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**From Termination to Self-Determination:  
American Indians and Alaska Natives in Higher Education**

by

JERRY A. DAVIS

B.A., History, Tulane University, 1989  
M.A., American Studies, University of Alabama, 1991

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**History**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December, 1998



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## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my late grandparents, Lucille and J.B. Davis of Dothan, Alabama, and Naomi and Gib Solomon of Headland, Alabama, for their loving kindness, generosity, community spirit, and strong work ethic.



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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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**ABSTRACT**

From the time of European contact with indigenous people in the region of North America that later became the United States of America, the concept of higher education and its attendant institutions underwent constant change. Like many people in North America, many Indians at one time or another fell under the influence of European and/or Euroamerican higher education to varying degrees. Native Americans possessed many kinds of educational traditions, but, after European settlement of North America was underway in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, imported forms of higher education dominated.

From the colonial era through the early twentieth century, British North American and United States institutions of higher education recognized the value of higher education

as an assimilative force in American Indian societies. Financial support for educational programs and scholarships supporting Indians' higher education came from both public and private sources.

Still, it was not until the New Deal and World War II that the federal government established a commitment to consistently uphold treaty provisions promising to provide education and other social services to tribes in return for land. As a result, the post-World War II era saw enormous growth in Native American student enrollments and educational programs at the postsecondary level, leading to the rise of a campus-based movement that encouraged social and political activism among Indian people and the establishment of new Bureau of Indian Affairs postsecondary institutions and tribally controlled community colleges.

Throughout this era of growth, Indian and non-Indian policy makers struggled with ever-changing ideals of self-determination for individuals and Indian tribal members. From 1945 to the present, the federal government shifted its national Indian policy back and forth from terminating its special trust relationship with tribes and Indian-oriented institutions and educational programs to expanding those very relationships with greater services. The role of higher education among Native people underwent transformations that reflected the changes in federal and tribal policies. By the mid-to-late 1990s, Indian higher education had become more responsive to the needs of tribal communities and individual Indian students, yet competing local and national policies often limited the potential for greater success.



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## List of Abbreviations

AAIA	Association on American Indian Affairs, New York, New York
AICC	American Indian Chicago Conference, or American Indian Charter Convention
AIGC	American Indian Graduate Center, Inc. (formerly, American Indian Scholarships, Inc.), Albuquerque, New Mexico
ARROW, Inc.	American Restitution and Righting of Old Wrongs, Inc.
AID, Inc.	American Indian Development, Inc.
AIO	Americans for Indian Opportunity
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior
BYU	Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
BYU-IAIS	Institute of American Indian Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
CCTS	Cook College and Theological School, Phoenix, Arizona
CIA	Connecticut Indian Association
<u>CIA Annual Report</u>	United States Department of the Interior, <u>Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior ... [with the appropriate date and publication information]</u>
CIEA	California Indian Education Association
<u>Civilization Fund, 1843</u>	<u>Civilization of the Indians: Letter from the Second Auditor of the Treasury, Transmitting a Statement Showing the Amount of Money Annually Disbursed for the Civilization of the Indian Tribes, &amp;c., March 2, 1843, 27<sup>th</sup> Cong., 3d sess., House Doc. 203, ser. Set 423 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1843)</u>
CNJ	College of New Jersey (now Princeton University)
DQU	Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University, Davis, California
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FLC	Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado
FTE	Full-time equivalency enrollment
<u>Hoover Papers year</u>	<u>Herbert Hoover: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, 1930 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1976)</u>
IAIA	Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico
IRA	Indian Rights Association, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
JOM	Johnson-O'Malley Act (1934)



KU	University of Kansas, Lawrence
LDS	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)
<u>LMFI</u>	Proceedings of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian, Lake Mohonk, New York (with appropriate year cited)
NCAI	National Congress of American Indians, Washington, D.C.
NCC	Navajo Community College
NIYC	National Indian Youth Council
OEO	Office of Economic Opportunity
OIO	Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OU	University of Oklahoma, Norman
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SIPI	Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico
SJJC	Sheldon Jackson Junior College, Sitka, Alaska
SNCC	Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
UNM	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
VISTA	Volunteers in Service to America
<u>Wheelock's Indians</u>	James Dow McCallum, ed., <u>The Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians</u> (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932)
WNIA	Woman's National Indian Association
WMCP	Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

### **Introduction: "Dangling Over the Cliff"**

The late winter air filled "Nibs" Hill's lungs as he jogged up and down the steps at Zimmerman Stadium on the campus of the University of New Mexico. In Mesa Vista Hall, the large dormitory near the stadium, few students stirred on the cold February morning. Only students preparing for 8:00 AM classes would have noticed the anthropologist huffing and puffing his way up the bleachers. A native of Salinas, California, and a childhood friend of John Steinbeck, Willard Williams "Nibs" Hill spent his February and March mornings in the late 1940s and 1950s getting himself in shape for his oology field research, a branch of ornithology dealing with birds' eggs. Although Hill taught anthropology courses in the "Development of Culture" and "Primitive Religion," his longtime hobby was oology. These workouts prepared Hill for the rigorous physical demands of oology fieldwork, which often required him to scale precipitous heights or dangle over cliffs to reach bird nests. UNM colleagues, who enjoyed Hill's affable company, sometimes joined him on these oology jaunts. At the university, students, staff, and faculty admired Hill, who served as the chair of the Anthropology Department for seventeen years (1947-64). In the early 1950s, when Native American students at the university began planning to organize a student club, they asked Professor Hill to sponsor them. Hill eagerly accepted the students' invitation and served as faculty sponsor of the



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Kiva Club for seven years (1952–59), one of the first all-Indian student clubs formed at a state university in the western half of the United States. Hill's seven-year commitment to the students of the Kiva Club reflected his devotion to the anthropology profession, as well as his oology hobby. Hill became one of the most respected anthropologists of the twentieth century, publishing Navaho Material Culture (1971) with Clyde and Lucy Wales Kluckhohn of Harvard University.<sup>1</sup> After Hill stepped down as Kiva Club sponsor, he became increasingly involved in service projects throughout the state and region, including the Executive Committee of the Laboratory of Anthropology and the State Commission on Indian Affairs.<sup>2</sup>

The image of Hill scaling the bleachers at Zimmerman Stadium on cold winter mornings characterizes his determined commitment not only to his hobby of oology but to his other work as well. In oology alone, Hill made a significant contribution to the field by donating his collection of eggs to the Museum of the Southwest at the University of New Mexico for use in studies on the impact of pesticides on egg-shell thickness. Ecologists today frown upon oology, which sometimes pitted bird egg collectors against angry parent birds. By the standards of his day, however, Hill made a significant contribution and that is how he should be judged. Similarly, his willingness to provide long-term

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<sup>1</sup> Clyde Kluckhohn, Lucy Wales Kluckhohn, and W.W. Hill, Navaho Material Culture (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971).

<sup>2</sup> UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, September 28, 1953, for the period October 1, 1952 to September 20, 1953; UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, May 15, 1959, for the period June 1, 1958 to June 1, 1959; Liz Zaborowski, "Faculty Profiles: Chairman of Anthropology Practices Weekend Oology," New Mexico Daily Lobo, May 29, 1962, clipping; "Memorial Service for W.W. (Nibs) Hill, Alumni Memorial Chapel, January 25, 1974," unpublished manuscript, Willard Williams "Nibs" Hill, Faculty File, University Archives, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (UNMA).



sponsorship of the Kiva Club at the University of New Mexico may not seem like a significant contribution today, but Hill's support of the organization in its early stages insured its continued existence from year in to year out, as new students matriculated and older students graduated.

The willingness of college and university faculty, staff, and administrators to provide support for student clubs and other services created a more positive atmosphere for American Indian and Alaska Native students after World War II. As a result of this institutional support, ethnic diversity on college campuses increased after 1945. In the North American West, particularly the Trans-Mississippi West, where most Native Americans were concentrated, institutions of higher education led the way in adapting to the needs of these new students. Just as colleges and universities made accommodations for ethnic diversity, Indian students themselves underwent changes while attending these institutions. Native students influenced institutions of higher education perhaps as much as universities and colleges shaped the students' world views. The relationship between Native people and higher education was not unilateral or uni-dimensional; rather, it was multi-lateral and multi-dimensional. The nature of this relationship changed from time to time and from place to place, but, on the whole, it was a dynamic and complex one.

The history of Indian higher education in the United States did not begin in 1945, although the post-World War II era is my emphasis in this study. For developments prior to the mid-1940s, I provide an overview of famous Indian college students in the three centuries prior to 1900. Chapter One divides this three-century era into four sections. It begins by examining Harvard College's Indian education program in the seventeenth

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century and explaining why it had such a short life span. Second, it turns to Moor's Indian Charity School and the origins of Dartmouth College in the eighteenth century, emphasizing the challenges that Indians faced as students in Euramerican-oriented institutions of education and, simultaneously, as members of their own indigenous communities. Third, the chapter traces the development of United States policy towards Indian higher education in the nineteenth century. Finally, it concludes with an examination of Susan La Flesche Picotte's experiences at Hampton Institute, the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, and in her Omaha community around the turn of the century.

Chapter Two addresses the three most significant developments in Indian higher education between (circa) 1900 and 1945. Organized thematically, this chapter examines the following developments: the rise of Native Americans' participation in intercollegiate athletics in general, and football in particular, at the Bureau of Indian Affairs' secondary/postsecondary boarding schools; the New Deal policies affecting American Indians and higher education; and, finally, the impact of war service by Indians on Indians in higher education. The first two chapters should provide a basic understanding of the background of Native higher education from the mid-1600s to 1945, as well as some insight into several cataclysmic influences changing Indian higher education during the early part of the twentieth century.

Chapters Three and Four examine the 1945-70 decades, otherwise known as the infamous Termination Era. The events of these decades set the stage for the revolutionary 1970s. Because policy makers were eager to terminate the trust relationship between



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Indian tribes and the federal government in the postwar years, Indian higher education came under the pervasive influence of this trend. At the same time, however, Indian student activism and developments at institutions planted the seeds for the revolutionary seventies. The 1945–70 era should, therefore, be viewed in terms of the symbiotic relationship between higher education and federal Indian policy. Although higher education reinforced the termination policy (Chapter Three), activism on campuses and in Indian communities spawned the movement that overturned termination, a phenomenon called self-determination (Chapter Four).

In chapters Five and Six, this study examines the tumultuous decade of the 1970s. Chapter Five focuses on selected college campuses in the Trans-Mississippi West, where Native American students represented minorities, while Chapter Six looks at predominantly Indian and Indian-controlled colleges. The rise of tribally controlled community colleges and pan-Indian colleges established the seventies as a pivotal era. In addition, college and university tribal and Indian studies programs sought to provide Native students and communities with information about their own history and culture—information previously accessed, utilized, and controlled primarily by non-Indians. More than any other period in the twentieth century, the concept of cultural relativism became accepted and institutionalized on unprecedented levels, aided by the rise of ethnic, area, and women's studies programs. During the seventies, the new self-determination policy reflected this general mood.

After the seventies, however, the United States embarked upon an era of political, economic, and cultural conservatism perhaps unrivaled in United States history. Called the



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Reagan Revolution, the 1980–88 period undercut many of the gains of the previous decades. Chapter Seven deals with the Reagan administrations's impact on Indian higher education. Although many programs and colleges supporting Indian students and programs suffered under the cutbacks of this era, those that survived learned to operate in a more cost-effective fashion. In response to federal downsizing, proponents of Native higher education sought to raise funds in the private sector, a move that resulted in less federal dependency yet produced new dependencies.

From the late 1980s through the mid-to-late 1990s, a new political mood struck the nation known as "centrism," which reversed some of the policies put forward during the Reagan years. Other factors contributed to this change as well, especially the Columbus Quincentenary, which inspired a revival of campus-based Indian activism, calling for a rethinking of Columbus's legacy and new higher education programs and services for Native American communities. At the forefront of these changes, the tribal colleges led the ongoing effort to maintain and strengthen an Indian-centered approach to higher education. These and other current developments are examined in Chapter Eight.

I first came to this project in 1995 when Margaret Connell Szasz asked me if I would be interested in writing a history of the American Indian Graduate Center, Inc. in Albuquerque, the organization that has administered the Bureau of Indian Affairs's Higher Education Scholarship Program since 1969. Previously, I had written a study of a late twentieth-century Indian land claims case, so I eagerly accepted this project. In addition, I was also looking for a dissertation topic at the time and had previously undertaken several ethnic studies projects, including a study of Presbyterian-supported schools for Hispanos

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in the Southwest and the experiences of African–American pilots at home and abroad during World War II. In both projects, I had used oral histories, which helped ease my decision to explore a Native American history topic. With that in mind, I began working on the history of the American Indian Graduate Center, which led into research for this dissertation.

This study of Indian higher education emphasizes developments in the Trans–Mississippi West, yet does not limit itself to that region. Instead, it examines Indian higher education in Colonial British American institutions, then gradually moves into the Trans–Mississippi West. Since I was not able to travel to every institution of higher education that served American Indians, I have focused on specific institutions and organizations in the West that illustrate the major changes in the history of Indian higher education.

As for definitions of concepts used in this work, I base the academic dimension of my study on the evolving Euramerican concept of higher education. From the mid–1600s to the mid–1990s, higher education underwent constant change, with a shifting emphasis from neo–classical curricula handed down from the ancient world of the Mediterranean to the growing importance in the twentieth century of professional training, as well as new developments in science and technology. At the same time, Euramerican society’s views of American Indian and Alaska Native cultures underwent alterations inspired by the growing appreciation for the uniqueness of indigenous cultures. Although the institutionalization of these more positive views of Native societies occurred very gradually, the growing appreciation for maintaining indigenous traditions prompted institutions of higher education to redefine the very conception of higher education. By the late twentieth



century, Native people participated in effectively merging the Euramerican-oriented system of higher education in the United States with indigenous conceptions of higher education for the first time.

In terms of the issue of Native American identity, I have accepted at face value the statements or assumptions of those who call themselves American Indian and/or Alaska Native, or who identify with one of the more than 500 tribes, bands, villages, and pueblos in the United States. The United States Bureau of the Census has long relied on self-identification as the best means of tracking a changing population and allowing for at least some individuality. With that in mind, I accept self-identification as the best means of determining who is Indian. At the same time, however, I accept the right of Indian tribes to determine criteria for tribal membership when threshold criteria are approved democratically by popular referendum. I also have discussed the politics of federal policies regarding tribal recognition and blood quantum, as well as some of the many responsibilities that pertain to tribal membership.

After all is said and done, my task often reminded me of the University of New Mexico anthropologist Nibs Hill. No matter how hard Hill trained and prepared himself for his excursions as an oologist, he could never be fully prepared for what he faced upon approaching a bird nest. He could gaze upon a nest only to see it empty, as I often did when I scoured archival material. Yet, sometimes Hill discovered newly hatched young, perhaps hoping that their chirps symbolized the call for a better future, just as I imagined Native American children demanding a future with full access to higher education. In other circumstances, however, Professor Hill approached a nest only to be beaten back by angry

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parent birds, who could not fully appreciate his intentions. By taking away from bird nests, Hill hoped to give something back, not necessarily to the family of birds from which he took but to the human family as a whole: namely, a greater understanding of, and respect for, the natural environment. Like Hill, I, too, take the words and stories of some but only to rescue those tales from the dustbin of history and give them the attention they deserve.



**Chapter 1:**  
**“Spekkle Face White Eye”**  
**and Other Twentieth-Century Precursors**

In an influential collection of essays published in 1991 on American Indian higher education, the critic Vine Deloria, Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) argued that Native people should take back to their communities the relevant concepts from universities, colleges, and professional schools that blend with, reinforce, and shed light on the beliefs, practices, and problems of tribal communities. Since institutions of higher education were first established, Native Americans have sought to take advantage of the information and services that colleges and universities provide to improve their personal lives, as well as their communities. Many college-educated Indians, however, found that the training and knowledge they received at these institutions either alienated them from their own culture or better prepared them to face the problems of Euramerican society than it did their own tribal communities.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most fundamental yet unanswered questions in the history of Native American education concerns whether public institutions had a stronger influence over individual Indian students and Indians as a group, or whether the students exerted an influence strong enough to prompt colleges, universities, and national education policy to adopt new programs, services, and approaches in response to American Indians' needs. In other words, did American Indians influence higher education, prompting institutions to

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<sup>1</sup> Vine Deloria, Jr., *Indian Education in America: 8 Essays* (Boulder, Colorado: American Indian Science and Engineering Society, 1991), 25–32.

change their policies to respond better to the needs of Native communities, or did the higher education “system” force Native Americans to adapt to “mainstream” oriented goals of success in the larger American society? This inquiry begs many additional questions, including debates over what it means to be “Indian” and who determines Indians’ diverse needs. In addition, the concept “education” itself has undergone constant application, redefinition, debate, and change throughout history. Although many people think of “higher education” in institutional terms, bureaucratically organized educational structures always seem to reflect the surrounding social milieu. As a result, American Indians and Alaska Natives influence these institutions as much, and sometimes more, than any other group.<sup>2</sup>

Native people affect higher education institutions, organizations, and concepts in diverse ways. Tribes and individuals bring unique perspectives and educational traditions to the college or university paideia. In a paideia, competing notions of culturally and ethnically specific socialization give way to complementary and mutually beneficial concepts of individual and group enlightenment.<sup>3</sup> In the late twentieth century, American Indians shaped the development of the university paideia as much as any group. But this influence did not appear overnight. Indeed, from the time that Harvard, the first British

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<sup>2</sup> I will use the following identifiers interchangeably when referring to the indigenous people of the United States: American Indians/Alaska Natives, Native Americans, Native people, Natives, American Indians, Amerindians, and Indians. This list reflects the diversity of pan-ethnic identification among the United States’ indigenous population.

<sup>3</sup> I borrow the term “paideia” from Lawrence A. Cremin, American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876–1980 (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 114–17, 149–50.



North American institution of higher education, appeared in 1636, Native people have taken part in defining and shaping the purpose of higher education institutions.

From the mid-seventeenth century to about 1900, American Indians and Alaska Natives responded to the establishment of educational institutions at the pre- and post-secondary levels in a variety of ways. Some Natives resisted Euramerican efforts to educate and “civilize” them, while others immersed themselves into college life and rose to the top of their predominantly non-Indian classes. Whatever the response, the two and a half centuries between 1650 and 1900 represented a time when Indian college students succeeded in applying the relevant concepts of higher education to their own communities in fits and starts. To demonstrate the inconsistencies in Native-oriented higher education programs, I survey the history of Indian higher education in this chapter, emphasizing the experiences of individuals at three different institutions: Harvard College in the 1650s and 1660s, Moor’s Indian Charity School and Dartmouth College in the 1750s–70s, and Hampton Institute and the Women’s Medical College of Pennsylvania in the 1880s.

### **American Indians and the Harvard Mystique**

The name of Harvard University, particularly in the context of its law, business, and medical schools, carries significant weight in American society. Harvard today may not rank first nationally in every educational category and field as it once did, but it still ranks in the top five in every category, as its steeped traditions, large endowment, famous faculty, well-connected alumni, ties to the federal government, and international connections ensure an ongoing impact on the world. Like other divisions and departments, Harvard's School of Education ranks as one of the leading pedagogical centers in the world. To maintain its leading status and to serve a diverse national population, Harvard began an American Indian Education Program during the 1970s to aid in the establishment and expansion of secondary and higher educational institutions on or near Indian reservations. Harvard's Indian education program represented not a journey into uncharted waters but a revival of an effort dating back over 300 years.<sup>4</sup>

Established in 1636, Harvard's founders faced difficulties in establishing an educational program for Native people, given the animosities and cultural differences that hindered reciprocal English-Indian relations. While Harvard's governing body debated the role of institutional education among Native communities, Harvard began training students in Latin, Greek, and the Classics, and for government and church offices. Harvard's president and governing body maintained a commitment to lofty ideals, yet realized the importance of pragmatic service to the community. To support the colony of Massachusetts, Harvard cooperated with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel,

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<sup>4</sup> Enrique Hank Lopez, The Harvard Mystique: The Power Syndrome That Affects Our Lives from Sesame Street to the White House (New York: Macmillan, 1979).



founded in London in 1649, to encourage its students to learn Indian languages, become missionaries, and establish educational programs for Indians at Harvard. As a result, several dozen Native Americans attended Harvard during the colonial era. Harvard did not open its doors to Indians immediately, however, as the institution primarily served the Puritans and those who subscribed to their nonseparating Congregationalist theology. Furthermore, the war against the Pequots (1636–37) strained Indian–English relations. Ironically, this war initiated the debate over opening Harvard to Indian students.<sup>5</sup>

When the Pequot War ended, Boston Governor John Winthrop (1588–1649) divided the Pequot prisoners among the various English and Indian communities. Governor Winthrop handed over twelve Pequot prisoners to Patrick Copeland, a Winthrop confidante who admired the Dutch Jesuits’ missions in Japan and Malaysia. Inspired by the Jesuits’ success, Copeland suggested that English missionaries might try to convert North America’s indigenous people. Colonial and Harvard leaders overlooked Copeland’s suggestion, failing to promote the religious and educational work of the Reverend Thomas Mayhew, Jr. (1597–1664) and the Reverend John Eliot (1604–1690), who had begun working among Native tribes during the 1640s. As a result, the missionaries, not colonial and Harvard leaders, became the primary spokesmen for Indian higher education.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1936), 342; Bernard Bailyn, “Foundations,” in Bailyn, Donald Fleming, Oscar Handlin, and Stephen Therstrom, eds., *Glimpses of the Harvard Past* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 11. Margaret Connell Szasz, *Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607–1783* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 101–28.

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Copeland to John Winthrop, December 4, 1639, in *Winthrop Papers*, 6 vols. (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929–92), 4: 157–59.



## “Spekkle Face White Eye”

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In 1642, on the Island of Martha’s Vineyard (Noepe in Wampanoag), located about five miles to the southeast of Buzzard’s Bay on Cape Cod, the Wampanoag sachem Hiacoomes met Thomas Mayhew not long after Mayhew’s father had purchased the island. Mayhew invited Hiacoomes to share in his family’s Sabbath day meals. Hiacoomes returned the gesture by teaching Mayhew the Wampanoags’ Algonquian dialect. Wampanoag sagamores on Martha’s Vineyard viewed Hiacoomes’ friendship with Mayhew as duplicitous. For example, the sagamore Pahkehpunnassoo of Chappaquiddick, the small isle just off Martha’s Vineyard, judged Hiacoomes’ actions as traitorous and struck him in the face. Hiacoomes converted to Christianity about a year after he met Mayhew. Hiacoomes’ new-found faith was quickly tested, however, when his wife experienced difficulty in giving birth. During her labor, their Wampanoag friends and relatives urged Hiacoomes to call on a tribal medicine man or “powwow.”<sup>7</sup> Hiacoomes, now trusting in his new faith, refused and a daughter, who was named Return (meaning, “returned” by God’s grace), was born. This episode reaffirmed Hiacoomes’ decision to convert, prompting him to begin working to convert his own people and teach them English. Later, when the Cambridge Grammar School established a program for Indians in cooperation with Harvard College, Hiacoomes’ eldest son Joel was in a unique position to enroll as a student at this institution.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Quote from Daniel Gookin, Historical Collections of the Indians in New England: Of Their Several Nations, Numbers, Customs, Manners, Religion and Government, Before the English Planted There (1674; Boston, Massachusetts: The Apollo Press, 1792), 15.

<sup>8</sup> Experience Mayhew, Indian Converts: Or, Some Account of the Lives and Dying Speeches of a Considerable Number of the Christianized Indians of Martha’s Vineyard, in New-England (London, England: Samuel Gerrish, 1727), 3–5. Lloyd C. M. Hare, Thomas Mayhew, Patriarch to the Indians (1593–1682): The Life of the Worshipful Governor and Chief Magistrate of the Island of Martha’s Vineyard (1931; New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1932), 89–93, 109–10.



## “Speckle Face White Eye”

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The years between 1640 and 1660 saw the growth of English missionary work and the short-lived expansion of Harvard's Indian student population. Indeed, English missionary success prompted Father Gabriel Druillettes, the French Jesuit missionary to Canada's Abenaki Indians, to compliment John Winthrop, Jr., in 1651 for the growth of New England's Indian "catechumens."<sup>9</sup> Mayhew and John Eliot, the most successful missionary in the Boston area, led new communities of "Praying Indians." More importantly, the charismatic leadership of converts like Hiacoomes ensured the growth of the praying Indian population to over 1,000 converts living in fourteen communities. In 1649, for instance, twenty-two Wampanoags converted as a result of Hiacoomes's sermons.<sup>10</sup>

While Hiacoomes and Mayhew prepared Martha's Vineyard Indians for English educational institutions, John Eliot helped pave the way for the admission of the first Indian student, John Sassamon (Wampanoag), to Harvard in 1653. Sassamon worked under Eliot as a disciple and scribe before the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England appropriated funds from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to construct the Indian College building on the Harvard campus. The sole Indian to begin regular course work for the A.B. degree before 1660, Sassamon only completed a single semester at Harvard before returning to Natick, one of the Algonquian "praying towns," to minister. Still, the United Colonies' plan for the construction of the Indian College went forward. When completed in 1654, the brick, two-story Indian College housed few, if any,

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<sup>9</sup> Gabriel Druillettes, S.J., to John Winthrop, Jr., dated after January 1, 1651, in *Winthrop Papers*, 6 vols. (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1929-92), 6: 90.

<sup>10</sup> Experience Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, p. 13.



Indian students. Harvard President Charles Chauncy (1654–72) moved Harvard’s printing press into the Indian College’s empty rooms on the first floor. Chauncy made this decision because there were so few Amerindians prepared to study at Harvard, and because he believed the press could provide the Indians a useful skill. In addition, Reverend Eliot wanted one of Harvard’s Indian students to assist in the printing of the first bilingual Algonquian–English language Bible.

Sassamon left Harvard before Eliot’s bilingual “tracts” were completed, but he served as an example to others. Over the next two decades, Sassamon’s influence among both Indians and English grew. Sassamon returned to study at Cambridge intermittently, preaching to English and Indian congregations and to powerful sagamores, such as the Mohegan Uncas, who respected him and listened to his sermons. Possessing bilingual skills and bicultural knowledge, Sassamon became a diplomat and spy for both English colonial and tribal governments. On the eve of King Philip’s (Metacom’s) War (1675–76), Sassamon betrayed Metacom’s plans for a surprise attack on the Plymouth Colony. Shortly thereafter, Sassamon’s body was found. The murder of John Sassamon demonstrates the difficulty that English–educated Indians had in balancing the interests of two different people.<sup>11</sup>

The presence of Native Americans at Harvard was based primarily on two broadly interpreted popular English ideas: mission and coexistence. Supported by a variety of

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<sup>11</sup> Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675–1699* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1913), 24–25. Oliver N. Bacon, *A History of Natick from its First Settlement in 1651 to the Present Time...* (1855; Boston, Massachusetts: Damrell & Moore, 1856), 29–30. *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 66 vols., vol. 31: *Collections: Harvard College Records, Part III* (1935; Boston, Massachusetts: The Society, 1925–93), 31: 150.



religious denominations and sects, the Puritans' mission initiated the idea of using educational institutions like Harvard to transform Indians into instruments of English colonization. To increase English missionaries' effectiveness, Harvard established the Cambridge Grammar School under the auspices of Elijah Corlett, who taught Indians the Latin and Greek languages, histories, and literatures.<sup>12</sup>

In 1657, President Chauncy asked the Commissioners if he could improve the Indian College for housing English students. Even more importantly, Thomas Mayhew sent his son Matthew, in company with five Indian students, including Joel Hiacoomes and Caleb Cheeschaumuck, to Harvard. Under Mayhew's tutelage, Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck were sufficiently prepared to overcome the rigors of Cambridge. Of the dozen or so Indians who studied under Corlett at the Cambridge Grammar School, by 1661 Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck were the first to matriculate into Harvard's A.B. program since John Sassamon had done so eight years earlier. Like Sassamon, Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck benefited from caring sponsorship. Corlett closely supervised Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck's work, and Hiacoomes received support from his parents. Yet, in spite of these apparent advantages, Harvard College's A.B. program failed to duplicate the vigilant mentoring of Elijah Corlett. Harvard's institutional weaknesses may explain why John Sassamon never attended beyond a semester's course work, as well

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<sup>12</sup> Lloyd C. M. Hare, *Thomas Mayhew*, p. 135. For a discussion of the relationship between expansion and religious life, see William Kellaway, *The New England Company, 1649-1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (London, England: Longmans, 1961) and Philip F. Gura, *A Glimpse of Zion's Glory: Puritanism in New England* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1984).

as why Cheeschaumuck and Hiacoomes were the only Indians in the seventeenth century to advance far enough to graduate from Harvard.<sup>13</sup>

When it was founded in 1636, Harvard College had hoped that the best minds of New England would teach at the college, just as England's best and brightest had taught at Cambridge and Oxford. Harvard's failure to attract private support and reliance on public funds forced the college to hire tutors in their early twenties who had just received A.B. degrees to instruct students. For most of these inexperienced tutors, who served on average for about two and a half years, Harvard was a stepping stone for receiving master's degrees, then ministerial appointments in towns throughout New England. Harvard hoped to rectify the situation of inadequate tutoring by assigning two tutors, John and Thomas Stanton, just to with Indian students. Although the Stantons' father, Thomas Stanton, Sr., served as the United Colonies' official interpreter to the Indians, his sons failed to be effective tutors for Harvard's Amerindian students. Thomas, Jr., left Cambridge soon after his appointment in 1654. John remained at Cambridge from 1658 to 1663, but the Commissioners repeatedly admonished him for idleness, "slinging of stones," and "base and filthy language."<sup>14</sup> Finally, in 1664, President Chauncy, after spending a year tutoring Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck, recommended that the tutorial system be revised and a more generous salary be provided for tutors.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Daniel Gookin, Historical Collections, pp. 15, 33. Samuel Eliot Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century, pp. 355.

<sup>14</sup> Middlesex Court Records, quoted in Morison, p. 358.

<sup>15</sup> Hare, pp. 134-35. Morison, pp. 342, 358.



In addition to institutional impediments, Harvard’s Indian students encountered severe cultural biases. Several years before Harvard completed the Indian College, a group of English leaders and Native sachems proscribed certain behavior and set penalties for crimes, moral transgressions, and social behavior that conflicted with the ideals of New England Puritanism. Five shilling penalties were levied for taking an Englishman’s boat without permission, for greasing oneself, or for wearing one’s hair too long; ten shilling fines were assessed for adultery or gaming; and twenty shillings for drunkenness, powwows, ignoring the Sabbath, or brawling. Despite these strict moral and social codes, wearing long hair became so popular among the English by 1649 that Harvard faculty protested the practice as an indication of barbarity and immodesty. Unfortunately, no one seemed to realize that these policies reinforced negative stereotypes of Native people, stifled Indian cultural practices among those who attended Cambridge schools, and severely limited the spread of the English mission.<sup>16</sup>

By the mid to late 1660s, the limitations of Harvard’s Indian program and mission became painfully apparent to Harvard administrators and prospective Indian students. Joel Hiacoomes and Caleb Cheeschaumuck completed the bachelors program in 1665, but, en route from Martha’s Vineyard to Boston, Hiacoomes died in a shipwreck off Nantucket. Although Hiacoomes died before graduation, Cheeschaumuck went on to become the first and only Native American to receive a Harvard A.B. degree in the seventeenth century. As

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<sup>16</sup> For a complete listing of the social proscriptions in the Concord Agreement (1646), see Thomas Shepard, [ed.], The Clear Sun-shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth upon the Indians in New-England (London, England: John Bellamy, 1648), 14–15. The ban on long hair at Harvard appears in Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol. 15: Collections: Harvard College Records, Part I, (1925), pp. 15: 37–38, 197–98.

fate would have it, however, Cheeschuamuck died a year later in Charlestown. Despite their tragic deaths, Hiacoomes and Cheeschaumuck proved that Native people could obtain colonial English higher education credentials despite extremely difficult circumstances. Given Harvard's institutional shortcomings during the colonial era, including the lack of resources for providing adequate tutoring, Cheeschaumuck and Hiacoomes' commitment to Harvard appeared stronger than the college's commitment to them. The college's treatment of its Algonquian students seemed lackadaisical and wasteful. Given this general attitude, it came as little or no surprise when Harvard condemned, then tore down, the Indian College in the 1690s. Nonetheless, the destruction of the Indian College prompted Harvard officials and alumni to acknowledge the efforts of its first Indian students. Harvard's president and fellows determined that "any Indians should hereafter ... enjoy their studies rent free."<sup>17</sup> Other gestures followed, including the establishment of scholarships in 1696 and 1703 for Indian and English students.<sup>18</sup> These measures, however small, represented the first efforts to institutionalize Indians' open access to higher education.

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<sup>17</sup> Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, vol. 15: Collections: Harvard College Records, Part I, (1925), p. 352.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 270–72. Margaret Connell Szasz, Indian Education in the American Colonies, 1607–1783, pp. 191–231.



### Moor’s Indian Charity School and Dartmouth College

During the eighteenth century, the colonial colleges in British North America included William and Mary College (founded in 1693), Yale College (1718), the College of New Jersey, later called Princeton (1746), King’s College, later called Columbia (1755), and Rhode Island College, later called Brown (1764).<sup>19</sup> In 1769, Dartmouth College became the ninth colonial college chartered in British North America. From its beginning, Dartmouth stressed a liberal arts curriculum. Like Harvard, Dartmouth attempted to support missionary work among Indians and educational programs for Native people. The college’s first president, the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock (1711–1779), had directed a mission school for over a decade and a half in Lebanon, Connecticut. Known as Moor’s Indian Charity School, this institution, which was incorporated into Dartmouth, led British American efforts to incorporate Indians into higher education during the eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

Between 1743 and 1770, Samson Occom (Mohegan, 1723–1792) and Eleazar Wheelock developed a relationship that expanded the English mission and transformed Moor’s Charity School into Dartmouth College. Coinciding with the Great Awakening, a

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<sup>19</sup> Chartered in 1693 partly to convert and educate Indians, the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia established an Indian school in 1700. Over the next three-quarters of a century, between 75 and 100 Native Americans studied at William and Mary, but their instruction never advanced beyond the elementary level. Margaret Connell Szasz and Carmelita Ryan, “American Indian Education,” in William C. Sturtevant, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, 20 vols., vol. 4: Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed., *History of Indian–White Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), 4: 285.

<sup>20</sup> Months after Wheelock established his Indian Charity School, Colonel Joshua More of Mansfield, Connecticut deeded some property to the school, prompting Wheelock to make More the school’s namesake. Flaws in the deed caused the school to be mistakenly named “Moor’s Charity School.” James Dow McCallum, *Eleazar Wheelock: Founder of Dartmouth College* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Publications, 1939), 82 n. 3.



sporadic religious revival movement of the mid-eighteenth century, the development of Moor's Charity School represented an extension of the Great Awakening into Native American communities. In 1743, Occom began studying with the Congregational minister at his home in Lebanon. Five years later, Occom became head of a church and school for the Montauk Indians of Long Island. Occom and Wheelock maintained close ties and gradually accumulated enough funds and support to start holding classes at Moor's Indian Charity School in Lebanon.

Supported largely by donations from Congregational churches and the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (1701), Moor's Charity School gradually expanded throughout the 1750s and 1760s with the goal of preparing Native American students for entry into the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) and to teach in Native communities throughout New England. In 1754, Wheelock received his first Indian students, John Pumshire (Delaware) and Jacob Woolley (Delaware). Fourteen-year-old Pumshire and eleven-year-old Woolley came to the charity school through the guidance of Princeton's John Brainerd, Presbyterian missionary to a small band of Delaware Indians living in New Jersey. Other Native students followed, including a Mohegan in 1757, a Montauk in 1758, two Mohegans and a non-Indian student in 1760, the first female students in 1761 (a Mohegan and a Delaware), and five Mohawks in 1761—including Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea), the Six Nations' leader who sided with the British during the Revolution. By 1765, Moor's students numbered 29 Indian boys, 10 Indian girls, and 7 non-Indian boys, “all on charity.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.



Samson Occom's success as a missionary among Native people lifted Moor's School from a little known educational experiment to a leading program in Indian higher education. As Moor's Indian Charity School slowly grew, Occom continued to work as a missionary, spending time among Oneida and Mohegan Indians, among others. His efforts culminated in 1765 when Occom and an English minister, Nathaniel Whitaker, raised 12,000 pounds sterling from congregations in England and Scotland to support Moor's Charity School and the anticipated college. By comparison, in the prior eleven years before the Occom-Whitaker trip, Wheelock had managed to raise only 1,639 pounds sterling. With new funds, however, Wheelock hoped to move his school to Iroquoia, the principal Indian nation in the region before and during the American Revolution. The financial support that Occom had raised helped catapult Wheelock to the position of a top educator in British America.<sup>22</sup>

The few Indian students at Moor's Charity School who went on to study at Princeton, Dartmouth, or elsewhere faced challenges similar to those at Harvard a century earlier. Like Harvard's Native American students, charity school Indians responded to English institutions in a variety of ways. For example, John Pumshire and Jacob Woolley had to set a high standard as the first students at Moor's Charity School. Both performed well; Pumshire "made uncommon Proficiency in Writing," and Woolley "made considerable progress in the Latin and Greek Tongues."<sup>23</sup> Even at five AM, Wheelock's students impressed visitors. Each morning, students assembled at Wheelock's house to

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<sup>22</sup> James Dow McCallum, ed., *The Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932), 17-18, 20 (hereafter *Wheelock's Indians*).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31, n. 1.



read Bible verses out loud. Following this, a visitor from Boston reported, they “entered Successively on Prosodia & then on Disputations on some Questions propounded by themselves in some of the Arts & Sciences.”<sup>24</sup> Like other visitors to Moor’s, this Bostonian believed that Wheelock provided a better education than many colleges, confirming the decision of Lebanon’s non-Indian residents to send their children to study at the charity school. Wheelock’s daily rigors may have had a negative impact on those, such as Pumshire, with poor health. In November 1756, Wheelock sent Pumshire home to recover his health, but he died just over two months later. Woolley, on the other hand, continued his studies at Moor’s until 1759 when the College of New Jersey accepted him into the A.B. program. At Princeton, Woolley found college life to be too confining, “because I want to travel some where or other & get acquainted with Mankind. For I don’t see as I am likely ever to learn anything else, but the Languages & Sciences.”<sup>25</sup> Woolley touched on a key dilemma of both academic institutions as well as religious institutions, but he faced other problems, too.

In the fall of 1762, College of New Jersey (CNJ) officials sent Woolley back to Wheelock’s charity school until “he reforms and prosecutes his Studies in such a Manner as to deserve your Recommendation[.] [H]e may on his Submitting to an Examination, be admitted to the Honours of College.”<sup>26</sup> CNJ officials had considered dropping Woolley altogether, but as a favor to Wheelock the college spared him. Woolley spent the year

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<sup>24</sup> John Smith to a friend, May 18, 1764, Wheelock’s Indians, pp. 73–75.

<sup>25</sup> Jacob Woolley to Eleazar Wheelock, December 14, 1761, in Wheelock’s Indians, p. 251.

<sup>26</sup> Jeremiah Halsey, Tutor, College of New Jersey, to Wheelock, September 30, 1762, in Wheelock’s Indians, p. 252.



1762–63 as an assistant instructor at Moor’s—an assignment that must have been a blow to the fourth-year college student’s ego—and he continued to drink, swear, and behave badly. After signing a formal confession and promising to improve, Woolley returned to Princeton with Wheelock’s renewed support. Wheelock told CNJ President Samuel Finley (1761–66) that Woolley had been “perplexed, & intangled with a young feemale [sic],” but that he had confessed and diligently studied to make amends.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Wheelock explained that Woolley had reached the point at which, if he did not receive his degree soon, he would surely again become discouraged and fall into temptation. Finley informed Wheelock that John Brainerd had kindly paid Woolley’s 200 pounds of unpaid expenses in the hopes of encouraging him to complete the A.B. program. Despite these efforts on his behalf, Woolley did not return to the college. In a letter to Wheelock, Woolley explained that he could not return until he worked off drinking debts he owed to a man in Indian Town, New York. Wheelock also suspected that complications from Woolley’s involvement with the woman at Princeton may have made it difficult or impossible for him to return to New Jersey. In January 1764, Joseph Fish, one of Wheelock’s friends, visited Woolley at Indian Town and asked if he could help Woolley restore his “Favour” with the woman in Princeton. Woolley thought that it might help, but he wept and spoke as though the matter had been firmly resolved.<sup>28</sup> When the two men

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<sup>27</sup> Wheelock to Samuel Finley, President, College of New Jersey, September 17, 1763, in Wheelock’s Indians, pp. 255–57, quote from p. 256.

<sup>28</sup> Quote from Wheelock’s Indians, p. 262.

parted, Fish warned Woolley that, unless he found something to do, he would “Soon be naked.”<sup>29</sup>

Other Wheelock students who graduated from Moor’s experienced difficulties trying to work as missionaries/schoolmasters among Indian people. The high point of the mission work conducted by Moor’s Indian Charity School graduates came during the 1760s when Wheelock’s students fanned out among the Six Nations to establish schools and teach the Gospels. Joseph Woolley (Delaware), Jacob’s younger brother, participated in this effort. When Joseph Woolley first came to the charity school in 1757, Brainerd characterized him as sober, of “middleing good Capacity, natually modest, and Something bashful.”<sup>30</sup> The younger Woolley studied at the charity school for seven years; then in 1764, after Pontiac’s Rebellion ended, Wheelock sent Joseph as a teacher to the Mohawk village of Onohoquaga on the Susquehanna River. Although Joseph died there a year and a half later, he had been so effective as a missionary teacher that an Onohoquaga chief came to Moor’s Charity School to request that another teacher be sent in his place.<sup>31</sup>

Joseph Woolley’s success was a true accomplishment, especially when viewed from the perspective of another Wheelock student, Hezekiah Calvin (Delaware). Calvin arrived at Moor’s in the same year as Woolley, but Calvin did not receive a teaching assignment until 1765 when the Connecticut Board of Correspondents certified him as a schoolmaster. Wheelock dispatched Calvin to Fort Hunter, located on the Mohawk River

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<sup>29</sup> Quote from *Ibid.* Also see, Jacob Woolley to Wheelock, Finley to Wheelock, October 21, 1763, in *Wheelock’s Indians*, pp. 255–62.

<sup>30</sup> John Brainerd to Wheelock, March 23, 1757, in *Wheelock’s Indians*, p. 30.

<sup>31</sup> *Wheelock’s Indians*, pp. 25–26.



just west of Schenectady, New York, to open a school. At Fort Hunter, however, “the Indians were very lo[a]th to send the[ir] Children,” claiming that their children’s chores prevented them from attending school.<sup>32</sup> Out of frustration, Calvin threatened to leave, but Iroquois children began coming to school. Gradually, school attendance rose to eighteen students a day. Still, Calvin and his Iroquois students’ parents disagreed over other matters, including proper disciplinary measures. “I am ready to give out with these Indians & with the Pains I have,” he said. “I have a hard head ache [at] certain time[s] in the afternoon[,] which sometimes is so hard that I hardly know what I am about.”<sup>33</sup> As Calvin’s experience demonstrated, English-educated Indian schoolmasters faced daunting cultural and tribal barriers. It appeared as though Calvin and other Wheelock students had imbibed English culture and attitudes to the point where they were at times unsure as to their own identity.

While at the charity school, Native American and English students’ ethnicity sometimes created tensions; these became most apparent when personal animosities were expressed. Tensions among individuals at Moor’s often reflected larger issues shaping Indian-English relations. In September 1765, Wheelock’s son John, who later became president of Dartmouth in 1779, and William Johnson (Mohawk), the son of Sir William and Molly (Mohawk) Johnson of New York—who brokered trade and diplomatic relations between the Iroquois and the English in the Mohawk Valley region—began cat calling one another until John’s ire led him to call William a “speckle face white Eye” and

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<sup>32</sup> Hezekiah Calvin to Wheelock, August 11, 1766, in *Wheelock’s Indians*, pp. 49–50.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

to challenge William to a fist fight. An onlooker, Joseph Johnson (Mohegan), chimed in against William, calling him “*Indian Devil*.”<sup>34</sup> The use of racial epithets in this exchange—the English student calling a Mohawk “spekkle face white Eye,” and another Indian student calling the Mohawk an “*Indian Devil*”—suggests that both Indian and English students at Moor’s had imbibed the racist attitudes of the larger society and employed negative stereotypes against one another in the school yard when necessary.

The tensions that pitted John Wheelock against William Johnson also may have reflected the animosity between their fathers. Sir William Johnson (1715?–1774), an Anglican and the Indian superintendent for British America’s northern colonies, opposed Eleazar Wheelock’s proposal to relocate the Congregationalist Moor’s Charity School within the domain of the Six Nations. Johnson wrote that Indians and others who fell under the influence of “Dissenters . . . have imbibed an air of most Enthusiastical cant,” and “the measures they pursue threaten more than our Religious liberties.”<sup>35</sup> In 1769, Johnson persuaded the Oneidas and other Iroquois parents to withdraw their children from Moor’s so that Anglican missionaries could replace Wheelock’s students as the dominant missionary group of the region. Wheelock finessed Sir William’s opposition to the Congregationalists, however, by obtaining support from the Earl of Dartmouth for the establishment of a college just outside Iroquoia. By founding Dartmouth College in

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<sup>34</sup> David McClure, second year student at Moor’s, to Wheelock, September 25, 1765, Wheelock’s Indians, p. 76.

<sup>35</sup> First quote from Johnson Papers, IV, March 3, 1763, in Wheelock’s Indians, p. 20, and second quote from Johnson Papers, V, October 8, 1766, in Wheelock’s Indians, pp. 20–21. By “Dissenters,” Sir William Johnson refers to Congregationalists and others who separated from the Church of England.



Hanover, New Hampshire, Wheelock avoided a direct confrontation with Johnson and his Anglican supporters.<sup>36</sup>

With the multitude of conflicts relating to religious, ethnic, and personal tensions, the process of preparing Native students for and sending them to college stalled. After 1769, mission work among the Six Nations halted when the Iroquois withdrew their children from Wheelock’s school. After the Iroquois left Moor’s Charity School, Wheelock turned his attention to recruiting Western Abenaki Indians for the newly established Dartmouth College (1769). Meanwhile, Samson Occom

complained ... that the Indian [school] was converted into an English School & that the English had crowded out the Indian Youths—he instanced in one Symons a likely Indian who came to get admittance but could not be admitted because the School was full. He supposed that Gentlemen in England tho’t the School at present was made up chiefly of Indian Youth & that he should write & inform them to the contrary.<sup>37</sup>

Occom became increasingly embittered at Wheelock for discontinuing mission work among the Six Nations and for his apparent lack of interest in developing an Indian education program at Dartmouth. “[Y]ou having so many White Scholars and so few or no Indian Scholars,” he wrote, it “gives me great Discouragement—I verily thought once that your Institution was Intended Purely for the poor Indians.” It was with this goal in mind, he reminded Wheelock, that “I Cheerfully Ventured my Body & Soul, left my Country my poor young Family” to raise money in England. “I was quite willing to

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<sup>36</sup> Margaret Connell Szasz and Carmelita Ryan, “American Indian Education,” p. 287.

<sup>37</sup> David Maccluer to Wheelock, May 21, 1770, in Leon Burr Richardson, ed., An Indian Preacher in England: Being Letters and Diaries Relating to the Mission of Reverend Samson Occom and the Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker to Collect Funds in England for the Benefit of Eleazar Wheelock’s Indian Charity School, From Which Grew Dartmouth College (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Publications, 1933), 354–55, quote from p. 354.



become a Gazing Stocke, Yea Even a Laughing Stocke, in Strange Countries to Promote your Cause.”<sup>38</sup>

There was justification for Occom’s feeling that his mentor had abandoned their cause, but Wheelock was not solely to blame for the changes in the Indian charity school after its incorporation into Dartmouth College. By that time, particularly after 1769, Wheelock had lost his former influence among the Six Nations. During and after the Revolution, most tribes in the Iroquois League supported the British, while Wheelock threw his lot in with the American colonists. Although only two Algonquian students, Daniel and Abraham Simon (Narraganset), moved from Lebanon to Hanover to study at the newly established Dartmouth College, Wheelock worked hard to continue an Indian educational program after the move. Wheelock’s efforts to recruit Western Abenaki Indians of Canada bore fruit. By 1774–75, Dartmouth enrolled fifteen Native Americans, an enrollment figure that matched attendance at Moor’s Charity School in previous years. Western Abenaki, particularly from the town of Saint Francis, Quebec, supplied Dartmouth with Native students well into the 1840s. In 1777, Daniel Simon became the first Indian to receive a Dartmouth degree. After graduation, Simon became a preacher–educator at Stockbridge, an Indian community located in western Massachusetts on the Housatonic River.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Samson Occom to Wheelock, July 24, 1771, in Harold Blodgett, Samon Occom (Hanover, New Hampshire: Dartmouth College Publications, 1935), 122–24, quote from pp. 122–23.

<sup>39</sup> James Dow McCallum, Eleazar Wheelock, p. 138. Leon Burr Richardson, ed., An Indian Preacher in England, p. 355–56 n. 1. Wheelock’s Indians, p. 219 n. 1. Gordon M. Day, “Western Abenaki,” in William C. Sturtevant, ed., Handbook of North American Indians, 20 vols., vol. 15: Bruce G. Trigger, ed., Northeast (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 15: 152.



As a result of Eleazar Wheelock’s efforts to train Indian missionaries and schoolmasters, and Samson Occom’s effectiveness as a fundraiser, missionary, and cultural broker, another institution of higher education, Dartmouth College, introduced Indian-oriented educational programs as a purported central aspect of its founding and mission. Like Harvard College, Dartmouth’s institutional support for Indian students mostly waned over time, but educators and institutions continued to attempt to build ties between Native people and higher education.

### The United States of America Enters Indian Affairs

After the Revolutionary War, the United States government struggled to maintain stable relations between Indian tribes and American settlers. The federal government remained weak during its formative decades, and the states, tribal governments, and individuals often took matters into their own hands. In 1790, the central government's inexperience became apparent when a United States military force under General Josiah Harmar was decisively defeated by Chief Little Turtle (Miami) on the Maumee River in northern Ohio. As a result, the government felt compelled to keep the administration of Indian affairs under the Department of War. Over the next half century, the war department implemented all government programs affecting Indian-white relations, including trade, removal, and education.

The missionary impulse that inspired the educational programs of Harvard, the College of New Jersey, and Dartmouth continued to shape developments in the nineteenth century. As Reverend Lucius Bolles, who sponsored the schooling of Amerindians at New York's Hamilton Institution, explained: "No one class of men is defined as the exclusive objects of our charity."<sup>40</sup> Bolles and other missionary-educators pressed the Jefferson (1801-09), Madison (1809-17), and Monroe (1817-25) administrations to build schools for Native American children. Despite such urging, funding for Indian education lacked consistent support until after the War of 1812 when Congress required the Secretary of

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<sup>40</sup> Quote from Lucius Bolles, A Discourse Delivered Before the Members of the Salem Female Charitable Society, September 27, 1810, Being Their Tenth Anniversary (Salem, Massachusetts: Thomas C. Cushing, 1810), 5. Civilization of the Indians: Letter from the Second Auditor of the Treasury, Transmitting a Statement Showing the Amount of Money Annually Disbursed for the Civilization of the Indian Tribes, &c., March 2, 1843, 27<sup>th</sup> Cong., 3d sess., House Doc. 203, ser. Set 423 [Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1843], 13 (hereafter Civilization Fund, 1843).



War to promote improvements in “agriculture, education, and civilization” among the Indians.<sup>41</sup> In 1819, Congressman Henry Southard presented a report to Congress asserting that increased trade with and stability among Indian communities would undermine “the influence of foreign traders” and promote peace.<sup>42</sup> Southard’s argument convinced Congress to provide \$10,000 annually to instruct Native people “in the mode of agriculture suited to their situations” and to teach “their children in reading, writing, and arithmetic.”<sup>43</sup>

The passage of the so-called “Civilization Act” of 1819 set the precedent for future federal funding for the education of American Indians and Alaska Natives. Spurred on by the new federal education funds, more schools appeared as attendance slowly rose. New schools included the Cornwall, Connecticut, Indian School (1817), the Shawnee Manual Labor School in Ohio (1822), and the Choctaw Academy in Kentucky (1827). These institutions formed the prototype for later boarding schools, combining vocational and academic training in an agriculture-oriented setting. In addition, off-reservation institutions like Cornwall and Choctaw Academy anticipated a persisting pattern in Indian education: namely, only a small percentage of Native students benefited from “civilization” funds, and those who did usually had to leave their homes and attend school far away.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Alteration of the System for Trading with the Indians, January 5, 1819, 15<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2d sess., House Doc. 158, in Walter Lowrie and Walter S. Franklin, eds., American State Papers, Class II, Indian Affairs, Vol. II: Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States, from the First Session of the Fourteenth to the Second Session of the Nineteenth Congress, Inclusive: Commencing December 4, 1815, and Ending March 3, 1827 (Washington, [D.C.]: Gales and Seaton, 1834), 186.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>43</sup> Statutes at Large, vol. 3, chap. 85, approved March 3, 1819 [Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1819], 516.

<sup>44</sup> Report from the Secretary of War, in Reply to a Resolution of the Senate of the 25<sup>th</sup> of January Last, Showing the Progress Made in Civilizing the Indians for the Last Eight Years, and Their Present



Although the Indian school fund mostly supported primary and secondary education, a handful of Native American students attended college and professional training courses with these appropriations. Between 1827 and 1844, at least fifteen Native people attended postsecondary institutions. Dartmouth College continued to attract Western Abenaki students, such as Pial Wzôkhlain, but also the Seneca Maris P. Pierce, who received \$800 from the government's "civilization" fund from 1834 to 1840. Indians attended other postsecondary colleges and specialized training courses as well. Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, enrolled two Native students in 1827–29. Two Creeks, William Barnard and Lee Compere, probably attended Georgetown College in Washington, D.C. in 1831–32. The next year, Henry and Joseph Folsom (Choctaws) briefly studied at Alabama's Lagrange College. Two Cherokee women, Nancy and Dolly E. Hoyt, attended the Monticello, Illinois, Female Seminary at least until 1844. Furthermore, several graduates of the Choctaw Academy went on to seminary and training in law and medicine. For example, William Trahern (Choctaw), described as "sprightly" by his teacher at the Choctaw Academy, took medical lectures in Lexington, perhaps as a student at Transylvania University, established by Kentucky in 1799 as the first college west of the Appalachians. During the early nineteenth century, Transylvania hired the best educated teachers in the West. Many Transylvania faculty, including its seven professors in the medical college, had enjoyed wide reputations before coming to Lexington. Consequently, Indian students who trained at Transylvania received excellent instruction. After William Trahern, other Amerindians followed him to Lexington, including James N. Bourassa

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Condition, March 26, 1830, 21<sup>st</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., Senate Doc. 110, ser. Set 193 [Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1830], 6–7, 9–10, 13. Also see Connell Szasz and Ryan, pp. 288–89.



(Pottawatomie) in 1834 and Reuben Smith, Jr. (Chippewa) from 1839 to 1842. Other students studied the law and one, James R. Godfrey (Miami), attended seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. All told, these fifteen Indian undergraduate and graduate students received over \$5,000 from the government's education fund.<sup>45</sup>

From the 1840s to the 1870s, Congress limited the civilization fund's use to tribes bordering frontier settlements. Unfortunately, Congress generated no reports on how funds were distributed. When the House requested that such an accounting be provided in 1870, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely S. Parker (Seneca) explained that his office did not have the resources to generate such a report in under ten to twelve months. Still, Parker estimated that the current balance of \$16,000 had been committed “to the best advantage.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Civilization Fund, 1843, pp. 15–16, 18, 24–40. Indian School Fund: Letter from the Secretary of War, Transmitting Reports of the Second Auditor and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Relative to the School Fund Belonging to Each Indian Tribe, &c., May 4, 1844, 28<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., House Doc. 247, ser. set 443 (Washington, D.C.: Blair & Rives, 1844), 43–45. William Trahern's record at the Choctaw Academy is reprinted in Carolyn Thomas Foreman, “The Choctaw Academy,” Chronicles of Oklahoma 9 (December 1931): 408. For a discussion of the development of Transylvania University, see Richard C. Wade, The Urban Frontier: Pioneer Life in Early Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Lexington, Louisville, and St. Louis (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 237 and passim.

<sup>46</sup> Efforts to Educate and Civilize Indian Tribes: Letter from the Secretary of the Interior in Answer to a Resolution of the House of March 24, 1870, in Relation to the Efforts That Have Been Made by the Government to Educate and Civilize the Indian Tribes within the Limits of the United States, May 11, 1870, 41<sup>st</sup> Cong., 2d sess., House Ex. Doc. 260, ser. set 1426 (Washington: GPO, 1870), 2. During the 1860s and 1870s, as a result of treaties signed by various factions of the Ottawa tribe, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and federal Indian agents, the Ottawas' Kansas lands guaranteed to them in removal treaties were sold off to establish Ottawa Indian University. Ottawas were named to the university's board of trustees, but, when land speculators were caught selling school lands to eastern investors at marked up prices, Ottawa tribal leaders tried to take over control of the school. American Baptist Home Mission Society and Ottawa University officials removed Ottawa tribal leaders from the board. In 1873, Congress passed compromise legislation that ensured that the Ottawas received the interest on the sale of their lands. Two years later, the last Ottawa Indians to serve on the university's board resigned. William E. Unrau and H. Craig Miner, Tribal Dispossession and the Ottawa Indian University Fraud (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985).



Over the next several decades, the federal government, prodded by the Board of Indian Commissioners established by President U.S. Grant (1869–77), gradually increased the annual appropriation for Native Americans’ education. The creation of government–run Indian schools, beginning with the Indian education program at Hampton Institute (1878) then Carlisle Indian School, institutionalized American Indian education to an unprecedented degree. Institutionalization presented tremendous problems for Indian higher education. The government schools emphasized primary and secondary schooling to the detriment of encouraging postsecondary academic and professional preparation. As in the past, however, several Indian students, including Charles A. Eastman (Santee Sioux, 1858–1939), Carlos Montezuma (Yavapai, 1866–1923), and Susan La Flesche Picotte (Omaha, 1865–1915), who came of age in the late nineteenth century, defied the odds and succeeded in becoming professionals within their own communities as well as in mainstream American society. Although more and more Native people began attending institutions of higher education in the late nineteenth century than ever before, Susan La Flesche Picotte became the first American Indian woman to receive a medical degree. To illustrate the emerging professionalization of this generation, La Flesche provides one case in point.



**Susan La Flesche Picotte and the Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania**

During the nineteenth century, leading institutions of higher education, such as Harvard and Transylvania University, established professional schools in a variety of disciplines, including business management, engineering, and medicine. With these professional training programs, the modern university emerged with its emphasis on both undergraduate and graduate education. Universities spearheaded the professionalization of various occupations following the scientific revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. New developments in science affected every educational field of study, particularly medicine. Doctors sought to facilitate the rapid application of new approaches and knowledge to understand disease and manage social welfare problems. As medical doctors applied new methods and sought to regulate their profession, the federal government encouraged physicians to serve communities after graduating from medical school. As a consequence, a small number of Native people became medical doctors in the nineteenth century, including Charles A. Eastman and Carlos Montezuma. To help meet the growing need for physicians serving on reservations, the Connecticut Indian Association (CIA), the state organization of the Woman’s National Indian Association (WNIA), sponsored the medical training of another American Indian, Susan La Flesche Picotte, at the Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania. La Flesche became the first American Indian woman to become a medical doctor.<sup>47</sup>

The youngest child of Joseph, Jr. (Omaha–French) and Mary (Otoe–Iowa–Caucasian) La Flesche, Susan La Flesche grew up in a prominent family that constantly

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<sup>47</sup> W. L. Coleman, M.D., A History of Yellow Fever: Indisputable Facts Pertaining to Its Origin and Cause (Chicago, Illinois: The Clinic Publishing Company, 1898).



moved between the Indian and non-Indian worlds. Joseph La Flesche, Jr. (1818?–1888) had succeeded Big Elk in 1853 as one of the two principal chiefs of the Omaha Indians. In 1854, as a successful trader and the leading assimilationist among the Omahas, La Flesche negotiated a treaty with the federal government that relinquished Omaha claims to hunting grounds throughout the Missouri River valley and established the Omaha Reservation in northeastern Nebraska. Joseph and Mary La Flesche believed that the 1854 tribal-federal treaty provided the best means of protecting Omaha land rights and teaching Omahas how to survive in the non-Indian mainstream. With this educational approach in mind, they encouraged their children “to mingle with the white people.”<sup>48</sup> Like her parents, Susan’s oldest sister, Susette (1854–1903), spent much of her notable life attempting to educate mainstream Americans about Indians’ problems on speaking tours through the nation. During the late 1870s, the federal government relocated several tribes, including the Nebraska Poncas, from lands guaranteed by an earlier treaty. Susette La Flesche joined several concerned non-Native journalists and Woman’s National Indian Association (WNIA) activists to publicize the Poncas’ mistreatment. By the end of Susette’s first major tour in 1880, the La Flesches had attracted considerable attention.<sup>49</sup>

Like her siblings, Susan La Flesche received an exceptional education in terms of understanding Indian-non-Indian relations and learning bicultural skills both at home and in school. As a student at the federal government’s school in Nebraska, La Flesche studied

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<sup>48</sup> Joseph La Flesche quote in Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 2 vols. (1905–06; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 2: 634.

<sup>49</sup> Douglas Street, “La Flesche Sisters Write to *St. Nicholas Magazine*,” *Nebraska History* 62 (Winter 1981): 515–23.



“geography, history, grammar, arithmetic and spelling,” subjects typically covered in McGuffey’s Readers.<sup>50</sup> In 1879, following in the footsteps of their oldest sister Susette, Susan and her sister Marguerite (1862–1945) entered the Elizabeth Institute for Young Ladies, a secondary finishing school in New Jersey. Three years later, Susan La Flesche returned to the Omaha Reservation, where she taught at the Presbyterian mission school. Anxious to return to school, in 1884 Susan and Marguerite La Flesche enrolled at Hampton Institute, Booker T. Washington’s school for freedmen established in Virginia after the Civil War.

Founded in 1868, Hampton Institute’s supporters argued that its mission of “civilization” through education could also be appropriately applied to the government’s Indian policy. In 1877, Army Captain Richard Henry Pratt (1840–1924) urged policy makers to establish an Indian-oriented educational program at Hampton. Hampton actively recruited Indians from the northern plains and upper Midwest, particularly among the Sioux, Omaha, Oneida (Wisconsin), and Winnebago tribes. Hampton’s nurse and Indian student advisor, Cora Mae Folsom, made eleven recruiting trips to the West between 1880 and 1911 and learned the Lakota language. When the La Flesche sisters arrived at Hampton, they began a regular course of study along side African American students. Because the sisters could already read and write English, Hampton instructors

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<sup>50</sup> Susan La Flesche letter, ca. 1877, in *ibid.*, p. 522. Susan’s brother, Francis, provided an account of this school in The Middle Five: Indian Boys at School (Boston, Massachusetts: Small, Maynard & Company, 1900).

allowed them to proceed at their own academic pace and to tutor other Native American students.<sup>51</sup>

Hampton's manual training curriculum remained tolerant enough to encourage a large degree of success and support among its students. Hampton allowed first-year students to speak their own language(s) in Sunday school. As General Samuel Chapman Armstrong (1839–1893), one of Hampton's most successful superintendents and fundraisers, explained, “the children gain good ideas and they use Indian [language(s)] to convey these ideas.”<sup>52</sup> Most Indians who attended Hampton converted to Christianity, and many found Indian spouses at Hampton. Between 1879 and 1893, only 5 percent of all Hampton students left the school out of frustration or hostility towards the school. La Flesche learned domestic arts, a term for cooking and cleaning, but the Hampton faculty and administrators, especially school physician Dr. Martha M. Waldron and General Armstrong, encouraged La Flesche to tackle academic subjects. Dr. Waldron and Armstrong believed that Susan La Flesche should attend medical school.

In May 1886, La Flesche graduated first in her class of thirty-six students, completing the three-year undergraduate curriculum in two years. Hampton faculty

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<sup>51</sup> Wilbert H. Ahern, “‘The Returned Indians’: Hampton Institute and Its Indian Alumni, 1879–1893,” *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 10 (Winter 1983): 101–24. Valerie Shere Mathes, “Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte: The Reformed and the Reformer,” in L. G. Moses and Raymond Wilson, eds., *Indian Lives: Essays on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Native American Leaders* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 61–90. Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877–1923* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 1–50, 199, 250–52, 259.

<sup>52</sup> Quote from General Samuel C. Armstrong to conference participants, September 30, 1887, in *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian, Held September 28 to 30, 1887* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Sherman & Company, 1887), 100, hereafter cited *LMFI*, with the appropriate year. Mathes, “Susan La Flesche Picotte: Nebraska's Indian Physician, 1865–1915,” *Nebraska History* 63 (Winter 1982): 503–04. Ahern, p. 108.



awarded her the Demorest Prize for receiving the highest examination score in the school as a junior. La Flesche's success inspired her to apply to medical school at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, but the costs of medical school were high, and the federal government spent most of the funds appropriated for Indian education on its primary and secondary schools. Native Americans who attended college and graduate school usually had to look elsewhere for scholarships. Luckily for La Flesche, family friend and ethnologist Alice Cunningham Fletcher of the Peabody Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, convinced the Connecticut Indian Association (CIA) to support her medical education. In October 1886, La Flesche began her graduate training at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP).<sup>53</sup>

Founded in 1850, WMCP trained several thousand women physicians in the late nineteenth century, increasing the percentage of women medical doctors from a bare handful to five percent of the profession. At the time La Flesche enrolled, Philadelphia was perhaps the premier location for medical education in the United States, since the city boasted that it had the earliest American medical school, the oldest hospital, one of the first postgraduate medical schools in the nation, and five major hospitals offering teaching clinics and residencies. As the first medical college for women in the country, WMCP was small, but its faculty trained with leading practitioners of the day. Rachel Bodley (1874–88), dean of the college in 1886, was the first woman professor of chemistry at WMCP.

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<sup>53</sup> T. W. Blackburn, Chief, Educational Division, Indian School Service, Department of the Interior, to conference participants, October 8, 1890, in *LMFI, 1890*, p. 30. Mathes (1982), pp. 504–05.



As dean, Bodley nurtured close student–faculty relationships. When La Flesche arrived, Dean Bodley warmly welcomed her.<sup>54</sup>

The Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP) offered a rigorous curriculum, but Susan welcomed the challenge. Dean Bodley and other faculty stressed scientific teaching and experimentation. La Flesche attended a variety of clinical training sessions, where she sometimes worked with male medical students from the University of Pennsylvania. Furthermore, La Flesche worked with medical residents at Philadelphia’s Woman’s Hospital, established by WMCP in 1861, and at the West Philadelphia Hospital for women. Like other medical schools, WMCP increasingly emphasized weekly clinical and physiological instruction. La Flesche received superior guidance in this area from, among others, WMCP’s Frances Emily White, who had studied with a leading experimental physiologist at Cambridge. Professor White’s reputation as a demanding teacher prompted one student to admit that White “is very good to me but we all are so afraid of her it almost worries the life out of us.”<sup>55</sup> La Flesche undoubtedly shared these feelings at some point during her medical school training. In addition to physiology, La Flesche enrolled in anatomy, physiology, histology, therapeutics, and obstetrics courses, but chemistry gave her the most difficulty.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Robert M. Kaiser, Sandra L. Chaff, and Steven J. Peitzman, “A Philadelphia Medical Student of the 1890’s: The Diary of Mary Theodora McGavran,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 108 (April 1984): 218, 223 n. 20. Mathes (1982), pp. 505–08.

<sup>55</sup> Mary Theodora McGavran, WMCP student (1892–95), to dairy, ca. April–May 1893, in Robert M. Kaiser, Sandra L. Chaff, and Steven J. Peitzman, “A Philadelphia Medical Student of the 1890’s,” p. 231.

