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A HISTORIC HOMECOMING: IINII (BISON) ARRIVE AT BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Browning, MT - Blackfeet Community College (BFCC) celebrated a historic milestone in reconnecting bison, land, culture, and our community. On October 20, 2026, the college welcomed seven yearling female iinii (bison) to campus, marking a historic moment for the college and the Blackfeet community. After years of planning and preparation, a long-term vision became reality as the bison stepped out of the trailer and onto their new home on the college's property.



BFCC President, Brad Hall stated, "It was an incredible sight to witness. The arrival of our iinii relatives means more than the completion of a long standing project, but a beautiful cultural re-connection and a meaningful step toward bringing iinii, the land, and the community together." The college celebrated this milestone with the community during Land Grant Day on October 21, 2026.

A VISION YEARS IN THE MAKING

Melissa Weatherwax reflects that the BFCC Land Grant Programs have spent the last three years working to bring iinii to campus, building on a vision that began with a land purchase in the mid-2000s. The college previously offered a Natural Resource Program that incorporated hands-on bison labs, followed by the K-College Native Science Field Center, which engaged students in land-based programming and iinii teachings.

The Land Grant Programs closely follow the Iinii Initiative, guided by a Blackfoot Confederacy strategic model focused on bringing bison back to intact grasslands and supporting healthy ecosystems. This work also advances food sovereignty and the college's Agricultural Resource Management Plan.

In 2022, BFCC was one of three tribal colleges awarded a $1.2 million Meat Processing Grant to support food sovereignty and agricultural workforce development. The resulting one-year certificate program trains students in meat processing and traditional harvest methods, with its first class expected to graduate in spring 2027.

Building on these efforts, the team embraced the Blackfoot concept of Oakanipstakii, or "bringing everyone together," as a guiding approach to supporting food sovereignty through healthy soil, grasslands, water, and iinii.

PREPARING A HOME FOR THE HERD

Bringing the bison to campus required collaboration, careful planning, and preparation. The team worked with community members and managers from across the Blackfoot Confederacy to develop appropriate infrastructure and ensure the herd could be cared for safely.

Preparations included hiring personnel, upgrading fencing, and establishing water and feed capacity. Electrical and fencing improvements cover two sections of rangeland totaling 284 acres, including a three-foot buffer zone.

The BFCC Board of Trustees approved the purchase of seven yearling females from the Fort Belknap Yellowstone bison herd, which arrived on October 20. The Piikani Nation will also be gifting three yearlings to the college, with three more expected in the spring from a private herd in Siksika. These partnerships reflect a shared commitment to strengthening the relationship between iinii, the land, and the people.

Watching the yearlings step out of the trailer and onto their new home was a powerful moment. After years of planning and hard work, the vision had become reality. Their arrival represents a renewed cultural connection while opening the door to new opportunities for education, land stewardship, and community involvement.

GROWING EDUCATION THROUGH IINII

The yearlings will make their home on campus and help work the land as BFCC continues developing educational opportunities that connect students with iinii, the land, language, and culture.

Future plans include a Piikanii Studies lan-

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guage lab, soil studies through USDA Land Grant programs, and a Workforce Bison Caretaking Certificate approved by the Board of Trustees on September 30, 2026. The college's long-term vision will continue planning for increasing bison carrying-capacity, research through the Lifelong Learning Center, and traditional-use workshops through the Medicine Spring Library.

Through this work, students will have opportunities to learn about bison care, healthy ecosystems, land stewardship, and traditional knowledge through hands-on experiences. The herd will become a living classroom, connecting academic learning with cultural teachings and practical skills.
As the herd grows, BFCC looks forward to expanding access to iinii-aligned education and programming for students and the community.

A COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENT

Bringing iinii home to BFCC was made possible through the dedication, collaboration, and support of many people and partners. The college extends its sincere gratitude to the Board of Trustees, President Hall, supporting managers from across the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Fort Belknap Tribal Bison Program, funders, USDA intern students, the Institutional Development team, the Facilities Department, and the many students, faculty, and staff who contributed to this work.

The arrival of iinii represents more than the growth of a herd. It reflects years of dedication, cultural connection, care for the land, and a shared vision for future generations. What began as a long-term goal has become a living part of Blackfeet Community College, creating opportunities for students and the community to learn, connect with their culture, and strengthen their relationship with the land.

Watch the project and iinii arrival on the Blackfeet Community College YouTube channel, @ blackfeetcommunitycollege, by scanning the QR code.





ASTRONAUT JOHN HERRINGTON VISITS BFCC DURING DAYS OF THE PIIKANI TO INSPIRE NATIVE YOUTH

We welcomed astronaut John Herrington on September 24, 2026, during the Days of the Piikani celebration. Herrington, a member of the Chickasaw Nation, visited BFCC to present on the importance of voting in partnership with Astronauts for America. During his visit, he also sat down for an interview with Jarrett Newman, a BFCC Piikani Studies student participating in the Visual Sovereignty Endorsement Program through Liberal Studies.

