**Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program (NASNTI) Project Abstracts for FY 2020**

**Abstract 1: Utah State University Blanding (UT)**

P031X200003 - The Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI) program will be located at Utah State University Blanding (previously College of Eastern Utah – San Juan Campus) in Blanding,

Utah. USU Blanding is a public two-year, state supported, comprehensive regional college

within the Utah State University system accredited by the Northwest Commission of Colleges

and Universities. Isolated from the mainstream of American educational and social life, the area

includes one of the largest concentrations of American Indians in the nation. The service area

covers over 40,000 square miles and encompasses portions of the Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute

Indian, and Hopi Nations. The population to be served is characterized by low-income, high

unemployment, low educational attainment, limited English proficiency, and first-generation

college students.

USU Blanding has the largest enrollment of Native Americans of the nine state and two

private institutions of higher education in Utah. Approximately 68% of the student body at the

Blanding Campus is Native American. Seventy percent are female and 72% are under the age

of 30. Seventy-nine percent of this campus’ students are first-generation college, and 83% are

low-income. Seventy-six percent would be classified as disadvantaged college students, and

92% of the student body were recipients of PELL Grants in the 2018-19 Academic Year.

The foremost priority of the project will be to increase the enrollment and success rate of Native

American students, preparing them for gainful employment, and assisting them in strengthening

their communities. This will be accomplished through implementation of three main goals: (1)

Increase the rate of persistence and overall completion for first-time, full time, Native American

students, (2) Increase the number of Native American students who participate in Financial

Literacy courses and workshops, and (3) Strengthen Native American cultural preservation

through student, family, and faculty/staff engagement. These three strategies will greatly increase

the success of our Native American students.

In addition, this project is designed to address the Competitive Preference Priority 1 (CPP1) as

outlined by USDOE:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Fostering Knowledge and Promoting the

Development of Skills that Prepare Students to be Informed, Thoughtful, and

Productive Individuals and Citizens: Supporting instruction in personal financial literacy,

knowledge of markets and economics, knowledge of higher education financing and

repayment (e.g., college savings and student loans), or other skills aimed at building personal

financial understanding and responsibility.

**Abstract 2: Carl Albert State College (OK)**

P031X200009 - Carl Albert State College (CASC) is a comprehensive 2-year state college serving the rural

eastern region of Oklahoma from its main campus in Poteau and a secondary location in

Sallisaw. CASC offers transfer associate degrees and career-oriented degrees designed for

applied knowledge fields. The College serves 2,400 students, including a large minority of

Native American students (35%, Fall 2019, CASC Institutional Research).

The College serves an economically and educationally disadvantaged region: 23.4% of all

residents and 23.9% of Native Americans live below the poverty line, compared with 15%

nationwide, and only 14.2% of residents above age 25 have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher,

compared with 30.9% nationally (U.S. Census, 2019; American Factfinder, 2014-2017).

The two-county service area has a population of 92,775, but the College’s influence reaches

beyond its borders. Situated near the headquarters of both the Cherokee and Choctaw Nations,

(which serve 300,000 and 200,000 tribal members, respectively, worldwide), CASC ranks 10th in

the United States in the number of Associate Degrees awarded to Native American students.

With resources in oil and gas and a large increase in major corporations near WalMart

headquarters just across the state line, the region is experiencing a growing economy – but one in

urgent need of skilled employees. Particularly needed are employees skilled in using computer

science to address cybersecurity issues, environmental health and safety, and digital technologies

(Southern Workforce Board, 2018; Workforce Investment Group [WIG], 2020).

Meanwhile, CASC students are hampered in their ability to succeed in science,

technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs related to these fields due, in part,

to difficulties with the “Math barrier.” Ninety-six percent of all students and 93 percent of Native

American students require Math remediation, but a large percentage are failing to succeed in

basic Math. CASC, too, is hampered by limited STEM programming and a related lag in

adopting new STEM programs and support systems which could significantly increase the

students’ access and success in college.

To address these and other “gaps,” CASC proposes a project which will (1) decrease the

failure rates of students enrolled in Intermediate Algebra and College Algebra; (2) increase

student access to STEM programs by developing three new STEM programs – in Cybersecurity,

Environmental Science, and Digital Technology, supported by virtual reality and other

technology; and (3) double the 3-year degree completion rates of CASC’s Native American

students and predominantly low-income student population by the end of the project.