<sup>56</sup> *Pioneer–Pacesetter–Innovator: The Story of the Medical College of Pennsylvania* (New York: The Newcomen Society in North America, 1971), 15. Mathes (1982), pp. 508, 510–11. Kaiser, et al., pp. 220–21.



Although La Flesche thrived in medical school and would have received offers to practice outside the Omaha Reservation, she never wavered from her goal of returning to the Omaha Reservation to help her people. When La Flesche left Nebraska for Philadelphia in 1886, two years passed before she returned home, but she did spend her first Christmas at Hampton with sister Marguerite and friends. The next summer, Hampton invited La Flesche to teach. Professional and alumni obligations compelled her to accept. In addition, La Flesche spent time with her Connecticut Indian Association sponsors, particularly the association's president Sara Kinney of Hartford, for funding her medical education. After graduating in March 1889, La Flesche accepted a competitive summer residency at the Woman's Hospital. That fall, the Department of the Interior appointed her as government physician for the Omaha Indian Nation. She moved to Nebraska and began a medical practice that included Indians and non-Indians.<sup>57</sup>

When Dr. La Flesche returned to Nebraska, she faced a tremendous challenge trying to provide medical treatment to her people. “[F]rom 1889 to 1893, I worked among the Omahas night and day attending the sick,” she wrote. “[M]en and women died from alcoholism, and little children were reeling on the streets.... Women pawned their clothing for drink, while men spent their rent money for liquor.”<sup>58</sup> Dr. La Flesche worked so rigorously treating the sick that her own health suffered. Compounding the responsibility

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<sup>57</sup> Dr. James B. Walker, “The First Woman Physician Among Her People,” *The Medical Missionary Record* 4 (October 1889): 126. Sara T. Kinney, letter, read to conference participants, October 8, 1891, in *LMFI*, 1891, p. 81. Mathes (1982), pp. 510–11.

<sup>58</sup> Susan La Flesche Picotte, MD, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 27, 1900, in *Indian Rights Association Papers, 1864–1973*, 136 reels (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1975), reel 15 (hereafter IRAP).



of treating over 1,200 Omahas spread out over a larger rural area, La Flesche accepted the WNIA's offer to become a medical missionary to her people in 1891. Since missionaries had paid for her medical school education, Dr. La Flesche felt a special duty towards the WNIA. In addition, officials at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania (WMCP) would have encouraged her to accept the offer. WMCP's Dean Bodley and her successor, Clara Marshall (1888–1917), encouraged graduates to become mission doctors. Most non-Indian WMCP students went abroad as missionary doctors, but La Flesche's skills were honed in her home land. Although trained as a physician in the Euramerican scientific tradition, Dr. La Flesche's status as a government-supported medical healer eased her transition to the Omaha Reservation. She undoubtedly encountered resistance as a young female doctor, since many Omahas continued to believe that a menstruating woman weakened men's spiritual powers. Yet, social and health problems on the reservation were so severe that few people had the luxury of choosing between Dr. La Flesche and another healer.<sup>59</sup>

Dr. Susan La Flesche remained on the reservation fighting disease and advocating welfare reforms until her death in 1915. Although La Flesche's main goal was to provide medical care to her Omaha people, she also treated non-Indians and built a hospital in Walthill, Nebraska that still bears her name.<sup>60</sup> On September 18, 1915, Dr. Susan La

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<sup>59</sup> *Pioneer-Pacesetter-Innovator*, p. 17. Mathes (1982), pp. 504, 526 n. 13–14. Mathes (1985), p. 73. Kaiser, et al., p. 226.

<sup>60</sup> Mathes (1985), pp. 74–81. Much to everyone's surprise, in 1894 she married Henry Picotte (Sioux-French), the brother of Marguerite's late husband Charles. They had two children, and Susan continued to fight for prohibition and other health laws. Alcoholism plagued Susan even at home, where Henry drank hard enough to kill himself in 1905.



Flesche Picotte died at the age of 49. The first American Indian woman to become a medical doctor, La Flesche certainly mingled with non-Indian people, but she also supported the contention that, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs William A. Jones said in 1899, “Education is the only hope of the Indian.”<sup>61</sup> Whether Jones was right or not, La Flesche demonstrated how individual effort could open doors to opportunity.

La Flesche and other Native Americans, such as Charles Eastman and Carlos Montezuma, who attended institutions of higher education in the late nineteenth century, prompted the federal government and private groups to increase their support for Indian higher education. The cumulative experiences of La Flesche and her generation in the nineteenth century, combined with the sporadic efforts to establish Indian-oriented programs at colleges during the colonial era, inspired leaders in the early twentieth century to renew efforts at gaining access to and defining higher education.

From the seventeenth to the turn of the twentieth centuries, Native Americans had achieved significant yet limited gains in non-Indian institutions of higher education. The dominant mode of education represented Euramericans’ efforts to assimilate Native people into non-Indian society. Native students clung to at least some of their customs, even if their very presence and actions sometimes changed traditional culture. In many cases, Native Americans who attended Euramerican institutions of higher education realized that they could have a tremendous impact as purveyors and intermediaries between cultures. John Sassamon used his position as an intermediary to gain much power and influence in

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<sup>61</sup> William A. Jones, to conference participants, October 11, 1899, in *LMFI, 1899*, p. 14.



seventeenth-century New England. Although Joel Hiacoomes spent years away from his family while at Harvard, he planned to return home to replace his father as the leading Wampanoag missionary among his people. During the eighteenth century, another Native missionary, Samson Occum, shared Joel Hiacoomes's desire to serve Indian people by traveling to Great Britain to raise funds to establish a college for Indians. The success of the Indian students who studied at Dartmouth College and its predecessor, Moor's Indian Charity School, inspired many non-Indians to enroll at their school and, eventually, emerge as the predominant ethnic group at the college. Many Native American students struggled with being cultural intermediaries, as in the case of Jacob Woolley, who enrolled at the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), and Hezekiah Calvin, who served as a missionary-teacher among Iroquois students. The schoolyard antagonisms among Indians and non-Indians at Moor's also reflected the tensions that emerged in these bicultural educational settings. During the nineteenth century, with the passage of the Civilization Act of 1819, federal support for Indian higher education allowed many Natives to attend colleges and universities, most of which were located east of the Mississippi River. As the federal government removed Indians to the West, Native students like Susan La Flesche Picotte had to go east to receive a Euramerican education before returning to her people in the West. La Flesche's success as a medical doctor demonstrated to many that obtaining credentials from Euramerican institutions of education provided influence and power that crossed cultural boundaries. Undoubtedly, La Flesche encountered tribal resistance as a Euramerican-educated medicine woman. But La Flesche and her predecessors showed other Indian people that experiences gained in



## “Speckle Face White Eye”

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Euramerican educational institutions could be selectively used to benefit their communities. By 1900, the small number of Native people who had gone to colleges and universities had not changed those institutions they attended, but these students had realized that they could use those institutions to change their communities in acceptable ways.

**Chapter 2:**  
**“We Have No White Man on the Team”:**  
**Ball Players, New Dealers, and Patriots Take Over**  
**Native American Higher Education,**  
**1900–1945**

Between 1900 and 1945 growing Native American participation in intercollegiate athletics, wartime military service, and the influence of the New Deal encouraged greater integration into the mainstream society but, perhaps more importantly, improved access to institutions of higher education. This forty-five year period was marked by many significant elements, but three in particular did more to influence and shape American Indian and Alaska Native higher education than any other. Affecting people throughout society, these watershed developments included the popularization of college athletics, government reforms implemented before and during the New Deal, and the growing sense of patriotism that emerged from both world wars. Some may view these changes, such as the rise of Indian intercollegiate sports, as non-representative and isolated incidents, but all combined to define the milieu of Amerindian higher education that existed in 1945 and that significantly influenced the postwar era.

Like previous missionary efforts by Harvard, Dartmouth, and the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania to educate, “civilize,” convert, and train Native students in a non-Indian oriented environment, educational institutions began incorporating organized athletic sports into their programs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as part of the continuing effort to assimilate Native Americans into the



mainstream. In the 1880s and 1890s, several federal Indian boarding schools established athletic programs and competed against non-Indian high schools and colleges. The athletic programs in general, and football in particular, at Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and later at Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, gained national and even international notoriety. By competing with non-Indians in a sport that demanded strength, agility, and competitiveness, Indian football players demonstrated that given the right support and encouragement they could equal or outplay their opponents. Proponents of Indian athletic sports were quick to draw parallels between successful competition on the football field and success in mainstream society.

The second major event for expanding access to higher education during this era came with the Indian New Deal and the allied legislation that established new national priorities and support for Native-oriented education. During the late 1920s, as a result of the failures of the allotment policy established by the Dawes Act (1887) and the advent of the Great Depression, the federal government began to gradually implement new programs, such as the higher education loan fund, that hoped to create more opportunities for individual American Indian students. This and other Indian New Deal programs would have been impossible without the expansion of postsecondary educational programs at the government Indian schools. By the same token, Native American service to the nation during wartime created an atmosphere in which popular support for New Deal measures affecting Indian people was almost assured.

Finally, the third major event that brought Native Americans more exposure and respect among non-Indians nationwide, and that helped change American Indians’

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attitudes towards integrating with the non-Indian mainstream, was their willingness to serve in, and financially support, the two world wars (1917-18 and 1941-45). Many Native people participated directly and indirectly in the war effort, but only a few, including the Navajo Code Talkers, have received even a modest acknowledgment for their efforts. Due to their extraordinary skills, the American Indian “code talkers” who served in the European and Pacific theaters encouraged the United States Congress to adopt measures designed to encourage access to higher education.



### **College Football Comes to the Government Indian Schools**

In the late nineteenth century, Indian students at Carlisle Indian School, Hampton Institute, and Haskell Institute began playing football, baseball, basketball, and other sports on an unofficial or intramural basis. Indian Service educators encouraged sports participation as a valuable method for teaching teamwork and the competitive spirit. At Carlisle Indian School, the first off-reservation federal boarding school established for American Indians after the Civil War, Superintendent Richard Henry Pratt (1840–1924) supported athletic competition. Carlisle students often organized intramural games against nearby Dickinson College. In one football game in 1893, Stacy Matlock (Pawnee) broke his leg while competing against the Dickinson team. This mishap prompted Pratt, an army captain, to suspend “outside football.”<sup>1</sup> The following year, undaunted by Matlock’s misfortune, forty students petitioned Pratt to reinstate “outside” competition. Pratt relented to the students’ desire to compete, but Pratt made the players promise that they would work to become a model of both fairness, sportsmanship, and success. “If the other fellows slug and you do not,” Pratt said, “very soon you will be the most famous football team in the country.”<sup>2</sup>

Indian students at the turn of the century were by no means strangers to athletic competition. Indeed, many of the sports adopted and dominated by non-Indian athletes throughout the twentieth century were derived from American Indian and Alaska Native

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<sup>1</sup> Brigadier General Richard Henry Pratt, U.S. Army, Retired, Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867–1904, ed. Robert M. Utley (1922; New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1964), 317.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, Battlefield and Classroom, p. 318.



games. Major national sports like baseball, basketball, and football had links to Native American cultures, although by the early 1900s these sports had significantly changed with the adoption of new rules and the organization of professional associations. Other American Indian sports, including lacrosse, archery, shinny, and kayaking, were also adopted by non-Indian Americans. Native leaders themselves, such as Charles Eastman, helped found national organizations, like the Boy Scouts of America, that drew heavily on Indian sports and skill competitions. While cross-cultural borrowing in sports accelerated around the turn of the century, Indian athletes had already been competing with non-Indians for over fifty years. From the 1840s to the 1870s, John Steeprock (Seneca), Louis “Deerfoot” Bennett (Seneca), and Big Hawk Chief (Pawnee) had competed against non-Indians in the United States and Great Britain.<sup>3</sup> Integrated athletic competition had rarely occurred, however, as Charles Eastman noticed not too long after he entered Dartmouth College in 1883. “My supporters orated quite effectively on my qualifications as a frontier warrior, and some went so far as to predict that I would, when warmed up, scare all the Sophs off the premises!”<sup>4</sup> The primary difference between these individual efforts and those that came later at Carlisle and Haskell lay in the makeup of the teams. Eastman often argued that being isolated from his Santee Sioux culture encouraged success in higher education, but the victories of the all-Indian teams at Carlisle and Haskell raised the issue:

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph B. Oxendine (Lumbee), American Indian Sports Heritage (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Books, 1988), 3–33, 162–65. Raymond Wilson, Ohiyesa: Charles Eastman, Santee Sioux

<sup>4</sup> Charles A. Eastman (Ohiyesa), From the Deep Woods to Civilization: Chapters in the Autobiography of an Indian (1916; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), 67–68.



to what extent should Indian higher education encourage integration with non-Indian culture(s)?

Richard Henry Pratt seemed to provide his answer to this question when he hired one of the most successful football coaches in America, Glenn S. “Pop” Warner, to build the sports program at Carlisle. A Cornell University graduate, Warner left a coaching position at his alma mater in 1899 to come to Carlisle. Over the next fifteen years, with the exception of a three-year gap from 1904 to 1906, Warner introduced a variety of innovations in playing and coaching that provoked a mixed reaction among Carlisle players. His oversight of the football program raised questions that led Congress to close the school in 1918. In Warner’s first season, Carlisle defeated the University of Pennsylvania, a national football powerhouse. In thirteen seasons at Carlisle, Warner recorded 108 wins, 41 losses, and 8 ties. However, Warner and his players also earned a reputation for deceit after the fabled “hidden-ball” or “hunchback” play in the 1903 Harvard game, in which one of his players stuffed the pigskin underneath the back of his jersey and returned the kickoff for a touchdown. Other Warner innovations at Carlisle included the use of blocking dummies, fiber pads, body blocking, the single and double wing offense, and the three-point stance.<sup>5</sup>

Following a three-year stint at Cornell, in 1907 Warner established the Carlisle Athletic Association and an association fund. Carlisle Superintendent Moses Friedman sat on the executive committee of the association and Bureau of Indian Affairs officials

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<sup>5</sup> Edwin Pope, *Football’s Greatest Coaches* (Atlanta, Georgia: Tupper and Love, Inc., 1955), 291–302. Jack Newcombe, *The Best of the Athletic Boys: The White Man’s Impact on Jim Thorpe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1975), 84–89.



periodically checked the fund's accounts, but, as president of the executive committee, Warner disbursed all moneys. Warner built the fund from gate revenues to pay his players, public relations consultants, and local police, who were paid to keep some of Warner's rowdier players out of trouble. During the 1907 and 1908 seasons alone, Warner paid some \$9,233 to his players, usually in monthly cash installments in the \$10–15 range or in the form of “loans” and bonuses for good performances. The association also speculated on industrial investment, including the purchase of \$30,000 of Northern Pacific and Reading Railroad bonds in 1907. The association also paid Warner's salary, donated to the minister who preached on Sundays, built Warner's house, constructed the players' special dorm and dining hall, and paid the tuition of Carlisle players who attended Dickinson College's undergraduate programs and law school. By paying players' tuition at Dickinson, Warner maintained a sizable roster of talented and experienced players, and many of his players went on to establish successful careers in coaching. Albert A. Oxendine (b. 1884), for example, attended Dickinson Law School while playing for Warner and Carlisle and later practiced law and coached at Georgetown University (1914–22), Washington State University (1923–25), and Oklahoma State University (1934–35).<sup>6</sup>

The year 1907 marked another watershed in the history of intercollegiate football with the arrival of James “Jim” Thorpe (Sauk and Fox, 1888–1951). Carlisle's football program would have been great without Thorpe, but the star athlete's records in football,

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<sup>6</sup> Pratt, p. 320. Carmelita S. Ryan, “The Carlisle Indian Industrial School” (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1962), 261–62. Jack Newcombe, *The Best of the Athletic Boys*, pp. 107–08, 111, 120–21. Oxendine, *American Indian Sports Heritage*, p. 245.



track, and baseball and his gold medals in the 1912 Stockholm Olympics brought international attention to American Indians in general and to Carlisle in particular. Thorpe had attended Haskell briefly, where he first saw organized baseball and football played, but he returned home when his father was injured in a hunting accident. In 1903, Captain Pratt met Thorpe and asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. An electrician, Thorpe said, surprising Pratt. Would he like to try painting, carpentry, or shoe making, all available at the BIA's schools, Pratt asked. The next year, the fifteen-year-old arrived at Carlisle and almost immediately began playing intramural football. Carlisle's coaches first noticed Thorpe when he jumped the 5'9" high bar wearing his tailor shop overalls and a pair of old shoes. He excelled in track and field, but the game of football caught his eye. Thorpe spent much of the 1907 season on the bench, but a game-ending knee injury to Warner's left halfback gave him his chance, and he galloped 75 yards for a touchdown. Thorpe's storied career culminated in 1912 when he won the pentathlon and decathlon at the Stockholm Olympic Games. That fall, he again returned to Carlisle, still taking postsecondary vocational education courses, and led his team to yet another winning season.<sup>7</sup>

Despite success on the gridiron, some Carlisle players complained about Warner's gruff style, his swearing, and the questionable morals of his win-at-all-cost philosophy. Off the field, Carlisle students complained about the student-athletes' special treatment.

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<sup>7</sup> Gene Schoor with Henry Gilfond, *The Jim Thorpe Story: America's Greatest Athlete* (1951; New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1968), 9-10, 23, 32-37, 42-45, 56-71, 86-100. Joseph D'O'Brian, "The Greatest Athlete in the World," *American Heritage* 43 (July/August 1992): 93-100. Rosemary K. Updyke, *Jim Thorpe: The Legend Remembered* (Gretna, Louisiana: Pelican Publishing Company, 1997), 29-44, 59-60.

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School officials caught Thorpe and one other player drinking on campus after curfew, for example, but they did not take any disciplinary action against them as it would surely have been against non-athletes. In a 1914 report to Secretary of the Interior Franklin G. Lane, BIA investigator E. B. Linnen found that so much emphasis had been placed on sports at Carlisle that the school's dietary standards, as well as the general moral atmosphere, had declined. Most students and employees, Linnen wrote, regarded Carlisle Indian School Superintendent Friedman with utter contempt and believed that Coach Warner really controlled the school. Former football star Gustavus Welch (1892–1970) in testimony before Congress disavowed Warner as unprincipled. Other Carlisle players bristled under the impression that only a white man like Warner could be their coach. As early as 1897, team captain Bemus Pierce (1873–1957), who later went on to coach at Haskell Institute and the University of Buffalo, pointed out that “we have no white man on the team when we are on the gridiron.” While he had no personal animosity towards Warner, it did seem to Pierce that “[I]f the Indian can do this [play the game],” then he might as well “handle the team, and handle the financial part?” On the one hand, Captain Pratt and Coach Warner told players that they could compete with non-Indians given the proper training and instruction; yet, on the other hand, Carlisle players felt that their full potential was not being developed. Furthermore, Pierce's dilemma reflected the limitations that the predominantly Anglo BIA power structure presented to Native Americans coming out of institutions of higher education in the early twentieth century. More broadly, such



prejudice reflected American society's general attitudes towards ethnic minorities in general and Indians in particular.<sup>8</sup>

E.B. Linnen's report to Secretary Lane, a congressional investigation, and student criticism of the athletic program began a major turning point at Carlisle. When, in addition to this public scrutiny, the 1914 football team recorded its first losing season in thirteen years, Coach Warner left Carlisle for the University of Pittsburgh. School morale languished. There were other factors that contributed to Carlisle's closing as well. Many critics opposed the off-reservation boarding schools as being too expensive to operate. In addition, policy makers cited statistics showing the large number of students who "returned to the blanket," or re-embraced their traditional tribal ways after leaving the boarding schools, as evidence of their inherent flaws. These factors combined to encourage Secretary Lane to close the school in 1918 and turn it over to the Department of War as a hospital for soldiers returning from the war in Europe.

Meanwhile, in the West, another federal boarding school that offered postsecondary courses carried the Carlisle approach forward into the postwar era. Having defeated Texas, Nebraska, and Kansas, Haskell's football team was encouraged to challenge Carlisle in a contest held during the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904. Although Carlisle won handily 38 to 4, the game not only brought attention to the sports programs of both schools but also seemed to provide evidence, as Carlisle bandmaster Dennis

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<sup>8</sup> Red Man, January 1898, pp. 4, 6, quoted in David Wallace Adams, Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928 (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 190. The identifiers "Anglo," "Euramerican," and "non-Indian" refer to United States citizens of Caucasian descent with historical ties to Europe.



Wheelock's (Oneida) contended, that “civilization can be understood by the Indian.”<sup>9</sup> By 1920, other Indian schools, including those in Albuquerque, Phoenix, and Riverside, California, began organized competition against nearby high schools and colleges.<sup>10</sup>

Established as a dormitory school in 1884, Haskell Institute had gradually added high school grades and postsecondary courses as enrollment expanded from year to year. Enrollment rose dramatically in 1910 when the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) allowed students from the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma to study at the Lawrence school. The school's growth led to the establishment of a teacher training program in 1895 and, in 1917, the elimination of primary grades. Like Carlisle, Haskell introduced organized sports when it added basketball in the 1890s. Similarly, Haskell's sports teams competed against nearby colleges, including Baker University and Washburn University in Topeka. In 1920, Haskell's high school program culminated at the tenth grade, but its commercial department provided postsecondary training that prepared students to be stenographers, bookkeepers, and clerks.<sup>11</sup>

Haskell's effort to identify itself as an institution of higher education reflected its future aspirations more than its contemporary circumstances. Haskell supporters propagated the “university” image not as a ruse but to facilitate postsecondary institutional development. Furthermore, Haskell administrators and students alike sought to establish

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<sup>9</sup> Red Man, January 1898, p. 5, quoted in David Wallace Adams, Education for Extinction, p. 190.

<sup>10</sup> Adams, p. 369 n. 43.

<sup>11</sup> E.B. Chapman, “Haskell Institute—The Indians' University,” Dearborn Independent, November 6, 1920, p. 12. Haskell Institute, U.S.A.: A Brief Collection of Stories—Provable, Personal, Otherwise—about the Indian School Known as the World's Largest Indian School (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Institute, [1959]), 3–5, 28, 31, 35.



ties with the nearby University of Kansas. By 1925, Haskell had added the eleventh and twelfth grades to its secondary curriculum, and Kansas had begun accepting Haskell high school credits without further examination. Within a year, seven Haskell graduates were attending KU, and by 1935 the number had increased to twenty-one. On one level, this may seem to represent a less than significant gain. But as Kansas education professor and later Haskell Superintendent Solon G. Ayres explained, Haskell provided only “terminal vocational education” primarily for the trades or for government service. Nevertheless, Haskell did provide room, board, and full-time employment for those students who enrolled in courses at the university across town. At the same time, however, Haskell established a sixty-four hour junior college program that included courses on chemistry, literature, and dress making and costume design, among others.<sup>12</sup>

The variety of educational and vocational offerings, ties to nearby institutions, the support of Superintendent Peairs, and the need to fill the vacuum left by Carlisle’s closing in 1918 combined to bring talented athletes and strong alumni support to Haskell from throughout Indian Country. In 1917, for example, while Carlisle struggled to win only two of nine football games, Haskell’s track team swept the University of Kansas. Within just a few years, Haskell long distance runner Phillip Osif (tribe not specified, 1906–1956) won the United States 1,000-meter championship and became a member of the 1932 Olympic Team. Like Carlisle, however, Haskell’s football teams gained greater notoriety than its

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<sup>12</sup> Quote from Solon G. Ayres, An Investigation of Terminal Vocational Education at Haskell Institute (Lawrence: The School of Education, University of Kansas, May 1952), 188–89, copy in Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka (hereafter KSHS). Haskell Institute, U.S.A., pp. 38–39, 46. Loretta Mary Granzer, “Indian Education at Haskell Institute, 1884–1937” (MA thesis, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1937), 159–92.



track stars. One of Haskell's greatest athletes, John Levi (tribe not specified, 1898–1946), participated in baseball, track, basketball, and football, just as Thorpe had, and Levi was elected a football All-American in 1923. Many Haskell players also entered the ranks of the professionals, such as Louis “Rabbit” Weller (tribe not specified, 1904–1979) and Theodore “Tiny” Roebuck (tribe not specified, b. 1906).<sup>13</sup>

Haskell Superintendent Hervey B. Peairs played a central role in the rise of Haskell football during the 1920s. Peairs' success depended largely on his ties to Lawrence's business community, as well as to American Indian tribes. As president of the Lawrence Rotary Club in 1920–21, Peairs convinced the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and the Kiwanis Club to lobby the Bureau of Indian Affairs to raise teachers' salaries at Haskell Institute. To facilitate greater interaction between Indians and non-Indians in Lawrence, the Chamber of Commerce promoted Haskell as a tourist site and joined with the Haskell Athletic Association in offering a percentage of gate revenues to big-time football teams in return for playing in Lawrence. As a result of Peairs' success as a Lawrence booster and broker between Indian and non-Indian cultures, the Haskell-Lawrence alliance helped pave the way for the construction of Haskell Stadium.<sup>14</sup>

In 1925, Haskell alumni began a fundraising campaign to build a football stadium that would celebrate Native Americans' participation in intercollegiate football, as well as efforts to build an all-Native postsecondary institution of education. Stadium architects

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<sup>13</sup> Oxendine, pp. 197–98. Adams, p. 183.

<sup>14</sup> Loretta Mary Granzer, “Indian Education at Haskell Institute, 1884–1937,” pp. 159–92. Keith A. Sculle, “‘The New Carlisle of the West’: Haskell Institute and Big-Time Sports, 1920–1932,” *Kansas History* 17 (Autumn 1994): 192–208.



used the Classical architecture of the Greek past to symbolize scholarship, tradition, stability, and greatness. Their embracing of Greco-Roman traditions claimed by the Western world probably reflected Haskell's efforts to assimilate into the mainstream. Furthermore, Haskell supporters funded the stadium's construction because they recognized, as had Coach Warner and many Native players, the tremendous revenue potential of such a stadium. Indeed, even Carlisle never had anything more than a few splintered wood bleachers dotting the sidelines of their "home" football field.

Now, as the nation's leading Indian school, Haskell had little difficulty raising the \$185,000 from among the fifty tribes necessary for the construction of a 10,500-seat stadium. Indeed, the stadium's biggest donor, Harry Crawford (Quapaw), never attended Haskell, but he found the project an attractive cause célèbre for his oil wealth. The Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma donated more funds to the stadium than any other tribe. Interior Secretary Hubert Work (1923-28) also endorsed the stadium as "a substantial financial dividend on the investment made by the government in education," or a gesture suggesting that Native people appreciated and sought to expand the government-funded educational programs and schools that had been established previously.<sup>15</sup>

The Haskell Stadium represented at once the greatest achievement of football at the federal Indian schools, as well as its ultimate downfall. As it turned out, the funds raised for the stadium's construction failed to cover building costs. Haskell's Student Activities Association, the stadium's owner, had expected that gate receipts from future

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<sup>15</sup> Some estimated that Haskell alumni raised \$250,000 for the stadium. Haskell Indian Leader: Haskell Celebration, October 27-30, 1926, Official Program, Lawrence, Kansas, pp. 14, 18. "Secretary Work Gives Kindly Advice to Indians," Topeka Daily-Capitol, October 30, 1926.



games would retire the debt. Unfortunately, Haskell football declined after the 1926 season. During the Depression, the BIA discontinued Haskell's postsecondary programs, thereby killing any future chance to revive intercollegiate football at the school. In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill that allowed the government to assume Haskell's debt and control its athletic programs, including the hiring and paying of the head coach. Under absolute BIA control, Haskell could not recruit big-name coaches using funds raised privately by Haskell supporters.<sup>16</sup>

Haskell also hired a new superintendent, Dr. Henry Roe Cloud (Winnebago), who sought to emphasize academics and expand Haskell's ties to Native American communities. Founder of the American Indian Institute, a college preparatory school established in Topeka, Kansas, in 1915, Roe Cloud hired about a dozen or so Indian faculty after he came to Haskell. Roe Cloud believed that thousands of Native Americans roamed the highways of the United States because many were “incapable of meeting the complex social order that has risen on their native soil.” Adamantly, Roe Cloud insisted that his Indian brothers be given land and “a slow, skillful training toward self-adaptation.” With the federal government's renewed control over Haskell, and the new goals set by Superintendent Roe Cloud, it appeared that the sun had set on the so-called glory days of Haskell football.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> “Uncle Sam Is Now Owner of Stadium,” Lawrence Journal-World, August 14, 1935, clipping in Haskell Institute Clippings, Vol. 1: 1885-1938 (n.p.), p. 220, in KSHS. Oxendine, p. 200.

<sup>17</sup> “The Revival of Indian Culture a Goal of Haskell Institute Head,” Kansas City Star, February 6, 1934, clipping in “Haskell American Indian Junior College History” file, Lawrence, Kansas Public Library. Steven J. Crum, “Henry Roe Cloud, A Winnebago Indian Reformer: His Quest for American Indian Higher Education,” Kansas History 11 (Autumn 1988): 171-84.



Despite the negative aspects of intercollegiate football, the government Indian schools attracted a great deal of positive publicity during the early twentieth century as a result of these programs. Many American Indians heralded the morale-boosting efforts to build institutions like Carlisle and Haskell. The success of Carlisle and Haskell football teams on the gridiron brought positive national notoriety to Native peoples on and off the field at a time when many non-Indians thought only of Indians in terms of frontier wars, particularly Custer's defeat at the Little Bighorn and other conflicts. Intercollegiate athletics provided a window of opportunity to Indian students to attend postsecondary training programs at Carlisle or Haskell, or some other institution, such as Dickinson College or the University of Kansas. Still, opportunities for Haskell and Carlisle graduates as professional players or college coaches remained limited, however, because athletics only provided a small economic niche for graduates.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the small number of players who became successful professional athletes or coaches represented an unexpected by-product of the federal Indian schools' sports programs. As superintendent Hervey Peairs

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<sup>18</sup> The pages of Major League Baseball history only include a handful of Native American players, such as: Louis Sockalexis (Penobscot, 1871–1913), who played three years (1897–99) for the Cleveland Spiders, which changed its name in honor of Sockalexis in 1915; Charles Albert “Chief” Bender (Chippewa, 1883–1954), who led the Philadelphia Athletics to the World Series in five straight years (1908–12); catcher John Tortes “Chief” Meyers (tribe not specified, 1880–1971) played in the World Series four times from 1909 to 1917, helped the Brooklyn Dodgers win its first pennant in 1916, and represented the players in disputes with league officials; and Jim Thorpe played for three different major league teams between 1913 and 1919. Each of these players attended college prior to, or while (in the case of Thorpe), playing professional baseball: Sockalexis (Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame), Bender (possibly Dickinson College), Meyers, and Thorpe (Carlisle and Dickinson College). Daniel Okrent and Harris Lewine, eds., *The Ultimate Baseball Book* (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979), 73–74, 82, 88, 97, 109–10; Joseph L. Reichler, ed., *The Baseball Encyclopedia: The Complete and Official Record of Major League Baseball*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (1969; New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1982), 656, 1151, 1359, 1410; Eugene Murdock, *Baseball Players and Their Times: Oral Histories of the Game, 1920–1940* (Westport, Connecticut: Meckler Publishing, 1991), 6, 13, 28; Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 91; Geoffrey C. Ward, *Baseball: An Illustrated History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 92, 107.

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explained, the central focus of the secondary and junior college programs at Carlisle and Haskell was on vocational education that prepared students for office clerk positions in private business or in government service. It would take Native American support of two world wars before Indian communities became greater beneficiaries of higher education.



### One of the Leading Races Gets a New Deal

In 1928, over a year and a half before the Great Crash of the stock market, Lewis Meriam of the Institute for Government Research and his team of ten Indian policy experts released a report entitled The Problem of Indian Administration. After visiting ninety-five reservations, agencies, hospitals, schools, and communities in seven months, the authors of the so-called Meriam Report recommended that education be the primary function of the BIA. The conclusions and recommendations of the Meriam Report resounded throughout the federal government and helped to bring renewed attention to Indian affairs.<sup>19</sup>

Heeding the Meriam Report's suggestions, President Herbert Hoover (1929-33) encouraged Congress to pay closer attention to Indian education policy and laid a preliminary, though significant, foundation for an Indian New Deal. Hoover, who had made a name for himself as a humanitarian and able war relief administrator during World War I, nominated a former associate, Ray Lyman Wilbur, as secretary of the Interior and instructed Wilbur to conduct a national investigation of public and private educational organizations. The resulting report, published in 1931, underscored the importance of Indian education that had been provided in the Meriam Report, and it bolstered Hoover's resolve to initiate changes. Hoover and Secretary Wilbur also signaled a renewed effort to reform the BIA through their appointment of long-time Indian Rights Association officer

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<sup>19</sup> Institute for Government Research, The Problem of Indian Administration: Report of a Survey made at the request of Honorable Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, and submitted to him, February 21, 1928 (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928). Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 2: 806-13.



Charles J. Rhoads as commissioner of Indian affairs. Rhoads first two annual reports insisted that Congress provide more funding for vocational programs at the federal Indian boarding schools or terminate them altogether. In addition, Rhoads implemented two initiatives that helped jolt Congress into writing new Indian higher education legislation. First, the BIA raised salaries and increased hiring standards for teachers and administrators at Indian schools and, to help BIA instructors meet the new qualifications, organized new university summer courses. Second, Rhoads encouraged the teaching of Native American arts and crafts at boarding and day schools in the Southwest.<sup>20</sup>

In 1930, in keeping with the general momentum for reform, Congress set aside \$15,000 a year for educational loans to American Indian students accepted to postsecondary institutions. President Hoover again played an important role in the passage of this legislation by requesting up to \$5 million in immediate appropriations over a three month period in late 1929 and early 1930 for the BIA's health and education programs. Ever mindful of current and past economic trends, Hoover concluded that the dollar's depreciated value over the previous fifteen years meant that BIA funding had failed to maintain educational facilities and services. In 1931, Congress demonstrated its willingness to support new initiatives by approving BIA teaching positions in physical education, music, fine arts, and by expanding vocational education programs. That summer, to

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<sup>20</sup> United States Department of the Interior, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the fiscal year Ended June 30, 1929 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1929), iv, 5 (hereafter CIA Annual Report, with appropriate year). CIA Annual Report, 1930, pp. 8-9, 11. "The President's News Conference of January 3, 1930," in Herbert Hoover: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, 1930 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1976), 1-4, 6 (hereafter Hoover Papers, with appropriate year).



further these efforts, the BIA held an agricultural education-oriented workshop for teachers at the Colorado Agricultural College in Fort Collins.<sup>21</sup>

Historians usually identify the New Deal with the spate of legislation passed in the first and “second” 100 days of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s presidency in 1933 and 1935. This view overlooks the initiatives taken by Congress and the President prior to the 1932 presidential and congressional elections. The actual Indian New Deal for higher education had already begun in 1932. That year, Congress approved BIA funding for the payment of Native American students’ tuition and fees at state colleges and universities, room and board for Indian college students who worked at the federal Indian schools, and increased the education loan fund’s annual appropriation from \$15,000 to \$25,000. Between 1930 and 1932, before Roosevelt came to office, seventy-six Native college students received education loans from federal or tribal funds. The expansion of the loan program in 1932, in fact, prompted the BIA to place the fund’s administration under the Institute for Government Research to ensure the implementation of goals set forth in the Meriam Report. Encouraged by congressional interest in supporting higher education for Indians, several universities and organizations, including the University of Michigan and the Indian Rights Association, established new scholarships for Native Americans.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “Annual Budget Message to Congress, Fiscal Year 1931, December 4, 1929,” Hoover Papers, 1929 (1974), 436–52. “The President’s News Conference of January 3, 1930” and “White House Statement About Additions to the Budget, February 24, 1930,” Hoover Papers, 1930, pp. 1–4, 6, 68–70. CIA Annual Report, 1931, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> Though President Hoover supported greater funding for Indian education and healthcare programs, he vetoed at least four land claim bills. “Veto of Indian Claims Legislation, February 18, 1931” and “..., February 24, 1931,” Hoover Papers, 1931 (1976), 86–88, 99–102; “..., April 25, 1932” and “..., January 30, 1933,” Hoover Papers, 1932–1933 (1977), 178–79, 979–80. For the Indian New Deal’s beginning, see CIA Annual Report, 1932, p. 8. Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida), interview with author, March 28, 1996.



The expansion of the BIA's role in higher education coincided with a reinvigorated national interest in vocational education. Manual training had played a significant part in the Indian school curriculum since the Carlisle School was established in 1879. During and after World War I, Congress expanded the nation's vocational education constituency by providing special rehabilitation and vocational training programs for war veterans, including Indian war veterans. Support for junior colleges expanded during both world wars and the Depression as part of a new emphasis on “blue collar” and semi-professional skill training. In this period, the BIA developed specialized programs for young adults, particularly in agriculture, at its Haskell, Flandreau, South Dakota, and Chilocco, Oklahoma, schools. “We have been careful,” Commissioner Rhoads explained, “not to encourage college work at ... Indian school[s], believing that the Federal Government ought not ... duplicate higher education facilities that are available to Indians as well as to whites.”<sup>23</sup> Yet this policy left the door wide open to postsecondary programs such as Haskell's commercial department, which trained many clerks whose employment with the BIA was almost assured after President Hoover exempted Native people from the competitive civil service examinations. The expansion of the BIA's vocational program could not have been more timely as community college enrollment nationwide increased from 4,504 at 46 institutions in 1918 to 149,854 at 456 institutions in 1940. The majority of the students cited in this statistic were non-Indians attending predominantly non-Indian institutions, but it appeared that vocationalism sought to gain a seat at the table of higher education. In addition, even the National Society for the Study of Education

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<sup>23</sup> CIA Annual Report, 1932, p. 6.



acknowledged the convergence of public and private demand for vocationalism by devoting two book-length studies to the topic. Thus, the growing demands for vocationalism throughout the United States also found support among tribal communities located in, or around, these new vocational schools. As a result of the New Deal, local demands of Native people influenced the federal government to adopt changes in its Indian schools.<sup>24</sup>

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and the nomination of John Collier as commissioner of Indian affairs brought a zealotry to the already established Indian New Deal. A long time critic of the BIA, Collier believed that the allotment policy disempowered Native people by shrinking their land base and that, in spite of the granting of citizenship to Indians in 1924, Congress continued to deny basic civil and personal rights to them. In a 1934 speech to Indian students at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma, Collier set the tone for the Roosevelt administration's approach to Indian higher education:

At Bacone you are not taught to forget that you belong to one of the leading races. You are not taught that within your own soul there must be built up a forbidding wall, and that your racial past, which truly does live on at the center and fountain of your existence, must be banished beyond that forbidding wall to be a slowly withering outcast, a rejected and doomed portion of the human heritage.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> See Hoover's following executive orders: 5213, October 28, 1929, pp. 1: 440-41; 5388, July 2, 1930, pp. 1: 615-16; 5545, January 30, 1931, pp. 1: 777-78; and, 5584, March 30, 1931, pp. 2: 807, in Proclamations and Executive Orders: Herbert Hoover, 1929-1933, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1974). CIA Annual Report, 1934, pp. 288-89. Nelson B. Henry, ed., The Forty-Second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, part I: Vocational Education (Chicago, Illinois: Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1943), vii-viii. Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in American, 1900-1985 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 28.

<sup>25</sup> John Collier, "Talk to the Students of Bacone College, Oklahoma, March 22, 1934," item 634, reel 32, The John Collier Papers, 1922-1968, 59 reels (Sanford, North Carolina: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1980). Hereafter cited Collier Papers.



To provide more educational assistance to this “leading race,” Roosevelt endorsed the cessation of allotment, the establishment of the Revolving Credit Loan Fund, and the expansion of the Indian higher education loan fund. Congress passed these measures in the Wheeler–Howard or Indian Reorganization Act (Public Law 73–383) on June 18, 1934. This legislation doubled the annual appropriation for higher education from \$25,000 to \$50,000. Most of these funds supported students in vocational and trade schools during the Depression and World War II. In addition, to encourage self-sufficiency among Native people and to teach business management methods, the 1934 law set aside \$10 million of “revolving credit;” that is, as loans were repaid, the principal and interest reverted to the fund for use by other borrowers. From 1934 to 1946, out of \$6.6 million loaned, \$3.3 million had been repaid with only \$14,459 past due. Finally, as for ending the allotment policy, Commissioner Collier wrote that this radical change in federal policy represented “almost a last chance for the Indians.”<sup>26</sup>

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and other New Deal measures played a tremendous role in augmenting the efforts of state universities and colleges to establish American Indian courses and programs. Throughout Roosevelt’s presidency (1933–45), Collier continued the policy established under Commissioner Rhoads of funding individual Indian students rather than university programs. In spite of this policy, one institution in

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<sup>26</sup> Collier quote from “Do Indians Possess Civil Rights?” *The Adult Bible Class Magazine*, June 1933, p. 261, item 577, reel 32, *Collier Papers*. Also see, “Presidential Statement Endorsing the Wheeler–Howard Bill to Aid Indians, April 28, 1934,” *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 3: *The Advance of Recovery and Reform* (1938; New York: Russell & Russell, 1969), 202–09. *CIA Annual Report*, 1946, pp. 366–67.



particular, the University of Oklahoma (OU), attempted to receive federal funding for a special “American Institute of Indian Civilization,” endorsed by OU President William Bizzell in 1929. The chair of OU’s history department, Edward E. Dale, also played an important role in supporting the interdisciplinary Indian studies institute. A co-author of the Meriam Report, Dale offered the nation’s first university-level Native American history course in 1930. Over the next seven years, while OU faculty added new Indian-oriented courses to the curricula and collected research materials for the university’s new Western History Collection, administrators and lobbyists negotiated with the BIA and Congress for the passage of a bill that would fund an institute for Indian-oriented courses, documents, and research. In 1937, the OU Board of Regents reported that with 29 percent of the nation’s federally recognized Native American population living in the state of Oklahoma and 250 Native students enrolled at the university—allegedly the largest Indian college enrollment figure in the United States—the BIA should fund the institute. Collier’s continued opposition, however, led to the proposal’s defeat.<sup>27</sup>

Over 1,200 miles away, in the lowlands of the Atlantic Coastal Plain, another institution of higher education, North Carolina’s Pembroke State College (now University of North Carolina at Pembroke), expanded its American Indian enrollment and programs as a result of the Indian New Deal. In cooperation with the Reverend W. L. Moore

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<sup>27</sup> Correspondence relating to Senate bill 1222, which was proposed in 1937 to establish an American Indian Institute at the University of Oklahoma, can be found in folder 4, box 34, legislative series, Elmer Thomas Collection (hereafter ETC), Carl Albert Center for Congressional Research and Studies, University of Oklahoma (hereafter OU-CAC). George Lynn Cross, The University of Oklahoma and World War II: A Personal Account, 1941–1946 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 43–48, 107–16. Steven J. Crum, “Bizzell and Brandt: Pioneers in Indian Studies, 1929–1937,” Chronicles of Oklahoma 66 (Summer 1988): 178–91.



(Lumbee), North Carolina’s legislature had established an elementary school for Indians in 1887. In succeeding decades, the state gradually increased funding, added high school grades to the school, and established the present site at Pembroke in southeastern North Carolina’s Robeson County. During the 1920s, the legislature constructed Pembroke’s first permanent structure known as “Old Main,” the state board of education accredited the high school, and the first “normal” class graduated. With the emergence of the Indian New Deal and particularly the passage of the Wheeler–Howard Act in 1934, however, a new issue emerged that divided portions of the Indian community: namely, the struggle of the Lumbee Indians for federal recognition as an Indian tribe(s).<sup>28</sup>

While Oklahoma’s Indians shared a long history of interaction with the federal government, territorial governments, states, and other tribes, North Carolina’s Native people had remained relatively insulated from national Indian policies. At the same time, southeastern Indians had often interacted with and intermarried Euramericans and African Americans more often than their western counterparts. Living in small, multiethnic, and isolated communities, the Indians of Robeson County themselves debated their tribal origins. Some said they were mixed–blood descendants of the Croatan Indians and English settlers from the so–called “lost” colony of Roanoke.<sup>29</sup> Others identified themselves as Tuscaroras who descended from these eighteenth–century Iroquois migrants. Still others insisted that they were tied to the Cherokees who clung to their communities in the

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<sup>28</sup> Adolph L. Dial and David K. Eliades, *The Only Land I Know: A History of the Lumbee Indians* (San Francisco, California: The Indian Historian Press, 1975), 89–118.

<sup>29</sup> Abraham Makofsky, “Tradition and Change in the Lumbee Indian Community of Baltimore,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 75 (March 1980): 67, attributes Lumbees’ claims of descent from the “lost” non–Indian colony of Roanoke as stemming heavily from racial politics.



mountainous western part of the state. But the majority of Robeson County Indians identified themselves as Lumbees who had lived along the banks of the Lumbee River for as long as anyone could remember. Whatever the lineage, all Robeson County Indians, whom ethnologists classified as Siouan people, had to gain federal recognition to benefit from the Indian New Deal. In 1936, the BIA sent field investigator D'Arcy McNickle to Robeson County to chronicle the Lumbees' and other Siouan Indians' efforts to gain federal aid and recognition over the previous decades. McNickle's reports led to the federal recognition of 209 Siouan Lumbees as Native Americans. Although federal recognition was only extended to a small number of Lumbees, their success in gaining recognition helped pave the way for the recognition of other southeastern tribes. Furthermore, the Lumbees' struggle for recognition improved education policy makers' and officials' understanding of Native groups that came to be known as “tri-racial” or mixed blood isolates.<sup>30</sup>

With the Lumbees' new found status as official American Indians, Lumbees who enrolled at Pembroke became eligible for Wheeler-Howard funding. As a result, the North Carolina state legislature granted Pembroke senior state college ranking. In 1940, the first four-year class graduated. The following year, the legislature renamed the school Pembroke State College for Indians in recognition of the significant role that Lumbees and other tribes had played at Pembroke since its founding in 1887 and for the successful

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<sup>30</sup> Felix S. Cohen, “Memorandum for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” April 8, 1935, item 606; D'Arcy McNickle, “Memorandum Re. Indians of Robeson County, North Carolina,” April 7 and May 1, 1936, items 607 and 608; and, William Zimmerman to Joseph Brooks, December 12, 1938, item 610; all surveyed in Glenn Ellen Starr, The Lumbee Indians: An Annotated Bibliography, with Chronology and Index (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1994), 78-79.

struggle in gaining federal recognition. After World War II, realizing that no other all-Indian college existed in the United States at the time, the state legislature opened Pembroke's doors to all American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States.<sup>31</sup>

The New Deal affected individuals as well as institutions in a variety of ways. The federal government's new emphasis on Indian education often had inconsistent results, as the examples of the University of Oklahoma and Pembroke State College demonstrate. The University of Oklahoma failed to gain an Indian studies institute, but Native American enrollments, academic offerings, and research centers at the university expanded. In North Carolina, Pembroke State College's Lumbee Indian students met the federal government's tribal identity requirements with success, and, in turn, the state established the nation's first all-Indian public college.

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<sup>31</sup> Adolph L. Dial and David K. Eliades, The Only Land I Know, p. 96.



### **Patriotism and War Service**

From 1917 to 1945, a perpetual state of war existed between Germany and the Iroquois Indians of New York. Despite the Treaty of Versailles (1919), two Iroquois tribes, the Onondagas and Tuscaroras, refused to share the peace pipe with Germany. Like many other tribes, the Iroquois contributed much to the war effort in 1917–18 and 1941–45, volunteering to serve in the military and in civilian war industries, dedicating natural resources to the nation’s defense, and buying war bonds. In each effort, Native Americans contributed more to the war in terms of people, money, and resources on a per capita basis than any other ethnic group in the United States.<sup>32</sup>

In both world wars, American Indians demonstrated acts of heroism and bravery. After President Woodrow Wilson declared war against Germany in April 1917, the commander of the American Expeditionary Force, General John J. “Black Jack” Pershing, requested that Apache scouts, whom he had served with against Geronimo in 1886, the Spanish in 1898, and Poncho Villa in 1916, be assigned to France. Whether enlisted men or officers, Native Americans reputedly exhibited a “wily strategy that used to make the Carlisle football team famous.”<sup>33</sup> The actions of Indian troops throughout World War I and II brought public acclaim time and time again. For example, while Germans withdrew across the Marne in July 1918, three American Indian scouts improvised a raft, crossed to the opposite bank, and reconnoitered German positions. When pickets discovered their footprints, the scouts dashed for the river and swam with the current underwater as

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<sup>32</sup> “On the Warpath,” New York Times, August 2, 1918, p. 10. “Indian Tribe Still at War with Reich,” New York Times, May 12, 1941, p. 1

<sup>33</sup> “On the Warpath,” New York Times, August 2, 1918, p. 10.



gunshots splashed the surface. The Indian scouts resurfaced, smothering their heads with river bottom mud, and regrouped on the American side of the Marne. In another instance of dedication and bravery, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Ernest McClish (Choctaw), the commander of Filipino scouts during World War II, organized and led an anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance movement across three Philippine provinces from late 1942 to early 1945. McClish united resistance groups, expanded his guerrilla army to three regiments, increased agricultural production and the manufacture of sugar, soap, alcohol, and coconut oil, and established an underground newspaper and communications network in the Philippines. In almost three years, McClish lost only 115 troops in engagements that resulted in over 3,000 Japanese deaths.<sup>34</sup>

As these two examples of Native American military service indicate, acts of individual heroism received greater recognition during World War II than during World War I. By 1941, many more Indians had joined the armed forces and had risen to the rank of officer, commissioned and non-commissioned. Furthermore, recalling Indians' patriotic service in 1917-18, during World War II journalists provided more coverage to Native Americans. At times, journalistic coverage of Native American participation was so close as to even threaten military security.<sup>35</sup> Native officers rose to the highest ranks in the military during World War II. For instance, the United States Army Air Force commander

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<sup>34</sup> “Allies Widen Wedge with Reinforcements” and “Apaches with Pershing,” *New York Times*, July 22, 1918, p. 2. United States Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, *Indians in the War, 1945* (Chicago, Illinois: n.p., 1945), 14-15.

<sup>35</sup> James M. Stewart, “The Navajo Indian at War,” *Arizona Highways* 19 (June 1943): 22-23. Also see Adam Adkins, “Secret War: The Navajo Code Talkers in World War II,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 72 (October 1997): 319-46.



in Hawaii, Major General Clarence L. Tinker (Osage), who studied at Haskell from 1902 to 1906, died while leading a bomber attack against the Japanese during the Battle of Midway in June 1942. In the Pacific theater, this battle helped shift the initiative in the Pacific away from Japan. Less than two years later, Captain Joseph J. Clark (tribe not specified), the first Indian appointed to the United States Naval Academy, received a promotion to rear admiral. “Tell the Japs when and where we’ll strike ... and invite them to come out,” the fifty-year-old quipped with the same bravado that Jim Thorpe had used during Carlisle football games.<sup>36</sup>

The heroism of Lieutenant Colonel McClish, General Tinker, and Admiral Clark proved to be representative of American Indian patriotism during the first half of the twentieth century. As Alanson Skinner, a Society of American Indian representative, explained, Native people served bravely in war after war because they believed that their loyalty would result in the full rights of “unhyphenated Americanism.”<sup>37</sup> To that end, about 17–18,000, or half of all Indians between 21 and 36 years of age, served in the armed forces during 1917–18. About 85 percent of this group volunteered in spite of conscription laws that prevented the drafting of “blanket” Indians, or those from unallotted reservations.<sup>38</sup> In addition, service in the United States military reinforced

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<sup>36</sup> “Enlistments by Indians Hailed,” *New York Times*, December 28, 1941, p. 11. “War Shaft at Haskell,” *Kansas City Times*, January 21, 1949, in *Haskell Institute Clippings, Vol. 2: 1938–1971*, p. 81, KSHS. James L. Crowder, Jr., *Osage General: Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker* (Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma: Office of History, Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center, 1987), 329–46. Quote from “Navy Showers Honors on Indian Carrier Skipper,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1944, p. 26. Captain Joseph J. Clark’s tribal affiliation is unknown.

<sup>37</sup> Alanson Skinner, “The Indians’ Belgium,” *New York Times*, October 10, 1915, p. 16.

<sup>38</sup> “Indians on the Warpath,” *New York Times*, August 4, 1918, III, p. 1. “How Indian Chief Helped Save Uncle Sam,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1919, III, p. 3. Thomas A. Britten, “American Indians in World War I: Military Service as a Catalyst for Reform” (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University,



Indians' warrior traditions. Within hours of Wilson's war declaration, for instance, 100 Alabama Choctaws volunteered to join the army. On the Fort Berthold Reservation in Montana alone, 107 servicemen died from wounds received in France.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, during World War II, Sioux warriors danced for two days at Little Eagle, South Dakota, "to make medicine against the Axis and pray for the safe return of their own warriors."<sup>40</sup> In 1942, army officials announced that if the entire population enlisted in the same proportion as Native Americans the selective service would not be needed. At the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico, so many Natives enlisted during the first year of World War II—including tribal chief Homer Yohanoza who was missing in action in the Philippines—that many feared the loss of thousands of dollars in livestock sales.<sup>41</sup>

Native Americans who remained at home matched the bravery of their compatriots abroad with their own service and sacrifice. During World War I, Indians bought over \$15 million in war bonds during the first three bond issues. In the third issue, American Indian contributions more than doubled previous purchases.<sup>42</sup> Jackson Barnett (Creek) purchased \$640,000 of war bonds in the first issue, \$660,000 in the second, and \$157,000 in the

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1994), 314. Also see Thomas A. Britten, American Indians in World War I: At Home and at War (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> "100 Choctaw Indians Volunteer," New York Times, April 9, 1917, p. 20. "Indian Hero Dies from War Wounds," New York Times, June 17, 1923, p. 17. For a discussion of Indians who joined the Canadian army to fight against Germany before the United States declared war, see Henry M. Owl (Cherokee), "The Indians in the War," Southern Workman 47 (July 1918): 353-55.

<sup>40</sup> "Indians Begin 48-Hour Dance," New York Times, August 8, 1942, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup> Richard L. Neuberger, "American Indians Fight Axis," New York Times, August 30, 1942, IV, p. 7. "The Apache Goes to War," New York Times, October 23, 1942, p. 20.

<sup>42</sup> Editorial, "Indian Citizenship," New York Times, January 12, 1919, III, p. 1. "Patriotism and the Indians," Southern Workmen 47 (May 1918): 213-14.



third. Barnett had become a millionaire when oil was discovered on his land near Tulsa, Oklahoma.<sup>43</sup> During the first six months of the war, when the Treasury Department only collected \$1.9 billion of its \$5 billion goal, federal officials asked Charles Eastman to make a hurried speaking tour among Indians in the West. Despite being the most impoverished and underemployed ethnic group in the United States, "The Indian tribes are .... the only race that has no shadow on its loyalty," Eastman said. "There is no spy among the Indians."<sup>44</sup>

During World War II, the homefront in Indian country continued to provide support for the war effort just as it had during the Great War. Only a flurry of failed legal challenges to the 1924 citizenship law took place following the passage of the National Conscription Act of 1940. In November 1941, a week before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, a federal appeals court ruled that the 1924 and 1940 statutes conflicted with the Iroquois' status as unconquered people forced to abide by United States laws without their consent, but the court held that these laws remained constitutional.<sup>45</sup> Pearl Harbor signaled a new mood in Native America, perhaps best represented at a December 17 powwow held by forty Chippewa women who proclaimed: "We have rifles, we have some ammunition, and we know how to shoot."<sup>46</sup> Tribes again dedicated money and resources

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<sup>43</sup> "Daniels Urges Navy to Take Bonds," New York Times, June 12, 1917, p. 2. "Indians on Warpath," New York Times, August 4, 1918, III, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> "Loan Drive Near 2 Billions on Eve of Final Week," New York Times, October 21, 1917, p. 9.

<sup>45</sup> See the following New York Times articles: "Indian Loses Draft Plea," May 15, 1941, p. 14; "Indians in Court Seek Rights of Free Nations," October 21, 1941, p. 25; and, "Nation Is Still Palefaces' ...," November 25, 1941, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> "Indian Women Await Foe," New York Times, December 18, 1941, p. 36.



to the war effort. During the spring of 1942, Natives under age 30 took “refresher” or retraining courses at federal Indian schools in seven states in preparation for war service. Although many Native Americans left their reservations for jobs at distant war plants located in cities throughout the United States, many remained at home, commuting to nearby factories or mines during the day. Some tribes, such as the Oregon Klamaths, built their own school for defense work training. Meanwhile, on the Navajo Reservation, over 3,000 worked at the Army’s Munitions Depot at Fort Wingate, located near the Arizona–New Mexico border. In addition, the Aluminum Company of North America employed many Indians who lived on the St. Regis Reservation in upstate New York.<sup>47</sup>

The most celebrated American Indian contribution to World War II was the work of the special unit known as the Navajo “code talkers.” The military used a variety of inscription methods in the early twentieth century, but the use of Native Americans speaking their own encoded language presented serious difficulties for the enemy since few Native languages had been transliterated and few non-Indians understood them. During the Meuse–Argonne campaign in 1918, the army had relied on Choctaws as code talkers. In 1940, the army asked the BIA to recommend thirty Comanches to serve as code talkers in the Signal Corps. Army officials deployed Comanche code talkers in the European theater with the 4th Infantry Division.<sup>48</sup> In the Pacific theater, the Marine Corps

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<sup>47</sup> “Indian Tribe Adopts MacArthur,” *New York Times*, March 20, 1942, p. 24. “Indians Make MacArthur Chief,” *New York Times*, June 9, 1942, p. 3. Willard Rhodes, “Indian Schools Are Hit by War,” *New York Times*, August 23, 1942, II, p. 6. Richard L. Neuberger, “American Indians Fight Axis,” p. 7. Alison R. Bernstein, *American Indians and World War II: Toward a New Era in Indian Affairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 71.

<sup>48</sup> “Comanches Again Called for Army Code Service,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1940, p. 16. Rebecca Robbins Raines, *Getting the Message Through: A Branch History of the U.S. Army Signal Corps* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1996), 266, 283 n. 56.



sought to use a language that German or Japanese scholars would have been less likely to study or learn about in press reports. The Marines recruited thirty Navajos for special communications training. By the end of the war, 420 Navajo Marines had served in the Pacific, significantly affecting the outcome of operations in the Solomon, Marianas, and Bismarck islands, Guam, Peleliu, Saipan, and Okinawa.<sup>49</sup>

The cumulative impact of Indian military and civilian service at home and abroad during both world wars encouraged the passage first of the 1924 citizenship law, then the G.I. Bill of Rights or the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, which included significant provisions for Indian war veterans. Congress approved these two laws as a reward to Native Americans and Alaska Natives for their patriotism during the world wars. The 1924 law provided few, if any, benefits to Indian veterans. Indeed, in some cases, those who received citizenship status lost more than they gained. Meanwhile, many World War I veterans struggled to find work. Even those who were highly decorated veterans, such as Na-Hiv-A-Ta (Sioux), or “Indian Joe,” fell prey to postwar downsizing. A recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal, the Croix de Guerre with palms, a citation from French Field Marshall Henri-Philippe Pétain, and two other medals, Na-Hiv-A-Ta found himself stranded, unemployed, and homeless in New York City in the summer of 1921. Fortunately, a group of ex-legionnaires and members of Volunteers of America helped him find a temporary job in vaudeville. In just a few years, Na-Hiv-A-Ta had

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<sup>49</sup> “Navajos Complete Training as Marines,” *New York Times*, July 5, 1942, p. 13. Master Sergeant Murrey Marder, “Navajo Code Talkers,” in *Indians in the War, 1945*, pp. 25–27. George Raynor Thompson and Dixie R. Harris, *The Signal Corps: The Outcome (Mid-1943 Through 1945)* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966), 218 n. 44. Doris A. Paul, *The Navajo Code Talkers* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Dorrance Publishing Company, 1973), 57–58, 66–67, 69.



traveled far from his Pine Ridge, South Dakota home, but economically he had gone nowhere.<sup>50</sup>

Seeking to prevent similar situations for veterans, including Native Americans, coming home after World War II, Congress passed the 1944 Readjustment Act, which guaranteed Indian veterans reinstatement at old jobs and provided from one to four years of education at a college or trade school. Most importantly for Indian higher education, the so-called “G.I. Bill” paid for tuition, fees, books, supplies, and a monthly living stipend. In addition, the law guaranteed one-half of Native American veterans’ loans for homes, farms, or business property. Furthermore, Congress made special provisions for disabled veterans.<sup>51</sup> Implementation of the G.I. Bill, however, presented a number of problems. As historian Alison R. Bernstein explains, Native American veterans encountered resistance at private banks that would not accept tribal lands held in trust by the federal government as collateral on loans. D’Arcy McNickle, a special assistant to Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, explained that the BIA maintained “protective restrictions over Indian land” to encourage tribal development projects and to maintain tribes’ land base.<sup>52</sup> By 1946, lenders continued to refuse loans to Native American veterans, prompting BIA officials to ease access to its own revolving loan fund and to tribal funds. Although the implementation of the Indian G.I. Bill stirred up many

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<sup>50</sup> “Indian Sniper Is Stranded,” New York Times, July 16, 1921, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup> Indians in the War, 1945, pp. 44–46. “Indians Now Can Obtain Loans Under the ‘GI Bill,’” New York Times, July 28, 1946, p. 34.

<sup>52</sup> D’Arcy McNickle to John Evans, July 14, 1945, G.I. loans file, box 13, United Pueblos Agency, Denver Federal Records Center, quoted in Alison R. Bernstein, American Indians and World War II, p. 143.



problems, it had been Congress' intent to repay Native people for their wartime sacrifices by including these special provisions when the law was originally passed in 1944.

In addition to special benefits for Native American veterans and public recognition for Indians' war work, as well as the popularity of Indian collegiate sports, the 1900–45 era also saw the rise of an Indian New Deal for higher education. During the late 1920s and 1930s, as a result of the Great Depression and the ongoing debate over federal Indian education policy, the federal government established permanent funds for the support of Indian higher education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Several colleges and universities began working with the federal government to develop their own interdisciplinary American Indian educational programs. By the end of the 1930s, the New Deal would help Amerindian students pay for college and aid institutions in establishing Indian-oriented programs.

The Indian New Deal provided a crucial boost to Native American higher education, just as the intercollegiate athletic programs at Carlisle Indian School and Haskell Institute and as Native American service in the first and second world wars rallied the nation behind the effort to support greater opportunities for Natives to receive a college education. Non-Indians began to appreciate Indian citizens' sports teams, patriotism, and educational institutions and made some initial efforts to repay them in kind. But new and unforeseen challenges lay ahead, as John Collier intimated in a 1942 speech to Chickasaw, Chippewa, Creek, and Navajo graduates of Haskell. Collier predicted that much upheaval would follow World War II and asked if these graduates could “build our

**“We Have No White Man on the Team”**

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liberty, our democracy, our cooperative commonwealth into something so potent, so worthy to be adored ... that it can carry the world through the things that are ahead?”<sup>53</sup>

The nation only had to wait for an answer.

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<sup>53</sup> “Address by John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Commencement Exercises of the Commercial Students in Absentia of Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas, in the Auditorium of the Interior Building, Washington, D.C., April 27, 1942, at 8:00 P.M.,” item 586, reel 32, Collier Papers.



**Chapter 3:**  
**“Their Rightful Place in the Life and Culture of America”:**  
**The Termination Consensus,**  
**1945–1970**

*The individual, driven by the belief that he should never rest content in his existing station and knowing that society demands advancement by him as proof of his merit, often feels stress and insecurity and is left with no sense of belonging either in the station to which he advances or in the one from which he set out.*

David M. Potter, *People of Plenty* (1954)<sup>1</sup>

*I don't believe we need more bricklayers or welders or shoe clerks within the Indian population .... but we do need people within each reservation community who have some idea of how the outside world operates and who can move their people into more favorable economic circumstances without involving them in unwarranted risks ... or acting in disregard of their fears and prejudices.*

D'Arcy McNickle (Flathead–Cree) (1962)<sup>2</sup>

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, thousands of Native people volunteered for military service. Even in the Fox Indian community, population 600, outside of tiny Tama, Iowa, fifty Fox Indians joined various branches of the military, such as the Army infantry or airbourne corps. As George Marlin (Fox) explained, Indians who

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<sup>1</sup> David M. Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 105.

<sup>2</sup> D'Arcy McNickle (Flathead–Cree), to William Zimmerman, Jr., July 25, 1962, folder 17, box 15, William Zimmerman Papers (hereafter WZP), CSWR, UNM.

served during the war saw more of the world than ever before and learned much about non-Indians. When Marlin and others returned home at the end of the war, families and friends held parties and rituals that provided the veterans an opportunity to share their war experiences. For months, the Fox war veterans lived, as Frederick O. Gearing observed, in a glow of recognition. But, as time passed, the glow dimmed along with their status as warriors. For Marlin and other Fox veterans, finding meaningful work presented a tremendous challenge, even with the benefits of the G.I. Bill. Out of frustration, Marlin began expressing anti-Indian views, usually while he was drunk. At the same time, Marlin joined with the other Fox veterans in establishing the first all-Fox American Legion Post, an autonomous group that reflected Fox desires for pride in traditional culture, as well as recognition from the non-Indian mainstream. In August 1953, months after the Fox American Legion Post appeared, Marlin encouraged all Fox Indians to participate actively in the upcoming powwow. Yet, on the last night of the annual celebration, torn between his Fox and non-Indian identity, George Marlin himself showed up heavily intoxicated, spouting anti-Indian views. As a witness to these events, Gearing believed that Marlin had retreated into his frantic, anti-Indian phase once again.<sup>3</sup>

Like George Marlin (Fox), many Native American veterans returning home after World War II found themselves faced with limited economic opportunities, despite the G.I. Bill of Rights.<sup>4</sup> To offset the effects of postwar economic downsizing on Native communities, policy makers and analysts launched a campaign designed to “emancipate”

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<sup>3</sup> Frederick O. Gearing, *The Face of the Fox* (Chicago, Illinois: Aldine Atherton, 1970), 3-5, 51-64.

<sup>4</sup> Carl N. Degler, *Affluence and Anxiety: America Since 1945*, 2d ed. (1968; Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresmen and Company, 1975), 1-39.



American Indians and Alaska Natives from the auspices of the federal government and encourage Native Americans' economic, political, and social assimilation into mainstream society. Congress formally acknowledged this “termination” policy in 1953 when the United States House of Representatives and the Senate adopted a joint resolution favoring the goals of termination. By proposing that the federal government end its trusteeship over American Indians' tribal lands, annuities, and securities, Congress sought to encourage greater economic, political, social, and cultural assimilation among Native people into the mainstream.<sup>5</sup> The wide variety of Indian and non-Indian Americans who supported this new policy between the late 1940s and the late 1960s could be labeled a “termination consensus.”

Postwar developments in higher education played a major role in reinforcing and shaping attitudes toward the termination consensus. Three changes in particular profoundly influenced the direction of Indian higher education in the context of the new termination policy. First, the number of higher education loans and scholarships offered by public and private institutions to American Indian students rose dramatically. These funds reflected the assimilationist mood by rewarding individual Native students who intended to build ties with mainstream society rather than those interested in tribal goals. Even pan-Indian organizations with scholarship funds often emphasized individual over communal achievements. Second, national and regional leadership workshops organized by Indian

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<sup>5</sup> For more information on the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 108 and the eighty-third Congress, see Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 2:1041-59. Donald L. Fixico, Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 91-110.



policy makers focused on college student leaders who sought to apply their skills in a mainstream context, rather than in tribal communities. Like scholarship sponsoring institutions, leadership workshops overemphasized assimilation, thereby ignoring the needs of tribal communities. Furthermore, the leadership workshop movement emphasized community leadership through a top-down rather than a bottom-up approach. Consequently, young Indian leaders met resistance when they attempted to usurp the traditional tribal leadership structures. Third, universities and colleges experienced an unprecedented growth in Indian student enrollment, prompting many institutions to provide greater support services and opportunities to Native students. For Native American higher education proponents, however, the weakness of many of these programs lay in their leadership. During the 1950s and 1960s, non-Indians who supported the goals of the federal government's termination policy directed some of the most influential university programs for Native students, which appeared, in some cases, to be imposed on the Native students. Like the leadership workshops, new university-based services and programs also sought to assimilate Indians into the economic, social, political, and cultural mainstream. In each of these three developments, a repeated emphasis on detribalization and assimilation into mainstream society formed the underlying theme that bound Native Americans to the termination policy. The termination consensus elicited widespread support. Groups ranging from government leaders and pan-Indian activists to tribal and student leaders jumped on the bandwagon.



