

The Effect of the Native American
Higher Education Initiative
on Strengthening Tribal Colleges
and Universities: Focus
on Governance and Finance



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INTRODUCTION

The tribal college and university (TCU) movement's institutions are unique in terms of governance, organization, and finance when compared to other institutions of higher education throughout the United States. The colleges are individually chartered through the authority of tribal governments, which have much the same jurisdictional authority as state governments and relate to the federal government on a government-to-government basis. Tribal colleges are relatively new institutions, with the oldest, Diné Community College, being 32 years old. For the most part, they are relatively small institutions. From the beginning, tribal colleges have followed the example of American Indian tribes, banding together to gain

strength and recognition. This banding together of the TCUs led to the formation of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in 1973, which in turn led to the development 15 years later of the American Indian College Fund (AICF).

The first section of this chapter describes the general governance and financing of the TCUs and the tribal college movement. It illustrates just how different the TCUs are from their sister institutions of higher education, yet it clearly shows that TCUs have similar goals and aspirations for their students. The second section of the chapter describes the infrastructure, development, and strengthening of two central organizations of the TCUs, AIHEC and AICF, and three important and related organizations of the TCU movement (see Figure 4.1). These three organizations are the AIHEC's Student Congress; the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education (NINLHE), a new organization made up of Native American higher education student support professionals working within mainstream institutions;

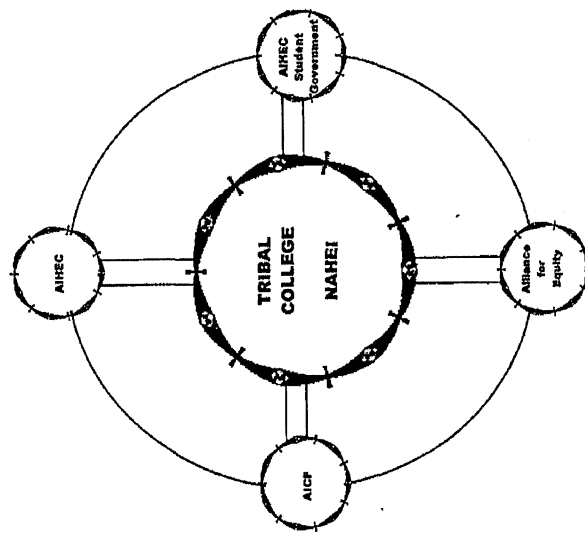


FIG. 4.1. Related Organizations.

and the Alliance for Equity, a joint organization representing the historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), and TCUs. All five of these organizations have substantially supported the work of TCUs as a result of the funding and networking opportunities provided through the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's Native American Higher Education Initiative (NAHEI). The third section of the chapter explores and evaluates how several NAHEI funded projects have worked to strengthen the governance and fiscal strength of AIHEC and two tribal colleges. The concluding statements present our thoughts on the outcomes of NAHEI, its effect on the TCU movement, and the role of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in this important educational endeavor.

FOUNDING AND GOVERNANCE OF THE TCUs

The founders of the TCU movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s understood that they were entering an educational world in which American Indian people had been denied input and, in fact, had seen an almost total eradication of all things American Indian. For several centuries, the United States government had systematically barred their communities and tribal governments from participating in the education of their children and young adults. To counteract the federal government's philosophy, which emphasized the total assimilation of their people, a small group of American Indian educators (and their non-Indian colleagues) chose the community college model of education for their tribal communities. The founders developed a philosophy that would support a dual mission, protecting and enhancing their own cultures and at the same time embracing many of the tools of standard postsecondary education. TCU leaders recognized that they could not just prepare tribal students to be proficient in their own culture but that they must also prepare them to be proficient in the non-Indian world that surrounds the tribal communities. Their educational institutions had to prepare native students to live in two very different cultures. It had to be that way if their people were to survive with some semblance of who they really were and are, as well as to protect what they had retained of their homelands and sovereign rights into the 21st century.

Navajo Community College (Diné College), the first TCU to open in 1968, was founded on the important principle of local community control. Its primary aim was to enhance the understanding of the Diné people's heritage, language, history, and culture. To accomplish their goal, the college founders established a clear, detailed, and powerful mission statement.

Diné College Mission Statement

- Strengthen Personal Foundations for Responsible Learning and Living consistent with Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'éh Hózhóón
- Prepare Students for Careers and Further Studies.
- Promote and Perpetuate Navajo Language and Culture.
- Provide Community Services and Research.

As the tribal college movement spread across the United States and Canada throughout the remainder of the 20th century, subsequent TCUs created similar mission statements as they laid down the foundation and governance of their colleges (Stein, 1992).

The local tribal community is the most important base and touchstone for a TCU. Once the members of the community-at-large have given their thoughts and support, the founders of a TCU can then approach the local tribal governing body for an enabling charter. The college's enabling charter must come from the local tribal government in order to legitimize the college in the eyes of the local community and the outside world. In addition to providing the charter, the local tribal government often provides some of the necessary resources needed by a fledgling indigenous college, such as meeting space for the college's early classes, funds to help defray the ever-present expenses of even the most modest effort, and land on which to build the college. The local government may also need to offer support in transactions with funding agencies and various levels of state and national government, as well as in solicitation of funds from private sources.