The proposed project focuses on Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Science,

Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, with emphasis on Computer Science. The

project will also center on improving student achievement in the two Algebra courses through

active teaching and learning strategies; improving Math tutoring; and transforming CASC’s

“early alert/after alert” support for at risk Math students. The project will also focus on

developing internship programs for the three new programs that will encourage students to

explore the opportunities and skills embodied in STEM careers.

**Abstract 3: University of Minnesota Morris (MN)**

P031X200010 - The University of Minnesota Morris is the University of Minnesota’s rural, public liberal

arts campus and the only 4-year Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution (NASNTI) in

the upper Midwest. The campus is located on traditional Dakota and Anishinaabe (Ojibwe)

homelands. Native American (NA) student enrollment has doubled since 2008 and is at a record

high—NA students comprise 26% of US degree seeking students. UMN Morris offers a

federally- and state-mandated tuition waiver for Native American students tied to campus history

as a Native American boarding school (1887 to 1910). Together, NA and low-income (LI)

students comprise 46% of students. The campus has made progress in addressing educational

equity and attainment for NA students but gaps remain and too few students earn Baccalaureate

degrees. Only 8 - 9% of Dakota and Ojibwe adults aged 25 and older in Minnesota have earned a

bachelor’s degree, well below White adults (37%). (MN State Demographic Center, 2016)

UMM has a regional reputation for academic rigor and exemplary education in the

sciences, social sciences, humanities, and education. While most UMN Morris NA students

graduated near the top of their high classes, many students find their first-year experience and the

initial leap to this curriculum challenging. More NA and LI eligible students attended underresourced

K-12 schools in rural, reservation, and inner-city districts with little access to rigorous

advanced curriculum, science fairs/clubs, or college prep programs. This project builds on the

Native American Student Success program established in 2015 with NASNTI support and

introduces strategies, policies, and programs that will better support NA and LI students’ success

by addressing not only the achievement gaps in grade point average, persistence, and graduation

rates, but also many of the underlying factors that contribute to those gaps.

This project will support a NA-student-centered transition to college and an enhanced

first year experience for new students — a critical need and essential student success strategy at

UMN Morris. In 2018, 36% of new NA first-year students either dropped out or failed to return

with second year standing (30 credits) vs. 20% of students from more traditionally college bound

backgrounds. The project also provides greater access to Visiting Elders-, Aunties-, Educators-,

and Young Alumni-in Residence, adding cultural representation, role models, and supportive

practices for students as well as faculty / staff professional development opportunities to build a

more culturally informed, supportive campus climate. The third component of the project

recognizes and addresses the growing impact of student mental health challenges in interrupting

students’ college progress by increasing understanding of intergenerational trauma, access to

culturally relevant resources, and support for NA students’ wellbeing. These three focus areas

show great promise in supporting NA student educational equity and attainment—at UMN

Morris and nationally at other NASNTI institutions.

**Abstract 4: Central Wyoming College (WY)**

P031X200006 - Central Wyoming College (CWC) is a community college established in 1966 on near the

Wind River Indian Reservation. The reservation is home to the Eastern Shoshone and Northern

Arapaho nations; the only one jointly held by traditionally antagonistic tribes. In this extremely

rural, high poverty area, educational attainment is low overall and outcomes are especially poor

for American Indian students (AIS).

CWC’s five-year project draws on literature on American Indian student success that

calls for a “family-like atmosphere”; it will dramatically shift the student experience through

intensive faculty and staff training on pedagogy, cultural sensitivity, user experience design, and

local reservation-specific topics. Expansion of services include an outreach center on the

reservation with a computer lab for remote students struggling with transportation and access to

technology; upgrades to enhance existing student space; additional staff to create systems of

support around AIS; and the use of student assessments to precisely address current student

needs and deepen CWC’s institutional data-informed decision making.

PROJECT GOAL 1) Retention of degree-seeking American Indian students: By September 30,

2025, increase AIS re-enrollment after the first fall semester from 58% to 65%; AIS course

enrollee success rate from 64% to 70%; AIS math passing rate from 51% to 60%; and the

percentage of students meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress standards from 54% to 61%.

PROJECT GOAL 2) Graduation of degree-seeking American Indian students: By September 30,

2025, increase the number of AIS earning certificates annually from 7.8 students to 13; increase

the number of AIS earning Associate’s degrees annually from 19 to 2; and graduate 10 students

annually from a new Bachelor of Applied Science degree program.