### **Educational Loans and Scholarship Funds**

During World War II, the federal government expanded the number of post-secondary courses and programs at the BIA schools. At Haskell Institute, for example, the commercial department grew enormously. The demand for stenographers, bookkeepers, and clerks trained at Haskell encouraged some students to accept employment even before graduating. In 1942, Haskell superintendent Solon G. Ayres re-established a two-year, post-secondary vocational program much like the one begun during the 1920s.<sup>6</sup> Because Haskell prepared American Indians for military and civilian service, the federal government continued to support its programs, including the funding of working scholarships for students attending the University of Kansas (KU). In 1944-45, four Haskell graduates received working scholarships to study at KU.<sup>7</sup>

The end of World War II and the need for postwar readjustment renewed calls for new domestic programs that aided needy Americans. Despite this concern, the United States's paranoia about the Cold War dictated that new foreign aid programs, such as the Marshall Plan, be given priority. While U.S. spending abroad grew to unprecedented levels, the poorest Americans, particularly the Native Americans, continued to suffer at home, an irony that critics of overseas economic and political expansion unceasingly pointed out. In 1947, at a meeting of the National Conference of Social Work, which had been involved in federal Indian policy since the 1920s, conferees discussed the role of

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<sup>6</sup> Selma M. Hoffman, "A Follow-up Study of the Graduates of the Haskell Commercial Department from Classes 1955, 1954, and 1953" (MA thesis, University of Kansas, 1956), 127-28. Jack R. Swain, "Haskell Institute: A Study of the Effect of Indian Bureau Policy on Curriculum, 1884-1966" (MA thesis, Wichita State University, 1966), 76-80.

<sup>7</sup> "Haskell Grads Attend K.U.," *The Indian Leader* 48 (September 22, 1944): 3.



postwar educational missions in Germany, Japan, and Italy. “Before we are ready to handle subject peoples in Europe and Asia,” cautioned Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs John H. Province, “we can best discipline ourselves [first] by improving conditions among the Indians.”<sup>8</sup> In a letter to the New York Times Magazine elaborating on Province’s point, Oliver La Farge, former president of the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA), explained that, on the whole, Native Americans sought to receive an education and general knowledge of the world that was equal to what non-Indians received, and that would allow Indians to compete with non-Indians on equal terms.<sup>9</sup>

In response to demands that the United States put its own house in order before assigning more international commitments, Congress approved funding for educational loans to “worthy Indian youth” who were studying nursing, home economics, forestry, agriculture, and other “industrial subjects” at post-secondary schools, colleges, and universities. Like the loan programs established during the 1930s, these loans had to be repaid in eight years.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of the loans further illustrated the Bureau of Indian Affairs’s (BIA’s) attempt to control the destiny of Indian higher education, following the pattern of federal intervention introduced by the Civilization Act of 1819. For over a century, Native people had resisted the federal government’s habit of tracking Indian students into certain fields.

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<sup>8</sup> George Streator, “Re-Education Held Hardest in Italy,” New York Times, April 16, 1947, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Oliver La Farge, “A Plea for a Square Deal for the Indians,” New York Times Magazine, June 27, 1948, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Public Law 79-123 [H.R. 3024], approved July 3, 1945, in U.S. Statutes at Large, 70<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> session, ch. 262, vol. 59, part I (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1946), 326, or cited as 59 Stat. 326 (hereafter cited in the latter format).



For instance, in the 1930s when John C. Rainer (Taos Pueblo) enrolled at the Santa Fe Indian School, his father wanted him to learn carpentry, which paid about \$8 a day at the time and was one of the vocational skills offered in the BIA's boarding schools. Rather than blame the federal government for preparing him for a blue-collar vocation, or his father for suggesting the idea, Rainer felt that his father had his best interest in mind, prompting him to “desire ... a better education than what I thought I was getting.”<sup>11</sup> With a strong willingness to improve himself, Rainer went on to study at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. When he arrived at Bacone, Rainer had no money, but school officials established a work-scholarship for him. Rainer did not hesitate to take advantage of this opportunity. His success at Bacone helped him secure a scholarship to attend the University of Redlands in California, where he received a masters degree in educational administration.<sup>12</sup>

John Rainer's decision to go to Bacone College was not made rashly; indeed, Natives were well aware of Bacone's long tradition of service to Indians. Established by the Cherokee Baptist Association in 1879, and aided by \$10,000 from Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Bacone College was constructed on land donated by the Cherokee Nation, the first tribal grant of its kind to establish an institution of higher education. From the 1880s to the 1940s, Bacone enrolled Indian students from the Southwest and across the country in primary, secondary, and post-secondary courses. During the 1920s and 1930s,

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<sup>11</sup> John C. Rainer (Taos Pueblo), interview with author, June 4, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> John C. Rainer, interview with Margaret Connell Szasz, 1972, tape 870, in Doris Duke Foundation, “American Indian Oral History Collection,” Center for Southwest Research (CSWR), Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (UNM-CSWR). John C. Rainer, interview with author, June 4, 1996.



Bacone’s American Indian faculty, including Indian art and music specialist Ataloo McLendon (Chickasaw), transformed the college into a regional center for the study of Native art, culture, and history. In 1943, Bacone appointed its first American Indian, the Reverend Earl Louis Riley (Creek), as college president. President Riley introduced two new programs that expanded Bacone’s appeal among Native communities and strengthened its financial ties to the Baptists. Riley established an Indian Institute at Bacone to organize and nurture missionary work conducted by community volunteers. Riley also invited American Bible Society linguists and Wycliffe Bible translators to conduct a Summer Linguistics Institute in 1943–44 that taught missionaries to work with people from oral-based traditions and exposed them to the Apache, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Comanche, Creek, Kiowa, and Ojibwe languages. After World War II, as more and more students receiving G.I. Bill benefits attended Bacone, the college’s enrollment boomed.<sup>13</sup>

Like Bacone College, other colleges sought to attract Native American students. In 1948–49, Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, a women’s college chartered in 1926, introduced a Navajo Scholarship Program to aid the nation’s largest Indian tribe. College officials explained that the four-year scholarship was intended not for the “elementary training to which Indians are too often limited but [to] ... help them ... take their rightful place in the life and culture of America.”<sup>14</sup> Aided by the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA), Sarah Lawrence named Florence Begay (Navajo) the first recipient of the \$2,000 award. Valedictorian of Flagstaff (Arizona) High School’s

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<sup>13</sup> John Williams and Howard L. Meredith, *Bacone Indian University: A History* (Oklahoma City: Western Heritage Books, Inc., 1980), 4–6, 11–14, 69–78, 85–90, 104–10.

<sup>14</sup> “Education Notes,” *New York Times*, February 22, 1948, IV, p. E9.



1948 class, the seventeen-year-old boarded a bus for New York City that fall. As the bus followed U.S. Route 66 eastward across the desert Southwest, Begay reflected on the significance of being the first Navajo to receive a perfect scholastic record at Flagstaff's public high school. She looked ahead with confidence in her plans to become a medical doctor, just as Susan La Flesche Picotte had over a half-century earlier.

Florence Begay's bus ride came to an abrupt end, however, when new passengers boarding in Amarillo, Texas insisted that the young Navajo sit in the "Jim Crow" section at the back of the bus. Rather than submit to these demands for segregated seating, Begay got off the bus, returned to Flagstaff, and enrolled at Arizona State College (now called Northern Arizona University). Begay made plans to transfer to Sarah Lawrence the next semester, but this incident points to many difficulties Native Americans faced over the next decades. First, Native people encountered attitudes among non-Indians that demonstrated considerable confusion and contradiction over what it meant to be an American, socially, culturally, politically, and economically. Second, Begay's decision to travel across the country to attend college with non-Indians was fraught with challenges, and the odds were that she would either fail or that her training would alienate her from Navajos and other Native American people. More importantly, however, as a scholarship recipient Begay became one of the first of her generation to define for themselves how instrumental higher education would be in shaping her future.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The *New York Times* reported on Begay's experiences in the following articles: "Navajo Scholarship Set Up," February 12, 1948, p. 48; "Education Notes," February 22, 1948, IV, p. E9; and, "Indian Girl Drops Scholarship Trip," October 3, 1948, p. 31. For other examples of racial discrimination against Indian college students, see "Color Line Dispute Brings Sorority Rift," *New York Times*, June 8, 1951, p. 29.



Recognizing that variation among institutions of higher education would inevitably result in the type of diverse experiences that Florence Begay and John C. Rainer had encountered, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), established in 1944, introduced a scholarship program that resembled the BIA's educational loan and grant program. In 1949, the NCAI created a subsidiary known as ARROW, Inc., an acronym for “American Restitution and Righting of Old Wrongs.” As a non-profit, tax exempt arm of NCAI, ARROW hoped that its efforts to raise scholarship funds would remain separate from political controversy. Consistent with the termination consensus, ARROW's goal was to fund programs that encouraged self-sufficiency and citizenship. Leading ARROW proponent Will Rogers, Jr. (Cherokee), a former member of Congress from California and a recipient of the Purple Heart for actions in Germany, announced: “Indians do not want handouts. . . . They want enough education and an economic foundation to be self-sufficient.”<sup>16</sup>

There were other reasons for ARROW's establishment as well, including the decline in the number of loans and scholarships awarded by older pan-Indian organizations that had been largely made up of non-Indians who supported national policy reform. Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida), who became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1966, received a loan from the Indian Rights Association (IRA) to attend law school from 1939 to 1941. Bennett had initially applied to the BIA for an education grant

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<sup>16</sup> Will Rogers, Jr. (Cherokee), quote from “Indian Aid Group Formed,” New York Times, October 11, 1949, p. 42. Also see NCAI document on “American Indian Development, April 9, 1952,” reel 60, Indian Rights Association Papers, 1864-1973, 136 reels (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1975) (hereafter cited as IRAP). Marjorie Dent Candee, ed., Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1953 (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1954), 540-41.



or loan, but he learned that the scholarship fund had been exhausted by BIA teachers returning to school to satisfy new federal teaching requirements, which Congress had raised from two years of “normal” training to a full four-year bachelors degree.

Consequently, even though he was a full-time BIA employee, Bennett had to turn to the IRA to borrow money for his law school tuition and fees.<sup>17</sup>

After World War II, competition over limited funding resources overwhelmed organizations like the Indian Rights Association (IRA), which maintained only modest scholarship and loan reserves. The unprecedented requests brought by veterans to the BIA’s education fund led to an increase in applications for IRA educational loans and grants. Unfortunately for Native students seeking support for higher education, the IRA did not maintain strict accountability for its funds, nor did it adhere to an equitable disbursement plan. Sometimes students received funding simply because they knew the right people. In 1949, for instance, Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee), who was both NCAI secretary and an IRA board member, secured an IRA loan for an Indian student in Oklahoma who knew Bronson’s sister, Jewell Muskrat Mason. Bronson repeated this request at least one other time. Eight years later, Bronson again asked the IRA’s general secretary, Lawrence E. Lindley, to approve a grant for a student working towards a doctorate. Wisely, Bronson suspected that other students might be more deserving. With a feeling of doubt ringing in her ears, Bronson asked Lindley to make the final decision, “But hereafter,” she added, “let’s say that the money can only be used for scholarships, to

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<sup>17</sup> Robert L. Bennett, interview with author, March 28, 1996.



... whoever [is needy].”<sup>18</sup> It appeared that Bronson felt increasingly uncomfortable with such personal requests. Yet, the personal attention that Bronson paid to the awarding of scholarships reinforced the individual orientation of the termination consensus era.

Meanwhile, the Indian Rights Association (IRA) continued to receive requests for scholarships and loans that revealed its inconsistent disbursement policies. Seeking to finance the college education of his three sons, Robert Bennett wrote: “I do not want to feel that they would be depriving ... some more needy person, but at the same time I would like to have them considered for any assistance which may be available.”<sup>19</sup> Area director of the BIA’s Aberdeen, South Dakota, office at the time, Bennett received a notice that the IRA’s education fund was flat broke and that, besides, the money could only be allocated to help students over short periods until they had secured more permanent financing or scholarship arrangements.<sup>20</sup>

The IRA’s policies justified ARROW’s efforts to create a more rational system of loan/scholarship disbursement and served to raise awareness of the need for more higher education for Native Americans. In 1949, the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA), an organization founded in the early 1920s to link academic social scientists with government policy makers, sponsored a study on Indian higher education. Reporting on

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<sup>18</sup> Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee) to Lawrence E. Lindley, October 21, 1957, reel 62, IRAP. Though Bronson’s requests may be viewed with some criticism, throughout the 1950s she continued to review scholarships for the NCAI’s Gaylord Scholarship, which awarded grants to Indian students pursuing health careers. Bronson to Dr. Galen Weaver, June 7, 1955, folder 2, item 70, Chester E. Faris Papers, UNM-CSWR.

<sup>19</sup> Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida) to Lawrence E. Lindley, April 18, 1958, reel 62, IRAP.

<sup>20</sup> Bronson to Lindley, May 12, 1949, reel 59; Lindley to Bennett, April 21, 1958, reel 62; and, Bronson to Lindley, March 10, 1960, reel 62, IRAP. Robert L. Bennett interview, March 28, 1996.



the findings, AAIA executive director Alexander Lesser explained that the reason “going to college plays no integral part in the lives of American Indians” was because federal boarding schools focused on low levels of aspiration and lacked sufficient mathematical and language resources to prepare students for college.<sup>21</sup> The AAIA report suggested that more organizations establish scholarship funds to help Native Americans seeking higher education.<sup>22</sup>

Although the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA) billed the report as the first of its kind, the need for a national scholarship organization had already been recognized by the NCAI leaders who had formed ARROW just a couple of months before. The AAIA report provides just one example of how the pan-Indian groups seeking to shape national Indian policy, including AAIA, IRA, NCAI, and ARROW, often duplicated each others’ efforts by failing to communicate. Even when reform organizations succeeded in acting in concert, misunderstandings and turf battles sometimes resulted. By creating a single unit responsible only for fundraising and disbursing grants and loans nationally, NCAI hoped to avoid these problems. By no means, however, were all AAIA activities flawed or derivative. Under the guidance of Oliver La Farge, a long-time activist and author, AAIA cooperated with the John Hay Whitney Foundation in awarding six of the foundation’s first forty-two annual opportunity fellowships to Native Americans. Ranging

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<sup>21</sup> Alexander Lesser quote in “College Opportunities for Indians,” New York Times, November 20, 1949, IV, p. E9.

<sup>22</sup> The Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA) sought to create an applied science of Indian affairs that combined specialists from all areas and sought to overcome the limitations of theoretical science. See Oliver La Farge, ed., The Changing Indian (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942), viii-x.



between \$750 and \$3,000 in value, the Whitney fellowships rewarded outstanding young people whose status as underprivileged minorities proved a barrier to full achievement.<sup>23</sup>

Just as private organizations joined the BIA in providing loans and scholarships to Native American students, tribes also began helping their members attend college. Beginning with the outbreak of World War II and continuing up through the early 1960s, an era that historian John Patrick Diggins calls the "proud decades," Indian tribes with extensive reservation-based natural resources enjoyed modest economic growth that spilled over into the area of Indian higher education.<sup>24</sup> By the early 1950s, the Navajo Nation, perhaps the wealthiest tribe in the country in terms of natural resources, had had several decades' experience of negotiating oil and mineral leases with the federal government and private industry.<sup>25</sup> In 1953, seeking to encourage economic modernization on the reservation and prevent the out-migration of its best and brightest tribal members, the Navajo Tribal Council appropriated \$30,000 for the establishment of a higher education scholarship fund. In 1954-55, during the second year of the Navajo scholarship program, Beulah Melvin (Navajo) became one of eighty-three members to receive a tribal scholarship to attend college. The tribe awarded Melvin a \$1,200 tribal grant, while providing seventy-five other scholarship recipients with more modest awards.

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<sup>23</sup> Lawrence E. Lindley to Alexander Lesser, June 22, 1949, reel 59, IRAP. "Indians Win Fellowships," *New York Times*, May 28, 1950, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace, 1941-1960* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988).

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of the history of oil exploration on the Navajo Reservation since the 1890s, see Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 18-19, 68, 77-78. Kathleen P. Chamberlain, "Dine Bikeyah Bik'ah (Navajo Oil): An Ethnohistory, 1922-1960" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1998), *passim*.



After graduating from a California high school, Melvin decided to attend Barnard College primarily because her mother had briefly studied with Barnard anthropologist Gladys A. Reichard. Like her mother, Melvin intended to study at Barnard for two years, then transfer to the Columbia University–Presbyterian School of Nursing. From 1953 to 1961, Beulah Melvin and 1,249 other Navajos received such tribal grants. The program’s success led to increases in the annual appropriation. In 1957, the Navajo tribal council expanded the fund’s annual appropriation from \$30,000 to \$115,000. The following year, the Navajo Nation expanded private lease–holders’ access to its Four Corners Oil Field, allowing for mineral exploration—a move that permitted the tribe to invest \$10 million in the creation of the Scholarship Trust Fund. With its funds earning interest on treasury bills, according to Robert A. Roessel, Jr., who later became the first president of Navajo Community College, the Navajo Nation reportedly generated \$20,000 annually for scholarships.<sup>26</sup>

Problems continued to plague the Navajos. Despite the expansion of the Navajo Nation’s scholarship program, the return of college–educated members to the reservation made little difference in overall social and economic conditions. Poverty and undereducation persisted, prompting some non–Indian critics, such as Senator Arthur V. Watkins (R–UT), to suggest that the nation’s largest Indian nation be detribalized.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> “Navajos Sponsor Girl at Barnard,” *New York Times*, September 26, 1954, p. 49. Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Navajo Education, 1948–1978: Its Progress and Its Problems* (Rough Rock, Navajo Nation, Arizona: Navajo Curriculum Center, Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1979), 39–43. Kathleen P. Chamberlain, “Dine Bikeyah Bik’ah (Navajo Oil): An Ethnohistory, 1922–1960” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1998), 243, 248–56. In 1997, Navajo Community College changed its name to Diné College.

<sup>27</sup> Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945–1960*, p. 93.



**“Their Rightful Place in the Life and Culture of America”**

Furthermore, the tribal scholarship fund itself suffered from either poor financial management or malfeasance. There was some disagreement as to whether the original principal of the Navajo Scholarship Trust Fund was \$5 or \$10 million, but Roessel claims the latter amount. If the original principal was indeed \$10 million and the Navajo Nation only earned \$20,000 in annual interest, then the rate of return on the tribe’s invested treasury bills was only two-tenths of 1 percent, or 0.20 percent per year. The rate of return on treasury bills purchased by December 1957 varied each year as the table below indicates:

Year	Rate	Year	Rate	Year	Rate
1958	-3.7 percent	1963	2.0 percent	1968	1.6 percent
1959	-3.6 percent	1964	2.3 percent	1969	0.7 percent
1960	1.9 percent	1965	2.0 percent	1970	2.1 percent
1961	1.4 percent	1966	2.3 percent		
1962	2.2 percent	1967	1.5 percent		
Average Annual Rate, 1958-70			0.9769 percent		

Source: adapted from Lawrence Fisher and James H. Lorie, A Half Century of Returns on Stocks and Bonds: Rates of Return on Investments in Common Stocks and on U.S. Treasury Securities, 1926-1976 (Chicago: University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, 1977), Table XXXIV, p. 109.

In the first two years, the Navajo Nation suffered a net loss on this investment, but, as long-term investors, tribal officials were well aware that this trend would not

last. Indeed, the yearly average rate of return for the thirteen-year period from 1958 to 1970 was 0.9769 percent. Calculated in this way, the average annual interest on \$10 million in long-term U.S. treasury bonds purchased in 1957 over a thirteen-year period was \$97,690 a year—a significantly larger figure than the \$20,000 that Roessel reports.<sup>28</sup>

What happened to all that money?

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence Fisher and James H. Lorie, A Half Century of Returns on Stocks and Bonds: Rates of Return on Investments in Common Stocks and on U.S. Treasury Securities, 1926-1976 (Chicago: University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, 1977), Table XXXIV, p. 109.



Despite the Navajo Nation's apparent financial problems, other tribes moved ahead with plans to established their own scholarship funds. In 1955, the Warm Springs Indian Tribe of Oregon, which owned immense stands of forests in north-central Oregon, began selling \$600,000 in timber annually to support a scholarship fund. Before World War II, most Warm Springs members had little or no opportunity to continue their schooling beyond the secondary level. For example, when Vernon Jackson (Warm Springs) asked BIA officials about attending college in the late 1930s, he was encouraged to remain on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, located on the east slope of Mount Hood. A dedicated and hard worker, Jackson became involved in tribal affairs, becoming secretary-treasurer of the tribal council. Meanwhile, Jackson and other Warm Springs parents began sending their children to public schools, rather than the BIA's Chemawa Indian School near Salem, Oregon, choosing to encourage their children's greater assimilation with the mainstream. During the 1954-55 school year, Jackson moved his family to Eugene, where he studied finance and tax law at the University of Oregon. The next spring, Jackson returned to Warm Springs and found much enthusiasm for a tribal scholarship fund. Of the seven Warm Springs Indians who graduated from Union High School in Madras, Oregon, in June 1955, six graduates expressed an interest in attending college. Consequently, the tribal council, representing over 1,200 tribal members, supported Jackson's proposal to establish a tribal scholarship program, which began awarding ten students \$1,000 scholarships annually. Interest in these scholarships was so high the first year that tribal council members voted to grant thirteen students scholarships rather than just ten. These high school graduates went on to enroll at a variety of institutions, including: a business



college in Tacoma, Washington; Eastern Oregon College; Oregon State College; University of Oregon; and, Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.<sup>29</sup>

By the late 1950s, a variety of mechanisms for increasing scholarships for American Indians and Alaska Natives had been tried, but neither public nor private scholarship funds had generated enough wealth to establish a completely new approach to higher education financing. This is not to say that there were no success stories. Indeed, like John C. Rainer (Taos Pueblo) and Florence Begay (Navajo), many students succeeded with scholarship and loan support. National organizations serving Native Americans' public interests, such as the Indian Rights Association, did continue, albeit modestly and inconsistently, to extend loans and grants to needy students. Meanwhile, other organizations, like ARROW, attempted to resolve the lack of opportunities for Native people. Drawing on the new income generated from the sale of natural resources, tribes succeeded in establishing their own scholarship programs as well.

Although a variety of groups encouraged educational loans and scholarship programs after World War II, these organizations reinforced the individualistic and assimilative thrust of the termination consensus. National organizations supporting Indian higher education sought to fill the funding gap and instill a more rational system of disbursement. Still, a "good ole boy" network limited the extent to which these efforts could succeed. Several tribes established scholarship programs, but all encountered

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<sup>29</sup> "Education Fund Set Up By Tribe," *New York Times*, October 2, 1955, p. 125. In addition to the Navajo and Warm Springs tribes, the Jicarilla Apaches of New Mexico established a \$1 million college scholarship fund in 1956 from oil and gas lease revenues. "Apache Scholarships," *New York Times*, August 1, 1956, p. 13.



barriers. Tribes had no way of knowing if scholarship recipients would return to the reservation after graduation. Indeed, some tribes that established scholarships hoped that greater assimilation into the mainstream would result. The financial management of scholarship programs themselves also presented challenges.

To move beyond the level of experimentation with new scholarship and loan programs, American Indian leaders at the local, tribal, regional, and national levels had to pool their intellectual resources, assess the impact of their experiences, and pass their knowledge along to the next generation of Native leaders. Although tribal scholarship programs and traditional leadership structures already provided alternatives to preparing future leaders to act as mediators with the outside world, only a handful of tribes, including the Navajo, Warm Springs, Jicarilla Apache, and Yakama people, had established scholarship programs before 1970. Most Indian students had to apply to the BIA and/or private organizations, such as the Indian Rights Association, for higher education scholarships. In their search for funding sources, Native American leaders needed to expand their access to the public and private sectors. The most effective means for continuing the scholarship and grant fund efforts established by these entities, and for strengthening ties between institutions of higher education and tribal communities, would prove to be through the regional and national leadership workshops that brought tribal leaders and college students together.

### **National and Regional Leadership Workshops**

D’Arcy McNickle (Flathead–Cree, 1904–1977) provided much of the energy for the workshop movement. After studying at Montana State University, Oxford University, and Columbia University, McNickle worked for the Federal Writers’ Project. In 1934, he met Johns Hopkins University anthropologist William Gates, a good friend of John Collier’s and a board member of the American Indian Defense Association. Professor Gates recommended McNickle to Commissioner Collier for a position at the BIA. There, McNickle rose through the ranks quickly. When Collier had to select several American Indian delegates to attend the Canadian Conference on North American Indians in 1939, he chose McNickle, along with anthropologist Arthur C. Parker (Seneca), future commissioner of Indian affairs Louis R. Bruce (Mohawk), and long-time BIA employee and Indian activist Ruth M. Bronson (Cherokee). Afterwards, McNickle went on to become a founder of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), author of *They Came Here First: The Epic of the American Indian* (1949), the first historical survey of Indian–non–Indian relations written by an Indian, chief of the BIA’s tribal relations branch, and a famous novelist.<sup>30</sup>

In 1950, when Dillon Meyer became commissioner of Indian affairs, McNickle doubted that Native people would become self-sufficient under the growing momentum to support the termination policy. As a result, McNickle, NCAI President Judge N.B. Johnson (tribe not specified), and NCAI Executive Director Ruth Bronson established another NCAI subsidiary organization called American Indian Development, Inc. (AID).

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<sup>30</sup> Dorothy R. Parker, *Singing an Indian Song: A Biography of D’Arcy McNickle* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), vii–x, 24, 26, 29, 35, 68, 93, 106, 116, 123.



McNickle remained at the BIA for one more year. Then, in 1951, when long-time BIA education director Willard Beatty resigned, McNickle decided it was time to leave as well. Afterwards, McNickle threw himself into the organization of an AID leadership workshop designed to encourage community development projects. McNickle's AID project intended to plant the seeds for community development programs at regional conferences, then conduct follow-up reports on reservations to encourage the implementation of various programs. During the summer of 1951, AID held its first workshop at the Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah. The fifty-plus tribal leaders who participated in the Brigham City workshop requested that NCAI officials seek public and private funds for an ongoing program in community development.<sup>31</sup>

In 1952, due to the success of its first workshop in Brigham City, American Indian Development (AID) received a two-year, start-up grant from the Marshall Field Foundation. In addition, AID received support from the Indian Rights Association (IRA), the American Friends Service Committee, an organization with close ties to the IRA, the National Board of the YWCA, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, and the Colorado and Utah tribes participating in the Brigham City workshop. To ensure accountability to the NCAI while maintaining separate autonomy from the Indian congress, NCAI board members appointed McNickle director of AID and Elizabeth Roe Cloud (Chippewa) assistant director. Winner of the Mother of the Year Award for 1950, Roe Cloud served as the national chair of Indian affairs for the General Federation of Women's Clubs and was married to Henry Roe Cloud

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<sup>31</sup> Lindley to D'Arcy McNickle (Flathead-Cree), May 1, 1951; "American Indian Development, April 9, 1952," reel 60, IRAP. Dorothy R. Parker, *Singing an Indian Song*, pp. 132-33, 136.



(Winnebago), long-time Indian higher education proponent and former superintendent of the American Indian Institute and Haskell Institute. In addition to appointing two prominent Indian leaders as director and assistant director of AID, the NCAI opened an account for AID under its other subsidiary, ARROW, Inc. In October 1952, with this new infusion of financial support, participants at the Phoenix AID workshop wrote a “Charter of Indian Rights” that advocated development projects, job opportunities, and leadership within tribes, states, and the nation. Most importantly, however, AID’s “Charter of Indian Rights” advocated the expansion of scholarships “to attend institutions of higher learning for both vocational and professional purposes, and to obtain training for business management of tribal enterprises and for the practice of the professions in Indian communities.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, with the emergence of AID’s leadership workshops, the basic infrastructure linking community activists, private supporters, policy makers, college students, and institutions of higher education had begun to take shape.<sup>33</sup>

In just a few short years, however, charges of malfeasance against ARROW forced AID and NCAI to reassess their relations with ARROW. In 1960, Ruth Bronson confided to Lawrence Lindley of the IRA that some philanthropists believed the NCAI and ARROW were being “careless with money.”<sup>34</sup> Requesting that Lindley destroy the letter after reading it, Bronson wrote that the wealthy dowager Ruth Thompson of Philadelphia

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<sup>32</sup> “Charter of Indian Rights Adopted at AID Phoenix Workshop, October 1952,” attached to letter, McNickle to Lindley, December 5, 1952, reel 60, IRAP.

<sup>33</sup> “American Indian Development, April 9, 1952;” attachment to letter, McNickle to Lindley, April 16, 1952; and, McNickle to Lindley, May 5, 1952, reel 60, IRAP.

<sup>34</sup> Bronson to Lindley, March 10, 1960, reel 62, IRAP.



would donate up to \$10,000 to the IRA for a study of terminated tribes, but only if Bronson herself directed the project. Unfortunately, Bronson and others who charged NCAI and ARROW with financial mismanagement in 1960 were not raising a new problem. Indeed, as historian Dorothy R. Parker notes, accusations that ARROW's directors were funneling money from AID's accounts into their own pockets dated back at least to 1957. These changes, along with a five-year Emil Schwartzaupt Foundation grant for \$100,000, a generous grant AID had received in 1955, prompted the NCAI and AID to formally separate from ARROW.<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, in 1956 another leadership workshop for Native American college students began at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. Directed by NCAI Executive Director Helen Peterson (Oglala Sioux), University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax, and Board of Home Missions of the Congregational and Christian Churches member Reverend Galen Weaver, the summer institute at Colorado College hosted twenty-five students who had heard about the workshop through word of mouth. Workshop participants, including Indian student and community leaders, policy makers, and university faculty, addressed cultural differences between Indians and non-Indians, feelings of inferiority about being American Indian, and the termination and relocation policies. Each summer from 1956 to 1960, workshops held at either Colorado College or the University of Colorado at Boulder addressed these issues, as well as the more practical problems students encountered in the fields of engineering, nursing, and education. Until

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<sup>35</sup> Bronson to Lindley, March 10, 1960, reel 62, IRAP. In 1957, NCAI established the NCAI Fund and broke its ties with ARROW. NCAI Fund Report 1 (September 1961), in folder 16, box 14, WZP. Parker, pp. 157-58.



1959, Helen Peterson, Sol Tax, and Galen Weaver administered these annual talks. That year, the nearly moribund American Indian Development (AID) received a charter from the state of Colorado to operate a non-profit charitable and educational organization, allowing McNickle to take over the administration of the Colorado workshops begun by Peterson, Tax, and Weaver. As the new workshop director, McNickle made the University of Colorado at Boulder AID's permanent conference site for the next decade.<sup>36</sup>

Between 1956 and 1970, American Indian Development (AID) conferences brought together over 300 American Indian and Alaska Native students from fifteen colleges throughout the western United States to discuss a variety of issues. AID workshop participants represented at least fourteen different tribes. Roughly seventy-two percent of the conferees spoke their own Native language. Representing a variety of disciplines, most AID students declared education or social science, which included anthropology, history, political science, sociology, and social psychology, as their undergraduate majors. After education and social science, the third most popular field of study fell into one of the professional fields, which included accounting, architecture, biology, chemistry, pre-law, pre-medicine, and physics.<sup>37</sup>

Whatever their background or interests, American Indian Development (AID) workshop participants eagerly discussed what Rolland H. Wright, a conference instructor

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<sup>36</sup> Eugene H. Wilson to Royal B. Hassrick, September 9, 1960; McNickle to William Zimmerman, Jr., July 25, 1962; "Training Indian Leaders for Community Development, AID, Inc., Boulder, Colorado," proposal attached to McNickle to Frank A. Cirillo, n.d., folder 17, box 15, WZP. Rolland H. Wright, "The American Indian College Student: A Study in Marginality" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1972), 12-16, 18-19, 23.

<sup>37</sup> Rolland H. Wright, "The American Indian College Student: A Study in Marginality," pp. 12-16, 18-19, 23.



from 1964 to 1969, calls “Folk–Urban Marginality.” In his study of American Indian college student participation at the AID workshops, Wright found that Native participants keenly understood the complex levels of the marginalization process. Wright argued that marginalization began when Indian people found themselves socially isolated from non–Indian society, or, as some conferees said, “out of it.” Following this stage, Natives became increasingly aware of what Wright calls one’s social degradation. These initial phases of ostracism led first to Indians’ assimilation to mainstream society, followed by feelings of disillusionment and reaction. Wright found that the last stage of the marginalization process, which he called reactionary behavior, usually involved a search for scapegoats. In his typology of marginalization, Wright dubbed the reactionary stage as true marginality. Under McNickle’s direction, AID conference participants clung to the “marginality” concept because it helped individual students understand their own problems better. Furthermore, McNickle introduced a course on “colonialism” that provided students with valuable analytic tools for “objectifying” Indians’ problems. As a result of these approaches, AID workshops saw high emotions, intense debates, bonding among participants, and energetic instruction.<sup>38</sup>

During the 1960s, McNickle’s workshops fell under increasing fire from Indian activists. In 1960–61, Sol Tax organized the American Indian Charter Convention, which met at the University of Chicago to direct future national policies towards American Indians and Alaska Natives. Also known as the American Indian Chicago Conference

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<sup>38</sup> In 1970, AID held its last workshop in Spokane, Washington. Wright argues that the 1961–64 workshops marked the heyday of AID, yet he spent most of his tenure as an AID instructor (1964–69) in the period of AID’s decline. Wright, pp. 5, 15, 25–28, 67–88, 104, 107, 114.



## “Their Rightful Place in the Life and Culture of America”

(AICC), the week-long meeting held in June 1961 brought 420 Native people from sixty-seven tribes to sign a “Declaration of Indian Purpose.” The Declaration advocated new policies and criticized government-imposed sanctions, such as the termination policy, which unilaterally declared the “earliest possible” termination of federal responsibilities to serve tribes in California, Florida, Kansas, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, and Wisconsin.<sup>39</sup> Among other recommendations, the “Declaration of Indian Purpose” called on the federal government to restore a full curriculum at boarding schools in preparation for advancement to the junior college level.<sup>40</sup>

The American Indian Chicago Conference (AICC) marked a watershed in the development of leadership workshops. Seeking to take advantage of the growing interest in pan-Indian conferences and workshops, McNickle scheduled the 1961 American Indian Development (AID) meeting to coincide with the AICC. Ironically, McNickle’s effort to bolster public relations for Indian affairs by synchronizing the scheduling of the AID workshop with the AICC served only to provide critics with an opportunity to speak out against the workshop concept. For example, many college students, like Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute), Shirley Hill Witt (Mohawk), and Clyde Warrior (Ponca), believed that McNickle’s approach was too conservative. These students and others went on to

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<sup>39</sup> Quote from House Concurrent Resolution 108, passed August 1, 1953, in 67 Stat. B132.

<sup>40</sup> Preliminary Statement: A Sample “Declaration of Indian Purpose” prepared at the Committee Meetings, April 26–30, for use at the AICC, June 13–20, [1961], to help work out a final Declaration of Indian Purpose, folder 1, box 8, WZP.



found the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), an organization that sought greater leadership among Indian youth based on “the values and beliefs of our ancestors.”<sup>41</sup>

Like the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), other individuals and groups criticized McNickle’s workshops. In 1965, American Indian Development (AID) invited Vine Deloria, Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) to be a guest speaker at the Boulder workshop. Deloria duly attended, but he was not impressed with the workshop approach. As Rolland Wright notes, after 1964 AID’s curriculum became increasingly irrelevant as student militancy intensified. From 1965 to 1967, students attending the workshops expressed more criticism towards the courses offered. In February 1967, former AID workshop participant Clyde Warrior testified to the President’s National Advisory Committee on Rural Poverty that Indian poverty was due to non-Indians’ unwillingness to allow Native people to run their own affairs. By 1968 and 1969, political and ideological differences widened the breach between pan-Indian organizations founded before and after the American Indian Chicago Conference (AICC). By the end of the decade, following the build-up of criticism by radical student and community leaders, AID conferees seemed to increasingly represent more assimilated and urbanized Indians than their earlier counterparts.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Quote from Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute), “Statement of the NIYC,” Aborigine: Instrument of the National Indian Youth Council, vol. 1, no. 1 (June 28, 1961): 1.

<sup>42</sup> Preliminary Statement: A Sample “Declaration of Indian Purpose” prepared at the Committee Meetings, April 26–30, for use at the AICC, June 13–20, [1961], to help work out a final Declaration of Indian Purpose; Sol Tax to All American Indians, circa late May–early June 1961, folder 1, box 8, WZP; Donald Janson, “Indians Demand New U.S. Policy,” New York Times, June 20, 1961, p. 16. “Declaration of Indian Purpose: American Indian Chicago Conference, June 13–20, 1961,” in Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., ed., Red Power: The American Indians’ Fight for Freedom (New York: American Heritage Press, 1971), 49–52. Wright, pp. 28–33. Parker, pp. 187–88, 195.



The transformations in Indian higher education during the late 1950s and 1960s reflected many of the social changes affecting other ethnic minorities in the United States: particularly, African Americans. After the Montgomery Bus Boycott's successfully challenged segregation on metropolitan bus systems in the southeastern United States, for example, boycott leader the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other community civil rights activists formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to ensure that the struggle against segregation would continue. Reverend King and many other leaders of the African-American movement against segregation encouraged the use of Gandhian methods of nonviolent direct action protest, as demonstrated when King and followers peacefully submitted to arrest during the bus boycott. Later protests, including the freedom rides and sit-ins, mirrored this technique. To incorporate the growing activism and participation of college students in the African-American civil rights movement, the SCLC's executive director, Ella Baker, called for the formation of a student subsidiary called the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in April 1960. Popularly known as "Snick," this student group gradually separated itself from King and the SCLC as older civil rights leaders pursued more conservative methods of bringing about social change, while the younger student leaders of SNCC advocated more radical forms of protest. Like the SCLC-SNCC split, disagreements among American Indian activists on college campuses and in tribal communities during the late 1950s to 1960s led to a similar generational, as well as cultural, cleavage.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981), 19-25, 191-92, 202-04, 231-32.



During the late 1960s, the influence of the national and regional leadership workshops for American Indians waned. Another experiment in encouraging American Indian higher education had been tried. The workshops should not be viewed as a failure, however, since they dealt with some of the most important and sensitive issues of the day, including individuals' responses to government policies and negative self-concepts regarding Indian identity. Furthermore, the American Indian Development, Inc. (AID) workshops provided a vehicle for encouraging student leadership on campus and in communities. Some workshop participants, including Shirley Hill Witt, went on to lead the National Indian Youth Council and to attend graduate school at the University of Michigan and the University of New Mexico.<sup>44</sup> Other workshops appeared, such as the Institute for American Indian Studies, established in 1968 by Clyde Warrior at the University of Kansas. But the Warrior institutes failed to build the consensus of support that D'Arcy McNickle's American Indian Development, Inc. benefited from—even if that consensus existed only for a brief time.<sup>45</sup>

Like the loan and scholarship programs, leadership workshops played a tremendous role in shaping American Indians' attitudes towards higher education both on reservations and in cities. These programs and services provided tangible evidence that ties between institutions of higher education and Native Americans were strengthening. In terms of linking Native communities with institutions of higher education, there was

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<sup>44</sup> Shirley Hill Witt, "Migration into San Juan Indian Pueblo" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1969), 265.

<sup>45</sup> Clyde Warrior Institutes were also held at the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and Stout State University in Wisconsin. "NIYC Sponsors Clyde Warrior Institutes," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 1, issue 1 (October 1969): 1; Wright, pp. 14–15.

another development that had an even greater effect on the termination consensus: namely, the rise of greater university support services for Native American students.



### **Support Services at Colleges and Universities**

According to a Brookings Institution study, in 1940 only 38 percent of all American Indian males in the United States had completed between five and eight years of schooling. Comparatively, this statistic was on par with African Americans and Anglos, whose percentages of men who had only completed between five and eight years of education ranked even higher in this category: 41 and 42 percent respectively. Two decades later, however, while the percentage of African Americans and Caucasians with between five and eight years of education had dropped to 35 and 32 percent, 38 percent of Native people still received only five to eight years of education. Why was virtually no progress made, and why did dropout rates remain high among Native Americans?<sup>46</sup>

Indian students dropped out of school for a variety of reasons. At the secondary level, the long distances between the BIA's best boarding schools and students' communities compelled many to enroll at overcrowded, unsanitary, and ill-equipped schools located closer to the reservation or on the reservation. Many parents disliked sending their children away to school and felt that schools had little or no community interaction. As historian Margaret Connell Szasz points out, non-Indians usually monopolized responsibility for "community" direction.<sup>47</sup> Many Native American students who dropped out of public schools ended up at BIA boarding schools, which became a refuge for Indian America's troubled youth. In addition, Native students who attended

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<sup>46</sup> Alan L. Sorkin, American Indians and Federal Aid (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1971), 17.

<sup>47</sup> Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928, 2d ed. (1974; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977), 104.



nearby public and BIA schools often encountered prejudiced teachers. For those students in public schools, cross-cultural misunderstandings, as well as the popular myth that Indians did not pay for their schooling, fueled ethnic tensions. Under the Johnson-O'Malley Act (1934), Congress approved contracts between state and federal school officials that oversaw the transfer of federal trust funds to public school districts for each Indian pupil attending state-funded public schools. Although this transfer of funds functioned as part of the federal government's treaty and statutory obligations toward American Indian tribal members, many state education officials simply transferred those funds into general education accounts, rather than for use in aiding districts where indigenous students were in attendance. Faced with such institutionalized biases, it is little wonder that dropout rates remained high at the secondary and postsecondary levels.<sup>48</sup>

Many of those who went on to graduate from high school, college, and/or graduate school often had parents, siblings, or other relatives to look upon as models for succeeding at colleges and universities. Sometimes, though, even this was not enough to encourage Indian students to attend college. In a 1968 survey of 135 Minneapolis Indian youths about their college plans, 95 aspired to go on to university while 40 did not. Surprisingly, the overriding difference between the two groups had nothing to do with age, knowledge of tribal language, their teachers' knowledge of tribal culture, or relatives in college. Instead, the only clearly distinguishing variable between those aspiring to

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 91, 129, 187. Although many critics suspected that federal and state education bureaucrats misused Johnson-O'Malley funds, scholars have had difficulty finding documents corroborating these suspicions prior to the late 1960s. Christine Bolt, *American Indian Policy and American Reform: Case Studies of the Campaign to Assimilate the American Indians* (London, England: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 244-45.



college and those who did not boiled down to what their friends were doing; that is, most college aspirants associated with friends who planned to attend college, while non-college aspirants did not.<sup>49</sup>

After World War II, colleges and universities throughout the country made their first institution-wide attempts to provide greater support mechanisms to Native American students. Unlike later student organizations, support services, and American Indian Studies programs and departments, some of the leading colleges and universities in Indian higher education that encouraged higher enrollments and retention before 1970 adopted assimilative models for student growth and development. At these institutions, culturally conservative administrators and faculty, not students, organized and controlled these services. As a result, these higher education institutions brought the termination consensus to college and university campuses. The most active of these institutions included church-affiliated schools, such as Sheldon Jackson Junior College (now Sheldon Jackson College) in Sitka, Alaska, and Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

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<sup>49</sup> Richard G. Woods and Arthur M. Harkins, Education-Related Preferences and Characteristics of College-Aspiring Urban Indian Teenagers: A Preliminary Report (Minneapolis: Training Center for Community Programs, University of Minnesota, 1969), 16, 18-20, 29. The information available on high school dropout rates nationwide is anecdotal and probably underestimates the real magnitude of the problem.

### **Sheldon Jackson Junior College**

In 1876, American Protestant missionaries arrived in southeastern Alaska and began proselytizing Native Alaskans who had already experienced over a century of interaction with Russian Orthodox priests sent from Moscow. The United States's acquisition of Alaska from Russia in 1867 had been much maligned. The extreme cold of the northern climate, the Northern Pacific's rugged coastline and tempestuous winds and currents, and the Russia–America Company's repeated failings in the region only reaffirmed the critics' labeling of the purchase Seward's "icebox" or "folly," named for Secretary of State William H. Seward.<sup>50</sup> For missionaries like the Presbyterian Reverend Sheldon Jackson (1834–1904), however, Alaska presented a whole new "field" in which to spread the gospel and convert the so-called "heathen races." As Jackson wrote: "When ... this vast territory ... was turned over to the United States, the call of God's providence came to the American church to enter in and possess the land for Christ."<sup>51</sup>

Presbyterians migrated to the West throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, first building schools in areas where public education was underfunded, then establishing hospitals with networks of rural health care facilities. An amateur ethnologist, Jackson raised public awareness about Alaska through his travels and writings. After the sale of Alaska, Jackson explained, Russian teachers were recalled and schools suspended. This situation continued until 1877–78, over a decade after Alaska's cession. Even then,

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<sup>50</sup> Hector Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Adventure, 1741–1867* (Portland, Oregon: Binford & Mort Publishing, 1965), 241, 254, 259.

<sup>51</sup> Rev. Sheldon Jackson, D.D., *Alaska and Missions on the North Pacific Coast* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1880), 129.



questions over what to teach and where to build schools hindered missionaries' educational efforts. Finally, in 1878, Jackson helped establish a primary school in the southeastern Alaskan community of Sitka. Four years later, the first building of the Sheldon Jackson Industrial School was completed.<sup>52</sup>

In 1884, Congress authorized the Department of the Interior to establish schools in Alaska and appointed Sheldon Jackson general agent for education. The Department of War, which administered Alaska after the 1867 purchase, required Native Alaskans to attend these new schools. Meanwhile, interest in developing Alaska's resources and training Native people in industrial trades had increased after the Yukon gold strikes of 1878. "Shall the native population be left, as in the past, under the encroachments of the incoming whites . . .," Jackson asked, "or shall they be so educated that they will become useful factors in the new development?"<sup>53</sup> Rather than wait for the federal government to respond, Jackson and other Presbyterian missionaries raised funds for the construction of Sheldon Jackson Industrial School. Here, Native Alaskan students, particularly the Tlingit Indians of southeastern Alaska, a Pacific Coast Athapaskan tribe, received training in navigation, seamanship, saw-milling, carpentry, and improved methods of fishing and canning.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Fred Koschmann, "Summer Education Comes to Sitka, Alaska," *Outreach* 12 (December 1958): 297-98; Rosita Worl, "History of Southeastern Alaska Since 1867," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, 20 vols., vol. 7: *Northwest Coast* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 7:149-58; Norman J. Bender, *Winning the West for Christ: Sheldon Jackson and Presbyterianism on the Rocky Mountain Frontier, 1869-1880* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

<sup>53</sup> Sheldon Jackson, *Alaska and Missions on the North Pacific Coast*, p. 399.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 387-400; Rosita Worl, "History of Southeastern Alaska Since 1867," p. 151; Michael K. Foster, "Language and the Culture History of North America," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, 20 vols., vol. 17: *Languages* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 17:74-75.



From the late 1870s through the 1950s, Sheldon Jackson Industrial School gradually added more secondary grades, then a junior college in 1944. After World War II, the Territory of Alaska raised the educational requirements for public school teachers. That, along with demands that Alaskans develop the vocational skills necessary for self-sufficiency and economic development, prompted the territory's institutions of higher education to expand vocational programs and course offerings. As the oldest college in Alaska, pinpointed between the University of Alaska, 700 miles to the north, and the University of Washington, 600 miles to the south, Sheldon Jackson dominated higher education in southeastern Alaska. As public support for Alaska's higher education programs grew, Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) began offering courses in typing, shorthand, home management, and first aid, much like the classes offered at Haskell Institute during the 1940s and 1950s. Similar to Bacone College, SJJC also developed a fine arts component with courses in painting, puppetry, photography, and art. Although the junior college could not offer upper division courses for teachers, it began a summer program in 1958 with courses in education, speech, and library science taught by instructors from a nearby BIA school, the Alaska Department of Health, and Whitworth College, a Presbyterian-affiliated, four-year institution in Spokane, Washington.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Fern Gabel, "Diamond Jubilee," *Outreach*, August-September 1953, p. 197. Fred Koschmann, "Summer Education Comes to Sitka, Alaska," pp. 297-98. Mildred Hermann, "From the Primitive to the Present," *Concern* 7 (November 1965): 19. The Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines (now University of Alaska), established in Fairbanks in 1917, set up extension programs everywhere in the territory except in Sitka, where Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) had long been serving indigenous and non-Native people. The university's extension programs, first begun at Fort Richardson near Anchorage in 1950, were designed to make its services more accessible to Alaska's far-flung population and to garner greater support among members of the territorial legislature for the university's expansion. T. Neil Davis, *The College Hill Chronicles: How the University of Alaska Came of Age* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Foundation, 1992), 57, 356-75.



During the late 1950s and early 1960s, Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) continued to expand its liberal and vocational arts curricula, but the statehood movement increased the fervor of the more culturally conservative missionary impulse. Alaskans voted for statehood on August 26, 1958, an event marked by loud parades and celebrations. When SJJC's radio station signed off at 2:00 A.M. the next morning with the hymn, "Now the Day Is Over," Dr. R. Rolland Armstrong, the college's president, thought to himself: "the day is not over, it is just beginning."<sup>56</sup> President Armstrong anticipated that Alaska would receive considerable revenue from the sale and lease of natural resources following statehood. At the same time, however, Armstrong cautioned against wild speculation and undisciplined growth. "Alaska will not become another Nevada," he wrote. "Terrific pressures will come from the entire Christian family to keep it morally level. Eskimos and Indians will demand strong laws in moral spheres. The new Alaska Council of Churches will seek public support for intelligent liquor legislation."<sup>57</sup> To guard against the potential Nevadaization of Alaska, SJJC introduced a required course entitled "Christian Home and Family Life" that emphasized thrifty use of time, energy, and money. As home economics instructor Yu-Chen Liu pointed out, Native Alaskans needed this type of course, since they had little or nothing to do during the winter season in Southeast Alaska. Consequently, "Whiskey and other alcoholic beverages are very common in this northern territory and far too accessible to those with time on their hands."<sup>58</sup> Another

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<sup>56</sup> Dr. R. Rolland Armstrong, "Alaska's Statehood Brings Problems and Opportunities to the Church," Concern 1 (January 1959): 10.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Yu-Chen Liu, "Sheldon Jackson College in Transition," Outreach, May 1958, pp. 151-52.



missionary teacher at the Sitka college approved of the vocational aspects of the curriculum and the relative lack of race tensions, but believed that “the Indian is not by any means encouraged to expect a leading or even a parallel position to the white man’s in the ordinary community.”<sup>59</sup>

Presbyterians and others who established Sheldon Jackson Industrial School and expanded it into a community college after World War II articulated certain conservative cultural biases that shaped institutions of higher education during the termination era. In the postwar years, missionary educators believed that imported ideas of spiritual uplift and educational enlightenment would catapult southeastern Alaska into a beacon of social and economic modernity.<sup>60</sup> But this effort to combine the progressive visions of the popular turn-of-the-century evangelist Dwight L. Moody and educator John Dewey lacked one important element: the Alaska Native perspective. Although Sheldon Jackson himself had gathered one of the finest Alaska Native collections of material culture in the world, and others at Sitka demonstrated strong interest in Tlingit, Aleut, and Inuit societies, many non-Indian faculty and administrators at SJJC remained culturally blind to the Alaska Native perspective. Consequently, they did not recognize that Tlingits and others had their own ways of educating and training the young.

Ethnologists who studied Alaska Natives provided a fuller view of the continuity of indigenous traditions over time, even when those traditions faced non-Indian

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<sup>59</sup> Laurence T. Doig, “Missionary Profile: Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka, Alaska,” ca. 1960, unpublished information sheet, in Sheldon Jackson Junior College Information File, MHL.

<sup>60</sup> Dr. R. Rolland Armstrong, “Alaska’s Statehood Brings Problems and Opportunities to the Church,” p. 10.



institutions of higher education. When ethnologist Frederica de Laguna came to southeastern Alaska in the early 1950s, he learned from Chief Shakes (Stikine Tlingit), who had led the Alaska Natives' voting rights movement in the early 1920s, how his people educated their young. Every night while he was growing up, Shakes explained, his grandfather told him stories. By the time he reached the age of about ten, his grandfather said, "Now you tell me a story about what I [have] been telling you."<sup>61</sup> Shakes spent the next six years repeating his grandfather's stories. When Shakes made a mistake, his grandfather corrected him. After perfecting the telling of one story, Shakes moved on to another one until he had memorized all the stories about Tlingits and other Natives throughout the region. These stories taught leadership and life skills, including hunting, fishing, and trapping, the main sources of income and survival in southeastern Alaska.<sup>62</sup>

Even though Presbyterian educators often utilized Native interpreters, the dominant cultural theme of progression and success at Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) revolved around the idea of Alaska Natives' assimilation of non-Indian cultures. For example, when Florence Hayes, editor of the national Presbyterian periodical Outreach, sought to tell a success story from SJJC, she highlighted the educational accomplishments of John Bordridge (Tlingit) and his supportive wife Emma (Inuit). John's success at SJJC had led him to the University of Michigan School of Law. Hayes asked Bordridge if he planned to practice law after graduation. In reply, Bordridge said that he

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<sup>61</sup> Chief Shakes (Tlingit) quote in Frederica de Laguna, Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972), 2:465.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*; Worl, pp. 7:151-53.



had not decided yet, “But I am eager to get started.... I have ideals.”<sup>63</sup> Each summer during law school, the Bordridges returned to Sitka, where they supplemented their income by fishing and lecturing to tourists on life in Alaska, while also spending time with their families.<sup>64</sup>

For Presbyterian sponsors of Indian higher education, the Bordridges demonstrated that funding for Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) produced positive results. Given the opportunity, Native people could climb the non-Indian higher education ladder of success. For Florence Hayes and other promoters of Native American college education, the Bordridges appeared to have embraced the goals of non-Indian society. Mission boosters placed less emphasis on the Bordridges’ decision to return to Sitka each summer to fish and congregate with their families, choosing to view this action as a means of raising the necessary funds to continue the quest for higher education. John and Emma Bordridge had multiple motivations for continuing to support John’s education, yet church-affiliated proponents of Indian higher education ignored his interest in tribal service and maintaining familial and cultural ties in southeastern Alaska. As a leader in the Tlingit community, Bordridge followed a long tradition of social and political activism handed down by Chief Shakes and other Tlingit leaders. Prior to the 1950s, Tlingits had established the Alaska Native Brotherhood (1912), which lobbied successfully for Native Alaskan citizenship two years before Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. The first Native Alaskan to have served in the territorial legislature was Tlingit. During the

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<sup>63</sup> John Bordridge (Tlingit) quote in Florence Hayes, “Sheldon Jackson Revisited,” *Outreach* 9 (October 1955): 245–46.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*



1960s and 1970s, Tlingits spearheaded the land claims case that resulted in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, passed by Congress in 1971. John Bordridge understood the utility of a higher education degree both in terms of Presbyterian goals for assimilating Native people into mainstream society and in using such institutions to improve the political, economic, and social conditions of Native Alaskans.<sup>65</sup>

But Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC) was not the only church-oriented institution of higher education in the United States that emphasized a culturally conservative and assimilative approach to Native higher education. The cultural conservatism that shaped SJJC also appeared at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where other Native people sought to make institutions of higher education more relevant in their lives.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid; Frederica de Laguna, Under Mount Saint Elias, pp. 1:8–10, 183, 198, 2:465; Worl, pp. 7:153–58.

### **Brigham Young University**

Brigham Young University (BYU) served as an arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Latter-day Saints (LDS), or Mormons, felt a special responsibility to work with Native Americans because the Book of Mormon revealed that Indians of the Americas and Polynesians of the Pacific had descended from ancient people called Nephites and Lamanites, whose ties to ancient Christianity had been long-ago broken. During the nineteenth century, Joseph Smith, Jr., Brigham Young, and other church leaders were unable to do much about restoring this connection because Mormons spent much of their time building communities in Utah, where they were largely free from non-Mormon ridicule.<sup>66</sup>

Mormons faced opponents everywhere they went, first east of the Mississippi, then in the West. The Mormon Exodus to the intermontane West encouraged largely negative relations with the Native inhabitants of the Great Basin, particularly the Utes, Paiutes (Southern and Northern bands), Shoshones (Northern, Eastern, and Western bands), and Bannocks, all sharing a region that now comprises eastern Oregon, most of Idaho, western Wyoming, western Colorado, northern Arizona, eastern California, Nevada, and, of course, Utah. In 1852, Brigham Young negotiated a peace treaty with Chief Washakie (Shoshone), because the Shoshones dominated the region immediately surrounding the Great Salt Lake. Although Young signed the 1852 treaty with Chief Washakie—an agreement that reinforced both leaders’ power and influence among their respective

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<sup>66</sup> For more information on Mormon-Indian relations in the nineteenth century, see Leonard J. Arrington, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (1985; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 240-43, 256-60, 315-16, 391.



people—LDS settlers showed little respect for prehistoric Indian communities by either destroying them or simply building over them. Conflict between Mormons and Western Utes heated up during the 1870s. Over the next half-century, the Utah Utes' land decreased from 23 million acres (about 45 percent of Utah) to about 100,000 acres in 1930.<sup>67</sup>

As the United States expanded its interests overseas during the twentieth century, and as Mormon communities consolidated within the nation, Latter-day Saints launched their first major efforts to expand the church's non-Caucasian membership outside of Utah. The occupation of the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba after the Spanish-American War (1898) and the two world wars of the twentieth century encouraged greater popular attention to foreign affairs and reinforced the church's global mission. In 1919, for example, the LDS Church dedicated its Hawaiian Temple, the first of the three temples built outside of Utah between 1915 and 1927. By World War II, Mormon interest in an organized Native American mission coalesced. Proselytizing among Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni Indians led to the development of the first Lamanite stakes, or local all-Indian organizations of the Mormon Church.<sup>68</sup>

At Brigham Young University, the Latter-day Saints' major training ground for church and missionary leaders, officials organized the first programs and support services

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<sup>67</sup> Don D. Fowler and David B. Madsen, "Prehistory of the Southeastern Area," in William C. Sturtevant, ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, 20 vols., vol. 11: Warren L. D'Azevedo, ed., *Great Basin* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1986), 11:178-79; Demitri B. Shimkin, "Eastern Shoshone," in *ibid.*, p. 11:311; Donald Callaway, Joel Janetski, and Omer C. Stewart, "Ute," in *ibid.*, pp. 11:355-56; Carling I. Malouf and John M. Findlay, "Euro-American Impact Before 1870," in *ibid.*, pp. 11:499, 508-10.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1890-1930* (1986; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 307.



for American Indian students. During the tenure of President Ernest L. Wilkinson (1951–64), BYU established many programs for Indians. Wilkinson’s support for Indian education largely emerged out of his Washington, D.C., law practice, which represented more Indian plaintiffs in Indian Claims Commission cases than any other law firm in the country. In 1952, as a result of Wilkinson’s strong support, Indians at BYU organized the Tribe of Many Feathers to ease the transition of newly enrolled Indian students. When members of the Tribe of Many Feathers appeared in the university’s student yearbooks, usually the Indian students were listed by name only, with no reference to tribal affiliation. Despite this lack of publicized tribal identification, most of the Indian students who attended the “Y” were either Navajo, Ute, Paiute, Shoshone, or Bannock.<sup>69</sup>

Because of the strong ties between BYU and the Mormon Church, the chair of the church’s Indian Committee, Spencer W. Kimball, worked rigorously to build programs that would increase Indian enrollments at BYU. In 1955–56, Kimball’s committee financed a special Indian education program that addressed students’ remedial education needs. At first, BYU provided all the necessary financial support, including tuition waivers and loans for books, for Indian students in this program. Two years later, Indian students’ self-support, veterans’ benefits, tribal scholarships, private grants, and LDS church offerings provided 71 percent of the \$29,761 in financial assistance to BYU Indians. Tribal scholarships alone constituted more than 14 percent of students’ financial aid. These

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<sup>69</sup> “Annual Report of the Indian Education Program, Brigham Young University (BYU), June 30, 1958,” and “Agenda: Indian Education Committee Meeting, September 5, 1958,” folder 1, Indian Education Program, Collection UA 430, University Archives, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter BYUA). Ernest L. Wilkinson, et al., eds., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 4 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 3:505–07.



numbers represented significant gains for BYU since previously Mormons had experienced extensive resistance from tribal scholarship officials. As BYU's Dean of Education Howard T. Reid claimed, Navajos who sat on the Navajo Nation's tribal scholarship committee made larger grant awards to students attending the University of Arizona or Arizona State University than to Brigham Young University.<sup>70</sup>

BYU instituted other mechanisms as well to build stronger ties between Indian communities and the Mormon Church. In one such effort, BYU hired Robert Gwilliam in 1957 to administer and advise students in the Indian education program. A non-Indian probably of Welsh descent, Gwilliam received his bachelor's and master's degrees in education from BYU, spent two years as a chaplain in the Navy, two years as a BIA teacher, and was working towards a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Utah when he was hired. Gwilliam was convinced that BYU's program would increase the rolls of the church, as well as produce well-adjusted members of society. In another effort, Indian students and faculty organized a study group that met in the late 1950s. Furthermore, in 1958 Doris Boyd of the LDS Child Welfare and Social Service Department began publishing Thunderbird: LDS Indian Student Newsletter, which was geared towards graduating Indian high school students.<sup>71</sup> On an even broader level, the LDS Home Placement Program placed Indians between ages 8 and 18 into foster homes. Many of the

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<sup>70</sup> “Annual Report of the Indian Education Program, BYU, June 30, 1958,” and “Agenda: Indian Education Committee Meeting, September 5, 1958,” folder 1, Indian Education Program, Collection UA 430, BYUA.

<sup>71</sup> Robert Gwilliam to Indian Education Committee, BYU, November 14, 1957, folder 12, box 5; Gwilliam, “Parochial Schools and Research,” paper presented to the Third Annual Conference on Navajo Education at Arizona State College (now Northern Arizona University), Flagstaff, January 26, 1960, folder 2, box 3; “Indian Community Center Appoints Robert Gwilliam,” clipping, June 5, 1962, folder 1, box 7, Institute of American Indian Studies (BYU-IAIS), Collection UA 552, BYUA.



adopted Indian children attended Utah public schools before enrolling at BYU. A controversial program, the adoption of Native Americans began in the late nineteenth century as part of an effort to end the so-called Indian slave trade. Serving as “servants” or “apprentices,” these adopted children, the adoption proponents hoped, would grow up to become civilized like themselves. With the renewal of old assimilation programs, as well as the establishment of new ones, BYU’s institutional support mechanisms increased Indian enrollments from 49 in 1956–57 to 135 in 1967–68.<sup>72</sup>

The most important step in the expansion of BYU’s Indian program came with the formation of the Institute of American Indian Studies and Research in 1960. As part of the Division of Continuing Education, the institute served various agencies of the LDS Church, the Unified Church School System, and BYU itself. The institute provided a college education for Lamanite students, as LDS Indians were known, but it also implemented programs to help solve Indians’ socio-economic problems. In 1964, BYU appointed Assistant Professor of Religion Paul E. Felt to direct the institute’s programs. A non-Indian like Gwilliam, Felt received a mandate from Spencer Kimball to expand the program as he saw necessary. Unfortunately, Felt wore the mantle of leadership with little regard for traditional tribal customs.<sup>73</sup>

By the late 1960s, a clash between BYU officials and Indian students over celebrations of American Indian Week reflected the conflict between the growing

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<sup>72</sup> Gwilliam, “Parochial Schools and Research,” paper presented to the Third Annual Conference on Navajo Education at Arizona State College, Flagstaff, January 26, 1960, folder 2, box 3; Carling I. Malouf and John M. Findlay, “Euro-American Impact Before 1870,” pp. 11:509–10.

<sup>73</sup> Ernest L. Wilkinson, et al., eds., *Brigham Young University*, pp. 3:517–19.



militancy of American Indian students and the cultural conservatism that remained the crux of the termination consensus. The controversy began in 1966 when Paul Felt invited newly appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida) to address the students. The first Indian to head the BIA in a century, Bennett's appointment as commissioner, many Native people hoped, reflected a new era in the nation's history—an era of tolerance for and acceptance of Native cultures. As president of BYU, Wilkinson thought that, as a non-Mormon, Bennett could not provide any LDS philosophy on the Mormons' efforts to convert Native Americans. Claiming scheduling conflicts, Felt withdrew Bennett's invitation, asking Bennett if he could postpone the visit until April 1967 instead. This allowed Felt to save face, and it gave Wilkinson more time to determine whether Bennett would be an appropriate speaker. Still, BYU officials' actions failed to hide the obvious snub of the most well respected Indian leader of the nation. After the Bennett debacle, BYU instituted a new policy that required organizations and departments to have guest speakers approved before being invited to campus.<sup>74</sup>

Reflecting the cultural conservatism that plagued Mormon-Native American relations, Felt next wrote a damaging letter that provoked an outcry even among Euramerican church members. After attending a few powwows, Felt decided to discourage Indian dances as much as possible since “The general spirit and atmosphere present left something to be spiritually desired.”<sup>75</sup> When a “vocal minority” of BYU Indian students opposed this view, Felt announced a new policy for American Indian Week:

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<sup>74</sup> “American Indian Week, 1966–67,” folder 6, box 1, Collection UA 552, BYU-IAIS, BYUA.

<sup>75</sup> Paul Felt to Spencer W. Kimball, April 14, 1966, folder 6, box 1, Collection UA 552, BYU-IAIS, BYUA.



“Instead of the traditional pow-wow [he stated], the emphasis and focus [would] be on a variety and talent show with imported guest Indians from the Ute Reservation providing a few traditional Indian dances.”<sup>76</sup> Felt’s actions led Indian students and “several fine Church members” to respond by unanimously opposing Felt’s policy. Despite opposition, Felt continued to protest the “spiritually damaging aspects of their apostate Indian culture,” even though the Indian enrollment at BYU was the largest at any single institution of higher education in the country.<sup>77</sup>

Like Sheldon Jackson Junior College (SJJC), Brigham Young University (BYU) endorsed a culturally traditional and assimilative approach to Indian higher education. From the late 1940s to the late 1960s, church-affiliated colleges and universities such as BYU and SJJC provided the post-secondary educational services that many tribal communities needed, but, because the mission goal remained central to their purpose, Indian students at these institutions saw their cultures overshadowed or overwhelmed. In some cases, this was stated policy, in others it was simply implied. Either way, the net result was to award individual achievements that fit a culturally conservative, mainstream model for success. Sometimes, Native students who attended these two colleges broke the pattern and went on to become leaders in their tribal communities, as in the case of Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute) who attended BYU on scholarship from 1959 to 1961. As a student, Thom helped found the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). After

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Quote from Felt to Kimball, April 16, 1966; “American Indian Week, 1966–67,” folder 6, box 1, Collection UA 552, BYU-IAIS, BYUA.



graduation, he became an engineer and was elected chairman of the Walker River Paiute Tribe—the same tribe that produced the leader of the late nineteenth-century ghost dance religion: Wovoka. In spite of Thom’s experiences, college and university administrators continued to press for assimilative individualism that furthered the cause of the termination consensus. With church-supported institutions of higher education leading the nation in funding American Indian students and Indian-oriented educational programs, the cultural clashes seen in Alaska and Utah were inevitable. Those very clashes inspired Native American leaders to take a more active role in defining relationships between Indian communities and higher education.

By supporting these three mechanisms for encouraging Indian higher education—including: expanded university and college services; leadership workshops; and, educational loans and scholarship programs—Indian and non-Indian proponents of Indian higher education supported a policy that sought to acknowledge Native people’s rightful place in the life and culture of America. At the same time, however, this new-found status often meant sacrificing traditional ways. Although many well-meaning innovators attempted to expand Natives’ access to higher education—as in the case of college and university faculty and administrators, leadership workshop organizers, and scholarship and loan fund officials—in reality they helped to reinforce the termination goals of Congress.

