MARKETING PLAN

2017-2019
BACKGROUND

WHITE EARTH TRIBAL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MISSION

White Earth Tribal and Community College is an institution of higher learning dedicated to academic excellence grounded in Anishinaabe culture, values, and traditions.

VISION

Gidinwewininaan Gibimiwidoomin niigaanakeyaa – “We are carrying along into the future the way that we were given”

PURPOSE STATEMENTS

- The college will present learning as a life-long process of discovery of knowledge embedded in the intellectual disciplines and the traditions of the Anishinaabe people.
- The college will support the self-determination of the Anishinaabe people through the preservation and promotion of their history, culture, and language.
- The college will seek to address the social, political, and economic needs of the White Earth Reservation through programs that encourage service to the community.
- The college will promote a philosophy based on the seven teachings of the Anishinaabe.

HISTORY

White Earth Tribal and Community College (WETCC) was established on September 8, 1997 by the White Earth Tribal Council per Tribal Resolution #038-97-005. On October 7, 1997 in a two-room humble building in downtown Mahnomen, Minnesota the White Earth Tribal and Community College opened its doors to 40 tribal students. WETCC continued to grow over the years as additional classes were added, various buildings were used to house classrooms throughout downtown Mahnomen.

Established as a not-for-profit tribally controlled educational institution of higher learning, the first Charter was approved on February 5, 1998 “…to provide adult education and post-secondary educational services to enrolled members of the White Earth Reservation and to other eligible Indians and non-Indian residents of the area…”

In 1998 as White Earth Tribal and Community College worked toward establishing accreditation, Moorhead State University offered assistance and Northwest Technical College (Bemidji) began accepting credits on a course-by-course basis; Northland College (Thief River Falls) followed.
The first graduation was held on May 25, 2000 for students who completed certificate programs. Official non-profit 501(c)3 status was obtained in 2000 and by 2001 four-hundred and sixty-three students had already been enrolled in degree and certificate granting programs.

WETCC attained Federal status in May of 2002 when H.R. 2646 – Farm Security Act of 2002 added White Earth Tribal and Community College as the 31st land-grant college. The Extension Office was added in 2003 and during that same year WETCC purchased the first property on 124 South First Street.

Initial Candidacy for Accreditation by The Higher Learning Commission was granted on October 14, 2004 with full accreditation granted on October 8, 2008. In 2010 Phase I construction was completed at 2250 College Road, the Drum Hall was added in 2012 and the location continued to grow through 2016 when construction phase III was completed and all students, faculty, and staff were finally located on one campus, greatly enhancing the ability of faculty and staff to serve students.

WETCC currently offers an Associate of Arts degree where students can choose between the following emphasis:

- Business
- Early Childhood Education
- Education
- Environmental Science
- Human Services
- Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences
- Native American Studies

WETCC is classified as a Private Not-for-Profit 2-year institution with the U.S. Department of Education and maintains accreditation with The Higher Learning Commission. WETCC is also participates with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) which requires at least 44 semester credits of lower division general education credits. MnTC credits are transferable to any state college and university in Minnesota. WETCC furthers the goals of MnTC by requiring each area to include and address the topic from an Anishinaabe perspective while meeting MnTC requirements.

GEOGRAPHY

White Earth Tribal and Community College is in northwestern Minnesota on the White Earth Indian Reservation which is a federally recognized Indian Tribe. White Earth is the largest reservation in Minnesota encompassing about 1,300 square miles.

Rail transportation is available but there are no four-lane highways within the boundaries of the Reservation. The closest commercial airports are located in Bemidji, MN and Fargo, ND.
DEMOGRAPHICS

Data from the 2010 U.S. Census shows the Reservation has five incorporated cities and five villages, including:

- Mahnomen City, population 1,214
- Naytahwaush Village, population 578
- White Earth Village, population 580
- Waubun City, population 400
- Pine Point Village, population 338
- Rice Lake Village, population 235
- Callaway City, population 234
- Ogema City, population 184
- Elbow Lake Village, population 95
- Bejou City, population 89

White Earth Tribal and Community College is located on the east side of the City of Mahnomen, which is the largest population base on the White Earth Reservation.

