

Closing Gaps, Opening Doors: Expanding BSN Access for Tribal Students

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Background

- Nebraska is home to 4 federally recognized American Indian tribes: Omaha, Winnebago, Ponca, Santee Sioux
- American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) have historically experienced significant health inequities compared to other populations, resulting in poorer health outcomes:
 - Physical health
 - Obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Mental health
- AIAN RNs represent 0.4% of the national workforce
- Limited number of RNs in Nebraska rural and tribal communities
 - High nurse vacancy rates
 - High percentage of travel RNs
- Significant social and structural barriers prohibit native students from pursuing a nursing education
 - Family obligations
 - Academic challenges
 - Cultural identity
 - Institutional climate
 - Social support
 - Financial challenges

Objective / Purpose

- The purpose of this project is to **expand access** to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree for students living and working in tribal communities in Nebraska
- The primary aim is to reduce structural and financial barriers while strengthening academic and social support systems

Collaboration

Partnership with:

- Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC)**
 - Serves the Omaha tribe and Santee Dakota Nation
 - Macy campus located 68 miles from UNMC Norfolk campus
- Little Priest Tribal College**
 - Serves the Winnebago tribe
 - 67 miles from UNMC Norfolk campus
- Clinical partners in tribal communities**
- Donors/sponsors**

Program Proposal



LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE
OUR MISSION: "BE STRONG AND EDUCATE MY CHILDREN"

"Nothing About Us Without Us"

Implementation



Resources/Support

Financial

- Tuition, fees, books
- Travel and technology support
- Childcare stipends
- Living expenses

Academic

- Academic-preparedness orientation
- Culturally-responsive academic success coaching
- Supplemental instruction
- Peer mentorship
- Professional mentorship

References

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Biography

Dr. Kristi Lynch serves as the Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Student Success at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing. She brings more than 20 years of experience in higher education, spanning roles as both a faculty member and a senior administrator.

In her current position, Dr. Lynch oversees recruitment, retention, and student success initiatives across all undergraduate and graduate programs within the UNMC College of Nursing, including traditional and accelerated BSN, RN-BSN, MSN, DNP, and PhD programs. Prior to joining the College of Nursing, she served as Senior Director of Graduate, Executive, and Professional Business Programs in the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Dr. Lynch earned her PhD in Organizational Behavior at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She holds an MBA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a Bachelor of Journalism in Advertising from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Lynch also is a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach and provides team-based consulting services to regional organizations.

Contact Information



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