While some leaders and institutions encouraged the termination consensus, other organizations and spokespersons recognized the limitations and inherent flaws of this policy. These critics viewed the termination policy as a critical threat to the future of Indian America. To offset the influence of the termination consensus and to support a

**“Their Rightful Place in the Life and Culture of America”**

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movement called self-determination, other proponents of Indian higher education spawned a cultural revolution in the United States that would restore Native people to their rightful place as the first Americans before Columbus.



**Chapter 4:**  
**“A Human Being on Campus and in the Community”:**  
**The Native American Movement in Higher Education,**  
**1945–1970**

*The Ironic elements in American History can be overcome, in short, only if American idealism comes to terms with the limits of all human striving, the fragmentariness of all human wisdom, the precariousness of all historical configurations of power, and the mixture of good and evil in all human virtue.*

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (1952)<sup>1</sup>

*The biggest Indian tribe in the United States does not have its own written language, does not have its own historians, writers, poets—nothing but the oral legends and lore presented by storytellers.*

Stanislav Kondrashov, in *Izvestia* (1967)<sup>2</sup>

In the “Indian War of 1964,” Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute) explained that the nation’s Indians were expected to get a Western/Euramerican education, then “told to go back and change their backward people. Young Indians are told to join in on this great civilizing venture,” he continued. “Ironically, this is the same tactic used by the

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<sup>1</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1952), 133.

<sup>2</sup> “Russian Reporter Finds U.S. Erases Navajos’ Heritage,” *New York Times*, June 4, 1967, p. 40.

U.S. Army in using Indian scouts to wipe out Indian resistance.”<sup>3</sup> Although the expansion of scholarships, leadership workshops, and university support services helped American Indian and Alaska Native students who entered institutions of higher education after World War II, serious problems remained. American Indian enrollment in institutions of higher education did indeed increase, but Native people still struggled to succeed in institutions dominated by non-Indians. Dropout and retention rates left much to be desired. Native Americans had made inroads, yet they found their needs and hopes being overshadowed by demands made by other groups. For those Indian college graduates who had obtained Western/Euramerican education, they often found their knowledge and skills useless on the reservation, where seniority and experience usually outweighed expertise gained from the Euramerican world.

Rather than give up, however, Native American student leaders and policy makers faced these challenges head on. Indian people’s demands to make higher education more relevant and useful in their lives remained a central concern. Rather than falling into the trap of the “termination consensus,” many proponents of Indian higher education expanded Native participation in the university-tribal outreach programs and American Indian student clubs. Consequently, university-educated Native American students emerged as the avant-garde of the Indian civil rights and Indian power movement.

By the late 1960s, the generation of college-educated Natives who came of age following World War II demanded that universities and colleges nationwide adopt Indian studies programs and more Indian-centered courses. As the protest movements launched

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<sup>3</sup> Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute), “Indian War 1964,” *American Aborigine*, vol. III, no. 1 (1964): 6.



by African Americans and Hispanics coalesced, Indian student leaders struggled to tie the goals of their own campus protests to those of their respective pan-Indian and tribal communities. This new campus-community relationship has waxed and waned during the last decades of the twentieth century, but it has remained a central characteristic of Indian higher education.

As always, the federal government played a prominent role in both coaxing and capping the Indian civil rights and Indian power movement. During the 1960s, the various Great Society programs organized community involvement in a way that focused public attention on the concerns of Indian students and their communities. As a result, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other government agencies established new programs and postsecondary schools designed to meet the new demands. The emergence of university-tribal outreach programs, Indian student clubs, and new BIA programs and postsecondary institutions led to the rise of the first tribally-controlled community college. Like other federal attempts to fund Indian higher education, however, these efforts simply added more underfunded and ill-equipped strata to an already overburdened bureaucratic structure.

### **University-Tribal Outreach Programs**

After World War II, universities became involved in tribal affairs on a variety of levels and for multiple reasons. The roots of tribal-university interactions date back to the colonial era, but, during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, major changes in the field of anthropology strengthened those long-established connections. During the 1800s, the fields of Ethnology and Anthropology emerged, two lines of inquiry defined in the nineteenth century as the science of race characteristics and interactions. Seeking to formalize this field, Europeans and Americans established ethnology societies, first in Paris (1839), then in London (1841) and New York (1842). Beginning in the late 1850s, ethnology as a distinct field of study became subsumed under the discipline of anthropology, which most practitioners defined as the science of humankind. Led by self-taught dilettantes who represented such divergent groups as medical doctors, politicians, financiers, and reformers, American anthropologists allied themselves with the federal government when the Smithsonian Institution established the Bureau of Ethnology in 1869. Following the lead of Alice C. Fletcher, many anthropologists also became activists who fought for Indians' rights and better treatment by non-Indians. Fletcher and others testified at public hearings and at the meetings of the Lake Mohonk Friends of the Indian and the Woman's National Indian Association. Anthropologist James Mooney fought against a 1918 congressional bill to outlaw the use of peyote, a hallucinogenic cactus used in traditional Native American religious ceremonies. Political activism attracted some



exceptional Native Americans, such as Francis La Flesche (Omaha), J.N.B. Hewitt (Tuscarora), and Arthur C. Parker (Seneca), to the field of anthropology.<sup>4</sup>

By the early twentieth century, Columbia University anthropologist Franz Boas had trained a generation of scholars who would develop a subfield of anthropology called “applied anthropology,” which adapted anthropological expertise to the practical political realm. Although Boas distanced himself from activist pan-Indian groups like the Society of American Indians, he protested racial discrimination against Native people and introduced to anthropology the concept of cultural relativism: the idea that every culture had its own inherent beauties that could be understood only within that culture’s framework, not assessed through the prism of an external culture. A revisionist, Boas persuaded a generation of scholars, including Oliver La Farge, to relate its knowledge to contemporary problems.<sup>5</sup>

Boas’s influence convinced government policy makers to rely increasingly on anthropologists. In 1936, for example, Commissioner Collier established the Applied Anthropology Unit in the BIA. This unit sponsored the ethnographic research projects in which anthropologists or anthropologists-in-training sought to help BIA administrators

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<sup>4</sup> Christine Bolt, American Indian Policy and American Reform: Case Studies of the Campaign to Assimilate the American Indians (London, England: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 189–208. Next to the powwow, peyotism became the most prolific pan-Indian institution in the United States during the twentieth century. Ferenc M. Szasz and Margaret Connell Szasz, “Religion and Spirituality,” in Clyde A. Milner, II, Carol A. O’Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss, eds., The Oxford History of the American West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 376–77, 388. Also see Richard White, “It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”: A New History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 441, and Scott B. Vickers, Native American Identities: From Stereotype to Archetype in Art and Literature (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 55–64.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



prepare constitutions under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and tribal economic development plans. One such anthropologist-in-training, D'Arcy McNickle, conducted ethnography field research in North Carolina, where Lumbee Indians sought federal aid to attend Pembroke State University. When anthropologists criticized BIA policies and failed to make the snap judgments that BIA officials expected, the unit closed after only two years of operation. Still, applied anthropology continued to receive support from Clyde Kluckhohn and other anthropologists at Harvard University and at the first Pan-American Conference on Indian Life, held in Mexico in 1941. That same year, the Society for Applied Anthropology was founded at Harvard. Between 1941 and 1946, the BIA and the University of Chicago's Committee on Human Development co-sponsored eleven Indian personality studies. Anthropology Department chair W. Lloyd Warner, department member Sol Tax, education professor Robert J. Havighurst, and Tax's student Frederick O. Gearing, all at the University of Chicago, led the effort to bridge the gap between universities and Native communities. Tax was one of the sponsors of the leadership workshop movement that began after World War II. Other applied anthropologists, such as Nancy Oestreich Lurie of the Milwaukee Public Museum, Philleo Nash of Wisconsin (Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1961 to 1966), and James E. Officer of the University of Arizona, participated in linking the anthropology profession to tribes by testifying at Indian Claims Commission hearings and adamantly opposing the termination policy.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Nancy Oestreich Lurie, "The Indian Claims Commission," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 436 (March 1978): 97-110. Christine Bolt, *American Indian Policy and American Reform*, pp. 189-208. Willow Roberts Powers, "The Harvard Five Cultures Values Study and Post War Anthropology" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1997), 34, 75-79.



## "A Human Being on Campus and in the Community"

Following the lead of the University of Chicago and the emerging subfield of applied anthropology, a small number of scholars and teachers from other universities and disciplines fell into line behind American Indian tribal communities. For instance, from 1953 to 1957, the United States Department of Justice granted two anthropologists, C.F. and Erminie W. Voegelin, and one historian, John A. Jones, from Indiana University \$140,000 to document evidence of tribal land claims dating from 1795. This research helped elucidate cases before the Indian Claims Commission. The addition of Jones to the Voegelin husband-wife anthropology team reflected the establishment in 1953 of the Ohio Valley Historic Indian Conference and the publication of the group's bulletin, Ethnohistory, which sought to combine the archival and field research methods of the history and anthropology disciplines.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the efforts by University of Chicago and Indiana University scholar-activists, little or no university-tribal outreach programs existed prior to the 1960s. In that decade, during the administrations of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, the nation's attention shifted to what the midwestern socialist Michael Harrington called The Other America.<sup>8</sup> Harrington reminded Americans that, in spite of the nation's new prosperity following World War II, the number of poor people in the United States was actually growing. Substantiating Harrington's claims, between 1945 and 1966 the federal

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<sup>7</sup> "400 Indian Claims for Lands Studied," New York Times, September 27, 1953, p. 47. "Indian Claims Entail Long Research Project," New York Times, August 26, 1956, IV, p. E9. For discussion of the field of ethnohistory, see Erminie W. Voegelin, "A Note from the Chairman," Ethnohistory 1 (April 1954): 1-3; "The History of OVIC," Ethnohistory 1 (April 1954): 4-6; and, Margaret Connell Szasz, ed., Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 6-8.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Harrington, The Other America: Poverty in the United States (New York: Macmillan, 1962).



government provided over \$900 million in total annual appropriations to fund the BIA's education and human services budget, yet this funding seemed to have little effect. Those who supported the termination policy probably would have ignored American Indians altogether if it had not been for two major events of the 1950s: the Brown decision (1954) and Sputnik (1957).<sup>9</sup>

The Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, et al. (1954) to issue a federal injunction against segregated public school districts across the United States raised larger questions about the impact of racial segregation on all groups, including American Indians and Alaska Natives. On a national level, Brown shed light on the issue of preferential treatment in the allocating of public school funds. To some, the debate over integration also spilled over into the realm of national Indian policy: should tribalization be encouraged, and should Indians attend BIA rather than public schools? Some people said, “no.” Terminationists coopted the rhetoric of integrationists by asserting that Native people deserved the same treatment as everyone else in American society. This approach led to the gradual expansion of the federal government's role in national education during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>10</sup>

In 1957, when the Soviet Union launched the Sputnik satellite, the people of the United States believed they had lost a significant Cold War battle. To regain the

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<sup>9</sup> For annual budgets covering the years 1946–66, see 59 Stat. 332–33; 61 Stat. 110, 465; 62 Stat. 1117; 63 Stat. 241, 771; 64 Stat. 683; 65 Stat. 252; 66 Stat. 117, 448; 67 Stat. 263; 68 Stat. 363, 813; 69 Stat. 142–43; 70 Stat. 168, 258–59; 71 Stat. 259; 72 Stat. 157; 74 Stat. 106, 828; 75 Stat. 26, 247, 520, 571, 743; 76 Stat. 336; 77 Stat. 98, 471; 78 Stat. 274, 1028; 79 Stat. 74, 85, 175; and, 80 Stat. 156.

<sup>10</sup> Hugh Davis Graham, The Uncertain Triumph: Federal Education Policy in the Kennedy and Johnson Years (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), xiii–xxiv.



competitive edge, policy makers sought to strengthen the nation's schools. From 1958 to 1965, four major pieces of national education legislation passed, each adding new federal programs as part of a larger effort that President Johnson termed the Great Society's War Against Poverty. The federal government's effort to improve education in the United States included: the National Defense Education Act (1958); the Higher Education Facilities Act (1963); Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965); and, the Higher Education Act (1965).<sup>11</sup>

The Great Society programs of the 1960s gradually expanded opportunities for more organized and sustained university-tribal outreach programs. In 1962, after the establishment of the Peace Corps, Acoma Pueblo requested that Peace Corps specialists assist the pueblo in its modernization efforts. The reporter who asked President Kennedy about Acoma's request spurred the President's imagination. Although Kennedy considered the possibility of employing Peace Corps workers to help American Indian communities, little was accomplished for two years. Then, in 1964, the American Indian Capital Conference on Poverty called attention to Native leaders' demands that they should have a more active role in programs designed to alleviate poverty. In the summer of 1964, while speaking before the United States Senate, Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver finally endorsed the proposed Economic Opportunity Act as a key to eliminating poverty among American Indians. Shriver believed that the program would lead to "broad participation by Indians and tribal communities all across the nation."<sup>12</sup> On August 20, 1964, Congress

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> "Economic Opportunity Act of 1964," Senate Hearings, 88<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d Session (1964), pp. 137-38, quoted in Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 2:1094. American Indian Capital



passed the Economic Opportunity Act, which established an Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to administer the six titles of the statute: youth programs; community action programs; rural assistance; small loans; work experience; and, VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America). The Acoma leaders' request for a domestic peace corps had been realized. During the summer of 1965, VISTA workers fanned out to serve on reservations throughout the United States. In terms of the overall impact of the Great Society programs on university-tribal outreach services, however, the community action programs initiated with OEO grants played a more significant role than VISTA.<sup>13</sup>

In 1965 and 1966, OEO community action programs sprang up throughout the nation. Some OEO grants directly supported poverty programs at universities that had "common histories of practical concern for the problems of Indian poverty," such as Arizona State University, the University of South Dakota, and the University of Utah, which received \$825,495 in 1965 to train staff and provide technical assistance to Indian reservations.<sup>14</sup> Projects involving as many as three universities simultaneously were

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Conference on Poverty: An Extended Meeting of the Council on Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., May 9-12, 1964: Findings, pamphlet, UNM-NAS.

<sup>13</sup> For Kennedy's and Shriver's reactions to Acoma leaders, see "Transcript of the President's News Conference on Foreign and Domestic Matters," New York Times, August 23, 1962, p. 14. "Acoma Tribe Asks Peace Corps Help," New York Times, August 26, 1962, p. 77. Unfortunately, much of the national press coverage on VISTA workers reflected miscommunication and cultural misunderstandings. See the following New York Times articles: "VISTA Girls Told to Leave Indians," December 15, 1965, p. 31; Nan Robertson, "Tribe Wants Back 2 Girls It Ousted," December 24, 1965, p. 40; and "2 VISTA Volunteers Will Rejoin Indians," January 21, 1966, p. 44. Francis Paul Prucha, The Great Father, pp. 2:1093-94. Such misunderstandings explain why so few Native people were involved in VISTA. During the summer of 1966, only two Indians served as VISTA volunteers on reservations. Albert John Wabaunsee (Pottawatomie), "VISTA Needs Your Help," ABC: Americans Before Columbus, vol. II, no. 7 (September 1966): 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Quote from "3 Universities Getting Indian Poverty Grants," New York Times, July 18, 1965, p. 57. Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928, 2d ed. (1974; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977), 134, 145, 157.



## **“A Human Being on Campus and in the Community”**

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certainly unprecedented, but perhaps the best example of harnessing, organizing, and distributing OEO resources on a statewide level occurred in Oklahoma.

**"Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity"**

In the twentieth century, with the exception of the Osage Reservation in northeastern Oklahoma, the state of Oklahoma has remained the only heavily Indian populated state in the union with no Indian reservations. This unique situation dated back to 1898, when Congress passed the Curtis Act, a law that unilaterally dissolved most of the political sovereignty of Oklahoma's tribes. After statehood in 1907, Oklahoma's Indians remained split into roughly two types of social groupings: modernizers and traditionalists. Statehood intensified the old modernizer-traditionalist pattern that long predated the removal era. Modernizers, on the one hand, generally attended integrated public schools with non-Indians, became swept up in the state's economic development, and assumed positions of influence based on their ties to both Indian and non-Indian communities. A classic example of a modernizer was W.W. Keeler, principal chief of the Cherokee Nation and board member of the Phillips Petroleum Company based in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Not all Cherokees became modernizers, however, as Angie Debo discovered during her fieldwork for the Indian Rights Association in 1949. A librarian and historian at Oklahoma A&M College (now, Oklahoma State University) in Stillwater, Debo met full-blood traditionalists living in rural communities in eastern Oklahoma, where church services were still being conducted in Cherokee and other indigenous languages. Unlike modernizers, traditionalists rarely interacted with non-Indians. Many lived in homes where tribal language(s) served as the lingua franca. Other traditionalists refused to vote or participate in non-tribal governments.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lois H. Gatchell, "Problems in Finding Out the Peculiar Needs of Indians in Poverty," unpublished manuscript, February 18, 1966, folder 9, box 282, Fred R. Harris Collection (FRHC), Carl Albert Center for Congressional Research and Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman (OU-CAC). For information



## “A Human Being on Campus and in the Community”

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In Oklahoma, a variety of circumstances determined whether Indian students became modernizers or traditionalists. For those who attended public schools, the size and location of the school district often dictated whether students remained isolated in rural, Indian-oriented communities or joined the non-Indian mainstream. During the mid-1960s, if a community had fewer than 500 residents, BIA funds earmarked for Indian students under the Johnson-O'Malley (JOM) act actually benefited those students, while in larger districts JOM appropriations disappeared into the general fund. Although some Oklahoma Indians clearly fell into one of these two categories—i.e., traditionalists versus modernizers—many Oklahoma Indians failed to fit into this neat dichotomous categorization. Those who acculturated to the mainstream often formed societies to preserve their Indian heritage(s), a source of pride for many middle-class Oklahomans. Yet, ironically, middle-class Indians usually were cut off from impoverished Native American communities. One acculturated middle-class Native said, “Our club wanted to take a food basket to an Indian family at Christmas time, but we didn't know any poor Indians. So we called an Indian minister.”<sup>16</sup>

During the early 1960s, LaDonna Harris (Comanche), an OU student, examined graduation rates of high school students in Canton, Oklahoma, a predominantly Cheyenne and Arapaho community. Harris found that Native students in Canton performed well in

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on Angie Debo's fieldwork, see Lawrence E. Lindley to Debo, March 10, 1949; Debo to Lindley, March 24, June 20, August 16, December 29, 1949, reel 59; May 3, 1951, reel 60, IRAP. The Indian Rights Association published Debo's report in a pamphlet entitled The Five Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions. LeRoy H. Fischer, Oklahoma State University: Historic Old Central (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1988), 209.

<sup>16</sup> Quote from Lois H. Gatchell, “Problems in Finding Out the Peculiar Needs of Indians in Poverty.”



school up through adolescence. Yet, not one Indian had ever graduated from Canton High School, and not one Indian had ever been a teacher there. In an effort to understand Canton's dubious distinction, Harris turned to Dr. William Carmack of the University of Oklahoma's Center for Continuing Education.<sup>17</sup>

Carmack organized a meeting with Comanche students at the Fort Sill Indian School in Lawton to discuss how community action could address problems affecting dropout and retention. In the fall of 1962, Carmack and other staff from the university's Southwest Center of Human Relations, a division of Continuing Education at the University of Oklahoma, lectured Indian students in Lawton on problem solving techniques, self-improvement, group process, and communication skills. Previously, the Southwest Center at OU, founded by Jewish activists, had been involved in issues of race relations, economic development, law enforcement, and labor management. In addition, the center had organized vocational education programs at the request of Indian communities. As a one journalist explained the center's activities, "Local Indian representatives request weekly programs they think will benefit their particular Indian community," at which time OU's Southwest Center arranged for faculty members, government officials, or community leaders to participate.<sup>18</sup> In 1963, Lawton community leaders took over the workshop, moving the meetings to the Chamber of Commerce and renaming it the Lawton Information and Education Workshop. Like D'Arcy McNickle's AID workshops, Lawton workshop leaders switched from lectures to a more group-

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<sup>17</sup> Fred R. Harris, interview with author, November 13, 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Bob Swearingin, "Imagination Center's Only Limit," clipping, n.d., attached to John B. O'Hara to Fred Harris, August 1, 1965, folder 28, box 12, FRHC.



oriented structure. During the 1964–65 year, the Lawton group took even greater steps by organizing an education committee, encouraging younger Indians to attend college and graduate school, writing a mission statement, changing their name to the Lawton Community Relations Council, and inspiring people in Anadarko, Carnegie, Hobart, Ponca City, and Watonga to establish Indian centers like theirs.<sup>19</sup>

By the early to mid-1960s, Lawton emerged as an activist community, partly because of grassroots support but also because of the election of Lawton resident Fred R. Harris to the United States Senate in November 1964. The husband of LaDonna Harris, Fred Harris—who defeated former University of Oklahoma football coach Charles “Bud” Wilkinson to serve out the last two years of Senator Robert S. Kerr’s six-year term—sought to form a statewide organization that would “improve cultural and economic opportunities and conditions of Oklahoma and American Indians and help draw them more fully into the Oklahoma and American economy and culture.”<sup>20</sup> During the summer of 1965, Fred and LaDonna Harris canvassed the state of Oklahoma and formed a coordinating committee made up of Iola Taylor Hayden (Comanche) of Lawton, Senator Harris’s aide Bill Sexton, BIA Muskogee Area Director Les Towle, BIA Anadarko Area Director Virgil Harrington, and OEO state director Robert B. Jones. Drawing on their collective resources, the coordinating committee held a meeting at the University of Oklahoma on August 7, 1965, which was attended by over 500 Indian and non-Indian state- and region-wide leaders. At this meeting, Indian activists from throughout

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<sup>19</sup> Fred R. Harris interview, November 13, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Article 5, Constitution and Bylaws, Oklahoma Indian Community for Indian Development, August 7, 1965, in folder 5, box 282, FRHC.



Oklahoma read the minutes of the coordinating committee meetings, voted on the organization's new articles, selected trustees and a board of directors, and secured an agreement from LaDonna Harris to administer the new organization under the name of Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO).<sup>21</sup>

Having formed a statewide organization with board members representing the BIA, OEO, and tribal leaders from Apache, Cherokee, Cheyenne–Arapaho, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Comanche, Creek, Kickapoo, Kiowa, Miami, Ponca, Quapaw, Seminole, and Shawnee communities, OIO turned its attention to expanding university–tribal outreach programs. Throughout the summer of 1965, while Fred and LaDonna Harris formalized OIO's organization, the Southwest Center of Human Relations provided administrative support for OIO's inaugural meeting. Southwest Center Director John B. O'Hara, a Euramerican, recommended that OIO might increase its chances of securing public and private grants by becoming part of the center itself. If OIO were based at the Southwest Center of Human Relations, O'Hara explained, OU could furnish all of its clerical, administrative, office space, consultant, and financial oversight needs. As a result, OIO opened its headquarters at the university, and LaDonna Harris asked O'Hara to serve on a grant-writing committee as a member of OIO's board of directors.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Fred Harris to Bill Sexton, October 15, 1965, folder 5; K.A. McClure, “Lawton Community Relations Council: History,” unpublished manuscript, n.d., folder 9; “Minutes of the Initial Meeting of Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO), August 7, 1965,” folder 33, box 282, FRHC. Arrell Morgan Gibson, *Oklahoma: A History of Five Centuries*, 2d ed. (1965; Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 258.

<sup>22</sup> O'Hara to LaDonna Harris, September 16, 1965, folder 7; Donald F. Sullivan to Dr. J. Clayton Feaver, Mrs. Lois Gatchell, Miss Iola Taylor, Leslie Towle, O'Hara, and Joe Exendine, March 14, 1966, folder 9; Fred Harris to Murray L. Wax, March 17, 1966, folder 28; Mrs. Don Gatchell to Leon Penn, March 17, 1966, folder 29, box 282, FRHC.



Throughout 1965–66, O’Hara sought to secure an OEO grant for OIO’s operation. After learning of the OEO grants to Arizona State University, the University of South Dakota, and the University of Utah, O’Hara wrote to Dr. Warren Cardwell, the director of OEO’s Indian Section, that OU’s Southwest Center “has for the past four years worked with Indian tribes in various sorts of community development programs.” “Because of our past activities in these areas,” O’Hara informed Cardwell, “we have developed a sizeable reservoir of faculty members who are sensitive to the cross-cultural problems and difficulties encountered in working with Indians.”<sup>23</sup> Despite OU’s efforts to build community action programs, OEO regulations only allowed for community action grants in federal Indian reservation communities. By limiting OEO grant funds to Indian communities exclusively located on reservation lands, the federal government seemed to have temporarily ignored the unique situation of Oklahoma Indians. Finally, after almost a year, the Indian-controlled organization Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO) received a \$20,050 grant from the federal government’s Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to train tribal leaders.<sup>24</sup>

Due to OIO’s efforts, Oklahoma began tapping into the federal government’s anti-poverty funds, but many critics pointed out that government-funded community action programs were problematic. W.E. McIntosh, the principal chief of the Creek Nation, viewed the accomplishments of OIO in general and LaDonna Harris in particular as

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<sup>23</sup> O’Hara to Dr. Warren Cardwell, November 23, 1965, folder 29, box 282, FRHC.

<sup>24</sup> “State Indian Program Aided,” clipping, n.d., folder 2, box 283; Cardwell to O’Hara, December 6, 1965, folder 29, box 282. The original grant submitted to OEO had been for \$240,733. “Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, July 15, 1966,” folder 33, box 282, FRHC.



miraculous for uniting all Indians of Oklahoma. The Creek leader dubbed her the “third U.S. Senator from Oklahoma.”<sup>25</sup> Although many heralded LaDonna Harris’s leadership, some severely criticized the programs OIO sponsored. For instance, the very notion that OEO would extend a grant to OIO to train tribal leaders offended many Oklahoma Indians. In 1966, the OIO asked tribal leaders to answer a questionnaire. The OIO asked: what prevents Indian people from becoming fully participating partners in your community? What should be included in an Indian leadership training course? What major problems do Indians face? In response, the OIO received some caustic comments. “What the Indian needs,” responded a college-educated full-blood Cherokee minister, “is respect for the leadership they [already] have.”<sup>26</sup>

Criticism of OIO and OU’s community action programs arose from other quarters as well. At the Indian Center in Anadarko, Oklahoma, for instance, where OU’s Southwest Center sponsored programs for people in the Anadarko vicinity, problems came to a head when the public relations director for the center, Pat Hayes (Chickasaw), was asked to resign. At a meeting in September 1965, just a month after OIO was officially established as a not-for-profit, tax-exempt educational and charitable organization, university and Anadarko Center officials—including OU registrar Boyce Timmons, the OIO’s Harold Cameron, OU project director Bob Miller, and Anadarko Center program chair Myers Wahnee—fired Pat Hayes as public relations director. Hayes

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<sup>25</sup> “LaDonna Harris Heads New Indian Aid Group,” The Pictorial Press, June 16, 1966, p. 1, clipping, folder 1, box 283, FRHC.

<sup>26</sup> Unidentified quote from Mrs. Thelman Moton to Harold Cameron, July 31, 1966, folder 32, box 282, FRHC.



leveled charges against everyone involved in the university-tribal outreach effort. He claimed that his authority as public relations director had been ignored, that Boyce Timmons had no business investigating his background, that Bob Miller had failed to do his job, and that OU's six Indian centers located around the state had simply served as "six political cells supporting the . . . senator."<sup>27</sup> Heaping on more criticism, Hayes alleged that Miller and Timmons' efforts to pursue brutality charges against Watonga police had left "hard feelings" and undermined the Watonga Indian Center's hopes of expanding its local base of support.<sup>28</sup>

While Hayes's accusations certainly may have been true, the heated argument between Hayes and Myers Wahnee, which led to fisticuffs at the September 1965 meeting, probably did not encourage a balanced perspective on the events taking place. Wahnee felt ashamed for assaulting Hayes, yet Hayes never let up in his attacks on the joint OU-OIO community action programs. Indeed, ten months later, Hayes wrote to a member of the OU Board of Regents that OIO had spent \$20,050 to hold only two meetings involving just forty-five Indians. Furthermore, Hayes renewed the charge that OIO simply functioned as a political arm of Senator Harris's reelection campaign. Harris did face a reelection campaign in 1966, and OIO probably did not hinder him in winning reelection that November. Similarly, others leveled political charges against Harris, including Paul W. Goaz, who claimed that "Fred Harris is not interested in Indians—except one tribe

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<sup>27</sup> Pat Hurley Daniel Hayes (Chickasaw) to Bob Miller, October 5, 1965, folder 7, box 283, FRHC.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



perhaps.<sup>29</sup> With these accusations in mind, Hayes asked the regents if the money would be better spent at Southeastern State Teachers College in Durant, a college that had been sponsoring federal Indian aid programs for years?<sup>30</sup>

Whether true or not, the charges that Pat Hayes brought against OIO, like the criticisms raised by tribal leaders after the leadership workshops of 1966, raised plausible points. OIO garnered a great deal of support for fulfilling a need that many Oklahoma Indians believed existed. Given the diversity of the sixty-six tribes in Oklahoma, this was no small feat. Yet, if it had not been for the election of Fred Harris as United States Senator, OIO probably would never have emerged. In response to critics, Senator and then-Mrs. Harris took two important steps that carried on the mission of improving Native people's opportunities and conditions. First, after Harris's reelection in 1966, the Harrises became more involved in helping individuals seek scholarships and fulfill tribal membership requirements, while at the same time gradually removing themselves from the administration of OIO. This approach allowed Senator Harris to serve constituents without risking the charge that he was using government services for partisan ends. Second, in 1970 Fred and LaDonna Harris formed a national counterpart to OIO called Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO). Like OIO, this organization sought to aid tribal

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<sup>29</sup> Paul W. Goaz to Representative John N. “Happy” Camp (R-OK), Washington, D.C., July 7, 1969, folder 33, box 2, John N. “Happy” Camp Collection, OU-CAC.

<sup>30</sup> Harold Cameron, “Activity Report and Incident at Anadarko Meeting, October 21, 1965;” Mrs. Leona Hayes to Dr. Thurman White, December 1, 1965; Pat Hayes to Miller, April 19, 1966; Hayes to Dr. Mark R. Johnson, July 10, 1966, folder 7, box 283, FRHC. It is difficult to tell whether or not Hayes was simply a crackpot, or was leveling legitimate charges against the OIO-OU community action programs. In interviews in 1997, Fred Harris and LaDonna Harris did not remember Hayes. Fred Harris interview, November 13, 1997. Arrell Morgan Gibson, *Oklahoma*, pp. 254, 258.



communities in a variety of ways, but, departing from OIO, the national body emphasized economic and leadership development among tribes.<sup>31</sup>

As for Senator Harris's service to Native American constituents, much of his correspondence dealt with the issue of disseminating information about scholarships to students and acting as the students' advocate. Many students, or students' parents, wrote to Harris after they had been turned down by the BIA for a higher education grant. Some students failed to receive the BIA education grants either because they were not poor enough or because they had chosen a field that did not receive high priority. For instance, after graduating from Henryetta High School in May 1965, Phyllis Berryhill (Creek) was accepted to the physical education program at Northeastern State College in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. After reviewing Berryhill's request for a grant, BIA officials said that Berryhill's father earned too much money. Yet, the BIA went on to suggest that Berryhill apply to Haskell Institute, where she could receive a tuition-free education along with free room and board.<sup>32</sup> Another student, Judy Sheashe Pennington (Sioux-Caddo), who planned to attend Central State College in Edmond, Oklahoma, encountered problems obtaining BIA funding because she was adopted by non-Indians. After the BIA informed Pennington that she must apply for a certificate of Indian blood, another BIA official

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<sup>31</sup> J.D. William to District Director, Internal Revenue Service, Baltimore, Maryland, February 20, 1970; IRS Exemption Application, Form 1023, Schedule 10h, February 20, 1970, folder 17, box 197, FRHC; Americans for Indian Opportunity, 1987-88 (Washington, D.C.: AIO, 1988). Fred Harris interview, November 13, 1997. Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian, p. 159. LaDonna Harris continued to lead Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) through the 1990s, relocating the organization's national headquarters to Bernalillo, New Mexico, a small community just north of Albuquerque. AIO sponsors an Indian leadership training workshop each year.

<sup>32</sup> Phyllis Berryhill (Creek), to LaDonna Harris, July 28, 1965; Fred Harris to Berryhill, August 17, 1965, folder 7, box 282, FRHC.



explained that in order to receive the certificate she had to have a court order to learn more about her biological parents.<sup>33</sup>

Senator Harris often helped constituents negotiate the BIA's enormous bureaucracy, as in the case of UCLA student Sandy E. Gibbs (Creek-Sauk and Fox). Gibbs had received \$3,980 in grants and loans, but, in a letter to Harris, he wrote that “For my family this is not enough to even exist on.”<sup>34</sup> Gibbs' primary obstacle was that he had to apply to the Muskogee Area Office, his “home” area office, for a grant, despite the fact that he was living and attending college in California. “I will probably never have an opportunity to get an education like this again,” Gibbs eagerly explained, “so I want to take [full] advantage of it if at all possible.”<sup>35</sup>

More than any other Oklahoma official, Fred R. Harris effectively utilized the resources available to him as a United States Senator to provide Oklahoma Indians access to new and continuing federal programs during the 1960s. Harris named his spouse LaDonna as head of OIO and his *chargé d'affaires* in dealing with Indian constituents. Having formed a successful statewide organization for harnessing federal economic opportunity grants for the funding of university-tribal outreach programs, the Harrises helped make higher education more accessible and accountable to Native communities and people.

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<sup>33</sup> Judy Sheashe Pennington (tribe not specified) to LaDonna Harris, August 30, 1967, folder 17, box 284, FRHC.

<sup>34</sup> Sandy E. Gibbs (Creek-Sauk and Fox) to Fred Harris, October 22, 1970, folder 2, box 197, FRHC.

<sup>35</sup> Quote from *ibid.* Also see, Louis R. Bruce (Mohawk), Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., to Fred Harris, stamped December 4, 1970, folder 2, box 197, FRHC.



### **American Indian Student Clubs**

Although OEO grants funded university-tribal outreach programs throughout Oklahoma and the nation, from 1945 to 1970 the growing popularization of American Indian student clubs would have a more direct and long-lasting impact on the lives of individual Native students attending colleges and universities. Native students involved in campus-based clubs saw their actions lead to more immediate results. Indian club activists had to negotiate university bureaucracies in battles over funding, but the fledgling bureaucratic structures they encountered were mere mid-day shadows in comparison to the federal monolith OIO faced. Unlike OIO's efforts to gradually "heave the wheels" of OEO and BIA bureaucratic structures, however, American Indian college student activism garnered more glorious newspaper headlines.

From the late 1940s to the late 1960s, as Indian enrollments at colleges and universities grew, the number of student clubs expanded along with student activism. By the late 1960s, Native American students adopted tactics of direct action protest that other groups, such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (1957) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (1960), had applied successfully. During the last two academic years of the 1960s, 1968-69 and 1969-70, campus-based Native American activism revolutionized the way non-Indians viewed United States' indigenous people and, indeed, the way many Native people identified themselves.

During the 1968-69 academic year, Indian students at Dartmouth College repeatedly criticized the school's use of an Indian mascot at sports events. The critics



alleged that the mascot perpetuated a romantic, naïve, and unrealistic view of Native cultures. Although Dartmouth’s Indian mascot had been leading cheers from the sidelines for over forty years, Native American students in the late 1960s pointed out that having an Indian figure playing the role of mascot denigrated the small number of Indians currently enrolled at Dartmouth, the significance of Native people to Dartmouth’s founding, and the desperate economic plight of many indigenous people throughout the United States. Since 1869, out of 43,900 students who had graduated from Dartmouth, only about a dozen had been American Indians. Indeed, in the 200 years since Dartmouth’s founding in 1769, only 19 out of the 117 Indian students who had attended Dartmouth went on to graduate. In light of the sad state of Indian higher education at Dartmouth, the college’s athletic council agreed to do away with the Indian mascot–cheerleader figure. Furthermore, college officials established an Indian Center and resolved to admit fifteen Indian students each year. The director of the new Indian Center, John P. Olquin (Isleta Pueblo), a 1965 graduate of the University of New Mexico, said:

We’re trying ... to equip young Indians for positions as doctors, lawyers, sociologists, [and] teachers[,] and we don’t know the real recipe for doing that ... But Dartmouth is giving us a chance to make mistakes. They’re saying, ‘Here’s the expertise—what are you going to do about it?’ It’s a real challenge.<sup>36</sup>

Olquin correctly noted that Dartmouth’s effort to expand Indian enrollments presented a real challenge to the students, but an even greater challenge to the college. Admitting fifteen Native American students per year represented only a small step forward. Out of an

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<sup>36</sup> John P. Olquin (Isleta Pueblo), quoted in M.A. Farber, “Dartmouth Adds Indian Students,” *New York Times*, July 26, 1970, p. 59.



average freshman class size of 850, these fifteen students would compose just over 1.5 percent of the first-year class.<sup>37</sup>

Due to Dartmouth students' success in banning the “Indian” mascot, Native American students at other institutions of higher education quickly took up the fight. For example, on November 14, 1969, Native activists at the University of Oklahoma (OU), who had formed a National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) chapter at the university, met to discuss the OU football team's mascot. Known as “Little Red,” the mascot danced on the sidelines at all home games throughout the 1950s and 1960s. From 1963 to 1969, Kirk Kickingbird (Kiowa) played “Little Red” and said that he felt his dances helped break down the stereotype that Indians were “not diligent, not useful.”<sup>38</sup> By the fall of 1969, however, OU Indian students objected to “Little Red” as symbolizing the negative stereotype of Indians as savages, while contemporary problems of unemployment and uneducation remained unresolved. By then, too, a new “Little Red,” played by Ron Benally (Navajo), had appeared. The OU chapter of NIYC publicized their critique of “Little Red” in the OU student newspaper, the Daily Oklahoman. This letter prompted Benally to sit out the next game, saying he would not dance if students opposed it. The combined actions of the NIYC students and Benally unleashed a furor throughout the state of Oklahoma “as if the flag, motherhood and apple pie had been attacked.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> “Dartmouth Loses Its Indian Mascot,” New York Times, October 12, 1969, p. 78.

<sup>38</sup> Kirk Kickingbird (Kiowa), quoted in Larry Nemecek, “A Centennial's Worth of Symbols,” Norman Transcript, October 21, 1990, p. 11C, clipping, “University of Oklahoma” file, Norman Public Library.

<sup>39</sup> “OU Indians Move on Little Red,” Americans Before Columbus, vol. 2, issue 2 (February–March 1970): 1.



Invoking extreme rhetoric, the NIYC editorialized that “Having an Indian mascot ... seems to many young Indians analogous to the Germans having a Jewish mascot at their soccer games who dances the hora after each score.”<sup>40</sup> Although this analogy played well in spurring momentum for Native student activism, OU student leaders recognized that they had to register their protest through certain bureaucratic university channels before anything could be achieved. Consequently, they wrote a letter to OU President Herbert Holloman, asking him to remove “Little Red” permanently. OU’s Dennis Red Elk (tribe not specified) explained that

The essential issue is whether OU will support a stereotype image and presentation of a symbol that is abusive and insensitive to American Indian identities and cultures. The mascot is symbolic of the non-Indian in the football stadium and rejects him as a human being on campus and in the community.<sup>41</sup>

Having read Red Elk’s letter, President Holloman referred the issue to the university’s Human Relations Committee, which recommended that he suspend “Little Red.” Holloman refused to do so. In January 1970, however, after Indian students staged a sit-in at his office, President Holloman agreed to ban “Little Red” from performing at any future football games.

The following fall, however, a “Bring-Little-Red-Back” movement sought to reverse the ban on “Little Red.” Meeting this effort head-on, NIYC leaders raised questions about “Little Red’s” symbolism: would African American students support a cotton-picking slave parading before the crowd each time the all-Caucasian football team

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Dennis Red Elk (tribe not specified) letter in *ibid.*, p. 5.



scored a touchdown? The NIYC achieved its goals, but it paid a price. The ban remained in effect, but the OU chapter of NIYC faced considerable hostility and lost virtually all of its university funding. OU's student government rejected the chapter's request for \$8,000 outright, and even then only grudgingly appropriated the group \$250. Indeed, the student government made the appropriation only because the NIYC chapter owed \$200 to a printing company. Meanwhile, the student government allocated \$6,000 to the black student club, \$3,000 to the international students, and \$1,500 to the Pakistani students.<sup>42</sup>

Native students' struggles to remove Indian mascots at Dartmouth and the University of Oklahoma represented the growing activism of American Indian college students and served as a harbinger of changes to come in higher education. Without Native student protests at Dartmouth and Oklahoma, the practice of using Indian mascots might have continued. As the examples of the Dartmouth and Oklahoma protests point out, the role of Indian student organizations would prove pivotal to the expansion of Indian-oriented programs and services at colleges and universities nationwide. The events of the 1968-69 and 1969-70 school years emerged spontaneously. Indeed, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, growing Indian college enrollments and student clubs inspired activism at Dartmouth, Oklahoma, and elsewhere. American Indians' student clubs became the catalyst for the campus-based, self-determination movement in higher education. Between 1945 and 1970, Native student clubs forced colleges and universities to institutionalize new services and programs. Student groups at Brigham Young University, the University

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<sup>42</sup> "OU Indians Move on Little Red," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 2, issue 2 (February-March 1970): 1, 4-5; David Poolaw, "OU Combats Racism," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. II, issue 4 (August-December 1970): 5.

of New Mexico, and Fort Lewis College, for example, helped lead the effort to revolutionize Indian higher education.



### **Brigham Young University**

Like their counterparts at Dartmouth College and the University of Oklahoma, Brigham Young University's (BYU) Indian students formed a club that prompted university-wide changes. With 535 Indian students enrolled in 1971, BYU boasted the largest Indian enrollment at any university in the country. Native students who influenced BYU deserve much credit for changing one of the nation's most culturally conservative educational institutions.<sup>43</sup>

After World War II, Indian enrollment at the "Y" increased until 1952, when Indian students formed an organization to help new students adjust. The organization, dubbed the Tribe of Many Feathers, sponsored parties, big brother-big sister networks, and Indian dances, and constructed homecoming parade floats. Between 1950 and 1958, the number of Native Americans at BYU rose from seven to forty. Of the forty Native students who enrolled at the beginning of the 1957 autumn quarter, however, only seven completed the entire year. A low retention rate at BYU was not necessarily caused by the lack of money, since the average amount of financial support for each of the university's Indian students in 1957-58 was \$744. Instead, the primary reason behind BYU's high dropout rate boiled down to the lack of courses and programs encouraging more positive treatment of American Indian culture and history.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ernest L. Wilkinson, et al., eds., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 4 vols. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 3: 520, 534-35.

<sup>44</sup> "Tribe of Many Feathers;" "Annual Report of the Indian Education Program, June 30, 1958;" "Indian Studies Minor and Indian Student Recruitment," n.d., folder 1, box 10; Gwilliam to Indian Education Committee, November 14, 1957, folder 12, box 5, Collection UA 552, University Archives, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter BYUA); Richard Owen Clark, "Higher Education Programs for American Indians at Selected Southwestern Colleges and Universities" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1972), 68-107



To meet the problem of low retention and high dropout rates among Native students, university officials hired Robert Gwilliam in 1957 to serve as advisor to Indian students. A Euramerican probably of Welsh ancestry, Gwilliam proposed that BYU and LDS authorities create an Indian service placement program to encourage Natives to join the Mormon Church. Working with Gwilliam, the Tribe of Many Feathers sponsored an open house at BYU for Indian high school seniors throughout Utah, thereby attracting new Indian students, such as Melvin D. Thom (Walker River Paiute). From 1959 to 1961, Thom attended BYU on scholarship and studied civil engineering. While at BYU, Thom joined with Gwilliam and others in organizing an Indian study group. After graduating, Thom helped to found and served as the first president of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC).<sup>45</sup>

In a 1962 thesis, Brigham Young University graduate student Anthony F. Purley argued that the academic preparation of Indian students had changed little since 1954 and that bilingual Indians had more difficulty adjusting to academic life than did those who spoke English only. Four years later, in a thesis comparing programs for Indians at BYU with similar institutional support programs at the Utah Trade Technical Institute, Vernon Harold Pack, another graduate student, provided eleven recommendations based on his research that would help improve Indian students' performances. Although Pack made many excellent suggestions, none of them mentioned a more positive treatment of American Indian culture and history. In the early-to-mid-1960s, about the same time that

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<sup>45</sup> Gwilliam to Doris Boyd, October 30, 1957, folder 14, box 9; "Indian Study Group meeting, November 20, 1959, folder 5, box 5, Collection UA 552, BYUA. "Melvin D. Thom" (Walker River Paiute), *Aborigine: Instrument of the NIYC*, vol. 1, no. 1 (June 28, 1961): 2.



these two graduate student theses appeared, a series of events took place that expanded Native American students' participation in life at BYU.<sup>46</sup> During Education Week in 1963, an annual event hosted by the School of Education, Gwilliam suggested that an Indian leadership seminar be held. As part of the seminar held that year, Richard Henstrom of BYU's Extension Services asked Indian dancers to perform. Henstrom's invitation was a breakthrough: it introduced traditional Indian dances into activities on BYU's campus. More importantly, the Indian leadership seminar and dancing initiated the ensuing debate over the response of the Mormon faithful to traditional tribal dances. Gwilliam remained an advocate. He had seen the Nizhoni Indian Dances at the University of New Mexico, where he told a New Mexico state education official that the dances served an “admirable purpose.”<sup>47</sup> For the next three to four years, few raised objections to traditional Indian dancing at BYU.

In 1965, however, when BYU began celebrating an “American Indian Week,” the issue of LDS theology versus American Indian traditional culture arose again. Plans for the 1966 and 1967 celebrations in particular prompted considerable debate. LDS leaders raised questions about the advisability of introducing traditional tribal dances in a university festival that ostensibly contributed to the Mormons' greater effort to redeem

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<sup>46</sup> Anthony F. Purley, “Comparison of the Results of Scholastic Aptitude Tests and College G.P.A. of Two Indian Populations at Brigham Young University” (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1962). Vernon Harold Pack, “A Study to Determine the Effectiveness of the Indian Education Program at Brigham Young University in Meeting the Needs of the Indian Student” (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966), 112, 118, 120, 123, 129, 135–36.

<sup>47</sup> Quote from Gwilliam to Joe H. Herrera, April 7, 1962, folder 2, box 3; Paul E. Felt to Richard Henstrom, February 13, 1964; Gwilliam to Dean Larsen, February 25, 1963, folder 8, box 5, Collection UA 552, BYUA.



“Indian Israel.”<sup>48</sup> Although Paul Felt, the director of BYU’s Institute of American Indian Studies and Research, had questioned the impact of “pagan” tribal dances on Mormon conversion of American Indian students, there was no consensus on this point. Some Mormons agreed with Felt, while others did not. Felt, Spencer Kimball, and others used the term “powwow” to refer to unacceptable tribal dances. Ironically, Felt later approved a flier labeling the 1967 celebration a “big heap Pow-Wow.”<sup>49</sup>

Whether Mormon converts or not, BYU’s Indian students continued to pressure university and church officials to incorporate Indian studies courses. By the late 1960s, church officials realized that an Indian education program at BYU could serve dual purposes: to support an Indian studies minor geared towards Indians and to aid Euramerican missionaries planning to work among indigenous communities. These Euramericans, who had formed an organization called the Sons of Ammon, likewise supported the minor. In speaking for the minor, Paul Felt argued that the program should include teacher, Navajo language, and public relations training. Felt received strong support from BYU linguist Robert Wallace Blair, who had previously taught thirty students (half Indian, half Anglo) in an informal non-credit Navajo language course. In 1968–69, BYU adopted a fifteen-credit-hour Indian studies minor. The program included up to seven credit hours of anthropology, up to three hours of education, two of sociology, two of archaeology, two of history, two of religion, and up to four hours of

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<sup>48</sup> Felt to Stake Superintendents, March 19, 1967, folder 2, box 1, Collection UA 552, BYUA.

<sup>49</sup> “How!!!” pamphlet, folder 6, box 1, Collection UA 552, BYUA.



electives. For a church-centered institution, it is surprising that the Indian studies minor permitted only two hours of religion credit.<sup>50</sup>

BYU's approval of the Indian studies minor for the 1968-69 school year represented major changes in the university's curricula. For the first time, LDS and BYU authorities recognized the need to institutionalize interdisciplinary cultural studies in a Boasian fashion. Even NIYC recognized the importance of reporting BYU Indians' views on contemporary issues and problems. In interviews with 340 Indian students at BYU, Stanley Snake (tribe not specified) of the NIYC found that 95 percent or more supported greater pan-Indian unity, emphasis on education, respect for the old ways, and encouragement of self-determination.<sup>51</sup>

The success of Indian students at Brigham Young University from 1945 to 1970 was astounding when viewed in light of the missionary goals of the institution. BYU-trained Mormon missionaries trekked throughout the world on foot or bicycle, transforming the church into one of the fastest growing faiths in the world. Yet, at the same time, American Indians attending the "Y" had forced the institution to adopt changes that called into question some of the basic tenets of LDS faith.

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<sup>50</sup> Gwilliam to Acquisitions Office, March 24, 1960, folder 13, box 13; "Staff Meeting Minutes, Indian Education Office, February 7, 1964," folder 17, box 12; Robert Wallace Blair, "Navajo Basic Course: Proposal for Research, October 20, 1966," folder 12, box 13; Felt to Stewart L. Durrant, February 2, 1967, folder 2, box 1, Collection UA 552; "Catalog Revisions for 1968-69," folder 5, box 1, Collection UA 581, BYUA.

<sup>51</sup> Stanley Snake, "NIYC Conducts Survey at BYU," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 2, issue 1 (December 1969-January 1970): 5.



### **University of New Mexico**

In 1952, Indian students from throughout the Southwest attending the University of New Mexico (UNM) established the Kiva Club. As the club's name suggests, UNM drew many of its students from the Rio Grande Pueblos of northern New Mexico, where many of the religious ceremonies and rituals take place in kivas. Hence, by naming their club for the sacred space known as a kiva, UNM's Indian students honored cultural traditions and maintained community ties. Since the construction of Hodgin Hall in 1890, UNM's architecture also reflected the Pueblos' strong influence over New Mexico and the Southwest. Continuing this tradition, in 1963 UNM constructed the Kiva Lecture Hall to reflect the important role that sacred space in general, and Pueblo traditions in particular, should play on campus. Despite efforts to maintain architectural continuity, the Kiva Lecture Hall contained serious design flaws. Floor to ceiling windows lined about three-quarters of the Kiva's circular exterior circumference. When the morning sunlight flooded the interior, the temperature became unbearably hot, prompting the dean of the College of Education to tape brown paper over the windows. The next day, however, the "heat difference was so great that all the eastern windows shattered!" Eventually, insulated drapes were installed "away from the windows by some inches."<sup>52</sup>

Unlike Indian clubs at other institutions, however, UNM's Kiva Club created a scholarship fund and received strong faculty support. In 1954, the club raised \$2,000 at

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<sup>52</sup> "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, September 28, 1953, for the period October 1, 1952 to September 30, 1953," Willard Williams "Nibs" Hill, faculty file (hereafter WWH); Joyce Simmons, ed., *1955 Mirage* (Albuquerque: Associated Students of the University of New Mexico, 1955), 137. "Kiva Lecture Hall, 1963," folder 69, box 2; quotes from Albert D. Ford, "Ford Evaluates Post-Ford Buildings," card, folder 69, box 11, University Architect, Collection 028, University Archives (hereafter UNMA), UNM-CSWR.



the Nizhoni Indian Dances (meaning “beautiful” in Navajo) held at the old Zimmerman Stadium. Rather than host a party, club members established a scholarship program in the hope that this money would support growing Indian enrollments and encourage “leadership through higher education.”<sup>53</sup> The Kiva Club Scholarship Fund filled a much-needed niche, as did the efforts of other organizations to establish scholarship funds after World War II, such as the National Congress of American Indians’ incorporation of ARROW as its fundraising and scholarship arm. Like ARROW, the Kiva Club Scholarship Fund drew on the example of state, regional, and national fundraising cooperatives organized by philanthropic organizations to meet the growing costs and increasing enrollments in higher education. The Kiva Club sought to make a consistent commitment to fundraising that other pan-Indian organizations, such as the Indian Rights Association and the Association on American Indian Affairs, failed to carry out. Furthermore, because UNM’s Indian students primarily came from the Rio Grande Pueblos and the Navajo Nation, the Kiva Club tended to support these tribes in various ways.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to its scholarship resources, the Kiva Club received strong faculty sponsorship from Willard Williams “Nibs” Hill, the chair of the Anthropology Department from 1947 to 1964. During the 1930s, after studying under Edward Sapir at Yale University, Hill conducted his field research on the Navajo Reservation and began teaching at UNM. Hill became a leader in the field of anthropology, conducting pioneering work on

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<sup>53</sup> Joyce Simmons, ed., *1955 Mirage*, p. 137.

<sup>54</sup> Joyce Simmons, ed., *1955 Mirage*, p. 137. “Kiva Club,” n.d., in Kiva Club Clippings, UNMA. “Indians to Dance for School Fund,” *New York Times*, April 21, 1957, p. 61. Merle Curti and Roderick Nash, *Philanthropy in the Shaping of American Higher Education* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1965), 238–58.



Santa Clara Pueblo religion and Navajo humor, receiving a one-year appointment in the new Department of Social Relations at Harvard (1946-47), serving as president of the American Anthropological Association (1951-52), and editing the Southwestern Journal of Anthropology. An award winning teacher and well-liked for his congeniality and humor, Hill gladly became the first faculty sponsor of the Kiva Club when Indian students formed the organization in the fall of 1952. With a leading southwestern anthropologist and a university department chair as their sponsor, Kiva Club members could not have asked for better on-campus representation than from Professor Hill.<sup>55</sup>

Another unique aspect of the Kiva Club was its community action programs, introduced a full decade before the federal government began underwriting similar efforts. In addition to the annual Nizhoni Dances, Kiva Club members toured schools among the Rio Grande Pueblos and on the Navajo Reservation to talk about university life and hosted university tours for Indian high school students. The club sponsored an annual Indian youth conference in Santa Fe and participated in regional educational and leadership workshops. Although club members did not require Native American ethnicity for

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<sup>55</sup> W.W. Hill, "Navaho Humor," General Series in Anthropology, no. 9 (1943); Clyde Kluckhohn, Lucy Wales Kluckhohn, and W.W. Hill, Navaho Material Culture (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971). J.C. Knode, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences to President Wernette, UNM, April 30, 1946; "Anthros Elect Hill Veep," New Mexico Daily Lobo, January 5, 1951, clipping; Hill to France V. Scholes, Vice-President, UNM, November 19, 1952; "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, September 28, 1953"; "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, September 30, 1954"; "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, June 1, 1956"; "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, ca. June-July 1957"; "Dr. Hill Is Appointed On Indian Commission," Albuquerque Tribune, July 23, 1957, clipping; Hill to Dean Wynn, Arts & Sciences, UNM, May 8, 1958; "UNM Annual Supplement to the Biographical Record, May 15, 1959"; "Reappointment," Albuquerque Tribune, May 31, 1961, clipping; Will Harrison, "Inside the Capital," Albuquerque Tribune, September 10, 1962, clipping; Hill to Dean Morris Hendrickson, January 20, 1964; "W.W. Hill: Memorial Minute Adopted by the University of New Mexico Faculty, February 12, 1974"; "Navajo authority Dr. W.W. Hill dies," ca. February 1974, clipping; Harry Basehart, Chair, Department of Anthropology, UNM, "W.W. (Nibs) Hill," unpublished manuscript, ca. spring 1974, WWH.



membership, the Kiva Club focused on providing peer support for Indians and awareness of Natives on and off campus.<sup>56</sup>

The Kiva Club's activism led the university to provide more programs and services to support Native students. In 1967, UNM's School of Law began conducting summer pre-law institutes for Indians planning to attend any law school in the country; UNM also became the first law school to offer a certification in Indian law. Each year, the program selected fifteen Native graduating college seniors who received room, board, tuition, travel, book, and stipend scholarships to attend the month-long, pre-law institute. The program surveyed the writing and studies skills needed to complete law school and analyzed contemporary problems and issues regarding the law.<sup>57</sup>

With the campus and community networks encouraged by members of the Kiva Club, and the expansion of UNM's Indian-oriented support services and programs, by the 1969-70 school year the university's Native activists were poised to request more support services. In that year, UNM student Conroy Chino (Acoma), who would go on to become a well-known television journalist in the Southwest, and his fellow Kiva Club members asked President Ferrel Heady to provide a student center where Indians could access peer support, tutoring, information, meeting space, Indian-related publications, and counseling

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<sup>56</sup> "Kiva Club," n.d., in Kiva Club Clippings, UNMA. Velma Martinez, ed., The 1958 Mirage (Albuquerque: Associated Students of the University of New Mexico, 1958), 81.

<sup>57</sup> "Special Law Program for American Indians," ABC: Americans Before Columbus (May 1967): 7; University of New Mexico Bulletin, School of Law, 1968-69 81 (December 1967): 23; University of New Mexico Bulletin, School of Law, 1970-71 83 (December 1969): 25; Fred Harris to Professor Frederick M. Hart and Assistant Dean Hunter L. Greer, University of New Mexico School of Law, April 2, 1970, folder 2, box 197, FRHC; Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian, p. 167; Philip S. Deloria, "The American Indian Law Center: An Informal History," New Mexico Law Review 24 (Spring 1994): 286 n. 3-5.



services. Another student who supported the Indian center, Dale Suazo (tribe not specified), explained that the center would help create a network for Native students, ensuring that Indians would not feel lost as he did his freshman year. In addition, the Kiva Club requested that university officials include special considerations for American Indian applicant, namely: that indigenous languages be allowed to satisfy the university's foreign language requirement; that tuition waivers be provided to students; and, that a well-structured Indian studies program be established. Kiva Club leaders wanted to build on the momentum of change initiated by the Navajo language program's appearance in June 1969. They wanted the Indian center to be ready by the spring of 1970 and the Indian studies program in place by 1971. During the summer of 1970, the university opened the Native American Studies Center.<sup>58</sup>

Although the University of New Mexico still had only about 130–40 Indian students enrolled in 1970, the university's Kiva Club had become an influential organization regionally and nationally. Members attended leadership workshops and conferences, supported the movement to expand the pool of scholarship funds, and pressed the institution to recognize Indian students' presence vis-à-vis new programs and services.<sup>59</sup> Dropout and retention rates still left much to be desired, but, heading into the decade of the 1970s, the University of New Mexico, with its new Native American Studies

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<sup>58</sup> “Kiva Club Presses for Program,” *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 1, issue 1 (October 1969): 4; Kiva Club meeting with Peter MacDonald (Navajo), March 1970, tape 497, reel 2, pp. 3–5, 7–8, Miscellaneous Interviews, American Indian Oral History Transcriptions, UNM–CSWR.

<sup>59</sup> Kiva Club meeting with Peter MacDonald (Navajo Nation Tribal Chair), March 1970, p. 3.



**“A Human Being on Campus and in the Community”**

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Center, found itself poised to take on the role of radical leader in the self-determination movement.

### Fort Lewis College

Indians' experiences at Fort Lewis College (FLC) followed another route. Originally located nearby Durango in Hesperus, Colorado, Fort Lewis began in 1891 as a federal boarding school for Ute and Navajo Indians. The national shift from off-reservation to reservation schools, however, prompted the BIA to transfer Fort Lewis and its surrounding lands to the State of Colorado in 1910, with the provision that the state provide tuition waivers for all Indian students. In the next few years, Colorado operated Fort Lewis as a high school for Indians and non-Indians and began offering postsecondary courses in 1927. Six years later, Fort Lewis dropped its secondary courses to focus exclusively on college programs. World War II brought other major changes when Indian enrollments rose, and, as a result, non-Indian students increasingly acknowledged the Indians' role in Fort Lewis's founding and development. Reflecting these changes, the college constructed a "Vets Village" where Indians and non-Indians alike lived. In 1949, student journalists also changed the name of the newspaper from The Collegian to Smoke Signals.<sup>60</sup>

In 1956, Fort Lewis A&M moved to Durango, marking a new era for the college. Gradually, Fort Lewis expanded its involvement in regional and national Indian higher education. In 1960, the United States Office of Education began conducting summer

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<sup>60</sup> The Cadet, 1948 (Hesperus, Colorado: Associated Students of the Fort Lewis Branch of the Colorado State College of Agricultural and Mechanical Arts, 1948), 44; The Cadet, 1949 (Hesperus, Colorado: Associated Students of Fort Lewis A&M College); Buford Wayt, "A Brief History of Indian Education at Fort Lewis College," unpublished manuscript, March 15, 1971, in "Continuing Education" folder, box 1, series G1, record group 18, Center for Southwest Studies, College Archives, Fort Lewis College (FLC), Durango, Colorado (hereafter FLCA). J. Donald Hughes, American Indians in Colorado (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1977), 109.



workshops at Fort Lewis for teachers of Indian students. These workshops continued into the 1970s. In addition, the college hired Harvey Paymella (Tewa) to teach Indian studies courses, and several of Durango's leading citizens financed the establishment of the college's Center for Southwest Studies in July 1964. Although the new center announced that it would collect oral histories from "pioneer families" in the Four Corners area, it also enhanced the college's identity as a prominent interdisciplinary regional studies center.<sup>61</sup>

With the growth of these new programs, Indian student enrollment and activism skyrocketed. Students organized an Indian Club in 1961. From 1956 to 1970, the total annual headcount of Indian students rose from 18 to 249. Three years afterwards, the Indian Club added the word "Shalako" (meaning "mountain spirits" in Navajo and Zuni) to its name, participated in homecoming, sponsored a dance, helped light the Christmas luminarias, supervised the orientation of Indian students, conducted a powwow, and sponsored a meeting of the National Indian Youth Council. The Shalako Indian Club's activism impressed yearbook editors enough to change the title of the student annual from Cadet to Katzima. Unfortunately, the editors failed to explain what this word meant, and why it was adopted as the annual's new title.<sup>62</sup>

The year 1964 brought major changes to Fort Lewis College. During its second year as a four-year college, FLC sought positive relations with Durango and nearby tribal

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<sup>61</sup> "Center of Southwest Studies Preserves Documents of the Past," Katzima 1965 (Durango, Colorado: Fort Lewis College, 1965), 63; Wayne Moorehead, "Indian Academic Challenges at Fort Lewis College, Durango," n.d., in "Indian Tuition Waiver Abrogation, Printed Materials, 1971" folder, box 1; "Indian Education Summer Workshops, Printed Materials, 1961-72" folder, box 2, series G1; "Indian Education Summer Institutes, Grant Proposals and Reports, 1965-69" folder, box 11, series G3, FLCA.

<sup>62</sup> "Overview of FLC and the Intercultural Program, Prepared for Cooperating Institutions, April 7-8, 1975" folder; Buford Wayt, "A Brief History of Indian Education at FLC," box 1, series G1, FLCA. Katzima 1964 (Durango, Colorado: Fort Lewis College), 63, 72; Katzima 1965, pp. 63, 95.



communities. The student body as a whole eagerly embraced political action, following the lead of the Young Democrat Club, which formed to unify student opposition to Colorado Governor John Love's proposed tuition hike. Growing interest in politics and Native Americans seemed to coexist comfortably. For example, the new Folk and Ballad Club sponsored hootenannies at the same time that the Fort Lewis College Museum opened its first exhibit with Homer E. Root's collection of Native material culture. Meanwhile, in the academic realm, faculty involved in the Center for Southwest Studies formed an Intercultural Program in 1967. Launched as a five-week orientation session for Indian students, the Intercultural Program gradually added remedial and cultural studies courses and tutoring services. From 1967 to 1974, the average grade point average of Intercultural Program students rose from 1.8 to 2.3, the dropout rate declined from over 90 to 12 percent, and fall trimester enrollment rose from 163 to 240 students.<sup>63</sup>

The changes that took place at Fort Lewis College in the mid-1960s catapulted the college's reputation as an Indian-oriented institution of higher education from a regional to a national level. In 1966, the thirty-two members of the Shalako Indian Club, representing Alaska Native, Apache, Chippewa, Navajo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Santo Domingo Pueblo, Shoshone, and Zuni Pueblo tribes, began celebrating Hohzoni Days, a festival much like Nizhoni Days at the University of New Mexico. The week-long celebration included an arts and crafts exhibit, the election of FLC's Indian "princess" and "brave," a powwow, dancing, performances by singing groups, a fashion show, special

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<sup>63</sup> Katzima 1964; "Intercultural Program" folder, box 1, series G1, FLCA. Richard Owen Clark, "Higher Education Programs for American Indians at Selected Southwestern Colleges and Universities," pp. 81-87.



Indian entrees at the college’s cafeteria, and appearances by Miss Navajo, Miss Indian Four–Corners, Miss Indian New Mexico, and Miss Indian Arizona.<sup>64</sup> Fort Lewis College’s support for Indian student cultural celebrations, like Hohzoni Days, and interdisciplinary and remedial academic programs, such as the Intercultural Program, encouraged Native students’ success. College faculty maintained constant vigilance in ensuring that Native students received every opportunity to perform well in courses.<sup>65</sup>

Fort Lewis College’s Indian students received more support and encouragement than did Native students at the University of New Mexico and Brigham Young University for a variety of reasons. First, and foremost, FLC provided tuition–free education to all American Indians and Alaska Natives who were admitted. Second, the college’s Intercultural Program provided the remedial instruction that Indian students needed to succeed at a four–year institution. Third, non–Indian students respected and publicly recognized indigenous cultures in a positive light. Last, Indian students at FLC felt comfortable expressing their cultures in both academic and popular entertainment settings. With these elements combined, Indians and non–Indians at FLC interacted amicably, and both groups were provided the cultural space necessary to maintain positive self–images and mutual respect. Similarly, the University of New Mexico’s indigenous students experienced a positive self–concept as a result of cultural celebrations like the Nizhoni Dances, but they did not receive the same degree of institutional support that Fort Lewis College provided. The situation at Brigham Young University, on the other hand, was

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<sup>64</sup> Katzima 1966; 1967 Katzima, p. 131; 1968 Katzima, pp. 38, 42–43; 1969 Katzima, pp. 56–59.

<sup>65</sup> Buford Wayt and Duane Smith to Curriculum Committee, July 7, 1969, in “Indian Education at FLC, Reports and Memoranda, 1966–71” folder, box 1, series G1, FLCA.

almost a mirror image of the University of New Mexico. BYU Indians received strong institutional support and encouragement but at times found their cultural practices and beliefs under fire.

While student Indian clubs transformed institutions of higher education, the federal government also responded to Indians' desires to attain greater postsecondary educational opportunities. From 1945 to 1970, the federal government helped to establish a variety of programs and schools intended to provide Native people with diverse postsecondary opportunities. Although differing in shape and size, the new federal programs included increased funding for vocational training, the establishment of the Institute for American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the rise of the first tribally-controlled community college in the Navajo Nation.



### **New Federal Programs and Schools**

In 1945, Congress approved a law providing educational loans to Indians studying "industrial subjects" such as nursing, home economics, forestry, and agriculture at colleges, universities, and other postsecondary institutions.<sup>66</sup> Four years later, Congress transferred a hospital facility in Brigham City, Utah, from the War Assets Administration to the BIA to make room for a new vocational school for children and adults. The following year, in 1950, the agricultural training facility at the Fort Sill Indian School in Lawton, Oklahoma, took over the Department of Agriculture's dry-farming experiment station at Fort Sill. With the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 108 in 1953, supporters of the termination policy became even more disposed to fund vocational educational programs. Indeed, in 1956, Congress appropriated \$3.5 million to the BIA to establish a vocational training program designed to help lower unemployment rates among Native communities and to facilitate the relocation of Indians to urban areas. Over the next twelve years, the BIA's vocational program seemed to be doing so well that Congress increased its annual appropriation from \$3.5 to \$25 million in annual appropriations for vocational education funding for adult Indians aged 18 to 35.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> P.L. 79-123 (H.R. 3024), approved July 3, 1945, in 59 Stat. 326.

