



HANDBOOK

Vision Statement

“We believe that education is the key to a better tomorrow for all Indian people

Mission Statement

Sky People Higher Education has been established to further the education of members of the Arapaho Tribe of the Wind River Indian Reservation, Wyoming, by providing Arapaho students with scholarships and other educational aid.

Sky People Goals

Increase funding and number of students going to colleges and universities.

- II. Improve retention and graduation rates of Sky People Higher Education funded students.
- III. Improve communications with students and educational institutions.

Forward

This handbook was produced to guide Sky People Higher Education funded students through the application, financial aid and program requirement process. Sky People Higher Education will assist students to remain eligible and hopefully graduate. Funding for the Program remains limited. It is therefore necessary that the Program establish criteria that are fair and equitable. Sky People Higher Education is a need based program designed to assist eligible students with college-related expenses. Scholarships are provided as a supplement to the financial aid package for students attending colleges/universities. We hope that the contents in this guide are precise enough to clarify questions you may have about Program requirements. Students are reminded to be aware of deadlines in the application process.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM PLAN OF OPERATION

A. TRIBAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO BE OBTAINED BY SKY PEOPLE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The major purposes of this program are as follows:

1. To administer the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Tribal Higher Education Programs, which will allow for maximum planning, counseling, coordination monitoring, and evaluation of program activities. This will lead to better decision making and increased educational opportunities available to members of the Northern Arapaho Tribe.
2. To improve the BIA and Tribal Higher Education Program and opportunities for Northern Arapaho Tribal members of the Wind River Reservation. The program is closely monitored and coordinated with Tribal and BIA personnel. This enables students to receive the maximum offering of educational services, allowing for coordination of programs which reflects the growing number of students completing their education.

B. WIND RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION/ SKY PEOPLE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

is a mature contract/no expiration date.

C. ORGANIZATION, AND PROCEDURES TO BE USED TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sky People Higher Education Committee and the Sky People Education Program are delegated the responsibility to accomplish the goals and objectives. Sky People Higher Education shall provide the following functions and services:

- 1 The Education Program is administered under the direction of the Sky People Education Director to assist Northern Arapaho Tribal members in becoming aware of the various opportunities and financial assistance available to him/her through the BIA and Tribal Higher Education Program. Personal interviews and data gathered on the applicant's background assists in accomplishing this goal. The primary purpose of gathering information is to enable the proper counseling of the individual to assist him/her in determining the best course of action to consider.
2. If Sky People Education Program services are deemed the course of action for the individual, applications are taken and the following will apply to allow the student entry into an educational program.

D. SCHOLARSHIP PLAN

The Sky People Higher Education scholarship program is designed to provide financial assistance to Northern Arapaho Tribal members, but not to carry the entire cost of a student's education. Educational Program funds will serve as supplemental financial assistance.

Students are responsible for completing the application process for Financial Aid; the PELL Grant and Sky People Application forms, before they can be eligible for a Sky People Education Scholarship.

Students are required: to apply for all available campus- based financial aid (i.e., PELL, CWS, SEOG, ETC.); and other financial assistance for each academic year; contribute part of the expenses toward their education; and document their needs with the institutions' financial aid officer.

1. THE SKY PEOPLE STAFF WILL

- (a) Consult with the institutions' financial aid office to determine the extent of the students' financial need.
- (b) Determine the amount of scholarship aid to be awarded to each student per academic year, based on the unmet need as determined by the institutions' Financial Aid Officer.
- (c) Complete the students' "Financial Aid Package" based on educational costs, resources and awards.
- (d) Provide counseling to those individuals funded under the Higher Education Program in selecting careers in their major area.
- (e) Advise students to declare a major during their Freshman year, in order to graduate by the end of the tenth (10) semester or fifteenth (15) quarter. Students are also strongly encouraged to contact the counseling department at their institution for assistance in choosing a major course of study. Students without a major have a higher rate of attrition (drop-out).
- (f) Serve as the coordinator between program participants (students) and universities/colleges.
- (g) Maintain current and accurate student

records of all students which will be available to authorized personnel and in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

(h) Implement an evaluation component for each student which will consist of the following:

(1.) Official transcripts, plan of students' academic progress and applicable appropriate academic advising.

Students will abide by the Higher Education rules and regulations, 25 CFR, Part 40. The student will provide the Education Program with an Official grade report within thirty (30) days after each quarter or semester.

The Director will consult with the college/university to monitor progress of each student, to determine if the student is making a sincere effort in accomplishing educational goals.