The college's charter would also include articles of incorporation, or a very similar set of guidelines, that describe how the college will operate as a legal entity of the tribe or indigenous community. Once the charter has been secured, a governing board of trustees for the college will be selected. Because the board of trustees will have numerous responsibilities in ensuring the success of their locally controlled college, the manner in which members are selected and the relationship they have with local governing bodies are crucial and will be defined in the college's charter (see Stein, chap. 2, this volume).

Two key factors in the success of an American Indian tribally controlled college are that its board of trustees must (a) act as a buffer between the college and the local governing body and (b) clearly set policy for the college's administrative practices. By acting as a buffer between the college and its local governing council, the board of trustees ensures that good educational practices will be maintained, rather than enacting or enabling politically

charged policies because of shifting local political tensions that have nothing to do with education. In essence, an indigenously controlled college (a TCU) must be an intimate part of its local community, yet must remain administratively separate from the local governing body. What we have learned over time is that being involved in the daily business of tribal governance is a sure formula for failure (see also Boyer, 1997; Stein, 1992).

The board of trustees may be selected in a number of ways, any of which will work if the process is clear and followed faithfully by the local governing body and community (see also Stein chapter). For example, the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Board charters Fort Peck Community College (FPCC), located in Poplar, Montana. The charter created a nine-member board of directors, one of whom is the current president of the FPCC student senate; he or she is a voting member of the board. When a vacancy occurs in one of the other eight positions, it must be advertised in the local papers for 30 days. The FPCC board of directors then has the authority to appoint a replacement from the applicant pool. After the FPCC board of directors has selected a replacement for the vacant position, the charter requires it to submit its candidate for review to the FPCC executive board of directors for their review. That board can reject the recommendation, in which case the FPCC board of directors must submit a new candidate for consideration. Occasionally, the tribal executive board has rejected a name; however, in follow-up discussions between the two boards, an understanding has been reached as to the politics of the choice and its rejection. To date, this selection process has worked well for FPCC (FPCC, 1996).

In short, organizational and administrative structures vary from college to college, each reflecting its own tribal culture to some degree, yet each also reflecting the structures of Western higher education institutions. This is primarily due to regional accreditation association standards that the TCU must meet in order to receive funding assistance from the federal government and private funding agencies (see Boyer, chap. 7, this volume).

FINANCING THE TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

TCUs have a unique foundation for financing their institutions, based on their tribal nations treaties with the United States government. Furthermore, the federal government has trust responsibilities for educating members of those federally recognized tribes that have valid treaties with it. This commitment is important for two reasons. First, most Indian land on reservations is held in trust by the federal government; hence, most tribes have

not been able to develop property tax codes to support the many services, including education, that such taxes generally support. Second, state governments have no legal obligation to support tribal schools and so far, have contributed little to the TCUs' financial foundation (see also Boyer, 1997; Stein, 1992). Today, as in the past, TCUs must rely on the federal government to provide their core funding; yet the amount appropriated has not been sufficient to meet the many needs of developing educational institutions that serve tribal communities and students. Although TCUs continue to work closely with the federal government to meet most of their base funding needs, over the past several years, they have had to search for and secure other sources of funding for their developing institutions.

For example, the operating funds of a TCU come from a variety of sources, including tribal funds, state and/or local funds, and private philanthropic funds. In fact, each of these sources has contributed to the stability and longevity of the TCUs. However, because they lack sustainable support, TCUs must continue to rely heavily on limited federal funds for their core operational expenses. In particular, they depend on funds distributed through the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-471), which is administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Title I of the law currently funds 25 of the colleges through a formula based on the number of Indian students enrolled (called the Indian Student Count or ISC). In fiscal year 1999, total appropriations reached \$30 million. However, appropriations for Title I schools in particular have never matched the authorized funding levels originally set by Congress. The current funding of \$2,964 per Indian student is now less than half the authorized amount of \$6,000. Because the authorized amounts have never been fully realized, Title I tribal colleges operate with significantly less funding per student than do mainstream colleges. Estimates indicate that the TCUs will receive an average of \$4,800 per full-time enrolled (FTE) student from federal, state, and local government revenues (AIHEC, 1999).

Title II of the law provides funding for core operations for Diné College. Title III provides matching funds for endowment grants and is authorized at \$10 million. However, appropriations have never surpassed \$1 million. Over the years, many TCUs have received multimillion dollar grants from Title III, the Higher Education Act, Aid for Institutional Development Program. In addition, funds are authorized for facility renovation and technical systems with recent total appropriations having increased slightly after remaining static in real terms for many years. Title IV is authorized at \$2 million to finance local economic development projects, but the funding has not yet been appropriated.

TCUs receive funds from several other important federal sources that finance educational programs closely suited to the particular TCUs' educational missions. Two TCUs receive no P.L. 95-471 funds, but rather receive their core funding from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technological Act. Several other TCUs receive their core funding through separate authorizations from Congress through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. TCUs also receive minimal funding from other sources, including state block-grant programs for adult education, the Minority Science Improvement Program, environmental management grants, and other specially directed funds. TCUs generally secure these other funds through a competitive process; monies are directed specifically to areas of educational need, determined by the colleges (AIHEC, 1998, 1999).

In 1994, TCUs were given land-grant status, joining 55 state universities and 17 historically Black colleges and universities. This new designation has helped TCUs become more visible and connected to mainstream institutions by sharing projects, resources, and information with other land grant universities and colleges through equity grants of \$50,000 per institution. The intention of the grants, allocated through the Equity in Education Land Grant Status Act of 1994, is to strengthen agricultural and natural resources programs. However, total appropriations authorized for all 29 eligible TCUs are about equal to the amount given to just one state land-grant university each year.

