Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque has received notification of re-accreditation, affirming that its degree and certification programs in advanced technical fields, liberal arts and business education will continue to enrich the lives of students from 66 American Indian tribes.

The Institutional Actions Council of the Higher Learning Commission notified SIPI that it has accepted the peer review team's comprehensive evaluation report and reaffirmed the school's accreditation at their recent meeting on February 13, 2018.

"This continuation of our accreditation affirms SIPI's efforts to provide a high-quality education to our students, and comes in the midst of our implementation of strategic initiatives focused on student success. Ultimately, it is our students who matter and we must be relentless in working continuously to improve their lives," said SIPI President Dr. Sherry Allison.

"I congratulate SIPI President Dr. Sherry Allison and her staff, the SIPI faculty and students, and the entire SIPI community for this tremendous achievement," said John Tahsuda, Indian Affairs Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior. "I know you are dedicated to ensuring that SIPI, which is an historically important higher education institution for Indian Country, continues to prepare its students for the future while maintaining their cultural knowledge and values."

"It is through the continued hard work of our faculty and staff at each of our schools that we can achieve and attain successes like this accreditation," said Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony L. Dearman. "This accreditation demonstrates our commitment to our American Indian and Alaska Native students and families to provide excellent educational opportunities along with support needed to succeed."

The initial accreditation was received in February 2014 for a 10-year cycle. To receive affirmation of the accreditation, there is a Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation. Institutions submit a report which includes an intense internal self-study documenting how the school upholds education standards, and includes a federal compliance review and a peer review on-site visit.

This accreditation will enable SIPI to award federal financial aid such as PELL grants; facilitate the transfer of college credits to other institutions; serve as a signal to other external facilities that it is a quality educational institution; and allow the school to be eligible to receive federal, state and private grant funds.

The HLC is an independent corporation founded in 1895 as one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The HLC accredits degree-granting postsecondary educational institutions in the North Central region, which includes 19 states.

The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs supports the Secretary of the Interior in

carrying out the Department's responsibilities to the federally recognized tribes through BIA and BIE programs and services. The BIA's mission includes developing and protecting Indian trust lands and natural and energy resources; supporting social welfare, public safety and justice in tribal communities; and promoting tribal self-determination and self-governance. For more information, visit the Indian Affairs website.

SIPI is one of two colleges and universities operated by BIE; the other is Haskell Indian Nations University in Kansas. The BIE also administers grants for more than thirty tribally controlled colleges and universities and provides higher education scholarships to Native youth. The BIE also implements federal Indian education programs and funds 183 elementary and secondary day and boarding schools located on 64 reservations in 23 states and peripheral dormitories serving more than 48,000 students. For more information, visit the BIE website.

SIPI is a 1994 land-grant college preparing students from 16 states to be life-long learners through partnerships with tribes and other organizations. For more information, visit the SIPI website.

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