**Abstract 5: Fort Lewis College (CO)**

P031X200013 - Fort Lewis College (FLC) is an accredited (Higher Learning Commission), public, four-year,

undergraduate liberal arts college located in the rural, southwest corner of Colorado. FLC is

one of two public, four-year colleges to grant tuition waivers to Native American students. In

2019, 41% of the student body received a Native American tuition waiver. Low-income students

represent 35% of the student body. FLC has the unique opportunity to transform the main floor

of the library, plus adjacent offices and classrooms, into an innovative academic hub that offers a

new vision of integrated academic services and directly addresses the needs of FLC’s American

Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) and low-income students. Called the FACT (Financial, Academic,

& Career Transformation) Center, this hub will create a vibrant, inclusive space where

students will be supported by a set of four integrated academic success initiatives that will help

FLC achieve the objectives noted below. Creating an inclusive, centralized hub for academic

achievement will provide holistic support to students at all phases of their academic career and

encourage collaboration between academic support and enhancement offices.

FACT Center Student Success Initiatives:

• Initiative # 1. Create inclusive FACT (Financial, Academic, & Career Transformation)

Center located in the Library that centralizes student success offices, staff, and programs;

• Initiative # 2. Centralize, expand, and innovate Success Coaching and Peer Education

models, focusing on inclusive forms of AI/AN outreach, tutoring, and programming;

• Initiative # 3. Develop an expanded first-year to second-year curriculum that supports

lower-division students in FACT (financial, academic, and career) success (CPP 1); and

• Initiative # 4. Centralize, expand, and redesign Career Services to promote applied

FACT success with upper-division apprenticeships and internships (CPP 1).

Enacting the set of four integrated academic success initiatives outlined above will result in

measurable outcomes that will achieve FLC’s retention, graduation, equity, and access goals:

• Goal #1: Increase Access to Improved, Expanded, Innovative Student Success

Services: Increase access to and use of student success services for all students, with a

focus on AI/AN and low-income students;

• Measurable goal is to track student use of success services, ensuring 70% of student

body uses one service per year and 50% use more than one service, taking advantage of

integrated FACT Center approach. Targeted low-income and AI/AN outreach will ensure

that 80% of those student populations use the FACT Center.

• Goal #2: Increase First- to Second-Year Retention Rates and Erase Equity Gaps:

• Measurable goal is to increase first-year to second-year retention rate of AI/AN and

low-income students from current rate of 57% to 70% at the end the five-year grant,

achieving approximately a 3% gain in retention each year.

• Goal #3: Increase Six-Year Graduation Rates and Erase Equity Gaps:

• Measurable goal is to increase each year’s AI/AN and low-income student graduation

rate by approximately 3%. This graduation rate improves the current six-year AI/AN

graduation rate of 29% to 41% at the end of the five-year grant.

This new student success hub that will provide integrated academic services that directly

address the needs of FLC’s AI/AN and low-income students. Achieving the goals of the project

will generate approximately $372,000 in additional annual tuition income by year 5 of the

project, creating a strong fiscal foundation upon which further institutional improvements can be

pursued.

**Abstract 6: Connors State College (OK)**

P031X200017 - Connors State College (CSC or Connors), located in the heart of eastern Oklahoma’s

Native American region, has grown from a secondary school of agriculture with an enrollment of

15 students and 4 faculty members in 1909 to an accredited community college serving more

than 3,000 students annually. Fall 2019 students totaled 2,113, including 874 Native American

students comprising 41.4% of total enrollment.

CSC’s seven-county service area (pop. 317,186) is predominantly rural, more than one-third

of area families are low-income, 17.3% of all residents live in poverty, and median

household income is just $42,251. Also, within the area, only 17.3% of adults have a bachelor's

degree. **The service region encompasses two Native American Nations (Cherokee and**

**Creek)**, with some counties showing more than 43% Native American residents. Disadvantaged

characteristics are accentuated among this population with 24.5% living in poverty and only 16

having a college degree. Native American per capita income is just $17,156 ***(ACS 2018).***

Among CSC's Fall 2019 enrollment of 2,113 students, 874 (41.4%) are Native American,

53% of all (52% of Native American) are low-income and 61% of all (59% of Native American)

are first-generation in college. Fall to Fall persistence is low across all ethnic groups (38%) and

even lower for Native American students (36%). Similarly, cohort graduation rates within three

years of first enrollment are low, 25% for all students and 24% for Native Americans.