Finally, Executive Order No. 13021 concerning TCUs was implemented on October 19, 1996, by President Clinton with strong bipartisan support from Congress. The primary purpose of this order is to promote TCUs' participation in programs funded by the federal government and to bring more attention to their accomplishments as accredited higher-education institutions. It will greatly assist the TCUs in their struggle to provide high-quality education and to achieve self-sufficiency.

In addition to receiving limited, yet important funds from the federal government, TCUs have received support and funding from a number of philanthropic organizations and foundations since their beginnings in 1968. Funding from philanthropic organizations and foundations has been useful over the years in helping TCUs and their national organization, AIHEC, develop specific educational programs and support the construction of organizational infrastructures that suit the particular needs of each unique community. Until recently, however, funding from foundations and philanthropic organizations was sporadic at best. TCUs often felt ignored by philanthropic organizations and foundations; and when these private institutions did interact with the TCUs, it was to tell them what tribal institu-

tions needed rather than to ask the tribal institutions what they thought their needs were and how private institutions could best assist in meeting those needs.

In the 1990s, private foundations began to interact in a more positive and useful manner with TCUs. Several of the world's largest private foundations (e.g., W. K. Kellogg and Ford) have responded to the TCUs' desire to enter into conversations with philanthropic agencies to set the priorities that would best suit the needs of native communities. This positive response on the part of private foundations has led to a number of successful and innovative educational programs for American Indian people (see W. K. Kellogg's and Ford's Annual Reports on Projects for 1999).

Indeed, the need for an adequate and permanent funding base for TCUs is as strong today as it was in 1968. TCUs will need to continue working closely with their many federal, tribal, state, and private agencies and benefactors to ensure that the institutions are funded at a level that provides quality educational opportunities to their students.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium

AIHEC was founded in 1973 by the first six tribal colleges as the organizational focal point for the development of tribally controlled higher education. During its early years, the consortium maintained an office in Denver, Colorado, and was supported through combined monies from the U.S. Department of Education, a Title III grant called Strengthening and Developing Institutions, and several private-foundation grants. AIHEC developed a long-range strategic plan and spearheaded lobbying by the TCUs that resulted in the U.S. Congress's passage of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (also see Boyer, 1997; Stein, 1992).

However, because AIHEC had become dependent on short-term grants, when these funds ran out in the early 1980s, the consortium was forced to close its Denver office. Over the next 5 years, the consortium existed only through quarterly meetings of the TCU presidents, which usually were held in Washington, D.C. Membership dues and several small private foundation grants enabled AIHEC to employ a part-time, Washington, D.C.-based lobbyist by the mid-1980s. Out of necessity, the consortium evolved as a decentralized organization that existed primarily with the volunteer labor of member AIHEC presidents. The administra-

tive functions of the organization were assigned to various colleges; for example, the AIHEC treasurers handled AIHEC finances through their colleges' business offices. In 1987, AIHEC was able to reopen its office on a full-time basis in Washington, D.C., and hire its part-time lobbyist as the full-time executive director of AIHEC. The organization then developed an aggressive legislative agenda that moved AIHEC forward as an effective advocate for TCUs. The TCUs were able to do this because they had greatly increased AIHEC membership dues to fund the base activities of the central office. Yet, in terms of governance, the board of directors of AIHEC still followed the American Indian style of decentralized management by equal, independent entities.

The aggressive strategies of AIHEC produced positive growth, which led to the founding of the AICF and the ability to purchase, in 1995, a building to house their central office in Alexandria, Virginia (this was made possible through individual investments by the tribal colleges and a grant from the Lannon Foundation). However, as with many new organizations, disagreements between the AIHEC executive director and AIHEC's executive board led to the termination of employees and a series of lawsuits that by 1997 had almost destroyed AIHEC and its subsidiary organizational structure. AIHEC was rebuilding its central financial and organizational structure, it was approached by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, which at the time was exploring the possibility of funding an initiative that would lead to the strengthening of American Indian higher education in the United States. Through discussions and collaborative efforts between the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, AIHEC's board of directors, and a host of American Indian educators and scholars, the NAHEI project was born.

Because the W. K. Kellogg Foundation recognized the importance of a strong central organization to the survival and success of TCUs, it offered, as part of the initiative funding, to strengthen AIHEC's administrative capacity. To accomplish this objective, two AIHEC projects were designed. The first was intended to build AIHEC's administrative, advocacy, and research and development capacity. The goals were:

1. To strengthen AIHEC's management and financial planning functions.
2. To strengthen AIHEC's capacity to provide technical assistance to the TCUs.
3. To strengthen AIHEC's capacity to conduct institutional data collection and policy-related research.
4. To strengthen AIHEC's capacity for advocacy and provision of public information on behalf of TCUs.

The American Indian College Fund

The AICF was established in 1986 by a formal charter of AIHBC, but it did not begin staffing and operations until late 1989. AICF was established as an organization separate from AIHBC to raise funds on behalf of the TCUs and their students by identifying and working with individuals, corporations, and private foundations interested in funding TCUs and TCU student scholar-ship programs. In the years between 1989 and 1996, AICF initiated a direct-mail cam-aign and allied itself with several major private foundations and corporate supporters, which resulted in raising approximately \$30 million for the TCUs and their students. By 1996, the direct-mail campaign was producing about \$3 million a year, and AICF was realizing an increase each year in corporate and private foundation support for TCUs (see Boyer, 1997).