The conversation explored Herrington's path to becoming an astronaut, the support of his Chickasaw Nation, and his hopes for inspiring Native youth through education, cultural connection, and a broader understanding of the world.

Herrington shared what inspired him to join the Navy, a decision that ultimately led him to become an astronaut. Along the way, his Chickasaw Nation supported his work and commitment to education, giving him opportunities to connect with students and share his experiences.

One memory that stood out was his first space launch. Herrington explained that he was surprised when hundreds of people from his tribe came to watch. That support stayed with him and reinforced his desire to give back to his community.

He also shared a story about meeting a young girl at a summer camp when she was about 10 years old. Years later, she became a civil engineer and told him that meeting him helped her realize she could pursue a career like that, too.

Stories like hers are why Herrington believes representation matters. He feels a responsibility to inspire Native youth and show them that careers in science, technology, engineering, and other fields are possible. Having someone they can identify with

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can help young people envision opportunities they may not have considered before.

During the interview, Herrington discussed the importance of connecting Indigenous knowledge and traditions with modern education and career opportunities. He pointed to fields such as engineering, chemistry, architecture, agriculture, and land management as areas where young people can recognize connections between today's work and the knowledge Indigenous peoples have practiced and passed down through generations.

By highlighting these connections, Herrington hopes to spark interest among Native youth and help them see the value of their cultural knowledge in a variety of career paths. He emphasized that Indigenous knowledge remains relevant and can contribute to how we understand and care for the world around us.

Herrington also reflected on the physical and mental experiences of living and working in space. He spoke about conducting experiments, adjusting to weightlessness, learning to sleep without touching surrounding surfaces, and following the demanding schedule astronauts maintain while in orbit.

Seeing Earth from a distance gave him a deeper appreciation for nature and a greater understanding of how fragile the planet is. The experience changed his perspective and reinforced the importance of using data and knowledge to help people understand environmental change and why action is needed.

Herrington hopes to use his experiences to help others recognize environmental impacts, including those that may not be immediately visible in their own communities. His reflections highlighted how seeing the world from a different perspective can strengthen our understanding of our shared responsibility to care for it.

Throughout the interview, Herrington emphasized the importance of sharing knowledge and giving back to the community. He wants to use whatever voice he has to help others learn, recognizing that collective action can make a difference.
He also offered a reminder that life does not always follow a straight path. As he put it, "Life is not a straight path, you learn things on a crooked path." His journey demonstrates how unexpected opportunities, challenges, and experiences can shape a person's future.

For students considering their own paths, Herrington's story is a reminder to remain open to possibilities, keep learning, and recognize that each experience can lead to new opportunities.

The full interview with John Herrington and Jarrett Newman is available on the Blackfeet Community College YouTube channel, @blackfeetcommunitycollege. Scan the QR code to watch their conversation and hear more about Herrington's journey to becoming an astronaut, his experiences in space, and his message to Native youth.

Additional presentations and videos from the Days of the Piikani celebration can also be viewed on the BFCC YouTube channel.

Herrington's visit during the Days of the Piikani offered students and community members an opportunity to learn from his experiences and reflect on the connections between education, cultural knowledge, and future possibilities. His message encouraged Native youth to recognize their potential, value the knowledge passed down through generations, and consider how their own experiences can help inspire and support future generations.



DR. BRAD HALL ELECTED TO AIHEC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On October 17, 2026, BFCC President Dr. Brad Hall was elected to the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Executive Committee as Student Activities Chair. In this role, Dr. Hall will help support the AIHEC Student Activities Committee, which organizes student events, promotes Indigenous culture, and creates opportunities for leadership, networking, and connection among students from Tribal Colleges and Universities. This appointment provides another opportunity for BFCC to contribute to the broader Tribal College community.



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BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE CELEBRATES 32 YEARS AS A LAND GRANT INSTITUTION

Land Grant Day honors the college's history, highlights ongoing work in energy sovereignty and food systems, and celebrates the connection between iinii (bison), the land, culture, and future generations.

Blackfeet Community College (BFCC) celebrated its 32nd year as a land grant institution on October 21, 2026, bringing together staff, students, community members, and program partners to recognize the work taking place across the college. The day highlighted how BFCC's Land Grant mission continues to grow through research, education, cultural knowledge, and a commitment to caring for the land and strengthening community wellness.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LAND GRANT INSTITUTION?

Land grant institutions were established to expand access to education and share knowledge that supports agriculture, research, and the needs of their communities. For tribal colleges like BFCC, this work also creates opportunities to center Indigenous knowledge, cultural values, and community priorities in education and research.

