot of efforts concentrated on the recruitment, retention, and graduation of our American Indian students:

#### Recruitment/Retention

- One-on-one meetings with prospective students throughout the academic year
- Native American College Student Task Force Meetings
- Residence Life Cultural Presentation
- University of North America College Resource Virtual Fair
- Student Registrations/NSOs
- Virtual one-on-one Student Meetings

#### Advising

The CAIS Director and .5 professional advisor are second and third advisors to our American Indian students. We are continuously advising our students on academic programming and planning.

#### Speaker Series

- Sage Fast Dog: “How to Indigenize a Classroom: An Innovative Configuration Map for Educators”
- Geri Mendoza-Gutwein: “Poetry of Witness, Poetry of Healing: Native American Representations of Boarding Schools”
- Clementine Bordeaux: “Decolonization, Indigenous Feminisms, and “Being a Good Relative”
- Foster Cournoyer Hogan: “Lakota Land Based Education: Sustainable Food Sovereignty for the Next Seven Generations”
- Eric Zimmer & Amy Sazue: “Remembering the Children: The Rapid City Boarding School Lands Project”
- Randilynn Boucher-Giago: “Nurturing the Relationship Between our Children and Unci Makha”
- Anpo Jensen: "Environmental Engineering and Mercury in the Black Hills"
- Angela Riley: “The Ascension of Indigenous Cultural Property Law”
- Alayna Eagle Shield: “Mni Wichoni Health Circle: Healing Through Mitakuye Oyasin (We Are All Related)”
- Jeremy Patterson: “Building Tribal Governance Capacity: Tribal Governments in the Era of Self Determination”

#### Student Organizations

- Lakota Omniciye & AISES
  - Red Shirt Cultural Gift Exchange – December 2021



**DAKOTA STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

## DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

As part of DSU's efforts to aid in the recruitment and retention of American Indian students, the campus is investing in cultural competency training, hosting community events, and helping facilitate DSU student attendance at traditional American Indian cultural celebrations.

DSU is home to the Native American Student Association (NASA). In November 2021, NASA and DSU hosted many events and programs for Native American Month. Activities included presentations by area Native artists and DSU faculty, traditional Native dishes offered during lunch at DSU food service, and performances by the Wakpa Ipaksan Youth Drum Group from Flandreau, S.D. In December 2021, DSU hosted the Dakota 38+2 Memorial Ride for a meal and program.

In the spring of 2014, NSU created an academic advising position focused on American Indian students as part of its new academic advising program funded with federal Title III funds. The position and subsequent American Indian Circle Program are housed in Academic Affairs within the University College. The Title III grant established the academic advisor position, and NSU has used internal resources to build each year from one advisor position to its current form of a growing program with an office and a director. The Circle Program exists as much to help the university adapt to American Indian students as it does to help American Indian students adapt to the university. The American Indian Circle Program uses a holistic model that serves to imitate the family-centered orientation of tribal life for American Indian students at NSU. This model provides student-centered planning and experiences that help these students cultivate a deeper cultural footprint during their college career while providing enhanced academic support services. This program is designed to work with faculty and staff to support the overall mission of NSU. The outcome of the program is to build a sense of community that contributes to the personal growth and academic success that leads to the graduation of NSU's American Indian students.

The Circle Program currently offers a variety of services to engage and support American Indian students and the broader NSU community:

- Coordinated recruitment efforts with NSU Enrollment Services, including partnering on-campus tours and visit days, high school and prospective student outreach, and new student registration activities;
- Cangleska wašté (Good Circle) pre-orientation program to help successfully transition students to college;
- Personalized academic advising and support from the time of acceptance to graduation;
- Peer-mentoring that builds connectedness and supports students as they acclimate to college life;
- Academic and cultural workshops and programming, including Native American Day and Native American Heritage Month events;
- Individualized tutoring in collaboration with the Student Success Center;
- Tribal-Higher Education/Scholarship workshops and guidance;
- Expanded scholarships through grant awards and support of the NSU Foundation;
- Academic recognition through the annual Crazy Horse Memorial Scholarship and Banquet and Graduation/Feathering Ceremony.