U.S. Census data reports in addition to the small cities and villages, about 6,000 more people live throughout the Reservation for a total population of 9,919 people within 3,720 households (average household size = 2.64 people). The median age is 38 with the age distribution as follows:

![Population by Age](image)

Of the population on the White Earth Reservation, about one-half consider themselves American Indian with the other one-half White.

Based upon historical populations of Mahnomen County and the other two counties located on the White Earth Reservation, the Minnesota State Demographers Office projects the population of the
White Earth Reservation is projected to see slight growth over the next 20-25 years (White Earth Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy “CEDS”).

Educational attainment for many tribal members is low per the White Earth CEDS report. “Of adults 25 years and over, 16.3% have not graduated from high school. More than one-third (37.8%) are high school graduates and 19.9% have an associate’s degree or higher.”

White Earth Tribal and Community College was also recognized in the White Earth report (SWOT analysis) as being “an excellent resource for creating a network of talent on the Reservation.” Opportunities in the report cited White Earth Tribal and Community College as “new opportunities to train workers for skilled living wage jobs” and “new opportunities to train workers in the latest technology.”

U.S. Census data also continues to report a persistent problem for residents of the White Earth Reservation. The White Earth CEDS reports in 2010 25% of the overall population live in poverty and 35% of the children. The data below is reported from the 2013 White Earth CEDS report based upon 2010 U.S. Census data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of People and Families with Income Below the Poverty Line</th>
<th>MN</th>
<th>White Earth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All People</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 years</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and older</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Families</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with Children under 18</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Headed Families with Children under 18</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Student Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) has identified that a majority of our students come from Mahnomen, Waubun, Naytahwaush, White Earth and Ogema areas. The SEMP has also identified that between 2008 and 2014 almost one-half of our students were between the ages of 20 and 29 and 64% of our students were female. 77% of our students during the same time were American Indian.
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

A situational analysis refers to a methodology used to analyze an organization’s internal and external environment to better understand our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Information for WETCC SWOT Analysis was gathered over years, dating back to strategic planning sessions conducted in 2014 and going forward to review and update as conditions change over time. Information was gathered from students, staff, and faculty.

IN THE SWOT ANALYSIS STRENGTHS ARE INTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WETCC THAT GIVE US AN ADVANTAGE OVER OTHERS

- Anishinaabe Teachings
- Committed Staff
- Beautiful Campus
- Engaged Students
- Small Community
- Accreditation
- Lowest Tuition in the State
- Low Faculty to Student Ratios
- Good Partnerships
- Financial aid for students
- Ojibwemowin
- Accredited by HLC
- MN Transfer Curriculum
- Chartered by the W.E. Reservation
- Cultural Opportunities
- We are now located within one campus

IN THE SWOT ANALYSIS WEAKNESSES ARE INTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WETCC THAT MAY PLACE US AT A DISADVANTAGE

- Funding Reliance & Restrictions
- Lack of Funding
- High Staff & Student Turnover
- Inconsistent Policies & Procedures
- Lack of Policies & Procedures
- Under Staffed & Over Worked
- Turmoil that Impacts our Reputation
- Student Retention
- Lack of Programming
- Low Enrollment
- Business Partnerships
- Lack of Accurate Data
- Leadership Changes
- Marketing
- Board Training
- Organizational structure (policies/procedures) needs improvement
- Lack of Marketing
- More Professional Appearance (Marketing Materials)
- High Financial Aid Recipients
IN THE SWOT ANALYSIS OPPORTUNITIES ARE EXTERNAL ELEMENTS IN OUR ENVIRONMENT THAT COULD BE A POTENTIAL

- HLC Academies
- Community Partnerships
- Ample Room for Growth
- Marketing
- Donor Relationships
- Alliance of Ojibwe Colleges (AOC)

- CEU’s
- Partner with Other Universities
- Partner with Largest employer in NW MN
- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)
- Job market in Local Area

IN THE SWOT ANALYSIS THREATS ARE EXTERNAL ELEMENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT THAT CREATE A POTENTIAL TO CAUSE HARMFUL EFFECTS FOR WETCC