<sup>67</sup> P.L. 81-20 (S. 170), approved March 17, 1949, in 63 Stat. 14; P.L. 81-612 (S. 2086), approved July 18, 1950, in 64 Stat. 342-43; "Adult Indian Training Program Pushed," New York Times, June 22, 1956, p. 14; P.L. 84-969 (S. 3416), approved August 3, 1956, in 70 Stat. 986; life at Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah is discussed in "Navajo Students Get Pick of Jobs," New York Times, February 24, 1957, p. 73; "New Training Set for Indians," New York Times, October 10, 1957, p. 19; P.L. 86-733 (H.R. 11813), approved September 8, 1960, in 74 Stat. 867-68; P.L. 87-273 (S. 200), approved September 22, 1961, in 75 Stat. 571; P.L. 88-230 (S. 1868), approved December 23, 1963, in 77 Stat. 471; P.L. 89-14 (H.R. 4778), approved April 22, 1965, in 79 Stat. 74; "Congress Clears Indian Aid," New York Times, January 25, 1968, p. 6; P.L. 90-252 (S. 306), approved February 3, 1968, in 82 Stat. 4. Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian, pp. 116-17.



Despite Congress's largesse in the realm of vocational education, the perception remained that little, if any, money for grants and scholarships existed. In a 1967 letter to LaDonna Harris, for instance, Beatrice Bolt (tribe not specified) of Locust Grove, Oklahoma, wrote that her twenty-nine-year-old son, who had completed a four-year term of service in the Marine Corps, applied for a BIA grant to attend barber school but was turned down because the "Federal [government] took over the money for Viet Naum [sic]."<sup>68</sup> The executive director of the Oklahoma Technical Institute in Oklahoma City agreed with Bolt, complaining that students at trade and technical schools did not receive the same tuition assistance and financial aid that students attending Oklahoma's four-year colleges and universities received. When Senator Fred Harris took up this issue with the BIA, an official explained that, out of the 290 students funded by the Muskogee Area Office alone, 186 or 64 percent attended twenty-five different vocational and technical schools in Oklahoma. Although Congress and the BIA continued to emphasize vocational education over liberal arts and advanced higher education, few seemed to be aware of this situation, reflecting the general lack of communication regarding federal Indian programs and the tremendous level of unmet need for education funds across Indian Country.<sup>69</sup>

The issue of allocating money to vocational education versus funding for liberal arts and advanced professional training remained a central concern. Surprisingly, though, few individuals or groups spoke out on this question. In 1969, in one of the few

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<sup>68</sup> Beatrice Bolt (tribe not specified) to LaDonna Harris, July 1967, folder 17, box 284, FRHC.

<sup>69</sup> John J. Ruzicka, Executive Director, Oklahoma Technical Institute, Oklahoma City, to Fred Harris, December 9, 1969; A.O. Allen, Acting Commissioner, Branch of Public School Relations, BIA, Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Fred Harris, December 24, 1969, folder 2, box 197, FRHC.



statements of opinion expressed on this issue, the Eastern Oklahoma branch of the NCAI passed a resolution stating that adult vocational training and higher education scholarship grants should be appropriated “under one fund which would be used for either Adult Vocational Training or Higher Education, or a combination of the two programs when it is in the best interest of the individual’s education and/or vocational goals and abilities.”<sup>70</sup>

In addition to funding individuals who attended various public and private postsecondary vocational institutions throughout the United States, the BIA took steps to establish another vocational training school, much like Haskell Institute, that would provide both high school and junior college schooling to Native Americans fifteen or more years of age. Many leaders of the Northern Rio Grande Pueblos supported the establishment of such a school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, since public educational facilities could not satisfy southwestern tribes’ demands for vocational–technical education. With Haskell located about 700 miles east of Albuquerque, the Rio Grande Pueblos argued that another BIA educational institution should be placed in the Southwest, and preferably in Albuquerque. Indians in the BIA’s Albuquerque Area pressed for “a high school education for all of their children, and for appropriate education and training beyond high school.”<sup>71</sup> The proposed school, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), which anticipated an enrollment of 1,000, intended to provide

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<sup>70</sup> Resolution, Eastern Oklahoma Regional Meeting of the National Congress of American Indians, Muskogee, Oklahoma, February 7, 1969, folder 85, box 118, Legislative Series, Carl Albert Collection, OU–CAC.

<sup>71</sup> Alvin Warren, Chair, Academic Working Committee, Albuquerque Area Office, BIA, to Edward Meyers, Architect, Plant Design & Construction, BIA, Albuquerque, New Mexico, stamped July 26, 1966, folder 0.0, Historical Materials, Archives Collection, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico (hereafter SIPIA).



postsecondary courses not available at the BIA's Albuquerque Indian School. Reflecting Congress's and tribes' growing interest in vocational educational programs, SIPI was scheduled to open by the 1971-72 school year.<sup>72</sup>

Several years before the planning for SIPI began, however, the BIA had established another new school in Santa Fe called the Institute for American Indian Arts, which grew out of the Santa Fe Indian School. Like SIPI, the Institute for American Indian Arts (IAIA) provided both secondary and postsecondary courses, but, as the name of the institute suggests, IAIA served a smaller and more vocationally focused constituency. IAIA's rise as a postsecondary BIA school was closely interwoven with its location in Santa Fe, the Southwest's mecca for artists and writers.

Established in 1890 as the U.S. Indian Industrial School and modeled on Carlisle, the BIA's prototypical boarding school, the Santa Fe school remained largely unchanged and unnoticed until 1916, when the BIA imposed a heavily vocational course of study on the school that excluded all arts and crafts training. The arts community in Santa Fe, led by John and Dolly Sloan, Margretta Dietrich, Mary Austin, Erna Fegusson, and others, formed the Indian Tribal Arts Association to help preserve Native American arts and crafts. Other individuals also encouraged Indian arts, such as Edgar L. Hewett of Santa Fe's School of American Research and Santa Fe Indian School Superintendent John (1918-26) and Elizabeth DeHuff. After the publication of the Meriam Report (1928), the

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<sup>72</sup> Summary Report, July 21, 1966, received by the Branch of Plant Design & Construction, BIA, July 27, 1966; "History of the School," unpublished manuscript, n.d., folder 0.0; John L. Peterson, Superintendent, Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), "SIPI Position Paper," unpublished manuscript, June 25, 1970, folder 0.1, SIPIA. As historian Margaret Connell Szasz points out, SIPI was the topic of much controversy during the half-decade before its establishment in Albuquerque. Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian, p. 220 n. 32.



BIA approved funding for a new arts and crafts building at the Santa Fe Indian School and hired Dorothy Dunn as the bureau's first "Teacher of Fine and Applied Arts."<sup>73</sup> Dunn and the students who trained in her studio from 1932 to 1937 popularized a style of painting that sold well commercially, leading Congress to establish the Arts and Crafts Board in 1935 to promote the economic welfare of Indians through the sale of Native products. By the late 1930s, however, after Dunn left Santa Fe, few students went on to enroll in university fine arts programs, and the style of painting produced at the school fell out of popularity. Out of 204 students who had enrolled in colleges and universities during the mid-1930s, only eight studied in art programs.<sup>74</sup>

By the late 1950s, the Santa Fe Indian School had slipped into anonymity, setting the stage for major changes to come. During the summer of 1961, BIA curriculum specialist and administrator George Boyce, author of When the Navajos Had Too Many Sheep: The 1940's (1974), proposed that a new program be established in Santa Fe that emphasized college preparation and vocational training exclusively in the arts. A heated debate followed, revolving around the question of how popular trends in the fine arts change, just as forms of vocational education change. In 1962, the BIA quelled the debate by announcing unilaterally that IAIA would replace the Santa Fe Indian School beginning that fall. Despite opposition by the All-Indian Pueblo Council, IAIA accepted students on

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<sup>73</sup> Winona Garmhausen, History of Indian Arts Education: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background, 1890 to 1962 (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Sunstone Press, 1988), 47.

<sup>74</sup> Dorothy Dunn, American Indian Painting of the Southwest and Plains Areas (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), 249-313, describes her students' works. Garmhausen, History of Indian Arts Education, pp. 5-59; Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian, pp. 69-71. J.J. Brody, Pueblo Indian Painting: Tradition and Modernism in New Mexico, 1900-1930 (Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1997), 6, 50-51, 82-83, 113, 182.



a quota basis from tribes throughout the nation. Ranging from fifteen to twenty-two years of age, IAIA students had access to a three-year secondary and a two-year postsecondary program. The institute emphasized art and cultural studies, particularly at the post-secondary level.<sup>75</sup>

In 1969, IAIA became one of the few, if only, institutions that received praise in the Congress's Kennedy Report, which applauded the school's curriculum, staff, attention to students' and their cultures, and graduation rate. Having received such an endorsement, IAIA Director Lloyd New (Cherokee) drafted a policy statement that was published by the BIA as Cultural Differences as the Basis for Creative Education. In this widely publicized statement, Director New explained that IAIA sought to serve Indian youths' cultural needs within an institutional setting, while also training aspiring artists and craftspersons. New's IAIA mission statement prompted its supporters to propose that the school be transformed into a senior college. Though IAIA served a relatively small constituency, on the eve of the 1970s its goals of focusing on Native students' cultural needs and resources transformed this BIA institution into a model for other institutions of higher education.<sup>76</sup>

During the late 1960s, the most profound and influential school established with the help of federal funds was Navajo Community College. The idea of a tribally controlled community college had long been discussed, but the funds did not become available until

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<sup>75</sup> George A. Boyce, When the Navajos Had Too Many Sheep: The 1940's (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1974). Garmhausen, History of Indian Arts Education, pp. 60-78. The All Indian Pueblo Council preferred the existing system of BIA schools, including the Santa Fe Indian School and the Albuquerque Indian School, because of their close proximity to the Northern Rio Grande Pueblos. After its closure, the Santa Fe Indian School merged with the Albuquerque Indian School. This merger helps explain why the All Indian Pueblo Council expressed such enthusiasm for the establishment of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) several years later.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 95-104.



OEO funded a joint Navajo–Arizona State University community action project in 1965. Building on this momentum, the tribe’s education committee, including tribal chair Raymond Nakai, Guy Gorman, Allen Yazzie, Dr. Ned Hatathli, the BIA’s Navajo Area Director Graham Holmes, and Robert and Ruth Roessel, began raising funds for the establishment of a community college controlled by tribal members. Other supporters of the community college idea were Dr. Howard Gorman, Dillon Platero, and Judge Chester Yellowhair. As Wayne J. Stein points out, the efforts of Robert Roessel, former professor of education at Arizona State University, in bringing his writing skills, educational expertise, philanthropy contacts, and consensus building efforts among Navajo tribal council members were crucial to NCC’s development. Consequently, in 1968–69 the Navajos received a three–year grant from OEO for \$450,000 annually, a \$250,000 grant from the Navajo Tribe, and \$60,000 from the Donner Foundation. Navajo Community College began offering classes in 1969, quickly expanding beyond the confines of its temporary space in the BIA boarding school at Many Farms, Arizona.<sup>77</sup>

Questions arose from the beginning as to why so many non–Indians administered and taught at Navajo Community College (NCC). Robert Roessel, a Euramerican married to Ruth Roessel (Navajo), had been the most successful fundraiser for the school, and, in return, the all–Navajo Board of Regents named Roessel NCC’s first president. In 1970, the faculty remained only one–third Indian, but, as Ned Hatathli, the second president of

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<sup>77</sup> Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, pp. 176–80. Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 120–23. Norman T. Oppelt, *The Tribally Controlled Indian Colleges: The Beginnings of Self–Determination in American Indian Education* (Tsaile, Arizona: Navajo Community College Press, 1990), 34–35. Wayne J. Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges: Making Good Medicine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 10.



NCC who succeeded Roessel after one year, put it: Euramerican faculty were “working themselves out of a job.”<sup>78</sup>

The establishment of Navajo Community College led to a flood of new tribally-controlled community colleges. Within just three years of NCC’s founding, five other tribal colleges appeared: D–Q University (1970); Oglala Lakota Community College (1971); Sinte Gleska Community College (1971); Turtle Mountain Community College (1971); and Standing Rock Community College (1971). This “first wave” was followed by two more “waves” in 1973–75 and 1977–78. By the end of 1978, nineteen tribes had formed their own colleges, and the list would continue to grow.<sup>79</sup>

The establishment of the first tribal college, made possible by funding from tribal, federal, and private sources, paved the way for the future growth of similar institutions throughout the United States. Although the BIA played only a small role in Navajo Community College’s founding, the success of the BIA’s postsecondary schools and willingness to support Indian higher education created a positive and hopeful atmosphere for experimentation. With the increasing variety of higher education institutions and organizations willing to support Native people in higher education, a new day of experimentation had indeed dawned.

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<sup>78</sup> Ned Hatathli, interviewed by Margaret Connell Szasz, October 5, 1970, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 178. Peter Iverson, *The Navajo Nation*, pp. 149–51.

<sup>79</sup> W. Larry Belgarde, “Indian Control and the Management of Dependencies: The Case of Tribal Community Colleges” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1993), 41.



**Chapter 5:**  
**Exposing the “False People” during the Seventies:**  
**American Indian Activists Shake up Western State Universities**

*We believe that we are going to be a primary force in the history of this country. Our prophecies told us that one day a man would come from the North, and his skin would be the color of death, and he would be here for a short while, and he would leave, and then again he would return and be here for a long time, and our people would suffer. But in the fifth generation after the second coming of the white man ..., small fires would crop up about our nations, and confrontations at Ft. Lewis, Alcatraz—these are those small flames.... Our prophecies tell us when trees would start dying from the top (pollution), a black cloud would settle, and there would be rioting, and the small fires would become one gigantic flame, and, at that time, the red people would stand once again in power.*

Vernon Bellecourt of AIM (1976)<sup>1</sup>

The scene opens with the sound of trickling water and chirping birds as the camera pans a beautiful river in a wooded setting. An Indian appears wearing buckskin leggings and a beaded shirt. As he walks along, the idyllic scene is suddenly interrupted with the appearance of trash and industrial waste. Cars from a nearby highway drown out the sounds of nature. The Indian chief, wearing the wrinkled brow of anger and disappointment, trudges through piles of trash and sludge until he comes out of the wood to the highway. Panning in for a close-up shot, the camera shows us first only the profile of the disconsolate Indian, but then, as the chief's lined face fills the screen, it reveals a

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<sup>1</sup> Vernon Bellecourt, “American Indian Movement,” in John R. Maestas, ed., Contemporary Native American Addresses (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 73–74.



tear rolling down his cheek. The emotional commercial ends as a voice proclaims: "You Can Start Pollution, but You Can Also Stop it!" Iron Eyes Cody (Oklahoma Cherokee, 1907–1991), who played the Plains Indian in this 1975 commercial, was a familiar figure to television viewing audiences in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Throughout his career, Cody appeared in many television and print advertisements, as well as in thirty-eight films, including two—Sitting Bull (1954) and The Great Sioux Massacre (1965)—in which he played the Sioux Chief Crazy Horse.<sup>3</sup> In the anti-pollution commercial, however, Cody's traditional Plains Indian dress contrasts anachronistically with the environmental problems plaguing urban areas throughout the 1970s. As this commercial demonstrated, Native Americans often became proponents for the emerging environmental movement. Indeed, Indians claimed center stage in the environmental movement, particularly as the Arab oil embargo and the nuclear arms race prompted policy makers and developers to seek further opening of reservation lands rich in oil and mineral reserves.<sup>4</sup>

Iron Eyes Cody powerfully represented the environmental aspects of the emerging Native American movement of the 1970s, but political activism among Indians

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<sup>2</sup> In 1975, after the "Stop Pollution" commercial aired, Iron Eyes Cody (Oklahoma Cherokee) began an environmental education program for the Indiana public schools and, three years later, presented an honorary headdress to President Jimmy Carter for his anti-pollution and conservation programs. New York Times, October 15, 1975, p. 34, and April 22, 1978, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> For more on Cody's movie career, see Iron Eyes Cody, as told to Collin Perry, Iron Eyes: My Life as a Hollywood Indian (New York: Everest House Publishers, 1982), 99, 248, passim; and, Ephraim Katz, The Film Encyclopedia (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994), 269.

<sup>4</sup> For more on the Arab-dominated Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) during the 1970s, see Charles R. Morris, A Time of Passion: America, 1960–1980 (1984; New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 171–72, 177–79, 235–36; and, John Maxwell Hamilton, with Nancy Morrison, Entangling Alliances: How the Third World Shapes Our Lives (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1990), 3, 17; Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, World Politics: Trend and Transformation, 3d ed. (1981; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 194–99, 337, 339–40, calls the 1970s the "OPEC Decade."



encompassed more than environmentalism alone. Indeed, during this contentious decade the United States faced its greatest threats since the Depression and World War II. The loss of the Vietnam War, Watergate, the energy crisis, the Iranian Hostage Crisis, the vacuous nuclear disarmament talks, the perceived failure of school desegregation, and the rise of the Religious Right created an opportunity for other grassroots causes, such as the emergence of Native American activism. For Indian people, the 1970s represented the meridian of Indian higher education in terms of the development of student activism, pan-Indian colleges, tribal colleges, BIA postsecondary institutions, and Native studies programs at colleges and universities. The federal government's highly touted "self-determination" policy accelerated this growth. As a result, the seventies saw a Native American cultural revolution emerge at several state universities in the western United States.

### "Self-Determination" and Higher Education

The concept "self-determination" became well-worn during the 1970s, yet people used and defined this term in a variety of ways. At the beginning of the decade, President Richard M. Nixon (1969-74) announced that "self-determination" should be the government's policy towards Indian affairs.<sup>5</sup> By the middle of the decade, Congress announced in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act that the federal government's lengthy domination over Indian services had retarded development, and that true self-determination could only come with education and the resumption of parental and community control over the educational process.<sup>6</sup> The National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), though, quipped that self-determination probably meant one of two things: "The time when every Indian can afford a white maid," or "What white people fought for in 1776 and are now fighting against since Indians are demanding it."<sup>7</sup>

Like any buzz word hashed about by politicians, the concept of self-determination remained inherently contested. Proponents and opponents of self-determination—whatever that happened to mean—appreciated this ongoing battle, yet often misunderstood the many definitions of self-determination. Marxist theorist Guy B. Senese correctly points out that self-determination's supporters have defined this concept in contradictory ways, yet Senese himself, in a classic Marxist fashion, insists on maintaining

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<sup>5</sup> President Richard M. Nixon, "Special Message to Congress on Indian Affairs, July 8, 1970," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Richard Nixon: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, 1970 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1971), 564-76.

<sup>6</sup> P.L. 93-638, January 4, 1975, 88 Stat. 2203-17.

<sup>7</sup> "NIYC Dictionary," Americans Before Columbus, vol. III, issue 2 (August-October 1971): 8.



a Hegelian dualism in his analysis of Indian education and the self-determination movement. On the one hand, Senese argues, self-determination can be viewed as a community's democratic effort to strengthen its economy and sovereignty. On the other hand, self-determination can be perceived as the federal government's attempt to reconcile the logic of the expansionist and progressive liberal state with the ideological requirements of ethnic pluralism.<sup>8</sup> While Senese draws an interesting comparison, policy makers' views of self-determination during the seventies did not necessarily support his claim. For example, at the fiftieth annual meeting of the Association on American Indian Affairs (AAIA) in 1973, Marvin L. Franklin, the Assistant to the Secretary for Indian Affairs, proclaimed that in order to achieve self-determination

The Indian needs to reverse his historic position of being out of phase with the rest of America. Our job is to assist him, not cradle him .... In the past ten years, ... part of my work has been to help establish Indian-owned and -operated manufacturing and service companies, designed to compete for business in the American marketplace. With Indian associates, I set out to beat the bushes for capital—we got it from corporations and occasionally from the Government. We found real estate on which to build small plants, we rounded up Indian labor and Indian management people, we bought raw materials, and we set out to do business and make money.<sup>9</sup>

As this quote makes clear, Marvin Franklin's view of self-determination fits into the first half of Senese's dualistic typology: community building through economic development.

Unfortunately, Franklin ignores the role of the federal-tribal trust relationship in the

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<sup>8</sup> Guy B. Senese, *Self-Determination and the Social Education of Native Americans* (New York: Praeger, 1991), ix-xi. Francis Paul Prucha, *The Indians in American Society: From the Revolutionary War to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 65, 68-69, 75-79, 83-90, argues that the concept "self-determination," as developed over the last century, always combined the contradictory elements of assimilationism and self-determinationism, whether articulated by federal or tribal officials.

<sup>9</sup> "Remarks of Marvin L. Franklin, Assistant to the Secretary for Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, at the 50th Annual Meeting of the Association on American Indian Affairs, New York," Department of the Interior News Release, May 7, 1973, folder 16, box 26, John N. "Happy" Camp Collection (JNHC), OU-CAC.



maintaining—or building, as the case may be—of tribal sovereignty. Like Franklin, the conservative Republican Congressman John N. "Happy" Camp (1969–75) of Enid, Oklahoma, saw self-determination as an opportunity not only to expand private industry on reservation lands but to reduce the size of government altogether. Congressman Camp believed that the policy of self-determination would be greatly expanded if the government placed restricted reservation lands on local tax rolls, abolished the BIA, and forced Indians to seek jobs in private industry. Once in the private sector, Camp hoped that Indians would not have to "work with bureaucrats (like the BIA), for it sure as hell is a pain in the ass for industry to have to do so."<sup>10</sup>

Although policy makers like Happy Camp and others helped to determine the outcome of the national Indian education "war," the main "battles" took place at three college or university campuses. At the University of Minnesota, faculty and students fought to form one of the first American Indian Studies departments in the nation. At Fort Lewis College, Indian students struggled to protect the federal–state agreement to offer tuition-free education. At the University of New Mexico, Kiva Club members finally gained their own student center and interdisciplinary program after almost twenty years of activism.

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<sup>10</sup> Camp to Marshall L. Austin, Woodward, OK, July 29, 1973; also see Woodward to Camp, July 14, 1973, folder 14, box 26, JNHC, OU-CAC.



### "Ski-U-Mah" at the University of Minnesota

During the 1884–85 school year at the University of Minnesota, Professor Thomas Peebles, a Princeton graduate, yelled, "Sis-Boom-Ah, Princeton," each time his intramural rugby squad defeated teams coached by John W. Adams and other professors. As a Minnesotan, Adams could not allow such a Princeton tradition to flourish at Minnesota's state university. Adams reflected on his childhood in Lake City, where he watched young Santee Sioux boys race canoes, with the winners always crying, "Ski-oo," as they crossed the finish line. Seeking to create a new yell that had a certain Minnesota flavor, Adams decided to borrow this Lakota word—even though he did not know exactly what it meant—and alter it to rhyme with "Rah, rah, rah" and "Minn-so-tah." Adams taught his team the victory song, which inspired them to defeat Peebles' team in their next rugby match. Soon afterwards, the student newspaper printed Adams' victory cheer, establishing it as the University of Minnesota's official call to glory still heard over a century later. The cheer goes: "Rah, Rah, Rah, Ski-U-Mah, Minn-so-ta!"<sup>11</sup> John W. Adams chose what he perceived as an appropriate Santee Sioux expression for what became the university's victory chant, because in 1851, when the legislature chartered the university, Santee Sioux and Chippewa/Ojibwe tribes occupied half of Minnesota Territory. Even a century later, after the removal, detribalization, termination, and relocation policies had come and gone, Native people of Minnesota and the adjacent Canadian provinces formed one of the largest Indian population centers in North

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<sup>11</sup> Martin Newell, ed., *The History of Minnesota Football* (Minneapolis: The General Alumni Association of the University of Minnesota, 1928), 233–35.



America.<sup>12</sup> In 1969, this same argument convinced the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents to establish the American Indian Studies Department, a leading American Indian studies programs that began during the 1969–70 school year.<sup>13</sup>

Prior to the establishment of the American Indian Studies Department, University of Minnesota and state officials sponsored a variety of programs designed to support Indian higher education. In 1909, inspired by the spread of Progressive political reforms nationwide, the Minnesota state legislature passed a law that provided tuition-free education to Indian students at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Originally an Indian school, the Morris campus, which is located in the west-central part of the state, had never attracted many Native students. Seeking to alleviate this problem, in 1955 the Minnesota State Department of Education established the American Indian Scholarship Program, which made it possible for William Antell (Chippewa) and seven of his siblings to enroll in college. Hundreds of others also benefitted from this program. During the 1960s, the University of Minnesota's Project Awareness (1962), which sent students to the White Earth Chippewa Reservation in northern Minnesota to assist in community service projects, and the Indian Upward Bound Program (1968) continued the state's

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<sup>12</sup> In the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin alone, 81,929 Native Americans, mostly Chippewa (Ojibwe), lived on or near reservation communities in 1991. In the adjacent Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Ontario, 120,835 North American Indians, as well as 23,530 Métis, or people of mixed North American Indian and European ancestry, formed 33 and 31 percent respectively of the nation's total North American Indian and Métis populations. The Canadian figures do not include the small number of Inuits in Manitoba and Ontario. Veronica E. Tiller, ed., *Discover Indian Reservations, USA: A Visitor's Welcome Guide* (Denver, Colorado: Council Publications, Council of Energy Resource Tribes, 1992), 143–52, 347–57. *Canada Year Book: 1997* (Ottawa, Ontario: Minister of Industry, 1996), 33, 88.

<sup>13</sup> The University of California at Berkeley established another American Indian Studies Department that same year. Frank C. Miller, "American Indian Studies, A Young Department with Major Educational and Social Goals," unpublished manuscript, n.d., American Indians' Clipping file, University Archives, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, Minneapolis (MNA).



tradition of encouraging Native American higher education. In 1969 Antell, who had become director of the state Department of Education, funded a five-week seminar, which was held at the university to train librarians and teachers to improve facilities and services in school districts with large Indian enrollments.<sup>14</sup>

The emerging activism of the Native American community in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul also influenced the university's decision to establish an American Indian Studies Department. During the late 1960s, the Twin Cities' American Indian community moved into political action. In 1967, to combat police brutality, Minneapolis Indian leader Russell Means (Oglala Lakota) and others formed the American Indian Movement (AIM). At first, AIM limited its activities to community policing as part of an effort to clean up their neighborhoods and improve Native Americans' public image. Later, AIM expanded into the educational realm, establishing the Heart of Earth Survival School in 1972. With funds from the U.S. Office of Education and from private donations, Heart of Earth sought to provide an Indian-oriented alternative to public schools from preschool through the twelfth grade. Instructors at the school taught Indian history, music, literature, art, and the Chippewa language to students who were either "pushed out" of public schools or referred to Heart of Earth by the juvenile courts. With 135 students

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<sup>14</sup> Indian Uprising: Indian Upward Bound Program, Phillips Junior High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, pamphlet, n.d.; Matthew Stark, Project Awareness: Minnesota Encourages the Chippewa Indians (Minneapolis: Office of the Dean of Students, University of Minnesota, [1967]); "Program Seeks Improvement in Libraries for Indians," University of Minnesota News Service Release, July 2, 1969; Dave Geisler, "Indian Upward Bound helps Native American high school kids despite funding problems," Minnesota Daily, October 25, 1976, clipping; Joanne Leis, "Indian students may get free tuition," Minnesota Daily, April 7, 1983, clipping; Joy Conley, "American Indians protest reduction of scholarships," Minnesota Daily, March 12, 1985, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA. Minnesota's Indian education programs are featured in U.S. Department of Education, Indian Nations at Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action: Final Report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1991), 52.



enrolled by 1974–75, Heart of Earth's success prompted Indians in St. Paul to establish another alternative school, the Red School House. AIM's success in Minnesota prompted university officials to support a variety of Indian education programs and services.<sup>15</sup>

In the spring of 1969, after the University of Minnesota's General College approved three new courses for the 1969–70 catalog—namely, Minnesota Indian History, American Indian Culture, and Minnesota Indians in the Sixties—the Ad Hoc Committee on American Indian Studies recommended that the university establish a program leading to a major in American Indian Studies as part of the College of Liberal Arts. The proposal included a "practicum" involving independent study and research during the junior year and allowed a two-year Chippewa/Ojibwe language course to fulfill the College of Liberal Arts' foreign language requirement. The proposal added more courses in American Indian Studies and other departments during the 1970–71 school year.<sup>16</sup>

University officials approved the formation of the department and charged it with accomplishing three tasks: first, provide a sound academic program; second, assist the university in becoming more open to Indian students and Indian studies issues; and, third, provide technical assistance in helping Indian and non-Indian organizations develop programs for Indians. The College of Liberal Arts appointed Roger Buffalohead (Ponca) acting chair of the department. As a child, one of Buffalohead's teachers warned him

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<sup>15</sup> Sally Thompson, "Amid ceremony, Indians dedicate SE building for Survival School," Minnesota Daily, May 15, 1975, clipping; Peggy Gislason, "School stresses cultural 'survival,'" Minnesota Daily, January 26, 1978, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA. Indian Nations at Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action: Final Report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force features Heart of Earth Survival School for its parental participation in Native education programs.

<sup>16</sup> David Kuhn, "Full Curriculum of Indian Studies Proposed for 'U,'" Minnesota Tribune, May 21, 1969, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file, MNA.



never to admit that he was an Indian and, "for God's sake, ... get rid of that last name."<sup>17</sup>

Yet, Buffalohead went on to study and teach American Indian history. At the University of Minnesota, Buffalohead taught the History of American Indians from 1850 to the present, asking students to define terms like "racism," "savage," and "pagan." "[T]his is an educational experience that can be unsettling for students," Buffalohead explained.<sup>18</sup>

Although the department's courses addressed controversial social issues, students, staff, and faculty expressed much enthusiasm for the program after it was established. Even though the department introduced new courses during the early 1970s, including a Dakota (Sioux) language course, Buffalohead asserted that the university sought to "mainstream" the department, which led the Minneapolis-St. Paul Indian community to withdraw its interest.<sup>19</sup>

In response, the American Indian Studies Department took several steps to rebuild its community ties. In 1975, faced with growing criticism from Native students and community leaders, Buffalohead stepped down as department chair and took a leave of absence. The university's board of regents chose Russell G. Thornton (Oklahoma Cherokee) to replace Buffalohead. A former postdoctoral fellow at Harvard, Thornton taught the sociology of education at the University of Pennsylvania before moving to

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<sup>17</sup> Roger Buffalohead (Ponca), quoted in Michael Tisserand, "American Indians at U confront prejudices," *Minnesota Daily*, June 17, 1987, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Orrin Jones, "Indian studies chairman says department has accomplished major tasks, aided community," *Minnesota Daily*, October 16, 1973, clipping; "University Offers Indian Languages," *Wassaja*, September 1976, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file; Michael Tisserand, "American Indians at U confront prejudices," *Minnesota Daily*, June 17, 1987, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.



Minnesota. Thornton possessed the credentials to do a good job and understood the challenges of teaching in a field for which there were "no available textbooks to use," but he lacked strong ties to the Minneapolis–St. Paul Indian community.<sup>20</sup> To counter this problem, the department hired Donald Allery (Ojibway–Cree) as the community program assistant. Allery had attended BIA boarding schools and a number of trade schools before spending fifteen years in the construction industry. In St. Paul, Allery served on the board of directors for AIM, which provided him direct access to community leaders. Allery recognized that Indian students faced several challenges when they came to the University of Minnesota, namely: poor English–language skills; difficulties in math; and, bad study habits. Unfortunately, Allery did not offer any solutions to these specific problems, but he did suggest that the university grant credit to Indian students demonstrating proficiency in their Native language(s).<sup>21</sup>

Native students also expressed concerns about the programs and services offered at the University of Minnesota. Within the first four years of the American Indian Studies Department's establishment, enrollment rose from 45 in 1969–70 to 250 in 1972–73. By 1975–76, the number of Indian students at the university peaked at 400, then declined to 228 in 1979–80.<sup>22</sup> Special education graduate student Jay Kanassataga (tribe not

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<sup>20</sup> Russell G. Thornton (Oklahoma Cherokee), quoted in Mary Klein, "Indians at U face admissions, identity and survival crises," Minnesota Daily, March 3, 1976, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>21</sup> "New chairman named for 'U' Indian studies," Minneapolis Tribune, June 14, 1975, clipping; "American Indian Studies Chooses Chairman," Minnesota Daily, July 3, 1975, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file; Judy Vick, "Indian Staff Members Are Ambassadors to Community," March 1, 1975, clipping; Mary Klein, "Indians at U face admissions, identity and survival crises," Minnesota Daily, March 3, 1976, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>22</sup> Enrollment figures are from John Bluestone, "Recruiter one cause of Indian enrollment increase," Minnesota Daily, February 14, 1973, clipping; Judy Vick, "Indian Staff Members Are Ambassadors to



specified) complained that the university curriculum was too generalized and that Indians were lumped with other minorities. "If I can't take the concepts I learn in school and make them applicable to Indian kids," Kanassatega said, "then the concepts are of no use to me."<sup>23</sup> The president of the American Indian Student Association, Brenda Peterson (tribe not specified), criticized the university for funding the American Indian Studies Department with only "soft" money that was often cut during budget crises, instead of fixed and guaranteed funds.<sup>24</sup> Why should 250 Indian students rely on soft funds for core courses, Peterson asked. By the spring of 1977, the university's Consolidated Higher Education for Low-Income People Center estimated that up to 90 Indian students would have difficulty registering for classes because of incomplete courses from the previous semester.<sup>25</sup>

To resolve students' concerns and help the department meet its goals, University of Minnesota President Claude Peter Magrath (1974-84) appointed an American Indian Task Force to make recommendations to the regents. The task force suggested that all services provided to American Indians on campus, including financial aid and student support, be centralized in one location called the American Indian Learning and Resources

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Community," March 1, 1975, clipping; Janice Command, "Indian enrollment levels: struggle goes on," Minnesota Daily, Welcome Weekend Edition, September 21-25, 1981, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>23</sup> Jay Kanassatega (tribe not specified), quoted in Mary Klein, "Indians at U face admissions, identity and survival crises," Minnesota Daily, March 3, 1976, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>24</sup> Lesa Alexander, "Former American Indian professor raps U department," Minnesota Daily, January 7, 1977, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>25</sup> "Task force to review Indian Studies Department," Minnesota Daily, February 17, 1977, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file, MNA.



Center. In support of these recommendations, John Webb of the College of Liberal Arts and American Indian Studies lecturer Elgie Raymond explained that this move would help make students' problems more visible to university officials and would follow the academic departments' efforts to offer courses that reflect society's cultural pluralism. President Magrath opposed these recommendations, however, believing that university services should be grouped on a functional, rather than a racial or ethnic, basis. Magrath's response also reflected his, and the legislature's, interest in science, technology, and agricultural research rather than the liberal arts.<sup>26</sup>

Although the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota continued to struggle, the department gradually added more courses to its curriculum, recruited new faculty who were willing to experiment, and took steps to maintain its relationship with the Indian community of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Lack of funding made the department's efforts to maintain a strong academic core problematic, hampering its abilities to assist the university in becoming more open to Indians on campus and in the community. Still, the success of the department at the university's Twin Cities campus encouraged the board of regents to support programs for Indians at other campuses, such as the Native Americans into Medicine Program at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "Task force to review Indian Studies Department," *Minnesota Daily*, February 17, 1977, clipping, American Indian Studies' Clipping file; "American Indian Task Force Makes Recommendations to Regents," University of Minnesota News Service Release, September 9, 1977; Karl Vick, "Magrath opposes center recommendation of own task force," *Minnesota Daily*, September 26, 1977, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA; Chris Hamilton, "Legacies of past leaders shape today," *Minnesota Daily*, October 13, 1997, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>27</sup> Ned Dale, "U student urges Indian health careers," *Minnesota Daily*, October 13, 1981, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA. Walter Funmaker (Wisconsin Winnebago), 1973-74, box 17, student files, 1970-87, American Indian Graduate Center, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico (AIGC).



Plenty of room for improvement remained, though, after over a century of growth the university appeared to appreciate the meaning of the expression "Ski-U-Mah" for Native people.

### The Tuition Battle at Fort Lewis College

On January 25, 1911, two years after the state of Minnesota approved the bill providing tuition-free education to all Indians attending the university's branch campus in Morris, Minnesota, the Colorado Legislative Assembly passed a similar measure for all Indians enrolled at the Fort Lewis School in Hesperus, Colorado. In order to receive title to the 6,318 acres that the federal government purchased from the Southern Utes, the state had to include language providing tuition-free education to all American Indians. In this way, the federal government transferred part of its responsibilities to educate Indian people, guaranteed by treaty and federal statute, to the state of Colorado. If state officials could have foreseen the process whereby Fort Lewis would grow into a college, move to Durango, and construct a larger campus, they probably would have balked at the agreement.

It was not until the 1960s that school officials at Fort Lewis A&M College (FLC) began raising questions about how many Indians were accepted each year and how those students identified themselves as Indian. Prior to this decade, the maximum enrollment of Indian students at Fort Lewis never reached more than a dozen. Consequently, the tuition issue rarely arose. In 1935, seeking to circumvent the law, the then-Fort Lewis School of Colorado State University began charging a non-resident fee to Indians who were not residents of Colorado. In an invoice sent to the BIA's Office of Indian Affairs, Fort Lewis officials charged student Crawford Platta (tribe not specified) \$12.50 in non-resident fees. The BIA authorized the payment for Platta's fees, but, after closely examining the records of other Indian students who had attended or were attending Fort Lewis, the BIA's Ruth



Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee) asked school officials why other Indian non-residents were not charged the same. In response to Bronson's query, Dean E.H. Bader explained that the \$12.50 non-resident fee was not considered part of tuition and had to be paid by Indian students. To reduce the financial burden that Fort Lewis's new charges might create for students, Bronson wrote to Colorado State University President Charles A. Lory, asking him if it would be "possible to secure a more liberal interpretation of the charter stipulation that Indian pupils shall be free of charge for tuition," or if other arrangements could be made "whereby Indian students will be exempt from non-resident fees?"<sup>28</sup> Believing that Indian students should be assisted in every way possible, President Lory instructed Dean Bader of Colorado State's Fort Lewis branch that Indians be charged only for student activity, registration, and lab fees, not tuition or non-resident fees.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1960s, as Indian student enrollment at Fort Lewis A&M College dramatically rose, officials became increasingly concerned about the financial burden these students placed on the college. From 1962 to 1966, the total annual "headcount" of Native American students almost tripled from 61 to 167.<sup>30</sup> Admissions Director Charles H. Reid, Jr., expressed concerns to the faculty about "receiving more and more inquiries from

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<sup>28</sup> Ruth Muskrat Bronson (Cherokee), Office of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, to Dr. Charles A. Lory, President, Colorado State A&M College, Fort Collins, November 22, 1935, in "Indian Tuition Waiver, Legislation, Printed Materials, 1874-1973" folder, box 1, series G1, record group 18, FLCA.

<sup>29</sup> Lory to Dean E.H. Bader, Fort Lewis School of Colorado State University, December 16, 1935, *ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> Like college and university officials, I use the expression "headcount" to distinguish between enrollment figures that include every single student enrolled, whether full or part time, and FTE or full time equivalency enrollment counts that divide the total headcount by 12 hours to determine the number of students engaged in full time study.



people who indicate they are members of an American Indian tribe whose rolls were officially closed some years ago."<sup>31</sup> If applicants sent Reid evidence that at least one parent was a member of a federally recognized tribe, they were admitted on a tuition free basis. In view of this situation, Reid recommended that the college print the federal government's definition of an "Indian," as defined in the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, in the 1966-67 catalog.<sup>32</sup>

In 1970, the American Indian enrollment at Fort Lewis College reached 249 out of a total enrollment of 2,078, representing a little over 10 percent of the student body. For the first time in the school's history, more Indian students applied for enrollment than the college was prepared to admit. Faced with these enrollment pressures, school officials delayed the admission of some Indian students to the winter trimester rather than the fall trimester, anticipating that enough Native American students would drop out during the fall to make way for new students in the winter—a rather cynical approach to school management. Undeterred, Indian students protested that the guarantee of tuition-free entry was built into Fort Lewis's charter. As a result, members of the Colorado Legislative Assembly took up the issue. In December 1970, in a meeting with the Legislative Council, an unidentified student at the University of Colorado at Boulder protested that "Colorado made this commitment in higher education and it must be lived up to." If the assembly

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<sup>31</sup> Quote from Charles H. Reid, Jr., Director of Admissions & Records, FLC, to faculty, June 6, 1966, in "Indian Education at FLC, Reports and Memoranda, 1966-71" folder, in box 1, series G1, FLCA.

<sup>32</sup> "Annual Headcount of Fort Lewis Indian Students, 1962-73," in "Overview of FLC and Intercultural Program, Prepared for Cooperating Institutions, April 7-8, 1975" folder, box 1, series G4, FLCA. For more information on Congress's definition of Indian identity, see the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 in 48 Stat. 988; United States Code, 1964 ed., vol. 6, title 25, ch. 14, § 479, p. 4897, which was reprinted in Fort Lewis College's catalog; and, United States Code, 1994 ed., vol. 12, title 25, ch. 14, § 479, pp. 438-39.



voted to limit or void tuition waivers at Fort Lewis, the student continued, "it would have a bearing on the other 6,000 to 7,000 [Native] students now going to college [in the United States]."<sup>33</sup> Placing the issue in a legal context, Tom Echohawk (Pawnee) of the Native American Rights Fund argued that the state of Colorado was in violation of the law. "It is not a matter of where do we get the money [to pay Indian students' tuition at Fort Lewis College], but how did this college get into the position of breaking the law?"<sup>34</sup>

To clarify Echohawk's charge, Colorado State Representative Clarence Quinlan, chairman of the Committee on Indian Enrollment Problems, asked state Attorney General Duke W. Dunbar to submit a report on the tuition issue at Fort Lewis. Rather than resolve the dispute, Dunbar's deposition opened a Pandora's box of statutory contradictions. In nine basic points explaining what the state could and could not do, the attorney general's findings should have led Tom Echohawk to ask: how did Fort Lewis College avoid breaking the law until now? First, Dunbar reported that the federal land transfer did not require the state to maintain a school at Hesperus, the original location of the school before its move to Durango. Second, the legislature could use the Fort Lewis School Endowment Fund for any public purpose deemed appropriate. Third, the state assembly could amend the statutes dealing with tuition waivers at Fort Lewis. Fourth, the state could not limit Indian enrollment at FLC. Fifth, the state could limit total enrollment, the

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<sup>33</sup> Unidentified student, quoted in "Special Meeting with Legislative Council, December 9, 1970," in "Background Material on Tuition Problem with Indian Students" folder, box 1, series G1, FLCA.

<sup>34</sup> Tom Echohawk (Pawnee), quoted in *ibid.*; Justice for Indian Education Committee, "Pow Wow on Justice for Indian Education, FLC Gymnasium, March 29, 1971," pamphlet, in "Background Material on Tuition Problem with Indian Students" folder, box 1, series G1; "Annual Headcount of Fort Lewis Indian Students, 1962-73," in "Overview of FLC and Intercultural Program, Prepared for Cooperating Institutions, April 7-8, 1975" folder, box 1, series G4, FLCA.



number or percentage of non-residents, and the number and value of tuition waivers. Seventh, the state could establish different entrance requirements for non-residents. Eighth, the state could not establish more lenient admissions standards for Indian applicants. And, last, the state could not charge Indians tuition or fees for special programs, but non-Indians could be charged.<sup>35</sup>

After receiving the attorney general's report, the state assembly's Committee on Indian Enrollment Problems at Fort Lewis College recommended that the state continue to provide tuition free education to a "sizable [sic] number of American Indian students," but that non-resident Indians

be eligible for admission and for tuition waivers on the same basis as all other non-residents. There would no longer be any possibility that the state of Colorado could be considered legally liable for the tuition-free education of all Indian students from throughout the nation, regardless of financial need or non-resident status.<sup>36</sup>

Out of the 208 Indian students at Fort Lewis College in 1970-71, however, only 8 were from Colorado. The rest were non-residents. The college's location in the Four Corners Area meant that it attracted many Utes, Navajos, Hopis, and Pueblo Indians from the surrounding states of Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. When the news of the proposed bill was announced, Fort Lewis College President Rexar Berndt announced to Indian students that his administration would work earnestly to seek other sources of income

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<sup>35</sup> Duke W. Dunbar, Attorney General for the State of Colorado, to Representative Clarence Quinlan, Chair of the Committee on Indian Enrollment Problems, Colorado General Assembly, March 18, 1971, in "Background Material on Tuition Problem with Indian Students" folder, box 1, series G1, FLCA.

<sup>36</sup> Indian Enrollments and Tuition Waivers at Fort Lewis College: Legislative Council Report to the Colorado General Assembly, March 26, 1971, Research Publication no. 167 (Denver: Colorado General Assembly, 1971), xi-xiii.



from the State Board of Agriculture, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the Legislative Assembly of Colorado, the federal government, and private foundations to continue a viable program in Native American educational studies. In response, students formed an organization called Justice for Indian Education, which issued statements criticizing the state and federal governments for not resolving this issue earlier. Justice for Indian Education held a powwow in the Fort Lewis gymnasium "to seek solutions in a peaceful way" and to solicit help from the "non-Indian people and communities."<sup>37</sup>

In April 1971, when passage of the tuition bill appeared imminent, Fort Lewis Indian students occupied Colorado State University's agricultural experiment station in Hesperus as a symbolic gesture that they would take back the land that the Indians originally had ceded to the federal government in return for educational services and payment. The tribe that ceded the original 6,318 acres to Fort Lewis, the Southern Utes of Ignacio, Colorado, however, opposed a pan-Indian, tuition-free program at FLC. The Southern Utes supported a strong Indian education program at FLC, but claimed that the state's first responsibility lay toward them, not all Indian people across the United States.<sup>38</sup>

The bill banning tuition waivers to non-resident Indians passed and remained in effect until 1975, when the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down the law. In compliance with the court's decision, the Colorado Legislative Assembly restored the law

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<sup>37</sup> Quote from Justice for Indian Education Committee, "Pow Wow on Justice for Indian Education, FLC Gymnasium, March 29, 1971," pamphlet; "Statement of Position of American Indian Students, March 26, 1971," in "Background Material on Tuition Problem with Indian Students" folder; Rexar Berndt, President, FLC, to Indian students, March 23, 1971, in "Continuing Education" folder, box 1, series G1, FLCA; Art Branscombe, "How to Repair a 'Broken Promise,'" Denver Post, April 7, 1971, p. 24.

<sup>38</sup> "Utes dispute land claim," Durango-Cortez Herald, May 9, 1971, p. 1; "Ft. Lewis College: No More Tuition," Americans Before Columbus, vol. III, issue III (special, November 4, 1971): 1, 3-4.

providing tuition waivers to all Indians at Fort Lewis College. American Indian and Alaska Native students had won another battle for Indian higher education, but it was an ironic victory. Like relationship between the University of Minnesota's American Indian Studies Department and the Twin Cities' Indian community, Indian students at Fort Lewis College often failed to see eye-to-eye with Indian residents of Durango, Colorado or tribes in nearby communities. University- or college-based student activism supported pan-Indian goals, such as the free-tuition law, that sometimes conflicted with local, tribal concerns. The case of activism at the University of Minnesota and Fort Lewis College provides just two examples of the increasing complexities of the Indian higher education movement.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> J. Donald Hughes, American Indians in Colorado (Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Company, 1977), 85-88, 109.



### Student Activism at the University of New Mexico

In a meeting with Navajo tribal chair Peter MacDonald in March 1970, University of New Mexico (UNM) anthropology student Dale Suazo (tribe not specified) said that, as a freshman, he had felt lost on campus. Indian students needed a place to go, Suazo told the Navajo Nation leader, a place they could receive help with tutoring and build a network through Indian friends. Suazo was not the first Indian student to urge UNM officials to establish an Indian student services center, but he added to the litany of voices supporting such a program.<sup>40</sup>

In 1968, the Kiva Club initiated the idea of an American Indian Center. Following up on this suggestion, UNM President Ferrel Heady created a Joint Committee on Minorities, which recommended that the university established a Native American Studies program during the summer of 1970. Housed in an old adobe at 1812 Las Lomas, which was destroyed in the late 1990s to make way for a new classroom and office building, the Native American Studies Center (NAS) was so dilapidated that Kiva Club members used their own funds and labor to fix up the house. During the fall of 1970, with the new NAS Center open, Indian enrollment at the University of New Mexico rose to 187 students, 115 more than the 1969 enrollment.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Dale Suazo's (tribe not specified) comments appears in "Kiva Club meeting with Peter MacDonald," tapped by Irene Silentman and Anna Boyd, March 1970, side 2, tape 497, reel 2, Miscellaneous Interviews, American Indian Oral History Transcriptions, pp. 3-4, 7-8, UNM-CSWR.

<sup>41</sup> Ted Jojola, Proposal for the Native American Studies Interdisciplinary Degree Specialization, November 1991, pp. 41-42, unpublished manuscript, Native American Studies Archives, Native American Studies Center, Mesa Vista Hall, University of New Mexico (UNM-NAS).



Like the American Indian Studies Department at Minnesota, the program at UNM operated on a soft-money, shoe-string budget that forced it to hire graduate students to teach most of its courses. As a program instead of a department, Native American Studies courses at UNM had to be approved by the departments under which they were listed. During the first year of the program, four courses were offered in three departments or schools: Anthropology 315, "Current American Indian Problems;" History 369, "American Indian History;" Educational Foundations 429, "The Indian in a Multi-Cultural Setting;" and, Educational Foundations 429, "Education and the Plains Indians." The following year, 1971-72, Native American Studies added seven new courses to the curriculum in conjunction with the departments of American Studies, Modern & Classical Languages, and Political Science. Many of these courses were initiated and taught by American Indian graduate students, such as Harvey Paymella (Tewa), Geary Hobson (Cherokee-Chickasaw), and Luci Tapahonso (Navajo), who were earning doctoral degrees. Native American Studies sought to become a degree-granting program, but other departments resisted these efforts. Alfonso Ortiz (Tewa), who joined the Anthropology Department in 1971, was the only Native American faculty member at UNM who fit into the "legitimate" faculty-peer role model category; in other words, Ortiz was the only Native American who had a regular faculty appointment in one of the traditional academic disciplines.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 9-12; Lois Sonkiss, "Geary Hobson, Acting Coordinator of Native American Studies," *Four Directions* 1 (October 1976): 3, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS. Geary Hobson (Cherokee-Chickasaw) now teaches creative writing at the University of Oklahoma. Luci Tapahonso (Navajo) also teaches creative writing at the University of Kansas. Alfonso Ortiz (Tewa), the first Native American to receive tenure at the University of New Mexico, passed away in 1996.



Ironically, while UNM's fledgling NAS Program struggled, Indian-oriented programs for graduate students flourished. The Anderson School of Business received a \$225,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to support Native American students in the MBA program. Designed to maintain traditional Indian values while equipping students with technical tools for the workplace, the two-year Sloan Grant funded fifteen students with stipends, tuition waivers, and dependent-children allowances beginning in the summer of 1973. The business school hired Donald A. McCabe (Navajo), a 1970 graduate of UNM with a BS in business and an MBA candidate, to direct the Indian business program.<sup>43</sup> At the UNM School of Law, the summer pre-law institute for American Indians entering juris doctor programs, established in 1967, continued to attract students from all over the nation during the 1970s. Since the program's early years, the pre-law institute's curriculum had changed a great deal, explained Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida). After Bennett resigned as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1969, he became director of UNM's new American Indian Law Center and taught regular law school courses, as well as pre-law courses.<sup>44</sup> One of Bennett's former students, Osley Bird Saunooke, Jr. (North Carolina Cherokee), admired how well prepared Bennett was for class, using enough stacks of note cards to "choke a horse."<sup>45</sup> By the 1973-74 academic year, the law center added new courses in advocacy and poverty law, federal Indian law, Indian legal sovereignty, and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 to a

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<sup>43</sup> "UNM grant," Union County (NM) Leader, March 15, 1972, clipping; "NM Indian Program Initiated," Las Cruces Sun-News, March 16, 1972, clipping; and, "New Funded Program will Help Indians Earn Degree," Navajo Times, March 23, 1972, clipping, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS.

<sup>44</sup> "Part I-ABC Interview: Robert Bennett, Former BIA Head," Americans Before Columbus, vol. VII, issue 1 (January 1974): 4-5.



curriculum that had previously emphasized legal writing, research skills, and the cultural and social challenges of making the transition to law school. Furthermore, the law center sought to bring some Indian perspective and custom to American law.<sup>46</sup>

As undergraduate and graduate programs at UNM slowly expanded and diversified, student activism on and off campus also grew. Many Kiva Club members began identifying themselves with the American Indian Movement (AIM), even when others discouraged them. AIM had received considerable publicity since its early days in Minneapolis–St. Paul (1967–68) and during the occupation of Alcatraz (1969–70). As AIM activist Dennis Banks later said, AIM had provided much-needed heroes to Native communities. In the spring of 1972, UNM's Kiva Club brought AIM activist Reuben Snake (Winnebago) and Indian folk singer Floyd Westerman (tribe not specified) to campus as part of American Indian Cultural Week. New Mexico freshman Larry Casuse (Navajo) listened carefully to Snake and Westerman during Indian Cultural Week as they discussed issues affecting Indian people nationwide. That fall, rather than elect a junior or senior as Kiva Club president, Casuse's peers took the unusual step of electing the sophomore president. Although Casuse did not speak Navajo nor follow traditional tribal religious beliefs, he felt strongly that the "system" worked against Indian people.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Osley Bird Saunooke, Jr. (North Carolina Cherokee), interview with author, April 3, 1996.

<sup>46</sup> Anthony Ripley, "University Is Helping Remote Indian Tribes in Southwest to Adopt Regulations of American Courts," *New York Times*, March 14, 1971, p. 31; "Part I–ABC Interview: Robert Bennett, Former BIA Head," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. VII, issue 1 (January 1974): 4–5; Robert L. Bennett (Wisconsin Oneida), interview with author, March 28, 1996.

<sup>47</sup> "Dances and Lectures on Indian Power Are Part of UNM's Indian Cultural Week," *Gallup Daily Independent*, March 22, 1972, clipping; John Gonzales, "Casuse Had Discovered His Own Power Source," *Las Cruces Sun–News*, March 4, 1973, clipping, Kiva Scrapbook, 1971–78, UNM–NAS. Russell Means, "DQ University Conference," unpublished manuscript, April 20, 1982, folder 9, box 1, series I,



Rather than focus attention on the University of New Mexico's weak efforts to fund the Native American Studies Program, Casuse and other Kiva Club members began to cooperate with an organization called Indians Against Exploitation, founded in Gallup in 1969 to protest the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial. Established in 1922 as part of an effort by the Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company to commercialize southwestern Indian art, the Ceremonial had become increasingly grandiose in scale.<sup>48</sup> With Gallup located on U.S. Route 66, the nation's primary transcontinental automobile artery in the years before interstate highways, the state of New Mexico also began supporting the Ceremonial. Despite the Ceremonial's success in the tourist market, critics charged that few Indian artists benefitted from the annual event, while white-owned businesses thrived. By 1970, protests against the Ceremonial, which had been led by Michael Benson (tribe not specified), turned violent. On the evening of August 13, 1970, after a day of peaceful protests at the Gallup Ceremonial grounds, someone fire-bombed the Gallup Chamber of Commerce building with molotov cocktails. Gallup police quickly closed in on the scene to smother the flames. No arrests or injuries resulted, leaving one to ponder whether the event was staged by supporters of the Ceremonial to attract the FBI's attention, which it certainly did.<sup>49</sup>

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KCP. Jay C. Fikes (as told to), Reuben Snake, Your Humble Servant: Indian Visionary and Activist (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Clear Light Publishers, 1996), 113-24.

<sup>48</sup> Susan A. Roberts and Calvin A. Roberts, A History of New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 271-72. The commercialization of southwestern Indian art is discussed in Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock, eds., The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway (Phoenix, Arizona: The Heard Museum, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> Phoenix, Communications Section, FBI, to Albuquerque and Director, FBI, August 13, 1970, frames 0283-0284; Albuquerque, Communications Section, FBI, to Director, FBI, August 14, 1970, frame 0281, File 105-203686, Section 1, reel 1, The FBI Files on the American Indian Movement and Wounded Knee, 26 reels (Frederick, Maryland: University Publications of America, Inc., 1986) (hereafter FBIF).



## Exposing the "False People" during the Seventies

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As a Navajo, Larry Casuse was particularly interested in the Gallup Ceremonial, since Gallup was the largest white community on the southeastern border of the Navajo Nation and the protests organized by Indians Against Exploitation had become well-known among Navajos. In the fall of 1972, Casuse began organizing support for Indians Against Exploitation on the campus of the University of New Mexico. Within the first month of school, Indians Against Exploitation had collected 1,100 signatures on a petition protesting the Ceremonial. Energized by such support, Casuse organized an eight-mile protest march through Gallup on Thanksgiving Day 1972.<sup>50</sup>

The Thanksgiving Day March led by Kiva Club students through Gallup remained peaceful, but tensions over the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial heated up again the next spring. In February 1973, New Mexico Governor Bruce King (1971-74, 1979-82, and 1991-94) appointed Gallup Mayor Emmett Garcia to the university's Board of Regents. During the hearing in the New Mexico State Senate on Garcia's appointment, regent Calvin Horn (1971-82) heard Larry Casuse express bitter opposition to Garcia, calling the mayor a "false person." Speaking for the Kiva Club, Casuse said

We feel that Emmett Garcia is not qualified to become a part of the UNM Board of Regents. A member of the regents should indeed be a man of prestige in his community.... The man is an owner of the Navajo Inn where numerous alcoholics are born. Yet, he ironically is chairman of the Alcohol Abuse Rehabilitation Committee. Does he not abuse alcohol? Does he not abuse it by selling it to intoxicated persons who often end up in jail or in a morgue from over-exposure?<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Larry Emerson, "Red Dawn," New Mexico Daily Lobo, September 26, 1972, p. 4, clipping; "Gallup Event Is 'Caucus on Indian Education,'" Gallup Daily Independent, November 17, 1972, clipping; "Students Planning March to Protest Ceremonials," Farmington Daily Times, November 19, 1972, clipping; "Indian March Here Peaceful: 125 Participate; Two Arrested," Gallup Independent, November 24, 1972, p. 1, clipping, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS.

<sup>51</sup> Larry Casuse (Navajo), quoted in Calvin Horn, The University in Turmoil and Transition: Crisis Decades at the University of New Mexico (Albuquerque, New Mexico: Rocky Mountain Publishing Company, 1981), 236.



In response to Casuse's charges, Mayor Garcia told the regents that he owned only one-third of the stock in the Navajo Inn and had no involvement in its management. Expressing their support for Garcia, the Rules Committee of the Board of Regents recommended that the State Senate approve the appointment. Casuse and the Kiva Club then took up the issue with UNM's Student Senate, which unanimously opposed Garcia's appointment.<sup>52</sup>

On February 23, 1973, the Kiva Club and about 200 supporters crowded into the regents' meeting at which Mayor Garcia was to be sworn in. Anticipating protest, Calvin Horn had made arrangements with the police to clear the building if things got out of control. Tension filled the room as Horn called the meeting to order. Casuse immediately spoke up, protesting Garcia's appointment as he made his way to the podium at the front of the room. Standing next to Horn, Casuse criticized all who approved of Garcia's appointment. Wearing an intense expression, Casuse silenced everyone in the room when he called the New Mexico State Senate, the regents, and Garcia "false people" who "condoned the murder of our people."<sup>53</sup> After Casuse completed his statement, the crowd heckled the regents, prompting Horn to threaten to clear the room. A moment of silence followed, then Casuse left with all the demonstrators in tow.

Profoundly disappointed in the failure of the effort to oppose Emmett Garcia's seating as a UNM regent, Larry Casuse and a friend—Fort Defiance, Arizona resident Bob Nakaidinae—decided to take matters into their own hands. On Friday, March 1st of

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235–37.

<sup>53</sup> Regents Minutes, February 23, 1973, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 239.



the following week, Casuse and Nakaidinae abducted UNM student Delbert Rudy as he was walking to his car, handcuffed him, and drove to Gallup with Rudy in the back seat. Once in Gallup, Casuse pushed his way into Mayor Garcia's office and fired his weapon at the mayor, but his shots missed their target. In a panic, Garcia struggled with Casuse for the gun and finally gave up. Garcia begged, "Don't shoot me, Larry." When Garcia asked Casuse if he wanted to talk about their differences, Casuse snapped, "You never gave the people at Navajo Inn a chance!"<sup>54</sup> Casuse and Nakaidinae then led Garcia out of his office and down the street to a sporting goods store. They broke the front window and pushed Garcia inside. Nakaidinae held the gun on Garcia but was momentarily distracted as Casuse searched for ammunition behind the counter. Seizing the opportunity, Garcia kicked Nakaidinae in the leg and dashed for the front door. Nakaidinae fired, but waiting Gallup Police simultaneously let go a barrage of bullets and tear gas. Although Nakaidinae walked away uninjured, police found Casuse's blood-soaked body on the floor in the back of the sporting goods store. Coroners announced that Casuse died of two shotgun wounds, one of which may have been self-inflicted. Mayor Garcia escaped with only cuts, bruises, and minor shotgun pellet wounds in his side.<sup>55</sup>

Following Larry Casuse's death, at a press conference in the Student Union Ballroom, Kiva Club members called for law enforcement officials to investigate the cause of his violent death. At a memorial service for Casuse on the UNM campus, Kiva Club members drummed while singing a "burial chant." Casuse supporters then placed symbols

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<sup>54</sup> Casuse, quoted in Emmett Garcia, interview with Horn, October 10, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>55</sup> "Violence Erupts in Gallup," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 2, 1973, pp. A1-A2, clipping, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS. Calvin Horn, *The University in Turmoil and Transition*, pp. 240-41.



of unity and life—including ears of corn, a jug of water, a blanket, and juniper branches—on a rug near the drum. Marches protesting Casuse's death followed in Albuquerque and Gallup.<sup>56</sup>

A period of shock followed Larry Casuse's death, accompanied by a flurry of pronouncements about expanding services and programs for Native students at the university. Many of these promises proved hollow, but positive gains were still realized. In 1974, students in Native American Studies began a newsletter called Four Directions to make their presence known on campus and to publicize their concerns. Kiva Club activists continued to butt heads with student government leaders over funding, but, supported by UNM President William "Bud" Davis, students and staff at NAS established a research subsidiary called the Institute for Native American Development, which began publishing a series of pamphlets in 1979. Perhaps Larry Casuse's criticism of the "false people" rang true enough to provoke some action after all.<sup>57</sup>

As the American Indian and Alaska Native student activism at the University of New Mexico, Fort Lewis College, and the University of Minnesota makes clear, self-determination in higher education adjusted to fit local circumstances and demands. It was at the local university or college level that Indian self-determination began to be realized

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<sup>56</sup> David Lucero, "Club Asks Probe," Albuquerque Journal, March 3, 1973, p. B2, clipping; "Casuse Took Garcia as a Symbol of Falsity," New Mexico Daily Lobo, March 5, 1973, p. 1, clipping; Richard Williams, "UNM Indian leader bore no one hatred," Albuquerque Tribune, n.d., clipping; "Chanting and Beating a Drum," Albuquerque Journal, March 25, 1973, clipping, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS.

<sup>57</sup> Ted Jojola, , Proposal for the Native American Studies Interdisciplinary Degree Specialization, November 1991, pp. 44-46, UNM-NAS; "Kiva Club Funded by ASUNM," Four Directions 1 (October 1976): 1, clipping, Kiva Club Scrapbook, 1971-78, UNM-NAS.



in higher education. The pronouncements of federal and state policy makers certainly had an effect, particularly in the instance of the free-tuition issue at Fort Lewis College, but it was grassroots change initiated by students, faculty, staff, and local activists that brought about substantive change in institutions of higher education where Indian students represented a minority on campus.

In Minnesota, state aid for Indian higher education gave rise to the rise of the American Indian Movement, which began in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul. From the late 1960s onward, community activism and Indian higher education programs at the University of Minnesota formed a nexus that inspired much innovation and change. Although not always successful, the university's efforts to maintain close ties with the local Indian community remained a key to the state's success in supporting Indian higher education in general.

While the Minneapolis-St. Paul Indian community sought to interact with and influence the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota, Indian students and community activists at the University of New Mexico struggled to convince university officials that a Native American Studies Program and center would help increase enrollments and decrease high dropout rates. Strained relations between UNM officials and Indian students became most obvious in the Larry Casuse affair. Ignoring Indian students' claims that Gallup Mayor Emmett Garcia mistreated Navajos in his bar near the Navajo Nation, members of the Board of Regents and the state legislature supported Garcia's nomination as a university regent. Feeling frustrated and chafed by university and state officials, Casuse took matters into his own hands. Tragically, Casuse



lost his life in the effort to prevent Mayor Garcia from joining the university's Board of Regents.

Indian students at the University of New Mexico, the University of Minnesota, and Fort Lewis College all faced difficulties, but these challenges differed widely. In Colorado, the state legislature sought to downsize state support for pan-Indian higher education at its Durango college. In Minnesota, the state provided perhaps better state-wide support for Indian-oriented, university educational programs than any state in the nation, yet the establishment and maintenance of the American Indian Studies Department and other University of Minnesota System programs struggled to survive. Finally, in New Mexico, where the largest Indian population among these three states resided, the fledgling Indian higher education programs failed to gain the institutional credibility that was sought, and Indian student activism failed miserably to positively affect these changes.

At other institutions where Native American students were in the majority, developments encouraging greater autonomy for Native people in defining higher education for themselves shared similarities with the experiences of the western state universities discussed above, while striking out on a path of their own.

**Chapter 6:**  
**“To Better Provide for the Well-Being of the People”:**  
**Native Americans as Campus Majorities in the West,**  
**1970–1980**

*I wish to assure you that the purpose of this visit is not to become convinced of the significance of the [Navajo Community] College because I am already convinced. Rather, I am here to learn ways in which the Bureau [of Indian Affairs] can better assist in this most important endeavor.*

Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce (Mohawk)<sup>1</sup>

*The eager young Navajos who want to learn those things [Navajo culture] they believe to be important will now have a place to go. The so-called dropouts can come home to learn.... We must innovate and we must experiment, yes, but we must above all keep quality education as our aim .... Our students must not be educationally deprived.*

Navajo Community College President Thomas E. Atcitty (Navajo)<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to the colleges and universities where American Indian and Alaska Native students represented minorities on campus, a number of predominantly Indian and/or Indian-controlled colleges expanded or emerged for the first time during the 1970s as a result of the efforts to expand access to higher education. Whether private pan-Indian colleges, BIA postsecondary schools, or tribal colleges, these Native oriented or

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<sup>1</sup> “College Given Strong Support by BIA Head,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 2 (September 1969): 2. In 1997, Navajo Community College was renamed Diné College.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas E. Atcitty (Navajo), quoted in “Atcitty Takes Oath at Formal Inaugural Rites,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. V, no. 3 (May 1973): 5.



Indian controlled institutions served a diverse population of indigenous people.

The variety of predominantly Indian institutions of higher education of the seventies shared as many commonalities as they did differences. Indian faculty and student activists at the University of California, Davis occupied an old Army communications facility and established the first indigenous-controlled Indian and Chicano college in the United States. Meanwhile, Haskell Institute began offering junior college programs, and Haskell students sought to build greater ties with the University of Kansas. In Albuquerque, AIM activists protested the BIA's policies and management practices at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, a new BIA postsecondary vocational school. Building on the institutional and philanthropic support previously provided to its schools in Arizona and Alaska, the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (PC-USA) opened Ganado College in the Navajo Nation under an Indian-controlled board of regents. Following in the wake of the Navajo Community College, other tribal colleges appeared, formed a consortium, and lobbied Congress successfully for legislation to provide increased federal support for tribally-controlled higher education institutions.

