

A Proposal
Future Stewards Initiative

Introduction:

There are a tremendous opportunities for institutions of higher learning to reach underrepresented minority populations. American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) represent less than 2% of the United States population yet control 4% of the land area. They are younger, on average, than the general population, their enrollment in colleges and universities have more than doubled in the past 25 years and over half have received financial aid. However, they are less likely to earn a bachelor's or higher degree than their peers even though AI/AN students earning degrees has more than doubled since 1976. AI/AN faculty on campus, at all levels, constitute less than 1% at degree granting institutions. If we consider these facts, it appears that financial aid supporting AI/AN scholars is a minor contributor to student attrition but the atmosphere of learning and lack of support infrastructure may be the likely cause of high attrition rates among AI/AN students.

Future Stewards Initiative (FSI) is a strategic partnership between Rochester Institute of Technology and AI/AN governments and communities for the purpose of providing directed educational and experiential programs for AI/AN scholars and the building of internal and external support networks that will empower future leaders or "stewards" and facilitate their return to tribal communities. These scholars, through COOPs with tribes, will be better equipped to work, live, and serve their community because the education and tools they receive at RIT will be specifically designed to meet the needs of their government or community. This will be accomplished through government-to-institution partnerships, scholarship awards, and the creation of a support infrastructure based upon AI/AN traditional values.

RIT has a history of responding to the educational demands of industries. To ensure the appropriate design of educational and support services, AI/AN Tribal Councils will advise RIT on how to improve the atmosphere for learning and the specific degree programs that will best serve their communities. With the support of tribal communities and the creation of an enhanced learning environment at RIT, we believe FSI will increase the number of AI/AN students at RIT, reduce the high attrition rate among this minority population, and will improve the educational experience for all RIT students and faculty.

FSI is consistent with RIT's bold strategic goal of becoming a "Category of One" university and goals set forth by New York State's Board of Regents Statewide Plan for Higher Education.¹ At this moment, no other university in the nation has chosen to seize the leadership role in providing the next generation of AI/AN scholars with a customized, career-focused education and the suite of practical and technology-rich skills they will need to lead their communities through the challenges and opportunities presented by the 21st century global economy. For the purpose of this proposal, FSI is narrowly conceived for American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and First Nations of Canada tribal members. However, FSI also has potential benefits if extended to international students who are sponsored by NGO's or American scholars sponsored by grass-root communities.

Mission Statement:

FSI provides the critical relationships, pathways, and infrastructure whereby RIT is the preferred and supported institution of choice for Domestic Governments and communities to send their best and brightest students to be educated in a way that empowers, engrains, embodies, and serves both traditional and contemporary needs.

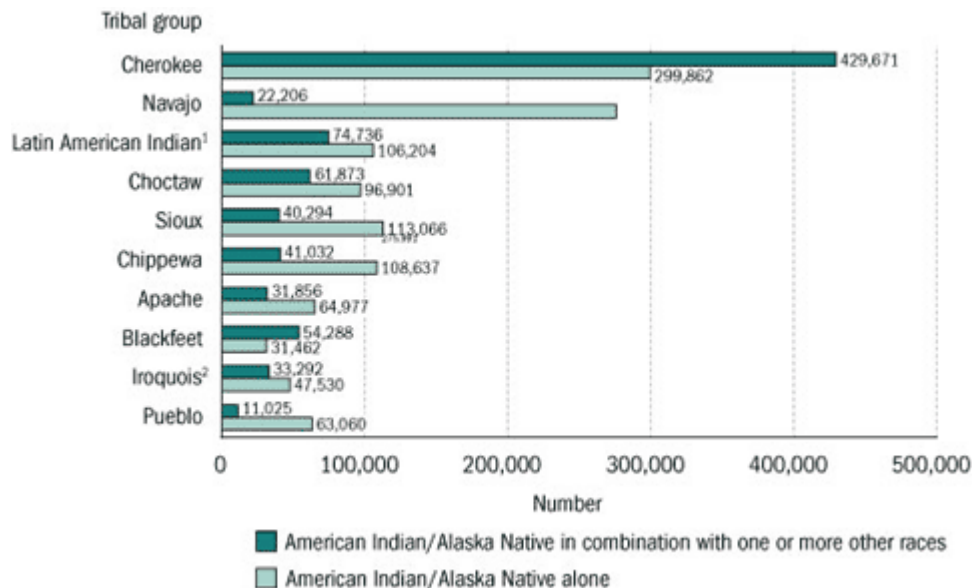
Demographics: American Indian/Alaskan Natives on Campus

American Indians/Alaskan Natives constitute less than 2% of the American population, however they are stewards of 4% of the land area in the United States, 40% of undeveloped land and represent some 700 distinct communities. AI/AN nations survive today along with their traditional and contemporary values, ways of thinking, religions, scientific knowledge, and creativity. In many cases the educational environment on college campuses may not serve this diverse community. Educational studies among AI/ANs demonstrate deficiencies and market potential for this population.²

In 2003, there were 4.4 million American Indians/Alaska Natives in the United States, representing 1.5% of the total U.S. population (see Figure 1).

In 2003, 4.4 million persons identified themselves as American Indian or Alaskan Native. Of the 562 American Indian Tribes recognized by the Federal Government, the Iroquois Nations (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Tuscarora, and Mohawk) ranked ninth with 47,530 tribal members.

Figure 1. Ten largest American Indian tribes according to number of self-identified members, by tribe: 2000



¹ Latin American Indian refers to respondents listing any one of a number of Latin American tribes (e.g., the Maya or Yanomamo).

² Iroquois is a language group which includes 6 federally recognized tribes in its confederacy.

NOTE: "Alone" refers to respondents who selected AI/AN and not any other race category. "In combination with one or more races" refers to respondents who selected AI/AN and one or more other race categories. Includes American Indians/Alaska Natives of Hispanic origin. Tribal groupings compiled by the Census Bureau do not necessarily correspond with federally recognized tribes. Self-identified membership does not necessarily correspond with official membership in a federally recognized tribe.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Census 2000 Brief: The American Indian and Alaska Native Population, 2000, 2002.

The American Indian/Alaska Native population is younger, on average, than the general population (see Table 1).

In 2002, 32.2% of American Indians/Alaskan Natives were under the age of 18 which is the second largest percentage among all ethnicities and demonstrating the future market of college-bound students.

Table 1. Percentage of population under the age of 18, by race/ethnicity: Various years, 1980 to 2002

| Race/ethnicity | 1980 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2002 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total | 28.1 | 25.7 | 26.1 | 25.7 | 25.3 |
| White | 27.0 | 24.5 | 24.9 | 24.4 | 24.0 |
| Black | 35.5 | 32.3 | 32.2 | 31.6 | 30.9 |
| Hispanic | 38.5 | 35.0 | 35.7 | 35.0 | 33.9 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 30.4 | 29.1 | 29.0 | 24.8 | 24.0 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 39.1 | 35.8 | 35.2 | 34.1 | 32.2 |

NOTE: Race groups include persons of Hispanic origin.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1995, 2001 and 2003*, based on Population Projections Program, 1980 to 2002.

Enrollment of American Indian/Alaska Native students in colleges and universities more than doubled in the past 25 years. AI/AN students accounted for 1% of the 2002 total enrollment (See Figure 2).

