



Tuesday, July 19, 2022

In Today's Edition

- NCHER Summer Legal Meeting: Virtual Option Now Available, Register Today!
- House Education and Labor Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Tribal Colleges and Universities
- Education Trust Report Examines How Student Loan Debt Harms Black Borrowers' Mental Health
- U.S. Department of Education News
- Member News
- General News

NCHER Summer Legal Meeting: Virtual Option Now Available, Register Today!

NCHER will hold its Summer Legal Meeting on Thursday, July 28, at the offices of Norton Rose Fulbright, which is located downtown at 799 9th St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC. For those members unable to travel, NCHER has decided to offer a virtual option so that all members can take advantage of the program agenda. The program agenda can be found [here](#), and includes an update on the activities of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, developments in financing federal and private student loans, legal issues with federal student loan forgiveness and Operation Fresh Start, a discussion of state laws affecting student loan servicing and private student loan lending, and a primer on federal contracting, as well as a Washington update. The registration fee is \$400 for

members and \$500 for nonmembers. So [register today!](#)

House Education and Labor Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Tribal Colleges and Universities

Today, the House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment held a hearing titled, “The History and Continued Contributions of Tribal Colleges and Universities.” In her [opening statement](#), Chairwoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) said that Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) were founded, in part, to help combat cultural erasure after the systematic decimation of Native communities. She said that “these communities have been deeply marked by historical trauma, stemming, in part, from the use of education as a tool of government-forced assimilation. TCUs now play a critical role in protecting and preserving culture and traditions. They also provide support to Native American students to help them succeed and meaningfully contribute to the self-governance of their Nations.” Chairwoman Bonamici said that, today, there are 35 accredited TCUs serving more than 27,000 students representing more than 250 federally recognized tribes. Each of these 35 institutions plays a critical role in the education of Native students by providing an affordable, culturally based education and a supportive learning environment. In addition, these institutions often provide essential resources to the communities in which they are located. She noted that a survey of several TCUs in 2019 found that 80 percent of their students experienced food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness. In response to the data, TCUs are helping to address barriers to completion and built successful in-house programs to support the basic needs of their students. The Chairwoman concluded her remarks but saying that, although they have an important role, TCUs often lack resources because they do not have the same access to funding from state and local governments as other colleges and universities. As a result, TCUs are chronically underfunded and face limitations on their institutional capacity to support the students they serve.”

In her [opening statement](#), Ranking Member Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) said that all students, including those at TCUs, are impacted by the broken postsecondary education system, which creates an incentive for higher tuition costs, poor student outcomes, and unaffordable debt for many Americans. She noted that, over the last 50 years, the nation has seen college costs rise at almost five times the rate of inflation, causing students and their parents to borrow more. She stated, “something has gone wrong. Instead of fixing the root cause of our student debt problems, such as ballooning college costs and lack of accountability for poor performing programs, Democrats are content doing what they

always do: throwing more money at the problem and expecting a different outcome. Instead of looking at the data to determine who is borrowing more and why, and reforming the system, Democrats are pursuing misguided mass student loan forgiveness.” She continued, “This is a major mistake. Let’s be clear about one thing - there is no such thing as student loan forgiveness. These loans don’t go away: Democrats are simply undertaking a massive transfer of wealth from hardworking taxpayers to the most affluent in the society. These policies are reverse Robin Hoods - taking from the poor to pay the rich. Further, if Democrats believe student loan debt is a problem why aren’t they willing to hold a hearing on the topic? By not holding a hearing or asking the tough questions about fixing the loan system, Democrats are showing that they are comfortable ceding their congressional authority to the Biden Administration, who in the last year and a half has already extended the repayment pause four times without legitimate reason and is changing the rules for multiple programs, changes that would not pass Congress.” She closed by stating that it is time for Congressional Democrats to take their legislative duty seriously and work across the aisle to reform the federal student loan system.

In her [testimony](#), Dr. Beth Akers, Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, stated that TCUs face a distinct challenge; educating an otherwise unserved population, often in rural communities without thriving local economies. Unfortunately, she stated, these institutions do not have an impressive track record of delivering their students into economic opportunity. She noted that TCUs have low graduation rates, with just 20 percent of beginning students completing a degree within six years. Dr. Akers noted that students enrolling at TCUs are not the only ones being let down by the system of higher education. The approximately 30,000 students being served annually across 32 fully accredited TCUs represent just a small share of the millions of students enrolling in accredited institutions of higher education each year. She stated that investing in education beyond high school is one of the surest pathways to economic prosperity in the United States. However, not all students who invest in higher education will earn the typical return. Some students, she stated, will end up worse off financially than when they began. At one-third of institutions, more than half of students will not be earning more than the typical high-school graduate 10 years after their initial enrollment. Dr. Akers said that the financial risk associated with postsecondary education is the single greatest impediment to the system of higher education better serving both students and taxpayers. Systemic reform through legislation is necessary to make investing in higher education less risky for students and also to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used efficiently. She stated that this can largely be accomplished through a small number of deep reforms to the federal student loan program:

- Preventing colleges with a track record of poor student outcomes from accessing the federal student aid program.
- Replacing the patchwork of loan repayment programs with a single, universal loan repayment program that will ensure that the neediest borrowers have access to the relief they need.
- Stopping students in graduate and professional schools from borrowing without limit.

In addition, Dr. Akers stated that it is crucial to reject calls for quick fixes like widespread federal student loan cancellation, which would exacerbate current systemic challenges while costing taxpayers billions.

