

TCUP CENTRAL

Expanding the Future of Tribal Education

Growth Places Increased Demand on Space

More than 30,000 students attend the 34 tribally controlled community colleges located across the United States and earn associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees in more than 200 disciplines. The growth of tribal schools and the changing demographics of the population they serve place increasing demand for classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and general meeting spaces to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

Aging Facilities Pose Problems

According to the Institute for Higher Education Policy in *Options for a Federal Role in Infrastructure Development at Tribal Colleges and Universities*, infrastructure and capital financing needs are among the most significant challenges facing these institutions. Because campuses consist of a patchwork of aging buildings that were not intended to be higher education facilities, the quality and number of facilities are serious problems for tribal colleges. Many of the colleges operate out of abandoned or donated buildings that have leaking roofs and crumbling foundations. In many cases, blueprints are not available for buildings, creating obstacles and adding to renovation costs, according to the report.

Although many of these institutions of higher education (IHEs) identify facility maintenance and construction as a high priority, most are forced to appropriate funds for instruction-related expenses. Since its inception, the U.S. Department

With the assistance of TCUP funds, tribal colleges and universities continue to renovate and expand their physical facilities to meet the growing educational needs of their students, faculty, and staff, as well as their communities.

of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) has provided assistance through a competitive grant program to help nonprofit tribal IHEs address their need for capital development.

TCUP Supports Capital Improvements

When meeting to discuss the priorities for the President's Executive Order on Tribal Colleges and Universities, tribal

college presidents collectively identified capital development as their primary concern. In particular, they cited the need for facility renovation and construction. This included building suitable student housing and instructional buildings, purchasing new equipment, and overseeing facility maintenance and waivers of the matching requirements for infrastructure programs. TCUP is designed to help tribal IHEs build, expand, renovate, and equip their facilities, especially those facilities that are used by or are available to the larger community.

Each funded activity must benefit low- and moderate-income persons, aid in the preservation or elimination of slums or blight, or meet other urgent community development needs for which no other financial resources are available, according to HUD's 2004 SuperNOFA. Two recent grantees used TCUP funds to complete innovative building projects that reflect each tribal community's unique culture and address their need for improved physical environments.

Tribal Colleges Renew and Expand

In Minnesota, the Leech Lake Tribal College used its TCUP funds to consolidate and construct replacement classroom space. A new 17,000-square-foot building

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provides classrooms, a library, and office space. When complete, the entire complex will resemble the thunderbird, a sacred symbol in the Ojibwe culture.

On the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin, the College of the Menominee Nation is using TCUP funds to expand Shirley Daly Hall, the building that contains most of the school's classrooms. The school has undergone tremendous growth over the past 12 years, expanding from an initial enrollment of 42 students to its current 600 enrollees each semester. The new space, made possible with the TCUP funds, will relieve classroom crowding and allow the school to schedule classes at times convenient for its growing student population.

With the assistance of TCUP funds, tribal colleges and universities continue to renovate and expand their physical facilities to meet the growing educational needs of their students, faculty, and staff as well as their communities. These new libraries, classrooms, and other spaces will serve the ever-increasing number of students enrolling at tribal colleges and universities nationwide. *

Thunderbird Becomes Theme for College Expansion

The thunderbird plays a prominent role in many Native American cultures. It is the focus of many legends and is portrayed as a sacred power, protector, and trickster. According to Ojibwe culture, the first thunderbird in the spring blesses all life with water from the sky. Because of its significant role in the Ojibwe culture, it seems only fitting that the Leech Lake Tribal College (LLTC) in Minnesota honor the thunderbird in the design of the college's new consolidated campus.

New Campus Takes Shape

Currently, LLTC consists of five buildings scattered across the town of Cass Lake, on the Leech Lake Reservation. The old buildings have obsolete plumbing, electrical, and HVAC systems and deteriorating infrastructure. They are not handicap accessible and are costly to lease and operate.

"The existing physical environment clearly demonstrates the need for a new campus," says Leah J. Carpenter, president of LLTC. A singular, consolidated campus will help us fulfill our mission of offering high-quality academic programs grounded in Ojibwe culture."

The new campus is designed to look like a thunderbird from the air. The first phase of the project was the classroom building, for which LLTC used its TCUP grant funds to help pay for construction. The 17,000-square-foot building contains 8 classrooms, a large open area for 15 workstations to accommodate faculty and student services staff, a small library, bookstore, vending area, conference room, and 2 private offices for the associate vice presidents of academics and student services.

"The project, which began in April 2004 and was completed in March 2005, is in the shape of the first wing of the thunderbird," says Carpenter. "It will open officially in May 2005 with a projected student capacity of 312. It will allow us to vacate three of our existing facilities, which are substandard, inadequate, and costly to operate and maintain."



Leah J. Carpenter, LLTC President.