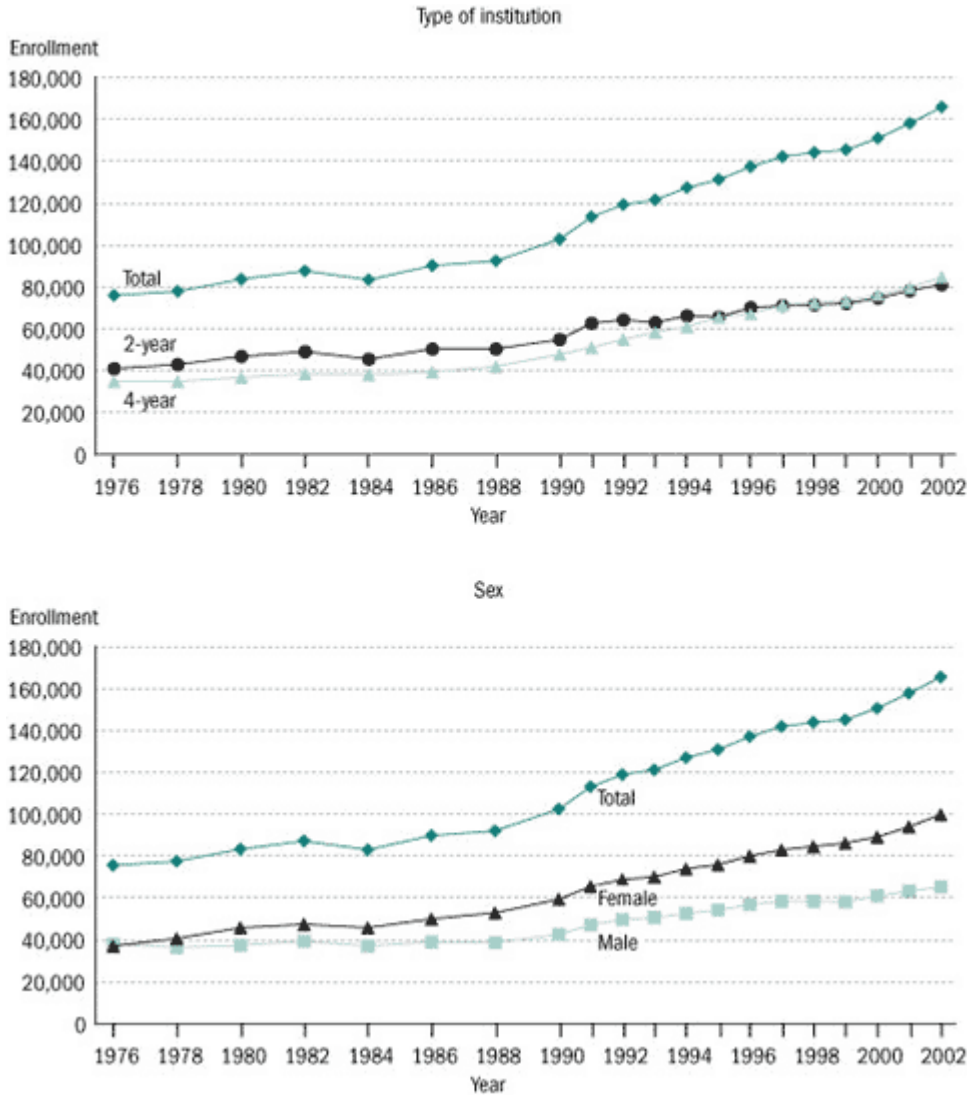
AI/AN enrollment in public and private degree-granting institutions more than doubled between 1976 and 2002. AI/AN students accounted for 1 % of the 2002 total enrollment. In 1976, about 76,100 American Indians/Alaska Natives were enrolled in colleges and universities. Enrollment grew steadily from 1976 and reached 102,800 in 1990. During the 1990s enrollments continued to increase, and by 2002 almost 166,000 AI/AN students were enrolled in higher education.

More than half of the American Indian/Alaskan native students were enrolled in 4-year degree-granting institutions in 2002. Between 1976 and 1994, more American Indians/Alaskan Natives were enrolled in 2-year postsecondary institutions than in 4-year postsecondary institutions. During the mid-1990s, the number in 4-year institutions began to surpass the number in 2-year institutions.

Between 1976 and 2002, college and university enrollment of male and female American Indians/Alaska Natives grew at different rates. In 1976, there was near parity in the number of AI/AN males and females enrolled in degree-granting colleges and universities (38,500 and 37,600, respectively). By 1978, the number of females enrolled exceeded, and has continued to grow more quickly than, the number of males enrolled. By 2002, there were 100,200 AI/AN females and 65,700 men enrolled in colleges and universities, a difference of 20 percentage points.

Only among Blacks was there a gender gap larger than that among American Indians/Alaska Natives; 28 percentage points separated the percentages of enrollment for Black females (64 %) and males (36 %) in 2002.

Figure 2. American Indian/Alaska Native enrollment in public and private degree-granting institutions, by type of institution and sex: Selected years, 1976 to 2002



NOTE: Data from 1976 to 1996 are for institutions of higher education that were accredited by an agency or association that was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, or recognized directly by the Secretary of Education. Data from 1996 and later years are for degree-granting institutions. The new degree-granting classification is very similar to the earlier higher education classification, except that it includes some additional institutions, primarily 2-year colleges, and excludes a few higher education institutions that did not award associate or higher degrees. Data for 1999 were imputed using alternative procedures. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2004 (forthcoming), based on Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Fall Enrollment in Colleges and Universities" surveys; and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Fall Enrollment" surveys, 1976 to 1999, and Spring 2001 through Spring 2003 surveys.

Despite more American Indians/Alaska Natives enrolling in college and university than ever before, American Indians/Alaska Natives composed only about 1% of the total college and university enrollment in 2002, an increase from 0.7% in 1976. College and university enrollment became much more diverse over these years. Minorities, including American Indians/Alaska

Natives, represented 16% of the total enrollment in 1976, whereas they represented 30% of the total enrollment in 2002.

In 2003, American Indians/Alaska Natives between the ages of 18 and 24 were less likely to be enrolled in a college or university than their White, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Black peers. Eighteen percent of AI/AN 18- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in a college or university, compared with 42 % of Whites, 60% of Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 32% of Blacks.

In the 1999-2000 school year, 56 % of American Indian/Alaska Native students received financial aid (see Table 2).

In the 1999-2000 school year, 56 % of American Indians/Alaska Native students received financial aid of some kind. Blacks (70%) were more likely than American Indians/Alaska Natives to receive financial aid, while Asian/Pacific Islanders (44%) were less likely than American Indians/Alaska Natives to receive financial aid.

