



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON DC 20420

DEC 30 2008

Mr. Anselm G. Davis
Executive Director
White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges
and Universities
Department of Education
1990 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Davis:

Enclosed is a copy of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Three-Year Plan to implement Executive Order 13270 on Tribal Colleges and Universities Fiscal Years 2009-2011.

VA fully supports Executive Order 13270 and will continue to champion education, training, internships, and employment opportunities in the Native American and Alaska Native communities.

Questions regarding this submission should be directed to Ms. Georgia Coffey, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diversity and Inclusion (formerly, Office of Diversity Management and Equal Employment Opportunity), at (202) 461-4131.

Sincerely yours,

for 
Willie L. Hensley
Acting

Enclosures

**White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities
Three-Year Plan for Assistance to Tribal Colleges and Universities
Fiscal Years 2009-2011**

Executive Summary

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) supports Executive Order 13270 through programs designed to increase the participation of Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in VA-sponsored programs. One of VA's enabling goals is to recruit, develop, and retain a competent, committed, and diverse workforce that provides high-quality service to veterans and their families.

VA Central Office (VACO) will continue to encourage organizations to utilize summer and fall internships through Fellowships, Internships, Recruitments, and Intergovernmental Personnel Acts. Some of these interns are students at one of the 32 U.S. Tribal Colleges and Universities that comprise the American Indian Higher Education Consortium. These students will be sponsored by VA to provide temporary and future employment opportunities. Also, VACO will establish a system to monitor and track student employment and inform organizations of upcoming internships availability. This will be a long-term development.

VA's Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of TCUs. VHA Workforce Succession Strategic Plan lists various strategies that emphasize commitment to establish affiliations with various colleges and universities. The Plan reflects the critical steps that VHA is taking, in partnership with TCU's, to achieve educational excellence while furthering the Administration's mission. These strategies, which include the affiliation with TCUs, are to:

- Promote diversity, excellence and satisfaction in the workforce, and foster a culture which encourages innovation.
- Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training.
- Promote a system-wide comprehensive program for recruiting personnel in scarce professions and career fields.

VHA will continue to support and implement employment initiatives, internship programs, academic affiliations, recruitment forums, and education and training programs with TCUs.

The Workforce Management and Consulting Office Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Employment Team (EEO/AET): The EEO/AET will continue to work with the Department of Health and Human Services' Indian Health Services in fulfilling the work plan that was established in 2008. The work plan was developed as a part of this initiative which includes various strategies to increase the number of American Indian/Alaskan Natives in VHA's workforce.

The Healthcare Recruitment and Retention Office (HRRO): One of HRRO's goals is to provide VA facilities with a unique opportunity to promote diversity while simultaneously providing college students with paid federal government work experiences. HRRO projects a slight increase of funding during FY 2009-2011.

HRRO plans to continue to support the Student Education Employment Program (SEEP) and VA Learning Opportunity Residency (VALOR) which allows undergraduate and graduate students in high-demand career fields to obtain a viable work experience while pursuing their academic degree which is based on agreements between VA facilities and academic institutions.

HRRO will continue to support employees in developmental programs such as: Employment Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP), National Nursing Education Incentive (NNEI), VA National Education for Employees Program (VANEEP), and the Education Debt Reduction Program (EDRP).

HRRO will continue to organize the attendance and sponsor recruitment exhibits at national meetings and conventions of all major health care occupations, job fairs and other recruitment forums held throughout the country to promote VA's image as an employer of choice. HRRO plans to continue to have representations of the Student National Medical Association, National Medical Association, National Hispanic Nurses Association, and National Black Nurses Association. These National events continue to target minority students and educational institutions. Representatives from HRRO will provide information about the mission of VA, employment opportunities, residencies, internships and scholarships.

The Office of Academic Affiliations: The Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) will continue to provide clinical training experiences to students who attend tribal colleges and universities. OAA has oversight for VHA's health professions training program. This program does not provide awards to colleges or universities; however, it provides direct support to VA facilities for students receiving training in VA. Direct support includes salary and fringe benefits paid directly to medical residents and associated health trainees. Indirect support is

the reported cost by VA Medical Centers of VA staff who are instructors for trainees and other administrative costs associated with the training program. The majority of the students that will participate in training at a VA facility are on a without compensation (WOC) basis but there is indirect costs associated with the training program.