In addition to its TCUP grant, the college also received funding from the American Indian College Fund, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assist with the construction.

The second wing of the thunderbird (phase two) is underway and will contain additional classrooms and office space. Other phases of the project include the construction of the body of the thunderbird and will house administrative offices, an expanded library, and a cafeteria. The tail of the thunderbird will house a community center and gymnasium, and the head will house a commons area that will connect the two wings, body, and tail. Once finished, the entire thunderbird structure will be completely joined, with the body serving as the connecting structure.

Accreditation Now Probable

According to Carpenter, the new campus will help LLTC achieve academic accreditation. In order for a college to receive academic accreditation, it must demonstrate that it has the infrastructure, capacity, and

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financial resources to operate into the future as an institution of higher education. The infrastructure requirements include physical facilities that are safe, conducive to learning, and handicap accessible.

“The new campus will provide state-of-the-art technology services and create an atmosphere that cultivates lifelong intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural interests,” says Carpenter. “LLTC has spent much of its resources to lease, maintain, and operate five inadequate buildings. Classes have been disrupted, buildings closed, and offices vacated when heating systems fail or the roof leaks or falls in. Now, LLTC can allocate those resources toward the instructional and student services needs of our students.”

Over the Top of the Learning Curve

According to Carpenter, the biggest challenge, the lack of construction management experience, occurred as LLTC began

construction of its new campus. “We all experienced a huge learning curve as we developed on-the-job construction experience,” says Carpenter.

Another challenge for LLTC was meeting the requirements of the various funding agencies while simultaneously making a plan for construction startup, developing a timetable for payment of construction expenses, and ultimately completing the project in a timely fashion and within existing budget constraints.

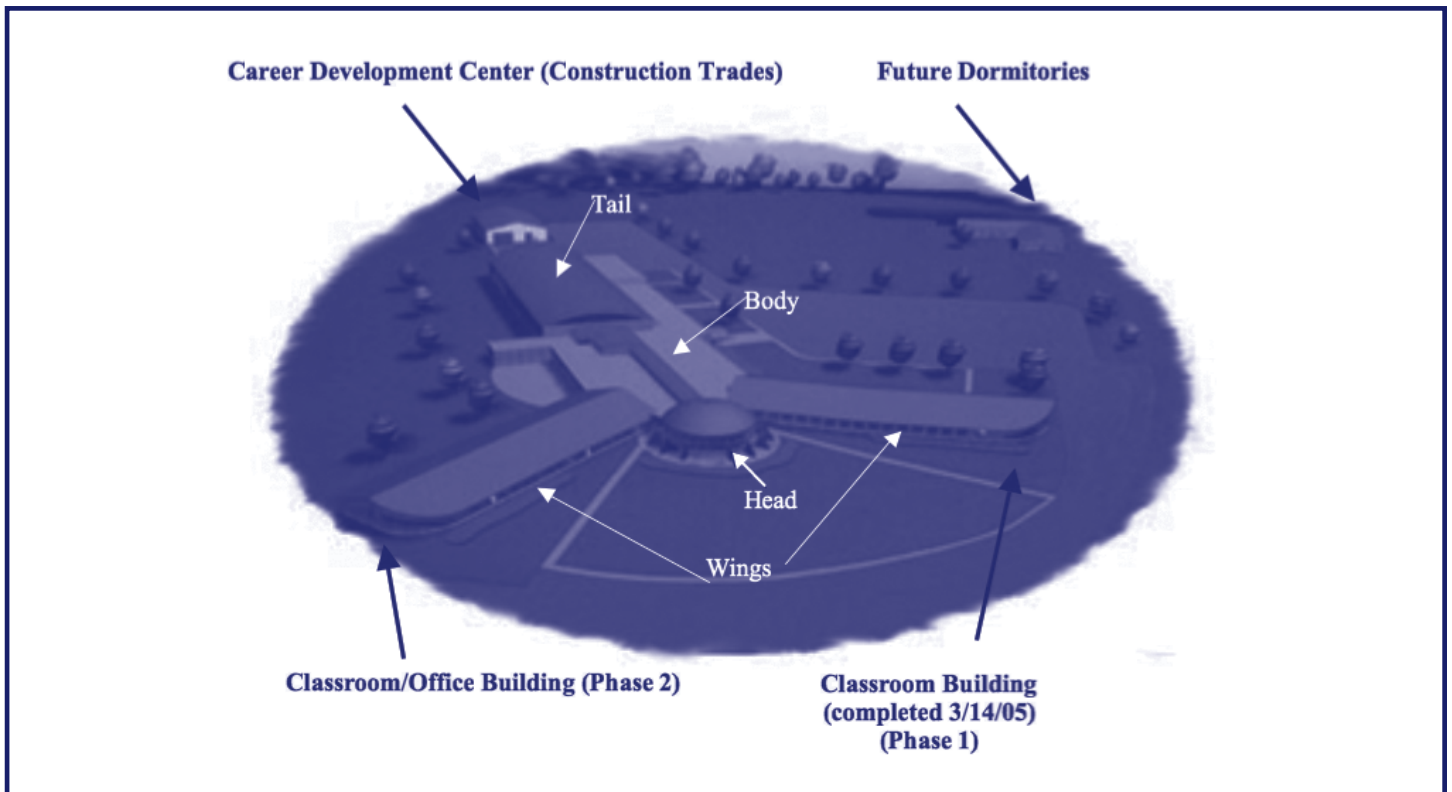
As LLTC and its stakeholders embark on construction of the second wing, the lessons learned in the construction of the phase 1 classroom building remain fresh in their minds, and they anticipate a smoother process as they continue to build their thunderbird.

