

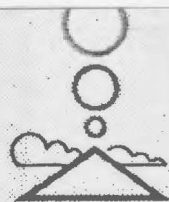
**The original documents are located in Box 9, folder “Education - Post Secondary”
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STUDENTS - AP031

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.--(AIPA)--How do Indian college students rate the special problems they encounter as they pursue their education, do they consider themselves fluent in English, and do their parents support their educational desires?

Some important answers to those questions emerged from questionnaires filled out by 2,736 Indian college students which had been prepared, circulated and then tabulated by the Division of Evaluation and Program Review of the BIA's Indian Education Resources Center (IERC) in Albuquerque.

Under the direction of Thomas R. Hopkins, the IERC student survey was conducted during the 1972-1973 school year. Hopkins said the students polled attended some 400 colleges across the nation, were evenly distributed between males and females, and that all students polled were receiving higher education assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). An "extraordinarily high number" of Indian students--nearly 50 percent--returned their filled questionnaires together with many pertinent observations, said Hopkins.

How did the students themselves rate their college problems?

Leading the list of problems for students by 26 percent was that of "poor study habits." The second highest problem was "lack of high school preparation," by 23 percent. The third identified problem in magnitude was "lack of motivation to study," as indicated by 18 percent of the students. "Lack of money" came next with 15 percent.

Coming in with six percent was the category of personal difficulties, defined as having "two or more problems." Five percent of the students said having "few friends to relate to" constituted a major problem, and three percent said "home problems" constituted a continuing personal worry. "Poor English skills" created problems for only two percent of the students, and only two percent said they were plagued with "homesickness" to the extent it interfered with their studies.

Said the IERC report on the ratings of Indian college student problems:

"The Indian students in colleges today attribute their biggest problems in school to be poor study habits. Since study habits are acquired through previous school experiences and the next biggest problem selected is lack of high school preparation, we can combine the two and attribute 49 percent to their previous school experiences."

The vast majority of Indian college students, 69 percent, stated that English was their "first language," according to the IERC survey. Only 26 percent of the students identified their own tribal language as their first language. And a tiny number, only five percent of the students, said "another" category--that of both tribal language and English--was their first language. The study indicated that both English and the tribal languages were used in the home situations of students.

Do Indian parents encourage their children to go to college? Overwhelmingly yes, the study declared.

MORE

The IERC student poll showed that 77 percent of the students indicated that their parents' encouragement led them to enter college. Students who found their parents "indifferent" to whether or not they attended college comprised only a slender 16 percent, and only seven percent of the students said their parents "did not encourage" them to pursue higher studies.

Said the IERC report on overall encouragement by Indian parents:

"An interesting and important finding of the survey was that while the educational level of (Indian) parents was considered to be low when compared to national parental levels of education, their aspirations for their children were exceptionally high."

IERC's Hopkins said about 55 percent of the Indian students, like their non-Indian counterparts, owned their own cars and chose to live in off-campus apartments rather than in student dormitories.

He also said that 85 of every 100 Indian students now in college had attended public schools rather than BIA schools in their pre-college years. He said the IERC data indicated that the average age of the Indian student is a few years older than that of non-Indians, meaning that many Indian students enter college, leave for a year or two, then reenter college to pursue degrees.

He also said that given the annual average income of Indian families, about 99 percent of Indian families could not support their children financially in higher education pursuits.

The areas of Indian country which proportionately produce the most Indian college students are the BIA's Minneapolis and Muskogee areas, according to Hopkins. Tribally, the Navajo Nation produces the single largest number of college students.





Brigham Young University

September 23, 1974

Honorable Brad Patterson
Special Assistant to the President
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Brad:

It was most pleasant visiting with you last week. As I indicated at that time, I will elaborate on the Indian education programs at Brigham Young University and my involvement in this great educational institution.

Currently we have over 500 Indian students enrolled, representing 77 tribes and blends from the United States and Canada. The enrollment is up more than ten times since 1964 when the enrollment was only 45 students. In 1974 we had 120 freshmen and 87 seniors. Our graduation rate for Indian students is 20 percent, several times the national average of four percent. I feel that this success relates directly to the unique educational opportunities for Native American students provided by the Indian Education Department of the University. This Department has been organized by and is staffed substantially by faculty of Indian heritage. The Department's major function is to assist all University colleges and departments on campus, as well as educational programs off campus, to effectively serve the Indian student body while preparing them to utilize available resources and take advantage of all available opportunities.

The same academic standards apply to Indian students as all other students. Although they are not pampered, they are given encouragement and assistance through sensitive faculty advisors, trained counselors -- many of whom are of Indian heritage -- special tutors, individualized instruction, inductive laboratory approaches to learning, and encouragement from successful Indian leaders on a regularly scheduled basis. The Indian students themselves assist one another through their own student government (The Tribe of Many Feathers), as well as such extra curricular activities as spontaneous talent shows, pageants, Indian Week celebrations, an Indian student publication to express "a calm voice of Indian thought and creative journalism" -- The Eagle's Eye -- and socialization with other Indian students. The object of this effort is the development of the individual Indian student as a human being capable of conceiving elevating sentiments, forming just judgments, and using his intelligence to serve society.