The Office of Research and Development (ORD) is committed to supporting research activities that will strengthen initiatives to serve veterans of diverse racial and ethnic groups, including American Indians and Alaska Natives. ORD has supported collaborative efforts by VA and the Indian Health Service to improve access and health outcomes for American Indians and Alaska Native veterans. VA's ORD supports a diverse and wide-range research portfolio aimed at understanding and reducing health disparities among racial and ethnic groups, and; in addition, has established a Center of Excellence devoted to research on health equity research and promotion. VA has been at the forefront of disparities research, and as an equal access healthcare system, has encouraged research that will ensure quality of care for all veterans, including American Indians and Alaska Natives.

VA has established equity and health disparities as a research priority, and recognizes that veterans, providers, health care facilities, and health care systems may all contribute to health care disparities. Research on all of these potential contributors is being supported. In addition, continual interventions focused on culture, language, and community outreach is identified as potential strategies to reduce disparities. This emphasis demonstrates ORD's commitment to the intent of the White House Initiative on Tribal Colleges and Universities. Other ORD research initiatives focused on healthcare informatics, implementation and management research, and educational interventions for health professionals will have the potential to enhance government efforts to facilitate improved partnerships between tribal colleges and universities and VA.

VA's Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides educational assistance payments to eligible veterans, dependents, reservists, and service members while they are enrolled in approved educational programs at TCUs and other institutions of higher learning. These payments help veterans and other eligible enrollees defray the costs of tuition and fees while enrolled at educational institutions.

VBA does not establish funding goals or measurable objectives for TCUs or any other educational institution under VA's educational assistance program. Education benefit payments are made directly to veterans or their dependents on the basis of their eligibility for such assistance. VBA conducts outreach activities to encourage eligible veterans and their dependents to use education benefits before the time period for their use expires.

VBA also makes payments to TCUs, which are referred to as reporting fees. The fees are paid to TCUs to cover administrative costs for processing reports and certifications of veterans' enrollments, as required by Title 38 USC, section 3684[c], in the administration of VA educational assistance programs. The total reporting fees awarded varies from year-to-year at each educational institution, as they are based on the number of veterans and other eligible beneficiaries who are enrolled.

VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA) will continue to honor all veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials that commemorate their service to our Nation.

NCA will continue to work towards increasing the participation of TCUs in Federal programs by sponsoring interns from the Washington Internship for Native Students (WINS) and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) organizations that fall under VA's National Internship Program. Through the program, NCA will be able to sponsor American Indian students for a 10-15 week—summer, spring, and fall sessions throughout the year. NCA will work to strengthen our partnership with the Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE).

NCA will participate in job fairs and conferences at TCUs and other local American Indian organizations, share job announcements, and provide NCA's employment Web site for employment opportunities. NCA will work collaboratively with the WINS, AISES, and SAIGE programs and establish a partnership with the American Indian College Fund to participate in annual tours for American Indian students to travel to local reservations and tribal colleges to stimulate cultural awareness and provide education and job opportunities. NCA will work to include VA's local and national cemeteries during these tours. Also, NCA will identify other TCU organizations that have not participated in VA's National Internship Program and establish a partnership to increase the representation of American Indians in the Federal internship program. NCA will increase participation with TCU organizations in an effort to build and strengthen the partnership with the American Indian community.

