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Morris Awarded ED Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program Grant

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Summary: The grant will increase the educational attainment of American Indian students by eliminating college achievement gaps.

MORRIS, Minnesota (January 7, 2016)—The University of Minnesota, Morris was awarded a \$1,997,003 Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program (NASNTI) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant will fully support the Morris Native American Student Success (NASS) Project.

The goal of Morris NASS is to increase the educational attainment of American Indian students by eliminating college achievement gaps. Grounded in student development theory, research, and lessons learned from campus pilot projects, it includes expanded summer bridge programming, college success coaching, peer mentoring, a residential living community, Anishinaabeg and Dakota language revitalization efforts, and a residency program that will bring to campus Native American elders, scholars, activists, and artists.

“It is exciting to be recognized as a Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution, not only because of our student population, but also because it contextualizes our work today framed by our history as an institution,” says Hilda Ladner, assistant to the chancellor for equity and diversity and director of equity, diversity, and intercultural programs. “Funding for the NASS program builds on Morris’s commitment of service to American Indian students and communities; it allows us to improve and expand programs with proven results and increase the visibility of American Indian peoples and cultures on campus beyond the diverse student body already present.”

Before the establishment of the University of Minnesota, Morris in 1960, the campus was home to an American Indian boarding school. In 1909 the United States Congress deeded the campus to the state of Minnesota with the stipulation that American Indian students be admitted “free of charge for tuition.” The campus proudly continues to honor the tuition waiver for qualified American Indian students.

Today American Indian students comprise 18 percent of the student body at Morris—the highest percentage of American Indian students in the University of Minnesota system. The NASS program builds on the existing Morris American Indian Studies major and minor, Ojibwemowin courses, and National Science Foundation-funded programs to increase student participation in the sciences as well as the educational and cultural resources, programming, and support offered by the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Intercultural Programs, American Indian Advisory Committee, American Indian Science and Engineering Society chapter, Circle of Nations Indigenous Association, and visiting Elder-in-Residence program.

About NASNTI

The NASNTI program provides grants and related assistance to Native American-serving, nontribal institutions to enable such institutions to improve and expand their capacity to serve Native Americans and low-income individuals. For more information, visit www2.ed.gov.

[View this story electronically.](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.

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