The majority of CSC students enter college underprepared for college-level coursework,

particularly in mathematics competencies. Failure rates in developmental courses are high,

39.7% for Fall 2019. And, among students that do complete required developmental math

courses, more than one-third fail college algebra (37.7% in Fall 2019). Connors struggles to

respond to the many needs of its students, particularly in light of severe state funding cuts in the

past six years. Yet despite these challenges, Connors remains committed to promoting the

success of students who turn to us for education and training.

CSC submits this Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution (NASNTI) grant

application as a means to expand academic program options in Science, Technology,

Engineering, and Math (STEM) disciplines **(Supports 2020 Competitive Preference Priority).**

A team of Connors personnel have conducted extensive research and identified Computer

Science as the field with the greatest potential for stable, high-wage career opportunities for our

students. Thus, with this application to the U.S. Department of Education, we propose to develop

an Associate of Science (A.S.) degree in Computer Science with three sub specialization options:

Software Development, Forensics, and Computer Engineering. And, we propose to develop three

Information Technology Certificate options: System Support Technician, Web Development

Technician, and Programming Technician. We will renovate classroom space to develop and

equip two computer laboratories to be used by all computer science students

To better prepare our students for success in the new computer science and other existing

degree programs, we will improve the quality of mathematics instruction by providing

professional development to improve math faculty's competency and confidence in and

implementation of current instructional technology (podcasts, online learning supports and

modules, and other digital resources). Following training, faculty will enhance math courses,

infusing new instructional techniques and strategies.

**Abstract 7: Montana State University-Northern (MT)**

P031X200004 - The Little River Institute (LRI) at Montana State University-Northern (MSUN) bears the

Blackfeet name for the 700 miles of meandering waterway coursing through northern Montana’s

Indian Country. Like the Little River, our university’s 37,000-square-mile service area reaches

from the Blackfeet Reservation in the northwest, passes along the Rocky Boy’s and Fort Belknap

Reservations in the center and continues on to the Fort Peck Reservation in the east.

MSUN, located in Havre, is northern Montana’s comprehensive university for programs at

the Associates, Bachelors, and Masters levels. Our service area includes four of the state’s seven

Native American reservations as well as the newly federally recognized Little Shell Tribe

headquartered in Great Falls. Two of these reservations are within a 45-minute commute. MSUN

has an annual unduplicated enrollment of around 1,400 students, 14% of whom identify as Native

American. Further, it is the only institution within the Montana University System that is NASNTI eligible.

The primary goal of the proposed MSUN NASNTI Project is to increase the on-time

graduation rates of Native American students at both the Bachelors and Associates levels. Its

secondary goal is to increase fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall retention rates for Native American

students, including first-time, full-time students and those with continuing, transfer, and returning

status. These goals will be achieved through the implementation of four interconnected, culturally responsive

project objectives: Tutoring, Mentoring, Professional Development, and Family

Engagement.

Tutoring services offered through the LRI will employ content experts and will include

strategies that help Native American students overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to achieve

their academic potential. Mentoring services will include general mentoring by student peers and

professionals, culturally responsive academic advising, and an Indigenous Mentoring Program that

builds relationships between students and STEM faculty. Professional development activities

will focus on training MSUN faculty to recognize Native American students’ linguistic barriers as

English Language Learners and their unique challenges as STEM learners, and to implement

specific strategies that can improve these students’ academic success. Professional development

activities for staff will focus primarily on incorporating a “Family Education Model” into the

operational philosophies of their respective student services offices. Finally, family engagement

activities coordinated by the LRI will strengthen Native American students’ sense of connection

and belonging by engaging their family members in the life of the campus community and enlisting

them as partners in students’ academic journeys.

The MSUN NASNTI Project will address NASNTI’s competitive preference for engaging

Native American students in STEM fields in three concrete ways: by employing a professional

STEM tutor; by training STEM faculty to mentor Native American students in their programs with

the Indigenous Mentoring Program framework; and by expanding computer science course

offerings to include reintroducing and redesigning an introductory course on computer

programming as an engagement tool to bring current MSUN Native American students and

prospective (high school) students into STEM fields.