Developments at D-Q. University, Haskell Indian Junior College, Southwestern Polytechnic Institute, Sage Memorial Hospital's School of Nursing, Cook Bible School, the College of Ganado, Navajo Community College, and Sinte Gleska College reveal much about the efforts to build and strengthen institutions as a whole, as well as pan-Indian and tribal cultures in particular. The development of various programs in Indian higher education often fell under the influence of private philanthropy and public programs, such as American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (now called the American Indian

Graduate Center, Inc.) in Albuquerque. Led by leaders from tribes across the nation, this scholarship organization contracts with the BIA to administer the higher education scholarship program. Due to the statutory limitations regarding the number of scholarships that could be granted to Native students, these Indian leaders had to prioritize the fields of study represented by applicants.

With the emergence of institutions of higher education and organizations managed by Native people for Native people, the history of Indian higher education during the 1970s infused new meaning to the expression “Indian Self-Determination.” In the process of invoking greater significance to this catch-phrase, Native Americans built institutions that revolutionized higher education across the nation, giving greater emphasis to tribal cultural studies programs and vocational training. After a decade of growth and expansion, leaders of developing nations throughout the world began to recognize Indian higher education in the United States as providing an international success story for development.



### **D.-Q. University**

During the summer of 1971, just months after the Fort Lewis College tuition battle came to a head, the first predominantly Indian-controlled, pan-Indian college in the United States was established in Davis, California, by a group of student and faculty activists from the nearby state university. Designed to serve Indians and Chicanos, the new school was called D.-Q. University in honor of two sacred Indian prophets representing North America: the Iroquois prophet Deganawidah and the Aztec prophet Quetzalcoatl. By abbreviating their names, D.Q. leaders demonstrated their recognition of the prophets whose full names were only allowed to be used in a religious context, which is why D.Q.'s founders chose to abbreviate the name of the university.<sup>3</sup>

D.Q. University perceived itself as unique because of its determination to continue the ancient indigenous traditions of education. “The original people of the American continent developed institutions or forms of higher education which were an integral part of their culture,” D.Q. officials explained. In the Aztec Calmecac at Tlatelolco (1520s–1560s) and other centers for advanced leadership training,

American Indian peoples devoted their lives and talents to the search and development of knowledge. This search and development of knowledge arose from the cultural group needs and in part focused on learning how to better provide for the well-being of the people. Students received help from educational systems in gaining inner strengths and depth of character. The awareness of self-identity emphasized the individual's relationship with the universe and one's place, a knowledge of the history and traditions of Indigenous peoples, as well as their future.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Jack D. Forbes, Kenneth R. Martin, and David Risling, The Establishment of D-Q University: An Example of Successful Indian-Chicano Community Development (Davis, California: D-Q University, 1972), ii–iii, 1–2; D-Q University, pamphlet, n.d.; D-Q University Catalog, 1979–81, p. 5, folder 1, box 1, series I, Katherine Cole Papers, UNM-CSWR (hereafter KCP).

<sup>4</sup> D-Q University Catalog, 1979–81, p. 6, folder 1, box 1, series I, KCP.



As this mission statement makes clear, D.Q.'s expectations set it apart from other similar institutions of higher education. D.Q. publicly acclaimed its ties to indigenous educational practices dating back at least 400 years. For D.Q. proponents, it did not matter what had happened to those practices and systems in the intervening centuries, only that school leaders were seeking to renew them. Also, building on the political activism of the Chicano movement and the United Farm Workers union in California, D.Q. sought to funnel that political action in a broader pan-Indian and multi-cultural direction, hoping to unite the Chicano and American Indian movements.

Chicanos did help support D.Q., but its real leaders were the American Indian faculty and students, who came from a variety of California colleges. In 1961-62, while teaching at San Fernando Valley State College, ethnohistorian Jack D. Forbes (Powhatan/Rappahannock) attempted to establish an American Indian Studies program. When that effort failed, Forbes joined with Carl Gorman (Navajo) and others to form a statewide American Indian College committee interested in promoting Native higher education. In October 1967, this group, calling itself the ad hoc committee on California Indian education, held a statewide conference at North Fork, California, where participants established the California Indian Education Association (CIEA) and endorsed Forbes's plan to establish an Indian-oriented college. In the fall of 1969, when the regents of the University of California System approved the establishment of Native American Studies programs at UC-Berkeley, UC-Davis, UCLA, CSU-Long Beach, CSU-Sacramento, and CSU-Sonoma, Forbes joined David Risling (Hoopa) and Kenneth R. Martin (Fort Peck Assiniboine-Sioux) as Native American studies faculty at UC-Davis.



Despite these innovations, Forbes, Risling, and Martin believed that “All of these programs came about directly because of the temporary fear and guilt feelings induced by several ‘Third World’ student strikes and by student militancy.”<sup>5</sup> New ethnic studies programs attempted to support multi-culturalism, but Native American and Chicano faculty and students found it difficult to change predominantly white institutions. Widespread disillusionment motivated D.Q. advocates to push ahead with their plans to build an independent, indigenous-controlled institution.<sup>6</sup>

During the 1970-71 school year, the federal government provided an opportunity for D.Q.’s proponents to act. That fall, the Office of Surplus Property Utilization<sup>7</sup> declared the former Yolo Army Communications Center, which occupied 647 acres outside Davis, California, “surplus property.” When they heard this news, supporters of an Indian-Chicano college announced their intentions to submit a proposal to buy the facility. In response, California Governor Ronald Reagan (Republican) attempted to block D.Q.’s effort. Reagan urged UC-Davis officials to prepare a rival proposal that would transform the old army communications center into a primate research facility. Students reacted swiftly. In November 1970, fifty UC-Davis students—including twenty-three Indian students who would not give their names—protested Governor Reagan’s and UC-Davis’s

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<sup>5</sup> Jack D. Forbes, Kenneth R. Martin, and David Risling, The Establishment of D-Q University: An Example of Successful Indian-Chicano Community Development, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2. Wayne J. Stein, Tribally Controlled Colleges: Making Good Medicine (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 27-39.

<sup>7</sup> The Office of Surplus Property Utilization formed part of the Department of Housing, Education, and Welfare (now the Department of Health and Human Services).



proposal by occupying the Yolo center, setting up a tipi on the grounds and picketing the main gate.<sup>8</sup>

The organization and planning provided by Jack Forbes and the California Indian Education Association (CIEA) proved crucial to D.Q.'s founding. When UC-Davis told the Department of Housing, Education, and Welfare that it would not be able to meet the January 1971 proposal deadline, the department's regional director in San Francisco, Robert Coop, recommended that Washington approve D.Q.'s application for the use of the site, which had been submitted well ahead of the deadline. In April 1971, with no other proposals for the Yolo center submitted, federal officials had no choice but to meet with D.Q. representatives and negotiate a transfer agreement. The agreement valued the property at \$427,000, a relatively modest price, yet Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Elliot L. Richardson (1970-73) included a duplicitous escrow agreement that made the contract impossible for D.Q. to fulfill.<sup>9</sup> In the escrow section of the contract, the U.S. Office of Education required D.Q. to enroll at least 500 students by April 20, 1973 and to achieve accreditation by October 1, 1975. Although Richardson and other Nixon administration officials sought "to give every qualified low-income student the same financial access to post-secondary education as a student from a middle-income family," the escrow agreement revealed just one inconsistency in the government's Indian

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<sup>8</sup> D-Q University, pamphlet, n.d., folder 1; Jack D. Forbes, "Education, Culture, and Academic Freedom: The Reagan Administration's Attack on an American Indian-Chicano College," unpublished manuscript, n.d., folder 4, box 1 series I; "Indians march on Yolo army center," Davis Democrat, November 3, 1970, clipping, folder 1, box 8, series IX, KCP.

<sup>9</sup> In 1979, Congress created the Department of Education and placed the health and welfare programs under the renamed Department of Health and Human Services.



education policies.<sup>10</sup> Miraculously, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges accredited D.Q. by the imposed deadline, but the federal government's enrollment requirement beleaguered D.Q. throughout the decade.<sup>11</sup>

On July 6, 1971, after signing the contract with the U.S. Office of Education, D.Q. opened its doors, offering junior-college programs in tribal leadership, American Indian studies, and Chicano studies. In 1971-72, for example, the Native American Community Leadership program consisted of eight requirements. The first three included the following: completing 240 hours of community service, or "fieldwork," while in residency at the college; fulfilling California's course curriculum requirements for the junior college level; and, demonstrating competence in English and an appropriate Indian language. The last five requirements incorporated various academic fields of study, namely: leadership theory, legal problems, tribal organization, non-Indian government procedures, Indian culture and values, and, again, community work. With the exception of the residency requirement, students could either complete courses or take comprehensive written or oral exams to satisfy the associate degree. Seeking to maintain accessibility for non-traditional students, D.Q. provided flexibility in its course scheduling. Students could either enroll in

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<sup>10</sup> Elliot Richardson, quoted in "House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Education Hearings on H.R. 32, 5191, 5192, and 5193 Proposing Various Programs of Aid to Higher Education, March 2, 1971," Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 29, no. 10 (March 5, 1971): 519. In May 1973, President Nixon appointed Richardson Attorney General during the Watergate Scandal, which prompted Richardson to resign. "Resignations Impede White House Work and Initiatives," Congressional Quarterly, vol. 31, no. 18 (May 5, 1973): 1069-70. "Watergate: A Hard Look at Presidential Impeachment," Congressional Quarterly, vol. 31, no. 43 (October 27, 1973): 2831-33, 2836, 2849-50.

<sup>11</sup> "Celebration Set for April 2," Deganawidah Quetzalcoatl University Historic Edition, vol. 1, no. 21 (April 2, 1971): 1, folder 5; Forbes, "An Analysis of the Transfer of Surplus Property by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to D-Q University," unpublished manuscript, n.d., p. 56, folder 3; Tim Daily, "DQU Chancellor Looks to the Future," California Aggie, November 2, 1982, clipping; Chris Woodard, "DQU: Surviving the battles," Davis Democrat, January 14, 1984, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.



regular semester-length courses or concentrated courses that met in the evenings or all day once a month. Students signed up for core courses like Helman L. Brightman's Political Science 160: The Native American in Contemporary Society. This course examined health care, suicide, and environmental pollution problems in Native communities, as well as the history of the BIA and federal Indian policy. In June 1973, after just two years of serving Native people, D.Q. graduated its first class of twenty students. Although D.Q. had already begun to graduate students, problems relating to the escrow agreement persisted.<sup>12</sup>

Jack Forbes correctly characterized the escrow agreement between D.Q. University and Secretary Richardson as underhanded. Without title to the land, D.Q.'s efforts to develop the property and the institution were hampered. From 1972 to 1975, farmers around Davis helped D.Q. clear 600 acres of land. In return for their services, D.Q. leased 100 acres to these farmers. Fortuitously, D.Q.'s farmers, with access to the deep-water wells on D.Q. land, made it through the 1976 drought while many others did not. As the drought threatened to raise food prices to all-time highs, the federal government demanded that D.Q. turn over 90 percent of its crops. When D.Q. refused, local farmers were overjoyed and renewed their support for the pan-Indian college. Although D.Q. benefitted from agricultural leases, two secretaries of education appointed by Presidents Gerald R. Ford and Jimmy Carter—namely, Forrest David Mathews (1975–

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<sup>12</sup> “Sample Program for an Associate of Arts Degree in Native American Community Leadership,” DQU Report, vol. 1, no. 21 (August 26, 1971), folder 2, box 8, series IX; Helman L. Brightman, “Political Science 160: The Native American in Contemporary Society, Fall Semester 1976, Final Examination,” folder 10; Melinda Welsh, “Eight graduate in DQU program,” June 29, 1981, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.



77) and Joseph A. Califano, Jr. (1977–79)—declared these illegal. In response, D.Q. replied that, with the title to the land tied up under the escrow agreement, the school had few other alternatives to raising money. To support D.Q.’s programs, students paid \$1,960 a year in tuition, and, even then, the school only had enough facilities for 150 students. Anticipating D.Q.’s difficulties, Education Secretary Mathews, the former president of the University of Alabama, charged that the school had failed to meet its contractual enrollment requirement of 500 students, and that it also had failed to develop the broad range of community-based educational services for which the contract called. What Mathews and later Secretary Califano failed to realize, Jack Forbes explained, was that the federal government had failed to grant D.Q. the necessary funds for fulfilling the contract.<sup>13</sup>

In 1976, after the dispute over D.Q.’s farmland and leasing agreements, AIM activist Dennis Banks became the college’s chancellor. Seven years earlier, Banks had entered the public spotlight during the occupation of Alcatraz, and, later, BIA headquarters in Washington, D.C. In South Dakota in 1973, Banks became involved in a violent incident at the Custer County Courthouse, where he protested the low bail set for a white man accused of killing an Indian. A melee followed that involved state troopers. They later charged Banks with assault, riot, and arson. After the occupation of Wounded Knee in the spring of 1973, the federal government charged Banks with treason. Needless to say, when Banks accepted the position as D.Q.’s Chancellor in 1976, federal officials raised their eyebrows. A comparison of the number of federal audits of D.Q. underscores

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<sup>13</sup> D-Q University Catalog, 1979–81, p. 10; D.Q. Fact Sheet, ca. 1982–83, folder 1; Forbes, “Education, Culture, and Academic Freedom,” p. 15, folder 4, box 1, series I, KCP.



the impact of Banks' presence on D.Q.'s feud with education secretaries David Mathews and Joseph Califano. Prior to Banks' arrival at D.Q., Mathews and his predecessors had conducted only four audits in five years. Afterwards, however, the secretary subjected D.Q. to dozens of audits, many conducted simultaneously. In 1977, the U.S. Office of Education accused D.Q. of padding its enrollment figures. Within two years, despite protests from D.Q. officials and congressional and state supporters of the university, the Department of Education succeeded in suspending federal funding pending further investigation. Although Secretary Califano headed the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare when the funding suspension went into effect, he initiated major changes, including the restoration of the department's civil rights initiatives and a department-wide restructuring effort, the first such reorganization in the federal agency's twenty-four year history. Despite these efforts, President Jimmy Carter fired Califano for opposing presidential advisers in the preparations for the 1980 re-election campaign.<sup>14</sup>

D.Q. University received close public scrutiny from the U.S. Office of Education partly because of the rise of the default rate on federally insured student loans during the mid to late seventies. In a hearing before the House in September 1978, Secretary Califano

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<sup>14</sup> George Thurlow, "DQU funding has been suspended," Davis Democrat, April 4, 1979, clipping, folder 1, box 8, series IX; Tim Dailey, "DQU Chancellor Looks to the Future," California Aggie, November 2, 1982, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP. For information on Banks's involvement in AIM, see the transcripts of "American Indian Movement," ca. February-March 1973, televised report with Douglas Durham, Chief Security Office of AIM and a paid FBI informant, Channel 11, WTTW-TV, Public Broadcasting Station, Chicago, frames 0649-0657; memo, SAC [Special Agent in Charge], Los Angeles, California to Director, FBI, April 9, 1975, frames 0702-0705, FBI File 100-462483, Volume 45, 1975, reel 13, in The FBI Files on the American Indian Movement and Wounded Knee, 26 reels (Frederick, Maryland: University Publications of America, Inc., 1986) (hereafter FBIF). For more on Joseph A. Califano, see "HEW Secretary Pledges Stepped-Up Enforcement of Civil Rights Laws," Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 35, no. 9 (February 26, 1977): 360; "Califano Reorganizes HEW, Predicts Eventual Savings of \$2-Billion a Year," Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 35, no. 11 (March 12, 1977): 446; "Hill Takes Dim View of Carter Cabinet Purge," Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 37, no. 29 (July 21, 1979): 1431-32, 1495.



explained that Congress had contributed to the increase in the default rate, which rose from 9.7 to 13 percent over a three-year period ending in 1978, by allowing students at “proprietary schools” to have access to guaranteed student loans.<sup>15</sup> The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare’s Student Financial Assistance bureau chief, Leo Kornfeld, pointed out that frequently these institutions enrolled students for three weeks, or just enough time to receive the federal funds, then disenrolled the students who qualified for loans. Because the department maintained such poor records management policies, these funds often disappeared, or students continued to receive financial benefits without having to demonstrate that they were making progress toward completion of a degree program. In a Department of Education audit publicized in 1982, two D.Q. students were shown to have received \$36,000 over an eleven-semester period (Spring 1977 to Spring 1982) without having declared a college major. D.Q. was certainly not the only school in the United States to enroll students who had difficulty making progress toward their degrees, but, because of its experimental nature, federal auditors usually seized any opportunity to point out the university’s shortcomings.<sup>16</sup>

Nonetheless, under the leadership of Chancellor Dennis Banks, regent David Risling, and President Steve Baldy (Hoopa), D.Q. also weathered this storm. By 1980, with the support of the Hoopa and Soboba Indian tribes, the Inter-Tribal Council of California, and the California Tribal Chairmen’s Association, D.Q. anticipated receiving

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<sup>15</sup> “Crackdown Begun: Student Loans: Nearly \$1 Billion in Default,” Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 36, no. 37 (September 16, 1978): 2487.

<sup>16</sup> “Crackdown Begun: Student Loans: Nearly \$1 Billion in Default,” Congressional Quarterly: Weekly Report, vol. 36, no. 37 (September 16, 1978): 2487-90. Howie Kurtz, “Federal Audit Sees Problems at D-Q College,” Sacramento Bee, March 13, 1982, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.

annual BIA funds under the Tribally-Controlled Community College Assistance Act (1978). It was one of only two Indian-controlled and accredited colleges on the West Coast, the other being Lummi Community College, founded in 1973 in the state of Washington. In its first ten years, D.Q. proved that, even in the most adversarial and impoverished conditions, Native colleges could combine an awareness of Indian cultural heritage(s) with the technical and professional skills needed in Native communities.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> D-Q University: An Accredited Two-Year Post-Secondary Institution of Learning, 1980-81, pamphlet; D-Q University, pamphlet, n.d., folder 1; A Development Plan for D-Q University: An Accredited Two Year Postsecondary Institution of Learning, Davis, California, prepared by Community Design Collaborative, Oakland, California, September 1980, folder 2; “D-Q University ... Gets Quarter Million,” The Longest Walk Newslite, vol. 1, no. 2 (August 1980): 1-2, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.



### **Haskell Indian Junior College and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute**

During the 1970s, the BIA continued to support educational programs that emphasized vocational and occupational training at the post-secondary level. Haskell's emphasis on technical-vocational programs and limited liberal arts courses showcased it as the BIA's premier postsecondary boarding school. Haskell's 320-acre, fifty-one building physical plant remained the largest BIA educational institution in the nation. No rivals threatened Haskell until 1971, when the BIA built Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), a postsecondary school located in Albuquerque. Introducing its mission to the public, SIPI superintendent John L. Peterson explained that, "Rather than compete with existing junior colleges in our state and in states from which our Indian students will be coming, ... [SIPI will] work with selected colleges and universities to transfer the successful completion ... of our programs ... for a block of credit."<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Haskell had focused on developing its occupational and general education programs, receiving junior college accreditation from the state of Kansas in 1970 for its two-year general education curriculum.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the BIA's occupational-education focus, during the early 1970s, faculty and students at Haskell Indian Junior College introduced new measures that reflected the

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<sup>18</sup> John L. Peterson, "Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute: Position Paper," unpublished manuscript, June 25, 1970, folder 0.1, Historical Materials, Archives, Southwestern Polytechnic Institute (hereafter SIPIA).

<sup>19</sup> Lew Ferguson, "Tribesmen No Longer Limited to Job Training: Haskell Now is Indian Junior College," *Wichita Eagle*, September 24, 1970, clipping, *Haskell Institute Clippings*, Vol. 2: 1938-71, p. 205, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka (KSHS); Charles A. O'Brien, "The Evolution of Haskell Indian Junior College, 1884-1974" (MA thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1975), 68-69; Mike Fisher, "Haskell College—One Path off the Reservation," *Kansas City Times*, November 24, 1975, p. 4B, clipping, "Haskell American Indian Junior College—History" file, Lawrence, Kansas Public Library—Main Branch (hereafter LKPL).



emergence of campus-based Native American studies programs and activism nationwide. In one example, Haskell instructor Jerry L. Rogers taught an innovative Indian history class that discussed important events and customs, formed a campus speakers' bureau, and researched the Indians of Douglas County, Kansas, where Haskell and the city of Lawrence are located. Reaching out to the local community, one of Rogers's students, Vernon Ahtone (tribe not specified), presented his findings at a meeting of the Douglas County Historical Society. In addition, serious concerns about the loss of culture and identity led Haskell staff to begin teaching Native languages. Students reinforced the momentum. To articulate and reinforce tribal cultures, they held the first Miss Haskell Pageant in 1970; the winner, Marva Big Lake (tribe not specified), went on to represent Haskell at the Miss Indian America Pageant in Sheridan, Wyoming that year.<sup>20</sup>

To ensure that occupational education would remain the BIA's central focus, SIPI announced that it would offer a "ladder" program of occupational education in which students could "climb on" at any stage, beginning with the high school GED program, and leave anytime they felt prepared for the marketplace. At SIPI's \$14 million, 164-acre campus located on the west bank of the Rio Grande, a site that had at once served as the dairy farm for the Albuquerque Indian School, students received training in the following programs: dental hygiene, commercial food preparation, business education, offset lithography, optical technology, engineering, electronics, and telecommunications. Since students were encouraged to train for specific jobs rather than satisfying requirements for

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<sup>20</sup> Haskell Indian Leader, 1970 Edition, pp. 77, 112, Archives, Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas (hereafter HA). "Language Links Past to Present," Haskell Today, Kansan Supplement, ca. 1971, clipping, LKPL.



a certificate or an associates degree, tracking the number of students placed in jobs was generally regarded as the best means of evaluating SIPI's success. Only two years after SIPI opened, the technical-vocational school had placed 136 students in jobs with Mountain Bell, the Museum of New Mexico, and the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce.<sup>21</sup>

Relations between the BIA and the students and staff at Haskell and SIPI during the 1970s were ambivalent. Although the schools provided a vehicle for developing innovative programs, students and staff often expressed displeasure and outright disgust at some of the BIA's management practices and policies. During the fall of 1971 alone, 327 of 1,163 Haskell students left the school out of protest against the excessive rules, such as restrictive dormitory visiting hours and unannounced bed checks. During the following spring of 1972, a student at the nearby University of Kansas, Bobby D. Ratliff, who was enrolled in Murray L. Wax's sociology course, surveyed 429 students, or about half the student body at Haskell. Ratliff asked students about their graduation plans and Haskell's programs and teachers. Fifty-two percent surveyed said that Haskell provided good education and employment training, but the same percentage of students agreed that Haskell should expand weekend recreational programs. When asked about their teachers, 41 percent said that instructors treated students aggressively (i.e., "I will teach you no

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<sup>21</sup> Rod Geer, "New Indian school to operate all year," *Albuquerque Tribune*, June 18, 1970, clipping; "Technical School for Indians Dedicated," *New York Times*, August 22, 1971, clipping; *Dental Assistant Training Program*, Indian Health Service, pamphlet, n.d.; *SIPI Commerical Food Preparation*, pamphlet, n.d.; *SIPI Business Education*, pamphlet, n.d.; *SIPI Offset Lithography*, pamphlet, n.d.; *SIPI Success Story*, ca. May 1973; Laurie McCord, "Introducing some new thinking into an old field: SIPI—a school with a different approach," *Albuquerque Tribune*, December 8, 1973, p. A3, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA; Department of the Interior, "News Release: Southwestern Polytechnic Institute to be Dedicated at Albuquerque, N.M., August 21, 1971," folder 0.7, Historical Materials, SIPIA.



matter what”), 39 percent said that teachers respected the differences between Indian and non-Indian cultures and sought to keep classes Indian-centered, and 10 percent said that their instructors were not qualified to teach at Haskell.<sup>22</sup>

Like Haskell students, SIPI students also criticized the lack of recreational programs and the policies regulating dormitory life. Judy Fragua (Jemez Pueblo) and Lillus Brooks (White Mountain Apache) complained that the administration was not sufficiently involved in student life. Since SIPI failed to schedule any recreational activities on weeknights and weekends, students often drank and smoked in their dorm rooms. In response, SIPI administrators adopted stricter rules. Resident hall directors ordered windows sealed shut. Instead of respecting students’ privacy, dorm staff knocked on doors only once before entering rooms. SIPI students Kathy Cruz (San Juan) and Tom West (Tlingit) agreed that about 75 percent of the students drank and smoked pot in their dorms, but, Cruz added, “We have asked the administration for coed dorms to prove we don’t have to have sex all the time.”<sup>23</sup> In addition to the inept BIA policies, Congress’s failure to appropriate funding for Phase II of SIPI’s construction, which included facilities

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<sup>22</sup> Jane Lee, “Haskell Has Rules Within Rules,” January 12, 1972, clipping, LKPL; Bobby D. Ratliff, “General Survey of Students at Haskell Indian Junior College,” unpublished manuscript, submitted to Murray L. Wax’s “Readings in Sociology 320” course, March 29, 1972, HA. The husband-wife anthropologist team of Murray and Rosalie Wax, best known for their work among the Oglala Lakota of Pine Ridge, South Dakota and the tribal Cherokee of eastern Oklahoma, were longtime supporters of Indian higher education, beginning with the leadership workshops of the 1950s. See Murray L. Wax, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Kansas to Fred R. Harris, U.S. Senate, May 4, 1966; Fred Harris to Wax, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, May 19, 1966, folder 28, box 282, FRHC. For more on Murray Wax, see his essay, “Educating an Anthro: The Influence of Vine Deloria, Jr.,” in Thomas Biolsi and Larry J. Zimmerman, eds., *Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria, Jr., and the Critique of Anthropology* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), x, 50–60.

<sup>23</sup> Kathy Cruz (San Juan Pueblo), quoted in Manuel Pino, “Communications a Problem SIPI Students Say,” *New Mexico’s 19 Pueblo News*, vol. 1, no. 10 (March 29, 1974): 1–2, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA.



for automotive mechanics, aircraft maintenance, building trades, machine shop, and a swimming pool, may also have provoked student dissatisfaction. To add insult to injury, the BIA placed forty staff on seasonal status at the beginning of the 1973–74 school year, leading the Albuquerque-based National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) to file a discrimination suit on behalf of the support staff, since the largely Euramerican “professional” staff was privy to permanent full-time contracts, while the predominantly Native support staff was restricted to seasonal contracts. To make matters worse, BIA and New Mexico state education officials began negotiating a merger between SIPI and the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute (TVI). In a review of the proposed SIPI-TV merger, the Interior Department’s Acting Solicitor David E. Lindren acknowledged that negotiations had taken place between BIA and various New Mexico educators during the late 1960s and early 1970s, but, Lindren correctly concluded, no contractual agreement was ever reached, and SIPI did not have to admit non-Indian students.<sup>24</sup>

Although SIPI remained a separate all-Indian postsecondary school, student and staff complaints against BIA administrators continued. These problems received the immediate attention of Superintendent John Peterson at 2:00 PM on April 16, 1975, when almost two dozen AIM activists, led by Terry Snake (tribe not specified), occupied the campus in protest against the accumulating complaints against SIPI. Within an hour and a

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<sup>24</sup> Dick McAlpin, “Plush \$13 million Indian school ready for students,” *Albuquerque Tribune*, August 5, 1971, clipping; “Technical School for Indians Dedicated,” *New York Times*, August 22, 1971, clipping; Manuel Pino, “Communications a Problem SIPI Students Say,” *New Mexico’s 19 Pueblo News*, vol. 1, no. 10 (March 29, 1974): 1–2, clipping; Vernon Garcia, “NIYC Files Suit on Behalf of SIPI Employees,” *New Mexico’s 19 Pueblo News*, ca. 1974, clipping; “SIPI non-Indian students possible but not required, says solicitor,” *New Mexico’s 19 Pueblo News*, ca. May 1974, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA; “Summary Report, July 21, 1966,” received by the Branch of Plant Design & Construction, BIA, July 27, 1966, folder 0.0, Historical Materials, SIPIA.



half, Peterson had contacted the FBI and the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office to be ready to step in if the protest turned violent. Since Snake and his followers appeared sober and had not drawn any weapons, law enforcement authorities agreed to remain behind the scenes unless it became necessary to intervene. At 3:30 PM, in a meeting with Peterson and three BIA representatives, Snake and four other AIM activists demanded that a fact finding commission investigate student grievances regarding SIPI's programs and that a hearing be held to determine the guilt or innocence of a temporary employee accused of raping a student. Eight days earlier, at a party at the employee's home, one SIPI student "became disenchanted" and walked back to the dorms.<sup>25</sup> Alone and in the dark, an unidentified assailant attacked and raped this woman. The next day, another woman who had attended the same party told Superintendent Peterson that she was leaving SIPI because the temporary library employee forced her to attend his parties and showered her with unwanted attention. To protect the student, Peterson asked the employee to resign, at which point AIM intervened in the affair. After talks lasting through the night, Peterson submitted to AIM's demands. By 10:00 AM the next morning, April 17, 1975, the protest quietly and successfully ended. To protect themselves, Snake and the others secured an agreement that they would receive amnesty from prosecution for their peaceful actions.<sup>26</sup>

By the late 1970s, SIPI had weathered the first major storm of criticism against its policies and began developing beneficial programs that encouraged modest growth. In the

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<sup>25</sup> Albuquerque, Communications Section, FBI, to Director, FBI, April 16, 1975, p. 2, frames 0724-0727, reel 13, File 100-462483, FBIF.

<sup>26</sup> Albuquerque, Communications Section, FBI, to Director, FBI, April 16, 1975, frames 0724-0727; April 17, 1975, frames 0728-0729, reel 13, File 100-462483, FBIF.



spring of 1975, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools based in Chicago, the nation's leading accrediting organization, voted to approve SIPI as a certificate-granting, post-secondary institution. To help students deal with alcohol abuse, SIPI received a two-year grant from the Department of Housing, Education, and Welfare to establish a National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Beginning in 1977-78, not only was SIPI's federal grant for the alcohol abuse program renewed, but SIPI negotiated an agreement that allowed students to transfer their credits in electronics and optical technology to the University of Albuquerque, a nearby private college serving, among others, American Indians. During the last three years of the decade, SIPI's enrollment rose from 298 to 328 and costs declined despite diminishing annual appropriations.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, during the late seventies, Haskell Indian Junior College and the University of Kansas began to communicate more openly. In a survey of thirty Haskell students conducted in 1974, most said that the only time non-Indians came to their campus was when Lawrence High School played football in Haskell Stadium. As this survey reflected, Haskell students in the seventies were too young to remember Billy Mills (Oglala Sioux), the most famous Haskell student to attend KU. Mills graduated from Haskell in 1957 and KU in 1962. While at KU, Mills won the Big Eight Cross Country

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<sup>27</sup> Joseph J. Semrow, Executive Director, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, to Peterson, April 21, 1975; Michele Weith, "SIPI trains Indians for modern world," *Albuquerque Tribune*, January 11, 1975, p. A3, clipping; Susanne Burks, "U of A Regents Approve Tuition Fee Increase," *Albuquerque Journal*, April 13, 1977, p. A2, clipping; Arnold Levinson, "Indian Alcoholics Offered Aid," *Albuquerque Journal*, September 26, 1977, p. A2, clipping; "SIPI in 7th Year of Operation," *Colville Tribal Tribune*, August 24, 1978, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s; *SIPI Institutional Self Study Report, 1978-1980, Prepared for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, January 1981*, p. 107, SIPIA.



Championship. After graduation, he joined the Marine Corps and participated in the 1964 Los Angeles Olympics, winning the 10,000 meter event.<sup>28</sup> Despite Mills's singular achievements, many Haskell students remained intimidated by KU. During the mid-seventies, KU senior Loretta Flores (Wichita-Pawnee) helped to dispell this notion, saying, “I found a tremendous amount of faculty and staff who are interested in getting Haskell students to KU.”<sup>29</sup>

The 1976 Bicentennial Celebration provoked a flurry of media reports comparing Haskell and KU, emphasizing differences yet opening channels of communication between the two institutions. Miss Haskell, Sophia Buffalohead (Ponca), told reporters that probably 90 percent of Haskell students would not participate in any bicentennial event. “To me, the bicentennial is nothing more than a commercial rip-off and very typical of the American people,” said Haskell student Milo Yellow Hair (Oglala Sioux). “I do not consider myself a citizen of the United States. I consider myself a citizen of a sovereign nation, the independent Oglala nation.”<sup>30</sup> Other Haskell students expressed more moderate views, agreeing with the argument posed by KU's African American student leaders that they should use the celebration to educate society about Indian history. Expanding on this argument, KU historian W. Stitt Robinson, chair of the KU bicentennial celebration

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<sup>28</sup> “Mills Qualifies in Two Olympic Events,” Indian Leader 68 (September 26, 1964): 1; “Billy Mills Captures Olympic Gold Medal,” Indian Leader 68 (October 23, 1964): 1; Early Morey, “Tony Unsurprised at Mills' Victory,” Indian Leader 68 (October 23, 1964): 1, 4; Indian Leader: 1965 Commencement Issue, HA.

<sup>29</sup> Loretta Flores (Wichita-Pawnee), quoted in Bill Uyeka, “KU, Haskell trying to bridge gap,” University Daily Kansan, February 11, 1976, p. 1, clipping, Newspaper Clipping Files, University Archives, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence (hereafter KUA).

<sup>30</sup> Milo Yellow Hair (Oglala Sioux), quoted in David Chartrand, “Few Indians join bicentennial,” Lawrence Journal-World, March 30, 1976, p. 5, clipping, KUA.



committee, explained that Native Americans played key roles in the American Revolution, and “they [American Indians] should take time to look at it.”<sup>31</sup> Rather than dividing the Lawrence community between Indian and non-Indian, these different views on the bicentennial drew people together. During the spring of 1976, KU Indian students and officials organized and funded a powwow on campus that attracted nearly 2,000 spectators. Two years later, a joint KU-Haskell summer science program provided 141 Haskell students with stipends, transportation to and from KU, and six hours of KU credit to participate. Special speakers included John Kaskaske (Kickapoo) of the Goddard Space Center and Carol Metcalf (tribe not specified) of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.<sup>32</sup>

Although BIA policies at Haskell Indian Junior College and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute created dissatisfaction among students and staff, these post-secondary institutions developed programs that helped meet the needs of Indian Country. Unlike state colleges and universities, the BIA colleges provided comprehensive occupational-education programs that prepared Indian people for a wide variety of jobs in the marketplace. Taking advantage of nearby colleges and universities, both Haskell and SIPI built relationships and joint programs with other institutions that strengthened their own programs. Native students who appreciated the challenges and advantages of local BIA postsecondary institutions and/or nearby state universities benefited.

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<sup>31</sup> W. Stitt Robinson, quoted *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> “KU Snubs Haskell, Survey Says,” University Daily Kansan, April 18, 1974, p. 3, clipping; “Powwow draws nearly 2,000,” Lawrence Journal-World, April 12, 1976, p. 2, clipping, KUA; Haskell Alumni Association Newsletter, vol. 1, no. 2 (August 1978), KSHS.



### **Presbyterians Sponsor Indian Higher Education in Arizona**

The Presbyterian Church of the United States (PC-USA) had supported Indian education since the colonial era. The Scotland Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, established in 1701, provided considerable financial support to assist Indians attending schools and colleges and even established Native American-oriented postsecondary schools, such as Sheldon Jackson Industrial School (now Sheldon Jackson College) in Sitka, Alaska. Presbyterian missionaries who established and taught at schools throughout the West sought to “save” not just souls but the body and mind as well. Since they saw physical health as a primary concern, Presbyterians also encouraged missionary-teachers to gain some training in medical care. Joined by other denominations, such as the United Church of Christ, Presbyterians throughout the United States supported missionary-teachers who could double as nurses. The Presbyterians also helped finance medical education for Native Americans like Susan La Flesche. For instance, Presbyterians supported the work of the Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania, which sent La Flesche and many of her colleagues to missionary posts throughout the world. In 1911, one such missionary, Dr. Charles H. Cook, established a Bible school for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona that hoped to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Indians living in the area.<sup>33</sup>

Medical missionaries in the southwestern United States offered not only health care services to Native people but post-secondary educational opportunities as well. In

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<sup>33</sup> Roe B. Lewis (Pima-Tohono O’odhom), “The Phoenix Indian Presbyterian Church,” *Outreach*, November 1957, pp. 277-78, Menaul Historical Library of the Southwest, Menaul School, Albuquerque, New Mexico (hereafter MHL).



1871, Dr. Cook arrived on the Pima Indian Reservation, where he ministered to Indian physical and spiritual needs. Later, when Cook moved to Phoenix in 1911, he decided that he could help Apaches, Mohave Apaches, O’odhoms, and Pimas living in Phoenix by establishing a Bible school. Testifying to the school’s success, several Cook Bible School graduates went on to become well-known tribal and pan-Indian leaders, including the former Phoenix Indian Presbyterian Church pastor Dr. Roe B. Lewis (Pima-Tohono O’odhom), former Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis R. Bruce (Mohawk), and long-time Mescalero Apache Tribal Chairman Wendell Chino. As Phoenix grew, it became apparent to Presbyterian missionaries that establishing a medical mission closer to the Navajo Nation would be more beneficial, since the Navajos were the largest yet among the poorest tribes in the United States. In 1910, the Presbyterian Board of National Missions sent a medical missionary to the tiny town of Ganado, where missionaries had been teaching near the Hubbell Trading Post for nine years. About the same time, the Presbyterians established hospital facilities in Albuquerque (now Presbyterian Hospital) and a rural clinic at Embudo Station, New Mexico, a river crossing settlement near Taos. During the 1920s, Presbyterians built Sage Memorial Hospital next to the Ganado Mission School. By 1927, Sage Memorial had sufficient facilities to enable Dr. Clarence G. Salsbury to perform surgery. Three years later, as medical director of Sage Hospital (1927-50), Dr. Salsbury established a nursing school for Indian women. Salsbury wrote, “Now is the day of opportunity for the mission educational program, the time for the Church to forge ahead and show its leadership.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Quote from Dr. Clarence D. Salsbury, “About the Navajos,” *Outreach* 2 (April 1948): 102; Jerry McLain, “Doctor Big,” *Presbyterian Life*, May 14, 1949, pp. 25; Roe B. Lewis (Pima-Tohono O’odhom), “The Phoenix Indian Presbyterian Church,” *Outreach*, November 1957, pp. 277-78; “Thanks to UPW,”



From World War II to the late 1950s, Presbyterians sought to meet the need for greater educational services by expanding their programs and beginning new ones. Asked to speak at the commencement ceremony of Sage Memorial's Nursing Program in August 1946, Navajo Tribal Chairman Chee Dodge (1942-47) presented Alta Gorman (Navajo) with the 100th diploma awarded by the hospital. Dodge expressed the Navajo Nation's appreciation for the hospital and its programs, and, in a private gesture, willed the hospital \$500 from his estate. Tragically, Dodge contracted pneumonia months later and died in Sage Memorial on January 7, 1947. Dodge's gift reflected his appreciation for the hardworking nurses educated at Sage Memorial. During World War II alone, 40 percent of the nurses who enlisted in the armed forces served with distinction. Those who remained at home also became heroes to their people. Throughout the war, Alta Gorman worked on the Navajo Nation as an itinerant teacher and hospital evangelist. Gorman later established a field nursing program. Presbyterians nationwide supported Sage's School of Practical Nursing by increasing the "Annual Summer Offerings" from \$21,523 in 1949 to \$94,698 in 1958. By the late 1950s, others followed in Alta Gorman's footsteps. Sally Kee (Navajo), Naomi Hills (Navajo), and Dolores Mae Beeson (Hopi), who had attended the Presbyterian mission school in Ganado and went on to attend the Nurses Training School at Dallas's Methodist Hospital, returned to work as aides at Sage Memorial.<sup>35</sup>

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Concern, November 1961, p. 29; "Cook School Provides Indian Leadership," A.D., October 1977, p. 38; "News," Presbyterian Survey, March 1986, p. 48, MHL.

<sup>35</sup> Catherine Culnan, "Hogan Evangelization," Women and Missions 20 (April 1943): 7-8, 27; Culnan, "Brothers," Outreach 1 (March 1947): 78-79; Jerry McLain, "Doctor Big," Presbyterian Life, May 14, 1949, pp. 22-24, 34-36; "Changes at Ganado," Outreach 4 (November 1950): 265-66; "Wanted—Nurses," Outreach, March 1952, p. 76; "Ganado Graduates Return to Serve," Outreach, December 1958, p. 310; Florence E. Ludy, "I saw it at Ganado," Concern, February 1959, p. 27; Gertrude Seubold, "The Quiet Miracle: A Decade of Achievement," Concern, May 1959, pp. 21-22, MHL; Peter Iverson, The Navajo Nation (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 20-21, 51.



During the 1960s, Presbyterians continued to expand health care facilities and educational programs. At Sheldon Jackson Junior College, a new associate degree program in science and health emerged for those students interested in working for a government health department and/or for those who wanted to continue their education. Meanwhile, in the southwestern United States, Sage Memorial Hospital captured the nation's attention at 8:30 PM on Friday night, May 27, 1960 as Americans sitting in front of their televisions watched an hour-long NBC documentary on the hospital's programs. "Few Americans realize with any accurate sense of appreciation the fact that such a sizable population in their midst lives so far removed from the life of comfort, gadgetry, and incessant activity that we know," observed Sage Memorial surgeon Dr. E.K. Mehne. "People who still carry their water supply by barrel, cook over open fires or in simple wood stoves, and lack the multitudes of blessings that electricity brings are usually associated with far-off places."<sup>36</sup> In support of the Presbyterians' educational initiatives, Navajo Tribal Chairman Raymond Nakai (1963-70) echoed Chee Dodge's sentiments of appreciation for Sage Memorial's services to the Navajo people. On October 21, 1963, 800 Navajo tribal officials, civic leaders, Catholic leaders, U.S. Public Health Service representatives, and Presbyterians from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah attended the dedication of a new forty-five bed hospital building at Ganado. Funds for the \$425,000 facility came from the United Presbyterian Women (\$300,000), the Navajo Tribe (\$25,000), and the Fannie E. Ripple Foundation (\$20,000).<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> E.K. Mehne, M.D., "A Surgeon's Observations," Concern, April 1961, p. 11, MHL.

<sup>37</sup> Paul L. Winsor, "Sheldon Jackson Program Grows," Concern 2 (August-September 1960): 10; Grace Salsbury, "You Were at Ganado," Concern, March 1964, pp. 20-22, MHL.



During the late 1960s, the Board of National Missions decided to support the establishment of an Indian-oriented college. Until then, the Presbyterians had provided support to sixty-seven colleges in the United States, including the oldest of these, Hampden-Sydney College (established in 1776) in Virginia, the University of Dubuque (1852) in Iowa, Mary Holmes College (1867) in West Point, Mississippi, and Hawaii Loa College (1963) in Oahu, all of which helped fulfill John Calvin's goal of coupling education with religion. Building on the success of its programs at Sage Memorial Hospital, Cook Bible School (now called Cook College & Theological School), and Sheldon Jackson Junior College, the Board of National Missions negotiated terms with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe for the expansion of the Ganado Mission High School into Ganado College. As James N. Moss, who had worked for UNM's extension programs, explained,

During recent years, B.I.A. and public schools have expanded their operations on the Reservation. Consequently, elementary and secondary educational opportunities are now available to most, if not all, school age children. However, there exists a very serious void between the level of achievement attained by our high school graduates and that which is essential for successful college work or employment.<sup>38</sup>

In 1969, with Moss's concerns in mind, the Board of National Missions closed the Ganado Mission High School and opened a "Learning Center," which was operated by an independent local board made up of Navajos Joe Watson, Judge Chester D. Hubbard, and Arthur Hubbard, as well as non-Indian Presbyterians. In July of that year, with ninety

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<sup>38</sup> Dr. James N. Moss, "The Board of Regents announces the organization of the College of Ganado," October 1970, item 16, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1, MHL. Moss signed a temporary contract with the UNM College of Education's Bureau of Educational Planning and Development for the period from December 1968 to June 1969. James N. Moss faculty file, UNMA.



students enrolled at the Learning Center, the predominantly Navajo board named James Moss its director. The Board of National Missions anticipated that all of its schools could be gradually taken over by community-based boards such as this one. Speaking in support of this new policy, Judge Hubbard, who was also chair of the Synod of Arizona's National Missions Committee, welcomed these changes as evidence that the church was moving in the direction of giving more control to Navajos.<sup>39</sup>

In 1970, the Board of National Missions voted to provide \$200,000 a year for the establishment of a new college in Ganado. With great anticipation, the board of the Ganado “Learning Center” decided to open a junior college called the College of Ganado, charging it to

provide instruction in programs that transfer to four-year colleges and universities; provide vocational-technical programs of varying length; provide general education courses for all students; provide continuing education for updating and upgrading; and serve community interest and need.<sup>40</sup>

To meet the requirements of Ganado's mission, the board hired BYU doctoral student George P. Lee (Navajo) as president and Dale Edward Guy (Caddo) as admissions director. Most of the teachers, like anthropologist David Brugge, served on a part-time basis. In addition to anthropology courses, Ganado College students also enrolled in art,

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<sup>39</sup> Vic Jameson, “News Release from the Presbyterian Office of Information, an office of the General Council of the General Assembly,” July 29, [1969], item 17, “Ganado College” folder, box 17.1.1; Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part II, Annual Reports of the Major Program Agencies, 181<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, San Antonio, Texas, May 14–21, 1969 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Office of the General Assembly, 1969), 47–48, 98; Marjorie Hyer, “Ganado: New Partners, New Policies, New Programs,” Presbyterian Life, November 1, 1969, pp. 24, 26–27; George Conn, “Why Do We Have So Many [Colleges],” Presbyterian Survey, April 1986, pp. 29–39, MHL.

<sup>40</sup> “Mission Statement,” College of Ganado, 1974–76, catalog, p. 1 (facing), item 3, “Ganado College” folder, box 17.1.1, MHL.



English, GED, math, Native American studies, religion, science, range management, natural resource management, and occupational education courses.<sup>41</sup>

With such a wide variety of courses and programs, it is not surprising that financial difficulties remained Ganado's primary concern throughout the 1970s. From the beginning, Ganado officials knew that church funding would not be permanent. In June 1970, the Board of National Missions launched a three-year program to strengthen the local administration of its colleges and universities. By 1973, the General Assembly appointed a task force to review progress at seven colleges, including Ganada College, that needed more time to develop into independent, autonomous colleges. Meanwhile, the General Assembly's annual support for its General Mission fund had declined precipitously from \$31,746,000 in 1967 to \$20,486,000 in 1975. Like other liberal mainline churches in the United States, in the late 1960s and 1970s Presbyterians suffered a financial decline as many Americans sought alternative religions, such as Zen Buddhism, or supported the emergence of new television pentecostals, including Pat Robertson.<sup>42</sup> In the face of this crisis, the Office of Education Services spent \$3.5 million of the fund's reserves during the 1974-76 period to help support Ganado and other struggling colleges. To prevent further overspending, the General Assembly forced the Office of Education Services to curtail its

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<sup>41</sup> Lincoln Richardson, "Ganado's New College," *A.D.*, December 1972, pp. 22-26; *President's Newsletter*, April 1973, item 12; *College of Ganado, 1974-76 catalog*, pp. 68-96, item 3; "Skills Training Now Set for COG Campus," *Tumbleweed Connection* 3 (September 1976), item 18; Roger C. Davis, Director, Division of Natural Resources, Navajo Nation, to Dr. Thomas Carson Jackson, President, Ganado College, March 3, 1977, in "Mission" Possible: *The College of Ganado*, ca. 1977, item 20; *Ganado Today* 2 (Winter 1977), item 22, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1, MHL. David Brugge, interviewed by author, April 17, 1997.

<sup>42</sup> Martin E. Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 452-69. Razelle Frankl, *Televangelism: The Marketing of Popular Religion* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 63-155.



support of Ganado College and other colleges more quickly than had been initially expected. Anticipating this move, Ganado College did everything it could to raise funds from other sources. From 1970 to 1972, the school received \$100,000 in private donations. Nonetheless, by the fall of 1975, Ganado President Dr. Thomas C. Jackson announced that the school had a \$42,000 deficit. Ironically, about the same time, Ganado won a three-year National Science Foundation grant totaling \$300,000 to establish a science center. At the same time, Ganado's enrollment rose from 85 in the fall of 1970 to a full-time equivalency (FTE) of 175 students in the spring of 1977. Although enrollment figures and programs gradually increased, school finances remained abysmal. In 1976, when a Presbyterian official wrote to President Jackson that he regretted the withdrawal of church support from Ganado College, he added, "The good news is the positive and energetic way in which you and the Board of Regents are seeking other sources of funding."<sup>43</sup> The next fall, the board began a fundraising campaign called "Mission Possible," which kept the college afloat through the early 1980s.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Richard K. Smith, Synod of the Southwest, Phoenix, Arizona, to Jackson, November 23, 1976, in "Mission" Possible: The College of Ganado, ca. 1977, item 20, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1, MHL.

<sup>44</sup> Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part II, Annual Reports of the Major Program Agencies, 183<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly, Rochester, New York, May 17-26, 1971 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Office of the General Assembly, 1971), 24-25; Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part IA, Journal, 186th General Assembly, Louisville, Kentucky, June 17-26, 1974 (New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1974), 492-95; Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part I, Journal, 188th General Assembly, Baltimore, Maryland, May 18-26, 1976 (New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1976), 566-67; Minutes of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part I, Journal, 189th General Assembly, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 21-29, 1977 (New York: Office of the General Assembly, 1977), 540-41; Mission Reports: College of Ganado, ca. 1971, item 25; Newsletter, ca. Fall 1975, item 10; "College of Ganado, Enrollment Data, February 18, 1977, item 21; Bleak pamphlet, n.d., item 7, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1; Lincoln Richardson, "Ganado's New College," A.D., December 1972, pp. 22-26, MHL.



Despite Ganado College's financial difficulties, students benefitted from its programs. In the early seventies, a teacher's aide who attended a summer program at Ganado told Alvin Dashee (Hopi) that he should go there, too. The thirty-year-old Vietnam veteran had a wife, three children, and a flock of sheep to care for, but he took the recommendation to heart and unselfishly organized bus trips so that other Hopi students could attend Ganado. Later, Dashee himself enrolled at the college. Another Ganado student and supporter, Virgil Link (Apache-Navajo), had been an AIM activist and had attended Arizona State University before coming to Ganado at the age of twenty-nine to write poetry. After graduating in the spring of 1976, Link advised other Indians to "reach within themselves and attempt to be what they [Indians] should be—independent, strong and totally self-reliant. You can still make your own way," he said, "and remain an Indian."<sup>45</sup>

Virgil Link's recognition that a Presbyterian-affiliated school like Ganado College could provide opportunities for Native people to become leaders in their communities reflected the flexibility that these colleges provided their students. At Cook Christian Training School, the faculty headed by Cecil Corbett (Nez Perce) and the students published a study, entitled Mending the Hoop (1974), which pointed out that few young Indians were entering the clergy and the average age of ordained Indian pastors was 54 years old. Furthermore, among sixty tribes in the United States, there were fewer than 100 Indian pastors for 499 Protestant congregations. To increase the number of Indian clerics and attract younger members to churches, American Indian Presbyterians and

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<sup>45</sup> Lincoln Richardson, "Ganado's New College," A.D., December 1972, pp. 22-26, MHL; Virgil Link (Apache-Navajo), quoted in "Virgil Link—From Activism to PR: He's Come Full Circle," Tumbleweed Connection 3 (September 1976), item 19, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1, MHL.



Congregationalists meeting at Dubuque University Theological Seminary in 1974 formed the Native American Theological Association and the Native American Theological Education Consortium. The consortium established a system of Presbyterian-affiliated colleges that would encourage Indian ministry students to continue their education through seminary. Ministry students began their education at Cook, where they received certificates and associate degrees, then moved on to four-year colleges like Huron College in South Dakota and the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas.<sup>46</sup> Finally, Dubuque Theological Seminary served as the pinnacle of the consortium, providing terminal training to ministry students. No significant gain in their field would be seen until the 1980s and 1990s, but these Indian-oriented Bible college programs reflected the Native American cultural revolution sweeping the nation's system of higher education during the seventies.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> In 1985, Huron College merged with the National College of Rapid City, South Dakota, severing its ties with the Presbyterian Church (PC-U.S.A.). Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Minutes, 197th General Assembly, 1985, Part I, Journal (New York and Atlanta: Office of the General Assembly, 1985), 535-36.

<sup>47</sup> Jane Grainger, "The Practice Has Existed Among Us," Concern, November 1975, pp. 3-6; Howard Anderson, "Native Americans Get Theological Training," A.D., October 1978, pp. 26-27; Gene Straatmeyer, "Teaming Up to Train Ministers," Presbyterian Survey, November 1985, pp. 32-34; Gene Straatmeyer, "Lay Ministry Taken Seriously," Indian Highways, October 1986, MHL; Dr. Coy C. Lee, interview with author, May 15, 1997.

### **Navajo Community College and Other Tribal Colleges in the Seventies**

In December 1971, after two years of struggling to raise private funding, the Navajo Community College (NCC) received \$5.5 million from Congress for construction and operational costs. The same law (P.L. 92-189) also met the NCC Board of Regents' request that the college would receive the same annual appropriations as other BIA schools, such as Haskell Indian Junior College. Within just two years, however, NCC began losing support for its expansion, as the BIA and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) slashed appropriations. For example, after the House approved operational funding for NCC at \$3,739 per student for fiscal year 1973, the BIA requested only \$3,200 per student, which OMB reduced even further to \$3,000. Similarly, at the hands of BIA and OMB bureaucrats, construction funding for the Navajo Community College underwent a similar decrease from \$4 million to \$2.9 million.<sup>48</sup>

These decreases came in spite of the college's growing enrollment, expanding programs, and successful fundraising. From the fall of 1969 to the fall of 1971, the Navajo Community College's enrollment outpaced all expectations, rising from 346 to 595. These numbers did not include the number of NCC students in extension programs with Arizona State University and the University of Arizona and those in the Adult Basic Education course, most of whom were part time. These two groups added over 500 students to the college's annual headcount.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 2 (September 1969): 2; P.L. 92-189, December 15, 1971, 85 Stat. 646; "Fund Cut Severe Jolt to College," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. IV, no. 3 (March 1972): 1, 6; "NCC Building \$\$ Delayed," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. IV, no. 9 (November-December 1972): 1-2.

<sup>49</sup> "Fall Enrollment is 346, Plus Adult Education," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 3 (October 1969): 1, 3; "College Expects ABE Classes to Enroll 500," Navajo Community College



## "To Better Provide for the Well-Being of the People"

The increasing enrollment figures at the Navajo college resulted from the wide array of programs and services provided to Navajos attending the community college. Although many "traditional" college-age students sought to study at a campus-based community college location, the key to NCC's popularity among Navajos and non-Indians in the region lay in its Adult Basic Education courses provided through the college's extension service. The college established extension centers at fifteen communities around the Navajo Nation, expanding the people's access to the college's services. In addition, through cooperative agreements with Brigham Young University, the University of Arizona, and New Mexico State University, NCC established a community agriculture and animal husbandry program. In the occupational education area, Navajo Community College provided a two-year certification program in welding, automotive mechanics, and nursing. Made possible by Project HOPE at Sage Memorial Hospital in Ganado, the nursing program at NCC prepared students for the Arizona state nursing licensure examination. Perhaps more important than these vocationally oriented skills training programs, though, was the college's emphasis on Navajo Studies as the core of its curriculum. In 1971, NCC's Navajo Studies Program included eleven courses that fell into four general categories: Navajo history and culture (3 courses); Navajo language (4 courses); Navajo arts and crafts (3 courses); and Navajo acculturation (1 course). NCC

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Newsletter, vol. I, no. 3 (October 1969): 1; "Adult Education Classes Benefit 15 Communities," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 4 (November 1969): 3; "U of A Service to Work with Adult Education," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 5 (December 1969): 2; "624 Are Enrolled for Spring Term," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. II, no. 2 (February 1970): 6; "1970-71 Enrollment Total to Reach 770," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. II, no. 10 (November 1970): 4; "Enrollment Reaches 611 in Mid-February," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. III, no. 2 (February 1971): 4; "Enrollment Increase Reported," Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. IV, no. 1 (January 1972): 1.



instructors, such as Mike Mitchell (Navajo), a medicine man who was one of the many Navajo members of the faculty and staff at the college, inspired students to take pride in their heritage. On May 4, 1971, speaking for the entire graduating class, one student explained that “Navajo Community College gave me something that I never before had or appreciated. It gave me pride in being a Navajo and it truly helped me appreciate the strength and beauty of Navajo culture.”<sup>50</sup>

Cultural pride remained the centerpiece of life at Navajo Community College throughout the 1970s. Dean Young (Sioux) and other NCC students formed the Golden Eagle Club to sponsor powwows and dances. At one such dance, members of the Golden Eagle Club invited students from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe to perform Plains and Seminole Indian dances before a packed crowd in the auditorium at Many Farms High School, a facility NCC shared during its first two years of operation. Leonard Begaye (Navajo) became the leader of the college’s Indian Club, which sought to promote greater awareness of Navajo culture on campus and throughout the Navajo

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<sup>50</sup> Quote from “17 Receive Diplomas,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 5 (May 1971): 4. For more information on the Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, see “Adult Education Classes Benefit 15 Communities,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. I, no. 4 (November 1969): 3. For animal husbandry and agriculture, see “College Sets High Agricultural Goals,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. I, no. 4 (November 1969): 1, 4; “NCC Department Conducts Seminars in Ag Development,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. II, no. 9 (October 1970): 6; and, “Workshops Teach Handling of Horses,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 11 (December 1971): 3. For occupational education programs, see “NCC Men Working to Become Expert Welders,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. I, no. 5 (December 1969): 6; “Vocational-Technical Credits for Transfer Students Okayed,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. IV, no. 1 (January 1972): 5; and, “Four Graduate from Nursing Program,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. V, no. 1 (January 1973): 1. For the Navajo Studies Program, see “Navajo Studies Program Described in New Book,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 1 (January 1971): 1; “History, Culture Instructor Teaches from Navajo Heritage Background,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 2 (February 1971): 5; “College’s Dr. Morgan Earns Many Honors,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 2 (February 1971): 7; and, “New Navajo Studies Courses,” *Navajo Community College Newsletter*, vol. III, no. 10 (November 1971): 6.



Nation. Such awareness, Begaye believed, would combat the assimilative “problems” posed by Anglo religion, BIA schools, traders, and strip mining projects. Student activism at NCC led to the formation of the Native American Studies Development Association, an organization of students from eleven southwestern colleges and universities that sought to build Native studies programs in the region.<sup>51</sup> NCC President Ned Hatathli (Navajo) and other college officials encouraged student involvement in the administration of the college. Indeed, Hatathli considered student involvement essential if the college were to succeed. “In the past,” Hatathli said, “Navajo parents had no say—so in their children’s education.” In order to change this, Hatathli asked NCC students “to take an active part in the college and to involve your parents so that we may have true Indian control and Indian participation.”<sup>52</sup>

The Navajo Nation’s Tribal Council, private foundations, and individuals found the college’s educational programs and community involvement worthy of their financial support. Although much of the college’s initial support came from the Donner Foundation, the U.S. Office of Education, and, of course, the Navajo Nation, only the Navajo Nation government continued to fund the college. Still, in light of the college’s

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<sup>51</sup> The eleven schools included: the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, the University of Albuquerque, Brigham Young University, the College of Santa Fe, the University of Colorado, Eastern New Mexico University, Fort Lewis College, the University of New Mexico, New Mexico Highlands University, and Northern Arizona University. “Indian Studies Group Formed,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. III, no. 3 (March 1971): 2.

<sup>52</sup> NCC President Ned Hatathli (Navajo), quoted in “Indians Hold Leadership Reins,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. III, no. 8 (September 1971): 6. In 1970, the regents established an All-Indian Council made up of fourteen to sixteen members, including students and staff in equal standing as administrators and faculty, to advise the president of the college. “Regents Approve All-Indian Council to Advise, Recommend to President,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. II, no. 5 (May 1970): 3. For more on student activism, see “Santa Fe Dance Group Pleases NCC Audience,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. II, no. 3 (March 1970): 4; “Indian Club Gets Active Again,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. III, no. 3 (March 1971): 4.

successful development, NCC coffers received other private support. Standard Oil Company of Texas awarded five scholarships of \$650 each for three years beginning in 1969-70. In 1972, the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation awarded \$76,000 to the Navajo Community College to establish the first training facility in the country to prepare Native Americans to work with mentally retarded youth who were Natives as well.<sup>53</sup>

In the spring of 1972, due to the fast growth of Navajo Community College, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools made the college a Recognized Candidate for Accreditation as a junior college, the second major step towards full accreditation.<sup>54</sup> By then, NCC's success had created a “coat-tails” effect, leading to the establishment of other tribal colleges in the upper Midwest and northern Plains on rural reservations located far from urban areas. By 1979, the tribal colleges included:

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<sup>53</sup> “Navajo Chevron Scholars Cited,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. I, no. 5 (December 1969): 7; “Kennedy Foundation Grants \$76,000,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. IV, no. 6 (June 1972): 3.

<sup>54</sup> “Colleges Reaches New Level of Accreditation,” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. IV, no. 5 (May 1972): 1, 6.



**“To Better Provide for the Well-Being of the People”**

**Table 6.1: Tribally-Controlled Community Colleges Chartered before the 1980s**

State	College	Year chartered	Chartering tribe
Arizona/New Mexico	Navajo Community College	1968	Navajo Nation
South Dakota	Oglala Lakota College	1970	Oglala Sioux
South Dakota	Sinte Gleska College	1971	Rosebud Sioux
North Dakota	Turtle Mountain Community College (C.C.)	1972	Turtle Mountain Chippewa
North Dakota	Standing Rock C.C.	1972	Standing Rock Sioux
	American Indian Satellite C.C.	1973	
North Dakota	Fort Berthold C.C.	1973	Mandan, Arikara, & Hidatsa
Nebraska	Nebraska Indian C.C.	1973	Santee Sioux, Omaha, & Winnebago
Washington	Lummi C.C.	1973	Lummi
South Dakota	Cheyenne River C.C.	1973	Cheyenne River Sioux
North Dakota	Little Hoop C.C.	1973	Devil's Lake Sioux
Michigan	Ojibwa C.C.	1975	L'anse-Vieux Band (Chippewa) Keweenaw
Montana	Blackfeet C.C.	1975	Blackfeet
Montana	Dull Knife Memorial College	1975	Northern Cheyenne
Montana	Little Bighorn College	1977	Crow
Montana	Salish-Kootenai C.C.	1977	Salish-Kootenai
California	D-Q University	1977	Hoopa Valley and Soboba
Montana	Fort Peck C.C.	1978	Assiniboine and Sioux
Arizona	College of Ganado	1979	Hopi
South Dakota	Sisseton Wahpeton C.C.	1979	Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux

Sources: Norman T. Oppelt, *The Tribally Controlled Indian Colleges: The Beginnings of Self-Determination in American Indian Education* (Tsaile, Arizona: Navajo Community College Press, 1990), 77; W. Larry Belgarde, "Indian Control and the Management of Dependencies: The Case of Tribal Community Colleges" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1993), 41.

Like the planning that led to the establishment of Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), D.Q. University, and Ganado College, the ideas for establishing these tribal colleges coalesced during the 1960s. For example, at meetings held in 1966 and 1967, the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council expressed concerns that young people were leaving for college only to become frustrated and defeated when they returned home. To help solve this problem, the tribal council determined to establish a community college that would allow the Sioux to succeed in an Indian and non-Indian world. In 1971, the council established Sinte Gleska Community College, named for “Spotted Tail,” the last principal chief, who argued that Indians could regain control of their lives by combining Native tradition with non-Indian education. Soon after its establishment, Sinte Gleska formed



bilateral agreements with Black Hills State College (now Black Hills State University) in Spearfish and the University of South Dakota at Vermillion and Springfield for students who wanted to transfer their credits.<sup>55</sup>

Like Navajo Community College and others, Sinte Gleska faced problems with funding and developing programs. Each year, Sinte Gleska struggled to scrape together enough funding to support its programs. Serving Indians and non-Indians, the college experienced increased enrollment during the 1970s, which attested to the need for Sinte Gleska in rural South Dakota. At the beginning of the 1971-72 year, 239 students enrolled, but, by the end of the 1973-74 year, that number had grown to 651. Meanwhile, the catalog expanded from a list of courses to actual programs, like Lakota Studies, Natural Resources, Business Education, Nursing, Remedial Studies, and Adult Basic Education. In 1973, to address the issue of funding, Sinte Gleska joined with Navajo Community College and other tribal colleges in forming the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). The consortium lobbied Congress for financial assistance in the planning, development, and operation of the tribal colleges. With support from Senator James Abourezk (D-SD), AIHEC persuaded Congress to pass the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act, signed by President Jimmy Carter in 1978.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Elizabeth S. Grobsmith, *Lakota of the Rosebud: A Contemporary Ethnography* (New York: Hold, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), 96-106; Norman T. Oppelt, "The Tribally Controlled Colleges in the 1980s: Higher Education's Best Kept Secret," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 8 (no. 4, 1984): 27-45; Wayne J. Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges: Making Good Medicine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 57-65.

<sup>56</sup> Wayne J. Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges*, pp. 64, 71, 109-17; P.L. 95-471, October 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1325-31;



## **“To Better Provide for the Well-Being of the People”**

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The Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 ensured that the tribal colleges would continue to receive partial federal funding. It gave Native people renewed hope that self-determination would indeed be realized. Serious limitations remained, however, as never more than 50 percent of these funds were allocated. This presented a major obstacle to development as was clear in the case of D.-Q. University. Regarding institutional strengthening measures at D.Q., SIPI, Haskell, Navajo Community College, and Sinte Gleska Community College, the issue revolved around how much funding could be attained to support all programs. Some public and private grants applied only to specific programs, such as Ganado College's National Science Foundation Grant, but the college's overall emphasis remained encouraging growth among all programs throughout the institutions. In these efforts, most Native people supported the expansive efforts of the institutions serving their communities. The issue of determining what programs to fund and deciding the best way to go about meeting the needs of Indian Country presented another challenge to students and higher education supporters alike.

### **The Business of Scholarships**

In 1969, as part of the new self-determination policy, Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel (1969–70) approved a procedure that would allow Indian-controlled organizations to administer BIA contracts. When the new contracting policy went into effect, a variety of tribal and pan-Indian groups petitioned to administer BIA programs, including the Higher Education Scholarship Program. During the 1950s and 1960s, as more and more Indians began to attend colleges and universities, higher education proponents argued that funds for graduate students should be in a separate category. By creating a separate fund for graduate education, Congress would reaffirm the growing importance of Indian higher education. In 1969, following his resignation as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Robert Bennett contacted John C. Rainer (Taos Pueblo), a former head of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the New Mexico State Indian Commissioner, and proposed that they form an organization, called American Indian Scholarships, Inc., to administer the BIA's funds for graduate student education.<sup>57</sup>

Initially affiliated with the American Indian Law Center at the University of New Mexico, American Indian Scholarships, Inc., or AIS (now known as the American Indian Graduate Center, Inc.), began to receive numerous excellent applications, but the BIA failed to support all of them. In 1976–77 alone, 326 Indian students applied for grants to attend graduate or professional programs at eighty colleges and universities across the nation. Under Title IV of the Indian Education Act of 1974 (P.L. 92–318), AIS's total costs would have reached \$3,260,000. In section 423 of this act, however, Congress

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<sup>57</sup> Bennett interview; John C. Rainer (Taos Pueblo), interviewed by author, June 4, 1996.



limited the United States Office of Education's funding for AIS to a maximum of \$2 million a year, out of which only 200 fellowships could be provided. As a result, in 1976–77 only 173 graduate students received grants averaging \$2,196.53 each. In the spring of 1978 at the University of New Mexico alone, only eighteen of eighty-three Native graduate students had received support from AIS due to its limited resources. As the staff of UNM's Native American Studies explained, “they [AIS] often don't have money to meet even the most minimum of college tuition for the students they do have.”<sup>58</sup>

AIS applicants sought to become teachers, administrators, lawyers, doctors, business owners, geologists, counselors, planners, social workers, wildlife experts, and public health specialists in their communities. Because applicants represented every discipline requiring graduate training, AIS board members, who represented American Indian and Alaska Native people throughout the United States, were forced to make hard decisions about who should be granted priority in the funding formula. In 1977, board members included: board president Lucy Covington (Colville) of Nespelem, Washington; board vice president David Lester (Creek) of Los Angeles, California; board secretary/treasurer Joe Sando (Jemez Pueblo) of Albuquerque, New Mexico; James M. Cox (Comanche) of Midwest City, Oklahoma; Ada Deer (Menominee) of Keshena, Wisconsin; Charles Trimble (Sioux) of Washington, D.C.; Osley Bird Saunooke, Jr. (North Carolina Cherokee) of Sarasota, Florida; and, Dee Ann DeRoin (Iowa) of

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<sup>58</sup> John C. Rainer, Director, American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (AIS), to Robert G. Lalicker, Administration and Development, UNM, n.d.; Chester C. Travelstead, Vice President for Academic Affairs, UNM, to Rainer, School of Law, UNM, July 1, 1973; untitled narrative history of AIS, ca. 1977, “Background of the Program” file; quote from Geary Hobson, Coordinator, Junella Haynes, Co-Assistant Coordinator, and Robert D. Mondragon, Co-Assistant Coordinator, Native American Studies, UNM, to Congressman Sydney R. Yates, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee, Interior Sub-Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., April 18, 1978, “AIS Publicity Narrative” file, AIGC.



