

# Blackfeet Community College: Priorities for the 119th Congress (February 2025)

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) provide rigorous postsecondary education and research opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) and other rural community residents. TCUs offer higher education that is uniquely Tribal, founded on Native languages, culture, and philosophy, with strong student support systems and community engagement. Through these educational opportunities, research, and industry partnerships for high-demand careers, TCUs are laying the foundation for sustainable economic development within Tribal Nations and beyond. Together, we build Strong Sovereign Nations through Excellence in TRIBAL higher education, empowering individuals and strengthening communities.

## BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE: AT A GLANCE

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2024=313/Fall 2024=323):
- Affordable Tuition: Full time is \$1,805.00/Semester  
Student to Faculty Ratio: 7:1
- Part-time/Full-time: Spring 2024: 140 P/173 F; Fall 2024: 85 P/238 F
- Persistence Rate: 45%
- Highest Level of Degree/Program Available: Bachelor of Science and Nursing (BSN)  
TRIO Program: No
- Fun Fact: The Knowledge Carriers Lodge (elder hub) was established on campus in the Fall of 2023 to support elders in the community to take advantage of opportunities, contribute to the curriculum programs, and interact with students, faculty, and staff.



## Blackfeet Community College: Driving Economic Development



In 2015, AIHEC conducted an economic impact study to evaluate the significance of TCUs in both the regional and national economies. TCUs serve as catalysts for economic growth at local and regional levels by enhancing educational opportunities, research, and leadership skills for Tribal and other rural students. Blackfeet Community College (BFCC) is a cornerstone of economic development for the Blackfeet Nation and its expanding service area, offering programs that equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to contribute to the local economy after graduation. Through BFCC's diverse offerings, the college aims to address urgent academic, workforce, and other post-secondary educational needs to support the growth of key regional employment sectors. Here are the various CTE offerings available at BFCC:

**The Industry Trades One-Year Certificate** offers students hands-on training, preparing them for construction and various technical careers. This program directly supports local construction projects and infrastructure development by providing well-trained job applicants to meet the increasing demand in these fields and industries.

**The Health Science Associate of Science program** plays a vital role in supplying qualified professionals to federal employers, such as the Indian Health Service (IHS) and local healthcare clinics, by ensuring a consistent pipeline of healthcare workers essential for meeting the medical needs of the Blackfeet Nation.

**The Criminal Justice, Legal Studies Associate of Science, and the Blackfeet Legal Studies One-Year Certificate** offers specialized training for positions in local law enforcement and Tribal justice systems, enhancing community safety and governance.

**Records Information Management One-Year Certificate** Addresses the increasing demand for skilled administrative professionals to manage complex records management tasks, supporting federal agencies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Blackfeet Nation, and other organizations that need precise documentation and compliance.

## TOTAL ALUMNI IMPACT

<b>\$2.3 BILLION</b>	<b>ADDED INCOME</b>
<b>28,778</b>	<b>JOBS</b>

Job equivalents indicate jobs created by TCUs, both full- and part-time. They are based on industry-specific jobs to sales ratios. The \$2.3 billion alumni impact supports 28,778 jobs nationwide. (EMSI & AIHEC, 2015)

## Blackfeet Community College: Strengthening Our Workforce

TCUs prepare professionals in high-demand fields, including agriculture and natural resources management, health, information technology, and building trades. By teaching the job skills most in demand within our communities, TCUs are laying a strong foundation for Tribal and regional economic growth. BFCC is implementing and developing new programs to address workforce readiness, renewable energy, human subjects research, and food sovereignty efforts underway in partnership with the Blackfeet Nation, community-based non-profits, and among state, national, and international emerging partnerships:

**Paid Internships** offer students project-based experiences in collaboration with community partners to create experiential learning opportunities within their field of study.

**Solar Energy Training and Certificate** offer training in solar energy design, construction, and implementation to promote alternative energy for campus and residential use.

**Human Subjects Research Certificate** provides students with training on the processes and ethics of conducting human subjects research within the Blackfeet Nation and in broader research contexts.