The objectives listed above serve our ultimate target of increasing Native American on-time

graduation rates (bachelors and associates) and retention rates (fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall)

by 10% by Year 5 of the grant period. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation will be conducted

on a semi-annual basis to ensure continuous improvement and, ultimately, a high-quality program

that serves MSUN’s Native American students.

**Abstract 8: Northeastern Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OK)**

P031X200005 - Northeastern Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (NEO) is a comprehensive two-year, public, Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution, located in Miami, Oklahoma in the

northeast corner of the state. NEO’s three service area counties (pop. 88,214; 22.3% Native

American) are home to ten tribal jurisdictions: Cherokee, Eastern Shawnee, Shawnee, Miami,

Modoc, Ottawa, Peoria, Quapaw, Seneca-Cayuga, and Wyandotte. Most service area residents

live in socioeconomic distress, following generational patterns of poverty and low educational

attainment. With over half a million American Indians (533,348 according to usnews.com

11/29/19), Oklahoma is home to 13.5% of all Native Americans in the USA, making it the 2nd

highest in the nation. According to the Oklahoma Policy Institute (okpolicy.org), in 2017, nearly

1 in 6 Oklahomans (15.8 percent) were living with income below the poverty line ($24,600 for a

family of four). The percentage of residents who live in poverty (17%), is much higher than the

national rate of 12.3% (www.census.gov). NEO service area counties have even higher rates of

poverty, ranging from 18-21%. Tellingly, while 30.3 percent of Americans complete college,

only 13 percent of Native Americans hold a college degree (www.census.gov and

www.nativepartnership.org). Furthermore, according to www.nativepartnership.org, from

elementary to post-secondary school, “35 percent of Native youth grow up in impoverishment.

Life without a college degree can often mean hardship and lost opportunity. Four-year college

grads earn $1 million more in a lifetime, and two-year college grads earn $10,000 more per year

than someone who only graduates high school.”

NEO’s mission to provide “opportunities that promote excellence in learning, service, and

leadership in a global society” is critical to the region’s residents, and the College serves as the

educational access point for thousands of disadvantaged area residents. In Fall 2019, NEO

served 1,856 students (536 of whom are Native American), offering 36 transfer and

occupational programs.

Fall 2019 Student Profile: In fall 2019, the vast majority of NEO students were first generation in

college (83%) and received some sort of financial aid (92%). Many NEO students juggle multiple

responsibilities in addition to their college studies, including jobs (63% work) and parenting

(23%). Almost forty percent (39%) are commuters. (NEO Office of Institutional Research, 2020)

Increasingly, NEO students are turning to flexible online and hybrid course offerings as a way to

pursue higher education while juggling work and family responsibilities. At the same time,

regional company Bolt Fiber Optic Services began work in 2014 on a $9 million initiative to

bring super speed internet access to Northeast Oklahoma. NEO is eager to leverage increased

demand for online and hybrid programs and the opportunity afforded by internet upgrades in the

service area to increase educational access for disadvantaged residents. However, the College

faces several key institutional gaps and weaknesses that stymie the institution’s efforts.

To address the institution’s identified problems and weaknesses, NEO proposes a project

entitled Increasing Access to STEM for Underserved Learners, that is composed of two

interrelated initiatives:

• Initiative 1: Increasing Access to High Demand STEM Degree Programs to

underserved learners

• Initiative 2: Increasing Access to Academic and other Support

NEO is addressing Competitive Preference Priority #2—Promoting Science, Technology,

Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science,

for the NASNTI FY2020 competition.

**Abstract 9: University of North Carolina at Pembroke (NC)**

P031X200008 - The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP) is one of 17 institutions comprising the University of North Carolina system.

Founded in 1887 as a school to train American Indian teachers, the institution is the only four-year

public institution founded by and for American Indians. Recognized as one of the most

diverse institutions in the South, 55% of the student population is comprised of students from

underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds, including 13% identifying as American

Indian. The American Indian student population represents 32 tribal nations, with majority of

students from one of North Carolina’s eight tribes. Additionally, 58% of undergraduate students

come from low-income households, 70% are from rural areas, and 24% are first-generation

college students.