Education for Indian students, indeed all students at Brigham Young University, is the deliberate attempt to form them in terms of an ideal -- as independent, self-governing members of a self-determining community of equals. Nothing in this ideal



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excludes such values as "cultural pluralism" has to offer. The University is also imbued with a perspective that draws out our common humanity -- contrary to the doctrine of every man for himself, or every nation for itself. As you enter the Provo campus of Brigham Young University, the greeting "the world is our campus" indicates our belief that in an interdependent world community, such as ours, we must understand and rely on our common humanity if we are to survive in any condition worthy to be called human. Everything else in the educational process sinks into triviality in comparison with this responsibility.

Within this framework of values and principles, I feel, the University fosters three basic objectives. The first is to equip the students with the tools of learning -- communication skills and deductive reasoning. This approach to training assumes no "body of knowledge" to be conveyed by memorization, but rather development by the individual of patterns of behavior and modes of thinking to enable them to more adequately observe, analyze and participate. These tools are important in any society at any time, but are most important in a democratic society, changing under technological development, because the citizens must understand one another. Further, with these tools at his command the student can learn all his life. The second objective of the University is to open new worlds to its students. Emphasis upon the immediate environment and current conditions narrow the mind and prevent understanding of the wider community and any real comprehension of the present. The third objective is to help the students, all students, understand their cultural heritage. This, too, is in the interest of the individual and the community. The individual ought to see himself in the community, a community having a tradition, which perhaps requires change, but which should not be rejected unless it is first understood. Comprehension of the cultural heritage is the means by which the bonds uniting the community are strengthened. Enough philosophy.

The following selected examples will indicate the richness of programs which are available to both on-campus and off-campus educational pursuits of Native Americans:

1. Teacher Training Programs at Blanding, Utah (Navaho) and Fort Duchesne, Utah (Ute) were designed with the tribes to provide certified teachers to on-reservation and near-reservation schools. While the Roosevelt School District consists of nearly one-half Ute students, it does not employ a single Indian teacher. As a result of the current work-study program, ten certified teachers of Ute heritage should be employed by the school district within five years.

Because of the period of time involved in producing certified teachers, it has been felt necessary to assist the educators in these areas to understand the needs of the Indian students. Brigham Young University met this challenge by conducting graduate credit teaching seminars for the staff of these school districts, and replacing the staff for the necessary period with Indian faculty from the University. The benefits from such a program are twofold -- the educators gain an appreciation of and sensitivity to Indian student requirements, as well as customs and traditions. The students, at the same time, are made aware of the successful role models of the Indian teacher.

2. The Lamanite Generation is a performing group of Native Americans who have toured the United States, Canada and Europe in recent years, bringing to these countries their culture. Not only is greater understanding fostered with the world community regarding Native Americans, but a sense of self-esteem is developed among the performers and the people they represent vicariously.



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3. The University is currently taking the lead in developing a viable program for educating more Indian students in engineering and technology. This reflects our concern that technology-intensive and dollar-intensive industries be developed on reservations as an integral part of the economic base to stabilize the current labor-intensive industries which predominate today.

4. The University has also accepted the challenge for improving mental health services to Native Americans by a commitment to support the University of Utah in a proposal to the National Institute of Mental Health for an Indian Mental Health Center in Salt Lake City.

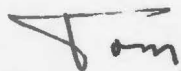
5. In addition, to help alleviate the near crisis situation of needed health services on Indian reservations, the University, through the Department of Health Science, has developed a program to train students in public health with specialty areas in alcoholism, mental health, nutrition, and sanitation. While the degree is available to all students, it was designed especially to suit the needs of Indian students and their communities.

6. In addition to the academic subjects offered, there are several programs of economic development on reservations which assist Native Americans to become economically independent, thereby making possible their goal of self-determination. Support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation enabled the University to sponsor an assistance program in agriculture and home management. The concept of this program was to assist in developing economic independence. As a result of this program 6,390 previously uncultivated acres were cultivated resulting in an estimated 1973 crop valued at \$272,800. The program developed 71 projects in cooperation with 30 tribes in 14 states and provinces. A total of 1,594 families were assisted by the agricultural projects while a total of 6,767 individuals were contacted by the mobile teaching unit.

Brad, during the course of writing this letter to you, I have been informed that Mr. Red Caveny at the White House requested information regarding Brigham Young University and its Indian programs for President Ford's address to the student body here on October 2, 1974. It might be helpful to him to have a copy of this letter to supplement the information contained in a letter of September 19th written to him by the University's Public Relations. I am also taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to Dr. Ted Marrs of the President's staff.

Best personal wishes.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Sawyer
Professor of Indian Education

cc: Dr. Theodore C. Marrs
Special Assistant to the President