- Low HS Graduation Rates (and equivalency)
- Limited Population in Area
- Number of jobs in the area
- High Reliance on Federal Funding
- High Poverty Area
- Historical Trauma
- Parental Support
- Participation & Follow Through

- Misinformation Flows Fast
- Student Numbers
- Competition
- Lack of Students Interested in Postsecondary
- Drug Use
- Rez Life
- Apathy
TUITION & FEES

Tuition rates are established by the WETCC Council of Trustees, for the 2016-2017 academic year tuition and fees were approved as follows:

Tuition:

$130.00 per credit hour

Student Services Fee:

$5.00 per credit for all students

Food Service Fee:

$200.00 for students taking 12+ credits
$150.00 for 3/4 students taking 9-12 credits
$100.00 for students taking 6-9 credits
No fee is charged to students taking less than 6 credits

Student Activity Fee:

$2.50 per credit hour is charged each semester

Technology Fee:

$2.00 per credit is charged each semester

Campus Maintenance Fee:

$5.00 per course is charged each semester

Art Lab Fee:

$70.00 is charged each Semester for students registering in an Arts Course

Science Lab Fee:

$50.00 is charged each semester for students registering in a Science course

Recent research by WETCC Financial Aid office indicates WETCC offers the lowest tuition within the State of Minnesota for post-secondary options.

Data collected from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), a national center for education statistics, confirms WETCC offers the lowest tuition within the State of Minnesota and is the third lowest in the entire United States ($3,285) with only the Blackfeet Community College, MT ($2,670) and the Latter-day Saints Business College, UT ($3,060) offering a lower tuition rate. While the low tuition is definitely a great selling point, low tuition does create challenges with adequate operating funding. In FY2016 tuition revenue was about $39,000 and operating expenses were $3.3m which means we have to multiple our student count by more than 85 times (8,415 students) in order to cover just current operating expenses.
In the IPEDS 2016 report (reporting 2015 data), WETCC was compared to 20 other similar institutions, including one in our immediate market area (Leech Lake), with results indicative of our low tuition in a high poverty area:

- Our 12-month enrollment numbers for 2014-2015 were low (93) as compared to the median of the group (431);
- The number of degrees we awarded in 2015 was low (9) as compared to the median group (30);
- 100% of our full-time, first-time degree seeking students were awarded grant or scholarship aid during the 2014-2015 school year while 91% of the comparison group received aid;
- While our FT first-time degree seeking students received enough financial aid to cover their tuition and fees, the amount ($3,441) was below the median of the comparison group ($4,502);
- 72% of all our students in 2014-2015 were awarded aid, and the amount of aid they received ($5,286) was more than the median of the comparison group ($4,789);
- WETCC retention rates for full-time, first time degree seeking students in 2014 was considerably higher than the average of the comparison group (87 versus 46);
- Our graduation and transfer-out rates of FT, first-time undergraduates within 150% of normal time to program completion was lower than the average (12 versus 22);
- Only 2% of our revenue is derived from tuition as compared to the comparison group who received 33% of their revenue from tuition – 80% of our revenue comes from government grants and contracts as compared to 1% of the comparison group;
- Our expenses are comparable per FTE enrollment for FY2015 ($7,112 compared to $7,108);
- Overall our FTE staffing is lower than our peers (8 versus 18);
- Our instructional staff are paid considerably less ($25,245) than the average of the comparison group ($42,084).

The entire IPEDS 2016 comparison group data should be consulted in conjunction with the Marketing Plan.

**COMPETITION**

The further away from home a student travels to attend college, the more it will cost. Per the American Council on Education (www.acenet.edu), “When deciding where to go to college, students ask several important questions: How much will it cost? What academic programs are available? Will it prepare me for my future? What colleges and universities are nearby?” In this article, the writer determined that “place matters even more for today’s college students, many of whom work full-time, care for dependents, and have close social ties to their communities...” This is very indicative of the people in our surrounding communities.