The discussions that led to NAHBI's support of strengthening AIHBC were expanded to include AICF and its need for expansion as an organiza-tion that was crucial to the success of the TCUs and their students. The dis-cussions led to a \$1 million grant request to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, through NAHBI, to develop a 3-year, \$120 million capital campaign effort by AICF on behalf of the TCUs. After negotiations between the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and AICF staff members, a two-part grant was awarded to AICF in the amount of \$1 million. Part one of the grant established the capital campaign effort with \$500,000, which was called Campaign Si Ha-Sin; part two established a \$500,000 challenge grant for TCU student scholarships, which would have to be matched one for one.

AICF was given several years to meet the matching requirement in part two of the grant, but it secured the \$500,000 match required for the scholar-ship program in fewer than 120 days. Thus, the first outcome of NAHBI was the doubling of scholarship funds available to TCU students in 1997 and growth to \$5 million by the year 2000. A second positive outcome of AICF's matching the NAHBI scholarship grant funds in such a short time was na-tional credibility with other potential contributors interested in providing scholarship funds for American Indian students in higher education. This includes the recent request by the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program that AICF administer the program's efforts to provide American Indian stu-dents with scholarships. This means that an additional \$5 million in scholar-ship funds will be available to American Indian students in the future.

The capital campaign portion of the NAHBI grant allowed AICF to re-search, organize, and implement its \$120 million capital campaign effort on behalf of the TCUs in 1998. Also in 1998, AICF raised an additional

The second project was intended to support the work of AIHBC to man-age the NAHBI project. AIHBC was funded to organize and deliver techni-cal assistance to TCUs so that they could meet the goals of their individual initiatives and the overall goals of the NAHBI project. In addition to these two major efforts, AIHBC would also supervise:

1. The Hawaii grant proposal
2. The AIHBC supplemental grant for technical assistance proposal
3. The AIHBC technology-enhancement grant proposal
4. The AIHBC cultural learning center proposal
5. The AIHBC new Meriam report proposal

The largest of these projects is the cultural learning center project in con-cert with the AICF, which has led to the construction of a cultural learning center at each of the TCUs.

NAHBI support has allowed the AIHBC central organization to mature within a relatively short time. Although this maturation can be attributed to many factors (including NAHBI funding), the changes are real and im-pressively successful. For example:

1. Staff capabilities have been greatly enhanced.
2. The financial position of AIHBC has been reversed from a point of near collapse in 1997 to one in which AIHBC now has substantial fi-nancial reserves. This improved financial situation allows AIHBC to per-form serious long-term strategic planning and ensures protection from future funding crises.
3. The strengthening of AIHBC's central staff has led to increased technical assistance to member TCUs and the major accomplishment of securing a White House executive order that mandates linkages between the TCUs and all agencies of the federal government.
4. AIHBC, in cooperation with the AICF, is now able to collect data from the TCUs, which is valuable when dealing with federal agencies, the U.S. Congress, and private foundations.
5. AIHBC has been successful in convincing the U.S. Congress and the president that funding provided by the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 and the 1994 Equity in Education Land Grant Status Act should be continually increased until TCUs gain funding parity, based on a per student basis, with mainstream institutions of higher education.

\$800,000 to support the planning and implementation of the capital campaign. In 1999, AICF launched its capital campaign effort, which led to a gift of \$30 million from the Lilly Endowment. That gift was the largest single award ever given to an American Indian nonprofit organization and resulted in the Packard and Tierney Foundations committing an additional \$3 million to the capital campaign. AICF staff have additional commitments suggesting that the capital campaign fund-raising effort would secure as much as \$50 million more by early 2001.

Other positive results have occurred because of NAHEI support of AICF, such as a \$17 million appropriation for TCU facility development by the federal government through such agencies as the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Agriculture. Another favorable outcome is the experience gained by AICF staff as they manage these two large programs (see AICF, 2000).

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium Student Congress

Tribal college students founded the AIHEC Student Congress in 1986 to address the academic and cultural needs of tribal college students and the economic, political, and social needs of tribal communities. The TCU student community comprises men and women whose natural abilities, personal qualities, and intellectual interests impel them to attempt to substantially improve the conditions of their communities. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, recognizing the need for a TCU student organization that would effectively prepare American Indian students for national leadership in the 21st century, funded the AIHEC Student Congress through NAHEI in an effort to promote continued leadership and academic excellence.

The guiding principle of TCUs is to provide academic and vocational education while broadening students' knowledge and understanding of their physical, cultural, and spiritual existence. TCUs provide the means for students to apply concepts of meaning and purpose to their daily lives and also to their relationships with their communities. The TCU presidents encourage their students to participate in directing the tribal college movement. Inclusion of the Student Congress in the administrative infrastructure of AIHEC is an unprecedented administrative policy in American higher education. AIHEC recognizes the voice of its 25,000 students and values their opinions and judgments concerning issues that affect their education and communities. This inclusion develops and cultivates future leaders of Indian nations and ensures sustainability of American Indian culture and society.

