

UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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For 44 years, with the most basic of funding, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) has provided postsecondary career and technical education, job training and family services to some of the most impoverished, high risk Indian students from throughout the nation. With such challenges, some colleges might despair, but we have consistently had excellent retention and placement rates and are a fully accredited institution. We are proud to be equipping our students to take part in the new energy economy in North Dakota and proud to be part of building a strong middle class in Indian Country by training the next generation of law enforcement officers, educators, medical technicians and "Indianpreneurs." We are governed by the five tribes located wholly or in part in North Dakota. We are not part of the North Dakota state college system and do not have a tax base or state-appropriated funds on which to rely. The requests of the UTTC Board for the FY 2014 Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)/Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) are:

- ***One-time BIE funding to forward fund United Tribes Technical College, approximately \$3.4 million.***
- ***\$7 million in BIE funding for UTTC for our Indian Self-Determination Act contract***
- ***Congressional support for a tribally-administered law enforcement training center***

A Few Things of Note About United Tribes Technical College. We have:

- Renewed unrestricted accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, for July 2011 through 2021, with authority to offer all of our full programs on-line. We have 26 Associate degree programs, 20 Certificate and three Bachelor degree programs (Criminal Justice; Elementary Education; Business Administration).
- Services including a Child Development Center, family literacy program, wellness center, area transportation, K-8 elementary school, tutoring, counseling, family and single student housing, and campus security.
- A projected return on federal investment of 20-1 (2005 study).
- A semester retention rate of 85% and a graduate placement rate of 77%. Over 45% of our graduates move on to four-year or advanced degree institutions.
- Students from 75 tribes; 85% of our undergraduate students receive Pell Grants.
- An unduplicated count of undergraduate degree-seeking students and continuing education students of 1200 and a workforce of 360.
- A dual-enrollment program targeting junior and senior high school students, providing them an introduction to college life and offering high school and college credits.

- A critical role in the regional economy. Our presence brings at least \$34 million annually to the economy of the Bismarck region. A North Dakota State University study reports in that the five tribal colleges in North Dakota made a direct and secondary economic contribution to the state of \$181,933,000 in 2012.

Positioning our Students for Success. *UTTC is dedicated to providing American Indians with postsecondary and technical education in a culturally diverse environment that will provide self-determination and economic development for all tribal nations.* This means offering a rich cultural education and family support system which emphasizes enhancement of tribal peoples and nations, while simultaneously evaluating and updating our curricula to reflect the current job market. The ramifications of the North Dakota Bakken oil boom are seen throughout the state. We saw the need for more certified welders in relation to the oil boom and so expanded our certified welding program. We are now able to train students for good paying, in-demand welding jobs. Similarly, our online medical transcription program was designed to meet the growing need for certified medical support staff. Other courses reflect new emphasis on energy auditing and Geographic Information System Technology.

We are in the midst of opening up a distance learning center in Rapid City, SD, where there are some 16,000 American Indians in the area. We are also working toward establishment of an American Indian Specialized Health Care Training Clinic.

We also understand the importance of culturally and legally competent law enforcement on Indian reservations. Our Criminal Justice program offers two and four-year degrees, and prepares graduates for employment as federal, state or tribal law enforcement, correction, parole and probation, and transportation safety officers; victim advocates; U.S. Customs, Homeland Security, Military Investigative Services and private security agents. UTTC wants to expand our endeavors to help meet the critical law enforcement need in Indian Country. Given our experience with our Criminal Justice program, our location, and our campus resources, we propose the establishment of a Northern Plains Indian Law Enforcement Academy.

Northern Plains Indian Law Enforcement Academy. We appreciate that the President requested increased funding in the FY 2014 budget to hire additional BIA and tribal law enforcement officers. However, we ask Congress to be more visionary than that and to seriously look at the problem of addressing crime in Indian Country with an eye toward establishment of a campus-based academy for training of law enforcement officers in the Northern Plains area of Indian Country. There are cultural and legal reasons why such training should be tribally-directed in order to be appropriate for the realities of tribal communities. And with the advent of expanded tribal authorities under the Tribal Law and Order Act and the Violence Against Women Act, 2013, the need has grown. At the same time, we realize that state and national training resources have an important role in this new endeavor.

Basic law enforcement training is currently provided through the BIA's Indian Police Academy in Artesia, New Mexico. The BIA Academy can train only 3 classes of 50 persons annually. The BIA is depending on the basic training provided by state academies to supplement what is provided at Artesia. We firmly believe UTTC is well positioned with regard to providing both basic and supplemental law enforcement training. An academy at UTTC would allow tribal

people in the Great Plains and other nearby regions a more affordable choice of training locations, minimizing the distance and long separation of trainees from their families.

In short, the BIA should be utilizing and enhancing the resources of UTTC to make a real difference in the law enforcement capability in Indian Country. We can offer college credit to trainees, and our facilities include the use of a state-of-the-art crime scene simulator. Maintaining safe communities is a critical component of economic development for our Tribal Nations, and local control of law enforcement training resources is a key part of that effort.

