

## **Provide Access to Higher Education through Support to Tribal Colleges**

### **State Need:**

- Montanans need increased access to higher education, in particular two-year education.
- Low per capita income, high tuition rates, and the rural nature of Montana all restrict access to higher education.

### **Market Reality:**

- 80% of the fastest-growing jobs in the country require education beyond high school.
- Only 54% of Montana high school graduates attend college, compared to 62% nationally.

### **Current Problem:**

- The tribal colleges provide a valuable point of access to higher education for all Montanans. There are approximately 300 non-beneficiary students attending the tribal colleges each year. The tribal colleges receive no federal funding for these Montana resident students.
- Montana statute provides for \$1,500/FTE of state support each non-beneficiary student enrolled in a tribal college. However, this appropriation is contingent upon specific funding in HB002.
- Over the last 10 years the funding for non-beneficiary students enrolled in the tribal colleges has varied from \$0/FTE to \$1,457/FTE. This lack of consistent funding discourages the use of tribal colleges as a point of access for students and places a significant burden on the tribal colleges

### **Proposed Solution:**

- Secure base funding is HB002 for the support of non-beneficiary students attending tribal colleges or amend the current statute to provide a statutory appropriation for this support.

### **Required Investment:**

- The state provided \$96,500 for support of non-beneficiary students for the FY04-05 biennium. An increase of approximately \$800,000 will provide funding at the statutory level of \$1,500/non-beneficiary student.

### **Return on Investment:**

- Increased access to higher education resulting in a better trained workforce and greater income for residents.
- Creation of a stronger business climate.

### **Selected Examples of Return:**

Salish Kootenia College (SKC) tracks placement and employment data for students that receive Bachelor and Associate degrees and Certificates of Completion. This SKC data shows the benefit and return to the state of supporting non-beneficiary (NB) students

attending the tribal colleges. Highlights of this data from 1999-2003 for SKC non-beneficiary students include:

- 174 NBs placed during 1999-2003 for beginning wages totaling \$4,722,380
- NB placements increased from 20 in 1999 with wages totaling \$440,800, to 49 placements in 2003, with wages totaling \$1,505,278
- The 174 NB placements are comprised of 29 bachelors degrees, 119 associate degrees, and 26 certificates of completion
- During the five-year period, SKC placed 71 NB nurses (62 RNs and 9 BSNs)
- Beginning wages for the 71 NB nurses for the five-year period totaled \$2,538,863

The specific SKC non-beneficiary placement and employment data for 2003 is as follows:

**Salish Kootenai College**  
**Beginning Wages of Non-Beneficiary**  
**Montana Graduates (NB) Placed in**  
**Montana Jobs, 2003**

Discipline	Degree	#NB Placed	Avg Hr. Wage	Avg. Annual Wage	Total Annual Wages
Computer Graphics	CC	2	\$9.00	\$18,720	\$37,440
Const. Worker Training	CC	3	\$11.88	\$24,710	\$74,130
Dental Assisting	CC	1	\$9.00	\$18,720	\$18,720
Medical Office	CC	1	\$10.00	\$20,800	\$20,800
Early Childhood Ed.	AA	1	\$17.00	\$35,360	\$35,360
General Studies	AA	2	\$5.85	\$12,168	\$24,336
Human Services	AA	2	\$8.39	\$17,451	\$34,902
Computer Science	AS	3	\$13.88	\$28,870	\$71,610
Env. Science	AS	1	\$12.50	\$26,000	\$26,000
GS-Psych	AS	1	\$10.00	\$20,800	\$20,800
Office Professions	AAS	3	\$7.72	\$16,058	\$48,174
Nursing	AS	17	\$18.31	\$38,085	\$647,445
Nursing	BS	6	\$25.05	\$52,104	\$312,624
Business	BA	2	\$10.10	\$21,008	\$42,016
Human Services	BA	1	\$9.50	\$19,760	\$19,760
Env. Science	BS	3	\$9.00	\$18,720	\$56,160
		<b>49</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>\$1,505,278</b>