Table 2. Average amount of financial aid awarded from any source per full-time, full-year undergraduate student, by type of aid, race/ethnicity, and type of institution: 1999-2000

| Race/ethnicity | Any aid ² | Grants | Loans |
|--|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Total¹ | \$8,500 | \$4,900 | \$5,400 |
| White, non-Hispanic | 8,700 | 5,100 | 5,500 |
| Black, non-Hispanic | 8,500 | 4,700 | 5,300 |
| Hispanic | 7,100 | 4,200 | 5,400 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 9,200 | 5,800 | 5,500 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 8,300 | 5,200 | 5,200 |
| Total, 2-year or less¹ | \$5,200 | \$3,000 | \$4,700 |
| White, non-Hispanic | 5,400 | 3,000 | 4,700 |
| Black, non-Hispanic | 5,000 | 3,000 | 4,400 |
| Hispanic | 4,600 | 2,900 | 4,900 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 4,800 | 3,100 | 5,300 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 4,600 | 3,200 | ‡ |
| Total, 4-year¹ | \$9,500 | \$5,600 | \$5,600 |
| White, non-Hispanic | 9,600 | 5,600 | 5,600 |
| Black, non-Hispanic | 10,100 | 5,500 | 5,500 |
| Hispanic | 8,100 | 4,800 | 5,500 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 10,400 | 6,700 | 5,400 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 11,100 | 6,700 | 5,700 |

‡ Reporting standards not met.

¹Includes other race/ethnicity categories not separately shown.

²Includes additional sources other than grants and loans

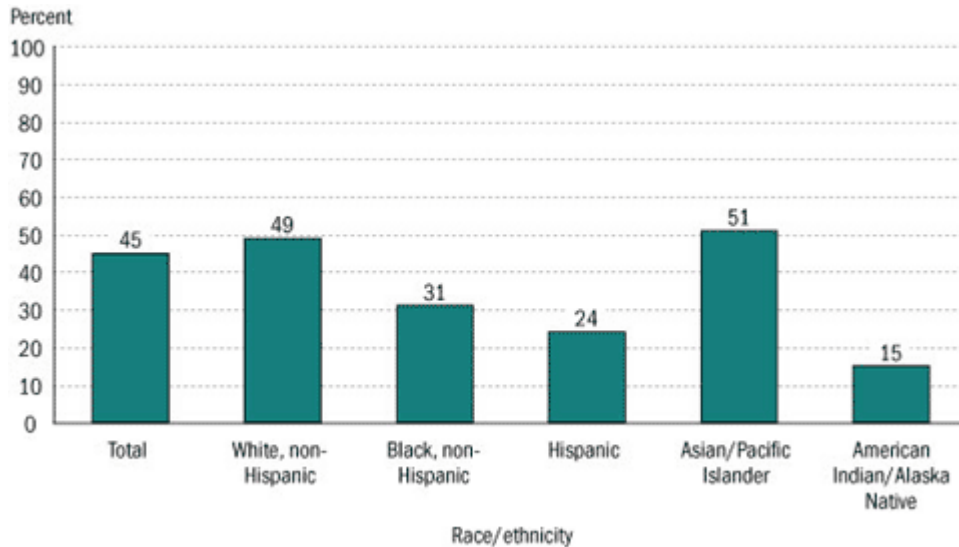
NOTE: Students may receive aid from multiple sources. Data include undergraduates in degree-granting and non-degree granting institutions.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), unpublished data, 1999-2000.

American Indians/Alaska Natives were less likely to earn a bachelor's or higher degree than their peers (see Figure 3).

In 2000, the bachelor's and higher degree graduation rates for American Indians/Alaska Natives (who were 12th-graders in 1992) were lower than the graduation rates for the total population (who were 12th-graders in 1992). Of the AI/AN 1992 12th-graders who were likely postsecondary participants, 11 % received a bachelor's degree as their highest degree by 2000 versus 31 % for the total population of likely postsecondary participants. American Indians/Alaska Natives were less likely to have received a bachelor's degree by 2000 than White (34 %), Black (24 %), and Asian/Pacific Islander (34 %) students who were likely postsecondary participants. Also, of the AI/AN 1992 12th-graders who were likely postsecondary participants, 2 % received a graduate degree by 2000 versus 6 % of the total population of likely postsecondary participants. American Indians/Alaska Natives were less likely to have received a graduate degree by 2000 than White (6 %) and Asian/Pacific Islander (8 %) students, but had similar rates as Black (2 %) and Hispanic (3 %) students. All figures are based on the 2000 educational attainment of those who were 12th-graders in 1992 and who were likely postsecondary participants (those for whom transcripts were received or requested and those for whose files supported postsecondary attendance).

Figure 3. Percentage of 1992 12th-graders who were likely postsecondary participants who completed a bachelor's degree or higher by 2000, by race/ethnicity



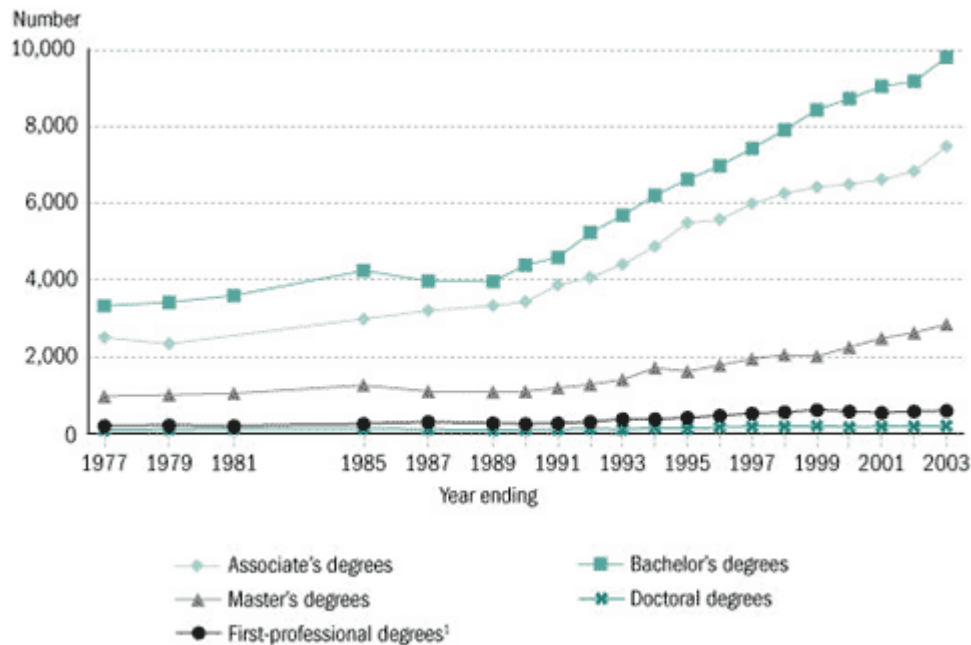
NOTE: "Likely postsecondary participants" include those for whom transcripts were received, those for whom transcripts were requested but not received, and those for whom other evidence in the NELS files supports the student's report of postsecondary attendance. "Bachelor's degree or above" includes bachelor's degrees, incomplete graduate degrees and nondegree post-baccalaureate work, master's, first-professional, and doctoral degrees.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/2000), "Fourth Follow-up," and Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS), 2000.

The number of American Indian/Alaska Native students earning degrees has more than doubled for each level of degree since 1976 (see Figure 4).

Between the 1976-77 and 2002-03 school years, the number of degrees awarded by colleges and universities to American Indians/Alaska Natives more than doubled for each level of degree. In 1976-77, 2,498 associate's degrees were conferred to American Indians/Alaska Natives. The number steadily increased to 3,871 by 1990-91. After 1990-91, the rate dramatically increased and 7,470 associate's degrees were awarded to AI/AN students in 2002-03. This was also the pattern for the number of bachelor's degrees earned by AI/AN students. In 1976-77, 3,326 bachelor's degrees were awarded; by 1990-91, the number increased to 4,583, and in 2002-03, 9,803 bachelor's degrees were awarded to AI/AN students.

