Your report states clearly that tribal colleges deserve to survive and prosper. But will the American people ever see the report? Will they learn, as you have, how important and effective our colleges are, not just for Indian people, but for the nation?

Or will it be just another study that gathers dust on the shelf?

As a critical first step, the presidents of the 27 tribal colleges have created the American Indian College Fund. Your report "strongly recommends" that foundations and other philanthropies make significant contributions. We hope that happens, and are working hard to see that it does. But that alone will not be enough.

We need to build a coalition of people all across America to join us. We need people who care about education, about the economy, about the environment, about social problems, about justice - but most of all about wasted human potential. We need you. I hope you can join us as a charter member and become an example for others.

No college today can survive for long without a fund provided by its supporters. The fact that we are the youngest colleges in America, and that we serve the poorest populations, should not deny us what others take for granted.

Other schools regularly call on their alumni. Aren't all Americans alumni of our land, our spirit, our heritage?

Does it seem too much to ask you, and the American people, to help us? After all, tribal colleges have come so far in such a short time. We were founded to help ourselves, and we have succeeded on our own.

Yet only committed caring individuals can create the stability we so badly need.

Now that there is finally an Indian higher education system proven effective by your study, will the American people listen? Do they want Indians to succeed? Will they help us?

I believe they will. I hope you do.

Sincerely,

Janine Pease-Windy Boy

Janine Pease-Windy Boy
President
Little Big Horn College
Crow Agency, Montana

P.S. We have just been awarded a challenge grant from the MacArthur Foundation. They will give us one dollar for every two we receive. If people only knew, I know they would respond generously. Please help us get our message out.

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1/92