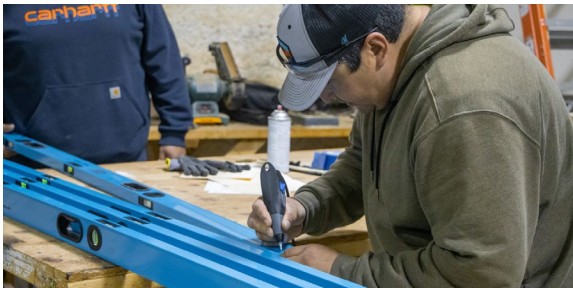
**Meat Processing Certificate trains students** for land-to-plate processing of locally sourced meats and local producer access to residents/markets.

## Blackfeet Community College: Building Our Futures

TCUs are resilient, resourceful, and proud to lead the nation in many areas, including preparing an American Indian and Alaska Native workforce of engineers, nurses, land managers, technicians, and teachers. Always looking to the future, TCUs are focused on building new partnerships, advancing educational excellence, and creating economic opportunities for Tribal and regional communities.

BFCC's Workforce Development Program, in conjunction with the Industry Trades One Year Certificate, seeks to provide opportunities for program graduates to pursue trades emphasis, including but not limited to welding, plumbing, electrical work, and carpentry, in alignment with the Montana State Apprenticeship program standards for licensure and certification. BFCC intends to partner with qualified businesses and trades professionals to help students obtain placement experience and earn the requisite hours required for each trade emphasis. Additionally, technical writing, Commercial Driving License (CDL), OSHA, and hazardous materials certifications are also offered to students seeking workforce credentials through partnerships with the Blackfeet Housing Authority, TERO, and other local professionals.

BFCC aims to enhance responses to health disparities through its Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program and the Health Science Associate of Science pathway to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, which is currently under review for accreditation by the Montana Board of Nursing. The Early Childhood and Elementary Education Associate of Science programs have played a key role in locally training educators to address the unique educational and cultural needs of the Blackfeet Nation, achieving a 100 percent job placement rate for graduates in local head starts and school districts. The college is expanding its partnerships statewide to further develop Bachelor of Science programs in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, while also working to provide foundational credits for transfer into Secondary Education Bachelor's programs at peer institutions, thereby increasing the number of locally trained teachers in specific content areas.



BFCC provides several student support services tailored specifically to meet the unique needs of our students. These services go beyond the traditional academic support offered at peer institutions, as they aim to comprehensively address academic, financial, emotional, social, and basic needs as a foundation for linking student success and wellness, according to our current strategic plan. Key services include:

**Tutoring and Academic Advising** Providing support for students to improve basic skills and connect faculty with students.

**Mental Health Supportive Services** Providing one-on-one or group wellness activities to students, faculty and staff.

**Physical Wellness** Providing students, faculty, and staff with pool passes and access to the Medicine Shield Fitness Center on campus, which is open Monday -Friday.

**Food Pantry and Grocery Store Food Cards** Providing essential food supplies to students facing food insecurity, helping them focus on their studies rather than worrying about meals and supporting those students with families to purchase food at a local grocery stores to further alleviate financial stress and promote healthy eating.

**Transit Passes & Fuel Cards** Providing transportation support through transit passes and fuel cards ensures students can consistently attend classes and access educational resources without transportation barriers.

**Emergency Aid Fund** Providing a vital financial resource that assists students with unexpected expenses such as rent, utilities, and car repairs (e.g., tires), with up to \$250 per year in emergency aid support.

**Laundromat Coupons** Providing access to laundry services ensures students can maintain personal hygiene, contributing to their overall well-being and self-confidence.

**Workshops** Providing customized workshops that focus on academic and life skills, empowering students with knowledge and practical strategies to navigate challenges associated with college life and career planning.

**Career Closets** Providing graduating students with professional and workforce-related clothing and gear for them to be ready on their first day on the job.

**NACTEP-STEM Program** Providing students in selected majors with supportive services that reflect addressing the comprehensive needs of BFCC students, helping to remove barriers and create a supportive environment for success and career readiness.