Figure 4. Number of degrees awarded to American Indian/Alaska Native students, by level of degree: 1976-77 to 2002-03



¹ A degree that signifies both completion of the academic requirements for beginning practice in a given profession and a level of professional skill beyond that normally required for a bachelor's degree. This degree usually is based on a program requiring at least 2 academic years of work prior to entrance and a total of at least 6 academic years of work to complete the degree program, including both prior required college work and the professional program itself. First-professional degrees are awarded in the fields of dentistry, medicine, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, podiatric medicine, veterinary medicine, chiropractic, law, and theological professions.

NOTE: For years 1984-85 to 2002-03, reported racial/ethnic distributions of students by level of degree, field of degree, and sex were used to impute race/ethnicity for students whose race/ethnicity was not reported. Data for 1998-99 were imputed using alternative procedures. Some data may have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred" surveys, 1976-77 through 1985-86; and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Completions Survey," (IPEDS-C:87-99), 1986-87 through 1998-99, and Fall 2000 through 2003.

The number of post-baccalaureate degrees awarded to American Indians/Alaska Natives also increased between 1976-77 and 2002-03: 967 to 2,841 for master's degrees, 95 to 192 for doctoral degrees, and 196 to 586 for first-professional degrees.

During the same period, American Indians/Alaska Natives earned a slightly increasing share of the degrees at every level. In 1976-77, AI/AN students received 0.6 % of all the associate's degrees awarded, 0.4 % of all bachelor's degrees, and 0.3 % each of all master's, doctoral, and first-professional degrees. These percentages increased to 1.2 % for associate's degrees, 0.8 % for

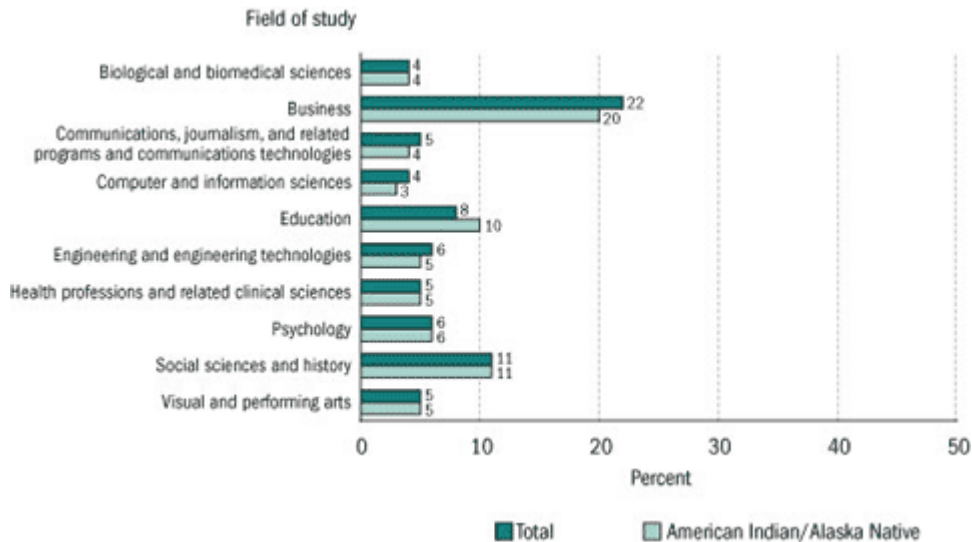
bachelor's degrees, 0.6 % for master's degrees, 0.6 % for doctoral degrees, and 0.7 % for first-professional degrees awarded in 2002-03.

In the 2002-03 academic year, American Indians/Alaska Natives earned more bachelor's degrees than associate's degrees. AI/AN males earned 3,858 bachelor's degrees and 2,624 associate's degrees, while females earned 5,945 bachelor's degrees and 4,846 associate's degrees. AI/AN females earned more associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees than AI/AN males. AI/AN males and females earned the same number of first-professional degrees, each with 293.

While American Indian/Alaska Native students were more likely to have earned their bachelor's degrees in business than in other fields, they were less likely to have earned their degrees in business than students of other racial/ethnic groups (see Figure 5).

In the 2002-03 school year, business, education, and social sciences were the most popular majors among American Indians/Alaska Natives earning bachelor's degrees. Twenty percent of AI/AN college and university graduates studied business, while 11 % studied a social science or history and 10 % studied education. As compared with 2002-03 graduates in general, American Indians/Alaska Natives were less likely to earn business degrees and more likely to earn education degrees. There was a difference of less than 1 % between the percentage of degree recipients of American Indians/Alaska Natives and the total population for psychology, health professions and related clinical sciences, and biological and biomedical sciences. Considering the rapidly growing industry in hospitality and tourism industries among AI/AN tribes' business ventures, there is an increasing need for degrees in business and hospitality service management. It is reasonable to expect that FSI graduates would enter tribal businesses at the executive level and eventually rise to the top levels of management.

Figure 5. Percentage of bachelor's degrees conferred in total and to American Indians/Alaska Natives by degree-granting institutions in the 10 most popular fields of study: 2002-03