LLTC primarily serves members of the Leech Lake Tribe, Red Lake Ojibwe Nation, and other bands of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, including Bois Forte,

Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Mille Lacs, and White Earth. However, non-Native Americans comprise about 9 percent of the student population.

For more information on LLTC, contact: Leah J. Carpenter, J.D., President, Leech Lake Tribal College, P.O. Box 180, Cass Lake, MN 56633; phone: (218) 335-4200.

*Leah J. Carpenter has been with LLTC since 2001 and is an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, Minnesota, Chippewa Tribe. Formerly an attorney, she is pursuing a Ph.D. in American Indian Studies from the University of Arizona, Tucson. **



Thunderbird design for new consolidated campus.

Building Renovations at Cankdeska Cikana Community College

Cankdeska Cikana Community College in Fort Totten, North Dakota, used its TCUP grant to upgrade various buildings on campus. They contracted architects, electricians, plumbers, and various other tradesmen to assist with the renovations.

The first project involved adding air conditioning to eight existing classrooms. The students, staff members, and community members ranked air conditioning as the number one priority in a needs assessment conducted by the college. The project involved a great deal of renovation and repairs, resulting in eight new air conditioners housed on the roof and vented into each classroom. A suspended ceiling covers all the sheet metal ducts. Also, new energy-efficient light fixtures were installed, and each classroom was painted and fitted with new electrical and fire alarm systems.

Science classroom space was another area of concern for the college. The previous science classroom was small and in need of renovation. The college built four new classrooms, which enables the students and science faculty to share information through the Interactive Video Network System. In addition, two older buildings received new siding, insulation, and wall repairs.

Academic Facility Construction at Stone Child College

With the help of its TCUP funds, Stone Child College, Box Elder, Montana, will construct the Stone Child College Academic Facility. The new facility will allow the college to expand curriculum offerings, update its computer technologies, and allow for growth in the student population.

The new facility will replace an existing structure that poses health and safety risks, is inadequate in both size and environment, and is unable to support the level of technology required to meet educational standards. It will include 11 classrooms to accommodate 20 to 25 students each, replacing 7 makeshift classrooms and adding 4 new classrooms to the college's inventory. It will also help to meet student demand for more extensive and up-to-date computer facilities and science labs. The facility will have the capacity to increase the college's student population by at least 100 students—the current enrollment is about 400—and provide space for training and educational services to the general public. ♦

OUP Report Celebrates Community Engagement

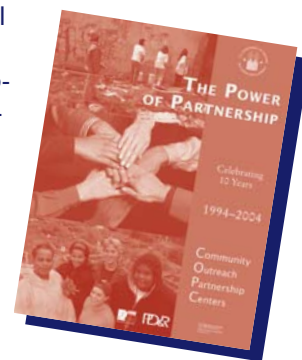
What happens when academic institutions make long-term financial and human investments in their local neighborhoods? The answer lies within *The Power of Partnership*, a special anniversary report that chronicles the 10-year evolution of the Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) program, assesses its success in introducing community engagement to academic institutions, and discusses some of the core ingredients for effective campus-community partnerships.

In neighborhoods nationwide, COPC grantees are responding to the most urgent needs of urban communities, providing public service projects and instructional programs, job training and counseling, resident-backed strategies to spur economic growth and reduce crime, youth mentoring programs, and financial and technical assistance for new businesses. *The Power of Partnership* highlights the nationwide impact of the program's initiatives on the individuals who live and work in COPC neighborhoods and honors those who have invested their time and expertise in collaborative efforts to galvanize neighborhood revitalization. It includes compelling personal stories such as these:

- ✿ Hispanic mothers in California receive support to pursue college degrees while participating in an applied research project aimed at finding ways to help other women.
- ✿ A West Philadelphia anthropology professor's urban health initiative changes nutrition-related habits in city schools while simultaneously rejuvenating his own teaching and providing his students the opportunity to put theory into practice.
- ✿ A city official in Rhode Island who relies on a university to do what his city did not have the resources to do—build the capacity of local residents so they could reverse their neighborhood's steady decline.
- ✿ An Illinois graduate student's social work internships give her the skills and confidence she needs to establish a civic association that is working to rid her own neighborhood of crime and drugs.

