

NATIVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS & RETENTION

117th Congress

ADVANCING SUPPORT FOR NATIVE-SERVING INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) supports high-quality academic and cultural education opportunities that prepare American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians for future success.

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Native students enter classrooms with different life experiences than their non-Native peers. They are citizens of sovereign nations, important members of Native communities, speakers of indigenous languages, and future leaders in their tribes. For many youth growing up on and near tribal lands, Native-serving institutions located near the community are critical to ensure that students are able to meet cultural and family obligations while advancing their academic careers. To uphold federal treaty and trust responsibilities to Native nations, we must ensure that such institutions have access to the funding and resources to advance opportunities for Native students and their communities, no matter where they are located.

BEST PRACTICES

To promote equity in education, institutions of higher education must take deliberate steps to foster academic integration of Native students, and design retention programs specifically for Native students.¹

>> SUPPORT AND FULLY FUND TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are an important avenue to the future success of many Native students. TCUs are specifically designed and equipped to support Native students. They are dedicated to the preservation of Native history, culture and language; they support research on issues impacting tribes; they produce graduates who contribute to their communities economically and otherwise; and, they are committed to keeping tuition low, so their students graduate without debt. NIEA recommends the following to support equity in access and resources for TCUs:

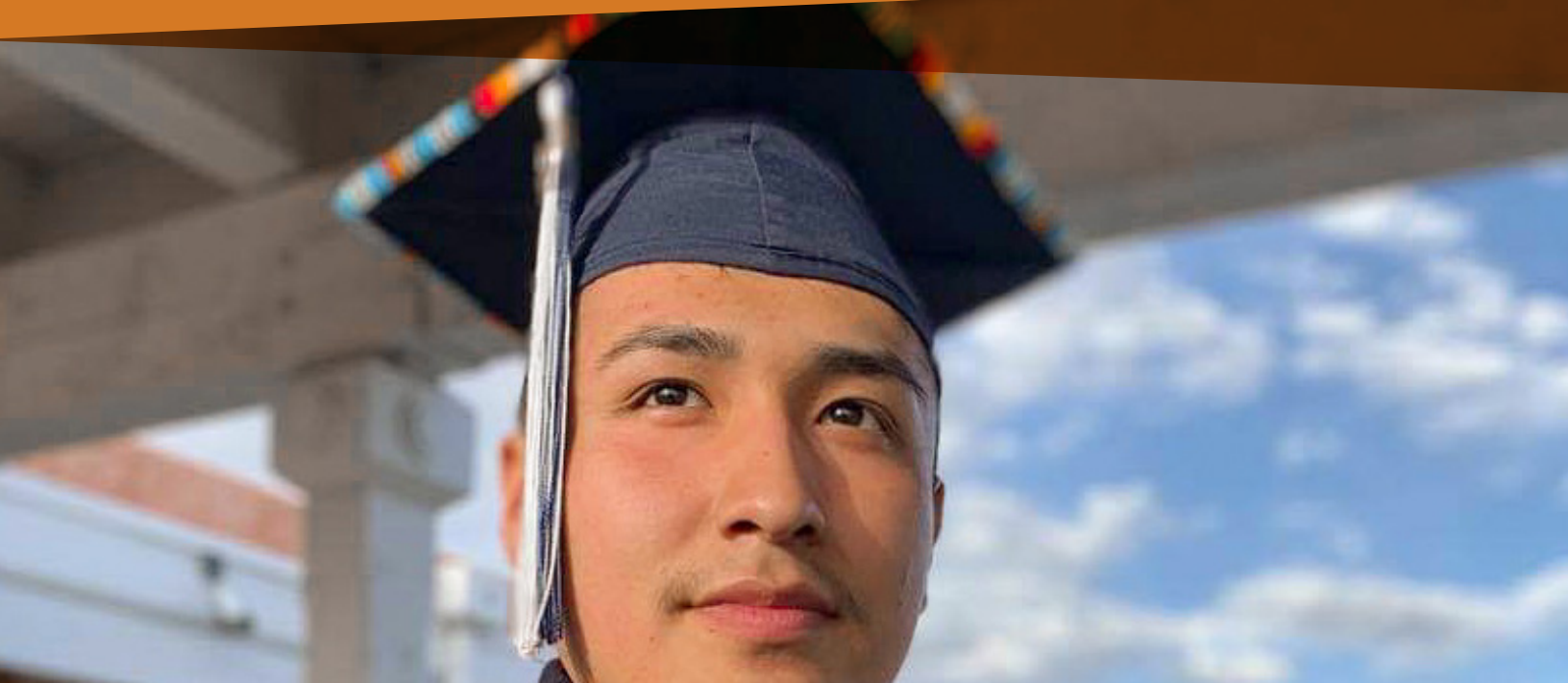
- >> Fully fund TCUs in parity with the other land grant institutions.
- >> Update the authorized activities of TCU Title III grants to expand academic instruction to include Native languages, tribal histories, and tribal sovereignty.

>> SUPPORT AND INCREASE OVERSIGHT OF NATIVE AMERICAN SERVING NON-TRIBAL INSTITUTIONS

Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTIs) are two- and four-year institutions of higher education that serve a student body comprised of at least 10 percent Native students and which are eligible for Title III funds. Typically rural and located near tribal nations, these schools receive federal grants to improve and expand their capacity to support Native students. NIEA recommends the following to ensure high-quality education for Native students at NASNTIs:



- >> Expand the Higher Education Act's Title III NASNTI grant program to support institutions to better serve Native students.
- >> Share best practices for retention and graduation rates of Native students, including programs that are successful in supporting tribal culture, language, and traditions.
- >> Provide oversight and technical support to NASNTIs that are not showing improvement for Native students.
- >> Ensure accountability to tribal nations by implementing ongoing and meaningful consultation that upholds the federal trust responsibility for Native education.



¹ Guillory, Raphael and Wolverson, Mimi. It's About Family: Native American Student Persistence in Higher Education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (January/February 2008).