We are well positioned to continue to be an integral part of building a strong middle class in Indian Country but we face challenges including lack of reliable, on-time BIE funding.

Forward Funding. We have wanted BIE forward funding for some time, and our experience this past year with the Continuing Resolutions, sequestration and inexcusably slow and insufficient allocation of funds really brings home this issue.

There was a *glitch in the FY 2010 appropriations process* which resulted in UTTC (and Navajo Technical College or NTC) not receiving BIE forward funding. There is authority for forward funding for tribal colleges under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Act, 25 USC 1810(b)(1) and (2). This authority applies to all colleges funded under that Act, including UTTC and NTC. When the Administration requested \$50 million for forward funding its FY 2010 budget, they asked for it under the line item of "tribally controlled colleges and universities" – that line item includes 27 tribally controlled colleges. However, we are funded under a different line item which is "tribal technical colleges" and thus when Congress provided the requested \$50 million for forward funding, UTTC and NTC were left out.

Forward funding requires a *one-time* extra appropriation of three-quarters of a year's funding; hence, *we are requesting, in addition to our regular FY 2014 appropriation, \$3,397,485 to forward fund United Tribes Technical College* (75% of \$4,529,981 – the FY 2012 BIE appropriation for UTTC - is \$3,397,485). The total BIE FY 2012 appropriation for "tribal technical colleges" was \$6,761,165 (\$4,529,981 for UTTC and \$2,231,184 for NTC). *To forward fund both institutions would require \$5,070,873 in addition to the regular FY 2014 funds.*

The manner of distribution of FY 2013 BIE funds has been a disaster. We still do not know the precise amount we will receive for FY 2013. Between having funding provided via Continuing Resolutions and held back due to the prospects of a sequestration, planning has been very difficult. We are particularly disturbed that the BIE allocated only 37% of our funding during the first six months of the year. *The unprecedented uncertainty in terms of timing and amount of funding this past year has taken a toll.* New faculty feel vulnerable because of the appropriations situation, and prospective candidates are reluctant to accept positions due to the same uncertainty. We have significantly reduced off-campus professional development activities for faculty, and held back on upgrading technology resources for our faculty and students. The oil boom in North Dakota has led to a serious housing shortage and the rates for local off-campus student housing have skyrocketed. While we have campus-based housing, it has never been sufficient to accommodate all our students and their families. Our students come from 75 tribes from around the nation; none of them can commute from their home communities. Lack of housing has impeded our ability to accept as many students as we would like.

Base Funding. UTTC administers its BIE funding under an Indian Self-Determination Act agreement, and has done so for 36 years. Funds requested above the FY 2012 level are needed to: 1) maintain 100 year-old education buildings and 50 year-old housing stock for students; 2) upgrade technology capabilities; 3) provide adequate salaries for faculty and staff (who did not receive a cost of living increase this past year and who are in the bottom quartile of salary for comparable positions elsewhere); and 4) fund program and curriculum improvements.

Acquisition of additional base funding is critical as UTTC has more than tripled its number of students within the past eight years while actual base funding for educational services, including Carl Perkins Act funding, have not increased commensurately (increased from \$6 million to \$8 million for the two programs combined). Our BIE funding provides a base level of support while allowing us to compete for desperately needed discretionary contracts and grants leading to additional resources annually for the college's programs and support services.

The Duplication or Overlapping Issue. We would like to comment on the Government Accountability Office reports of March of 2011 regarding federal programs which may have similar or overlapping services or objectives (GAO-11-474R and GAO-11-318SP). Funding from the BIE and the DOEd's Carl Perkins Act for Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Education were among the programs listed in the reports. *The full GAO report did not recommend defunding these programs; rather, it posed the possibility of consolidation of these programs to save administrative costs.* We are not in disagreement about possible consolidation of our funding sources, so long as program funds are not cut.

BIE funds represent over half of UTTC's core operating budget. The Perkins funds supplement, but do not duplicate, the BIE funds. *It takes both sources of funding to frugally maintain the institution.* In fact, even these combined sources do not provide the resources necessary to operate and maintain the college. We actively seek alternative funding to assist with academic programming, deferred maintenance, and scholarship assistance, among other things. The need for postsecondary career and technical education in Indian Country is so great and the funding so small, that there is little chance for duplicative funding.

There are only two institutions targeting American Indian/Alaska Native career and technical education and training at the postsecondary level—UTTC and NTC. Combined, these institutions received less than \$15 million in FY 2012 federal operational funds (\$8 million from Perkins; \$6.7 million from the BIE). That is not an excessive amount for two campus-based institutions who offer a broad (and expanding) array of programs geared toward the educational and cultural needs of their students and who teach job-producing skills.

Closing. UTTC offers services that are catered to the needs of our students, many of whom are first generation college attendees. Our BIE and Perkins funds are central to the viability of our core postsecondary programs. Very little of the other funds we receive may be used for core career and technical educational program; they are competitive, often one-time supplemental funds which help us provide support services but cannot replace core operational funding. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.