E. USE OF SCHOLARSHIP/GRANT

Scholarship funds are to pay for portions of the student's budget costs that include:

- Tuition
- Fees
- Books
- Room/Board/Housing

Application for On-Campus housing is the student's responsibility. Check for housing deadlines.

- Transportation
- Deposit Fees

Students are responsible for their own room deposits and monthly rent payments.

- Personal
- Miscellaneous

Expenses related to attendance at a college.

F. TYPES OF SKY PEOPLE EDUCATION AWARDS

Only those applicants for undergraduate scholarship will be accepted and considered for funding under the Education Program.

G. PROCEDURES FOR FILING APPLICATIONS

A student application packet entitled Sky People Higher Education Scholarship Application shall be used by all applicants for assistance.

Forms are available at the Sky People Office, Northern Arapaho Tribal Building, 533 Ethete Rd., Ethete, Wyoming.

The Sky People Education Office will provide an application packet that includes.:

1. Cover letter.
2. Standard Sky People Higher Education grant application, Tribal and BIA form 6237.
3. A standard "Financial Needs Analysis" form, Tribal and BIA 6238, to be sent to the Financial Aid office of the college or university for completion.
4. Privacy Act Statement.
5. Transcript Release Form
6. A Statement of Education, stating that the grant will be used solely for expenses related to attendance at an accredited Higher Education institution.

H. PRIORITY APPLICATION REVIEW

Priority funding will be assigned according to the following criteria:

1. Seniors ready to graduate (within three full-time quarters or two full-time semesters) providing that they have met all deadlines in a timely manner.
2. Continuing students with a grade point average (G.R.A.) of 2.25 or better providing that they have met all institutional and Sky People Higher Education scholarship deadline dates.
3. High School/GED graduates provided that application is made in a timely manner as outlined above.
4. LATE APPLICANTS - are those who did not complete all the necessary paperwork for the institution and Sky People Higher Education

in a timely manner. Sky People Higher Education scholarships will be awarded according to the chronological receipt of completed applications only if none of the above priorities apply.

The student is reminded that it is her/his responsibility to complete all paperwork on time.

I. APPLICATION REVIEW

Each applicant is responsible for submitting the following:

Application - A complete application listed under "G", in addition:

2. Certificate of Indian Blood certifying that the applicant is one-fourth (1/4) or more degree Northern Arapaho Indian Blood quantum or an enrolled member of the Tribe. (new applicants). Priority given to Northern Arapaho Tribal members.

Also:

(a) A letter of acceptance from the college or university (new applicants, transfer, and previously suspended students).

(b) Official transcripts: General Equivalency Development (G.E.D.) or High School Diploma.

(c) Previous college transcripts or grades, continuing students are to submit transcripts from previous semester (funding is not automatic).

(d) Late applicants will be processed only after those received prior to closing date.

J. DEADLINE/CLOSING DATE

Sky People Higher Education applications shall be submitted to the Sky People Education office by:

1. June 1st for the Fall term or academic year.

2. November 15th for Spring semester.

3. April 15th for students planning to attend Summer school. Justification for the need to attend summer school according to priorities should accompany the application pending funds.

4. Any application received after such closing date will be considered only if funds remain available after awarding eligible applicants who met the deadline.

5. Continuing students must apply for a scholarship each academic year and for the summer session.

The items not needed: Acceptance letter (if same college previously attended). Certificat of Indian

Blood

6. "Walk-on" students who do not apply for a scholarship, but are accepted by a college/university and request a scholarship "after the fact" will not be awarded a scholarship.
7. The Sky People Office receiving applications shall acknowledge their receipt by writing or by personal contact.

K. NOTIFICATION OF ACTION

The Sky People Office will notify all applicants and the Financial Aid Officer in writing of the action taken on their applications, stating reasons for approval or disapproval.

2. Applicants awarded a Sky People scholarship/grant will be notified by the standard award letter. Official notification of award statement will provide the following information:
 - a. Student Budget Costs.
 - b. Resources: (i.e. Veteran's Admin., student contribution, Social Security, other income, etc.).
 - c. Other Aid: PELL Grants, SEOG (Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants), CWS (College Work-Study), Perkins Loan, Stafford Loan, PLUS Loans, Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS).
 - d. Amount of Scholarship, Tribal or BIA award, and period of time covering the award.
 - e. Funds budgeted for books and supplies will be available immediately after registration.
 - f. All payments shall be subject to availability of funds; the Sky People Education Committee may set limitations on scholarship awards to any or all accredited institutions.
 - g. If a student's budget does not show financial need as determined by the institutional financial aid office of the educational institution, Sky People Education funds will not be committed.

h. The “Financial Aid Package” shall serve as the principal basis for determining the Scholarship amount.