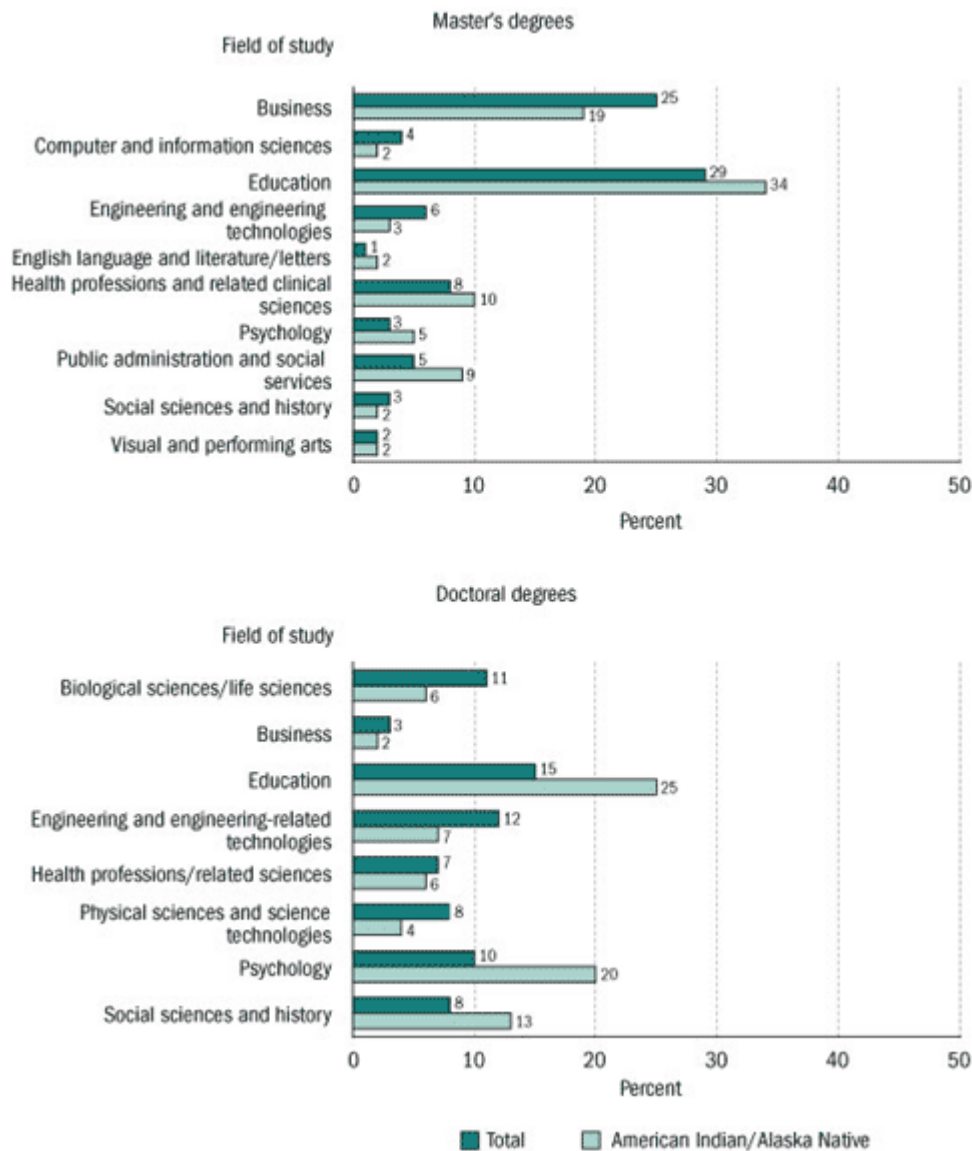


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2004 (forthcoming), based on Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2003.

More than half of the master's degrees awarded to American Indian/Alaska Native students were in education or business. American Indians/Alaska Natives were more likely to have earned their doctoral degrees in education and psychology than other degree recipients (see Figure 6).

In the 2002-03 school year, 34 % of AI/AN master's degree recipients studied education and 19 percent studied business. These two fields were also the most frequently studied for the general population, with 29 percent of the master's degrees being awarded for education and 25 percent for business in the general population.

Figure 6. Percentage of master's and doctoral degrees conferred in total and to American Indians/Alaska Natives by degree-granting institutions in the most popular fields: 2002-03



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2004 (forthcoming), based on Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2003.

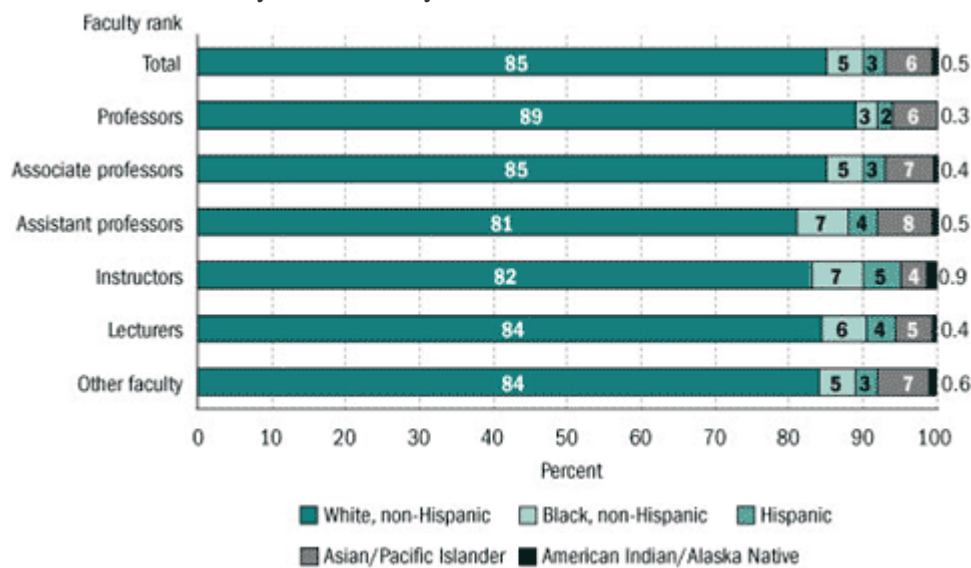
In 2002-03, American Indians/Alaska Natives earning doctoral degrees were most likely to earn their degrees in education, psychology, and social sciences and history. Twenty-five percent earned their degrees in education, 20 percent in psychology, and 13 percent in social sciences and history. As compared with graduates in general, American Indians/Alaska Natives were more likely to earn degrees in education, psychology, and social science and history. Doctoral degree earners in the general population were more likely than AI/AN doctoral degree earners to study engineering, physical sciences, or biological and biomedical sciences.

RIT's 4+1 Bachelors/Masters degree programs in business and hospitality service management will be especially attractive to AI/AN tribes. Results of an informal survey among NY tribes, the Coquille Indian Tribe of Oregon and Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma each reported significant deficits in tribal members working at the executive management level. There were many tribal members working for casinos or other business ventures but few at higher management levels. Of those at the higher levels, few were recent college graduates indicating an immediate need of graduate level business degrees.

American Indians/Alaska Natives constitute small percentages of faculty in degree-granting institutions (see Figure 7).

In 2001, American Indians/Alaska Natives accounted for about 0.5 % of faculty in degree-granting institutions. Differences by level of faculty are apparent. American Indians/Alaska Natives constituted 0.9 % of instructors, but only 0.3 % of professors and 0.4 % of associate professors. As a point of comparison, in 2002 AI/AN students made up 1.0 % of the total enrollment in degree-granting institutions.

Figure 7. Percentage distribution of full-time instructional faculty in degree-granting institutions, by race/ethnicity and academic rank: 2001



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2003, based on Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Winter 2001-02.

Educational Needs and Return on Investment:

Many tribes now own casinos, hotels, restaurants, and have large tracks of land to manage. They have an increasing need for resources to support and defend their self-determination as well as a critical need for tribal scholars to enter their workforce at executive management levels.

Historically, tribal scholars, after completing their college degrees, rarely returned to their tribes to work in tribally-run industries. Worse yet, many do return only to find that the education they hoped would prepare them for leadership roles had poorly trained them to work in a tribal setting.

Institutions of higher education have largely failed to recognize and capitalize on opportunities to work collaboratively with tribes to meet the unique educational needs of their respective communities. There are several reasons for this failure, such as:

- A general lack of recognition by universities of tribes as sovereign governmental entities (nations and states) and an appreciation of their right to self-determination.
- Higher education curricula that do not provide the appropriate teaching and learning methodologies required to reach AI/AN youth and to prepare them for the unique challenges they face when they return to their communities.
- An approach by universities to identify AI/AN students as “underrepresented minorities” and to organize their programs and support services in ways that do little to attract and retain AI/AN students.
- An appreciable and historically-justified attitude of mistrust by AI/AN communities toward non-Indian institutions.

Universities and colleges that are able to understand and address these challenges will reap incredible benefits, including increased AI/AN student enrollments, applied tribal resources and endowments, and innovations in science and technologies that allow them to become leaders among their peer institutions.

RIT’s Innovation and Leadership:

RIT has a rich history of launching programs just like FSI. Since its beginning in 1829, RIT has built its international reputation as a leading comprehensive, technical university through the creation of innovative, high technology, industry-responsive, career-oriented academic programs that respond quickly to global technological advances. Its “first in the nation” academic programs have included Biotechnology, Imaging Science, Software Engineering, Information Technology and Microelectronics Engineering.