Stanford, California.<sup>59</sup> Throughout the 1970s, AIS defined priority areas as education, social work, business, and public health. Board members believed that tribes needed people with experience and training in these areas. This decision reflected a similar choice for programs funded at state colleges and universities throughout the West, as well as at the predominantly Indian and tribally controlled community colleges. In addition, the popularity of these fields in Indian Country represented a continuation of the priority areas dominating Indian higher education after World War II. In 1976–77, for example, the top ten fields of study funded by AIS were social work (21 students), guidance/counseling (15), educational administration (14), medicine (12), special education (8), public health (6), dentistry (5), education (5), elementary education (4), and regional planning (4). The board’s choice in the area of funding would have a profound impact on whether students would receive funding. For instance, while Adoniram Van Bowen (Creek) received five years of scholarships from AIS to attend Harvard Medical School, Imogene I. Kitto Boucher (Santee Sioux), who wanted to study social work at the University of Nebraska, received no funding.<sup>60</sup>

Still, with the rise of the federally supported self-determination policy, which allowed AIS to contract with the BIA for administering the higher education scholarship program, Indian leaders from throughout the nation were able to influence Congress and the debate over the educational needs of Indian communities. At the same time, by

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<sup>59</sup> Untitled narrative history of AIS, ca. 1977, “Background of the Program” file; American Indian Scholarships, Inc. [Annual Report, 1978–79], pp. 3 and “attachments,” AIGC.

<sup>60</sup> American Indian Scholarships Annual Report, 1976–77; Adoniram Van Bowen (Creek) file; Imogene I. Kitto Boucher (Santee Sioux) file, student files, box 6, American Indian Graduate Center, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico (AIGC).



submitting reports to Congress, AIS provided policy makers with current information about the goals and aspirations of American Indian and Alaska Native students. In addition, by the late 1970s AIS's existence encouraged more Native people to attend college and graduate school than ever before. By providing valuable scholarship resources, AIS helped Indian people overcome obstacles to higher education. Unfortunately, like the tribal colleges and other institutions of higher education, AIS suffered funding limitations, which forced board members to determine what areas of study should receive priority in the funding formula.

Throughout the 1970s, American Indians established their own colleges, giving a whole new meaning to the expression “Indian Self-Determination.” The pan-Indian and tribal colleges that emerged in this decade sought to thoroughly undermine the federal government's termination policy. In a speech at Navajo Community College, activist Cyriano Manuel (O'odhom) explained that the idea of termination was “based upon incompetency so that Indians remain dependent and continue to be alienated from even their own people and their land.”<sup>61</sup> Manuel and others argued that the only way to make self-determination possible and to better provide for the well-being of the people was to create institutions of Indian-controlled higher education. But, as long as the new colleges faced economic challenges that threatened their very existence, Indian higher education would never provide the popular services needed in Native communities.

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<sup>61</sup> Cyriano Manuel (O'odhom), quoted in “Official of ICAP Denounces the Idea of ‘Termination,’” Navajo Community College Newsletter, vol. II, no. 1 (January 1970): 3.

With the success of each Indian-controlled college, Native people gradually “chipped away” at the “stone” of access to higher education. By struggling to build their own institutions, Indians made education work for them in a positive way. The struggles emerged through meetings, demonstrations, powwows, standoffs, and occupations. The generation of Indian college students who came of age during the 1970s proved to be politically savvy; they appreciated the importance of organized protest. Despite the successes of the seventies, the 1980–95 era would severely challenge the gains made at the new pan-Indian and tribal colleges, as well as Indian higher education in general. The self-determination policy waned and waxed during the coming decades, just as it had throughout the twentieth century.



**Chapter 7:**  
**“The Imperative to Seek New Sources of Revenue”:**  
**Indian Higher Education and the Reagan Revolution,**  
**1980–1988**

*In these days of Ronald Reagan, the only thing worse than being an Indian is being a redwood tree.... Perhaps Reagan played so many cowboys in those scratch[y] old westerns that he really started to believe the scripts.*

Steve Cameron (1982)<sup>1</sup>

*Kenneth Smith is the first Indian head of the BIA in recent memory who has seen his job as primarily justifying the government's Indian policy to Indian people rather than explaining to the government what Indian problems are and concerns are.*

“The Kenneth Smith Traveling Snake Oil Show”(1983)<sup>2</sup>

After President Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, Elizabeth Dole, the head of the White House Public Liaison Office, called a meeting of Reagan's aides to establish teams of advisors in charge of various foreign and domestic policy areas. As governor of California, Reagan had not generated much support from American Indian and Alaska Native communities because of his opposition to D.Q. University. Consequently, Reagan had few if any Indian advisors. This situation became painfully obvious at a meeting Dole organized to ask Reagan's campaign organizers if anyone had experience working with

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Cameron, “Newest Reagan budget cuts leave Indians out in cold,” Albuquerque Tribune, February 10, 1982, p. A3, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>2</sup> “The Kenneth Smith Traveling Snake Oil Show,” Americans Before Columbus, vol. II, no. 3 (1983): 2.

Native people. When no one spoke up, Morton C. Blackwell, “the overseer of the 1980 Youth for Reagan effort,” raised his hand and replied that his father had recently told him he was 1/32 Cherokee. Prior to the 1980 campaign, Blackwell, a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, had written for the Conservative Digest and the New Right Report. As a longtime conservative who supported government downsizing, Blackwell fit the Reagan model of policy making perfectly. With this in mind, Elizabeth Dole told Blackwell that he had just become the President’s new special assistant for Indian affairs.<sup>3</sup>

From 1980 to 1988, a conservative tide—labeled a “Revolution” by Reagan Republicans—washed over Indian Country, seeking to drown the educational foundations that had been established during the previous decade.<sup>4</sup> The decade and a half was marked by two major developments in Native American higher education. First, the federal government tried, but failed, to shut down D.Q. University in California and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in New Mexico. Second, the effort to privatize as many government services as possible and to rely increasingly on philanthropies for supporting Indian higher education foundered. The nation’s conservatism throughout the Reagan era limited the extent to which Native people could shape higher education to meet their own needs.

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<sup>3</sup> “How to Become a Chief without Really Trying,” Americans Before Columbus, vol. 9, no. 3 (July 1981): 2.

<sup>4</sup> Charles R. Morris, A Time of Passion: America, 1960–1980 (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 209, 222–25.



### **BIA Postsecondary Schools on the Ropes**

In the spring of 1981, President Reagan instructed Secretary of the Interior James Watt (1981–83) to shut down Indian education programs as part of a broader effort to cut all Department of Education services and, eventually, the recently created department itself. Initially, Secretary Watt, in discussions with Delfin Lovato, chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council and Reagan supporter in 1980, proposed that the Institute for American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe merge with Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) in Albuquerque, primarily because Pueblo Indian students at the overcrowded Albuquerque Indian School badly needed IAIA’s facilities. In addition to supporting Reagan’s government downsizing policies, Lovato’s suggestion emanated from Pueblo Indian leaders’ efforts to restrict enrollment at SIPI and IAIA to southwestern tribes rather than Native people from throughout the United States. Hardly a new effort, Lovato’s campaign to merge SIPI and IAIA dated back to the 1960s, when Pueblo leaders sought to establish an all–Pueblo BIA occupational–education school. During the 1980 presidential campaign, this effort to establish a predominantly Pueblo Indian postsecondary school reappeared.<sup>5</sup>

In 1980, the All Indian Pueblo Council sought to re–establish part of the old Santa Fe Indian School’s high school programs at IAIA, continuing its opposition that dated back to IAIA’s establishment in 1962. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the Pueblo

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<sup>5</sup> Hope Aldrich, “Move to Oust IAIA Gaining Strength,” *Santa Fe New Mexico*, March 19, 1981, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA; Sherry Robinson, “Will School Survive Watt?” *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1983): 4–5; Winona Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education: The Institute of American Indian Arts with Historical Background, 1890 to 1962* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Sunstone Press, 1988), 62–94.



students who attended Albuquerque Indian School increasingly found themselves in a dilapidated and overcrowded institution. To build support for the IAIA-SIPI merger, the Pueblo Council established a network of supporters who included Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs Forest Gerard (a former Pueblo Council lobbyist) and members of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). With Pueblo Council chair Delfin Lovato serving as an NCAI board member, the Pueblos had strong national support for their proposals. Not all Pueblo Indians, however, supported Lovato's efforts. Zuni Pueblo Governor Robert Lewis, for example, believed that IAIA should continue to serve as a “national Indian art institute.”<sup>6</sup> With the Pueblo Council attempting to control IAIA's fate, and with national Indian opinion divided over the issue, opponents of IAIA and SIPI began citing figures to illustrate that these postsecondary schools were expensive and inefficient. Even Winona Garmhausen, a teacher at the College of Santa Fe who directed a joint art program with IAIA, argued that IAIA students would be better off at four-year colleges and universities.<sup>7</sup>

During the summer of 1981, just when proponents of Indian higher education thought that things could not get any worse, the Interior Department's new Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Kenneth L. Smith (Warm Springs), recommended that SIPI

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Lewis (Zuni), quoted in “Controversy Flares over IAIA Campus,” *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 8, no. 2 (February 1980): 1–2. In 1981, Lewis presented a resolution supporting SIPI before a meeting of the National Tribal Chairmen's Association. “Board of Regents Rally Support to Save SIPI,” *SIPI Newsletter*, September 1981, p. 5, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA.

<sup>7</sup> “Controversy Flares over IAIA Campus,” *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 8, no. 2 (February 1980): 1–2, 5. Winona Garmhausen argued that the quality of art produced by IAIA students had declined over the years. Therefore, the program was no longer worth supporting. See Garmhausen, *History of Indian Arts Education*, 118–20. Cultural historians, such as Scott B. Vickers, argued that IAIA artists adopted an expressionistic pop art style to convey Indianness in new and ironic ways. See Vickers, *Native American Identities*, 111.



be closed. To implement SIPI's closure, in August 1981 Congress passed the Omnibus Reconciliation Act, which limited total annual appropriations for the Johnson-O'Malley Act, the programs of the BIA's Office of Indian Education Programs, the Navajo Community College Act, and the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act to \$262.3 million, \$276.1 million, and \$290.4 million for fiscal years 1982, 1983, and 1984, respectively. These appropriations represented huge decreases in spending over previous years, such as 1977 when Congress approved a \$677.1 million budget for all Indian programs. In President Reagan's proposed budget for fiscal year 1983, which was to take effect on October 1, 1982, the BIA's total budget would be downsized by 10 percent or \$880 million.<sup>8</sup>

To justify SIPI's closure, Secretary Smith cited statistics showing that it cost SIPI between \$5,700 and \$8,000 a year to educate each student, while educational costs per student remained lower at other institutions, namely: the University of Albuquerque (\$5,000); the University of New Mexico (\$4,500); Haskell Indian Junior College (\$4,000); and the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute (\$2,500). According to SIPI's own institutional studies submitted to the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, however, SIPI had already significantly cut costs between its 1980 and 1981 fiscal years, reducing annual per student expenses almost in half from \$8,904 to \$4,963. The latter figure was not available at the time of the debate over SIPI's closure, and, consequently, a war of statistics resulted that failed to address many questions. How many

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<sup>8</sup> For a comparison of federal spending on Indian education programs, see P.L. 95-74, July 26, 1977, 91 Stat. 292 and P.L. 97-35, August 13, 1981, 95 Stat. 441. In 1997, Navajo Community College changed its name to Diné College.



students graduated from SIPI? How many graduates found jobs? How long did students enroll at SIPI? Should room and boarding costs be treated separately? Should students be counted by raw numbers or by the number of hours enrolled? Not only did government policy makers address these questions, so, too, did accrediting institutions.<sup>9</sup>

Albuquerque residents and businesses rallied behind SIPI and its tuition-free educational services for Native people. Non-Indians living in the neighborhoods around SIPI formed the West Side Association. One association member, Art Brown, thought that the school was declining, but this trend could be arrested, he said, if SIPI opened its doors to non-Indians. Albuquerque dentist Michael D. Parey wrote Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) that SIPI trained productive citizens and served as a model Indian educational institution. If SIPI closed, Dr. Parey continued, more Indians would end up on welfare. When Interior Secretary James Watt agreed to reconsider SIPI's closure on the contingency that private funds could be found, the Xerox Corporation granted Albuquerque manager Ron Mills a six-month leave of absence to help SIPI expand its private base of support. Mills testified at BIA hearings on the issue, claiming that many Albuquerque businesses, like Xerox, hired SIPI graduates.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> SIPI Institutional Self Study Report, 1978-1980, Prepared for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, January 1981, p. 107; SIPI Institutional Self Study Report, February 1986, p. 99, SIPIA; David Steinbert, "U.S. Memo Advocates Closing Indian Polytech," Albuquerque Journal, August 27, 1981, clipping; Arley Sanchez, "Lujan Calls Watt to Oppose SIPI Closing," Albuquerque Journal, September 3, 1981, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s, SIPIA.

<sup>10</sup> Jack Ehn, "Opening school's doors could stem budget cuts," Albuquerque Tribune, August 27, 1981, clipping; Michael D. Parey, D.D.S., Dentistry for Child, Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Senator Domenici, October 26, 1981, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s; Arley Sanchez, "Hearing on SIPI: Students, Staff Plead to Keep School Open," Albuquerque Journal, March 31, 1982, clipping; Talli Nauman, "Indian Tech Shifts Fight to Improving Programs," Albuquerque Journal, January 5, 1984, pp. A3-A4, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.



## "The Imperative to Seek New Sources of Revenue"

As in the previous decade, SIPI's campus organizations led demonstrations to keep the postsecondary school open as an all-Indian institution. During the fall of 1981, the SIPI chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) asked BIA head Kenneth Smith to send a representative to review the school's programs. Faced with a proposed closure that would take effect by December 1981, students set aside their criticisms of SIPI's management and rallied behind the school. "We don't realize what we've got here," Yolanda Olguin (tribe not specified) told the 300 SIPI students gathered in the gymnasium to protest the proposed closure. "We're not in high school anymore. I care about this school and I care about my Indian people."<sup>11</sup> Another student, Rayna Lopez (tribe not specified), said, "I am disappointed that the government doesn't realize that a vocational school is important for the Indian people. This school is a unique institution and a link from the reservation to urban Indian living."<sup>12</sup> Supported by the Mescalero Apaches, Navajos, Zunis, the United Sioux, the National Tribal Chairmen's Association, and the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), SIPI exerted sufficient pressure on the BIA to keep the school open another semester.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Yolanda Olguin (tribe not specified), quoted in "Polytechnic students rally to prevent program closing in '82," New Mexico's 19 Pueblo News, December 1981, p. 6, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1970s; Arley Sanchez, "SIPI Closing Linked to Poor Record," Albuquerque Journal, March 26, 1982, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>12</sup> Rayna Lopez (tribe not specified), quoted in "Inquiring Photographer," Roadrunner, February 18, 1982, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>13</sup> Kenneth Etcitty (Navajo), to the editor, "Navajo support for SIPI needed," Navajo Times, February 24, 1982, clipping; Paul R. Wieck, "Zuni Leader Seeks Pact to Run SIPI," Albuquerque Journal, February 25, 1982, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA; "NIYC Board Resolutions," Americans Before Columbus, vol. 10, no. 2 (1982): 7.



## **"The Imperative to Seek New Sources of Revenue"**

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At 7:30 AM on the morning of April 27, 1982, 250 SIPI students and supporters gathered on the campus to hear prayers in preparation for the march to the BIA's Albuquerque Area Office. Beating a drum and chanting, marchers walked south on Coors Boulevard to Central Avenue, then continued eastward on Central across the Rio Grande—the old U.S. Route 66 that makes its way through Albuquerque—passing through the downtown area and the University of New Mexico (UNM) campus on the way to the First National Bank Building (now the First Security Building) at Central and San Mateo. When the procession reached UNM, Kiva Club members joined the marchers, adding more voices and a drum to the chorus of protest. By 3:30 PM, with the fifteen-mile trek completed, the marchers gathered outside the building which held the Area Office. After listening to several speeches, the crowd of protesters became restless and wondered whether or not Area Director Sidney L. Mills was going to come out of his office. Disregarding security guards, protesters crowded up the stairs and elevators towards Mills's office. Faced with such an outpouring of support for SIPI, Mills met with students, then held a conference in the building's lobby area. Mills told the crowd that his office had no authority over education, except in a supportive, housekeeping type of role. All decisions regarding educational programs, he said, were made in Washington. To this comment, the crowd jeered. Surprisingly, Mills admitted that he had not made any formal recommendations to Secretary Smith about SIPI prior to the April 27th demonstration march. Still, in previous conversations, Mills had admonished Smith to consider the



progress SIPI had made over the previous year and the more positive attitude that students were taking towards the school.<sup>14</sup>

The SIPI protest march in April 1982, and the inquiry into the Reagan administration's reasons for closing SIPI that followed this demonstration, provided the first serious challenge to Reagan's assault on Indian higher education. In a speech to the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, New Mexico's Senator Pete Domenici said, I predict that the plan for Indian economic development now being hammered out by the Sub-Cabinet Working Group will require a national facility very similar to SIPI. Therefore, I cannot see the advantage in stopping a program that works, only to scramble to start it up again when this administration finds out that SIPI is needed.<sup>15</sup>

Reaffirming Domenici's conclusions, an informal poll conducted by SIPI spokeswoman Lucinda Harris revealed that 70 percent of SIPI students did not know where they would go if the vocational-technical training facility closed. In response to the controversies rocking SIPI, several independent research organizations—Independent Sector, the Center for Responsive Government, the federal government's National Institute of Education, and Ohio State University's National Center for Research in Vocational Education—carefully examined the issues involved in the proposed closure and made the following conclusions. First, Independent Sector and the Center for Responsive Government found that the little private support available for education had primarily gone to the arts and

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<sup>14</sup> Richard L. Drinon, Jr., "Indian college closing sparks protest march," New Mexico Daily Lobo, April 26, 1982, pp. 1,5, clipping; "School supporters," Albuquerque Tribune, April 27, 1982, clipping; Rick Nathanson, "SIPI Backers Confront Area Director," Albuquerque Journal, April 28, 1982, pp. A1, A3, clipping; Richard L. Drinon, Jr., "Pow-wow held in area office," New Mexico Daily Lobo, April 28, 1982, pp. 1, 5, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>15</sup> Senator Pete Domenici, quoted in Richard L. Drinon, Jr., "Indians march today to prevent school close," New Mexico Daily Lobo, April 27, 1982, p. 1, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.



social programs for impoverished minorities. Second, in a study of education costs per student at vocational schools nationwide, the National Institute of Education estimated that overall costs ran about \$4,000 a year per student. Since SIPI's figures for 1981-82 (\$4,619 per student) incorporated meal costs, SIPI spent about the same as the national average or perhaps even less. Finally, Ohio State's National Center for Research in Vocational Education found that SIPI's job placement rate of about 70 percent a year fell within the national average for postsecondary vocational schools, which ranged from 70 to 80 percent a year. Yet, these studies may have underestimated the institution's effectiveness in preparing Native students for the job market. In an examination of SIPI's most successful programs, Sherry Robinson of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) found that during the 1981-82 school year SIPI placed 77 percent of students enrolled in the Food Preparation program, 89 percent of those in Clerical, 89 percent in Optical Technology, and 94 percent in Accounting.<sup>16</sup>

The following month of May 1982, the last month of the school year, SIPI's Board of Regents convinced United States District Court Judge Thomas A. Flannery to stay the Interior Department's order to close SIPI. Giving momentum to Judge Flannery's decision, Representative Sidney L. Yates (D-IL), the chair of the House Appropriations Committee's Interior Subcommittee, and other key members of the House banned the use

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<sup>16</sup> Rick Nathanson, "SIPI Backers Confront Area Director," *Albuquerque Journal*, April 28, 1982, pp. A1, A3, clipping; Richard B. Schmitt, "School May Be Out Forever at an Indian Institute as Federal Funds End and Private Aid is Scarce," *Wall Street Journal*, May 12, 1982, p. 52, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s; *SIPI Institutional Self Study Report, February 1986*, p. 99, SIPIA; Sherry Robinson, "Will School Survive Watt?" *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1983): 4-5. Robinson's report for the NIYC must be viewed with some skepticism, however, since the organization provided legal counsel to SIPI during the closure controversy.



of budgetary funds to prepare SIPI for closure. As an alternative to shutting altogether, Secretary Watt revived the old idea (first proposed in 1974) of a merger with TVI. A longtime supporter of Indian education programs, Congressman Yates threw his support behind SIPI, inspiring the Board of Regents to announce new plans for expanding SIPI's private support. Yates committed funds to keep SIPI open through the 1982-83 year and recommended that Secretary Watt appoint an independent task force to determine SIPI's fate.<sup>17</sup>

Rather than providing the mechanism SIPI needed to escape the dark cloud of budget cuts, the task force provided Secretary Watt another opportunity to thwart SIPI's efforts to stay open. In a dubious bureaucratic evasion tactic, Watt asked Yates to appoint the task force that would make recommendations regarding SIPI to Congress. During the task force's first meeting, however, members expressed surprise when the BIA's Lincoln A. White (Mohawk) showed up at the meeting and announced that he would chair the task force's investigation. As chair, White maintained that he could not give task force members direct access to SIPI students, staff, or materials, but they could contact SIPI through him. Despite White's subterfuge, in January 1983 the task force managed to write a decision that recommended SIPI stay open. Seeking to undermine the task force's

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<sup>17</sup> Board of Regents of Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, et al., v. James G. Watt, Secretary of the Interior, and Kenneth L. Smith, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs, civ. no. 82-1353, filed May 17, 1982; "Panel Denies Use of Funds to Shut SIPI," Albuquerque Journal, June 15, 1982, p. B4, clipping; "Smith Says Transfer of SIPI to Albuquerque Institute Still Considered," Indian News Notes, vol. 6, no. 19 (June 17, 1982), clipping; "Watt proposal to transfer SIPI rejected," Navajo Times, August 18, 1982, clipping; "SIPI to remain open, accepting spring semester applicants," Navajo Times, November 24, 1982, p. 11, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA; "Watt Blocked from Closing SIPI," Americans Before Columbus, vol. 10, no. 4 (1982): 1; "SIPI Future Still Undetermined," Americans Before Columbus, vol. 10, no. 5 (August 1982): 1, 8; Sherry Robinson, "Will School Survive Watt?" Americans Before Columbus, vol. 11, no. 1 (1983): 4-5.



findings, BIA head Kenneth Smith did not allow members of the team to see the final version of the report, allowing Smith to bury the task force's recommendation. To add insult to injury, Smith attached a cover letter to the task force's report to Congress, apologizing that the investigation failed to provide enough information to make a final recommendation one way or the other.<sup>18</sup>

Refusing to accept defeat, SIPI students became even more determined to overcome these bureaucratic maneuvers designed to take away their school. In March 1983, collaborating with UNM's Kiva Club, SIPI's Student Senate organized a three-day marathon designed to raise awareness about the Reagan administration's efforts to close SIPI. On March 26, 1983, almost a year after the march on the BIA Area Office, Bill Martin of Cochiti Pueblo blessed two groups of runners wearing SIPI t-shirts and traditional shoulder pouches containing messages from the SIPI Board of Regents and the Student Senate to all tribal leaders who supported the school. Departing the SIPI campus, one group of runners headed north towards the Pueblos of the upper Rio Grande region, while the other group headed west to Laguna Pueblo, Acoma Pueblo, Zuni Pueblo, and, finally, Window Rock, the Navajo Nation's capital. "By running directly to the communities we hope to get stronger support from tribal leaders and the state," said SIPI

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<sup>18</sup> The SIPI Task Force appointed by Representative Sidney L. Yates (D-IL) included: (1) Navajo Nation Director of Commerce Michael T. Allison (Navajo); (2) the Navajo Nation Department of Education's Leonard Arviso (Navajo); (3) Thomas Champion of the Public Service Company of New Mexico, the state's leading utility company; (4) Caroline Hughes of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education; (5) Bruce McConnell of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; (6) Zia Pueblo Governor and member of the All Indian Pueblo Council Bennie Salas; and, (7) Director of Indian Education for the New Mexico State Department of Education Rena Salazar (San Juan Pueblo). "SIPI task force alleges Interior manipulation," *Americans Before Columbus*, vol. II, no. 3 (1983): 3; "DeLayo Fears SIPI Report Fails School," *Albuquerque Journal*, March 31, 1983, p. C2, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.



Student Senate President Daniel Ringlero (tribe not specified). “We also hope to symbolize the need for local unity among Indian people to help us with ou[r] struggle to keep SIPI open.”<sup>19</sup>

The grassroots support that SIPI enjoyed in Albuquerque and among tribes across the Southwest, the consistent placement of students in jobs with companies like Mountain Bell, Sandia National Laboratory, IBM, and Cheyenne Enterprises, and support from Congressional Democrats who were longtime promoters of Indian self-determination allowed the postsecondary training school to survive the Reagan administration’s adamant closure efforts. Major challenges still lay ahead, as SIPI tried to maintain ongoing programs with less and less money. In 1984, with a larger enrollment and a smaller budget, SIPI President Robert Martin (Cherokee) reported that the school still operated the same number of programs that it had in 1980. SIPI’s ability to stay open and continue its programs prompted fiscal conservatives to boast that Reagan’s cuts forced SIPI and other BIA schools to operate more efficiently. With few other funding alternatives, SIPI’s supporters, such as Ron Mills of Xerox, organized the Friends of SIPI to increase private support. Likewise, this privatization movement prompted several companies to make cash and capital donations to SIPI, including the Atlantic Richfield Company which gave the school \$15,000 to buy new software and introduce a new word-processing course at SIPI. Other BIA schools followed SIPI’s lead in reaching out to private supporters. For

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<sup>19</sup> Daniel Ringlero (tribe not specified), quoted in “Relay run planned to help save SIPI,” Albuquerque Tribune, March 24, 1983, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA; Neal Singer, “Long Distance Run for Ed Funds,” Americans Before Columbus, vol. 12, no. 2 (1984): 4.



example, Haskell created a private, non-profit foundation in 1984 to organize and fund efforts to raise the money necessary to maintain higher education programs.<sup>20</sup>

The Reagan cutbacks had a profound impact on SIPI students. When faced with losing their school, Indian students began to take greater pride in the institution. Explaining why SIPI provided a much-needed service, students touched on the tangible benefits of its programs, but they also explained what it meant to be an American Indian or Alaska Native in the United States. Pointing to an emerging trend of self-confidence and cultural pride at SIPI, students formed the Intertribal Indian Club and began holding weekly meetings and powwows. Illustrating their pride in the SIPI campus, traditional respect for the environment, and willingness to reach out to the surrounding community, SIPI students held a “Mother Earth Day,” hosted by actor Iron Eyes Cody. In one day, SIPI students collected 800 bags of trash along Coors Boulevard, the major north-south corridor flanking the campus. Like Indian organizations at other postsecondary schools, colleges, and universities, SIPI students began holding fashion shows featuring traditional tribal garments. One SIPI student, Chuck Miner (Winnebago), an electronics technology major, played the Navajo Marine Jake Silverheels at the Vortex Theater in Albuquerque while a student at the institute. During the Iranian Hostage Crisis in 1979-81, Silverheels refused to leave the United States Embassy, despite Iranians’ efforts to offer him asylum. Miner himself served in the Air Force during the crisis and was placed on stand-by alert. Miner strongly identified with Jake Silverheels because he “acted as a marine’s marine

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<sup>20</sup> Lynn Bartels, “Better times ahead?” Albuquerque Tribune, January 5, 1984, p. A6, clipping; Talli Nauman, “Indian Tech Shifts Fight to Improving Programs,” Albuquerque Journal, January 5, 1984, pp. A3-A4, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA. “The Haskell Foundation,” flier, in Haskell Indian Nations University, pamphlet, n.d., HA.



during the takeover.” “I’m trying to portray him as an Indian proud and true, true to the marine corps and true to his Navajo heritage.”<sup>21</sup> In the staged version of Silverheels’s involvement in the hostage crisis, Miner emphasized that Silverheels’s loyalty to the United States and the Navajo Nation remained compatible. Yet, ironically, while Silverheels reaffirmed his patriotism in a crisis abroad, SIPI students struggled to justify the existence of their all-Indian school at home.

Whether portraying other Indians in dramatic productions or organizing powwows and shows to express their own cultural values, the Indian students of Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute realized during the early 1980s that they could utilize and shape the institute’s programs to meet their own needs. Protest marches and other efforts to save the institute encouraged political awareness, community action, and self-confidence among individual students. Pride in school became synonymous with cultural awareness and cultural tradition. SIPI students began publicly acknowledging the positive aspects of their campus community. Most students chose to identify closely with this on-campus community, while a few, like Chuck Miner, sought to express their identity outwardly to Albuquerque’s theater audience. Speaking to SIPI’s graduates at the 1983 commencement exercises, President Robert Martin said, “We think SIPI is a legacy left to you by your ancestors.” Martin urged the students to “Soar like the eagle as high as you can.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Chuck Miner (Winnebago), quoted in Chip Calamaio, “For Immediate Release, November 10, 1983,” flier, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>22</sup> “SIPI Intertribal Indian Club,” *Rolling Redskin Review*, vol. 3 (March/April 1982): 6; Robert Martin (Cherokee), quoted in Michael J. Hartranft, “SIPI Graduates 110 Students,” *Rio Rancho Observer*, May 26, 1983, clipping; Chip Calamaio, “SIPI Has 13-Year History,” *Rio Rancho Observer*, Progress on the



### **The Reagan “Revolution” Threatens D.Q. University**

In April 1981, only a few months after Ronald Reagan took the oath of office, forty-one United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) delegates, who were members of the Paris-based International Institute for Educational Planning, visited D.Q. University during a tour of colleges and universities in the United States. Eager to please their international guests, D.Q. held a powwow, served a dinner featuring many different tribal delicacies, organized musical performances, sponsored talks on American Indian culture, and invited the UNESCO delegates to an arts and crafts show. UNESCO's Mauno Mbamba of Namibia, who presented certificates of appreciation to Dennis Banks, David Risling, and Jack Forbes, told the crowd after dinner that D.Q. was the “least representative” school they had seen in the United States. “Where else were they met by a circle of singers around a central drum?” “Where else [were they] fed with buffalo, venison, salmon, wild rice, fry bread, maize and duck?”<sup>23</sup> Echoing Mbamba's sentiments, another UNESCO delegate, Samuel Mumbengegwi of Zimbabwe, added, “If you were to visit our countries, you'd be sure to find universities in each one of them, but it .... would be a university that is like any other in the western world; it's not a university of the people the way this university is a university of the people. I have always argued with my friends and enemies that a people without culture will perish, and that if you want to destroy a people, destroy their culture.”<sup>24</sup>

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West Side, January 26, 1984, clipping; SIPI, Delta Epsilon Chi, Presents the Spring Native American Fashion Review, March 22, 1985 pamphlet, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA.

<sup>23</sup> Mauno Mbamba, quoted in Dugan, “Without Culture, We Perish,” unpublished manuscript, n.d., folder 8, box 1, series I, KCP.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Mumbengegwi, quoted in an untitled and unpublished manuscript describing the UNESCO tour at D.Q., April 10, 1981, folder 8, box 1, series I, KCP. UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) supported D.Q. University's minority-language policies and the principle of institutional segregation in societies where “mainstream” institutions failed to adapt the values of those integrated. See



The attention D.Q. received from UNESCO prompted other international organizations and individuals abroad to express their support for D.Q. in letters to President Reagan. Members of the Swiss International Committee for the Indians of the Americas, for instance, pointed out that the Reagan administration should respect D.Q. for being Indian controlled and for protecting the sacred land where the university was established.<sup>25</sup>

International sentiments notwithstanding, throughout President Reagan's first term (1981–85), Secretary of Education Terrel Bell and White House Budget Director David Stockman attempted to close D.Q. In February 1982, Stockman announced that the federal government would cease its policy of donating and/or selling surplus property to state and local governments at discount prices. This policy had allowed D.Q. to establish itself at the former Yolo Army Communications Center outside of Davis, California. During Stockman's announcement, he specifically mentioned D.Q.'s failure to utilize the former federal property for the purpose for which it was intended in the land transfer contract. To administer this new policy, Reagan appointed a Federal Property Review Board to direct the sale of federal property to private companies. Meanwhile, the Department of Education continued its audits of D.Q., designed to demonstrate that D.Q. had failed to comply with the 1971 transfer agreement. In March 1982, a month after

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Mark Blaug, Kjell Eide, Louis Emmerij, Torsten Husén, François Orivel, and Zsuzsa Ferge, Planning Education for Reducing Inequalities: An IIEP Seminar (Paris, France: UNESCO Press, 1981), 39, 110.

<sup>25</sup> “Native American Arts, Sculpture and Crafts Exposition at D.Q. University, April 8–11, 1981,” flier; “Invitation to attend an International State Dinner with UNESCO, April 10, 1981,” flier; Alex Weber, President, and Marianne B. Wilhelm, Secretary, Incomindios: Internationales Komitee für die Indianer Amerikas, Zürich, Switzerland, to Dennis Banks, June 4, 1982; Jessica Grob, Hanover, West Germany, to President Ronald Reagan, August 14, 1982, copy, folder 8, box 1, KCP.



Stockman's announcement, the Department of Education published a harsh indictment of D.Q. Alleging that the institution created “padded” enrollment figures, federal officials charged that D.Q. only enrolled eighty-six students on a full-time basis. Moreover, the report asserted that D.Q. only used 10 of its 643 acres for educational purposes. In addition, it questioned D.Q.'s practice of faculty and staff teaching courses to each other. For example, board member David Risling instructed Dennis Banks and several trustees through independent study courses called “Governance” and “Management Procedures.” In addition, university controller Rudy Vargas offered an independent study course, entitled “Basic Fiscal Management,” for six staff members.<sup>26</sup> The Department of Education claimed that these courses were fraudulent. In response to the department's charges, D.Q. President Steve Baldy (Hoopa) explained that the university provided these courses to administrators and staff not to pad enrollment but to improve the institution. By leveling charges of padded enrollment, President Baldy added, the federal government sought to control D.Q.'s curriculum. Correcting the report's enrollment figures, Baldy asserted that 185 students attended D.Q., 86 of whom lived on campus during the fall of 1981—an FTE equivalent of 133 students enrolled for twelve or more hours.<sup>27</sup>

Seeking to resolve the controversy, Congressman Vic Fazio (D-CA) sponsored legislation designed to give D.Q. more independence from federal oversight. Fazio's bill

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<sup>26</sup> Howie Kurtz, “Federal Audit Sees Problems at D-Q College,” Sacramento Bee, March 13, 1982, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.

<sup>27</sup> Leo Rennert, “White House Halts Surplus Land Discounts, Seeks Private Offers,” Sacramento Bee, February 26, 1982, clipping; “U.S. may pull land from under little DQ,” San Francisco Examiner, March 20, 1982, clipping; “DQU's Dilemma,” editorial, California Aggie, April 5, 1982, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.



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proposed to abrogate the 1971 quitclaim deed and escrow agreement, transfer lands to the university, divide the lands into four parcels, require D.Q. to submit plans for the development of those parcels, and waive any claims, liens, or other financial obligations made prior to 1981. To encourage a quick resolution, the bill required that these tasks be accomplished within ninety days after the bill became law. Although well-intentioned, Congressman Fazio decided to withdraw his support for the bill, as the Department of Education's 1982 audit continued to attract negative press coverage for D.Q. In response, the Department of Education plunged ahead with its plans to take over the facility. As public sentiment against D.Q. mounted, Dennis Banks concluded that Fazio and members of Congress would not withhold judgment until all the facts were in. D.Q.'s leaders were compelled to seek another approach.<sup>28</sup>

The 1982-83 school year proved a pivotal one for D.Q.'s survival. Although its finances remained shaky, rays of hope began to penetrate the looming darkness. Following D.Q.'s desperate tuition hike initiated in 1980, the college slowly began to increase its revenue. When D.Q.'s regents raised tuition from \$1,600 to \$6,000 a year, many feared that the school would be swept off the map in a matter of months. But, fortunately for D.Q., a core group of supporters found the necessary funds to pay the tuition and the institution's income rose, as did support from foundations and individuals. In 1982-83, for the first time, D.Q.'s endowment fund generated a positive income of \$66,000. Within three years, the annual contribution from the endowment would almost triple to

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<sup>28</sup> United States House of Representatives, A Bill to Provide for the Conveyance of Certain Lands to D-Q University in the State of California (H.R. 3144), 97th Cong., 1st sess., folder 7, box 1, series I, KCP.



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\$177,596.<sup>29</sup> Continuing in its efforts to close D.Q., the Department of Education froze the school's \$108,000 in financial aid funding throughout the 1982–83 year. Moreover, President Reagan's Federal Property Review Board applied further pressure for the seizure and resale of the property by increasing the land's value from the 1971 price of \$427,000 to \$6 million. In the fall of 1983, just after classes began, United States District Court Judge Phillip C. Wilkins lifted a restraining order against the federal takeover of D.Q., paving the way for federal marshals to occupy the campus on October 24, 1982, when a thirty-day eviction notice was due to expire. In preparation for the federal takeover, D.Q. leaders and 200 supporters organized a 72-hour vigil. Dennis Banks announced that federal marshals would have to carry him off the campus in order to enforce the eviction notice. Although defiant, Banks insisted that all supporters must refrain from using drugs, alcohol, or weapons during the vigil. In a flier promoting D.Q.'s blockade against federal marshals, Banks emphasized that “RESISTANCE WILL BE NON-VIOLENT.”<sup>30</sup> Faced with such stalwart opposition, federal attorney Louis Demas withdrew the occupation order, alerting the press that the government would pursue the takeover effort in the courts.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Among the supporters of D.Q., Mrs. Katherine Cole of the San Francisco Chapter of the Woman's International League for Peace and Freedom gave 500 shares of Excel Energy Corporation Common Stock valued at \$3,061 to D.Q. Melinda Welsh, “Eight graduate in DQU program,” June 29, 1981, clipping, folder 6; Gerald P. Kirkland, Vice President and Trust Officer, Wells Fargo Bank, to Steve Baldy, President, D.Q. University, July 30, 1981, folder 8, box 1, series I; James Hogle of Salt Lake City donated \$2,000 to D.Q. Dennis Banks to Hogle, January 10, 1981, folder 1, box 8, series IX, KCP.

<sup>30</sup> The American Indian International Tribunal, “Urgent Action: Blockade to Defend D–Q U,” October 24–26, 1982, flier, folder 8, box 1, series I, KCP.

<sup>31</sup> D–Q University, Five–Year Projections of Revenues and Expenses, n.d., pamphlet, folder 8; Ted Bell, “Judge Oks DQU Land Takeover,” Sacramento Bee, September 4, 1982, clipping; Mike Fitch, “DQU awaits action by government,” Davis Enterprise, October 25, 1982, clipping; Tim Dailey, “DQU Chancellor Looks to the Future,” California Aggie, November 2, 1982, clipping; Mike Fitch, “Judge



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When the case of the Department of Education versus D.Q. returned to the courts, D.Q. won a victory. In April 1983, almost as if he were conceding to D.Q., President Reagan proclaimed American Indian Day as part of the

commitment made in 1970 to strengthen tribal governments and lessen Federal control over tribal government affairs. To further the principle of self-government, we will encourage the political and economic development of the tribes by eliminating excessive Federal regulation and government intervention, which in the past have stifled local decision-making, thwarted Indian control of Indian resources, and promoted dependence rather than self-sufficiency.<sup>32</sup>

One month later, arguing before Judge Wilkins's district court, U.S. attorney Louis Demas put Reagan's proclamation into a more accurate perspective when Demas said that the federal government was not concerned with the mechanics, composition, or needs of D.Q. Rather, Demas said that the Attorney General was concerned only with real estate. To express their outrage over Demas's assertions, D.Q. students, including Betty Clair (Lakota), determined to publish a newsletter. Clair wrote, "So much for Reagan and the government's policy towards Indian self-determination!" "IT REMAINS THE SAME OLD TERMINATION AT ALL COSTS ... YOURS AND MINE!"<sup>33</sup> Recognizing the hypocrisy riddling the Reagan administration's treatment of D.Q., Judge Wilkins ordered the Department of Education to release the \$108,000 in financial aid funds frozen during the 1982-83 year and to allow D.Q. students to draw funds as needed during the 1983-84

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orders U.S. to free DQU funds," Davis Enterprise, August 10, 1983, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.

<sup>32</sup> Ronald Reagan, "American Indian Day, 1983, Proclamation 5049 of April 14, 1983 by the President of the United States," in Federal Register, Presidential Documents, vol. 48, no. 74 (April 15, 1983), 16227-28.

<sup>33</sup> Betty Clair (Lakota), quoted in "Editorial," Student Voices from D.Q.U., vol. 1, no. 1 (June 1983), folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP. Emphasis hers.



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school year. Finally, in January 1984, after three years of continuous struggle, Judge Wilkins ruled that the government had failed to prove D.Q.'s violations of the original quitclaim deed and escrow agreement; the judge added that the original transfer agreement needed more clarification.<sup>34</sup>

In the wake of its court victory, D.Q. survived the most serious effort yet to close the college. D.Q.'s success reflected the motto that appeared on an exterior wall mural at the Indian-controlled college. In this mural, D.Q. likened itself to three warriors holding vigil over a war shield on which the following words were emblazoned:

When a warrior struggles for the life of the people, the personal happiness of the warrior is not put aside. Love of the people and their way of life is a warrior's personal happiness.

There is freedom in resistance against the acts of genocide—that freedom is the very life that a warrior's heart pumps. The warriors are the life-blood of the people.<sup>35</sup>

D.Q. helped produce the "warriors" who maintained the struggle for Indian higher education. By persisting in a stalwart resistance against a determined Reagan administration, the warriors held the conservative tide at bay.

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<sup>34</sup> Mike Fitch, "Judge orders to free DQU funds," *Davis Enterprise*, August 10, 1983, clipping; Chris Woodward, "DQU: Surviving the Battles," *Davis Democrat*, January 14, 1984, clipping; Glenn Brank, "Judge Rejects DQU Campus Eviction Order," *Sacramento Bee*, January 18, 1984, clipping, folder 6; United States of America v. D-Q University and SAFECO Title Insurance Company, civil no. S-82-531-PCW in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California, filed January 16, 1984, folder 7, box 1, series I, KCP.

<sup>35</sup> Mural quote from photograph in Chris Woodward, "DQU: Surviving the Battles," *Davis Democrat*, January 14, 1984, clipping, folder 6, box 1, series I, KCP.



### **The Limitations of Privatization and Self-Support**

By the mid-1980s, an entirely new political, economic, social, and cultural climate enshrouded Indian higher education. Between 1981 and 1987, every Congressional act affecting Indian education limited spending—with the exception of a 1983 law that raised annual spending for each FTE student from \$4,000 a year in fiscal year 1984 to \$5,820 by fiscal year 1987. Reagan’s election had indeed succeeded in reducing the size of government and had shifted the nation’s ideology towards the conservative right.<sup>36</sup>

To expand support for downsizing the federal government, Reagan and his supporters argued that public programs should be privatized through foundation, corporation, and individual philanthropy. Private support for education had a long history in the United States, dating back to the establishment of church-affiliated educational institutions during the colonial era. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, accompanying the rise of the first major national corporations, such as the United States Steel Corporation, the Ford Motor Company, and the Atlantic Richfield Company, big businesses began reserving profits for the establishment of philanthropic subsidiaries, many of which later evolved into separate organizations that possessed sufficient capital to function in perpetuity. Indeed, the Ford Foundation went on to become the leader among the world’s foundations, possessing \$6.2 billion in assets in 1991 alone (see **table 7.1**). In the decades after World War II, leading Republicans, including President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, and

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<sup>36</sup> P.L. 98-192, December 1, 1983, 97 Stat. 1335-43. For laws reducing spending, see P.L. 97-35, August 13, 1981, 95 Stat. 441; P.L. 98-449, October 4, 1984, 98 Stat. 1725-26; and, P.L. 98-511, October 19, 1984, 98 Stat. 2391-2401.



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California Governor Ronald Reagan, believed that philanthropies could help privatize government services, directing those services toward greater efficiency and productivity. This may have been partially true, but philanthropies could not match the resources commanded by federal and state governments. In two studies published in 1982, Washington, D.C.-based Independent Sector and the Center for Responsive Government found that there was not enough private support available in the United States to support schools and colleges. Still, many continued to insist that philanthropy supported an educational infrastructure "essential if the U.S. is to have the kind of public schools that its democracy requires: schools that are accessible to all, fair, harmonious, and high in quality."<sup>37</sup> The limitations of philanthropic contributions notwithstanding, it seems possible that some wealthy conservatives supported this approach simply to re-establish a more laissez-faire political economy, like the system at work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Edward J. Meade, Jr., "Foundations and the Public Schools: An Impressionistic Retrospective, 1960-1990," *Phi Delta Kappan* 73 (October 1991): K1-K12; this essay formed part of the "Kappan Special Report" series.

<sup>38</sup> Merle Curti and Roderick Nash, *Philanthropy in the Shaping of Higher Education* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1965), 3-59, 107-67, 186-264; Richard B. Schmitt, "School May Be Out Forever at an Indian Institute as Federal Funds End and Private Aid is Scarce," *Wall Street Journal*, May 12, 1982, p. 52, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1980s, SIPIA; Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities Since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 110-14, 206, 270-309; Julie L. Nicklin, "With Clinton in Office, Some Foundations Reassess Their Spending Priorities for Research, Education," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 39 (May 12, 1993): A35-A36.



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**Table 7.1: The Top Ten Foundations Ranked by Dollars Granted in 1991**

Foundation	1991 Assets
1. Ford	\$6.2 billion
2. W.K. Kellogg	\$5.3 billion
3. Lilly Endowment	\$3.5 billion
4. John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur	\$3.3 billion
5. Pew Charitable Trusts	\$3.3 billion
6. Robert Wood Johnson	\$4.0 billion
7. Rockefeller	\$2.1 billion
8. Andrew W. Mellon	\$1.7 billion
9. New York Community Trust	\$1.0 billion
10. Kresse	\$1.4 billion

Source: adapted from Julie L. Nicklin, “With Clinton in Office, Some Foundations Reassess Their Spending Priorities for Research, Education,” The Chronicle of Higher Education 39 (May 12, 1993): A35–A36.

In the case of Presbyterian-supported institutions of Indian higher education, Ganado College in northeastern Arizona became the first Indian-controlled and Indian-dominated church affiliated school to feel the effects of limited private funding. College officials

knew that funding would decrease as the Presbyterian Church gradually withdrew its support. Moreover, beginning in 1981–82, federal funding for Indian education programs also took a precipitous dive, placing more pressure on Ganado College to expand its programs and services. In one effort to attract private donations, Ganado published a pamphlet with an unusual title that was sure to provoke a grin and a chuckle or two if not contributions. Entitled Let’s Talk About Native Americans and Fishing Poles, this fundraising gimmick claimed that

It’s been said that if you give a person a fish, you feed him for a day. But give that person a fishing pole and feed him forever! The College of Ganado is in the business of giving “fishing poles” to Native American young people. That “fishing pole” is a quality education that allows students to become strong, independent and contributing citizens of this nation.<sup>39</sup>

Although not intended to be read literally, this fundraising technique eventually failed to attract the support Ganado College needed to remain open, perhaps because fishing poles

<sup>39</sup> Let’s Talk About Native Americans and Fishing Poles, pamphlet, item 6, “Ganado College” folder, box 17.1.1, MHL.



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evoked images of laziness, not success for Indian college students. Meanwhile, through the mid-1980s, Ganado continued to receive modest support from the church. In 1985, at the Presbyterian Church's General Assembly, which met after Huron College merged with a college in Rapid City, South Dakota, church delegates asked what could be done to prevent the closure of other colleges that had lost many "traditional age" students.<sup>40</sup> Presbyterians predicted that by 1990 many other church-affiliated colleges, including Ganado, would fold. Ganado College's closure came sooner than expected. By September 1986, after three major fundraising campaigns—"Mission Possible" (1977), "Mission Possible II" (1981), and the "Capital Fund Campaign" (1986), as well as annual fund drives—the board of regents announced that the College would close immediately.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Minutes, 197th General Assembly, 1985, Part I, Journal (New York and Atlanta: Office of the General Assembly, 1985), 536.

<sup>41</sup> "Mission" Possible: The College of Ganado, ca. 1977, item 20; Bleak, pamphlet, n.d., item 7; Gordon G. Gorman, chair, Board of Regents, to Miss Hermann, July 29, 1985, item 31; Capital Fund Campaign: College of Ganado and Navajo Nation Health Foundation, 1986, pamphlet, item 28; "The College of Ganado," October 20, 1986, clipping, item 29, "Ganado College" folder, box 17.1.1; Dr. Daniel Honahni, "From the President's Desk," A.D., May 1983, p. 3, MHL. In 1986, the same year Ganado College closed, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church ended its practice of providing information on each college and university supported by the church. See Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Minutes, 198th General Assembly, 1986, Part I, Journal (New York and Atlanta: Office of the General Assembly, 1986), 598-602.



### **American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (AIS)**

The limitations of President Reagan’s privatization initiative also affected the organization administering the BIA’s Higher Education Scholarship Program, called American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (now the American Indian Graduate Center, Inc.). As executive director of American Indian Scholarships (AIS) from 1969 to 1983, John Rainer sought to ensure that the organization would not only survive the Reagan-era cutbacks but wean itself from the shifting politics of Capitol Hill altogether. In a letter to Colburn S. Wilbur of the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Rainer wrote:

Up to this year, AIS, Inc., has had a very small contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1/3 of actual need.... [I]t is imperative that we seek new sources of revenue to enable us to raise the Indian standard of living through financially assisting Indian men and women graduate students.<sup>42</sup>

To aid in this effort, AIS hired fundraisers who, on a contract basis, earned a certain percentage of the total amount raised. In Rainer’s words: “that did not pan out very well.”<sup>43</sup> The amount of time needed to administer the program, including meeting the needs of applicants and tracking students’ progress in graduate school, made fundraising difficult for the staff, even with the assistance of a part-time development officer.<sup>44</sup>

Meanwhile, through the early 1980s, Congress and the Reagan administration failed to recognize the difficulties higher education posed for Native people. Based on 1980 Census

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<sup>42</sup> John Rainer (Taos Pueblo), to Colburn S. Wilbur, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, December 8, 1981, AIGC.

<sup>43</sup> Rainer, interview with author, June 4, 1996.

<sup>44</sup> By 1984, many Indian organizations nationwide had hired development officers as part of a broader effort to develop long-range planning, as well as to expand private support. *AIS Annual Report, 1984 & 1985*, p. 2.



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figures, fewer than 7,000 of 1.4 million Indians in the United States had college degrees. Of this number, only about 1,500 had received advanced degrees, half of whom had been funded by AIS between 1969 and 1980.<sup>45</sup>

Between 1978 and 1982, record numbers of American Indians and Alaska Natives completed advanced degree programs at the colleges and universities nationwide, averaging 3,000 graduates a year. By seeking greater support for Indian higher education scholarships, AIS contributed tremendously to the Indian self-determination movement. Unfortunately, the Reagan “Revolution” swiftly undercut these tremendous gains. As a result, AIS—like Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, D.Q. University, and Ganado College—turned increasingly to private support. Between 1977 and 1985, the number of AIS private supporters rose from five to nineteen corporations and foundations (see **table 7.2**). By the mid-1980s, AIS had also expanded its assets to include three endowment funds and four designated funds. The growing private support came at an auspicious time in the history of BIA higher education funding, anticipating the Reagan cutbacks taking effect in fiscal year 1982.

**Table 7.2: Private Funding to American Indian Scholarships, Inc., 1977–85**

Non-government Funding Sources, 1977–78		Non-government Funding Sources, 1980–85			
		Foundation Supporters		Corporate Supporters	
1.	IBM	1.	Avon Products Foundation	1.	Atlantic Richfield Co.
2.	Union Carbide	2.	Ettinger Foundation	2.	Adolph Coors Co.
3.	Culpepper Foundation	3.	Exxon Educational Foundation	3.	Equitable Life Assurance Society of the U.S.
4.	American Indian Lutheran Board	4.	The Forest Foundation	4.	Mobil Corporation
5.	Sun Oil Co.	5.	William Randolph Hearst Foundation	5.	RCA Co.
6.	NCAI commemorative prints sale	6.	Montrose Educational Foundation	6.	Sandia National Laboratories
7.	Indian Scholarship Week revenues	7.	New Land Foundation	7.	Syntex Co.
		8.	David & Lucille Packard Foundation	8.	Texaco, Inc.
		9.	Polaroid Foundation	9.	Texas Instruments Co.
				10.	Union Carbide Co.

Source: adapted from AIS Annual Report, 1977–78; AIS Annual Report, 1984 & 1985.

<sup>45</sup> “A Proposal to the Third World Fund [of San Francisco, California] from American Indian Scholarships: Expanded Graduate Opportunities,” April 28, 1982, Development file, AIGC.



Private support strengthened AIS and helped to legitimize the organization as an important national force in Indian higher education and the self-determination movement. Yet, at the same time, the privatization of funding proscribed the use of certain funds and “tracked” many students into more lucrative professional fields of study and work. For example, many private donations often included restrictions on how the money was to be spent. During the 1984–85 academic year, private donors funded students from New Mexico tribes studying the “hard sciences,” including physics and chemistry. In addition, donors provided special funds for law students through “living wills,” as in the case of the Thomas W. Echohawk Scholarship Fund, named for the Pawnee Indian employed by the Native American Rights Fund in Boulder, Colorado, who was involved in the Arizona–California water rights dispute over the Lower Colorado River. Private contributions sometimes allowed AIS to use only the interest on a donation’s principal. “At one point, we had a \$200,000 gift,” John Rainer remembered, “with a provision that you can use only the interest earned.” Most donors, though, had significantly less to give, \$500 or \$1,000, “yet they put provisions in there [to limit its use].” “And it makes it very difficult [to manage.]”<sup>46</sup>

AIS’s board of directors, which represented tribes throughout the United States, identified five priority areas following the establishment of AIS in 1969; these areas were business, education, engineering, health, and natural resources. In 1986, when AIS began administering the BIA’s higher education scholarship program for law students—

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<sup>46</sup> *American Indian Graduate Record* (Fall 1988): 3. Thomas Echohawk and his wife, Jean, were killed in a plane accident in 1982. Rainer interview, June 4, 1996.



previously administered by the American Indian Law Center at the University of New Mexico—law became AIS’s sixth priority area. Within two years, law emerged as the primary field of graduate study funded by AIS, while non-priority areas fell by the wayside. For example, between 1985 and 1988 the number of different fields funded by AIS dropped from eighteen to seven. In addition to law, more students in medicine received funding, which resulted in more than doubling the number of new medical doctors from 1986–87 to 1987–88. Many students who needed AIS funding had to enter one of these fields.<sup>47</sup>

In the case of law, many circumstances thrust this profession into a priority field in Indian Country. The formation of the Indian Claims Commission after World War II called for experts in both historical and contemporary Indian affairs to testify before the courts of claims. Out of this claims process emerged a new age of land disputes that brought tribal, local, state, and federal interests together in a negotiation process. By preparing Indian students to represent their tribes in courts, UNM’s Pre-Law Institute and American Indian Law Center contributed to the rise of law as a “priority field” in Indian education. During the 1970s, particularly after Taos Pueblo’s court victory over Blue Lake, land claims cases appeared throughout the nation. To fight these battles, tribes recruited not only anthropologists and ethnohistorians but Indian lawyers as well. From 1966 to 1996, the number of practicing Indian attorneys in the U.S. increased from twelve to over 1,500.

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<sup>47</sup> American Indian Graduate Record (Fall 1987): 8; AIS Annual Report, 1987, p. 4; AIS Annual Report, 1988, p. 4; AIGC Annual Report, 1992–93, p. 5. Anonymous AIGC scholarship recipient, interview with author, April 10, 1996; Robert L. Bennett interview, March 28, 1996.



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Reflecting this explosive growth, by the late 1980s 47 percent of all AIS recipients were law students.<sup>48</sup>

Despite the growing importance of legal education to American Indian and Alaska Native communities, the older, more traditional fields of study continued to attract students. A survey of 118 students applying for BIA higher education grants between 1970 and 1992 showed that the majority (37) planned to earn masters or doctoral degrees in education. The second most popular area of study was law, which had 14 applicants. After law came business (10), social work (9), medicine (8), counseling (7), and public health (6), followed by a bevy of fields represented by four or fewer students: fine arts, public affairs/administration, divinity, anthropology, psychology, architecture/planning, geology, speech pathology, wildlife management, film production, museum administration, nursing, political science, communication, sociology, fisheries, and agriculture (see **table 7.3**).

**Table 7.3: Students Who Applied for BIA Higher Education Grants by Field of Study Represented by Five or More Students, 1970-92 (N=118)**

Number of Students	Field of Study
37	Education (MA and Ed.D.)
14	Law (JD)
10	Business (MBA)
9	Social Work (MSW)
8	Medicine (MD)
7	Counseling (MS)
6	Public Health (MS)

Source: Boxes 2, 6, 11, 17, 23, Student Files, 1970-87; box 21, Student Files, 1986-91, AIGC.

As “traditional” fields for Indian higher education, it is not surprising that education, social work, and health care continued to draw Native students. Special programs, such as Brigham Young University and Arizona State University’s Indian education programs and Sage Memorial Hospital’s nursing program,

<sup>48</sup> AIS Annual Report, 1987, p. 4; Connell-Szasz, *Education and the American Indian*, p. 167. For information on land claims cases, the legal profession, and ethnohistory, see Laurence M. Hauptman, *The Iroquois Struggle for Survival: World War II to Red Power* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986).



had prepared the previous generations of students for these professions. The legal profession had not been a popular field, but gradually, following the example of leaders like Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert L. Bennett (1966–69), Indians perceived law as a feasible profession. Augmented by the success of the University of New Mexico's pre-law institute, more Indians became lawyers and helped to represent their own tribes in litigation involving land claims, treaty rights, and government service disputes. The Oneidas of upstate New York formed their own legal department and established an internship program for law students.<sup>49</sup>

Indian law students saw themselves playing a pivotal role in shaping Indian self-determination. In their BIA grant applications, students often expressed their hopes for bringing about positive changes. One student, who had attended Northern Montana College, the University of Maryland, and San Francisco State University before applying to law school in the 1970s, explained that

The Indians' self-determination efforts have brought on many problems that never existed before because they were controlled or handled by white individuals. Today, because the Indian is trying to control his own destiny, he is finding himself bottled-up in courtroom battles in many areas—education, land, natural resources ... brought on by former unqualified and unconcerned representation in the courts.<sup>50</sup>

Reflecting this sentiment, another law school student planned to address "social welfare and economic development problems ... common to all tribes."<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately for these

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<sup>49</sup> The 118 students selected for this survey are from boxes 2, 6, 11, 17, 23, Student Files, 1970–87; box 21, Student Files, 1986–91, AIGC.

<sup>50</sup> James Franklin Contway (Little Shell Band of Landless Chippewa Indians of Montana), to John C. Rainer, March 18, 1976, box 11, Student Files, 1970–87, AIGC.

<sup>51</sup> Robert Lyle Schuyler (Wisconsin Oneida), "Career Goals," February 22, 1988, box 21, Student Files, 1986–92, AIGC.



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two students in particular, their ideals did not lead to success. Although the first student submitted many letters of support and showed much promise, he received no funding, probably because the BIA's higher education grant fund simply ran dry. The latter student received funding for two years, then dropped out.<sup>52</sup>

The process of applying for BIA funds required stubborn patience on the part of the student applicants. AIS shifted many student applications for BIA grants to a long waiting list contingent upon additional Congressional funding. Those who received grants deserved considerable credit for successfully meeting all institutional requirements and negotiating BIA and university bureaucracies. Some students failed to receive funding for other reasons as well. For example, among 118 student files surveyed, the most common reasons for not receiving a grant were as follows: incomplete application (14); failure to be accepted to graduate program (6); told (pre-1986) to pursue funding from the American Indian Law Center at the University of New Mexico (5);<sup>53</sup> tribe not federally recognized

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<sup>52</sup> Mark Whalen, Havre, Montana, to AIS, March 19, 1976, box 11, Student Files, 1970-87; Reginald Rodriguez, Chief, Postsecondary Programs, BIA, to Lorraine Edmo, AIS, May 23, 1989; also see, Irene Wasner, Financial Aid Officer, University of Washington, to Edmo, March 7 and 9, 1989; Edmo to Rodriguez, May 10, 1989; “Noted to File: Robert Schuyler, May 25, 1989; Oran LaPointe to Robert Sutton, AIS Memo, May 25, 1989; and LaPointe to Rodriguez, May 30, 1989, Schuyler file, box 21, Student Files, 1986-92, AIGC. It is often difficult to track students who received BIA higher education grants, even while in school, because the system for maintaining records on students changed year after year. That there is no reason provided for dropping out in this instance reflected the BIA's changing policy regarding criteria for student awards. During the 1970s, AIS asked if applicants had dependents for whom they cared. AIS provided dependent allowances for these students if the funds were available. Many students discussed the financial challenges of going to school, working, and raising dependent children in their applications. In many cases, even if students received grants, personal circumstances often forced them to withdraw from graduate school, or attend part-time, in which case they lost their BIA funding. By the 1980s, however, the growing number of students applying for higher education scholarships forced AIS to eliminate dependent allowances to students; and applications no longer requested information about dependents. As a result, AIS's relationship with its grantees became somewhat less personal, making it more difficult to determine why some students dropped out. The problem of maintaining contact with scholarship recipients became so convoluted that the Department of Energy awarded AIS/AIGC a grant to develop a statistical database called the American Indian College Student Tracking Project to aid the National Indian Policy Center in Washington, D.C. See *AIGC Annual Report, 1990*, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> In 1986, AIS took over the scholarship program for Indian law students.



## “The Imperative to Seek New Sources of Revenue”

(3); no response from student (3); no financial need shown (3); part-time status (2); other sources should be consulted first (2); no Certificate of Indian Blood (2); blood quantum not 1/4 or more (1);<sup>54</sup> still undergraduate (1); already possesses terminal degree (1); and, missed deadline (1). This list represents only 44 of the 118 students surveyed, because the other student files did not retain sufficient information. In part, the insufficient data on almost 60 percent of the sample reflected the confidentiality of the application process. Each student applicant was required to disclose financial statements, as well as other personal information. Understandably, some were unwilling to disclose these details. American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (AIS) began withdrawing financial information from student files during the late 1970s, which also explains why the student files are incomplete.<sup>55</sup>

During the Reagan era, the BIA instituted other changes that sought to streamline the Higher Education Scholarship Program. In 1986, the Bureau combined the special scholarship program for law students, previously administered by the American Indian Law Center at the University of New Mexico, with the program for all other Native American graduate students overseen by the American Indian Scholarships, Inc. (AIS). “The combined program is not only more economically efficient,” wrote AIS executive director Lorraine P. Edmo (Shoshone-Bannock), “but ... it will be more advantageous for tribes, Indian students[,] and colleges to deal with a single BIA graduate scholarship

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<sup>54</sup> In 1987, the BIA eliminated the 1/4 or more blood quantum requirement allowing the federally recognized tribes themselves to define membership and determine who should be eligible to receive government services. *American Indian Graduate Record* (Fall 1987): 2-3.

<sup>55</sup> Boxes 2, 6, 11, 17, 23, Student Files, 1970-87; box 21, Student Files, 1986-91, AIGC.



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program."<sup>56</sup> Edmo's attitude toward the Reagan cutbacks reflected the hopefulness and energy that she brought to AIS after replacing John Rainer as executive director in 1984.

With a bachelors degree in journalism from the University of Montana, a masters in public administration from the University of New Mexico, and as the founder of her tribal newspaper, the Sho-Ban News (1970), Lorraine Edmo brought considerable talent to AIS. Edmo's arrival could not have been more timely, since she led the organization perhaps through its roughest years (1984-89). In addition to being an able administrator, Edmo mirrored the emergence of a new generation of Native American women as national Indian leaders during the 1980s. American Indian women had worked for AIS and had served on the board of directors during the Rainer years (1969-83)—including Ada Deer (Menominee)—but in 1984-85 four of AIS's seven board members were women: namely, board president Joy Sundberg (Yurok), board vice president Rose Robinson (Navajo), board secretary-treasurer Alice Bathke (Navajo), and Martha Yallup (Yakama). By the end of Edmo's term as executive director in 1989, five of eight board members were not only women but women who had become leaders in their professions. For example, Martha Yallup, who had a Ph.D. in educational leadership from Seattle University, served her tribe as deputy director of human resources, founded the Heritage College in Toppenish, Washington, and sat on the boards of the Alliliated Tribes of Northwest Indians and Haskell Indian Junior College. Another woman board member, Jeanne S. Whiteing (Blackfeet-Cohuilla), worked as a partner at the Boulder, Colorado, law firm of Whiteing & Thompson, served as deputy director of the Native American Rights Fund,

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<sup>56</sup> Lorraine P. Edmo (Shoshone-Bannock), quoted in AIS Annual Report, 1986, p. 2.



and held memberships in the Colorado Indian Bar Association and the Native American Natural Resources Committee of the American Bar Association. As the professional advances of Martha Yallup and Jeanne Whiteing indicate, American Indian Scholarships, Inc. had come a long way since 1982, when a AIS newsletter article saluting Indian women acknowledged that “We are, of course, all aware of the current drives for equal this and equal that for women.” “[B]ut[,] somehow, men assume they are more equal than women.”<sup>57</sup>

Faced with federal cutbacks that closed or almost wiped out BIA postsecondary schools and private colleges, the American Indian Scholarships, Inc. managed to survive the Reagan years. A new generation of Native leaders cut their teeth on the government downsizing struggles of the eighties, leaving many politically savvy but economically destitute. With the exception of a few notable idealists, the old confidence and hopefulness of the seventies seemed to have withered away. Only a major shift in federal policy, combined with a grassroots cultural revival, could revive the flagging spirit of self-determination.

The 1980–88 era began with major closure threats against institutions of higher education, such as at D.Q. University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI). These schools managed to survive, but they remained largely dependent on BIA and Department of Education funding. They had cultivated some independent sources of

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<sup>57</sup> For more information on Edmo, see American Indian Graduate Record, no. 1 (1985): 1; AIS Annual Report, 1986, p. 2; and, AIGC Annual Report, 1990, p. 3. For more on the changing composition of the AIS board and its women leaders, see AIS Annual Report, 1977–78; AIS Annual Report, 1984 & 1985; and, AIGC Annual Report, 1990, p. 5. Quote from AIS Newsletter, Summer 1982, pp. 1–2.



funding, yet served a population that did not have much excess income. Although President Reagan and others touted privatization as the best approach to government downsizing, the experiences of Indian higher education proponents revealed its limitations. When conservatives in Congress realized the shortfalls of their policies, federal funding for scholarships, BIA schools, and tribal colleges began to increase by the late 1980s. That funding, as well as the buildup to the Columbus quincentenary, led to a resurgence in Indian student activism.



