

UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Winter Count

A traditional winter count is a series of drawings. Each is of a memorable event in the life of a tribal group. Each image tells a story. And each contributes to a timeline, chronicling remarkable experiences. Today these are historical records that document the past from a tribal point of view. They reflect observations and values from within the culture. It shows how Native People viewed events, what was important to them, what they thought was worth remembering for the future.

This winter count expresses its content in writing and photographs. In 2019, United Tribes Technical College reached 50 years as a tribal college. People involved with marking the anniversary considered the many events that shaped the college's progress and success and chose these to present as the *United Tribes Technical College 50 Year Winter Count*.

United Tribes got its start in the early 1960s. Four North Dakota tribes actively resisted government policies aimed at diminishing tribes and terminating their existence: Devils Lake Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Three Affiliated Tribes and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. Working together, they prevented the state from assuming greater jurisdiction on reservations. Other mutual concerns (economic development, tribal planning and jobs training) led to formation of the United Tribes of North Dakota Development Corporation in 1968. When Bismarck's Ft. Lincoln became available, they secured the 105-acre former military post as a training center for Indian families. The facility they established became United Tribes Employment Training Center, later named United Tribes Technical College.

A detailed *United Tribes Technical College Chronology* that includes source references can be accessed in the library and archive section of the college website www.uttc.edu.

Winter Count

1969

The United Tribes of North Dakota board selected the Bendix Field Engineering Corporation of Owings Mills, Maryland, to operate an Indian family training center on the former site of Bismarck's Fort Lincoln. Contract operations began July 1; the first group of trainees arrived in late August. "United Tribes Employment Training Center" was formally dedicated Sept. 6 during a public program. Job training instruction began within days for the first cohort of student-trainees.

1970

Powwows first started in 1970 at United Tribes. Trainees and staff held one on April 11. The first one to which the public was invited took place July 24-26 as the highlight of "United Tribes Days." An open-house for the local community, it was a huge public relations success. Lee Fox, a student from Three Affiliated, conceived and promoted the event with the help of staff and other student-trainees. His 17 year-old daughter, Sharon, was selected "Miss United Tribes.

1971

Having planned to end the start-up contract with Bendix, on July 1 United Tribes assumed full, tribal control and supervision of all aspects of its vocational training programs. The ratio of Native staff changed from 40 percent to 63 percent Indian, as the character of the organization became more "Indian oriented."

1972

United Tribes recruited a new executive director, Warren W. Means (Oglala Lakota). His academic, administrative and legal background bolstered confidence in the new organization among federal agencies. Means initially concentrated on streamlining the organization and developing support for Indian vocational programs.

1973

Theodore Jamerson Elementary School (TJES) began serving the children of student-trainees. It was named for Theodore "Tiny Bud" Jamerson, the center's first director. North Dakota U.S. Senator Milton R. Young, considered the "primary motivating force" in establishing the center, honored the campus with a visit.

1974

Two United Tribes students, Effie Fighting Bear (Crow Agency) and Joe Benson (Three Affiliated), became the first couple married on campus. The Rev. Lester Kills Crow officiated in United Tribes Chapel. Photos were taken by W.L. "Bill" Miller, photography instructor. <> UTETC hosted the Great Plains Indian Rodeo Association finals at the center's rodeo grounds.

1975

The United Tribes of North Dakota Development Corporation and its United Tribes Employment Training Center merged into one organization with a new name, "United Tribes Educational Technical Center." The change broadened the scope of service to allow for two-year associate degree programs. A redesigned logo featured five diamonds instead of four, signifying the addition of Sisseton-Wahpeton to the governing board.

1976

Planning moved forward on new campus facilities after United Tribes and the city of Bismarck resolved two-years of discord over the city's recommendation to relocate UTETC to make way for expansion of the Bismarck airport. <> United Tribes hosted a training workshop for its American Indian Curricula Development Program started in 1972. AICDP resulted in educational materials prepared from tribal sources that reflected a Native worldview.

1977

New construction began on campus following groundbreaking for a \$3.5 million vocational skills center and receipt of a \$300-thousand grant for a daycare facility. <> Standing Rock educator David M. Gipp, 30, took over as UTETC's new executive director. He began work on improving operations, attaining accreditation and upgrading training programs beyond the certificate level.

1978

United Tribes received candidate status for accreditation at the certificate-granting level from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. <> Two new buildings were dedicated on campus, completing the first major expansion of facilities since the center was established almost a decade earlier.

1979

United Tribes conducted a capping ceremony for the Center's first cohort of practical nursing students. Harlan Horned Eagle, Wagner, SD, was the only male among the first ten UTETC nursing grads.