In the 2021-22 academic year, a grant from 3M was awarded to NSU to assist with scholarship opportunities for Native American students in STEM fields. In addition to the Crazy Horse Memorial Scholarship, this award is facilitated through campus partners and the Circle Program. NSU offers a Native and Indigenous Studies academic minor. Native students have strong advocacy and support at NSU through the American Indian Advisory Committee, the Student Success Center, CARES team, the university Campus Culture and Climate Taskforce, and Opportunity for All. Campus units, including TRIO Student Support Services, Accessibility Services, academic support, tutoring, and others, also work collaboratively to provide support and assistance to Native American students. Students' university success team, comprised of faculty, professional advisors, and other personnel, is also highlighted and accessible through Navigate,

the campus early-alert, and engagement platform.

NSU also has an active Native American Student Association (NASA), a recognized student organization that provides cultural education and event programming for the campus and Aberdeen community.

The Circle Program Director/Academic Advisor (1 FTE) provides direct support to students, faculty, and staff; serves as a campus to community liaison; attends the Indian Education Summit; assists with recruitment activities in partnership with NSU Enrollment Services; and collaborates with other BOR Indian Education Directors.

## SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES & TECHNOLOGY

Numerous programs at SD Mines serve the American Indian undergraduate students both before they arrive on campus and during their time at SD Mines. The SD Mines' Admission Office makes concerted efforts to connect with high school students, school counselors, and math and science teachers at the tribal high schools and at high schools with high concentrations of American Indian students.

In addition to traditional recruiting efforts, SDSMT also utilizes experience-based outreach for early recruitment and to foster interest in science and engineering:

- American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) Pre-College Outreach – This program provides science and engineering experiences for middle and high schools in an area with high concentrations of American Indian children. This outreach is a voluntary effort through our AISES student chapter.
- Admissions Outreach – The South Dakota Mines' Admission Office makes concerted efforts to connect with high school students, school counselors, and math and science teachers at the tribal high schools and high schools with high concentrations of American Indian students. Recruiting efforts are made by visiting high schools and participating in college fairs across the state. This effort predominately involves one Admissions Counselor.
- Tribal Liaison – The Chief of Staff in the Office of the President serves as a liaison between the university and tribal schools and organizations. The liaison has assisted in planning outreach events for tribal school students and frequently represents the university in discussions involving collaboration with tribal organizations.

SDSMT is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment and has established mentorship programs and projected-based learning opportunities to help in the retention of American Indian students:

- Office for Inclusion Pre-Orientation – This program invites self-identified, incoming students of color, including non-traditional and transfer American Indian students. At the start of the fall semester, students come to campus the week before classes to begin acclimating to college life. The Office of Residential Life allows students to move in prior to the official move-in day. During this time, students attend sessions to get oriented to their class schedule, meet their advisors, are paired with mentors, build relationships with each other, and learn how to be successful in college.
- Mentor Program – To ensure that no American Indian student feels isolated or unsupported, peer mentorship is offered to all students who participate in the Office for Inclusion Pre-Orientation as well as those who feel they could benefit from such a relationship. Mentors provide guidance, connection, and support throughout the first semester. Although the commitment for students is only for the first semester, many continue their relationship well into the future. The goal of the program is to positively impact the retention rates of American Indian students. Related objectives are for underrepresented students to have a successful and satisfactory first year, whether they are first-time freshmen, transfer, or non-traditional students. The program is also geared toward reinforcing a Native support system for students who may feel out of place. Mentors