At BFCC, the land grant mission connects programs focused on natural resources, food sovereignty, energy sovereignty, workforce development, and cultural learning. These efforts bring together traditional teachings and new approaches to help students and community members build knowledge while caring for the land and preparing for the future.

THE HISTORY AND IMPACT OF TRIBAL COLLEGE LAND GRANT PROGRAMS

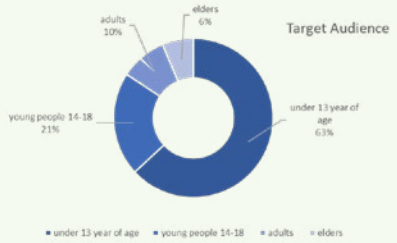
The Land Grant mission at BFCC is part of a broader effort by Tribal Colleges to strengthen education, research, and community development. In 1973, leaders from the nation's first Tribal Colleges formed the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) to unite Tribal Colleges, encourage collaboration, and advocate for sustainable funding and federal recognition. AIHEC has since played an important role in advancing tribal self-determination and securing federal recognition and land grant status for Tribal Colleges.

In 1998, federal legislation established funding opportunities to support agricultural research and Extension work at Tribal Colleges. The Strengthening Tribal College Program created the Tribal College Research Grants Program, while the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act authorized the Tribal College Extension Grant Program. These programs help Tribal Colleges develop research, provide educational resources, and share knowledge with their communities.

Through its 2022–2026 grant cycle, BFCC's Extension work has supported staff, more than 25 student interns, greenhouse demonstrations, local producers, professional technical assistance, and travel for staff and students. The program also creates opportunities to share knowledge among community elders, producers, and youth, helping connect education and research with community needs.

Felix Nez, BFCC's USDA Extension Director and Agent, expressed appreciation to BFCC, the Blackfeet communities, the USDA





(NIFA), USDA Intern Students/Staff and the many partners who have supported the program throughout the grant cycle.

HONORING THE VISION AND HISTORY

The program opened with nohkspoo-mohkinaan, asking for guidance offered by Marvin Weatherwax Sr., followed by a welcome from BFCC President Dr. Brad Hall.



Terry Tatsey, one of the founding in dividuals who helped establish BFCC as a land grant institution, spoke about the community input and planning that shaped the college's vision. The work included developing a plan around energy efficiency, reducing the college's carbon footprint, and striving toward net-zero emissions to minimize impacts on the natural world. The 10 year campus facilities masterplanning document was completed around 2012–2014, building on a vision to make BFCC a research institution while incorporating traditional Blackfeet ways and values.



The presentations throughout the day showed how that original vision continues

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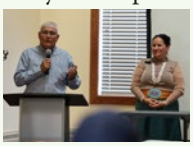
to guide the college's work today.

CONNECTING IINII, THE LAND, AND RESEARCH

Felix Nez, discussed how iinii are becoming an important part of BFCC's Land Grant programs. Now in the fourth year of their current extension grant, the team is planning additional research opportunities, including a proposed Tribal College Research Capacity Grant that would study native grasses and how they affect inii. This work supports a broader understanding of the Blackfeet people and reciprocal relationship with inii, and its imprint on grasslands, and healthy ecosystems.



Melissa Weatherwax, Institutional Development Director, also shared information about transporting the inii to campus and thanked the many people and who helped make their arrival possible. The herd represents years of planning and collaboration to reconnect students and the community with iinii and the land.



Warren Juneau, an instructor with the USDA Equity Program, discussed the importance of cultural identity and combining traditional knowledge with modern technology. Through visits to cultural sites and land-based learning, the program studies the relationship between the Blackfeet people, the buffalo, and the land that has sustained generations.



The program plans to establish two experimental fields and work in partnership with the buffalo to learn what can grow in these environments. This work recognizes the historic relationship between buffalo and the land, and how that partnership helped maintain healthy ecosystems while providing what people needed to thrive in this area. The goal is to help restore ancestral food and medicine systems that support a healthy lifestyle while strengthening cultural knowledge and relationships between elders and youth.

Helen Augare reflected on the history of BFCC's natural resource programs, beginning with the Native Science Field Center in 2004. Initially focused on youth, the program expanded through new partnerships and eventually grew to serve tribal college students. Today, many of those young people have carried their teachings into careers and community work in schools, nonprofits, and summer camps.



Augare explained that conversations with elders helped inspire efforts to bring iinii back to the land. The work continues to focus on healthy food, wellness, cultural learning, and opportunities for young people to build relationships with the land.

BUILDING ENERGY SOVEREIGNTY AND WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES

BFCC continues to connect its land grant mission with energy sovereignty and workforce development. Ron Lahr, Facilities Director, spoke about his role in supporting the college's projects and helping programs work together.