1980

UTETC hosted the center's first cultural arts show in June; over 600 people viewed the work of 29 artists in the new Skill Center Building.

1981

UTETC adopted a new academic calendar, moving from a 12-month continuous operation to a system of quarters. Gone was the monthly entry and exit system, replaced by three terms per year - fall, winter and spring - each 12 weeks in length.

1982

United Tribes created an endowment fund in response to federal budget cuts of 47 percent. Three Affiliated Tribes made the first contribution. To remain open, the Center cut back to a four-day work week, released half the staff, and discontinued two educational programs. <> The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredited UTETC at the certificate-granting level.

1983

Congress addressed funding cuts by approving line-item status for UTETC in the BIA annual budget. <> The "Thunderbird Theatre" of Haskell Indian Junior College was featured during the annual powwow.

1984

United Tribes hosted the annual conference of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium and the Second Annual National Indian Athletic Conference Basketball Championships. <> Student athletes competed in their second season of intercollegiate cross country competition under Coach Dave Archambault Sr. <> Minority Business Enterprise Director James K. Laducer was named "Minority Advocate of the Year" by U.S. Small Business Administration.

1985

Russell Hawkins of Sisseton-Wahpeton presented the first of the “State of the Tribal-State Relationship” speeches at the State Capitol in Bismarck. Planning involved UTETC leaders and board members and the state Indian Affairs Commission. The idea for a formal talk to lawmakers came from Brian Palecek of the North Dakota Peace Coalition, later a noted United Tribes instructor.

1986

One of the earliest contests that ignited the long-running, cross-town basketball rivalry between United Tribes and Bismarck Junior College occurred in the final game of the state junior college tournament. In its second season of intercollegiate play, UTETC’s loss to the Mystics, 69/58, was considered a big accomplishment for a new program and a preview of exciting games to come.

1987

The United Tribes amended its articles of incorporation to change the Center’s name to “United Tribes Technical College.” <> UTTC hosted an accreditation site visit and received approval for the school’s first two-year Associate of Applied Science degree programs: Medical Records and Licensed Practical Nursing. <> The college modified the cycle of its academic year, switching from quarters to semesters.

1988

A basketball squad from United Tribes pulled off a remarkable victory in junior college play. The Thunderbirds defeated NDSU Bottineau 84-81 with only three T-Bird players on the court at the end of regulation. <> UTTC’s Indian Business Development Center was heralded for its outstanding work by the U.S. Dept. of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency.

1989

United Tribes was well represented in the crowd that welcomed President George H.W. Bush to the State Capitol to mark the North Dakota Centennial. TJES students had front row seats and several shook hands with the President. <> Faculty member Butch Thunder Hawk designed the North Dakota Centennial Native American logo. <> An all alumni and staff 20th Anniversary Reunion was part of the festivities of the 1989 United Tribes Powwow.

1990

UTTC received initial funding under the Federal Carl Perkins Vocational and Technologies Act of 1990. <> The powwow dance arena at the center of campus was named “Lone Star Arena,” the Indian name of David M. Gipp. An honoring for the UTTC president recognized his commitment to tribal higher education and acknowledged his receipt of an honorary doctorate from NDSU.

1991

Native servicemen and women in Operation Desert Storm were honored for their service. One-hundred-seventy-six flags were posted in Lone Star Arena by name for each American Indian from UTTC’s governing tribes then serving. <> UTTC students won the AIHEC Knowledge Bowl at the annual student competition.

1992

Research and Development Director Jack Barden led the planning for UTTC professional development. Supported by a Bush Foundation grant, the effort focused on general education, state-of-the-art work in the vocations, work skills across the curriculum, and the connection between elementary and postsecondary components of the institution.

1993

UTTC received general authority to offer Associate of Applied Science degrees for all of its vocational and academic programs.

1994

During UTTC’s silver anniversary year, America’s Tribal Colleges and Universities became “Land Grant” institutions. TCUs gained access to resources and benefits previously reserved for state institutions and historically Black Colleges and Universities. The “1994s” received endowment funds and grants for equity, extension programs and research to improve the lives of tribal students and the self-sufficiency of Native communities.

1995

United Tribes entered the era of distance education, offering classes for the first time over the North Dakota Interactive Video Network. A

Skill Center classroom was equipped with telecommunications equipment to interact with instruction originating from North Dakota University System campuses and other tribal colleges and state institutions.

1996

Seventy Native American visual artists from around the country displayed their works at the 1996 United Tribes Indian Arts Expo. The two-day event at the Bismarck Civic Center was held for the first time in the spring, separating it from the powwow held in the fall.