“Financial Aid Package” means the various types of resources prepared by the institution’s Financial Aid Officer.

L. ELIGIBILITY

II students funded under the Higher Education Program will meet all eligible criteria as established by the Sky People Education Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

2. To be eligible for financial assistance for the Sky People Higher Education scholarship/grants, an applicant must:

- a. Be at least one-fourth (1/4) Northern Arapaho descent and an enrolled or non- enrolled member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe. Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB), certifying that the applicant is a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe.
- b. Maintain a 2.25 “C+” grade point average (G.R.A.) on a 4 point scale. The Director will evaluate the student’s academic record to determine if the student has met the minimum “C+” grade point average.
- c. For continuing students - Complete no less than twelve (12) credits in the quarter/ semester immediately preceding the students application; enroll in no less than twelve (12) credits in the quarter/semester for which they seek assistance; and have applied and been accepted for admission in an accredited college or university program of study.
- d. High School/GED students will be placed on Probation immediately for their first semester.

M. MAXIMUM ELIGIBILITY

1. Students will be eligible for a Sky People Higher Education Scholarship for a maximum of five (5) academic years ten (10) semesters; or 15 quarters to complete an undergraduate degree.
2. Sky People Higher Education funds can be used to take remedial college preparatory courses for one (1) semester, however, the student is reminded that these courses do not count toward a college degree.

3. After two (2) years attendance at a junior college level students may transfer to a four (4) year college or university. Students may petition to attend an additional semester (1) junior college (2 year) level. Justification for the need to attend an additional semester must be presented to the Sky People Higher Education Program.

N. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students shall maintain the following requirements for academic progress for continued awards:

1. Enroll and complete twelve (12) or more semester hours per term.
2. Maintain a minimum 2.25 grade point average (g.p.a.) or better.

O. PROBATION

1. A student who does not meet the minimum academic requirements will be placed on Academic Probation for next term.
2. A student will be removed from Academic Probation after completion of one (1) semester! qj~ter if the student earns a G.P.A of 2.25 or better and does not have a credit deficiency.

P. TERMINATION OF FUNDING

Funding may be terminated if a student:

1. Fails to meet or maintain the eligibility requirements of the program.
2. Fails to maintain minimum G.P.A. of (2.25) and/or course load (12 semester hours) standards while on academic probation.
3. Fails to submit grades to the Sky People Higher Education Office, before the beginning of the next semester/quarter or within 30 days of the end of the semester.
4. Is suspended from the institution's financial aid

program. A student financially suspended from an institution's financial aid program will not be eligible for funding until the institution reinstates their financial aid.

5. Withdraws, during a semester/quarter without providing written notification to the Sky People Office. Only withdrawals for the following reasons will prevent termination for assistance.

a. Medical - must present medical statement signed by your physician.

b. Personal - letter for describing personal reasons (i.e. death in family causing stress, etc.).

These reasons must be verified in writing and presented to the Sky People Program before the end of the semester/quarter.

6. Uses funds for other than approved purposes under this program.

Q. APPEAL PROCESS

1. Students who are denied funding or who are dissatisfied because of modification of award amount, may appeal the matter to the Sky People Education Committee.

2. Students must appeal, in writing, to the Sky People Education Office, within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the disapproval notice.

3. The Sky People Director shall rule on the decision within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the appeal and promptly notify the student of the Director's ruling.

4. If the decision is upheld by the Sky People Director, the student may appeal in writing to the Sky People Education Committee, within ten (10) calendar days of receipt, of notice, of the Director's ruling.

5. The decision rendered by the Sky People Education Committee will be final.

STUDENT WRITES COMPLAINT

DIRECTOR

Ten days to rule

STUDENT

Ten days to appeal

SKY PEOPLE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FINAL RULING

R. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND CONTROL SYSTEM

The evaluation of this contract will be divided into two separate components. One of the components is the evaluation of the contract goals and objectives. The other component is the monitoring of the Higher Education Program by the BIA and Tribe. Sky People Higher Education Program will assist and coordinate all monitoring activities requested and directed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs/Northern Arapaho Tribe.

2. The evaluation will also include the major aspects and stages of a complete plan and be under the direction of the Sky People Director. The Sky People Staff will review: financial records, monthly and quarterly financial reports, annual reports and all student records.

