

BFCC MAGPIE



JANUARY 2026

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BLACKFEET TRIBAL COLLEGE EXTENSION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS HANDS-ON MEAT PROCESSING TRAINING

The Blackfeet Tribal College Extension Program had the privilege to provide elders, producers, and interns hands-on education in meat processing, yield grading, and healthy harvest practices. We are grateful for our partnership with Montana Premium Processing Co-op, with General Manager Bill Jones generously providing the laboratory and training site, and local Montana producer Coulee Cuts, with Kesler Martin supplying a 746-pound beef carcass for meat science evaluation.

Following proper harvesting and processing under the supervision of an on-site USDA inspector, participants were able to take home ground meat, chops, roasts, and ribs to support their families and strengthen food security. The program highlighted cooperative partnerships that advance food sovereignty by bringing together traditional knowledge holders of native plant foods with hands-on harvesting of diverse animal species, while keeping food production local. Thank you to all participants for making this event possible and for their continued support of our Extension Program. For those interested in learning more, partnering with the program, or joining as a student, please contact:

Felix Nez, USDA Extension Director / Agent
(406) 338-5441 ext. 2751 | felix.n@bfcc.edu
or

Chelsea Pree, Administrative Assistant, USDA Extension
(406) 338-5441 ext. 2768



BFCC STUDENTS SELECTED FOR 2025-2026 COLLEGE LEADERS COHORT

We are proud to announce that Brandi Harwood and Helen Dayle Carlson have been selected as members of the 2025-2026 College Leaders Cohort through the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement (MCNCE)!

The College Leaders Cohort is part of the Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement, a statewide coalition of colleges and universities dedicated to fostering civic engagement, service learning, and student leadership across Montana. The program empowers students to design and lead community-focused service projects, gain leadership training, and work collaboratively to address real community needs while developing civic responsibility and leadership skills.

Participants in the cohort have the opportunity to:

- engage in hands-on projects that serve local communities,
- receive mentorship from campus advisors,
- develop skills in collaboration, project planning, and civic leadership,
- and even apply for micro-grant funding to support student-led initiatives.

The network itself has a long history of promoting civic engagement within higher education in Montana, with a mission to educate students for civic responsibility and to partner with communities across the state to inspire meaningful service. Its collaborative efforts encourage student voice and active participation in community improvement. We congratulate Brandi and Helen for being selected as members of the 2025-2026 College Leaders Cohort! Their inclusion in this program speaks to their commitment to service, leadership, and making a positive impact in their communities and beyond. We are excited to see the community projects they will pursue and the difference they will make through this opportunity.



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WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK: SPRING 2026 REGISTRATION

We are seeking student feedback on the Spring 2026 registration process. Whether your experience was smooth or you encountered challenges along the way, your input is valuable and will help improve registration for future semesters.

Student feedback plays an important role in strengthening college services and ensuring a better experience for everyone. By sharing your thoughts, you are helping BFCC identify what's working well and where improvements can be made.

Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey by scanning the QR code below or by clicking the link.

Be sure to use your BFCC student email account to access the survey.

Thank you for your time and for helping make Blackfeet Community College better for all students.

— The BFCC Administration Team



https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSey1B83bhct2Sx1bqgmBZqyO6_2yhpdTxZ9EtLXNW7AU9NoBWA/viewform

HUMAN RESOURCES - NEW HIRES!

We are excited to share several staffing updates within our team. Please join us in welcoming our newest approved hires to campus!

We are excited to welcome Charlee Wippert back to Blackfeet Community College as the YES Grant Coordinator. Charlee previously worked with the College for a couple of years and now returns to the Education Department, bringing valuable experience, knowledge, and a strong commitment to student success. We are glad to have her back on campus and look forward to the positive impact she will continue to make.

We also welcome Jess Spotted Bear, our newly approved Custodian, who is new to the institution. Jess joins our facilities team, and we are pleased to have him on board as he supports the daily operations and upkeep of our campus.

At this time, the College has the following open positions:

- Meat Processing Instructor
- Financial Aid Specialist
- Human Resource Specialist
- Human Services Administrative Assistant

If you or someone you know is interested, please visit our website or contact the Human Resource Department for more information at <https://bfcc.edu/Human-Resource>. Welcome to our new team members, and thank you to everyone who continues to support our growing campus community!

YES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS

We are currently recruiting high school juniors and seniors to apply for the YES (Youth Employment Services) Program, an opportunity designed to help students get a strong start on their college and career journey. Applications are open now for students interested in beginning this semester.

The YES Program supports students as they remain enrolled, build foundational academic skills, and gain early career experience while working toward their long-term educational and professional goals. Through this program, students are able to begin taking college-level coursework while receiving guidance, structure, and hands-on support.