1997

A cultural group from United Tribes participated in President Bill Clinton's inaugural parade. <> UTTC published a student yearbook for the first time. <> A grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation launched the Northern Plains Bison Education Program to assist in developing and managing bison herds on tribal homelands.

1998

The UTTC Automotive Technology program was certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). <> Newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Gover visited United Tribes in the company of North Dakota U.S. Senator Kent Conrad.

1999

United Tribes received funding to strengthen institutional operations and services to students through Title III of the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Act. <> For the second year in a row, the Thunderbird men's team earned a trip to the NJCAA basketball finals. <> The college instituted a "no smoking" policy in campus buildings.

2000

With financial support from the American Indian College Fund, UTTC purchased 132-acres to the south for future development. The adjacent parcel more than doubled the size of campus, empowering the vision to increase institutional capacity and expand the student population. <> A groundbreaking ceremony blessed a new building on the north side of campus, a "Cultural Interpretive Arts Center."

2001

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools granted United Tribes 10-years of continuing accreditation, without stipulation, as a two-year degree and certificate granting institution. <> Students, staff and friends from the community gathered at the campus Medicine Wheel to pray and smudge for American lives lost on 9-11.

2002

United Tribes dedicated its newly constructed student center to a man who avoided the spotlight. The Jack Barden Student Life and Technology Center featured computers, high-tech instructional equipment, the college bookstore and meeting space. <> A last minute shot in double overtime lifted the Thunderbird men into the junior college national tournament for the third time in five years.

2003

After 30 years of continuous occupation, UTTC received unrestricted title to the property that was formerly Fort Lincoln. <> Strategic planning was underway to expand the campus and double enrollment. <> Two reports illustrated the college's positive economic impact in the local community and the value of investing tax dollars in tribal college students. <> An exhibit about the internment period of WWII opened on campus with public programs. <> War in Iraq claimed the life of a former TJES student, Pfc. Sheldon R. Hawk Eagle, 21.

2004

The "Parade of Champions" and Bismarck-Mandan's "Folk Fest Parade" merged into one community cultural event on powwow weekend. <> A UTTC group marched in the grand procession of Native Nations to open the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. <> The first in a series of public art sculptures by UTTC art students was dedicated near the Missouri River multi-use pathway. <> During "Operation Teddy Bear," Teacher Education students collected more than 2,000 stuffed animals to send to children in Iraq.

2005

During spring commencement, the number of UTTC graduates topped the century mark for the first time. Among the 114 grads was the first cohort of five Elementary Education students to

earn Bachelor's Degrees, conferred in partnership with Sinte Gleska University.

2006

UTTC named its new wellness center for the late Lewis Goodhouse, chairman of the Devils Lake Sioux Tribe and one of the college founders. <> A new apartment complex was built with student and staff labor, providing much-needed on-campus housing. It was later named for August Little Soldier, chairman of the Three Affiliated Tribes, also a college founder.

2007

United Tribes marked David M. Gipp's 30th year as its leader with honoring events and by establishing a scholarship fund in his name. <> Lobbying by North Dakota's tribal college presidents paid off with a long-sought victory in the State Legislature. A new law provided funding for non-beneficiary (non-Indian) students attending tribal colleges.

2008

David M. Gipp addressed the Democratic National Convention in a speech titled *Renewing America's Promise to American Indians*. <> UTTC art students sculpted an eagle dubbed "The Keeper," the fifth and final public art piece in a series commissioned by the local park board. <> The college previewed a vision for the future at a dedication overlooking the college's new, south campus.

2009

An intertribal group organized by United Tribes marched in President Barack Obama's Inaugural Parade. <> Tribal Arts instructor 'Butch' Thunder Hawk co-curated an exhibit about Lakota culture at Harvard's Peabody Museum. <> UTTC began using the social media platform Facebook. <> Ground was broken for a new science and technology building, the first structure on the college's south campus. <> Fireworks thundered over the powwow, marking the college's 40th anniversary. <> The Curriculum Committee approved the college's first-ever upper division course, Early Childhood Special Education.

2010

Canadian actor Gary Farmer, who played the warm-hearted Philbert in the movie "Powwow Highway," was a big hit when he visited UTTC. <> The campus hosted the Fort Lincoln Planning

Conference about the internment era during WWII. <> Two outstanding former basketball players, Tanner Albers and Jason Logg, were inducted into the "Thunderbird Hall of Fame."

2011

United Tribes became a four-year college with Higher Learning Commission approval of three bachelor-degree programs: Elementary Education, Business Administration and Criminal Justice. Ten years of accreditation included associate degree programs and degrees earned online. <> The North Dakota Education and Practices Board approved UTTC Teacher Education for preparing graduates for teacher licensure in Elementary Education.

