

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 (MITW) 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 MITW provides Michigan residents who are at least one-quarter Native American blood quantum and are enrolled 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, for several years now, lawmakers have wisely made adjustments in the baseline budget adjustments to allow for full reimbursement to universities for actual MITW costs incurred. Because the costs will rise each year as tuition and enrollment change, sustained annual support remains crucial for continued success.

Policy Action:

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