**Chapter 8:**  
**“The College Must Promote and Sustain Tribal Identity and Sovereignty”:**  
**Political Centrism and Indian Higher Education,**  
**1989 to the Present**

*We conserve and extend the histories and cultures of our tribes. Many colleges conduct research on the language and history of their tribes; gradually, publications by tribal college faculty are beginning to take their places as significant works of scholarship. Several colleges have established archival collections, to preserve tribal and personal documents.*

Lionel Bordeaux (1989)<sup>1</sup>

*Get (a white) education so you can survive, but keep our ways so you can live.*

University of Minnesota Professor Carrie Schommer (1993)<sup>2</sup>

In the summer of 1995, Charles Thode (tribe not specified) and seven University of Minnesota students wrote a letter to administrators asking that the university fund a full-time chair, include treaty rights issues in courses, provide more computer resources, and fund a newsletter for the American Indian Studies Department. The twenty-six-year-old department still struggled for basic resources, just as it always had. Native American

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<sup>1</sup> Lionel Bordeaux, “Commitment to Community: An Introduction to This Journal,” Tribal College: Journal of American Indian Higher Education 1 (no. 1, special edition [1989]): 4.

<sup>2</sup> Carrie Schommer (Wahpeton-Sisseton Lakota), quoted in Michele Ames, “Powwow honors American Indian language teacher,” Minnesota Daily, October 11, 1993, American Indian Studies clipping file, UMA.

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students who studied in the department usually pursued one of two tracks: either mastery of Dakota, Ojibwe, or another Native language, or the interdisciplinary track that examined American Indian art, literature, philosophies, socio-economic, and spirituality issues.<sup>3</sup>

During the ten-year anniversary celebration of the university's American Indian Resource Center in 1989, many alumni returned to the Twin Cities campus to share their appreciation for the department and its allied programs. One Minnesota native, Mark Fiddler (tribe not specified), recalled believing that he had the ability to complete his undergraduate and law degrees, but the staff of the resource center, as well as the department, gave him the emotional and psychological support he needed to make straight "A's." As a result, Fiddler received a state Indian scholarship that allowed him to attend the University of Minnesota full time, then went on to law school on a three-year fellowship. After graduation, Fiddler became an Indian child care attorney in the Public Defender's Office. Another successful American Indian Studies graduate, Hattie Kauffman (Nez Perce), explained that she chose the University of Minnesota because the Native studies department functioned like a family. Kauffman graduated with undergraduate honors in education, completed a masters degree in journalism and mass communications, then joined CBS's Good Morning America.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Pratik Joshi, "American Indian studies debated," Minnesota Daily, July 7, 1995; "Department of American Indian Studies," College of Liberal Arts Today, Special Edition, September 1994, American Indian Studies clipping file, UMA.

<sup>4</sup> Allison Campbell, "American Indian Resource Center celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> year," Minnesota Daily, April 3, 1989, American Indian Studies clipping file, UMA.



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All Indian students at the University of Minnesota, including Hattie Kauffman, Mark Fiddler, and Charles Thode, benefited from the dedication and service of Native American studies faculty. In the early to mid-1990s, the generation of Indian teachers who began this American Indian Studies Department began to reach retirement. In 1993, at a university function honoring Lakota linguist Carrie Schommer, one Dakota student, who would only be identified by her traditional name (Makoce Uy Waste'Mani, meaning "Walks with Nature"), explained that Schommer immerses students in Lakota culture by helping "you to see that a people's language is their culture, and their culture is their language."<sup>5</sup>

Although clearly a success in terms of empowering and motivating Indian students to succeed in a variety of fields, the American Indian Studies department and services at the University of Minnesota remained institutionally marginalized. More than any other indication of this problem, the fact that the College of Liberal Arts would not provide support for a full-time department chair—the key liaison between the university and the American Indian faculty and student body—signaled the depth of the institution's failure. In the words of higher education theorist William G. Tierney, the problem at the University of Minnesota, as well as elsewhere, reflected the Official Encouragement, Institutional Discouragement that plagued Indian higher education in the nineties.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Makoce Uy Waste'Mani (Dakota), quoted in Michele Ames, "Powwow honors American Indian language teacher," Minnesota Daily, October 11, 1993, American Indian Studies clipping file, UMA.

<sup>6</sup> William G. Tierney, Official Encouragement, Institutional Discouragement: Minorities in Academe—The Native American Experience (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1992).



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Despite the criticisms of William Tierney and others, the decade of the nineties, saw some important gains in the growth of Native American higher education. The persistence of SIPI and D.Q. University and the failure of Ganado College and other privatization efforts prompted policy makers to re-evaluate the policies of the Reagan "Revolution." The essential conservatism remained, but, during the late eighties, Congress began authorizing development grants for tribal colleges and BIA postsecondary schools. By 1990, Congress provided \$10 million a year for programs and capital improvements at tribal and BIA colleges. For the first time since the early 1970s, Congress amended the Indian Financing Act to provide more credit to the loan guaranty and insurance fund, formerly called the Revolving Loan Fund. By the end of the 102nd Congress in 1992, Congress had provided the following: \$43.2 million to support the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act for fiscal year 1993; \$10 million for endowment grants; \$2 million in construction grants at the Navajo Community College; \$2 million for Native language studies grants; and \$40 million to establish the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation in Tucson, Arizona. The Udall Foundation in Tucson funded outstanding non-Indians in environmental studies, but it cast a wider net in its support of American Indian and Alaska Native undergraduates by funding those students who pursued careers in health care and tribal policy, as well as environmental management.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For laws increasing funding for Indian higher education programs, see P.L. 100-297, April 28, 1988, 102 Stat. 414-15; P.L. 100-442, September 22, 1988, 102 Stat. 1763; P.L. 100-446, September 27, 1988, 102 Stat. 1818; P.L. 101-121, October 23, 1989, 102 Stat. 701; P.L. 101-477, October 30, 1990, 104 Stat. 1152; P.L. 102-259, March 19, 1992, 106 Stat. 78-84; P.L. 102-225, July 23, 1992, 106 Stat. 797-98; and, P.L. 102-524, October 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 3434-37.



### **The Ascendency of Centrism**

President George Bush (1989–93), a New Englander turned Texan, influenced the shift to political centrism indirectly by seeking to differentiate himself from his two-term predecessor and by his longtime knack for flip-flopping on political issues. In 1964, Bush lost a race for one of Texas's Senate seats after he promised to vote against President Lyndon Johnson's civil rights bill in favor of the more conservative economic and social policies advocated by Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AZ). Yet, when Bush won a seat in the House of Representatives, he supported an open housing bill. Similarly, after criticizing Reagan's supply-side economic policy proposals as "voodoo economics," Bush accepted Reagan's invitation to be his vice-presidential running mate in 1980. Bush always had difficulty making firm commitments to any philosophical position, but, at the same time, he represented the quintessential political insider, having served as Congressman for two terms, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, chair of the Republican National Committee, envoy to the People's Republic of China, and director of the Central Intelligence Agency. As a two-term vice president under Reagan, Bush remained a political insider, rarely venturing out into the public arena. Like many previous vice presidents, Bush hesitated in speaking out on issues, except in preparation for the 1988 presidential campaign. After Bush defeated Democratic Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis, he was determined to establish a record that built on, yet departed from, Reagan's, to rid himself of the "wimp" image. In a bold move that threatened to destroy his conservative base of support, Bush raised taxes on the upper-income brackets in



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response to national opinion polls showing that the wealth disparity in the United States was growing.<sup>8</sup>

In Indian affairs, President Bush also sought to separate himself from his Republican predecessor. On November 28, 1989, the President signed the National Museum of the American Indian Act (P.L. 101-185), proclaiming that "our nation will go forward with a new and richer understanding of the heritage, culture, and values of the peoples of the Americas of Indian ancestry."<sup>9</sup> "Our Constitution contemplates a special relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes," Bush announced months later while signing a measure that continued Congress's efforts in fulfilling treaty obligations.<sup>10</sup> In his most notable gesture in support of Indian higher education, on October 30, 1990 the President re-authorized the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 and the Navajo Community College Act because

I recognize and acknowledge the tribal colleges for the contribution they have made and continue to make in improving the quality of life for many American Indian people. Tribal colleges represent an opportunity for many American Indians to develop academic knowledge and job-related skills and become contributors to the economy both on and off Indian reservations. In addition, the tribal colleges are excellent examples of the Administration's policy of self-determination for Indian tribes.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Jerry Hagstrom, *Beyond Reagan: The New Landscape of American Politics* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 120, 152-54; Kevin Phillips, *The Politics of Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath* (New York: Random House, 1990), 4-5, 30-31, 42, 201-02, 210-21.

<sup>9</sup> "Statement on Signing the National Museum of the American Indian Act, November 28, 1989," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1989, Book II, July 1 to December 31, 1989* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1990), 1598.

<sup>10</sup> "Statement on Signing a Bill Amending Indian Laws, May 24, 1989," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1990, Book I, January 1 to June 30, 1990* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1991), 725-26, quote from p. 725. Although he signed this bill into law (P.L. 101-301), President Bush asked his Cabinet to consult with the Attorney General over the issue of section 2(a)(6), which authorizes racial preferences without requiring tribal membership.

<sup>11</sup> "Statement on Signing the Bill Reauthorizing Native American Higher Education Assistance, October 30, 1990," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1990, Book II, July 1 to December 31, 1990* (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1991), 4597.



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In addition to reaffirming the federal government's trust responsibility towards American Indians and Alaska Natives, President Bush expanded the BIA's policy of contracting its services to Indian tribes and organizations. Furthermore, by signing the Native American Languages Act (1992), Bush helped to support the restoration of cultural identity and pride among Native people. For conservative Republicans, Bush went too far in revamping the federal programs of the pre-1980 years. This would cost him a second term as President. The adjustment to centrism during the Bush administration, later developed more fully under President Bill Clinton, also responded to the Indian student activism surrounding the quincentenary of Columbus's first expedition to the Americas.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> “Statement on Signing the Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Project Act, December 4, 1991 [P.L. 102-184],” in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1991, Book II, July 1 to December 31, 1991 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1992), 1545; “Statement on Signing the Native American languages Act, October 26, 1992 [P.L. 102-524],” in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1992-93 Book II, August 1, 1992 to January 20, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1993), 2003-04. Despite President Bush's support of this and other measures affecting American Indians and Alaska Natives, he opposed the movement to incorporate Native Hawaiians into legislation dealing with federal-Indian relations, such as the Native American Languages Act (1992). In addition, Bush opposed Native Hawaiians' inclusion in the Veterans Home Loan Program Amendments (1992). See “Statement on Signing the Veterans Home Loan Program Amendments of 1992, October 28, 1992 [P.L. 102-547],” in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George Bush, 1992-93, Book II, August 1, 1992 to January 20, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1993), 2056-57.



### **Memorializing 1492 and Re-Building Indian Activism**

In October 1993, during one of the many demonstrations over the 500th anniversary celebration of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas, 100 Indian students from Haskell Indian Junior College and the University of Kansas (KU) marched through the streets of Lawrence. When the marchers reached the Kansas Union building at the University of Kansas, Haskell Student Senate President Sleepy Eye LaFromboise (Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux/Tonawanda Seneca) said, "There are many people back home that cry." "They don't know what to do with their lives," LaFromboise continued. "Brothers and Sisters, it is up to us to bring our people back, to stand up once again."<sup>13</sup> People throughout the United States celebrated the Columbus quincentenary in newspaper articles, books, museum productions, seminars, television events, and films, yet many American Indians decided not to join in these events. Indian college students asked how could Columbus's voyages be celebrated as a "discovery" when Native societies already lived throughout the Americas. What is there to celebrate, students asked, when Columbus's efforts initiated a pattern of colonization, enslavement, and killing that led to the destruction of whole Indian societies. Seeking to raise society's awareness of Native Americans' perspectives on the Columbus quincentenary, the Haskell student leader and others led marches and took pride in their fellow students who joined them in protest.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Sleepy Eye LaFromboise (Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux/Tonawanda Seneca), quoted in Andrew E. Nachison, "March protests Columbus Day, venerates past," Lawrence Journal-World, October 12, 1993, p. 3A, newspaper clipping files, KUA.

<sup>14</sup> "Response to the Columbus Quincentennial," AIGC Annual Report, 1991, p. 2. Lanier Holt, "Putting Columbus in new perspective," Minnesota Daily, October 5, 1992; Arthur Kane, "Students protest Columbus' voyage," Minnesota Daily, October 13, 1992; Lanier Holt, "1492 marked more than Columbus' trip," Minnesota Daily, October 28, 1992, American Indians clipping file, UMA.



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Born in Santa Monica, LaFromboise had lived with his father in Aberdeen, South Dakota, until his mother took him to her parents' home on the Tonawanda Seneca Reservation in western New York, where there was no plumbing or running water. As a tenth grader in the late 1980s, he became involved in Seneca spiritual ceremonies and "really came in touch with myself and who I am."<sup>15</sup> After attending an all-white public high school in New York, LaFromboise recalled the adrenaline rush he felt when he began running with Haskell's cross-country team: "At my side I could see all these dark Indian people. It was a great feeling."<sup>16</sup>

During the late 1980s, while LaFromboise was still in high school and learning Seneca spiritual ceremonies, the buildup to the Columbus Quincentenary began. No one spoke of concrete plans yet, but Haskell and KU officials placed increasing attention on Native American students and programs. During the spring of 1988, Haskell and KU officials formed a joint liaison committee, which held monthly meetings. That first semester, sixty staff members from KU's Student Life department toured Haskell. Encouraged by this interchange, KU invited the BIA to hold a summer in-service training workshop to be conducted by KU and Haskell instructors on the state university's campus. During the fall of 1988, KU's Museum of Anthropology held the first of its annual Indian arts and crafts exhibits, showcasing works by the former director of

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<sup>15</sup> Sleepy Eye LaFromboise (Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux/Tonawanda Seneca), quoted in Andrew E. Nachison, "A vision for his people," Lawrence Journal-World, November 8, 1993, p. 1D, newspaper clipping files, KUA.

<sup>16</sup> Quote from *ibid.*; Peter Lundquist, "Haskell, KU share ideas," Lawrence Journal-World, September 24, 1993, p. 3A, newspaper clipping files, KUA.



Haskell's art program, Richard West (Cheyenne).<sup>17</sup> In addition, Lawrence businesses, artists, and teachers organized a city-wide Indian Market that coincided with the museum exhibit at KU. In 1989, KU's Museum of Anthropology, Haskell, and the Lawrence Arts Center joined to host the Lawrence Indian Arts Show, which brought in Emil Her Many Horses (Rosebud Sioux) of the Beuchel Museum in South Dakota, Margaret Archuletta of the Heard Museum in Phoenix, and Sara Bates of the American Indian Contemporary Arts Center in San Francisco to judge the event. As a result of the growing interaction between KU and Haskell, Indian enrollment at KU almost doubled from 106 in the fall of 1987 to 219 in the fall of 1989.<sup>18</sup>

In 1990, when Indian activist and poet Luci Tapahonso (Navajo) joined the KU faculty, students at KU and Haskell began to collaborate in protest of the 500th anniversary of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas. After leaving the University of New Mexico (UNM), where Tapahonso had protested cuts to the Native American Studies Program's budget, she accepted a temporary position as professor of creative writing at KU. Tapahonso's status as a visiting professor from UNM was short-lived, however, since the days of the joint agreement between the English Department and Native American Studies at UNM were numbered. Fortunately for Tapahonso, KU faculty and students welcomed her on a permanent basis. One of Tapahonso's twenty-seven

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<sup>17</sup> Richard West (Cheyenne) is now the head of the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

<sup>18</sup> Lisa Gaumnitz, "KU, Haskell link up for cooperative programs," Lawrence Journal-World, June 26, 1988, clipping, Haskell Institute Clippings, Vol. 21: 1988, p. 82, KSKS; "KU, Haskell plan exhibit of Indian arts and crafts," Lawrence Journal-World, October 23, 1988, p. 5C; Deb Gruver, "KU-Haskell group seeks closer ties," Lawrence Journal-World, April 25, 1990, p. 3A; Deb Gruver, "KU panel discusses recruiting at Haskell," Lawrence Journal-World, January 16, 1991, p. 4B, newspaper clipping files; "News: The Office of University Relations," February 27, 1991 and September 2, 1993, News Releases, Office of Minority Affairs, 1964-97, series 6/0, box 1, KUA.



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poetry students, senior Ben Jones, recalled that he had doubts about taking her course, "but Luci brings a gentle open spirit to the class."<sup>19</sup> In February 1990, while establishing ties with KU students, Tapahonso encouraged Caverly Smith (Navajo) and Allan Hayton (Alaska Gwich'in Athabascan) to establish the Native American Student Association (NASA). As NASA's faculty advisor, Tapahonso said that she wanted to establish an Indian studies program at KU, organize a call-in show dealing with Native American issues on the student radio station KJHK, and urge KU to encourage and set aside a few days to celebrate Indian culture. Fifteen years earlier, another Indian student organization had appeared at KU called the Native American Alliance, but after 1978 this group had disappeared into the conservative tide that washed over Indian Country.<sup>20</sup>

During the early nineties, Indian activism had re-emerged at Haskell, KU, and other schools, recalling the events of the 1960s and 1970s. Beginning in the summer and fall of 1991, KU and Haskell faculty and staff began speaking out on the meaning of the upcoming quincentenary of Columbus's landing in the "New World" in 1492 and how that event should be interpreted. In a speech delivered at Haskell that summer, KU history professor Rita Napier, a former BIA teacher in Alaska, cautioned educators to learn as much about Native cultures as they could before teaching those cultures. As Napier

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<sup>19</sup> Ben Jones, quoted in Jane Hoskinson, "The Motion of Songs Rising: An excerpt from the poem by Luci Tapahonso," ca. 1991, "Luci Tapahonso" file, KUA.

<sup>20</sup> Luci Tapahonso (Navajo), Department of English, University of Kansas, Curriculum Vitae, "Tapahonso" file; Deb Gruver, "New group makes plans for 2nd year," Lawrence Journal-World, January 21, 1991, p. 10A; "Indian literature programs set at KU, Haskell Juco," Oread 14 (February 16, 1990): 1, newspaper clipping files, KUA. For information on the Native American Alliance (1975), which preceded the Native American Student Association (1990) at KU, see Bill Uyeka, "KU, Haskell trying to bridge gap," University Daily Kansan, February 11, 1976, p. 1; "Powwow to feature dancers," Lawrence Journal-World, April 8, 1976, p. 5, newspaper clipping files; and, "1978" file, Indians of North America, Records, series 67/433, box 1, KUA.



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pointed out, some sacred stories should only be told during the winter time, a custom that must be respected. Haskell President Robert Martin, the former SIPI president who was married to Luci Tapahonso, told a group of ministers that few non-Indians had recognized Indians' contributions to world history, such as their production of 60 percent of the world's crops and development of the anesthetics and drugs that made modern medicine possible. After marching across town to KU, Haskell instructor Venida Chenault-White told a crowd of sixty supporters that Columbus's deed should be called an encounter, not a discovery, and Columbus Day should be termed a commemoration, not a celebration.<sup>21</sup>

The controversy surrounding the Columbus Quincentenary and the rise of Indian student activism at KU and Haskell forced both institutions to respond positively to requests for additional programs. By the fall of 1992, for example, two years after Tapahonso's request, KU named November Native American Heritage Month. That same semester, KU and Haskell signed a memorandum of understanding that allowed for the first faculty exchange. Previously, KU faculty had taught at Haskell, but never vice versa. Under this agreement, KU assistant professor of systematics and ecology Raymond Pierotti would teach a course at Haskell called "Native and Western Views of Nature," while Haskell instructor Don Bread would teach "Tribal-Federal Government Relations" at KU. In addition to course offerings, Haskell students wanted access to the ROTC program at KU. Since 1989, when the Department of Defense ceased its sponsorship of ROTC programs at junior colleges, Haskell students had had no opportunity to establish

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<sup>21</sup> Deb Gruver, "Educators gain teaching ideas for Native American culture," Lawrence Journal-World June 26, 1991, p. 7A; Tim Carpenter, "Haskell leader plugs Indians' 1492 world," Lawrence Journal-World, October 10, 1991, p. 3A; Mike Dekker, "Participants in march want rethinking of Columbus Day," Lawrence Journal-World, October 14, 1991, p. 11A, newspaper clipping files, KUA.



their military service careers while in school. When other schools in the area, such as Baker University and Washburn University, had also lost their programs, they, too, established cross-enrollment agreements with KU. Similarly, in May 1994, Haskell President Robert Martin and KU Chancellor Gene Budig signed an agreement enabling Haskell students to take ROTC courses at the state university, where they would receive books and uniforms from the Army. In addition to providing Haskell students access to military service via KU's ROTC program, KU law professor Robert B. Porter, II (Seneca) created the Tribal Law and Government Center. In the fall of 1995, as director of the center, Porter taught law courses that counted towards a tribal lawyer certification and oversaw a joint KU-Haskell law program that shepherded students through the associate, bachelor, and juris doctor programs.<sup>22</sup>

The Columbus Quincentenary transformed the Haskell campus, shifting the focus of attention from the old Haskell Stadium, built in 1926, to the new Medicine Wheel Earth Work, completed in 1992. Located on the southern end of Haskell's campus, in an area previously used as a "broom field," the Medicine Wheel was dedicated to

ensure [that] the future of relations of peoples from different places on this planet will not produce a repeat of the catastrophic experiences the first Americans have faced in the last 500 years of the "Columbian Legacy." We undertake this sharing to overcome a part of

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<sup>22</sup> Leigh Anne Nicholson, "Native American culture focus of month at KU," Lawrence Journal-World, November 5, 1992, p. 6A; Muneera Naseer, "Haskell faculty will exchange with KU in 1993," University Daily Kansan, November 16, 1992, p. 3; Denise Nell, "Change in ROTC policy could include Haskell," University Daily Kansan, April 19, 1994, p. 6; Andrew E. Nachison, "Haskell students enroll in ROTC," Lawrence Journal-World, July 26, 1994, p. 1B; Nathan Olson, "ROTC program lets Haskell students experience KU," University Daily Kansan, November 16, 1994, p. 3A; Kathryn Clark, "New Tribal Law and Government Center established," Oread 20 (November 3, 1995): 4; Diane Carroll, "New law center addresses issues of American Indians," Kansas City Star, November 25, 1995, p. C6, newspaper clipping files; "News: The Office of University Relations," November 3, 1995, News Releases, Office of Minority Affairs, 1964-97, series 6/0, box 1, KUA.



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this 500 year legacy which has yet to be changed: the continued devaluation and outright denial of the existence of indigenous American spiritual and intellectual tradition.<sup>23</sup>

Designed by Haskell art instructor Leslie Evans, social and natural science instructor Dan Wildcat, Lawrence artist Stan Herd, and Haskell students, the Medicine Wheel consists of a central circle, symbolizing the sacred hoop, with a fire circle in the center and the four cardinal directions marked off with limestone blocks from the oldest buildings at Haskell. In terms of scale, the circle is about 100 feet in diameter. Mounds and solstice markers around the wheel represent the first Americans. A giant bird, approaching the sacred hoop from the east, represents all birds and their circular nests, round like the tipis of Haskell students' ancestors.<sup>24</sup>

By 1995, after the hoopla over the Columbus quincentenary had died down, the programs, organizations, and physical evidence left by the commemoration remained. Whether Haskell students were marching with KU's ROTC, studying under KU professors, or protesting on KU's campus, the old barriers that had separated the two schools had finally diminished. Misunderstandings occasionally divided the campuses, but, on the whole, the inter-institutional interaction served as a model. Meanwhile, on Haskell's campus, the administration worked hard to provide students with more options and developed a community college that gave students who transferred to four-year schools a strong educational background.

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<sup>23</sup> Daniel Wildcat, quoted in Lena Johnson, "Haskell Medicine Wheel," n.d., clipping. Wildcat taught natural and social sciences at Haskell. "A Walking Tour of Haskell," n.d., clipping, HA.

<sup>24</sup> "The Medicine Wheel Earthwork," unpublished manuscript, n.d., HA.



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Like KU and Haskell, other universities, colleges, and postsecondary schools serving American Indians and Alaska Natives saw student activism and Indian-oriented programs expand in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the University of Minnesota, anticipating the growing emphasis on scholarships, local Minneapolis businessman and longtime university benefactor Rodney Wallace established a fund for Native American students pursuing degrees in education. Mirroring the growing emphasis on legal education, the largest law firm in the state of Minnesota, Dorsey & Whitney, established a fund for Minnesota Indians providing \$5,000 a year for three years to cover tuition and fees in law school.<sup>25</sup>

Although geographically positioned to develop a collaborative program like Haskell and KU, SIPI and UNM expanded cross-fertilization only among student activists. Kiva Club members eagerly participated in SIPI's marches and marathons, but the New Mexico State Legislature's cuts to the university's budget made it difficult, if not impossible, to sponsor joint projects with SIPI. Like UNM, SIPI operated on a limited budget. After surviving the closure threats of the early 1980s, SIPI administrators closely watched their spending, reducing per student costs to \$4,138 a year by 1990-91. Yet, SIPI programs continued to enjoy high job placement rates, particularly in the electronics and optics technology programs.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> "Native American Scholarship Started at U of M College," University News Service, February 2, 1988, clipping; "Indian law scholarship offered at U of M," St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch, October 17, 1990, clipping, American Indians' Clipping file, MNA.

<sup>26</sup> SIPI 1993 Self Study Report Submitted to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools: SIPI Transition Plan 2000, January 1993, p. 107. This figure excludes facility management. Bruce Ross, "GSA funds aid SIPI protest, UNM grad students," New Mexico Daily Lobo, April 26, 1993, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1990s, SIPIA.



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The 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas challenged Indian college students nationwide to raise questions about Columbus's legacy and how it was treated on campus. As a result, student activism increased, prompting state colleges and universities in the West to pay closer attention to Indian students and Native American oriented educational programs. After the attention given to the Columbus quincentenary declined, the predominantly Indian colleges, such as SIPI and the tribal colleges, focused on institutional development rather than direct political action.



### **The Growth of the Tribal Colleges**

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, when Indian programs at colleges and universities and pan-Indian colleges experienced continuous cutbacks, grassroots support for the tribal colleges in Native American communities steadily grew. As Patricia Thrash, the executive director of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education at the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, recognized,

one contribution [of the tribal colleges to the accrediting process] is an understanding of how a culture uses education to transmit values and sustain history. More than most institutions, tribal colleges have taken on that task.... I see it as a way of maintaining the culture. Another contribution is how the tribal colleges ... are very closely tied to the community.<sup>27</sup>

To establish themselves as viable institutions and to build community support, tribal college leaders organized the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in 1973. AIHEC's lobbying efforts led to the passage of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978. Afterwards, AIHEC continued to provide a national presence for the tribal colleges in Washington, D.C. and to disseminate technical assistance to the colleges when necessary. AIHEC member institutions shared information, ideas, and even staff members so that each college could benefit from the experiences of the entire consortium group.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "Giving Accreditation Where Accreditation is Due: An Interview with Patricia Thrash," *Tribal College* 5 (no. 4, Spring 1994): 32.

<sup>28</sup> David H. Wicks, "An Assessment of the Status of American Indian Controlled Community Colleges in the United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, Kansas State University, 1979), 36, 144 (following); Wayne J. Stein, "A History of the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges: 1968-1978" (Ed.D. dissertation, Washington State University, 1988), 1-20; Lionel Bordeaux, "Commitment to Community: An Introduction to This Journal," *Tribal College* 1 (no. 1, special edition, [1989]): 3-4; Wayne J. Stein, *Tribally Controlled Colleges: Making Good Medicine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992).



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The tribal colleges, which now number twenty-nine in the United States, successfully served Native communities by offering a relevant curriculum and experimenting with new programs. Before enrolling in tribal colleges, many Indian students had negative experiences in educational institutions. Despite these challenges, Falistus Yellowmule (Crow), who studied chemistry at Little Big Horn College and entered the genetics program at Montana State University, explained that "A lot of the (Indian) students are real rusty when they go back to school, but the (tribal) college starts you from way down at the bottom and brings you up."<sup>29</sup> In addition to the sciences, Salish Kootenai College in Montana, and other tribal colleges, offered human services programs, including drug and alcohol dependency, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disability, and elderly services. The six top fields in which students received vocational certificates, associate's degrees, bachelor's degrees, or master's degrees in 1995 consisted of the following: 51 in business/secretarial; 33 in computer/information processing; 30 in liberal/general studies; 29 in construction trades; 28 in protective/human services; and 23 in Native American Studies. These six fields represented 60 percent of the 325 tribal college graduates in 1995.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Falistus Yellowmule (Crow), quoted in Mac Daniel, "Learning Chemistry at Little Big Horn Gave Falistus Yellowmule the Skills and Confidence to Study Genetics at Montana State University," *Tribal College* 1 (no. 3, Winter 1990): 10.

<sup>30</sup> Paul Boyer, "Serving Students Means Thinking about Communities," *Tribal College* 1 (no. 3, Winter 1990): 6-7; "Salish Kootenai Offering Four-Year Degree," *Tribal College* 5 (no. 4, Spring 1994): 6.



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<b>Field of Study</b>	<b>Number of Associates, Bachelors, or Masters Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Number of Vocational Certificates Awarded</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Arts/Culinary Arts	6	4	10
Agriculture/Natural Resources	14	4	18
Business/Secretarial	28	23	51
Communications	1	0	1
Computer/Information Processing	18	15	33
Construction Trades	10	19	29
Education/Home Economics	20	10	30
Engineering	5	2	7
Health Professions	8	11	19
Legal Studies/Law Enforcement	6	1	7
Liberal/General Studies	28	2	30
Mechanics	2	5	7
Native American Studies	20	3	23
Protective/Human Services	24	4	28
Recreation/Hospitality	1	3	4
Science	8	0	8
Social Science	7	0	7
Tribal Management	12	1	13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>325</b>

Source: adapted from Gerald Slater and Michael O'Donnell, "What Tribal Colleges Teach: Degrees and Certificates by Number, Level, and Curriculum Area," *Tribal College* 7 (no. 1, Summer 1995): 38-41.

In comparison to popular fields of study at mainstream colleges and universities nationwide, the popular programs at tribal colleges represented a balance among the traditional liberal arts subjects, occupational-education training, and the growing emphasis on tribal and Native American studies and the high-tech computer sector. While the BIA postsecondary schools tended to emphasize vocational skills and universities focused on professional education, the tribal colleges successfully blended these two approaches, which explains their popularity within Native communities.

Perhaps most importantly, however, tribal college faculty and students blended Native and non-Indian philosophies in their courses. For example, at Navajo Community



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College, faculty and staff wrote the Faculty Implementation Handbook to bridge Diné and Western world views. In addition, Sisseton Wahpeton College of South Dakota established the Institute for Dakota Culture to provide formal and informal instruction, research, and preservation of Lakota society. Furthermore, Lummi language instructor Bill James of Northwest Indian College in Bellingham, Washington compiled a 2,000-word dictionary to help revitalize the language. Many people used James's dictionary, including college personnel and students, the Lummi tribal office, and the Indian Health Service. To raise awareness of American Indian cultures, promote student participation in college government, and improve communications between students, faculty, staff, and administrators, United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, North Dakota, started a newspaper entitled Four Directions, much like the newspaper with the same name begun by Kiva Club members in the 1970s at the University of New Mexico. Furthermore, beginning in the 1990s, tribal college faculty and others who teach American Indian history and culture at colleges and universities nationwide participated in a series of seminars sponsored by the Newberry Library's D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> David H. Begay and Martha B. Beckett, "These Are Ancient Traditions and They Don't Grow Old," Tribal College 1 (no. 4, Spring 1990): 10-11, 14-15; "New Tribal Management Program," Tribal College 2 (no. 1, Summer 1990): 4; "Sisseton Wahpeton College Creates Institute for Study of Dakota Culture," Tribal College 2 (no. 4, Spring 1991): 4; "Students Start Newspaper at United Tribes Technical College," Tribal College 2 (no. 4, Spring 1991): 5; Lyn Dennis-Olsen, "Speaking of the Past: A Northwest Indian College Instructor Helps Save a Language from Extinction," Tribal College 2 (no. 4, Spring 1991): 13. For information on the D'Arcy McNickle Center seminars, see the Newberry Library, D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian, Essays from "Indian Leadership and Indian Identity: A Tension Through Time." January 1994, Occasional Papers in Curriculum Series, No. 17 (Chicago, Illinois: The Newberry Library, 1995).



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The key factor in the success of the tribal colleges rested upon financial backing. Given the climate of federal downsizing that continued almost uninterrupted throughout the post-1989 era, finances presented a formidable challenge. In addition, accreditation depended upon the tribal colleges' ability to fund stated programs and goals. Due to their close ties to Native communities and the experimental nature of some of their programs, tribal colleges received substantial public and private grants. In November 1989, after the publication of the Carnegie Foundation report on the tribal colleges, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awarded \$3 million to eighteen tribal colleges for a three-year period to strengthen existing programs and develop new ones. Furthermore, Oglala Lakota College received a \$708,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, to establish a graduate-level tribal management program in cooperation with Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Classes offered in the tribal management program included: ethno-management, reservation economics, and community development. A major recipient of federal and state grant funds, Fond du Lac College in Cloquet, Minnesota, received over \$7 million to build a new campus with fiber optics links to area tribal and public schools.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Tribal Colleges: Shaping the Future of Native America (Lawrenceville, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989); "Colleges Receive a \$3 Million MacArthur Foundation Grant," Tribal College 1 (no. 2, Autumn 1989): 5; "New Tribal Management Program," Tribal College 2 (no. 1, Summer 1990): 4; Marjorie Johnson, "Fond du Lac College Builds New Campus," Tribal College 3 (no. 1, Summer 1991): 10-11. For information on more new programs established by public and private funds, see "Loan Program to Fund Entrepreneurs," Tribal College 1 (no. 3, Winter 1990): 5; Paul Boyer, "Looking for Tomorrow's Leaders: Institute Helps Prepare the Next Generation of Tribal College Presidents," Tribal College 2 (no. 2, Fall 1990): 5; Daniel Carrigg, "Professional Scavenging Produced a New Science Facility at D-Q University," Tribal College 2 (no. 2, Fall 1990): 6-7; "U.S. West Provides \$2 Million to Support Colleges," Tribal College 3 (no. 2, Fall 1991): 6; Carlos Cordero, "Healing the Earth," Tribal College 3 (no. 3, Winter 1992): 8-10; Marjane Ambler, "Indians Giving: The New Philanthropy in Indian Country," Tribal College 6 (no. 3, Winter 1994): 14-23.



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Despite signs of growth in philanthropic and, in some instances, even federal government support, philanthropies generally supported only short-term, start-up projects throughout the 1980s. By the 1990s, however, even this began to decline. In the place of this private support, some new Indian-controlled philanthropies emerged, such as the American Indian College Fund (established in 1988) and the Seventh Generation Fund for Indian Development, Inc., which borrowed its name from the Iroquois concept of considering the impact of every decision on the seventh generation. But these funds had relatively small endowments and, therefore, could only support smaller projects.<sup>33</sup>

Still, despite financial challenges, the tribal colleges led the way in strengthening ties between Native communities and institutions of higher education. With popular grassroots support, tribal colleges raised eyebrows among mainstream college and university personnel. Operating under the representative umbrella of AIHEC, the tribal colleges challenged accrediting institutions, including the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, to question the very methods of accreditation, even questioning the quality control and accountability methods used to regulate higher education. In the process, higher education in general and Indian higher education in particular underwent constant redefinition. As Elgin Bad Wound, president of Oglala Lakota College, put it, "[T]he college must promote and sustain tribal identity and sovereignty.... We are willing to work

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<sup>33</sup> Marjane Ambler, "Indians Giving: The New Philanthropy in Indian Country," *Tribal College* 6 (no. 3, Winter 1994): 14-23; Rebecca Adamson, "Money with a Mission: A History of Indian Philanthropy," *Tribal College* 6 (no. 3, Winter 1994-95): 26-29, 46.



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with organizations outside our reservation to the extent that they are willing to contribute to our mission.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Elgin Bad Wound, quoted in “The Power of Tradition: A Conversation with Elgin Bad Wound,” Tribal College 3 (no. 1, Summer 1991): 21. For a critique of the accreditation process and the assimilative effects it has on Turtle Mountain Community College in Belcourt, North Dakota, and Little Big Horn College in Crow Agency, Montana, see W. Larry Belgarde, “Indian Control and the Management of Dependencies: The Case of Tribal Community Colleges” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1993).



### **Indian Higher Education under Clinton and the "New Democrats"**

After winning the 1992 Presidential election, Bill Clinton, the Democratic governor of Arkansas, maintained the course set by his Republican predecessor George Bush. The start of Clinton's "centrist" course, as political pundits have labeled it, began in 1980 when then incumbent-Governor Clinton lost a re-election race. Afterwards, Clinton restrained his progressive impulses and worked cautiously with the state legislature, maintaining his liberal support base while preventing a conservative backlash against him. As a "New Democrat" on the campaign trail in 1992, Clinton moralistically characterized his political program as a "New Covenant" with the American people to change a pro-big business White House. Although Clinton outlined many new and ambitious policies, he met enormous resistance. After the 1994 mid-term elections, which saw Republicans seize the majority in both houses of Congress for the first time since the Great Depression, Clinton backed away from his progressive goals only to reaffirm the centrist principles that had won him the White House two years earlier. In response to the 1994 "Republican Revolution," which represented a continuation of the Reagan policies of the 1980s, Democrats realized that in order to survive as a party they must recognize that the [1994] election was an expression of the fundamental national will, which is anti-tax and anti-spending. It was not, however, fundamentally a rejection of government and its role in society. Rather, it was a rejection of the way the Democratic Party has come to use the resources of government, which is increasingly perceived to be at the expense of the middle class to benefit (almost exclusively) the poor.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Mark Penn and Douglas Schoen, "A Contract with the Middle Class," unpublished manuscript, November 1994, in Evan Thomas, Karen Breslau, Debra Rosenberg, Leslie Kaufman, and Andrew Murr, Back from the Dead: How Clinton Survived the Republican Revolution (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1997), 220.



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Although President Clinton proposed many major changes to the nation's domestic policies, the lessons of his own political campaigns and the will of the electorate forced him to moderate his views, steering only a centrist political course.<sup>36</sup>

The centrist approach appeared evident in President Clinton's policies affecting Native Americans and Alaska Natives. The President knew little about Indian affairs prior to coming to Washington, D.C. At a "town hall" meeting in the East Room of the White House on February 20, 1993, a Lumbee Indian stood up and said that under the law he was not recognized by the federal government as an Indian. "I didn't know that there were Native American tribes that hadn't been formally recognized," the President responded.<sup>37</sup> In 1994, Clinton finally organized a meeting with tribal leaders to discuss a variety of sovereignty and development issues, including education. Through "Goals 2000," the Clinton administration sought to raise standards and provide more local control in schools throughout the United States, including schools funded by the BIA. Like Bush, Clinton supported the federal government's trust responsibilities towards Native people and the government-to-government relationship between tribes and the federal government. But, when it came to fully supporting the tribal colleges, Clinton balked under the political pressure brought by the "Republican Revolution." In response to a question on support

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<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Drew, On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 29-32; Senator Paul Simon, We Can Do Better: How to Save America's Future—An Open Letter to President Clinton (Bethesda, Maryland: National Press Books, 1994); Denise M. Bostdorff, "Clinton's Characteristic Issue Management Style: Caution, Conciliation, and Conflict Avoidance in the Case of Gays in the Military," in Robert E. Denton, Jr. and Rachel L. Holloway, eds., The Clinton Presidency: Images, Issues, and Communication Strategies (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1996), 189-223.

<sup>37</sup> "Remarks at the Children's Town Meeting, February 20, 1993," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1993, Book I, January 20 to July 31, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1994), 146-65, quote from p. 164.



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for the tribal colleges at a town hall meeting in Broadview, Montana, on June 1, 1995, Clinton said, "we did some things for the tribal community colleges that had not [been] done before and made them eligible for certain streams of Federal money." Catering to fiscal conservatism and his half-hidden centrist principles, the President added, "I can't promise to fully fund anything in this budgetary environment; I wish I could, but I can't."<sup>38</sup>

Under the Clinton administration, the BIA continued to function, as it did under Reagan and Bush, as an entrenched bureaucracy that would go to almost any length to protect itself against criticism. Recalling criticism leveled at former BIA head Kenneth Smith, the BIA's management of SIPI in the early 1990s continued to draw the fire of students and their parents.

In April 1991, Carolyn Elgin (Choctaw), a longtime BIA employee who worked as a counselor at SIPI in the 1970s, took over as SIPI's new president. That summer, addressing the problems of alcohol and drug abuse on campus, SIPI's Board of Regents approved a rule that suspended students' dormitory privileges if they were caught possessing, ingesting, or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. President Elgin supported this rule without hesitation, mandating a zero tolerance policy in this area.

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<sup>38</sup> "Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion with Farmers and Agricultural Leaders in Broadview, Montana, June 1, 1995," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1995, Book I, January 1 to June 30, 1995 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1996), 783-801, quote from p. 801. For President Clinton's views on the basic principle of Native American sovereignty, see "Remarks to Native American and Native Alaskan Tribal Leaders, April 29, 1994," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1994, Book I, January 20 to July 31, 1994 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1995), 800-803; and, "Interview with Larry King in Culver City, California, September 21, 1995," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1995, Book II, July 1 to December 31, 1995 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1996), 1436. To see President Clinton's cautious and conciliatory issue management style in action, see his discussion of Indian gaming rights in "Remarks to the Community in Los Alamos, New Mexico, May 17, 1993," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1993, Book I, January 20 to July 31, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1994), 689.



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Throughout the 1991–92 and through half of the 1992–93 school years, few if any complications resulted from this proscription. Then, in February 1993, due to a “personal” conflict, Elgin called police to remove Dean of Student Affairs Dalton Henry from the campus. The incident began when students complained to Henry and his wife—who, Elgin said, “had a history of intimidating the staff”—about windows welded shut, faulty smoke alarms, plugged shower drains, and taped over broken windows.<sup>39</sup> Thomas Alvarez (Acoma), a student who witnessed the confrontation, explained that the Henrys popularity among students lay at the bottom of the conflict with President Elgin. In protest of Elgin’s actions, students boycotted class, and 217 of the 353 students enrolled signed a petition asking for her resignation. About a week later, in late February–early March 1993, students’ parents arrived on campus to support requests that Elgin be ousted. BIA police temporarily attempted to stop the protest. When the police left, students and parents formed a prayer circle, performed a gourd dance, and camped out on the campus in protest of Elgin. After a few days of these demonstrations, SIPI Regent Benny Atencio, who was also vice-chair of the All Indian Pueblo Council, convinced student leaders to return to class. Thomas Alvarez and others complied with Atencio’s request, because the students believed that the regents wanted to help them.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Carolyn Elgin (Choctaw), quoted in Isabel Sanchez, “Protest at SIPI Targets President, Dormitories,” Albuquerque Journal, February 26, 1993, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1990s, SIPIA.

<sup>40</sup> “Indian School Leader Resigns,” Albuquerque Journal, April 26, 1991, clipping; SIPI Board of Regents, “Resolution No. 148,” June 3, 1991; Kandice McDonald, “SIPI Parents Say Dancers Confronted,” Albuquerque Journal, March 1, 1993, clipping; Isabel Sanchez, “SIPI Protesters Back in Class, Tents,” Albuquerque Journal, March 4, 1993, clipping; Isabel Sanchez, “Protesters May Sue SIPI Leader,” Albuquerque Journal, n.d., clipping; Isabel Sanchez, “Protesters Plan New SIPI Camp,” Albuquerque Journal, Metro Plus, April 20, 1993, clipping, SIPIA.



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The protest continued, however, as Gina Sixkiller (Cherokee) led fifteen students in a sit-in at Elgin's office several weeks later. Remaining resolute in her authority, President Elgin refused to concede to the protesters and ordered the students' arrest. In a show of support for the protest, UNM students voted to give SIPI protesters \$500 for legal assistance. By May 1993, the SIPI Board of Regents continued to support Elgin, but agreed to consider reorganizing SIPI along the lines of Navajo Community College, which had shifted power from the BIA to an all-Indian board of regents. When it became clear that Elgin was securely entrenched as SIPI president, students hopelessly gave up the protest. Still, the public attention that the Elgin protest brought to SIPI reaffirmed the institute's commitment to strengthen its programs and services.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Bruce Ross, "GSA funds aid SIPI protest," New Mexico Daily Lobo, April 26, 1993, clipping; Susan L. Allen, "Native Students Civil and Religious Rights Violated," The Circle, April 1993, clipping; "Editorial: SIPI Board Takes Important Step," Albuquerque Journal, Metro Plus, May 4, 1993, clipping, SIPI Scrapbook, 1990s, SIPIA.



### **Recent Developments**

In recent years, general developments in Indian higher education signified a greater acceptance of Native American traditions and beliefs. At the University of Kansas (KU), officials allowed Native students to wear traditional clothes at graduation, instead of the Euroamerican style gown and mortar board. In addition, activists from the community and the KU and Haskell campuses formed the Lawrence Alliance to protest the expansion of a thoroughfare just south of Haskell's campus near a wetlands area. Like the Lawrence Alliance, the Lawrence Indian Arts Festival also brought Indians and non-Indians together in a community gathering.<sup>42</sup>

Haskell Indian Junior College capitalized on the increasing consciousness in Lawrence, Kansas, of the Indian community to protest local economic development projects and strengthen educational programs. Haskell Indian Junior College, renamed Haskell Indian Nations University in October 1993, began hosting a community-wide Three Sisters Festival in the summer of 1997 to celebrate the importance of corn, beans, and squash to American Indian communities. Haskell's new name followed the North Central Association's awarding the college accreditation for a bachelor of science degree in elementary teacher education. Within two years of the establishment of the bachelors program in teacher education, the first class of senior college students graduated, including Miss Haskell 1994-95 Rolene Curley (Navajo). As Miss Haskell, Curley participated in a tradition of pageantry and leadership dating at least to 1950, when

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<sup>42</sup> Joann Birk, "Students unite to preserve wetlands," *University Daily Kansan*, November 9, 1995, p. 1; Michael Dekker, "Gathering marks directions of peace," *Lawrence Journal-World*, June 27, 1997, p. 1B, KUA.



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Haskell student leaders Frank Brave (Osage–Cherokee) and Marlene Eagle (Ponca) became the first Campus Brave and Campus Queen.<sup>43</sup> Seeking to learn about other cultures and “share ... positive insight and wisdom with others,” Rolene Curley represented Haskell at conferences and powwows nationwide. Curley urged the 759 students at Haskell, 357 of whom were women, to take pride in themselves and “instill in the younger children the importance of our language, our cultures, and the traditional family structure.”<sup>44</sup>

Positive self-image and cultural pride carried much significance for Richard Snelding (Kaw), the Student Senate president at Haskell during the 1996–97 school year. One of 2,186 members of the Kaw Nation, Snelding stood out at Haskell, with his blue eyes and light skin color. Snelding traced his Kaw heritage only through his mother, who, as a 1/8 mixed-blood Indian, traced her descent through a 1902 tribal roll—the only requirement for tribal membership. As the number of full-bloods declined and intermarriage became more common among the Kaws and other Native people throughout the United States, Snelding and other mixed bloods forced tribal officials to adopt new methods of defining membership that emphasized cultural over blood ties. In 1987, after the Cherokee Nation dropped its blood quantum requirement altogether, tribal membership more than doubled over the next decade to 182,000. More recently, in November 1996, the Fort Sill Apaches of Oklahoma, who are descended in part from

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<sup>43</sup> “Haskell’s History,” pamphlet, n.d.; “Indian Club” file; The Indian Leader: Commencement Issue, May 26, 1950, pp. 20–21, HA.

<sup>44</sup> Rolene Curley (Navajo), quoted in Haskell Indian Nations University, 1995, p. 40; Fall 1995 Student Body Statistics Prepared by Admissions & Records, October 4, 1995 (Lawrence, Kansas: Haskell Indian Nations University, 1995), in HA.



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Geronimo's band of Chiricahuas imprisoned at Fort Sill from 1894 to 1912, changed their blood quantum requirement from 1/8 to 1/16 because they, too, saw an inevitable demise of membership based on the previous standards. "It's not so much blood as ... [how] you feel in your heart and spirit," said Fort Sill Apache tribal chairwoman Ruey Darrow. Yet, many Native people frowned upon this trend, and even Snelding saw the decline of the full bloods as "a pretty scary thing," symbolizing the "passing on of a whole nation, a whole culture." Among Snelding's 2,186 Kaw people, only 2 full bloods were still alive in early 1997. Like many groups, Haskell students debated these issues, and some directed "white bread" jokes in Snelding's direction. Yet, this young Kaw, who had been raised as a Mormon, found more tolerance, honor, and openness at Haskell than discrimination or anything else.<sup>45</sup>

The changing ethnic composition of indigenous people in the United States, combined with the rise of more Indian-oriented institutions of higher education, inspired education policy makers and educational institutions to admit indigenous people from other parts of the United States and the world. In the early 1990s, the federal government began to include Hawaiian Natives in legislation dealing with Native Americans. This came about partly as a result of the success of the Native Hawaiian movement to upset the islands' exploitative political and economic forces. Like American Indian tribes, Native Hawaiians also grappled with issues of membership, and a split emerged over blood quantum: the group Poka Laenui believed that relations to the land should determine national allegiance among Hawaiians, while Ka Lahui Hawai'i activists maintained that

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<sup>45</sup> All information from this paragraph is from David Foster, "Who's a 'Real' Indian? Tribes Weigh Clouded Question," *Albuquerque Journal*, January 27, 1997, pp. A1-A2.



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Hawaiian citizenship should be based on 50 percent or more blood quantum. In response to this growing movement, the U.S. Congress formally apologized to Hawaiians for the government's role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. This apology came on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called "Hawaiian Revolution."<sup>46</sup>

Institutions of higher education geared towards Native people, including Cook College & Theological School in Phoenix, Arizona, tacitly encouraged the broadening of the native American ethnic identifier. Marketing itself as "Educating, Enabling and Empowering Native Americans," Cook College served not only Canadian Indians but Pacific Islanders as well, particularly Marshallese students. Established in 1911 by Presbyterians as a Bible school, Cook educated many American Indian leaders, including longtime Mescalero Apache tribal chairman Wendell Chino. During the 1970s, Cook and other Presbyterian-affiliated colleges formed the Native American Theological Association to encourage more Indians to enter the ministry. Through extension programs and intensive month-long courses, Cook offered postsecondary training in lay leadership, pastoral skills, and, beginning in 1991, associates degrees in pastoral studies. By the mid-1990s, approximately 150 of 452 Native American churches still had vacant pulpits, as

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<sup>46</sup> Gail Hovey, "Survival and Sovereignty in Rural Hawai'i," *Christianity and Crisis* 52 (February 17, 1992): 32-34; *New York Times*, October 29, 1993, p. A7; *New York Times*, November 16, 1993, p. A14; *New York Times*, November 17, 1993, p. A16; A.K. Trass, "The History of the Native Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement," presentation delivered in Margaret Connell Szasz's "American Indian History Since 1850" course, University of New Mexico, March 28, 1994. For arguments that Hawaii's tourist economy has helped, not hindered, economic and social development among Native Hawaiians, see Noel J. Kent, *Hawaii: Islands Under the Influence* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), 147, 158-59; and Thomas Kemper Hitch, *Islands in Transition: The Past, Present, and Future of Hawaii's Economy* (Honolulu, Hawaii: First Hawaiian Bank, 1992), 278-82.



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compared to 24 of 135 churches twenty years earlier, but Cook's efforts to synchronize the religious traditions of Native people and Christianity slowly succeeded.<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps the best example of religious syncretism at Cook College was evident in a rendering of the "American Indian Christ" figure that hangs in the college chapel. Painted by former Cook student Michael Paul and dedicated in 1988, the Indian Christ combines sacred symbols of Christianity with traditional Native American spiritual beliefs. For example, on the Indian Christ's chest appears a circle inscribing a cross that represents the crucifixion and the suffering savior, as well as the four seasons of life and the four directions. The Christ figure wears a belt with three triangular shapes, signifying the Holy Trinity and the homes of three Spirit Beings.<sup>48</sup>

At other colleges and universities, Native people continued to influence and change higher education, yet limitations in funding forced many to revisit old issues. For instance, in 1994 at the University of New Mexico Kathleen Ash-Milby (Navajo) followed the path to commencement taken previously by her mother, Shirley M. Ash (class of 1957) and her grandmother, Kathryn Peshlakai Arviso (class of 1966). In addition to enrolling large numbers of Indian students, UNM continued to attract national conferences addressing issues affecting Native people, including the 57<sup>th</sup> annual Tekakwitha Conference on the evangelization of Indian Catholics held in 1996. But, unfortunately,

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<sup>47</sup> "American Indians Develop Churches," *A.D.*, October 1976, pp. 47-48; "A Red Letter Day for the Redman," *Indian Highways*, December 1977; "Graduates 1983," *Indian Highways*, May 1983; "News," *Presbyterian Survey*, March 1986, p. 48; Stephen T. Hillis, "Growth Shown in TEE Program," *Indian Highways*, Summer 1991, p. 6; Eunice Robbins, "New Beginnings: First Associate of Arts Degrees Given," *Indian Highways*, Summer 1993, p. 5; Dale Strong, "Our Fundamental Mission," *Indian Highways*, Fall 1996, p. 2; Patricia El-Najjar, Associate Director of Development, Cook College & Theological School, Phoenix, to author, July 21, 1997.

<sup>48</sup> Michael Paul, "Indian Christ," flier, CCTS.



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after years of urging university officials to establish the Native American Studies Center, which unified academic and counseling services to Indian students in one campus location, UNM reorganized the center again, consolidating Indian student services with other campus offices. Many among the upcoming generation of college students felt that a special center for Indian studies and services was not necessary. Some even resented the efforts of Native American Studies staff to keep records of Indian students' grades.<sup>49</sup>

From 1989 to the present, Indian higher education demonstrated, as in previous periods, evidence of change and continuity with the past. At the University of New Mexico, the alterations of the Native American Studies Center indicated a return, to an extent, to the 1960s, when no center existed and dropout rates among Indian college students ran high. Similarly, the American Indian Studies Department and Center at the University of Minnesota experienced profound financial problems to the point where they could not even receive funds to hire a full-time department chair. At other institutions, such as Haskell Indian Nations University and the University of Kansas, however, the nineties represented a revival of campus-based action and cultural awareness similar to that of the 1970s. Fort Lewis College's AIM chapter began organizing again after largely disappearing underground for about a decade. Even at Minnesota, despite the ongoing struggle to justify itself to university officials, Indian graduates reaffirmed calls for greater support. More than any other type of institution, the nation's twenty-nine tribal colleges

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<sup>49</sup> "Tekakwitha Conference opens Wednesday at UNM," *Albuquerque Journal*, August 3, 1996, p. B7; Steve Brewer, "UNM Proposes Changes in Indian Program," *Albuquerque Journal*, November 21, 1996, p. D3; Ted Jojola, "Neglect Saps Indian Programs," letter to the editor, *Albuquerque Journal*, May 30, 1997, p. A15; Chris Burroughs, "Women of Strong Fiber," *Mirage* 15 (Fall 1997): 25.



provided perhaps the most effective model for linking Indian communities with higher education through the use of innovative vocational and liberal arts programs at traditional campus settings, as well as through extension programs.

The combination of approaches used in the expansion of Indian higher education in the post-1989 era reflected the diversity of the over 500 tribes, communities, villages, rancherias, and reservations of indigenous people living in the United States of America. Such diversity would not have come about had it not been for all the many different institutions examined in this study, ranging from the more culturally conservative and assimilative church-affiliated colleges, particularly prior to the 1970s, to the more traditionalistic Indian-controlled institutions that followed in the wake of Diné College's establishment in the late 1960s. A panoply of approaches that fell between these two types of Indian higher education emerged, and some found success while others failed.

The role of the federal government, beginning in the early nineteenth century, played a part that has been perhaps more maligned than heralded. Federal policy changed over time, just as the concept of education itself also evolved. Federal Indian policy and the goals of educational institutions often reinforced one another. Since American Indians and Alaska Natives rarely had the opportunity to either directly influence federal Indian policy or establish Indian-controlled educational institutions in the decades and, indeed, centuries prior to the 1970s, Native people usually became swept up in these larger forces. The seeds for change in the seventies were planted at many different points and places in the past, from the more immediate past of the post-World War II decades all the way back to the colonial past. Whether Indian or non-Indian, those who supported Indian



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education in general and Indian higher education in particular all played a part in establishing the diverse universities and colleges that serve Native people today.



## Epilogue

At the University of New Mexico, a young Pueblo Indian student, Kaye McSween, raised by educators who prize the value of maintaining cultural traditions while pursuing knowledge about the world, wrestles with the competing interests and demands of the Indian and non-Indian worlds.<sup>1</sup> McSween attended the Pueblo's elementary/junior high school during the 1980s and received some exposure to Keresan, a language used most frequently by older Pueblo Indians. Instead of following her siblings to the nearby public high school, she elected to attend a private school in Albuquerque, which provided her with an opportunity to study with students in a multi-ethnic, yet predominantly non-Indian, environment. She enjoyed this school for the opportunity to explore her identity and pursue her interests in the world outside of her Pueblo. Yet, as a student in this environment, her teachers frequently asked her to provide her classmates "the Indian point of view" on issues affecting Native Americans. McSween understood why she had to entertain such questions, but it became tiresome. In 1994, her success in private school prompted admissions officials at the University of New Mexico to award her a four-year scholarship as a University Fellow.

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<sup>1</sup> To maintain her anonymity, Kaye McSween's real name has not been used.



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At UNM, Kaye McSween took advantage of many programs, including living with other University Fellow recipients during her first year, studying in the University History Honors Program, and participating in a junior-year program at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Still, UNM felt in many ways too close to home. McSween enjoyed living at home with her parents and commuting to Albuquerque, but her desire to learn more about the non-Indian world continued to draw her interests. As a result, instead of joining the Kiva Club and immersing herself in campus politics and Native American student issues, she takes courses in the Asian Studies Program and works as an editor at the New Mexico Historical Review. In her personal and familial circles, McSween continues to maintain close ties to home even after moving to her own apartment in Albuquerque, dutifully supporting family and Pueblo Indian customs at feast day celebrations. As a reflection of her diverse interests, her friends represent a virtual rainbow of different religious and ethnic groups. With a major in history and a minor in journalism, she currently receives much encouragement among the faculty in both departments. Indeed, each of her professors recognize her value as a conscientious and thoughtful student.

The demand not only for American Indian but for Indian women scholars, like Kaye McSween, in higher education is tremendous. In the fall of 1997, a group of historians attending the Western History Association meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota, formed an Indian Scholars Group to encourage more Native students to join the history profession, a movement that tribes, too, have begun to recognize and to promote through the establishment of tribal archives and library facilities. On the cusp of completing her



undergraduate education, this particular UNM student's decision over whether to attend graduate school comes at a fortuitous time in the field of Native American Studies.

McSween would presumably have many opportunities to study at the graduate level.

Two forces, however, draw McSween away from continuing her education as a graduate student in history: namely, the limited number of professional opportunities in the field in general and the pressure for her to write American Indian history. As the statistical sampling of graduate students discussed in previous chapters has shown, not a single Native American graduate student in history appeared in the group under study. This is not to say that there are none, but, relative to other graduate programs, the number in history remains statistically insignificant. Unlike other professions that have successfully combined scholarship with political activism, including the fields of law and anthropology in particular, history has largely failed to provide a mechanism for community interaction. Only ethnohistorians have worked to resist this trend, yet their numbers remain small, and their hybrid methodology remains contested. McSween is perhaps more aware of these issues than most undergraduates. In addition, she feels pressure from her academic mentors to write Pueblo Indian history. McSween struggles with this issue in choosing the subject of her senior thesis. On the one hand, she wrestles with the elements that shape Pueblo life for herself and her family. Yet, on the other hand, she appreciates the emotional distance and the intellectual challenge of writing about non-Indian people. This is a dilemma shared by many scholars who seek to combine an objective historical perspective with a subjective personal enlightenment about their lives. For the history of



American Indians and higher education, however, her decision has tremendous importance.

In early 1998, I was invited to sit in on an introductory Social Sciences course at the College of Santa Fe, where the topic of discussion was the ongoing academic debate over the alleged competing merits of the traditional "great books" curriculum of Europe and Western Civilization versus the more recently introduced multicultural curriculum that has received growing attention at the secondary and postsecondary level throughout the United States. About halfway through the discussion, the instructor asked me, where do you place yourself in this debate? In a perfect world, I replied, every field of study or subject should be taught by those who are properly trained and who possess a hands-on, practical understanding of the subject. In other words, when applied to Kaye McSween's situation, those best suited to teach and write American Indian history are those who have received academic training, as well as personal experience living life as a Native American. In my version of utopia, scholars should combine subjective and objective experiences, for this provides unique insights into individuals and societies. This is not to say that non-Indians should not write Indian history, as I have attempted to do, but that each approach brings different strengths and weaknesses to the topic.

As a Native American, McSween can bring a unique insight to her people's history that few non-Indians can. Thus, if she decides not to become a historian, our society as a whole suffers, and her generation's history will be lost. This is a heavy burden to bear, but it should not be shouldered to the detriment of her, or anyone else's, personal happiness.



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The history of Indian higher education is littered with stories of Native American students who made tremendous personal sacrifices to benefit themselves and their communities, villages, tribes, and pueblos. Beginning in the first decades of British colonization in North America, indigenous people sought to attend Euroamerican educational institutions to develop their skills as cultural intermediaries. In a few instances, Native people replaced Euroamericans as missionary-teachers among their own tribes or nearby tribes. This was particularly evident among the small number of Indian students at Harvard College in the seventeenth century and Dartmouth College in the eighteenth century.

With the establishment of the United States, Indian higher education began to receive limited public funding and national political support. Such funding remained intermittent until the Indian New Deal of the late 1920s through the early 1940s. Meanwhile, private colleges and organizations funded most Native students enrolled in higher education programs. Beginning in 1878, however, at the secondary educational level, Congress established the first of many Indian schools administered by the BIA. Modeled on Hampton Institute and Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute, the basic literacy and manual training skills taught at these schools provided an important stepping stone for Native people, such as Susan La Flesche Picotte and her generation of Indian leaders, to continue their education at the graduate level. Like La Flesche, many college and professional school graduates returned to their own tribal communities or joined the Indian Service as a means of uplifting their own people. A medical doctor, La Flesche's service to the Omaha Indian and non-Indian communities of northeastern Nebraska



around the turn of the century probably led to her early death, a supreme personal sacrifice.

Like Susan La Flesche and her predecessors, Native Americans who attended college in the early twentieth century brought more attention to Indian higher education's need for increased federal funding and sought opportunities for themselves, as well as opportunities for the tribal communities from which they came. Jim Thorpe gave Carlisle Indian School and Native people nationwide a model sports hero who, for a short time at least, replaced the negative images of savagery that pervaded the non-Indian popular consciousness. Furthermore, both World Wars expanded the demand for postsecondary educational and vocational training programs at the BIA schools. The postsecondary occupational programs that began in the early twentieth century fulfilled a valuable niche in the nation's economy and even prompted the BIA to establish a new vocational-oriented institution in the 1970s: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI). Thus, the success of individual students in higher education leavened the entire educational system for Native American people.

After World War II, Indian higher education underwent profound transformations that had many contradictory effects. On the one hand, the federal government's efforts to terminate the special trust relationship with Indian tribes, and other treaty obligations owed to tribes, threatened many of the educational gains that had been achieved by individuals and communities. On the other hand, with the boost that the Indian G.I. Bill gave to Indian higher education, and the threats of the termination policy looming, tribes and national Indian organizations prepared themselves for this so-called emancipation



through the establishment of new scholarship funds controlled by Native people. Many of these same organizations sponsored leadership workshops to help Indian college students cope with the challenges and opportunities that higher education posed to them and their communities. These annual summer workshops demonstrated the effectiveness of grassroots community organizing and tapping the leadership potential of college students. During the 1960s, many Great Society programs sought to replicate this type of networking and organization. Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity, Inc. (OIO) became the first statewide, Indian-run organization that sought to funnel government funding for Great Society programs down to local tribal communities vis-à-vis the University of Oklahoma's extension programs. As a result of these programs and the emerging community activism in Indian Country, Native student clubs at colleges and universities nationwide began to criticize the use of Indian mascots in intercollegiate sports and to seek greater support from university officials for funding American Indian studies programs and student centers. The National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) led many of these efforts, as did campus-based chapters of the American Indian Movement (AIM).

By the decade of the seventies, the stage was set for a national movement in support of greater Indian cultural awareness, self-pride, and renewed support for Indian higher education on a level not seen since the New Deal. Called Indian "self-determination" for its support of greater tribal autonomy, this new movement saw the rise of the first group of tribally-controlled community colleges and a new national Indian higher education lobbying group called the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). Building on the energy of the new tribal colleges and new Native American



studies programs and departments at universities throughout the country, but particularly in the West, campus-based student activism reached a meridian during the 1970s.

The election of Ronald Reagan as president in 1980 signaled a decline not only in student activism but in funding for Indian higher education nationally. Over the next eight years, many BIA and tribally controlled colleges struggled for their very survival. These institutions overcame the budget cuts of the Reagan "revolution" but emerged only as shadows of the former selves. As a consequence, the many outspoken and independent Indian student voices of the 1960s had been replaced by those who defended these institutions as performing valuable, if not always satisfactory, services and as upholding the federal treaty and trust obligations to Native people. By the late eighties, Indian higher education appeared leaner than before, but the old idealism of community interaction still held sway among students and college officials. A revived effort to prepare for termination led to the establishment of the American Indian College Fund and other organizations that sought to wean tribes from dependence on federal services.

Since 1989, a new mood of political centrism in national Indian policy led to a limited resurgence of Indian higher education. This zeitgeist, combined with the student and community activism surrounding the Columbus Quincentenary of the early 1990s, revived some of the activism of the 1970s. In addition, Congress passed new laws increasing funding for Indian education and encouraging the revival of bilingualism and other aspects of Indian cultural heritages. At this time, the tribal colleges also grew, even while financial resources remained relatively limited. During the nineties, Native American students still faced many of the same challenges that their higher education predecessors



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encountered, especially the struggle to find satisfying jobs or careers that fulfill certain cultural and community needs.

Unlike a century or even twenty-five years ago, Indian students today have a range of choices when it comes to picking colleges and graduate schools, as well as the number of job opportunities available to them. The gradual expansion of Indian higher education over a long period has, of course, made these choices possible. Yet, as UNM's Kaye McSween would probably attest, the increasing number of options in higher education presents a luxury that everyone deserves, but it is certainly no less of a challenge.



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- HA Haskell Archives, Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, Kansas
- IRAP Indian Rights Association Papers, 1864-1973, 136 reels (Glen Rock, New Jersey: Microfilming Corporation of America, 1975)
- JNHP John N. "Happy" Camp Collection, Carl Albert Center for Congressional Research and Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman
- KCP Katherine Cole Papers, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
- KSHS Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka
- KUA University of Kansas Archives, Spencer Research Library, Lawrence
- LKPL Lawrence, Kansas, Public Library (Main Branch)
- LMFI Proceedings of the Lake Mohonk Conference of Friends of the Indian, Lake Mohonk, New York (with appropriate year cited)
- MHL Menaul Historical Library of the Southwest, Menaul School, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- MNA University Archives, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus, Minneapolis
- NOPL Norman, Oklahoma Public Library (Main Branch)
- OU-CAC Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Norman
- SIPIA Archives, Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico



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UNM-CSWR	Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
UNM-NAS	Native American Studies Center, Mesa Vista Hall, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
WWH	Willard Williams "Nibs" Hill file, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque
WZP	William Zimmerman, Jr. Papers, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

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