RIT also has a history of commitment to the educational needs of governments and communities that have experienced major economic and socio-cultural changes and that can benefit from the type of comprehensive academic programs for which RIT is recognized nationally and internationally. In 1967 RIT established the National Technical Institute for the Deaf—an institution that serves the unique educational needs of a very specific community. With more than 1,100 students enrolled, NTID is the largest technical college in the U.S. dedicated to the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and its graduation rate for these students is twice that of any other American college and university. In 1997 RIT established The American College of Management and Technology in Dubrovnik, Croatia—a model of international cooperation between a highly respected American university and a foreign government. The outcome of this remarkable collaboration is a highly successful academic program in Hospitality

and Service Management which currently enrolls more than 600 students from across Central Europe. Plans are now in place to add two new programs in Economic and Environmental Science and Management to meet the challenges of Croatia's rapidly growing economy. RIT is in the process of forging a similar relationship with the Republic of China.

RIT's success in creating responsive curricula and delivering a first-rate technical education is widely recognized, making it an optimal choice for a partnership with AI/AN tribes. In the category of Northern Universities-Master's, RIT is ranked 6th overall and 2nd in the category of "academic reputation" among the 86 "top tier" schools listed in *U.S. News and World Report: America's Best Colleges 2005*. Applications for admission, admissions selectivity, and the profile of incoming students now place RIT among the more selective institutions in the United States. Based on average standardized test results of incoming students, RIT now ranks in the top 4% of all institutions nationally. Yet while becoming more selective, RIT has also increased its full-time equivalent enrollment over the past decade by 40%, becoming the twentieth largest private university in the United States when ranked by total enrollment. With its strong focus on career education, RIT's Cooperative Education program, begun in 1912 and now one of the largest in the nation, allows nearly 2,600 students annually to earn in excess of \$16 million working in jobs that are directly related to their academic studies and career goals.

RIT Advantage:

Rochester Institute of Technology is uniquely poised to succeed in utilizing the untapped innovation found among AI/AN nations for four primary reasons.

- RIT is historically steeped in a craftsman tradition where hands-on experiences are common methods of teaching and learning science and technology. These ways of educating are akin to the most effective methods for AI/AN students where learning is most effectively achieved by observation, doing, and close mentoring and apprentice relationships with their elders. There is every reason to believe that a partnership with RIT will succeed in meeting the needs of AI/AN communities.
- Recent efforts and advances by RIT in the area of faculty recruitment have achieved significant results that underscore the value to a university of growing and nurturing a pluralistic community. The recent hiring of two AI/AN faculty members with ties to their home communities has led to tangible and developing relationships between their tribes and the Institute. Additionally, due to community interconnectedness and the "word-of-mouth" speed of communication throughout "Indian Country," other tribes and AI/AN organizations are aware of RIT and the numerous mutually beneficial possibilities that exist if this initiative were to come to fruition.
- RIT has an advantageous geographical placement in New York where numerous tribes are in close proximity. These tribal communities include the Six Nations people of Ontario, Canada, and federally recognized tribes in Western New York, the Akwesasne Mohawk Tribe, Cayuga Indian Nation, Mohawk Reservation, Oneida Indian Nation of New York, Onondaga Nation, Seneca Nations of Indians (Salamanca), Seneca Nations of Indians (Cattaraugus), Seneca Nations of Indians (Oil Springs), Tonawanda Band of Seneca, Tuscarora Nation, and Western Mohegan Tribe and Nation.
- In 2003, there are 4.4 million AI/AN According to the 2000 census, projections indicate this population to exceed 5 million by 2010. There are 137,854 AI/AN college students currently enrolled in higher education programs. If college enrollment figures increase at the same rate

as population projections indicate, the college enrollment will be close to 300,000 AI/AN students. There are 636 American Indian Tribes and bands and 286 Alaska Native bands and villages recognized. There are nearly 77,000 AI/AN in New York. There were 158,200 AI/AN scholars enrolled in college in 2001 nation-wide.³ These populations have been historically underrepresented on university and college campuses. An educational initiative such as FSI would be the first in the United States.

Competition:

Several of RIT's peer institutions have Native American support programs.

- **Cornell University**—American Indian Program; American Indian Science and Engineering Society; Cornell Council for American Indian Graduate and Professional Students; Native American Law Student Association; Native American Students at Cornell
- **Ithaca College**—Native American Cultural Club
- **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**—Native American Student Association; American Indian Science and Engineering Society
- **SUNY-Buffalo**—Minority Undergraduate Higher Education Management Development Program
- **SUNY-Stony Brook**—Society for Creating Indigenous Awareness (formerly Native American Cultural Club)
- **Syracuse University**—Native American Students at Syracuse; American Indian Science and Engineering Society; Haudenosaunee Promise
- **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**—Native American Cultural Club

In 2006, Syracuse University launched The Haudenosaunee Promise, a scholarship covering the cost of tuition, on-campus housing and meals, and mandatory fees for up to four years. Similarly, SUNY-ESF launched the Center for Native Peoples and the Environment offering Haudenosaunee scholarships of \$5,000 and \$2,000 amounts. Ironically when surveying educational services provided by New York tribes and peer institutions, SUNY-ESF had no program in place. Their program very similar to FSI and includes on their Board of Directors two of the tribal individuals we surveyed.

Expected Outcomes:

- Domestic Governments send future stewards to RIT to learn the latest science and technology and self-determined skills needed by tribal communities while applying traditional values, methods, and knowledge.
- FSI scholars serve COOPs within their tribal community or other tribal communities.
- AI/AN student population at RIT will dramatically increase with a goal to exceed the national average of AI/ANs enrolled at 4-year institutions of higher education by the end of the 5th year.⁴
- AI/AN student attrition rates will be considerably less than the national average.

- Graduates become the innovators and developers of new science and technology that benefit their respective communities, the United States, and RIT.
- RIT and Domestic Governments build lasting and productive partnerships based upon mutual respect and reciprocity.

Operational Management:

RIT offers unique learning opportunities where cutting-edge curricula and real-world work experiences (co-ops and internships) are fully integrated. FSI will:

- Facilitate the recruitment, retention and academic success of Domestic Government scholars by providing a welcoming and supportive community and home away from home for AI/AN students.
- Serve as a liaison between tribal partners and RIT faculty to modify existing curricula and, when needed, create new programs that are responsive to the needs of tribal communities. For example, the College of Science and College of Liberal Arts intend to offer a minor in Environmental Science with an emphasis in Native American Science and Technology (NAST). This program includes a curriculum specifically designed to serve diverse AI/AN communities, especially those with expansive cultural and natural resources to manage within their tribal territories.
- Assist tribal scholars in finding co-ops and/or internship experiences with tribal communities. It is further expected that these relationships will facilitate synergetic relationships whereby tribes consider hiring RIT graduates and graduates consider working for tribes.