The report also includes insightful contributions from former OUP directors on issues such as empowering and improving local communities, improving relations between campus and community, and helping HUD fulfill its mission. It also provides a list of COPC grantees from the program's inception to the present.

To view a PDF file of *The Power of Partnership*, visit www.oup.org/pubs/copc10.html. You may obtain a free copy of the publication from the University Partnerships Clearinghouse at (800) 245-2691. ♦



Expansion Improves Instructional Facility

When it was organized 12 years ago on the Menominee Indian Reservation, the College of Menominee Nation (CMN) in Keshena, Wisconsin, served primarily adult part-time students who favored evening and weekend classes. Today, it serves primarily full-time students ages 15 to 24, which has created the need for more available space and course scheduling options. With the help of its most recent TCUP grant, CMN will undertake an expansion of Shirley Daly Hall, the college's primary instructional facility, to help address these needs.

CMN serves five native nations and neighboring communities in its region. In 12 years its enrollment has increased from 42 students to some 600 students each semester. "While such growth is a testimony of the high quality of education we offer, it also poses challenges for classroom space for academic instruction, community outreach, and training activities for a growing student population," explains Holly YoungBear-Tibbetts, the college's dean of external relations and director of the Sustainable Development Institute.

The Shirley Daly Hall expansion project supports CMN's strategic plan for building a campus that meets the current and long-term needs of the institution and community. It will allow the college to add 9,600 square feet of instructional space, providing



Dr. Verna Fowler, College President

five new lecture-style classrooms in the science wing. Office space for 11 of CMN's full-time faculty will be constructed in the basement level. "This will ease the burden of scheduling classes at times that are inconvenient for students but essential given the shortage of instructional space," says YoungBear-Tibbetts.

The additional classrooms are intended to relieve crowding and allow for increased enrollments and additional course offerings, particularly in the science-technology-engineering-mathematics curriculum. In addition, they will allow for a higher caliber and better delivery of educational programming at CMN, ultimately offering more economic opportunities for the students, who are largely

comprised of low-income, underserved populations. New facilities will also provide better technology; increased accessibility; and, with the completion of the faculty office center, an improved sense of communication, organization, and community among and between faculty members and students at CMN.

"We are proceeding on schedule with our current TCUP project," says YoungBear-Tibbetts. "We anticipate that we will have a ground blessing in late June 2005 for a July 1 construction startup."

With Expansion Comes Challenges

CMN's expansion project is not proceeding without challenges. "We face escalating costs of materials due to demands by Florida reconstruction efforts, and spiraling energy costs that are driving up the cost of both material and labor," says YoungBear-Tibbetts. "Also, development in rural areas always costs much more than it does in urban areas. It is difficult to build anything in our rural region for less than \$1 million, so we are frequently forced to engage in incremental construction," she explains. "Moreover, a late spring, with the frost only now leaving, and the ground still soggy and moisture-laden, prohibits heavy equipment use," she adds.

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Left: Shirley Daly Hall, focus of CMN's current expansion project. Right: Campus Commons, developed with a previous TCUP award, provides recreational space for campus and community events.

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Despite the challenges, YoungBear-Tibbetts and other project staff are not daunted. “We were awarded the Business of the Year award by the regional chamber of commerce for our leadership, excellence, and contribution to the economic well-being of the area,” she explains. “We’d be worried if we were not challenged, because it would suggest that we’ve stopped pushing the envelope. We will continue to provide high-quality higher education, mobilize and manage resources prudently, and be a positive, proactive force in transforming our rural economy while building the capacity of the five native nations we serve,” says YoungBear-Tibbetts.

The 2005 TCUP grant is the second such award for CMN. The first award underwrote capital costs for the development of a campus commons, which provides organizational and recreational space for the campus and community. It also provides students with a place to meet, study, and eat between classes.

Dr. Verna Fowler, CMN president, sums up the college’s feeling toward their TCUP award in this statement: “We are extremely grateful for the award made by HUD’s Office of University Partnerships. Through this expansion project, TCUP is helping to transform the lives of our students, our reservation, and our region.”

For more information on CMN’s expansion project, contact: Dr. Holly YoungBear-Tibbetts, director, Sustainable Development Institute, College of Menominee Nation; phone: (715) 799-5600, ext. 3044; e-mail: hyoungbear@menominee.edu.

*Holly YoungBear-Tibbetts is an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she earned an M.S. and Ph.D. in geography. Her primary scholarly interest is native land issues, and she convened an international conference on sustainable development titled “Sharing Indigenous Wisdom: An International Dialogue on Sustainable Development.” **