Project Goals and Outcomes: The primary goal of the Honoring our Heritage project at UNCP is

to ensure the institution honors its heritage as North Carolina’s historically American Indian

University and ensure that the American Indian student population is holistically supported from

matriculation to graduation. The project will help to centralize services and supports for

American Indian and low-income students at UNCP and develop intentional opportunities that

promote student success, retention, and graduation in culturally relevant and responsive ways.

Population to be Served: UNCP’s student population is 13% American Indian, a total of 1,013

students. The project will serve American Indian students with the highest need for services,

including those who are low-income, non-traditional, first-generation, and from rural areas.

Additionally, the project will target American Indian students who have been provisionally

admitted to the university due to poor academic performance and who have been deemed at-risk

for not persisting or performing well academically by faculty and staff. Although the focus of

this project is supporting American Indian students, the services and programs offered will be

open to the entire UNCP student population, the majority of whom are low-income.

Project Overview: Guided by principles of the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments

Model (Museus, 2014) and data collected from various pilot students and focus groups, the

UNCP Honoring our Heritage Project establishes a centralized student support services office to

focus on American Indian student success. The proposed American Indian Heritage

Center (AIHC) would provide advising, programming, and support services aimed at increasing

the retention and graduation rates of current American Indian students. Initiatives include a preorientation event, advising, financial literacy workshops, specialized workshops for first generation

college students, academic success coaching, and cultural programming. The AIHC

would also foster a more inclusive and supportive campus environment at UNCP, providing

professional development and cultural presentations for non-Native faculty, staff, and students.

**Abstract 10: Redlands Community College (OK)**

P031X200001 - Redlands Community College (Redlands) is a public, open-access, two-year institution located in western Oklahoma. Redlands offers Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in

Applied Science degrees, as well as Certificates of Mastery in certain areas. Our fall 2018 FTE

enrollment was 1,021.

Activity: New Program Development: Agricultural Technology

This project will improve Redlands’ capacity to increase the participation, academic

success and graduation of Native American and low-income students by improving curriculum

and emphasis options within the Associate of Science in Agriculture degree program, increase

learning and academic support for these students through Supplemental Instruction (SI) and

tutoring within a Learning Community, and renovate and improve facilities and equipment to

facilitate an Agriculture Technology Lab (ATL). We have carefully designed courses to

articulate with four-year universities in Oklahoma. We will develop, pilot, and evaluate 6 new

courses directly related to utilization of technology. Courses to be developed include at least the

following: Introduction to Coding, Introduction to Drones, Introduction to Robotics, Advanced

Drone Operation, Drone Photo and Video Production, and Applied Automation. All courses will

be four-credit hour courses with the exception of the Drone Photo and Video Production course

which will be a three-credit hour course. Cohorts of Native American and low-income students

will not only participate in these courses, but also receive individual and group tutoring,

participate in SI sessions, and have the opportunity to attend workshops focused on educational

and career opportunities in STEM fields. This program will enable Redlands to upgrade a

currently unused building on campus to accommodate the ATL and furnish it with robotics,

drone and automation equipment to meet the hands-on learning needs of the new classes. As part

of this project, STEM faculty will participate in professional development leading to greater

understanding and improved instructional methods Native American students. This project will

improve the success, retention, and graduation rates of Native American and low-income students

as well as increasing Redlands capacity to high-quality programming in STEM fields. This

application also addresses Competitive Preference Priority 2.

**Abstract 11: Eastern Oklahoma State College (OK) $1,499,979**

P031X200012 -Eastern Oklahoma State College (Eastern or EOSC) is a two-year, public, Native American-Serving Nontribal college located in rural southeastern Oklahoma. EOSC’s main campus is in Wilburton, OK; EOSC also has instructional sites in McAlester, OK; Idabel, OK; and Antlers, OK. In Fall 2019, EOSC served 1,469 students, of whom 29% were Native American. The majority (53%) of EOSC’s students

attend part-time. Well over two-thirds (70%) are first-generation college students, 79% receive

need-based Pell grants, and more than half of entering students require developmental education

upon entering the college.

Area Profile: EOSC is situated in rural southeastern Oklahoma and serves a vast 12-county

service area. Uniquely, EOSC’s service area overlaps with the Choctaw Nation tribal lands.