What Makes the YES Program Unique

The YES Program stands out by combining academic progress with real-world work experience. Students earn income while completing general core classes such as English and math, helping them build confidence and responsibility early on. Alongside coursework, participants receive ongoing support that strengthens time management, communication, and professional skills—preparing them for future programs of study or entry into the workforce.

Student Success and Growth

YES Program participants demonstrate success through consistent enrollment, completion of program requirements, and active participation in work-based learning experiences. Students gain valuable skills, develop professional habits, and establish a strong academic foundation that supports their transition into college-level programs.

Courses and Academic Support

Students in the YES Program typically enroll in general core courses required across multiple degree pathways. The program is designed to support students through these foundational classes while helping them balance school, work experience, and future planning.

Apply Now

Students interested in getting a head start on college while gaining work experience are encouraged to complete their YES Program application as soon as possible. Early application helps ensure students can begin the program this semester. For more information or assistance with the application process, please contact:

Charlee Wippert
 YES Grant Coordinator
 (406) 338-5441 ext. 2922
charlee.b@bfcc.edu

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BRANDI HARWOOD: A THIRD-YEAR FULL CIRCLE SCHOLAR MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Today we celebrate Brandi Harwood, who has been selected as a recipient of one of the Full Circle Scholarships, the Coca-Cola First Generation Scholarship, from the American Indian College Fund for the 2025–2026 academic year. This marks her third consecutive year receiving this prestigious award, which recognizes first-generation college students who demonstrate academic dedication, leadership, and commitment to their communities. The scholarship provides crucial support, allowing students like Brandi to focus on their studies, pursue their goals, and remain connected to their culture and community while advancing academically. In May 2025, Brandi graduated with her Associate of Science in Health Science, which gave her a solid understanding of how the body works. She is now completing her Associate of Arts in Piikani Studies and Language (expected May 2026), combining her knowledge of health with the culture and language of her people. Her next step is to begin the Meat Processing Program at Blackfeet Community College in June 2026, which will allow her to pursue the Basic Human Subjects Research certification. She plans to start a research project at BFCC examining how a traditional Piikani diet, rich in buffalo and native plants, can help reduce inflammation in her community compared to a standard diet. Ultimately, Brandi hopes to continue her education in Indigenous Health Research with a focus on Ethnobotany, documenting the power of traditional foods and plants to improve health today.

Brandi expressed heartfelt gratitude for the scholarship, saying, “Niitsiniiyii’taki – I am grateful. This scholarship has helped me in so many ways, paving the way for my education and helping me set an example for the younger generation. Because of the support from the American Indian College Fund and Coca-Cola, I’ve been able to focus on my goal of combining Health Science with Piikani Studies. I believe that our people have always been natural-born scientists, and I want to use my education to prove that. Having lived with rheumatoid arthritis since I was six, I’ve seen firsthand how traditional foods and plants can heal. This scholarship is helping me stay in school so I can research these traditional ways and bring that health back to my community. I want the younger generation to see that our culture and our science go hand-in-hand, and that we can find our own path to healing.” Blackfeet Community College congratulates Brandi Harwood on her achievements and looks forward to supporting her as she continues to advance Piikani language, culture, and traditional wellness practices, while serving as a model of dedication, leadership, and community-focused research.

FROM CAMPUS TO CONFERENCE: BFCC STUDENTS PREPARE FOR AIHEC 2026

We are proud to announce that Blackfeet Community College has selected all student teams who will represent our institution at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Student Conference, taking place March 15–18, 2026, in Bismarck, North Dakota. We extend our sincere appreciation to all students who expressed interest in participating.

About the AIHEC Student Conference

The AIHEC Student Conference is a national gathering that brings together students from Tribal Colleges and Universities to compete, collaborate, and share their academic, cultural, and creative work. This conference provides our students with opportunities to:

- Demonstrate academic excellence and research
- Engage in cultural expression and Indigenous knowledge
- Build leadership and professional skills
- Represent Blackfeet Community College on a national stage

BFCC Teams Representing Our College

We are honored to support our students as they prepare to compete in the following AIHEC events:

- One Act Play
- Film Festival
- Speech
- Business Bowl
- Archery
- Traditional Plants
- Science Poster Presentation
- Cultural Demonstration
- Research Poster
- Critical Inquiry
- Mr. & Ms. AIHEC

Each team is actively preparing through practice, mentorship, research, and collaboration, reflecting the dedication, talent, and commitment of our students.

Honoring & Send-Off Ceremony

Prior to their departure, Blackfeet Community College will host an honoring and send-off ceremony to recognize our students for their hard work and commitment as they prepare to travel and represent our institution. We invite the campus and community to stay tuned for more details and join us in showing support and encouragement as our students begin their journey to AIHEC 2026.