The founders of AIHEC's Student Congress were concerned with the development of a national leadership organization that would work effectively and efficiently with the 33 tribal colleges in the United States. Their mission statement articulates goals, guiding principles, and values:

We, the students, with the divine guidance of our Creator, The Great Spirit, as acknowledged by our North American and Alaska native people, do hereby establish a student organizational structure under the sanction of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). Furthermore, it is our mission to provide leadership opportunities to our students; to promote a sense of community between student leaders of all tribe and nations; to work for tolerance, peace, prosperity, and love across the globe; [and] to ensure longevity of native tradition, language, and culture while working together to build healthy communities. (www.AIHEC.org)

Tribal college leaders place a high value on traditional knowledge and culture in shaping the social, economic, and educational development of tribal communities. They believe that, for American Indian nations to be truly sovereign, they must be in control of their educational institutions. TCU leaders exercise self-regulation in their home higher education institutions, which is sovereignty in practice. As a result, TCUs are reviving hope and resurrecting opportunity in tribal communities by supporting traditional values of self-respect, dignity, honesty, pride, compassion, cooperation, and responsibility for the community, and by stressing that these values are equal in importance to academic excellence. It is in their institutions that TCU leaders see their future and the completion of the philosophical circle they started with the TCU movement. It is imperative that a responsible student congress be in place to carry on and implement the TCU leaders' philosophy of tribal sovereignty.

In an effort to continue the TCU leadership circle, the AIHEC Student Congress provides a NAHEI-sponsored program featuring valuable experience in the dynamics of leadership. The program, Leading All People (LAP), is a summer leadership institute that develops a deep understanding of the social, political, and cultural processes that exist in higher education. The Student Congress believes that leadership training, cultural awareness, and strong communication skills are essential in strengthening students' involvement and development as future tribal leaders. The LAP institute is a weeklong program in which students learn different leadership styles, examine a wide range of communication techniques, and debate the ethics of power. Delegates investigate key concepts such as self-governance and sov-

eighty and are exposed to different methods for bringing about social change, including tools for lobbying elected officials, navigating the legislative process, and understanding best practices in working with the media. Guiding all of these activities is an ongoing focus on self-esteem, wellness, and personal balance. A major cornerstone of the institute is the crafting of community action plans by all in attendance. Each delegate is asked to bring a specific community concern and pertinent documentation to the institute. With assistance from the group, participants develop community action plans that address their concerns. After the institute concludes, participants are charged with implementing the plans once they return home.

The AIHEC Student Congress further believes that support for tribal college students only begins with their enrollment at the TCU and must continue throughout their educational and personal careers. Funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, through NAHEI, enabled one delegate from each tribal college to attend the 2000 LAP Summer Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The AIHEC Student Congress has also launched its own endowment campaign to provide for its future development and continuity. Revenue from the student congress endowment will support a permanent office that develops initiatives in leadership, service, and action.

The National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education
NINLHE was founded by the directors of the American Indian program at Stanford University and the Native American program at Dartmouth College, based on an idea that came to fruition in 1992. Gathering a small cadre of fellow student-service professionals who also worked with American Indian students from across the United States, they put together the following working mission statement: "Members of the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education are committed to sharing personal and professional experiences that cultivate Native communities through the promotion of viable and culturally appropriate support systems in higher education." (Lartimore, 1992).

The founding professionals sought to improve support services for American Indian students attending colleges and universities across the country. In 1992, they submitted a proposal to Intel Corporation and received funding in 1993, that would promote the professional development of and encourage collaboration and networking between and among Native American program directors from a selected group of colleges and universities with a proven commitment to the well-being of Native American students. In spring 1993, the Intel Foundation (Corporation) funded the

proposal from the group, which now called itself the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education or NINLHE. The purpose of the group was to support a series of professional development institutes and create a national consortium of Native American program directors at 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education that have a demonstrated commitment to Indian education (see Lartimore, 1994, Intel Corporation Grant). NINLHE's first several years focused on the goals of developing an institute and a national consortium of major-market program directors. The institute, held during the summer months, based its programs on a theme chosen by consensus of the working governing group and featured selected participants chosen from the ranks of student-service professionals who worked closely with American Indian students. The goals of the institute were (a) to strengthen the professional personnel capabilities of institute participants; (b) to provide participants with strategic planning assistance for program development; (c) to strengthen institutional commitment to American Indian student-service programs; (d) to form regional networks of cooperation and support among American Indian student-service programs; and (e) to educate, inform, and enlist the aid of corporate, foundation, and higher education leaders in addressing American Indian educational issues and meeting the needs of American Indian students. The institute provided many of the participants with their first-ever opportunity for sustained interaction and dialogue with fellow American Indian colleagues from institutions other than their own. This interaction led to the establishment of a network of communications among the student-service professionals serving American Indian students on selected campuses across the United States (Shendo, NINLHE's 1994 Progress Report).

By 1997, NINLHE's goals of establishing a successful Institute of Professional Development and a network of professionals working for American Indian students in mainstream institutions of higher education had been met (Shendo, 1998). In meeting these goals, it became clear to the council managing the organization that, to accomplish the overall mission of better serving American Indian students in higher education, more had to be done. At that time, NINLHE turned to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for financial support to enhance their efforts to better serve American Indian students and their student-service professionals.