- are volunteers, but the Office for Inclusion compensates students when funds are available.
- National Science Foundation (NSF) OSSPEEC II Grant - A Pre-Engineering Education Collaborative with Oglala Lakota College, South Dakota State University, and South Dakota Mines. The project aims to increase recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion rates in pre-engineering and engineering for Native American students. OSSPEEC II provides culturally centered and integrated project based experiential learning through pre-engineering classroom activities and co-curricular activities consisting of research on reservation needs in the areas of water quality and quantity, geology, and sustainability. The project also investigates and elucidates the impact of the OSSPEEC model, which emphasizes the importance of experiential learning and incorporation of the Lakota worldview as the basis for making essentially correct preconceptions in engineering. The program is designed for Native American students to complete their first two years of engineering education at Oglala Lakota College and then to complete their engineering education at South Dakota State University or South Dakota Mines. An additional goal of the OSSPEEC II project is to improve the quality of engineering education at Oglala Lakota College through professional development of faculty and staff.
  - American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) Chapter – South Dakota Mines has an award-winning AISES chapter that promotes excellence, leadership, and opportunities in education and professional development of students. AISES participates in national and regional conferences, scholarships, job placement assistance, internships and co-op opportunities, networking and social support, community service, and campus involvement. The chapter also helps to support the American Indian Honoring Ceremony.
  - Office for Inclusion - Provides direct student support services for all underrepresented students, including self-identified American Indian students. Support services include, but are not limited to, scholarship alerts, internship/co-op information, and opportunities for leadership and professional development. This office also provides leadership and helps to facilitate the coordination of programs to underrepresented groups, especially those related to American Indian students. The office reaches out to all underrepresented populations; holds free student lunches for networking and social support each semester, and coordinates the Honoring Ceremony for American Indian graduates. The Office for Inclusion also collaborates with several departments across campus to promote diversity and inclusion initiatives for students, staff, and faculty.
  - American Indian Honoring Ceremony - The Office for Inclusion coordinates and sponsors the American Indian Honoring Ceremony established in December 2008. This is a special ceremony held in the spring, the day before campus commencement. It celebrates and honors South Dakota Mines Native graduates by providing a traditional meal for graduates, family, and invited community. Speakers are drawn from faculty, staff, alumni, and tribal communities. The Honoring Ceremony includes an invocation, prayers, songs, a traditional meal and gifts to the graduates from their families.
  - Research Opportunities for Undergraduates (REU) – South Dakota Mines is the host to two NSF REU programs, the NSF REU “Back to the Future” site and the NSF REU “Security Printing and Anti-Counterfeiting Technologies (SPACT)” site. These programs provide research opportunities for American Indian students and engage students in a funded 10-week summer undergraduate research experience. As part of the site activities, undergraduate students are also involved in outreach activities which support ongoing

programs that support American Indian high school students, such as the Army Educational Outreach REAP and UNITE program. Recent highlights include student presentations at the national AISES conference and student mentoring of local American Indian high school students. The sites had an average participation of nearly 20% American Indian students.

- NSF Tiospaye Scholar Program - American Indian students at South Dakota Mines may qualify for the Tiospaye Scholar Program. This program is dedicated to increasing the number of American Indian students receiving STEM degrees by providing support in five areas: financial, academic, professional, cultural, and social. In the current version of the program, students in approved STEM majors are eligible to apply for the NSF All Nations AMP stipend after one semester of attendance. Students with cumulative GPAs exceeding 2.5, 3.0, and 3.5 are eligible to receive \$1200, \$2400, and \$3600 annually. Once AMP scholars confirm AISES membership, they become Tiospaye Scholars and eligible for the support components. Since its inception in 2009, we have graduated 55 Tiospaye Scholars. We currently have 17 Tiospaye Scholars. A major initiative is underway to secure private funding to establish two permanent endowments to support the program for the future. The Tiospaye Scholar Program is housed on the garden level of the Devereaux Library and is co-located with the Industrial Engineering Department.

## SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY



SDSU's American Indian Student Center (AISC) provides culturally appropriate retention and advising programming to positively impact recruitment and retention of American Indian (AI) students. AISC is led by the Larson Family Endowed Director of AISC, with the assistance of a Program Coordinator and an American Indian Success Advisor. The American Indian Success Advisor is a key member of the Student Success Network of the Wintrose Student Success and Opportunity Center. The AISC provides cultural programming and support, including:

- The AISC First Year Experience which is designed for American Indian students seeking to establish campus connections, create life-long friendships, and create a support system to facilitate the transition to SDSU and enhance their overall academic experience. The AISC First Year Experience consists of:
  - *AISC Orientation Program* is a program that allows American Indian students to arrive on campus prior to the start of the fall semester. Students meet with their academic advisor, AISC staff, and current SDSU AI students before the start of classes. They participate in activities designed to help them become acclimated to campus. They also learn valuable skills and begin cultivating resources that will help them be successful at SDSU.
  - *Oyate Yuwitaya Tipi Living Learning Community (OYT)* is designed for first year AI students. Wokini Scholars are required to live in the OYT LLC, or another LLC currently established at SDSU connected to their academic program their first year to work toward building connections and a sense of belonging with other students who share similar life experiences.
  - The *First-Year Seminar* course, Introduction to American Indian Studies, is required for Wokini Scholars. Other students are encouraged to take the course for academic credit as well.
- SDSU's Elder In-Residence Program is designed to foster academic, cultural, and social support for American Indian students pursuing higher education. The program introduces cultural practices, celebrates and honors traditional knowledge, reinforces and affirms tribal identity, establishes pathways, and raises cultural awareness for faculty, staff, and students. The Elder In-Residence program is a three-day program, during which time the elder has opportunities to engage with SDSU American Indian Students, contributes to the classroom experience by serving as a visiting lecturer, and provides presentations for the greater SDSU community.

The *Wokini Initiative: A New Beginning* is SDSU's collaborative and holistic framework to support American Indian student success and Indigenous Nation-building. Wokini, which is led by the Larson Family Wokini and Tribal Relations Director, provides innovative university and community-wide collaborations to strengthen American Indian student success by building relationships with the tribal communities of South Dakota. The goals of the Wokini Initiative are to:

1. Transform SDSU to create a welcoming environment for American Indians by increasing SDSU's staff/faculty capacity, knowledge and understanding of Oceti Sakowin history and culture through professional development and other learning and networking opportunities.

2. Improve American Indian student enrollment and success by providing effective support in all aspects of the university experience to increase the number of American Indian graduates.
3. Strengthen partnerships, outreach, and research infrastructure with tribal communities in South Dakota through trusting relationships, strategic networks, and ongoing effective communication.

Along with the recruiting and retention activities provided by the AISC and Wokini Initiative, SDSU provides additional support to AI Students pursuing nursing degrees through the Native American Nursing Education Center (NANEC). The NANEC provides programming designed to help students enrolled in nursing programs thrive and flourish. Some of the NANEC programming opportunities include:

- RN to BSN Mentoring - The RN to BSN program is designed for diploma or associate degree nursing students to earn their baccalaureate degree completely online. The NANEC supports RN to BSN students through mentoring and academic support. Mentors are available to students via face-to-face meetings, emails and/or phone calls/texting. Mentors provide support, encouragement, and resources that students may find helpful on their journey to earning their BSN online.
- Undergraduate Nurse Mentoring - Mentoring is offered for Native American pre-nursing and nursing students. The Lakota nurse mentor meets with the student monthly as needed. The mentor is available as a guide, role model, and advocate as the student progresses through the nursing program.
- Graduate Nurse Mentoring - NANEC offers mentoring to Native American students enrolled in the graduate nursing program. In collaboration with the Graduate Nursing Student Services advisor, the mentor provides additional social, academic, and cultural support. Mentoring provides a one-on-one relationship where Native American graduate students can seek guidance, direction, and encouragement throughout their graduate nursing education experience.
- Wohanpi na Wounspe (Soup and Learn) - Every month, NANEC hosts Wohanpi na Wounspe (Soup and Learn) events featuring various cultural topics and Lakota speakers. The event is open to all SDSU nursing students, staff, faculty, and the public. This professional development opportunity promotes cultural education, awareness, and competency grounded in Lakota culture and values.
- You' Nihanp (Honoring Ceremony) - Each semester, students are honored with a ceremony at graduation. Honoring ceremonies have been a part of Lakota history for generations. The ceremony signifies recognition of achievement for students for having completed their nursing program. The honoring ceremony also means understanding the responsibility of conducting their lives as professional nurses.
- Wicozani Otipi (Welcoming Room) - the Wicozani Otipi, or a place of balance in wellness, is a place for Native American nursing students, faculty, and staff to rejuvenate, relax, and unwind after a long day of studying and/or work. Wicozani Otipi is quiet and comfortable, allowing people to re-focus and re-center after a hard day's work. The Wicozani Otipi is inspired by Lakota artwork and consists of a lounging area, microwave, refrigerator, and coffee machine.