In her [testimony](#), Dr. Sandra Boham, President of Salish Kootenai College (SKC), stated that TCUs are place-based and mission-focused institutions. They serve critical roles in preparing individual American Indian and Alaska Native students for success, as well as strengthening and sustaining the Tribes, Tribal communities, lands, languages, and cultures. SKC, like all TCUs, was established for two reasons: (1) the near complete failure of the U.S. higher education system to address the needs of – or even include – American Indians and Alaska Natives; and (2) the need to perpetuate the culture, language, lands, and sovereignty. After giving an overview of the Salish Kootenai College, she stated that Tribal College and University funding is very complex which makes budgeting and long-term planning even more challenging. In her [testimony](#), Carrie Billy, President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, stated that what began as one college on the Navajo Nation, there are now 35 accredited tribal colleges serving more than 130,000 American Indians and Alaska natives and other rural community members each year. She stated that, through academic and community-based programs at more than 75 sites in 15 states, students come from more than half of all federally recognized Indian tribes and about 30 states. The goal of every college is to build its own education system founded on ways of knowing traditional knowledge and spirituality. She stated that tribal colleges are also severely underfunded. The responsibility for providing operating support for tribal colleges falls to the federal government because of the federal trust responsibility, treaty, obligations, and the exchange of over 1 billion acres of land. Yet, she stated, the average TCU receives only about a little more than \$8,000 per native student with no operating support for non-enrolled tribal members and little or no funding from the states although tribal colleges are public institutions. Ms. Billy continued that tribal colleges lead in several areas in awarding American Indian and Alaska Native degrees such as accounting, business, construction, natural resource conservation, computer, and information science and

training native teachers and nurses. She mentioned that tribal colleges are growing the native workforce who graduate debt free and contribute to the local tax base. Cynthia Lindquist, President of Cankdeska Cikana Community College was not able to testify at the hearing, but her testimony can be found [here](#).

For more information, including an archived webcast of the hearing, visit the [committee website](#).

Education Trust Report Examines How Student Loan Debt Harms Black Borrowers' Mental Health

The Education Trust recently released a [briefing](#) that found student loan debt takes a toll on the mental health of Black borrowers. The brief is the second in a four-part series based on the National Black Student Debt Study, a survey of nearly 1,300 Black borrowers and 100 in-depth interviews. It found that 64 percent of respondents reported student debt had harmed their mental health. Even among students enrolled in income-driven repayment plans, the majority of respondents said loans were their “primary source of financial stress” and came with negative mental health effects. The brief shared the accounts of Black borrowers who said in interviews that student loan debt led some of them to depression, stress, anxiety and suicidal ideation. The brief recommends canceling at least \$50,000 of federal student debt regardless of income, loan type, or degree level - (80 percent of study participants recommended the federal government cancel all student debt.) It also suggests doubling the Pell Grant, making public college free through federal-state partnerships, and making reforms to income-driven loan repayment plans.

U.S. Department of Education News

For today's *Federal Register*, click [here](#).

The following announcements were posted to Federal Student Aid's Knowledge Center:

- [\(GEN-22-11\) Procedures for Institutions Seeking Approval of a Request to Change or Add Accrediting Agencies](#)
- [\(GEN-22-10\) Guidance for Institutions Seeking to Change or Add Accrediting Agencies](#)

Member News



Trellis Research conducts an annual, nationwide student survey to examine the connection between college student financial wellbeing and student success.

Trellis can partner with your organization to bring the [Student Financial Wellness Survey](#) to your state. Participating institutions receive a report that is unique to their campus and statewide reports can be produced. Contact Trellis at partnerships@trelliscompany.org to discuss bringing the [Student Financial Wellness Survey](#) to your state!

General News

The Student Borrower Protection Center released a [report](#) saying that a recent review of contracts between public and private nonprofit universities and online program managers or OPMs reveals risks for both students and the institutions.

[Forbes](#) and [MarketWatch](#) report that several Members of Congress have an alternative answer to federal student loan cancellation being discussed by the Biden Administration – a 0 percent interest rate for student loans.

[The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) reports that, while higher education has largely recovered nearly all of its pandemic-associated job losses, the task of recruiting and hiring administrators and staff members has become a daunting one, according to a *Chronicle* survey of college leaders, hiring managers, and administrators that was conducted with support from the Huron Consulting Group.

[Bankrate](#) reports on the impact of inflation on college tuition and how the cost of college has risen over time.

[The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) reports that colleges and universities in recent years have boasted that they are steadfastly committed to student and faculty racial diversity.

But a new analysis by McKinsey & Company says that is really more talk than action.

[Forbes](#) examines how S. 4400, the “College Savings Recovery Act,” would make 529 College Savings Plans a no-brainer. A common complaint is what families might do with money leftover should the beneficiary get a full ride or not attend college - withdrawing leftover funds subjects the account owner to both tax on earnings plus a 10 percent penalty tax as a nonqualified withdrawal. The latest bill would mitigate that penalty by allowing assets to be rolled into a Roth IRA.

An online version of this Daily Briefing is available to view and print from the [Daily Briefing Section](#) of the [NCHER e-Library](#).

Do not forward this email with this link included.

Anyone clicking on this link will unsubscribe you from the Daily Briefing distribution.

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage subscription](#)

Copyright © 2022

National Council of Higher Education Resources

1050 Connecticut Ave NW #65793

Washington, DC 20035

Phone: **(202) 822-2106**

Fax: (202) 822-2142

MailPoet