We are incredibly proud of our students and look forward to supporting them as they represent Blackfeet Community College at AIHEC 2026. We wish each team the very best as they prepare to compete, perform, and showcase their talents in Bismarck.

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FALL 2025 PRESIDENT'S LIST

Michelle Boyce	Autumn Wells
Lakota ChiefAllOver	Caroline SpottedEagle
Ramona Croff	Dani Hamann
Terry Croff	Shelsey Christiaens
Francine DeRoche	Madison Augare
Angela Gallineaux	Keelee BearChild
Brandi Harwood	Ozlyn Buffalo-TalksDifferent
Morgan Hughson	Anthelia Cosay
Kimberly jiron	Megan Daniels
Justin LaDue	Michelle DesRosier
Jarron Lahr	Tiffany Sellars
Tashlyn LazyBoy	Vanessa Bahr
Denyse Loaff Houghtelling	Brittany HeavyRunner
Caroline McEvers	Marcus Buckley
Terrance Melton	Beatrice Kipp
Lorna NorthPeigan	Allen Walker
Jaina OldChief	donna kipp
Andrea RedCrow	talia mittens
Marla Redhorn	mykendall scabbyrobe
Craig Reece Jr	cody trombley
Kiyana RidesAtTheDoor	hailey bullshoe
Shanna RunningCrane	misty pace
Braelyn RunningFisher	nicole racine
Jeslyn Rutherford	christina begay
Morgan Sellars	tiphany olson
Morgan Shakespeare	daesean bullshieds
Colten Sharp	tyler runningcrane
Nerrayah Snow	Marly Blackman
Joyce SpoonHunter	Josie Clark
Mialyn Spoonhunter	Kaeton Crawford
Melisa Trombley	Lauryn Johnson
Rubylynn WeaselHead	Austin Vielle

IMPORTANT DATES

- **JANUARY 12:** FACULTY RETURN
- **JANUARY 13 - 16:** SPRING 2026 REGISTRATION
- **JANUARY 19:** MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY (BFCC CLOSED)
- **JANUARY 20:** FIRST DAY OF CLASS
- **JANUARY 21-22:** BEAR RIVER COMMEMORATION - STUDENT COMMONS
- **JANUARY 23:** BEAR RIVER MEMORIAL (BFCC CLOSED)
- **WEDNESDAYS:** CRAFTING - 2:00PM - 4:00PM - KNOWLEDGE CARRIERS LODGE
- **FRIDAYS:** CRAFT FRIDAYS - ALL DAY - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY

BEAR RIVER COMMEMORATION INFORMATION

We will host the Bear River Commemoration on January 21-22, 2026, honoring the impact of the 1870 Bear River Massacre on the Piikani People. This gathering provides space for education, reflection, and collective healing through shared knowledge, culture, and community.

Call for Presenters

BFCC invites individuals or groups to submit presentations on the history, background, and present-day impacts of the Bear River Massacre, as well as Piikani resiliency and cultural tools supporting healing.

Submission Information:

- Applications available through Alden Spoonhunter (Stuck Behind Building / Old Academy)
- Deadline: January 12, 2026, by 4:00 PM (or postmarked)
- Submit via email: alden.s@bfcc.edu
- Submit via mail:
- Blackfeet Community College
- c/o Lifelong Learning - Bear River 2026
- PO Box 819, Browning, MT 59417

Call for Art Show Submissions

Artists are invited to submit work for the commemoration's art show around the theme:

"A People Still Standing, a Culture Still Speaking." Artwork should honor Piikani history, culture, and resilience and may include visual art, traditional media, or creative interpretations.

Submission Details:

- Drop off in person with Elaine Littleplume or Ranessa Skunkcap (Beaver Painted Lodge, Student Commons Offices)
- Deadline: January 12, 2026
- Contact:
- Elaine Littleplume - elaine.lp@bfcc.edu | (406) 338-5421 ext. 2262
- Ranessa Skunkcap - 24ranessa.sc@bfcc.edu

The Bear River Commemoration is an important opportunity to remember, educate, and honor the strength of the Piikani People. BFCC encourages community members, scholars, and artists to participate and contribute to this meaningful event.

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN ACCESS LIBRARY RESOURCES ANYWHERE?

Take a look at our online digital archives, our card catalog, and check out meeting/study space from anywhere.

Schedule a room or a study space for your convenience when studying. Book a conference room for a meeting with colleagues!



View our online archives to discover past issues, stories, and publications from Blackfeet Community College.



Search our library catalog online to search our collection of books, e-books, and media resources.