SDSU has also fostered a collaborative education agreement with the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, where SDSU offers a 15-credit fall-semester, undergraduate, academic certificate program in leadership and sustainability delivered at The Indian University of North America® at Crazy Horse Memorial. The program is titled Wizipan, which is based on the Lakota term - Wachante Hecha Wizipan - The Heart of All that Is. Ten students completed the program in 2021.

SDSU also has several active grants to develop and support programming which aids in the retention and recruitment of AI students:

- NIFA/USDA New Beginnings for Tribal Students: Igluwiyeya (Prepare Oneself) Funding: \$500,000 over 3 years  
*Current Funding Amount:* \$333,859  
*Deadline:* August 31, 2023  
*Purpose:* This project addresses the critical need for tribal students in South Dakota to prepare for, transition to, and ultimately graduate from an institution of higher education. The project is a collaboration among South Dakota State University, Sinte Gleska University, including its additional branch locations of Lower Brule Community College and Ihanktonwan Community College, and tribal high schools serving the Rosebud, Yankton, Crow Creek, and Lower Brule Sioux Tribal communities. The project will strengthen current programming, create additional pre-college and transition programs, develop sustainable resources, and increase support for American Indian students through targeted outreach and consistent face-to-face student engagement.
- Bush Prize for Community Innovation  
*Funding:* \$500,000 over 3 years  
*Current Funding Amount:* \$225,637  
*Deadline:* June 2023  
*Purpose:* In recognition of winning a 2019 Bush Prize for Community Innovation, this grant will advance South Dakota State University's transition to creating a welcoming environment for Native Americans through the Wokini Initiative.
- Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropy  
*Funding:* \$1,000,000 over 3 years  
*Current Funding Amount:* 465,365  
*Deadline:* Currently in progress for extension  
*Purpose:* The purpose of the project is to develop a professional development series for staff and faculty at South Dakota State University to foster a responsive and supportive campus environment for American Indian students with a goal of increasing student retention and graduation rates.

Recruitment efforts for American Indian students have been bolstered by a new position, the Director of Native Recruitment and Alumni Engagement, which the Office of the President oversees. The person in this role collaborates with Enrollment Services, Student Services, and Academic Affairs to increase the number of Native students attending USD and strengthen the Native alumni network. Efforts include:

- Maintaining effective relationships with agencies in the territory to work with potential students (i.e., job service, community colleges), developing articulation agreements and updating existing agreements, and visiting agencies on a regular basis to maintain contact and nurture prospects;
- Implementing a substantive recruitment plan, in consultation with NSS & Director of Tribal Relations, throughout the academic year, including all nine Indigenous nations in South Dakota, surrounding nations in adjacent states, and including college fairs or conferences with a significant Native population;
- Working closely with NSS in designing and implementing a recruitment and training plan for the Native American Ambassadors Program and cultivating the Wiyuskinyan Unpi Tipi Living Learning Community;
- Coordinating with fellow Admissions Counselors on all Native American student visits; and with NSS for all group visits from the Native American/reservation high schools.

USD has initiated multiple strategies to improve retention and support students who are American Indian, including those who are members of the nine federally recognized tribes in South Dakota.

