

My name is Tierra Standing Soldier Thomas. I have been facing many struggles while studying at Haskell Indian Nations University starting in the fall 2021 semester. I experienced many family, educational, and personal struggles during my time at Haskell for which I received no support. In many cases, Haskell administrators exacerbated or created challenges. These struggles included:

- grieving the death of three family members within a period of 8 months
- the arrest of a father figure (uncle) in spring 2022
- six hospitalizations in a year and a half period due to severe allergic reactions, medication side effects, injuries, sickness, a severe concussion caused by unknown circumstances, and a suicide attempt
- a hostile school and athletic environment due to bullying from student-athletes
- intimidating meetings with Judith Gipp and Tonia Salvini where students were threatened and forced under duress to sign a no-contact order for Coach Mayes
- mental health challenges such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideations, and several suicide attempts
- sexual assault by another Haskell student in spring 2022, of which I will further detail

I was walking around for hours and sometimes walking miles in circles because my mental state was so poor in order to keep myself from unliving. November 4, 2021 is when I learned I was no longer able to have contact with former Coach Clay Mayes, who had been a big support in my push towards advocating that I needed mental help and trying to stay on task with my work. It had been a little over a month since I had buried two family members that I was close with and I was trying to cope and grieve in a stressful environment.

After the hostile practice environment and being pulled from competing in cross country meets, I quit the track team due to so much emotional turmoil in a short amount of time and grew extremely depressed. Over the semester, I had made numerous jokes about ending my life, slowly went from excellent attendance to not showing up, and didn't know how to ask for help any further. I distanced myself from others, walked for hours even in the rain, and stopped participating in the sport I love most. I attempted to take my life over winter break.

At a Champions of Character event regarding suicide in February of 2022, as well as during classes, I revealed my suicide attempts and had no wellness check done on me. I was making a cry for help and I needed someone to conduct a wellness check on me. My cry was not heard. I then experienced a knee injury which greatly impacted my mental state because I was not able to use my main coping mechanism: running. I would often break down crying trying to make it around campus because of the pain and having to climb down two flights of stairs any time I wanted to leave my dorm. This made it difficult to attend class, go to the food hall, and carry on daily activities. I felt extremely hopeless and was not sure what to do regarding my mental health and classes.

April 26, 2022, another student at Haskell drugged me, raped me, and held me against my will for 15 hours off campus. I was terrified to go anywhere around Haskell campus in fear of running into my perpetrator again. I had lost all sense of my personal identity due to denial, a regular occurrence in rape victims. I showed clear signs of PTSD such as not eating, being unable to sleep, becoming quieter, and avoiding eye contact. I ignored calls from family and friends because I felt so much

shame and didn't feel like my body belonged to me. With the fear from running into the person again and PTSD combined, I couldn't emotionally stay invested into class.

May 12, 2022, I emailed McKinney seeking plausible extensions in my classes due to recent trauma, hospital visits, and losing family. May 15, I discussed thoughts of suicide and rape to an RA and she reported it. May 16, 2022, I met with Danelle McKinney about my rape and received a no-contact order against my perpetrator. The order did not protect me from the perpetrator living in student housing, attending the university, or from having to run into them on campus. No consequences were given to that person with little transparency. McKinney stated she would look into extensions, but there was no follow up and I was not informed of a no-credit option. May 20, 2022, I was told I did not qualify for summer housing due to my GPA and had to work with McKinney to get a room for summer school.

All of these circumstances, compiled with my pre-existing ADHD diagnosis and mental health struggles including suicidal ideations and attempts, made it impossible to keep up with school work. I took the initiative to gain a referral to our community mental health facility and to seek out tutoring, but received no support from Haskell administration. I reached out to Dannelle McKinney, Alta St. Pierre, Matthew Downing, Judith Gipp, Albert Gipp, Freda Gipp, Tina Tortillott, and various professors for assistance such as extensions. Over and over, I expressed I was overwhelmed with grief, felt alone, felt trapped, was having problems with my classes after trying to reach out, and wanted mental health resources. Ultimately, instead of being assisted, I was kicked out of Haskell twice due to a low GPA and denied my Pell grant during my time at Haskell between Spring 2022 and Spring 2024 including summer school. I have been proactive throughout the year when I needed help and was not offered the proper services I needed.

I had some hope when investigators came onto Haskell's campus to investigate wrongdoing in the summer of 2022. After being interrogated by them for over 3 hours, reliving my trauma I had not yet processed, they reassured me that the report would be made public and I would be protected from retaliation. I have yet to see the report and shortly after making my investigative statement, I was kicked out of Haskell.

I was an MMIW who survived. I'm asking for accountability. Accountability for Pell I haven't received, accountability for all of the retaliation I've been subjected to. I want acknowledgement for the emotional distress I've gone through. I am a victim who has had to overcome many obstacles and barriers that should never have been in place. I'm tired of living in fear of my predator, of school staff, or everything I do being used against me. I want to see victims at Haskell protected. I want to see the proper legal procedures and support occur for victims. I want to have the opportunity to pursue my education at a place I feel protected and safe in. I want the predators at Haskell removed. I don't want young girls to worry about seeing their predator. I'm asking that my words hold meaning and enact the change Haskell needs to be safer and follow the legal conduct required of them.

Pilamayaye (thank you),

Tierra Standing Soldier Thomas