FY 2009 Plan
Resources to Assist Tribal Colleges and Universities

Agency Name: Department of Veterans Affairs

| Strategic Goals | Synopsis of TCU Programs that Relates to Goal | Performance Measure for Each Program | Projected Funding for Program | Funding Category | Relationship to Mandates in EO 13270 |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Promote diversity, excellence and satisfaction in the workforce, and foster a culture which encourages innovation. | Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Management and Support Office/EO/Affirmative Employment Team | Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training. | \$0 | Other Activities | Long-term Development |
| Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training. | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% increase over FY 2008 | \$258,933 | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Educational Achievement |
| Promote a system-wide comprehensive program for recruiting personnel in scarce professions and career fields. | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% increase over FY 2008 | \$64,363 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training | VHA's Office of Academic Affiliations | VA will continue to encourage the expansion of affiliation efforts with Tribal College Institutions | \$65,233 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Educational Achievement |
| Ensure quality of care for veterans | Office of Education and Research Development | Improve access and health care outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. | \$0 | Other Activities | Education and Research |
| Direct Institutional Subsidies | VBA's funding to TCUs | Reporting fees paid to TCUs to cover administrative costs for processing reports and certifications. | \$3,867,402 | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Institutional Capacity |
| Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid | VBA's funding to TCUs | Educational assistance payments to veterans, dependents, reservists and service members attending TCUs. | \$2,505,419,738 | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Institutional Capacity |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-----------|---|-----------------------|
| Participation of TCUs in the Federal Workforce | NCA's EEO/Human Resources (HR) offices | Increase the representation of American Indians/Alaska Natives with NCA's workforce | \$155,000 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Participate in job fairs and conferences at TCUs and other local American Indian/Alaska Native organizations. | NCA's EEO/HR offices | NCA will increase participation at various TCUs and other American Indian/Alaska Natives organization job fairs and conferences. | Stable | Other Activities | Long-term Development |

Additional information

Direct Institutional Subsidies based on a 1.020% increase
 Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid based on a 1.020% increase

FY 2010 Plan
Resources to Assist Tribal Colleges and Universities

Agency Name: Department of Veterans Affairs

| Strategic Goals | Synopsis of TCU Programs that Relates to Goal | Performance Measure for Each Program | Projected Funding for Program | Funding Category | Relationship to Mandates in EO 13270 |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Promote diversity, excellence and satisfaction in the workforce, and foster a culture which encourages innovation. | VHA's Management and Support Office EEO/Affirmative Employment Team | Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training | \$0 | Other Activities | Long-term Development |
| Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training. | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% increase over FY 2009 | \$264,519 | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Educational Achievement |
| Promote a system-wide comprehensive program for recruiting personnel in scarce professions and career fields. | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% increase over FY 2009 | \$66,130 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training. | VHA's Office of Academic Affiliations | VA will continue to encourage the expansion of affiliation efforts with Tribal College Institutions. | \$64,363 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Educational Achievement |
| Ensure quality of care for veterans | Office of Research and Development | Improve access and health outcomes for American Indians/Alaska Native veterans. | \$0 | Other activities | Education and Research |
| Direct Institutional Subsidies | VBA's funding to TCUs | Reporting fees paid to TCUs to cover administrative costs for processing reports and certifications. | Increase | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Institutional Capacity |
| Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid | VBA's funding to TCUs | Educational assistance payments to veterans, dependents, reservists and service members attending TCUs. | Increase | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Institutional Capacity |
| Increase the participation of TCUs in the Federal workforce and the number of American Indians/Alaska Native interns in the National Internship Program. | NCA's EEO Office | Increase the number of American Indians/Alaska Native interns within NCA. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---|----------|---|-----------------------|
| Participate in job fairs and conferences at TCUs which includes: Washington Internships for Native Students, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and Society for American Indian Government Employees and other local American Indians/Alaska Native organizations. | NCA's EEO/HR Office | Increase the representation of American Indians/Alaska Natives within NCA's workforce. | Increase | Other Activities | Long-term Development |
| Strengthen partnership with the TCUs organizations and other American Indian organizations to increase the number of American Indians/Alaska Native applicants. | NCA's EEO/HR Office | Send job announcements to the organizations and work collaboratively with these organizations to visit reservations to inform individuals of job opportunities | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Identify other TCUs organizations to form partnerships. Increase the representation of American Indians/Alaska Natives within NCA's workforce. | NCA's EEO Office | Search for TCUs that have not participated in the national internship program and establish a partnership. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Establish partnership with the American Indian College Fund. Increase the representation of American Indians/Alaska Natives within NCA's workforce. | NCA's EEO Office | Participate in the three journey tours annually for American Indian students to travel to local reservations and tribal colleges to stimulate cultural awareness and provide educational/job opportunities; and include the local and national ceremonies during the tours. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |

Additional Information

Direct Institutional Subsidies increases to \$4,022,099 based on a 1.040% increase
Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid increases to \$2,605,636,528 based on a 1.040% increase

FY 2011 Plan
Resources to Assist Tribal Colleges and Universities

Agency Name: Department of Veterans Affairs

| Strategic Goals | Synopsis of TCU Programs that Relates to Goal | Performance Measure for Each Program | Projected Funding for Program | Funding Category | Relationship to Mandates in EO 13270 |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Promote diversity, excellence and satisfaction in the workforce, and foster a culture which encourages innovation. | VHA's Management and Support Office EEO/Affirmative Employment Team | Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training | \$0 | Other Activities | Long-term Development |
| VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% increase over FY 2010 | \$269,809 | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Educational Achievement |
| Promote a system-wide comprehensive program for recruiting personnel in scarce professions and career fields. | VHA's Healthcare and Retention and Recruitment Office | 2% percent increase over FY 2010 | \$67,452 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Improve VA's ability to recruit trainees into the permanent workforce following training | VHA's Office of Academic Affiliations | VA will continue to encourage the expansion of affiliation efforts with Tribal Colleges and Universities. | \$64,363 | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Educational Achievement |
| Ensure quality of care for veterans | VHA's Office of Research and Development | Improve access and health outcomes for American Indians/Alaska Native veterans. | \$0 | Other Activities | Education and Research |
| Direct Institutional Subsidies | VBA's funding to TCUs | Reporting fees paid to TCUs to cover administrative costs for processing reports and certifications. | Increase | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid | Institutional Capacity |
| Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid | VBA's funding to TCUs | Educational assistance payments to veterans, dependents, reservists and service members attending TCUs. | Increase | Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships and Other Aid. | Institutional Capacity |


| | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|----------|---|-----------------------|
| Increase the participation of TCUs in the Federal workforce and the number of American Indian/Alaska Native interns in the National Internship Program. | NCA's EEO Office | Increase the number of American Indian/Alaska Native interns within NCA. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Participate in job fairs and conferences at TCUs to include WINS, AISES and SAIGE and other local American Indian/Alaska Native organizations. | NCA's EEO/HR Office | Increase the representation of American Indian/Alaska Natives within NCA's workforce. | Increase | Other Activities | Long-term Development |
| Strengthen partnership with the TCUs organizations and other American Indian organizations to increase the number of American Indian/Alaska Native applicants. | NCA's EEO/HR Office | Send job announcements to the organizations and work collaboratively with these organizations to visit reservations to inform individuals of job opportunities. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Identify other TCUs organizations to partner with. Increase the representation of American Indians/Alaska Native within NCA's workforce. | NCA's EEO Office | Search for TCUs that have not participated in the intern program and establish a partnership. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |
| Establish partnership with the American Indian College Fund. Increase the representation of American Indians within NCA's workforce. | NCA's EEO Office | Participate in the three journey tours annually for American Indians students to travel to local reservations and tribal colleges to stimulate cultural awareness and provide educational/job opportunities. Include the local and national ceremonies during the tours. | Increase | Fellowships, Internships, Recruitment, IPAs | Long-term Development |

Additional information

Direct Institutional Subsidies increases to \$4,267,447 based on a 1.061% increase
 Student Tuition Assistance, Scholarships, and Other Aid increases to \$2,764,580,356 based on a 1.061% increase

Designation of Agency Representative

Please use this form to designate the senior-level official in your department or agency serving as FY 2009 liaison to WHITCU to implement Executive Order 13270. Please fax the completed form to 202-219-7086 by December 15, 2008.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Agency | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| Name of Liaison | Brenda A. Martin |
| Title | EEO Specialist |
| Phone | (202) 461-4040 |
| Fax | (202) 501-2145 |
| E-mail | Brenda.martin@mail.va.gov |
| Office | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| Address | 810 Vermont Avenue, NW |
| City/State/Zip | Washington, DC 20420 |
| Signature of Agency Head |  Willie L. Hensley |
| Date | |