



Annual Convention 2022

Tulalip, Washington

Resolution #2022 - 32

“Support For Washington State Funding to Waive the Tuition, Meals, Room/Board and all Associated Fees for American Indian/Alaska Native Students of the Northwest Region to Attend a University or Post-Secondary Institution in Washington State”

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants’ rights secured under Indian Treaties, Executive Orders, and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise to promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and specific tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) and tribes in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of the ATNI; and

WHEREAS, a federal trust and treaty responsibility exists to provide funding and access to post-secondary education and vocational training for federally recognized Tribes; and

WHEREAS, American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) students’ access to higher education, vocational training, and apprenticeship opportunities near Indigenous homelands is vital in the pursuit of knowledge, skills, vocation, and career pathways and will increase retention, graduation, and advancement and contribution to their home and regional tribal community; and

WHEREAS; Washington State invests in workforce development across all career pathways, and now more than ever this new investment in tribes will provide an opportunity to build a vital employment base for our tribal governments and for the state of Washington; and

WHEREAS, AIAN students are increasingly unable to afford the full cost of attending a Washington State university, community college, or apprenticeship due to the increases in tuition and fees in which students are forced to attend postsecondary schools away from their home in order to access tuition waivers/scholarships, and thus experience unique barriers and lack the necessary support to complete their higher education degree; now

THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, ATNI appeals to Washington State and higher education institutions, in consultation with ATNI, to honor the trust and treaty responsibilities to provide tuition waiver, meals, room/board, and associated fees (i.e., transportation, healthcare, technology/internet and books, etc.) to attend a Washington State university, community college, or apprenticeship; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ATNI urges higher education institutions to address inaccurate data enrollment, management, reporting, and financial aid practices that eliminate AIAN students’ visibility and prevent their access to designated and needed resources to sustain their educational pathway due to relying on Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) categories rather than accounting for all AIAN students; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ATNI encourages higher education policies and practices that comprehensively communicates and improves transparency of actual tuition costs, meals, room/board, and associated fees (i.e., transportation, healthcare, books, technology/internet) to attend a Washington State university, community college, or apprenticeship in order to fulfill the obligations of trust and treaty responsibilities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, ATNI urges Washington State and higher education institutions to engage, consult, and communicate with tribes, higher education tribal liaisons and directors, AIAN students and families to uphold the trust and treaty responsibilities by providing Washington State AIAN Citizens of federally recognized tribes and those AIAN citizens of federally recognized tribes of regional states and who have treaty recognition in Washington territory tuition waivers, housing, meals, and all fees associated to attend a Washington State university, community college, or apprenticeship.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2022 Annual Convention of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, held at the Tulalip Resort and Casino, Tulalip, Washington, on September 18-September 22, 2022, with a quorum present.


 Leonard Forsman, President


 Norma Jean Louie, Secretary