

CARRIE L. BILLY
PRESIDENT & CEO

AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

In 2007, Carrie L. Billy was named president and CEO of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the collective spirit and unifying voice of our nation's 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). Billy has a track record of success in both government and the nonprofit sectors, where her accomplishments include designing and implementing strategic initiatives, developing innovative policies and programs, and forging partnerships and coalitions. An enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, she has dedicated more than 25 years to ensuring that American Indian students are given the resources they need to stay successfully on an academic track.

As AIHEC's top executive, Billy deeply understands and supports the organization's mission to ensure excellence in *TRIBAL* higher education. Under her leadership, AIHEC secured \$50 million in additional operating support to "forward funding" for TCUs and \$300 million in mandatory funding for TCU institutional development; established AIHEC AIMS, a comprehensive data collection system of nearly 120 qualitative and quantitative indicators to which TCUs report annually—ensuring their accountability to tribal communities and funders; developed the Indigenous Evaluation Framework, which incorporates Indigenous epistemology and core tribal values into a framework that integrates place, community, individual gifts and sovereignty with Western evaluation practice; and launched new initiatives to engage Native students in advocacy and leadership on key community-based and public policy issues.

Billy works closely with the AIHEC Board of Directors to achieve the organization's strategic vision and priorities, which include: **Institutional advancement** to sustain TCUs and the Tribal College Movement; **performance accountability** to provide standards, processes, and technical assistance necessary for TCUs to be accountable premier higher education centers within their communities; **strengthen communities** and improving the capacity of TCUs to serve their students, individuals, families, and tribal nations; and **student engagement** to increase Native student completion and success through high quality, culturally relevant, and holistic and integrated education, research and support programs.

Billy was appointed previously by President William J. Clinton in 1998 to serve as the first executive director of the White House Initiative of Tribal Colleges and Universities. In this role, Billy is recognized and celebrated as leading initiatives that resulted in historic changes to improve TCUs' capacity and increase American Indian student success. Her emphasis on integrating TCUs into U.S. federal programs and strengthening the institutions' partnerships with the private sector resulted in the largest funding increases ever received by TCUs in annual federal appropriations; the establishment and funding of new education and infrastructure programs in several U.S. federal departments—including the National Science Foundation's Tribal Colleges and Universities Program, which has led to more than \$140 million in STEM funding at TCUs; and the creation of a public-private facilities initiative involving the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Housing and

Urban Development that has transformed TCU campuses into state of the art learning centers. Billy's tireless efforts also influenced President Clinton to become the first U.S. president to visit a TCU.

Earlier in her career, Billy served as a senior staff member to U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, (D-NM) where she focused on Indian Affairs, health policy, judicial issues, and education. It was during this time that Billy first began working with TCUs—overseeing the enactment of a key vocational education program for selected institutions as well as securing ongoing support and funding for the nation's only institution of higher education (Institute of American Indian Arts) dedicated to promoting and nurturing American Indian Art. In 1994, Billy also helped to pass legislation designating TCUs as "Land-Grant Institutions," which opened new doors of opportunities for the institutions in agriculture, land-use, and community development. Additionally, Billy's unyielding belief in increasing educational opportunities for all underserved students also led her to work on legislation that created the Hispanic-Serving Institutions designation—adding these institutions to the list of Minority-Serving Institutions that receive federally-supported opportunities and resources from the U.S. Department of Education.

Billy has served on several national and international boards and committees. She currently serves on the American Association of Community Colleges Board of Directors, the Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council, the University of Winnipeg's Indigenous Advisory Circle & Masters in Development Practice Advisory Circle, and she is one of three co-Chairs of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC).

Billy has undergraduate degrees from the University of Arizona and Salish Kootenai College. She also earned a Juris Doctorate from the Georgetown University Law Center and practiced law in Arizona.