

Tribal College Librarians Institute (TCLI) 2020 Gathering

GPO Employee Assists Tribal College Librarians with GPO Services and Resources

For more than 40 years, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) have changed the lives of thousands of students who might not have otherwise pursued higher education. The Tribal Colleges grew out of the American Indian “self-determination” movement of the 1960s with the first tribally-controlled college established in 1968 by the Navajo Nation. Today the nation's Tribal Colleges consist of 37 TCUs with more than 75 sites in the United States providing access to higher education to over 80 percent of Indian Country, serving more than 100,000 in academic and community-based programs annually. In 1994, in recognition of the essential ties between the colleges, tribal lands, and local economic development, Congress designated Tribal Colleges as land grant institutions.

As is common in most colleges and universities, libraries and librarians are an important part of the institution and community.

“Tribal libraries provide more than library services,” said Cordelia Hooee of Pueblo of Zuni Governor’s Office Archive & Library. “They also serve as archives, language repositories, heritage centers, museums, and a gateway to local, state, and federal service programs, learning centers, and community gathering places.”

To address the unique needs of TCU libraries and in response to a request for a special workshop to address

the professional needs of librarians at Montana’s seven tribal colleges, the Tribal College Librarians Institute (TCLI) was founded in 1990 by the Montana State University (MSU) Library and holds the TCLI conference annually on the MSU campus in Bozeman.

TCLI was designed to provide continuing education, professional development and networking opportunities for tribal college librarians and librarians who have mandates to serve tribal college students. The institute has helped facilitate the acculturation of many librarians who are new to tribal college libraries, often contributing to their longevity. While MSU librarians coordinate the annual event, they rely heavily on a Native Librarian Advisory Board to provide the most relevant and timely programming. Each year they strive to create a balanced mix of topics from basic librarianship to cutting edge developments, while addressing cultural concerns important at the tribal colleges. This is especially important because even today, more than half of the librarians are non-Native. They have featured guest speakers and experts from both the library profession and Native culture. A growing trend over the past decade has been for many of the programs to be presented by TCLI participants who are sharing their latest projects and best practices with their peers. Especially important have been Native librarians



Diné College - Kinyaa'aanii Charlie Benally Library, Tsaile, AZ.

The first tribally controlled and accredited collegiate institution in the United States was established in 1968 as Navajo Community College and was later renamed Diné College.

who have served as role models and have entered into mentoring relationships with some of the participants.

When tribal college librarians in the region got word of this successful annual workshop, librarians from North Dakota, South Dakota and the state of Washington began to participate. With a grant from the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the program once again expanded to include librarians from all AIHEC affiliated libraries. As the workshop has grown, the coordinators have opened

TCLI to all librarians who serve tribal college students and typically welcomes 35–60 participants from across the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

In 2004, after a decade of networking and group problem solving informally during the TCLI workshops, the tribal college librarians decided to form their own professional organization, the Tribal College and University Library Association (TCULA) to better serve their needs in a variety of collective efforts and give them more of a voice in the profession



Fort Peck Community College – James E. Shanley Tribal Library, Poplar, MT.

Opening in September of 2012, the library was designated a Tribal Library by the Tribal government and serves the whole reservation population as the major resource/research center for students, faculty, community and professionals. The library was named in honor of Dr. James E. Shanley, retired Fort Peck Community College President, who was instrumental in Indian Country Higher Education for 40+ years and a tremendous library advocate.



Todd Scudiere, Technical Services Librarian in GPO's LSCM since 2011, speaking at one of the TCLI Conferences. In 2015, he became the first liaison between GPO and the tribal college library community.

and at their own institutions. They convene each June at TCLI on the MSU campus and at annual AIHEC meetings, and other conferences and workshops.

MSU Professor/Research Service Librarian, Mary Anne Hansen, is the Director of MSU's TCLI and said the highlight of her career has been her 22-year involvement with the TCLI.

"Often, the tribal college library is the only library on a reservation, and it also fills the role of a public library," Hansen said.

To ensure tribal college librarians can receive the training, Hansen has procured more than \$800,000 in grants to help reduce travel expenses for librarians attending the institute. Over the 29-year history of the institute, more than 400 librarians and presenters have benefited from it; many attendees return multiple times and represent 25 states, and four Canadian provinces. Hansen said, "I've formed deep and rewarding relationships with many of the tribal college librarians, and I've learned so much from them."

In addition, Hansen is a leader in the library community, not only through her work with the Montana Library Association but also through her involvement with the American Indian Library Association (AILA), which has included working with the American Library Association (ALA) to create an advocacy toolkit for rural, native and tribal libraries. In December of 2019, Hansen was named one of only 10 winners nationwide of the I Love My Librarian Award from the ALA. This prestigious honor recognizes librarians for leadership in the profession and for their

commitment to transforming lives.

