

Spotlight: Meet the University Centers Working with Indigenous Communities!

In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, the University Center Cohort Corner would like to recognize and honor University Centers working with Indigenous communities. Here is a snapshot of the work some of these centers are doing:



New Mexico State University

The University Center at New Mexico State University

The Center has a dual focus to enhance and foster entrepreneurial cultivation and bolster technology commercialization in New Mexico. Initiatives will connect rural, tribal, and smaller-sized communities to resources and opportunities they might not have otherwise have access to, promoting inclusivity and equitable access to entrepreneurial support.



San Juan College

Harvest Food Hub and Kitchen

To date, the Harvest Food Hub and Kitchen (HFHK) has helped many farmers grow their businesses and directly facilitated approximately \$275,000 in income for local farmers. HFHK's Next steps include expansion into a commercial kitchen entrepreneurship program, projecting measurable growth in the number and size of food entrepreneurs, an increase of minority entrepreneurs, and an enhanced network within the food production cluster to support innovation, teach best practices, improve systems, and increase quality and quantity of products brought to market.



Southeastern Oklahoma
State University

Southeastern Oklahoma State University

Texoma Region Economic Empowerment Center

The Center will empower the regional economy through two channels: (1) train University students through real world situations applying classroom theory to live businesses, and (2) enlist regional businesses and entrepreneurs as clients. Businesses owned by Native Americans will be a focus of the Center, due to the Center's location to the Choctaw Nation and a large percentage of Native American students enrolled at the University.



University of Montana

University of Montana EDA University Center

The Center connects underserved, early-stage businesses with targeted training, coaching, expertise, and resources to ensure they are ready to apply for funding, and able to deploy capital effectively in key areas such as scaling up inventory, adding new equipment or facilities, and expanding their workforce. The Center supports funders to find methods to successfully fund current underfunded entrepreneurs by providing data collection, analyses and facilitation of new financing methods that are able to reach women-owned, Indigenous-owned, and other underserved rural businesses.



SUU SOUTHERN
UTAH
UNIVERSITY

Utah Tech and Southern Utah University

Southern Utah Entrepreneurship Hub

The Southern Utah Entrepreneurship Hub (SUEH) connects multiple strategies: establishes monthly convenings of a Regional Coordination Council to increase the resiliency of the regional economic ecosystem; develops and delivers monthly training through a FutureReady Utah Worksites Academy to build a high-skill workforce, and develops high-skill training programs in target industries; and cultivates equitable innovation through business outreach, assessment, referral, and support services for underserved employers by Targeted Outreach

Coordinators strategically positioned throughout the region. Achieving its full capacity, SUEH's model establishes and engages regional systems and partnerships that are continuously focused on bringing innovation to the region.