Organizational Components:

- The **President's Native American Advisory Council** will be formed to include the Tribal Council chairs of New York's federally recognized tribes and other regional members. The Council will advise the President and identify current and future needs of tribal communities and their scholars.
- **AI/AN & First Nations** will send their best and brightest students to RIT, assist in the creation of FSI policy, advise the RIT President and the staff of needed programs of study, and consider ways to enhance and support the FSI and RIT programs of study through the application of tribal resources. When FSI scholars complete the requirements of their degree, a participating tribe will consider FSI students for future employment.
- The **Assistant to the Provost for Native American Affairs** will serve as faculty advisor and be a member of the President's Native American Advisory Council.
- The **Future Stewards Initiative and Native American Programs Director** will coordinate all FSI and AISES student activities; Facilitate recruitment of NA students and faculty; Coordinate RIT President's Native American Advisory Council; Maintain communication with tribal education coordinators; Prepare budget for FSI and AISES; Maintain and supervise the use of physical office, supplies and equipment; and meet annual goals prepared by supervisor.

- **AI/AN Faculty** will contribute to the development and teaching of the curricula and serve as mentors for the FSI scholars. They will assist in the recruitment and retention of program participants.
- **Future Faculty Career Exploration Program** will seek out AI/AN Ph.D. scholars to be considered for RIT faculty members. RIT will champion the process of recruitment, hire, and retention of AI/AN faculty.
- **RIT Colleges** will respond to the demand of AI/AN curricular needs with help in the design of programs aimed at meeting tribal needs based upon advice from the President's Native American Advisory Council and cooperation from the FSI staff.
- **FSI Scholars** will maintain a good academic standing, serve in a co-op or internship with their respective tribe or a tribal nation, and consider employment by their community after graduation.

Eligibility for participation in the Future Stewards Initiative:

AI/AN students who have been admitted to RIT and meet the following criteria are eligible to participate in the FSI:

- Students who are enrolled members of federally or state recognized tribes
- Students who can document tribal membership with a photocopy of tribal enrollment, who are eligible for tribal enrollment but have not enrolled, can prove tribal heritage through lineage documentation, are members of State recognized tribes, or have Bureau of Indian Affairs tribal documentation⁵

Ideal Candidates:

1. 18-24 years old
2. Nascent traditional values
3. Future steward for tribe
4. Commitment and desire to work among tribal communities
5. Talented
6. Outgoing

[insert flow chart]

Target Tribes: Building Critical Mass and Reducing Attrition

The tribes listed below are New York-based, are geographically close or are already affiliated with RIT. Initially FSI will focus regionally with only a few exceptions to several out of state tribes.

- New York Tribes
 - Haudenosaunee
 - Seneca Nation
 - Onondaga
 - Tuscarora
 - Cayuga
 - Oneida
 - Mohawk

- Out-of-state Tribes
 - Connecticut: Mashantucket Pequot
 - Mohegan Tribe
 - Oklahoma: Cherokee Nation
 - Oregon: Coquille Indian Tribe

Primary RIT FSI Team @rit.edu:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Dr. William Destler, RIT President | bill.destler (475-2394) |
| Dr. Stanley McKenzie, RIT Provost | sdmpro (475-2011) |
| Dr. Katherine Mayberry, Vice-President for Academic Affairs | kjmgpt (475-2607) |
| Mr. Eulas Boyd, Asst. Provost for Diversity | egbavp (475-4705) |
| Dr. Ian Gatley, Dean, COS | gatley@cis.rit.edu (475-2483) |
| Dr. Andrew Moore, Dean, RIT Graduate Studies | ammgla (475-4476) |
| Dr. Jason Younker, Asst. to the Provost for Native American Affairs | jtygla (475-5549) |
| Dr. Paul Shipman, Asst. Professor, COS | passbi (475-4316) |
| Dr. Alfreda Brown, Chief Diversity Officer | axbpro (475-4993) |

Implementation:

Year 1

- Establish the President's Native American Advisory Council.
- Identify the critical needs areas with the assistance of the Native American Advisory Council.
- In response to Native American Advisory Council, identify RIT's strengths and weaknesses.
- Hire a FSI director.
- Establish physical space for FSI support office and common room.
- Establish student support programs (e.g. American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)).
- Identify current AI/AN RIT faculty mentors.
- Recruit for future faculty AI/AN Ph.D. candidates and/or those already with degrees earned.
- Identify AI/AN students currently on RIT's campus and develop peer mentorship program.
- Recruit potential FSI scholars to programs that RIT currently have that meet the needs identified by the Native American Advisory Council.

- FSI director to seek internal and external resources to support tribal students including those not participating as FSI scholars.
- Establish contact and maintain rapport with tribal education coordinators
- Work with tribes and Dr. Contomanolis to establish COOPs.

Year 2

- Ongoing activities:
 1. Participate in and organize Native American Advisory Council annual retreat;
 2. Nurture RIT's American Indian Science and Engineering Society;
 3. Nurture peer mentorship program;
 4. Recruit targeted AI/AN scholars for upcoming year;
 5. FSI director to seek internal and external resources to support tribal students including those not participating as FSI scholars;
 6. Maintain contact and rapport with tribal education coordinators
 7. Work with tribes and Dr. Contomanolis to maintain COOPs.
- Work with RIT Colleges in establishing programs that will meet the deficiencies identified by the Native American Advisory Council.
- Establish AI/AN research opportunities with RIT faculty mentors.
- Assess FSI and identify strengths and weaknesses—report to supervisor.

Year 3

- Ongoing activities:
 1. Participate in and organize Native American Advisory Council annual retreat;
 2. Nurture RIT's American Indian Science and Engineering Society;
 3. Nurture peer mentorship program;
 4. Recruit targeted AI/AN scholars for upcoming year;
 5. Seek internal and external resources to support tribal students, including those not participating in FSI;
 6. Maintain contact and rapport with tribal education coordinators;
 7. Work with tribes and Dr. Contomanolis to maintain COOPs;
 8. Work with RIT Colleges in establishing programs that will meet the deficiencies identified by the Native American Advisory Council;
 9. Establish AI/AN research opportunities with RIT faculty mentors.
- FSI director will seek internal and outside resources that will support AI/AN programs.

Year 4

- Ongoing activities:
 1. Participate in and organize Native American Advisory Council annual retreat;
 2. Nurture RIT's American Indian Science and Engineering Society;
 3. Nurture peer mentorship program;
 4. Recruit targeted AI/AN scholars for upcoming year;
 5. Seek internal and external resources to support tribal students, including those not participating in FSI;
 6. Maintain contact and rapport with tribal education coordinators;
 7. Work with tribes and Dr. Contomanolis to maintain COOPs;
 8. Work with RIT Colleges in establishing programs that will meet the deficiencies identified by the Native American Advisory Council;
 9. FSI director will seek internal and outside resources that will support AI/AN programs;
 10. Establish AI/AN research opportunities with RIT faculty mentors

- Assess FSI and identify strengths and weaknesses—report to supervisor.
- Identify and seek out funding for FSI beyond 5th year
- Identify FSI's potential for application to international students and other minority populations

Year 5

- Ongoing activities:
 1. Participate in and organize Native American Advisory Council annual retreat;
 2. Nurture RIT's American Indian Science and Engineering Society;
 3. Nurture peer mentorship program;
 4. Recruit targeted AI/AN scholars for upcoming year;
 5. Seek internal and external resources to support tribal students, including those not participating in FSI;
 6. Maintain contact and rapport with tribal education coordinators;
 7. Work with tribes and Dr. Contomanolis to maintain COOPs;
 8. Work with RIT Colleges in establishing programs that will meet the deficiencies identified by the Native American Advisory Council;
 9. FSI director will seek internal and outside resources that will support AI/AN programs;
 10. Establish AI/AN research opportunities with RIT faculty mentors.
- If FSI is funded beyond 5th year, identify strengths and weaknesses and establish goals for next funding cycle
- If FSI is not funded beyond 5th year continue supporting establish AI/AN programs and mentor remaining FSI scholars.
- Prepare and submit FSI 5-year report for supervisor.

