Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn today announced that the College of the Muscogee Nation in Okmulgee, Okla., is eligible for operations funding from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) under Title I of Public Law 95- 471, the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978, as amended. Funding to the College would commence in July 2014.

"I congratulate the College of the Muscogee Nation for achieving this important milestone in its development and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation leaders for realizing their vision of bringing higher education opportunities to their people," Washburn said. "I'm pleased that we are able to support the College in its quest to become an independent institution of higher learning, and a full member of the family of tribal colleges and universities."

In April of last year, the College sought funding as a tribal college under Title I of the Act. The Assistant Secretary's approval of the College of the Muscogee Nation as eligible for operations funding increases the number of Title I BIE-funded tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), which are forward-funded, to 27.

Founded in 2004, the College was established to meet the Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizens' need for quality higher education that also embodies Muscogee (Creek) tribal culture, language and history. The institution is governed by a board of regents, an independent entity based on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation constitution, legislation and code.

The College awards associate degrees in Gaming, Native American Studies, Police Science and Tribal Services, and offers two certificate programs in Gaming and Mvskoke Language Studies. Its primary source of funding is from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. In its early years, the College entered into an agreement with the Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology (OSUIT) to enhance services to its students. While the College continues its development, financial aid processing, transcripts and awarding of credits through the OSU system, its students have access to OSUIT facilities, administrative systems and technical support through dual enrollment in both institutions.

The College is working towards becoming an independent institution, and is currently in candidacy status with the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) North Central region. The HLC is an independent corporation and one of two commission members of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), one of six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. The HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the North Central region, which includes Oklahoma. HLC accreditation grants membership in the Commission and in the North Central Association.

The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs oversees the Bureau of Indian Education, which operates a federal school system for American Indian and Alaska Native children from the federally recognized tribes and provides operating grants to TCUs and two tribal technical colleges. It also directly operates two post-secondary institutions – Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., and the

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, N.M. – and offers higher education scholarships. It also implements federal education laws, such as the No Child Left Behind Act, in and provides funding to 183 elementary and secondary day and boarding schools and peripheral dormitories located on 64 reservations in 23 states that serve approximately 41,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students.