During the event, the college honored Amishi Singh and Marlowe Lawson for their contributions to BFCC's energy sovereignty projects, along with Chelsee Pree and Codie Horse-Topetchy for their work with land grant programs and efforts to bring iinii to campus. Each received a blanket in recognition of their contributions.



Melissa shared that the BFCC Board of Trustees had confirmed the Blackfeet Energy Knowledge Sovereignty Institute. The institute is intended to establish a central resource for energy knowledge and collaboration, examining data, standards, and building codes while helping develop a community network around energy sovereignty.



Cheryl Madman, Director of Workforce Development discussed how their program supports these efforts through funding, training, and grant opportunities. This includes the one-year Meat Processing Certificate and One Year Certificate Bison Caretaker which we hope to launch spring or early summer, training in alternative energy, which includes basic solar installation and energy auditing working alongside Blackfeet Housing Authority while helping creating pathways for students to develop practical skills while supporting the college's broader goals.

EXPANDING CULTURAL LEARNING AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Alicia Yellowowl shared the development of BFCC's meat processing program and the acquisition of a mobile meat processing unit. With instructor Dan Polk joining the program, the unit will primarily support buffalo processing. The program grew from a desire to



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make meaningful use of the college's extensive land while creating educational opportunities connected to food sovereignty and traditional practices.

Angel Little Plume discussed the role of Piikani Studies and the importance of connecting students with the land through the iinii. She described how the presence of the inii can encourage students to become helpers, overcome barriers, and build stronger relationships with their culture and community.



Through pilot programming, students are encouraged to bring these connections into the classroom. Little Plume emphasized the importance of respectful language and recognizing the sacredness of the buffalo, which provided for the people in many ways. These teachings help students understand the relationships between cultural knowledge, food, wellness, and responsibility to the land.

Aaron Lafromboise, Medicine Spring Library Director, reflected on her 17 years at BFCC and her long-standing goal of building a library that truly belongs to the Piikani community. Through partnerships, including support from the USDA, the library has developed experiential learning opportunities such as a greenhouse made from recycled materials and raised garden beds.



Lafromboise also discussed the library's cultural arts programming, supported by a grant from the American Indian College Fund three years ago. Workshops have included hide tanning, drum making, rattle making, and moccasin making. She emphasized that learning about iinii should extend beyond harvesting and eating the buffalo to understanding how all parts were traditionally used. Her vision is for the library to be a welcoming community space where people can learn, share knowledge, and strengthen cultural connections.

HONORING THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORK

The day included an honor song recognizing the many students, faculty, staff, community and partners who have contributed to BFCC's land grant efforts, from programs dating back to the 1980s through today's work.

The recognition extended to funders and partners, including First Nations, USDA Extension, Cedar Tree, Kendeda Fund, Grid Alternatives, student interns, teachers, the Iinii Initiative, BFCC's Institutional Development team, and support staff. The singers, Marvin Weatherwax Jr., Napi Wadsworth, and Taos Yellowowl, helped honor the collective efforts that have made this work possible.



The presentations reflected oahkanipstakii, a shared commitment across departments and partnerships to support students, strengthen community relationships, and carry traditional knowledge into future generations.

As a gift in celebration of the Iitoomsapii, the herd coming to campus, students were gifted bison meat for them and their families. The feed highlighted knowledge carrier Liza England to provide a bison meal focusing on the preparation of a "gut feed" from the bison harvested by BFCC staff. Her story was captured and presented to demonstrate good energy that goes into food through traditional knowledge, healthy soil, healthy grass, healthy animals, healthy relationships, healthy Piikani-Kiitowaahsin.

LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

In the afternoon, participants broke into sessions showcasing the work taking place across BFCC's land grant programs. Attendees had opportunities to learn about the Iinii Initiative, meat processing, and other program activities, as well as tour the new inii herd and its range.

The sessions offered a closer look at how the college is putting its land grant mission into practice through hands-on education, research, cultural learning, and community engagement.

As BFCC celebrates 32 years as a land grant institution, the work continues to grow from a foundation of community knowledge, traditional values, and care for the land. The return of iinii to campus and the continued development of energy, food, and workforce programs demonstrate how BFCC is bringing these commitments together to create opportunities for students and the community.

Through collaboration across programs, with elders, partners, and future generations, BFCC continues to build on its land grant legacy while strengthening the relationships that sustain the people, the land, and the future.



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KNOWLEDGE CARRIERS LODGE AND STUDENT SUCCESS BRINGS LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE INTO EVERYDAY LIFE PRESENTATION

Blackfeet Community College's AahsiiksKookaan Knowledge Carriers Lodge (KCL) and the Student Success Department welcomed elders Delano Calfbossribs, Peter Tastey, and Betty Littleplume for Language & Culture in Daily Life on Tuesday, October 13, 2026. Led in part by KCL Director Kim Jiron Deroche, the gathering brought together community members to listen, learn, and reflect on the importance of Blackfeet language, cultural teachings, and lived experiences.