NAHEI, although directed at the TCUs, also includes other major components, one of which is the strengthening of several national organizations, like NINLHE, dedicated to the improvement of American Indian participation and success in higher education. Hence, with the financial support of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, NINLHE has identified and ex-

panded its mission to build stronger American Indian communities through effecting lasting and meaningful change in higher education practice and policy at the individual, institutional, and national levels. To meet its objectives, NINLHE will enhance the individual capabilities of higher education professionals involved in American Indian student retention programs, strengthen the standing of American Indian student retention programs on each participating campus as a strong and lasting institutional priority, and position NINLHE as a peer with other national education organizations. NINLHE is emerging as a unique technical-support systems agent among higher education institutions.

NINLHE's membership now includes representatives from more than 50 public, private, and tribally controlled colleges and universities, as well as national native education organizations in the United States and Canada. Today, NINLHE's Institute of Professional Development provides its members an opportunity to learn about and to develop effective student retention strategies for use at their home institutions, and they also learn how to network more effectively with their peers at other colleges and universities. The institute is conducted in a collaborative manner and is a rigorous academic experience while still maintaining cultural integrity that reflects the many American Indian communities from which its participants come. Fellows selected to participate in the institute develop the conference materials from their pertinent areas of research. Topics have included principles and practices involved in helping effect healing change in those hamfully involved with alcohol; effective approaches to advising native students and families about financial aid eligibility and awards; effective methods of promoting personal, professional, and spiritual growth in leadership development; exploration of cultural and community asset-mapping and the balancing of leadership styles; and expansion of the tradition of participation. In addition, workshops in fund raising and grant writing have been conducted.

The 25 participants attending the 1999 institute stated that their expectations had been exceeded in many ways. They regarded the most valuable outcomes of the institute as the acquisition of new knowledge, the increase in their networking skills, attainment of a sense of personal renewal, the fact that a spiritual theme permeated the institute's program, and the opportunity to share perspectives with their colleagues. Participants further stated that the institute left them feeling renewed and energized to pursue the institutional changes needed at their individual campuses, in order to promote both the academic and personal success of their students. The challenge now for NINLHE is how to best support institute participants

once they have returned to their individual campuses so that they can maintain their newly acquired skills and spiritual energy.

NINLHE originated as a loosely allied group of American Indian professionals in the area of student services at only mainstream institutions, but through its participation in NAHEI, the group has expanded to include TCU student service professionals. The expansion to include TCUs has elevated NINLHE's need for organizational development and strategic positioning. NAHEI financing was used, in part, to establish a series of workshops for the group's governing council, intended to strengthen organizational development. An outcome of these workshops was a 10-year strategic plan. The organization is now in the first of three stages of that plan, which is called Gathering Strengths That Sustain Organizational Life and Cultural Identity.

NINLHE has also applied for and received grants from other foundations, such as the Education Foundation of America. These grants are directed at supporting a professional fund raiser who is responsible for launching a capital campaign and an institutional membership drive for NINLHE. Other objectives of the strategic plan include (a) matching organizational functions to specific revenue sources; (b) designating other program staff and activities to be supported through grants and individual gifts; (c) establishing a professional-on-loan program, allowing the governing council to move away from direct involvement in and maintenance of programmatic initiatives; (d) diversifying funding sources to create a family of funders; and (e) developing higher education professional training modules suitable for marketing.

NINLHE is now entering its third phase of development as an organization. In phase one, founders of NINLHE worked closely with the Intel Corporation to clarify and refine its mission and purpose. In phase two of its growth, NINLHE, funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, expanded its original goals to include TCUs as part of its overall mission. This required that the organization build a stronger internal infrastructure so that it could ensure its future service to scholars in both TCUs and mainstream institutions. Currently, in phase three of NINLHE's growth, funded in large part by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the organization is developing and instituting programs that support the scholarship of American Indian students (Larimore, 2000).

Alliance for Equity

At the American Council on Education's annual conference in Miami, Florida, the Alliance for Equity was born from a meeting sponsored by the

W. K. Kellogg Foundation and led by Dr. Hector Garza and Dr. Betty Overton-Atkins. The meeting brought together representatives from historical Black colleges and universities (HBCU), TCUs, and Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) for initial discussions, which continued at several other educational meetings, with the continued sponsorship of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. In June of 1999, the Alliance for Equity was officially formed and funded by NAHEI. That same month, the Alliance selected Jamie Merisotis, of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, as director of the Alliance for Equity. The three national organizations that founded the Alliance are AIPHEC, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO). The institutions belonging to these three national organizations that make up the Alliance educate more than one third of all American Indian, Hispanic, and African-American students in the United States and also serve a high proportion of economically and educationally disadvantaged students in the United States (see Fig. 4.2).

The Alliance for Equity promotes greater collaboration and cooperation among colleges and universities that serve large numbers of students of color, in order to enhance the nation's economic competitiveness, social

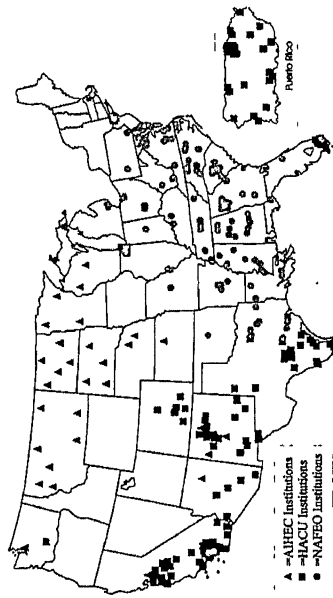


FIG. 4.2. Alliance for Equity in Higher Education; Minority-Serving Institutions. Note: AIPHEC is the American Indian Higher Education Consortium; HACU is the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; and NAFEO is the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. Prepared by The Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington, DC.