- Native American Academic Advisor and First Year Experience Course - The Native American Academic Advisor provides academic advising support that begins with the registration process for incoming students, continues in the role as primary or secondary advisor for students' first 45 credit hours, continues as a secondary advisor to the major advisor, and concludes at graduation. The Native American Academic Advisor also teaches a one-credit First Year Experience course for incoming American Indian students. This course includes learning strategies for academic success, meeting other American Indian students, and building a supportive network in a cohort-based classroom setting. During the academic year 2020-2021, costs included \$46,653 for the salary of one FTE (not including benefits).
- Native Student Services (NSS) – The NSS offers cultural, academic, and social programming, traditional meals and food workshops, freshmen orientation, graduate honoring ceremony, assistance with financial aid and scholarship applications, open houses, and game nights. Most NSS programming is offered in the Native American Cultural Center (NACC) and is inclusive of all students, with particular attention to the needs of Native students. The Director of Native Student Services also oversees the day-to-day operations of the NACC, maintains contact with various tribal groups across the state, provides training across campus, and acts as a support system and cultural advisor.
- The Native American Cultural Center (NACC) – The NACC is a space for Native students centered around their individual and community needs. Cultural practices are prioritized. In addition, the NACC offers a newly updated computer lab, free printing, a lounge area, a full-service kitchen, and a study space.

- During the academic year 2020-2021, Native Student Services costs included \$77,840 for the salary of one FTE (not including benefits), student employee wages, and \$40,232 for operating expenses.

USD also has several student organizations that serve to provide opportunities to engage American Indian students and educate the community:

- The Tiospaye Student Council encourages American Indian students to get involved in school activities. Tiospaye supports students in their academic pursuits, promotes American Indian life on campus, and diversifies the student body by involving students, faculty, and community members of all walks of life. Tiospaye holds numerous events throughout the year, including the annual wacipi held every spring.
- The American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) is a national, nonprofit organization focused on substantially increasing the representation of American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, First Nations, and other indigenous peoples of North America in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies and careers. The USD AISES chapter provides opportunities for students to network professionally and socially via community service projects and present their research at the national conference. In collaboration with Wells Fargo, the national AISES organization has developed a culturally contextualized financial literacy curriculum called Native Financial Cents for elementary, middle, high school, and young adult students. This program is currently being utilized with USD's TRIO Upward Bound participants and the First Year Experience course.

In addition to the recruiting and support provided by USD, the USD Sanford School of Medicine (SSOM) also has initiatives to recruit and support American Indians seeking careers in healthcare fields:

- USD is a satellite site for the Indians into Medicine (INMED) program based at the University of North Dakota. This program provides opportunities for enrolled members of federally recognized tribes who are planning to enter the healthcare field. For example, one opportunity includes participation in the INMED Summer Institute (SI), a program for students in grades 7-12 to enhance their knowledge in academic subjects such as biology, chemistry, physics, and math as well as study skills, health and wellness, and communication strategies in a campus setting. SSOM transports students from SD that are accepted to SI. The USD SSOM holds two spots for incoming INMED medical students, supports attendance at Academy of American Indian Physician (AAIP) conferences and workshops, and supports other needs during medical school. Additionally, one Avera scholarship is awarded to an incoming American Indian medical student annually.
- The Native American Healthcare Scholars Program (NAHSP) provides support, mentoring, career development, and awareness-building activities for a select group of junior and senior high school students from Red Cloud Indian School and Pine Ridge High School. The goal of the program is to increase the number of American Indian healthcare professionals.
- The He Sapa Health Careers Summer Camp is a three-day camp held in Rapid City, SD, for American Indian high school students who are interested in pursuing a future career in healthcare. Participants explore a variety of healthcare careers, learn about important issues significant to American Indians, and develop professional and social networks.

- The Pine Ridge Scrubs Camps are designed to encourage students in South Dakota to consider pursuing a career in healthcare. Made possible through a collaborative effort between South Dakota's Department of Education, Department of Health, and USD, these camps offer high school students in the surrounding area the chance to learn about various health professions and network with professionals in the field.
- During the academic year 2020-2021, Sanford School of Medicine costs were grant-funded and included \$117,909 for salaries for one FTE (not including benefits) and \$21,598 for operating expenses.