3. The evaluation plan and activities will utilize project staff of the Sky People Higher Education Program. The monitoring plan for the program will be developed and implemented by the Area Education Program Administrator, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Billings Area Office.

S. MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Subject to the power of the Northern Arapahoe Business Council, it hereby authorizes and instructs the Sky People Education Committee to assume administration of the Sky People Education Program, (Resolution #7081), to oversee, manage, apply for and administer all actions and funding of the Education Program. The Sky People Education Committee is authorized to sign letters, contracts, modifications, and other instruments pertaining to the Sky People Education Program.

2. The Sky People Education Committee will:

a. abide by the By-Laws and Articles of the Sky People Committee, as recognized by the Northern Arapaho Business Council, September 18, 1979.

b. The Program has developed and implemented a Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, approved and subject

to change on modification by the Sky People Education Committee, in a regularly scheduled committee meeting, November 9, 1993.

c. Appoint a Director with a Bachelors Degree in Education or a related field or an equivalent combination of Education (not less than an Associates Degree) and experience from which comparable knowledge and abilities can be acquired.

3. The Sky People Education Director will:

a. manage and maintain an office for the Sky People Education Program.

b. be responsible for the administration and management of the Higher Education Program, according to applicable Tribal and Federal policies and procedures.

c. be responsible for reviewing and recommending all Higher Education scholarship applications to the Sky People Education Committee for approval. Grievances and disputes will be processed accordingly.

d. refer applications submitted by all applicants to the Sky People Education Committee for review, to avoid conflict of interest.

e. consult with colleges/universities to monitor progress of each student, to determine if the student is making a sincere effort in accomplishing educational goals.

4. The Sky People Staff will: Maintain current and accurate reports, statistical data, files and accounts as required by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Northern Arapaho Tribe. All financial accounting records will be available to Bureau or Tribal representatives at any reasonable time.

5. The Sky People Education Program Staff will:

a. provide counseling to those individuals funded under the Higher Education Program in selecting careers in their major area.

b. advise students to declare a major during their Freshman year, in order to graduate by the end of the tenth (10) semester or fifteenth (15) quarter. Students are also strongly encouraged to contact the counseling department at their institution for assistance in closing a major course of study. Students without a major have a higher rate of attrition (drop-out).

c. implement an evaluation component for each student which will consist of the following official transcript, plan of study, academic progress and if applicable appropriate academic advising. The student will be required to submit an official grade transcript within thirty (30) days after each quarter/semester. Maintain current and accurate student records which will be available to authorized personnel and in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974.

d. serve as the coordinator between program participants (students) and universities! colleges.

e. abide by the Higher Education rules and regulations, 25 CFR, Part 40.

f. submit an annual report covering the

programs' accomplishments for the contract year, within thirty (30) days of the close of the contract year. The report will be submitted to the appropriate personnel.

g. issue internal procedures for obtaining refunds from Educational institutions for students who did not enroll, withdraw or "dropped-out" in order to maximize the use of BIA and Tribal Higher Education funds. If a student withdraws or "drops out" of school without the approval of the Sky People Education Program, the student is liable for the entire amount of scholarship award, which becomes immediately due and payable to the Sky People Education Program.

h. is authorized to deduct a reasonable amount from a student's per capita, until amounts due are "paid-in-full". Students who are non-enrolled and do not receive per capita payments must have an enrolled member "co-sign" and obligate their per capita in the event that the student becomes liable for repayment of funds to the Sky People Higher Education Program.

implement the Higher Education Programs' scholarship deadline dates for processing boarding school applications. The deadline dates will be the following: for Fall semester June 1st. Spring semester November 15th. All applications will be processed according to guidelines set forth by the Sky People Education Program and the Billings Area Education office.

T. PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Sky People Education Program Personnel Management Policy Manual, which may from time to time be revised, deleted or changed, shall apply to employees, supervisors and personnel of any description whose salaries or compensation of any typewhatever is paid in whole or partially, directly by or through Federal Contracts, including but not limited to Federal Contracts; CTC58XOO1 01, Higher Education and CTC58XOO1 02, AVT/DE, State Contracts or any other agreement.

U. CERTIFICATION BY LICENSED ACCOUNTANT

The Sky People Higher Education Program is certified by Joseph Eve & Company (CPA firm located at Suite 414, Strain Building, Great Falls, Montana 59401) of having a financial management system that meets contract requirements and P.L. 93-638.

V. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The Program maintains an inventory list which is properly tagged, of all property purchased indicating whether it was purchased by a grant or program money.

W. ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The contract describes fully the organizational methods and procedures to be used to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Higher Education Program.