2012

The Educational Outreach program launched a dual enrollment program to start tribal high school students on the path to college. <> UTTC's Skill Center was designated as a polling site for local and state elections. <> The once-popular welding vocation that went dormant was revived as part of TCC DeMaND, a workforce training program UTTC coordinated with four tribal colleges. <> Billi Jo Beheler Gravseth (Standing Rock) was the first student to graduate with a bachelor's degree from UTTC.

2013

UTTC's Teacher Education staff arranged for world-class presenters from the Smithsonian Institution to present at the workshop "Prairie Traditions" for pre-service teachers. <> The Tribal Leader's Summit commemorated the 50th anniversary of Robert F. Kennedy's visit to Bismarck. <> UTTC became the first tribal college in the state to be a "Tobacco Free" campus.

2014

United Tribes experienced a transition in executive leadership. After nearly 37-years at the helm, David M. Gipp became the college's President Emeritus. Following eight months of interim leadership by Academic Vice President Phil Baird, the College Board selected Leander "Russ" McDonald as the new UTTC President. <> One entire team and nine individuals were inducted into the Thunderbird Hall of Fame. <> U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. keynoted the fourth annual Tribal Consultation conference at UTTC.

2015

UTTC adopted single-stream recycling throughout campus, co-mingling recyclables that previously went to the landfill. <> A very active UTTC Chapter earned first place in the Portfolio Competition at the annual American Indian Business Leaders conference. <> Campus teams raised and donated over \$6,770 to the American Cancer Society during the college's first-ever "Mini Relay for Life."

2016

United Tribes began a pilot program offering tuition waivers for Native students who were enrolled members of federally-recognized tribes. <> Shawn Craig and Trevor Shavehead earned national acclaim as the two remaining Thunderbird players in a wild double-overtime conference basketball game. <> For the first time ever, the UTTC Women went all the way to the NJCAA Division II national basketball tournament. <> The Welding program was certified as an accredited test facility of the American Welding Society. <> UTTC became the first tribal college in the country to earn designation as a "Tree Campus USA." <> The college hosted a "Prayer for Peace" gathering for unity in resolving community friction over the Dakota Access Pipeline. <> UTTC received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer its fourth bachelor's degree: Environmental Science and Research.

2017

United Tribes instituted a Student Work Repayment program to help settle unpaid bills that accumulated while attending the college. <> UTTC became a certified third-party biller for medical care provided at the college's wellness center. <> The powwow arena overflowed with family descendants of World War One-era Native servicemen from the college's governing

tribes. Honored were the sacrifices of those who served in the "Great War" in Europe.

2018

Legislation initiated by the North Dakota Congressional delegation helped UTTC avert the loss of federal Pell Grant eligibility. The measure excused high student loan default rates at colleges located in high poverty areas. <> After a two-year trial, the Native Student Tuition Waiver became a permanent program. <> The college received a combination USDA grant/loan to construct a storm water system on the campus. <> At the outset of the annual powwow, the newly renovated dance arbor was re-dedicated with a slightly new name, "Lone Star Veterans Arena."

2019

United Tribes Technical College celebrated its 50th anniversary as a tribal college by recalling its origins in service to the economic success of North Dakota's tribal nations and renewing the proud legacy of workforce development through technical education and academic training. The occasion was marked with projects and events around the time of the annual powwow that focused on recognizing college leaders, graduates and staff members. <> The "United Tribes 50-Year Chronology" was published, containing highlights of college history as an informative resource and guide for researchers. <> Rain caused planners to move events indoors at the Bismarck Event Center for two days of the United Tribes Technical College International Powwow. <> The Fox family of the M/H/A Nation made a major contribution to the powwow in the name of Lee Fox Sr. and his wife Elizabeth Marie Fox to honor their leadership in starting the college's first powwow in 1970. <> A 50-year United Tribes Winter Count was published as Chapter 13 in the 2019-2021 edition of the North Dakota Blue Book.

<><><><><>

The *United Tribes Technical College Winter Count* was compiled by Phil Baird and reviewed in 2009 by members of the United Tribes 40th Anniversary History Sub-committee: Charlene Weis, chair; Anne Kuyper, Glenna Muller, Ann Kraft, Kathy Aller, Phil Baird and Dennis J. Neumann. It was edited and updated in 2019 by Dennis J. Neumann and reviewed by the United Tribes 50th Anniversary Sub-Committee: Kathy Dye-Chapin, chair; Dan Henry, Melvin Miner, Lisa Azure, Jolene DeCoteau, Amanda Hairy Shirt, Leander "Russ" McDonald and Dennis J. Neumann. Learn more from the *United Tribes Technical College Chronology* posted in the library and archive section of the college website www.uttc.edu.

<><><><><>