Throughout the event, the Knowledge Carriers shared personal stories about growing up, teaching in local schools, and maintaining their connection to the Blackfeet language during times when speaking it and expressing Native identity were not always accepted. Their experiences offered a powerful reminder of the challenges previous generations faced and the importance of creating opportunities for younger generations to learn and carry these teachings forward.

KEEPING THE BLACKFEET LANGUAGE ALIVE

During the discussion, Kim DeRoche reflected on the stories of her mom's generation struggling to live in two worlds, moving away from our traditional ways of life and sometimes not being given the choice to. The effects of those experiences continue to influence language learning today. Kim shared that she does not know the Blackfeet language, highlighting how the experiences and treatment of earlier generations affected the passing down of language and cultural knowledge.

Betty Littleplume shared her experiences teaching and emphasized that learning a language requires repetition and consistent practice. Hearing a word once is not enough to remember it. Language must be spoken, practiced, and incorporated into everyday life.

Betty recalled teaching at local schools, where she incorporated Blackfeet language through Napi stories once a week. Her students came from diverse backgrounds, including Native and non-Native students, and they enjoyed the stories while learning the words and teachings shared through them. Her experience demonstrated how storytelling can create meaningful opportunities for language learning and cultural understanding.
Her message encouraged attendees to continue using the language in daily conversations and to make it a regular part of family and community life.

LEARNING THROUGH NATURE, ART, AND SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

Peter Tastey spoke about the importance of remembering what gives life and taking care of the natural world. He reminded attendees that nature sustains us and deserves our respect and care. Peter also shared how singing and drawing help him reconnect with memories and spiritual teachings. He brought his sketchbook to the gathering and shared some of his artwork, explaining the stories and meanings behind his drawings. Through his examples, he demonstrated how art can preserve memories, communicate teachings, and strengthen connections to culture.

Peter also discussed approaches that are helping children learn the Blackfeet language. He shared that children are learning to pray in Blackfeet, understanding the words they are saying, and using visual materials to reinforce their learning. He emphasized the importance of allowing children the time and space to grow, learn, and make mistakes, reminding attendees that children are still developing their knowledge and understanding.
His reflections highlighted the value of making language learning engaging, meaningful, and connected to everyday experiences.

CARRYING LANGUAGE WITH PRIDE

Delano Calfbossribs shared his experiences growing up with the Blackfeet language. Although he was fortunate to have Elders around him and the opportunity to speak fluently with them, he recalled being ridiculed by other children his age for speaking the language.

Despite those experiences, Delano remains proud of his ability to speak Blackfeet. He described standing up for himself and refusing to accept negativity directed toward his language and identity. He also expressed appreciation for the Knowledge Carriers Lodge because it has given him opportunities to meet other Knowledge Carriers, including Betty Littleplume, with whom he can sit and hold conversations in Blackfeet. His reflection illustrated the



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importance of having spaces where fluent speakers and cultural Knowledge Carriers can connect, share experiences, and continue practicing the language together.

The gathering demonstrated how the Knowledge Carriers Lodge serves as a place for Elders to connect with one another and share knowledge with the wider community. Through conversations like these, the Lodge helps support the continuation of language, cultural teachings, and relationships across generations.

KNOWLEDGE CARRIERS LODGE WELCOMES GEORGE KIPP IV

The Knowledge Carriers Lodge also welcomes George Kipp IV, whose placement is made possible through a Work Experience (WEX) training program with the Blackfeet Tribe Vocational Rehabilitation (BTVR) Program.

George will focus on helping community members connect with veteran services and resources. His scheduled hours are Monday through Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Born in Los Angeles, California, on June 22, 1954, George describes himself as a relocation baby. He graduated from high school in June 1972 and served in the United States Army from 1973 to 1975, receiving an honorable discharge. He later earned an associate degree from Haskell Indian Junior College.

George brings decades of professional experience in training, workforce development, and community services. His previous positions include serving as BHIP Director from 1980 to 1983, working as a Training Specialist and Department of Energy Inspector with ACKCO, Inc., from 1983 to 1990, and serving as a Department of Labor Training Specialist with the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona from 1990 to 1999. He then served as Blackfeet Manpower Director from 1999 until his retirement in 2024. His experience will support the AahsiiksKookaan efforts to help connect veterans with services and resources. KCL will be hosting bi-weekly meetings in the KCL on Thursday's @ 2pm-3pm. All local veterans and other interested individuals are welcome to attend.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

The Knowledge Carriers Lodge will continue hosting events and creating opportunities for community members to learn, connect, and access resources.

ELDER FAIR

The Elder Fair in part with the Elder Luncheon will be on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The fair will bring together programs, organizations, and service providers to share resources and information for Elders and their families. The Knowledge Carriers Lodge is currently seeking programs, presenters, and sponsors interested in participating and helping bring resources together for an afternoon focused on supporting Elders and their families.

