

## Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver Program

The state universities of Michigan are fully supportive of partnering with state government to enhance college access for economically disadvantaged populations. One such population is Native Americans. Recognizing this, the Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver (ITW) program was enacted in the 1970s, pursuant to a 1934 executive agreement the state of Michigan entered into with the federal government to provide free public education for Native students. The ITW provides Michigan residents who are at least one-quarter Native American and are certified members of a United States tribe free tuition at all of the state's 15 public universities and 28 community colleges. For decades, the State of Michigan did not honor its obligations to fund these students, leaving universities and community colleges to absorb large losses from enrolling these students who do not pay tuition. Thankfully, current leadership in the Michigan Legislature has become a champion of supporting these students and the institutions and should be commended for their support. Because the costs will rise each year as tuition and enrollment change, sustained annual support will be crucial for continued success.

### Policy Action:

- Advocate for the state to fully fund its mandated Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver program.