stability, and cultural richness. The shared values and experiences of these colleges and universities include commitment to community ideals and civic responsibility, dedication to student access and success, emphasis on teaching and scholarly excellence, belief in the power of colleges and universities to promote personal and spiritual fulfillment, devotion to the elimination of poverty and discrimination in American society, and encouragement of cultural diversity. These shared values and experiences necessitate that greater unity and coordination be established by and among these institutions. The Alliance for Equity will play a major role in convincing these college and university communities that increased collaboration is possible and will serve as a forum for shared experiences and building of agendas. The Alliance also conducts policy analysis in key areas of importance to the communities and engages in public policy advocacy on issues that are jointly supported. The Alliance's goals in pursuit of these activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Ensuring student access, success, and equal opportunity by (a) increasing student financial assistance, (b) promoting fair and inclusive college admission standards and requirements, (c) raising the number of students of color in science and technological fields, (d) expanding programs for counseling students of color, and (e) improving testing and diagnostic systems, all of which should increase enrollment and graduation rates for students of color.
2. Enhancing teacher preparation, faculty development, and leadership by (a) strengthening teacher preparation and recruitment strategies, (b) increasing the numbers of advanced-degree recipients from underrepresented groups, (c) expanding professional development opportunities, (d) broadening K-12 linkages, (e) supporting institutional leaders, and (f) developing community leadership.
3. Strengthening institutional development by (a) improving and expanding physical infrastructure, (b) increasing access to and use of technology, (c) raising endowment levels at participating institutions, and (d) enhancing capacity for curriculum development and innovation.
4. Preserving and recognizing America's diversity by (a) supporting cultural values and traditions, (b) understanding the nation's richly diverse history, and (c) maximizing language abilities and skills.
5. Exploring new opportunities for collaboration and cooperation with each other, and other groups with like interests. (Alliance for Equity, 1999)

In September 2000, the Alliance presented its first report, *Educating the Emergency Majority*, on the need for minority teachers in the United States. The report called for a minimum of \$100 million to support teacher education programs at minority institutions in the United States. The report stated that the enrollment of minority students in elementary and secondary schools had increased by 73% over the last 25 years, compared to 19% for Euro-Americans students. However, minorities comprised only 16% of all students enrolled in teacher education programs, whereas 80% of students enrolled in such programs were Euro-American. This inequity is a result of substandard K-12 academic preparation of students of color, as well as social and economic factors.

The Alliance's report went on to state that the disparity between students and teachers of color adds to the overall crisis in quality and supply of elementary and secondary educators nationwide. The report then provided recommendations of ways the federal government, teacher preparation programs, governing boards of educational institutions, and researchers studying teacher education programs in the United States can strengthen teacher education programs for students of color and eliminate many of the persistent problems plaguing teacher education in the United States.

CASES OF CAPACITY BUILDING: FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING

AIHEC's NAHEI Management Project

Many examples of successful, innovative NAHEI-funded projects are included in this book. Only three projects are highlighted here to illustrate how particular organizations strengthened their governing structures and fiscal capacities. The first example is AIHEC's NAHEI Management Project, a five-part project having the following basic components: (a) fiscal responsibility and management, (b) program management, (c) communications, (d) technical assistance, and (e) evaluation. In the area of fiscal management, AIHEC has further developed its own capacity to provide sound fiscal management by hiring a staff assistant, implementing strong internal controls in the central AIHEC office, closely monitoring each grantee's adherence to the project budget, and providing oversight and guidance on all budget modifications and related matters. AIHEC has also helped at least 12 of its member colleges that have requested technical assistance with fiscal management of their NAHEI projects.

In the area of program management, AIHEC has provided services to fellow NAHEI grantees by maintaining regular communications with each

project director and the grantor, by providing site visits to at least six member colleges to deliver and monitor technical assistance in program management, and by assisting in the coordination of NAHEI networking conferences. In the area of communications, AIHEC was required to be a central clearinghouse for much of the communications for the overall NAHEI project. Although resources were limited, it was able to leverage other sources of funds to assist in accomplishing communications for the overall project. Its communications strategy involved making numerous telephone calls to all involved parties, making on-site visits to various NAHEI participants' home sites, holding meetings that include all stakeholders, discussing NAHEI with potential media partners, and using the *Tribal College Journal* to highlight individual member-college projects. AIHEC also made a substantial effort to reach out to the international education community by attending such events as the 1999 World Indigenous People's Education Conference in Hilo, Hawaii.

In the area of technical assistance, which is a core mission of AIHEC, the consortium continues to provide the traditional kinds of technical assistance that it always has to its member colleges, while adding a number of new areas made possible through additional funds from NAHEI. Several of the new areas include research and data collection, fund raising, public relations, technology acquisition, and assessment. In the area of evaluation, AIHEC has developed an evaluation plan that serves as the foundation for a comprehensive assessment of the consortium's services. In the end, AIHEC has strengthened its capacity to serve a growing fleet of top-notch TCUs through programs that have required AIHEC to continually assess the programs' progress, to identify and address barriers to successful service to TCUs, and to both ascertain and achieve a clearer vision and action toward future enhancement and expansion (AIHEC, 1999).

