Americans need an education to get a decent job, which is why they are applying to tribal colleges in record numbers!

Yet most can't attend without a scholarship. The poverty is too deep on the reservations. And the job opportunities where they could earn enough money for tuition simply don't exist.

Can you see why I -- and they -- feel so frustrated, and why we need your help?

Thankfully, the Hearst Foundation grant is an enormous boost. Just think, if you help us match it, as many more students can attend a tribal college this year.

Believe me, that will make all the difference in the world for people like Ruth Hopkins, a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Nation. She's typical of many tribal college students.

Ruth and her husband worked at low-paying jobs that barely met their needs. She wanted to attend college but thought it was impossible. She had two children. And she had no money.

"Like many of our people on reservations sprinkled across this country," Ruth says, "I felt as if I was in a hopeless situation, and I had lost faith in myself."

But thanks to caring people like you who support the American Indian College Fund, Ruth now attends Cankdeska Cikana Community College in Fort Totten, North Dakota. It's hard work, but Ruth told us . . .

> *"I find strength in the eyes of my two young sons, and in knowing that there are hundreds more like me in Tribal schools across the country working just as hard through their blood, sweat and tears, to better themselves, their families, and their people. I can even dare to dream about the future."*

Ruth is flourishing by receiving an education close to home at a college that respects and reflects her Indian heritage.

That's what makes tribal colleges unique. They're welcoming communities for Native Americans who often struggle to fit in on traditional campuses.

I admire Ruth and I'm sure you do, too. But for every success like hers, many will never be able to attend a tribal college without help from the American Indian College Fund.

I ask you to please help them reach their dreams of becoming nurses, accountants, engineers, ranchers, and many other

(over, please)