Prospective External Funding Sources:

Native American Career and Technical Education Program (NACTEP)

Sponsor: Office of Vocational and Adult Education/Department of Education

The sponsor's program provides grants to improve career and technical education programs that are consistent with the purposes of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 and that benefit Native Americans and Alaska Natives. Grant duration is 60 months and average \$400,000.

Florence Young Memorial Scholarship

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers one award in the amount of \$1,500 to a student pursuing a Masters in art, public health or law

Adolph Van Pelt Special Fund for Indian Scholarships

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers Adolph Van Pelt Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 to students in any curriculum.

ITT Industries Space Systems Division (CO-OP)

ITT offers NA scholars competitive salary based on discipline and education level, travel expenses from school/home city to Rochester or Ft. Wayne, IN, assistance with locating housing, and mentoring

Allogan Slagle Memorial Scholarships

Sponsor Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers Allogan Slagle Memorial Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 to students who are members of tribes that are not recognized by the federal government.

Sequoyah Graduate Fellowship

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The Sponsor offers a fellowship to American Indian and Alaskan Native Students in the amount of \$1,500.

Fund of the Sacred Circle

Sponsor: Headwaters Foundation for Justice

The fund is directed toward supporting projects that address systemic injustice affecting American Indian Communities (geography limited)

American Indians Into Psychology Program

Sponsor: Indian Health Service/DHHS

The sponsor provides support for the American Indians into Psychology Program. Eligible applicants are public and non-profit private colleges and universities, however, only one grant will be awarded and funded to a college or university per funding cycle. It is anticipated that approximately \$738,966 will be available to fund a three year award.

Native American Education Grant

Sponsor: Presbyterian Church

The sponsor provides grants to Native American students enrolled full time at an accredited institution in the U.S. Awards range from \$200 to \$3,000.

Leadership and Entrepreneurial Apprenticeship Development (LEAD)

Sponsor: First Nations Development Institute

The program is a unique American Indian nonprofit leadership development opportunity for motivated individuals seeking to create a stronger future for tribal or reservation-based nonprofit organizations—institutional assets in Indian country. The sponsor is seeking applicants for a one-year apprenticeship placement in an American Indian nonprofit organization, which will be coupled with mentoring by Native nonprofit leaders.

Emilie Hesemeyer Memorial Scholarships

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers Emilie Hesemeyer Memorial Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 with a preference given, but not limited to, students pursuing a Major in education.

Elizabeth and Sherman Asche Memorial Scholarships

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers Elizabeth and Sherman Asche Memorial Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 each to graduate and undergraduate students pursuing a degree in public health or science.

Displaced Homemaker Scholarships

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers Displaced Homemaker Scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 each to those men and women who would not otherwise be able to complete their education goals due to family responsibilities. Funds may be used to assist with child care, transportation and basic living expenses, etc. in addition to educational costs

David Risling Emergency Aid Scholarships

Sponsor: Association on American Indian Affairs

The sponsor offers scholarships to full time American Indian and Alaskan Native students in the amounts ranging from \$100-\$400 for acute, temporary emergencies.

FAQs:

Q-Can we develop and implement FSI at the college or department levels without the need of an institute-wide program?

A-No. Federally recognized tribes are sovereign governmental polities. Tribal Nations warrant treatment at the Presidential level. Just as it would not be appropriate for states or nations to deal only with colleges or departments for the development of educational programs, treating tribal governments as such would not foster productive or positive relationships. Also, participating tribes will be diverse, often separated by drastically different cultures and motivations. A single institute point-of-contact is needed to meet the needs of all participants involved to avoid misunderstanding.

Q-Can FSI be implemented under current existing multicultural programs such as the North Star Center?

A-No. The FSI primary goal is to develop relationships with governments and in addition, those communities recovering from drastic economic and socio-cultural changes. FSI is not a diversity initiative, although it is a direct result of RIT's successful diversity endeavors. It contributes significantly to the diversification of RIT's student body. Historically Native American Students are not typically served by catch-all multicultural programs as they often are placed in a situation where they are a minority among minorities. Current RIT programs are not equipped to deal with Tribal nation-states and lack the intensive cultural knowledge required to productively interact with Native American students and communities. Native Americans have had to struggle to maintain their cultural identities against difficult odds. Being "lumped in" with other minorities is not looked upon favorably by tribal communities. The FSI foundation is built upon developing relationships with governments and communities who have unique educational needs. The North Star Center's unique contribution to RIT is to enhance the student experience of all AALANA scholars. FSI will continue to work with the NSC and complement existing services.

Q-Why do we need a program targeting a minority group that has such a small enrollment at RIT?

A-For exactly that reason—Native Americans are an exceptionally under represented minority group whose cultural and academic needs are often not met. Comparable academic institutions generally have a Native American student population around 2-3 percent and

especially where similar programs exist (e.g. Syracuse University's Haudenosaunee Promise). RIT's Native American student population is 0.4 percent. There is terrific potential to increase Native American student enrollment especially as tribes become more economically stable. Increasing our Native American population to comparable institutions would mean an overall enrollment increase of 1.5% to RIT's existing student body. In addition, in facilitating FSI this would contribute significantly to Tribal nations well being and help them overcome a history of socio-economic stress. The United States has been negligent in their treatment of Native American tribes. This is simply the right thing to do.

How do we pay for the FSI?

A. Over time and with adequate resources FSI will continue to grow as will Native American student enrollment. Native American and other diverse student populations will increase and tribes will see RIT as a preferred institution of choice. Some tribes are also experiencing exceptional success in their economic endeavors. These tribes fully understand that the most efficient way to preserve their traditional and cultural identities is through the retention of their tribal scholars. Tribes are likely to invest in education programs that facilitate the return of their scholars to the reservations or tribal communities. Reciprocity is also a major cultural foundation among all Native American tribes. Tribes will certainly look favorably upon institutions that create formidable partnerships in respective ways—programs that approach learning in traditional and contemporary ways.

¹ The Board of Regents Statewide Plan for Higher Education, The University of the State of New York.
http://www.highered.nysed.gov/Quality_Assurance/statewideplan/page3.htm

² Statistics provided by National Center for Educational Statistics.

³ Census 2000 PHC-T-18 American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes in the United States: 2000

⁴ Self-identified AI/AN among RIT's 15,000 students decreased from AY2004 from 73 to 51 in AY2006. AI/AN currently comprises .3% among RIT's student body ranking it the lowest minority population represented on campus. Comparably, Native American student enrollment at Columbia University is 502 students or 3.7% of the total student body population of 13,569. Statistics provided by RIT Enrollment Services and Commission of Professionals in Science and Technology, "The Status of Native American in Science and Engineering.

⁵ Tribal scholars in this classification must secure documentation from associated tribal governments, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or a tribal council letter of support indicating the prospective student's lineage-based connection to the tribal nation. Some exceptions may apply.