Generational poverty and low educational achievement plague most residents of EOSC’s vast,

rural service area. Southeast Oklahoma, characterized by more than a century of economic

hardship, is often compared to Appalachia because of its similar geography, poverty and low

educational attainment of residents, especially Native American residents. According to Census

data, the service area poverty rate (21.3% all residents; 24.6% Native American residents) far

exceeds both the state (15.6%) and national rates (11.8%). Educational attainment levels are low.

Only 14.6% of area adults (11.2% Native American) hold a bachelor’s degree or higher,

compared to 25.2% statewide and 31.5% nationwide.

Proposed Project: Academic Excellence: Engaging Students to Persist and Complete

Proposed Project Initiatives: EOSC proposes to transform its approach to instruction and target

services, thereby increasing retention and associated enrollment revenues while improving

overall graduation/persistence rates and student development of 21st century skills. Over the five-year

project period, EOSC will revise 31 courses to infuse active learning and culturally responsive

instructional strategies. Target courses have been selected that support the attainment

of a Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) or healthcare-related degree

based on state recommendations for in-demand industries and occupations in Oklahoma’s most

recent Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act state plan. To facilitate active learning and

culturally-responsive strategies in revised courses, EOSC faculty will receive professional

development training and EOSC will create a new learning commons and interactive classroom

in its library. The new learning commons will house three private study/tutoring rooms for

individual and small group work; two larger collaborative learning spaces that can be

reconfigured for use by a large group or multiple smaller groups; a computer lab; a cultural

engagement lab, and a proctored testing center. EOSC will also create new services to be offered

in the learning commons. New systems for tutoring via Zoom and proctored testing will be

developed and piloted. EOSC will also develop a new Native Americans Who Code summer

program to introduce and attract Native American students to computer science degree programs.

The proposed project addresses Competitive Preference Priority #2.

**Abstract 12: Eastern Oklahoma State College (OK)**

P031X200015 - University of North Carolina at Pembroke Partnership The primary goal of this partnership is to provide students in our service region (Robeson County, NC) a smooth transition between Robeson Community College (RCC) and UNC Pembroke (UNCP). We want to assist these students by providing greater access to tutoring in the areas of education, nursing, and math. Also, the transfer advocate will assist students in transferring successfully to UNC Pembroke (UNCP). We want to see more students achieve their associate degree and be in a position to move on to a bachelor’s degree

program at UNCP in high-demand areas. We hope that students will ultimately go on to serve

the region in the areas of health and education, as well as other areas, but we know these are

critical areas of future work for our region. As the baby boomer population continues to age, and

the desire to age in place grows, we know the need for trained health professionals will increase.

We desire that these great education students will always serve Southeast North Carolina. We

want to ensure that students are supported more holistically from RCC to UNCP to promote

college continuation and, ultimately, graduation. The project will help to centralize services and

supports for American Indian students at RCC and UNCP and develop intentional opportunities

that promote student success, retention, and graduation for all who access the services, but

especially American Indian students.

Population to be Served: UNCP’s student population is 13% American Indian, a total of 1013

students. The project will serve all of our student body, but with a focus on American Indian

students with the highest need for services, including those who are low-income, non-traditional,

first-generation, and from rural areas. Additionally, the project will target American Indian

students who have been provisionally admitted to the university due to poor academic

performance and who have been deemed at-risk for not persisting or performing well

academically by faculty and staff. Although the focus of this project is supporting American

Indian students, the services and programs offered will be open to the entire RCC and UNCP

student population.

Project Overview: This project is guided by the fact that this problem of low retention and

graduation rates is exacerbated when students do not feel connected and engaged with campus

(Habley, Bloom, and Robbins 2012. The Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of

Higher Education has proposed to use retention rates and graduation rates - measures of

accountability (U.S. Department of Education, 2006) to assess student success. Those are longstanding

measures that have been used and will continue to be useful. This partnership will

allow us also to include measures of student engagement, which naturally feed into retention and

graduation rates. The UNC System in 2007 identified the reduction of student attrition rates as a

benchmark for improvement-this remains a crucial initiative. This project provides the

opportunity for greater collaboration between RCC and UNCP, and we will share data, which

will provide for a much richer data set from which to analyze and draw conclusions from our

efforts and guide our futures. Financial literacy programming, academic support through tutoring

and peer mentor programs, and the creation of a Transfer and Commuter Center will grant the

chance to create smooth transitions between our institutions.