The Government Publishing Office (GPO) has been a participant in TCLI through GPO's Library Services Content Management (LSCM) business unit, which administers the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Todd Scudiere, a Technical Services Librarian in GPO's LSCM since 2011, became the first liaison between GPO and the tribal college library community in 2015.

Scudiere said, "Working as a Technical Services Librarian, I have selected and tailored certain GPO resources for the tribal college library community. I can also answer direct cataloging questions and assist with related issues."

"Tribal libraries are very diverse and difficult to generalize about," Scudiere indicated. "They are typically located on tribal lands or sovereign nations, administered by a tribe and serve the needs of the local community as well as serve as a repository of tribal knowledge for all. They can be public libraries, at schools and colleges, and in museums and archives. Tribal college libraries are part of colleges and universities and serve the needs of the students, faculty and staff of that particular college or university. The TCLI conference in Montana is for tribal college libraries, and there are currently nine of the libraries in the FDLP. They are located in Alaska, Washington, Montana, New Mexico, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Minnesota."

The TCLI conference is typically attended by 40–50 tribal college librarians, though this year it went

online for the first time due to the pandemic and social distancing concerns. The conference consisted of various on-line sessions via Zoom and WebEx, largely presented by tribal college librarians themselves, as well as, a couple others. The overarching goal of the 2020 online alternative gathering was to provide a means for tribal college librarians to connect and share what they're doing in response to COVID-19. They also discussed how to improve internet access, concerns and plans for reopening their libraries, programs on Cree language revitalization, the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) new PubMed, and more.

In response to a need discovered over the years while attending the TCLI conference, Scudiere started to create subject-based lists of GPO resources on various topics that serve the needs of students, faculty, and staff at Tribal College Libraries (TCLs). This year, Scudiere presented about GPO's Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) on GitHub Resources for Tribal Colleges Project.

"This is a relatively new project, and our goal is to run these lists quarterly to highlight online publications recently added to the CGP in those subject areas," said Scudiere. "These subject areas have been requested by tribal college Federal Depository Libraries and we are hoping to continue and expand upon this project."

"Todd Scudiere has represented GPO well at the annual TCLI for six years now, and it's obvious that TCLI participants welcome his gentle presence," said



Little Big Horn College Library – Crow Agency, MT.

Little Big Horn College, located on the banks of the Little Big Horn River is a two-year, tribally owned community college, serving the people of the Crow Indian Reservation. The college is directed by the Board of Trustees elected by districts within the reservation. The library design, completed in 2008, included an interactive engagement process with the staff, students and Crow reservation community, as well as research into Crow culture, patterns and artifacts which are reflected in the buildings' design and patterns. The buildings are decorated throughout with Crow parfleche and beadwork patterning in brick, painted concrete, and tilework.

Hansen. "They are glad to have him available in person at each annual gathering. Though many Native peoples have a long-standing mistrust of federal government because of historical trauma from boarding schools, broken treaties, etc., Todd has established himself as a trustworthy representative of GPO at each annual TCLI gathering. He is respectfully proactive about speaking with TCLI participants to learn what their real needs are, as well as how they use GPO services and resources. Todd serves a valuable role in helping GPO recognize and adapt resources and services to the unique needs of tribal college and university



Jaime Huaman and Cathy Wagner of the Government Publishing Office presenting a certificate to Eva English, Director of the Aaniih Nakoda College Library (Harlem, MT), recognizing 10 years of participation in the Federal Depository Library Program.

libraries.”

Scudiere commented about his interaction with the TCLI over the years saying, “My outreach with the tribal college library community has been the most rewarding, fulfilling and eye-opening part of my ten-year career at GPO. It is an honor for me to be accepted into this community, and I continue to be amazed, shocked and humbled by everything I learn. Most rewarding has been the long-lasting friendships formed at TCLI and ongoing interaction.”

On July 2nd of this year, Congress introduced the Library Stabilization Fund Act establishing \$2 billion dollars to address financial losses and bolster library services, with priority to the hardest-hit communities to accelerate recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The legislation would also allocate \$45 million in formula grants to Tribal libraries.

Though face-to-face communication, sharing, learning, and comradery were not possible this year, the TCLI conference and TCU libraries help strengthen tribal communities through higher education and preserving their culture, tradition, and environment. GPO plays a unique and important role by providing free and open access to federal government information for all. This includes treaties and legislation that has historically impacted Native Americans. Govinfo.gov is a tremendous resource for this and Scudiere knows firsthand this resource is being used at Tribal college libraries. The GPO and LSCM are honored to participate and proud of Todd Scudiere’s contributions.



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Aaniiih Nakoda College Library (Harlem, MT) serves as the public library for the Fort Belknap reservation and the academic library for Aaniiih Nakoda College.