SENIOR PLANET

We are excited to begin offering: SENIOR PLANET from AARP©. BFCC Knowledge Carriers Lodge applied for the FREE technology course platform in the late spring and was notified at the end of the Summer that they were selected as a site!

Senior Planet is the flagship program of the nonprofit Older Adult Technology Services (OATS) from AARP, a national leader in technology training for older adults. Everything offered reflects the philosophy of their organization: Aging with Attitude. Please reach out to Kim for more information to become involved. Watch for further publications for upcoming locations and course schedules.

KCL is in the beginning stages of official onboarding and program planning plans. It is a volunteer based trainer program and is currently searching for locations/programs to offer this FREE resource.

Programs and organizations interested in participating can contact KCL Interim Coordinator, Kim Jiron Deroche for more information.

For more about the Knowledge Carriers Lodge:
Kim Jiron DeRoche, KCL Interim Coordinator
Phone: 406-338-5441, ext. 2235
Email: 23kimberly.j@bfcc.edu
Website: bfcc.edu/knowledgecarriers
Location: Beaver Painted Lodge Building, near the Admissions entrance at Blackfeet Community College

The Knowledge Carriers Lodge continues to provide a place for Elders and community members to share their experiences, preserve cultural teachings, and strengthen connections across generations. Through language gatherings, community events, and access to resources, KCL supports the knowledge carried by Elders and the continued learning of future generations. They also would like to inform the community of the KCLs active donation page for the Knowledge Carriers Lodge. This effort is to help elevate donor awareness regarding the need for support to help support KCLs mission and goals.

Donate now at: https://givebutter.com/knowledgecarriers

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PIIKANI STUDIES STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN IINISINII BISON LAB FOR NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



In recognition of Native American Heritage Month in November, Blackfeet Community College's Piikani Studies Division is conducting a special bison lab focused on traditional Blackfeet bison management, cultural knowledge, and the entire bison lifecycle.

The project, named Iinisinii (embodiment of the inii), reflects the program's emphasis on understanding the bison beyond its role as a food source and recognizing the traditional knowledge, practices, and relationships connected to the inii.

Piikani Studies is excited to once again partner with FAST Blackfeet to promote healthy nutritional alternatives through traditional foods. During the lab, students will learn traditional Blackfeet methods of dressing a bison, gaining hands-on experience with the processes and cultural practices passed down through generations.

An important part of the learning experience will be understanding the Blackfeet terminology and traditional uses of the bison's most valuable portions, including the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, spleen, bladder, entrails, and tongue. Students will learn about the nutritional value, preparation, and cultural significance of these traditional delicacies within Blackfeet foodways.

Through this project, students will have an opportunity to strengthen their understanding of traditional food knowledge while connecting language, culture, nutrition, and the responsibilities involved in bison management.

The project will culminate in a short film documenting the experience, which will premiere at the Bear River Commemoration. The film will share the students' learning experience and highlight the importance of preserving and passing on Blackfeet knowledge and traditions to future generations.

SHOW YOUR BFCC PRIDE!

Enjoy 40% OFF BFCC Merchandise at the BFCC Bookstore! Stop by and shop the selection of BFCC apparel and gear while supplies last.

40% OFF



BFCC GYM IS OPEN WITH NEW UPGRADES!

The BFCC Gym is open to students with several new upgrades, including an improved leg press, rubber-coated free weights, a two-person infrared sauna, stair stepper, speed bag, and punching bag. The free weights, sauna, and speed bag are located in the gym's annex room.

Future improvements will include fresh paint, additional mirrors, and updated flooring.

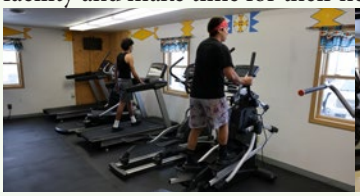
GYM ACCESS & STUDENT STAFF HOURS

Students may access the gym when a student intern or work waiver student is available.

- Ty Gilham: Monday–Friday, 2–5 p.m.
- Tyler Running Crane:
  - Monday & Wednesday: 8–10 a.m., 1–2:30 p.m., 4–6 p.m.
  - Tuesday & Friday: 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
  - Thursday: 8 a.m.–2:30 p.m., 4–6 p.m.
- Craig Reece: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Tyler can also be reached through email and is often available in the Student Center. His primary responsibility is the Food Pantry, but he can assist with gym access when available.

BFCC students are encouraged to take advantage of the updated facility and make time for their health and wellness!





BFCC AWARDED $821,439 TO SUPPORT TRIBAL ENERGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Blackfeet Community College (BFCC) and the Blackfeet Energy Knowledge and Sovereignty Institute (BEKSI) were recently selected for a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Unleashing Tribal Energy Development Award. BFCC received $821,439 through this competitive funding opportunity to strengthen energy workforce development.