**Abstract 13: University of Minnesota Morris (MN)**

P031X200014 -The University of Minnesota Morris is the University of Minnesota’s rural, public liberal arts campus and the only 4-year Native American Serving Nontribal Institution (NASNTI) in the

upper Midwest. The campus is located on traditional Dakota and Anishinaabe (Ojibwe)

homelands. UMN Morris will work in a cooperative arrangement with three Minnesota Tribal

colleges – Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Leech Lake Tribal College, and Red

Lake Nation College – to build Pathways to Success for Native American students through new

institutional, academic, and student life partnerships including transfer pathways.

The project’s goal is to increase the number of Minnesota Tribal college graduates who go on to

attain bachelor’s degrees. Only 8% of Dakota and 9% of Ojibwe adults aged 25 and older in

Minnesota have earned a bachelor’s degree, well below White adults (37%). (MN State

Demographic Center, 2016) The project will also support student educational equity and

attainment by preparing more Native American P-12 teachers and developing culturally

competent P-12, college, and university teachers who are knowledgeable about Native American

histories, epistemologies, worldviews, educational pedagogies, and curricula.

UMN Morris recently completed a Strategic Visioning and Planning process which articulates a

vision for growth in student enrollment, a deepened commitment to Native American student

success with partnerships in Tribal communities, and a new focus on transfer student pathways,

resources, and support. Native American student enrollment at UMN Morris has doubled since

2008 and is at a record high, comprising 26% of U.S. degree seeking students. Together, Native

American and low-income students comprise 46% of the student body. UMN Morris has not

historically focused support on transfer student success and the institution does not have any

tribal or community college program partnerships, transfer pathways, or agreements.

The project will focus on three primary outcomes: 1) Establishing formalized relationships

between Minnesota Tribal Colleges and the UMN Morris (e.g. faculty collaborations, academic

course/program collaborations, transfer pathways, memoranda of understanding and/or

articulation agreements); 2) Increasing the number of Native American students earning UMN

Morris BA degrees with Education majors, teacher licensure, and Tribally issued Ojibwe

Language eminence credentials; and 3) Increasing the number of Native American and low-income

transfer students who complete a bachelor’s degree at UMN Morris.

UMN Morris and the partnering Institutions of Higher Education in this cooperative agreement

all have deep ties to the Anishinaabe people, a core commitment to Native American educational

equity and attainment, and distinctive missions of service to their communities.

**Abstract 14: Robeson Community College (NC)**

P031X200016 -Robeson Community College (RCC) is a public two-year college

servicing Robeson County in southeastern North Carolina. Programs in academics, nursing,

human services, and career and technical educational fields serve over 1,700 students of which

44% are enrolled full-time. Females comprise of 68% of the student populations, and 44%

percent is American Indian and 19% are African American.

Project Title: First Americans’ Pathway to STEM Success (FAPSS)

Problems: RCC RCC’s advising model is understaffed to the meet the advising needs of the

first time to college student who may be underprepared and/or at risk. The advising process lacks

centralization in oversight and location making it difficult to navigate for the less resilient

student. The absence of professional advisors or academic coaches is a responsibility fulfilled in

the academic program areas often with insufficient training and tools. RCC’s retention and

completion rates are low. The College does not have comprehensive plan for offering adequate

high-quality professional development related to American Indian learning styles, to faculty and

staff. There is often a lack of funding and the expectation to engage in professional development

is not consistently communicated. STEM enrollment, persistence and completion numbers are

very low among American Indian Students and there are no strategies in place to address this

problem. There has been little STEM program growth in the last decade, which contributes to

the low STEM related program slow growth.

Strategies: Hire STEM Success Coaches to help advise, assist with finding additional financial

resources, and develop externships; promote growth mind set in the classroom, increase

awareness of cultural differences in the classroom, support STEM faculty member to help grow

new STEM program offering and improve overall instructional abilities.

Outcomes: (1) improve the academic advising process for American Indian students; (2)

increase professional development opportunities for faculty and staff; (4) improve retention,

persistence and completion by engaging students in career awareness/exploration activities and

opportunities to participate in work base learning experiences (3) help grow new STEM

programs through additional faculty support and 4) offer STEM externships for students.

Project Management: The First Americans’ Pathway for STEM Success project will be

directly supervised by the Vice President of Instruction and Support Services, Dr. Patrena B.

Elliott, in order to ensure that activities adhere to strict academic standards

Competitive Preference Priority: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math

(STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science.