Sitting Bull College

The NAHEI-funded project initiated by Sitting Bull College (SBC), located in Fort Yates, South Dakota, sought to achieve the following basic objectives: (a) expanding continuing education opportunities for the Standing Rock Sioux Nation; (b) developing a direct mail fund-raising campaign; and (c) developing a recruitment and retention promotional campaign and compiling, printing, and disseminating a booklet of its workshops each year that will reach the continuing education objective of SBC. In fall 1998, to meet SBC's challenge to build its programs, 420 continuing education units were provided, which in turn meant additional revenues for

the college. SBC has also added economic and business workshops to its offerings and has held them in all eight districts on the Standing Rock Sioux reservation. To increase its funding stream, SBC instituted an annual direct mail campaign that has improved each year and increased its returns substantially. And, to encourage enrollment, SBC has disseminated its recruitment video to all of the area high schools and several job-training programs, such as Job Services of North Dakota and South Dakota. SBC is also presenting the video at area high schools' college night open houses and at its own annual Preview Day high school event (AIHEC, 1999).

The Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute

The Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute's (SIPI) project objectives were to develop its agriculture, science, extension, and technology programs. To fulfill this challenge, SIPI has undertaken a wide variety of initiatives. For example, in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and Lockheed-Martin, it has retrofitted its current greenhouse compound for joint use by its agriculture, natural resources, and environmental science degree programs. Further, SIPI has established distance-learning sites on four local Indian reservations and is also delivering Geographic Information Systems (GIS) broadcasts on topics of interest to regional Indian nations, such as the topic of implementation and protection of treaty rights.

CONCLUSION

In the end, TCUs and their partner organizations (AIHEC, AICE, AIHEC Student Congress, NINLHE, Alliance for Equity) have grown stronger through maturing and positive relationships among TCUs and between TCUs and their sister institutions (e.g., mainstream postsecondary institutions). However, there are still many challenges to be met and overcome as TCUs enter the 21st century. The funding of the many NAHEI projects must be viewed as only a beginning in the continual quest of American Indian educators to find the necessary resources to improve and increase educational opportunities for all their people seeking an education. AIHEC and the AICE have made the following recommendations to government policymakers, mainstream colleges and universities, and private-sector organizations in an effort to reinforce and solidify their help in strengthening the TCUs, the TCUs' national organizations, and the tribal communities.

1. The appropriations funding levels of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act, which funds the base operations of the TCUs, should be increased at reasonable rates.
2. The Equity in Education Land Grant Status Act should be fully funded at the authorized levels approved by Congress, which would allow the TCUs to further develop and build on their programs in agriculture, natural resources, and nutrition.
3. Faculty development for TCUs faculties must have increased financial and strategic support, as this is an area that requires continuous effort.
4. Teacher education programs housed within the TCUs must be strengthened and given additional resources to improve the participation and success of American Indians in these programs.
5. American Indians need the TCUs to increase their research efforts in the areas of health and nutrition; this can be done by continuous support of the new National Center for Research on Minority Health and Health Disparities.
6. Opportunities must be provided for TCUs to have more interaction with early education intervention programs such as TRIO and Head Start, which will lead to greater success of American Indian youths as they pursue their educational futures.
7. More collaboration between TCUs and K-12 institutions should be promoted by providing innovative funding opportunities for collaborative programs; this will lead to a smoother transition from K-12 to higher education institutions, thus ensuring greater success of students.
8. Traditional values, histories, art, languages, and many other valued parts of American Indian life and culture should be preserved and expanded by supporting private-sector initiatives, such as tribal cultural and learning centers.
9. Federal funding of TCUs' technology grants should be increased so that the TCUs can leverage private-sector investments, which will expand and strengthen their information-technology infrastructure.
10. By increasing resources to a TCU, aimed at encouraging cooperative agreements, all funding agencies, public and private, will promote and support partnership development and collaboration with other TCUs and mainstream institutions.

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation has shown how a private philanthropic organization can make a substantial contribution. It is providing the leadership within its own circle that can be replicated by other philanthropic organizations, as well as public agencies, in the creative funding and support that

American Indians desire for tribally controlled educational institutions. It is the NAHEI project model, emphasizing cooperation and partnership among all stakeholders, that has made such a successful difference in AIHEC and the TCUs' efforts to build stronger and better-financed institutions.

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Tribal Colleges and Universities Building Community: Education, Social, Cultural, and Economic Development



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INTRODUCTION: A COMMUNITY FOCUS

Perhaps more than any other educational institution, tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) are creatures of their communities. Hence, community building is a primary feature and goal of the current 33 TCUs in the United States and is the focus of this chapter. The mission statements that guide TCUs stem from their unique native/indigenous communities' history and cultural traditions; consequently, the activities supported by TCUs are aimed at meeting their communities' varied needs. A brief look at tribal colleges' mission statements confirms this and reveals that not only are the TCUs designed to serve their communities, but they also define their communities and propose to serve them in different ways.

After nearly 30 years, TCUs have expanded the communities that they serve. The multilayered communities that today's TCUs are challenged to serve are shown in Fig. 5.1. Their first responsibility is to their local, native community. Over time, individual TCUs have learned that certain things (e.g., language immersion programs, economic development initiatives, access to funding sources) can be achieved more effectively and at less cost if TCUs combine their efforts to achieve common needs and goals. In so do-

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