The funding will support an expanded partnership with Blackfeet Housing, the creation of a weatherization pre-apprenticeship program for BFCC students, and internship opportunities with Glacier Electric. This award builds on BFCC's ongoing work to advance energy sovereignty for the Blackfeet Nation while creating valuable training and career opportunities for students and the broader community.

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SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH MIDTERMS AND BUILDING CAREER SKILLS

A Midterm Week Coffee Break

During midterm week, October 19–21, the BFCC CNSS Team hosted a coffee bar to give students a refreshing break and a little extra encouragement during a busy week of studying.

Students stopped by to enjoy iced coffee, cold brew, and matcha with a variety of flavor options. Fresh bagels, coffee cake, and fruit were also available. The coffee bar offered students an opportunity to take a break, recharge, and connect with others as they worked through midterms.

Many students expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the thoughtful gesture. The CNSS Team was happy to welcome students and provide a little midweek boost!



FALL 2026 CNSS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Fall 2026 BFCC CNSS Internship Program gives students the opportunity to gain hands-on work experience while earning income right here on campus. Following the application process in September, selected interns committed to serving throughout the fall semester in departments across the college.

Interns support a variety of campus operations, including Admissions, Financial Aid, Media, Registration, the Campus Gym, and the Knowledge Carriers Lodge. Students are eligible to work up to 20 hours per pay period at a rate of $14.98 per hour.

In addition to gaining practical workplace experience, interns are encouraged to develop personal budgets and save toward specific financial goals. These opportunities help students strengthen their professional skills, build financial awareness, and prepare for future careers.

Through the CNSS Internship Program, BFCC continues to provide students with meaningful opportunities to learn, contribute, and gain valuable experience while supporting their college community.



SKY JACKSON AND THE JACKSON'S OF LOVECROSS BRING MUSIC TO RED RIBBON WEEK

BFCC celebrated Red Ribbon Week with music, community fun, and plenty of Halloween spirit! Departments across campus came together to create a variety of booths, handing out candy and treats to children in the community.

The celebration also featured a special concert by BFCC's rock band, Sky Jackson and the Jackson's of Lovecross. Students and community members enjoyed the live music, especially the Halloween songs. Although band members admitted they were nervous at first, their confidence grew as they performed and connected with the crowd.

The band shared how much fun they had performing and how nice it was to see everyone come out to enjoy the music. Their message for what comes next? "This is just the beginning, baby!"

Students interested in joining the BFCC Rock Band can contact Gordon Bennett at gordon.b@bfcc.edu.









NEWSLETTER

BFCC MAGPIE

NOVEMBER 2026

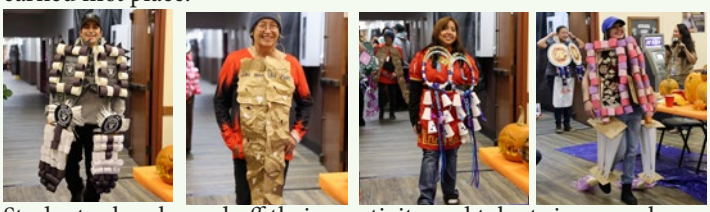
WWW.BFCC.EDU/MAGPIE

BFCC FALLOWEEN BRINGS STUDENTS TOGETHER FOR GAMES, CONTESTS, AND COMMUNITY

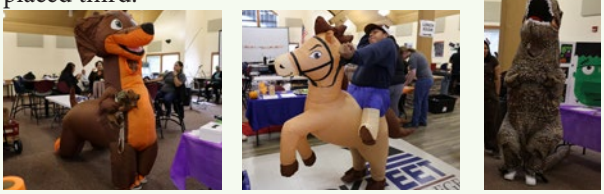
Our annual Falloween event brought students together for an afternoon of food, games, prizes, and friendly competition. Hosted by the Student Success Center and sponsored by various BFCC programs, the event offered students an opportunity to connect, show off their creativity, and enjoy the fall season together.

From creative costumes and pumpkin carvings to dancing and the popular Big Aunty Earrings Contest, there was something for everyone. The Mental Wellness program also hosted a mystery-feel game, challenging participants to reach into a box and guess the hidden objects by touch.

One of the highlights was the Big Aunty Earrings Contest, which celebrated bold style and creativity. Craig Reece Jr. took first place in the student division, followed by Lori Tastey in second and Alison Skunkcap in third. In the staff division, Paula Bremner earned first place.



Students also showed off their creativity and talents in several other contests. In the costume contest, Irene No Runner won first place, Andrew Afterbuffalo took second, and Daesean Bullshields placed third.



The pumpkin carving contest winners were Rylynn Harwood in first place, Trevor Severn and Kylie NoRunner in second, and Andrew Afterbuffalo in third (not pictured).



