



Head Start Investing in the Workforce -Supporting a highly skilled workforce with competitive pay, benefits, and access to supports for staff wellness.

# Tribal Colleges and Universities Head Start Partnership Programs

## (TCU-HS Partnership Programs)



### *Growing Our Own: Building Early Childhood Education Career Pathways in Native American Communities*

#### Background

The purpose of the TCU-HS Partnerships Programs is to increase the number of qualified education staff working in American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Since September 2020, the Office of Head Start has awarded \$8 million to Tribal College and University Head Start (TCU-HS) Partnership Programs. Originally, 4 million dollars were awarded in 2020, and then in 2022, the TCUs received an additional two million dollars as supplemental funding to continue to support this grant initiative. More recently in 2023, an additional two million dollars were awarded to a new cohort of Tribal Colleges and Universities. With the new grants, OHS provides a total of \$8 million dollars per year to increase access to both entry level credentials and higher early education degrees for staff in American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start programs.

*Over 700 AIAN candidates will graduate with an ECD degree by 2028.*

#### Practical Applications for the TCU-HS Partnerships Program:

1. Building Early Childhood Education Career Pathways in Native American Communities
2. Addressing the employment needs of Tribal Head Start Programs while being responsive to the cultures and languages of Native Tribes through a "Growing Our Own" Approach
3. Meeting the unique needs of individual native communities and supporting staff in AIAN programs to acquire the competencies that ensure children's academic development while also supporting cultural identity.
4. Building TCUs' capacity to create or enhance innovative approaches to increase access to early childhood education degrees in Tribal Nations

#### TCU –HS Partnership Supports to Enrolled Candidates: Key Elements

- Flexibility in course delivery and design (i.e., on-site, distance learning, hybrid innovative approaches, etc.)
- Ability to provide preliminary or remedial instructions
- Assistance with tuition, books, and other cost
- Articulation agreements - transfer credits to multiple colleagues
- Credit for professional experience
- Strong, personal support for enrolled AIAN candidates
- Integration and implementation of culturally and linguistically appropriate courses
- Technology supports (i.e., iPad, computers, laptops, hotspots, etc.)
- Academic Coaches and Mentors
- Mental Health and Wellness Supports
- Professional development opportunities and workshops
- Integration of cultural and language revitalization activities
- Support Tribal Language Summits
- Implementation of 2+2 agreements, build four-year degrees, etc.
- Tutoring services, registration, and academic supports, etc.

#### TCU-HS Partnership Programs: (Existing & New Grants)

- Navajo Technical University, NM
- Salish Kootenai Community College, MT
- Stone Child College, MT
- Fond Du Lac Tribal Community College, MN
- White Earth Community College, MN
- Cankdeska Cikana Community College, ND
- Bay Mills Community College, MI
- College of Menominee Nation, WI

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