2ND PLACE WINNERS TREVOR & KYLIE, 3RD PLACE PUMKIN (MLAHHH), AND 1ST PLACE RYLYNN



The dance contest featured Trevor Severn in first place, Craig Reece Jr. in second, and Rylee Quesnelle in third.

Another exciting highlight was the debut performance by BFCC's Rock Band. Their first performance at the event filled the room with energy and brought an extra layer of excitement to the celebration.



With a strong student turnout, plenty of activities, and many memorable moments, Falloween once again provided a fun way for the BFCC community to come together. The event reflected the importance of creating opportunities for students to build connections, enjoy campus life, and celebrate alongside their peers.

The Student Success Center and participating programs helped make the annual celebration a success, giving students a chance to relax, have fun, and make memories at BFCC. For more photos of the event visit www.bfcc.edu/magpie



NEWSLETTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

NOVEMBER 2: Oral History Backpacks: Ethics of Interviewing - 12:00-1:30pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 4: Craft Wednesday - 12:00pm-3:00pm - Knowledge Carriers Lodge
NOVEMBER 5: BFCC Closed - Elouise Cobell Day / Employee Professional Development Day
NOVEMBER 6: Maker Friday (Candle Making) - 10:00am-3:00pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 9: Breakfast with Veterans - 9:00am - Student Commons
NOVEMBER 10:

- Breakfast with Veterans - 9:00am - Student Commons
- Soup Tuesday - 11:00am - Knowledge Carriers Lodge
- Culture & Arts Workshop (Beading Moccasins) - 2:30-4:30pm - Learning Center
- Tech Tuesday (Making Flyers Without AI) - 4:30-6:00pm - Medicine Spring Library

NOVEMBER 11: BFCC Closed - Warriors Day (Veterans Day)
NOVEMBER 12: Beaded Thursday - 4:30-6:30pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 13: Maker Friday (Open Work Session) - 10:00am-3:00pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 14: Meat Cutting - 12:00pm-4:00pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 17: Genealogy Workshop (Beyond the Pedigree Chart) - 2:00-4:00pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 18:

- Career Fair - 9:00am-3:00pm - Student Commons
- Elder Fair / Elder Luncheon with Activity - 11:00am - Eagle Shields

NOVEMBER 19: Book Club (Poet Warrior by Joy Harjo) - 4:30-6:00pm - Medicine Spring Library
NOVEMBER 20: BFCC Closed to the Public - All Staff Meetings
NOVEMBER 23–27: BFCC Closed - Thanksgiving Break
NOVEMBER 30: Extended Hours - 8:00am-8:00pm - Medicine Spring Libary

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATES

Welcome to the BFCC Team!

Blackfeet Community College is pleased to welcome Kelton Crawford as our new Custodian, effective October 26, 2026!

Please join us in welcoming Kelton to the BFCC family. We are excited to have him on our team!

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT BFCC

Blackfeet Community College is currently accepting applications for the following positions:

- Student Services Specialist
- Enrollment Specialist

New employment opportunities are posted regularly! We encourage community members to visit the BFCC website weekly to stay informed about available positions.

Interested in Joining Our Team?

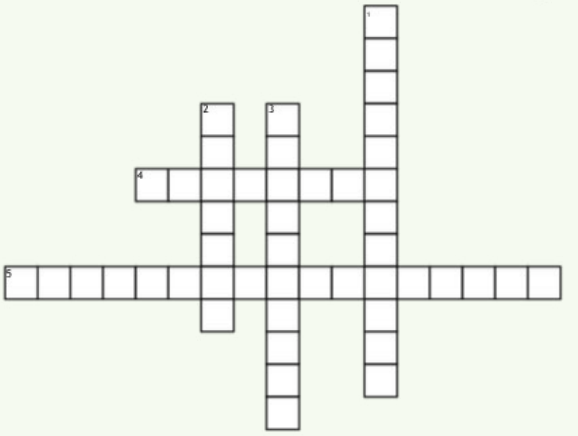
When applying for a position at BFCC, please ensure you submit all required application materials:

- Completed BFCC Employment Application
- Cover Letter
- Current Resume
- Official College Transcripts (degree conferred, if applicable)
- Tribal Affiliation Documentation (if applicable)

For employment information or questions, contact:

BFCC Human Resources Department
Christie Farmer, HR Director christie.f@bfcc.edu or Wanda Lahr, HR Specialist wanda.l@bfcc.edu

November Crossword Challenge



Across
4. Creek
5. Good Morning

Down
1. Sew
2. Laugh
3. Montana

October Answers
Across
3. Kakatosi 5. Aohkanotahtomo
Down
1. Ohohkaannaapsi 2. Niitaikoop 4. Omat

Need a hint? Watch our Blackfeet Word of the Week series on YouTube to find the answers!