White Earth Tribal and Community College is located in a rural area of NW Minnesota with seven (7) other two-year or community colleges within a 100-mile radius.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TWO-YEAR COLLEGE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>MILES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MN State Community and Technical Colleges</td>
<td>Moorhead</td>
<td>South West 71 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northland Community &amp; Technical College</td>
<td>East Grand Forks</td>
<td>North West 80 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northland Community &amp; Technical College</td>
<td>Thief River Falls</td>
<td>North 60 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Lake Nation College</td>
<td>Red Lake Reservation</td>
<td>North East 85 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Technical College</td>
<td>Bemidji</td>
<td>East 63 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leech Lake Tribal College</td>
<td>Leech Lake Reservation</td>
<td>East 81 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN State Community and Technical Colleges</td>
<td>Detroit Lakes</td>
<td>South 37 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN State Community and Technical Colleges</td>
<td>Fergus Falls</td>
<td>South 81 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map of area community colleges
In addition to the two-year and community colleges within 100 miles, three four-year colleges are also within the radius:

- University of Minnesota Crookston – 58 miles northwest
- Bemidji State University – 68 miles east
- Minnesota State University Moorhead – 72 miles southwest

According to Inside Higher Ed (www.insidehighered.com), a study completed in 2016 reports “...for many students, where they go to college depends largely on where they live.” “The majority of incoming freshmen attending public four-year colleges and universities enroll within 50 miles of their home” and the median distance students live from home is 18 miles (46 for private nonprofit four-year colleges, and only eight miles at public two-year colleges).

White Earth Tribal and Community College is in an ideal demographic location for attracting students to a community college setting.
MARKETING STRATEGIES

DIAGNOSIS

Throughout calendar year 2016 the following marketing observations were made:

- A weekly radio spot on Mahnomen 101.5
- Regular recruitment at area events
- Presence at tradeshows and job fairs with folder of photo copied materials
- Outdated website information
- Social media presence with little activity
- Infrequent newspaper articles, advertising, or sponsorships
- Billboards with message of: Your Community, Your College, Your Future

STRATEGIC PLAN

Due to the lack of a consistent marketing campaign in the past, White Earth Tribal and Community College will be like starting fresh. Recent feedback in our local community indicate that even people who live right here in the small town of Mahnomen don’t even know they can take classes at the College.

Three key messages have been identified:

1. WHY WETCC is convenient (cost, location, and low faculty-student ratio)
2. HOW we are a part of the community
3. HOW students benefit

A number of initiatives have been identified to help strengthen White Earth Tribal and Community College which historically has relied upon grants to cover expenses. In 2016 a new Strategic Plan was completed identifying five top priority areas:

1. **Identify and implement fundraising priorities**
   1.a. Increase external funding
   1.b. Prioritize fundraising efforts
   1.c. Advance marketing efforts

2. **Create culturally relevant campus-wide assessment and evaluation**
   2.a. Embed institutional/learner outcomes across campus
   2.b. Incorporate existing data into institutional planning

3. **Strengthen institutional policies and procedures**
   3.a. Develop polies and policy based procedures college-wide
   3.b. Implement policy based procedures college-wide

4. **Enrich and expand college capacity**
   4.a. Increase Anishinaabe culture on campus
   4.b. Increase academic programming
   4.c. Develop non-academic programming
4.d. Enhance community outreach

5. Increase student success and engagement
5.a. Enhance relationship building opportunities with students
5.b. Increase student graduation rates

Marketing has been identified as one of the priorities (Priority 1.c.) and have included the following steps outlined for the 2017 calendar year:

**GOAL: STRENGTHEN OVERALL MARKETING EFFORTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Steps</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Branding</td>
<td>12/31/2016</td>
<td>A consistent look will be established and then written standards established for all personnel when using the official logo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Internal and external signage updated</td>
<td>01/31/2017</td>
<td>Prominent internal and external signage will be visitor friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Create media kit</td>
<td>02/28/2017</td>
<td>Media kit will assist internal staff in marketing efforts to external users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Create tri-fold brochures</td>
<td>12/31/2016</td>
<td>Up-to-date brochures with consistent logo and branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Create poster with prospect cards</td>
<td>01/31/2017</td>
<td>Poster to be visible in multiple public locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Public relations via radio and newspaper</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>At least 50 radio and newspaper encounters will occur by 12/31/2017 to promote a positive image of WETCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Website updated</td>
<td>01/31/2017</td>
<td>Website will be user friendly with calendar of events and ongoing up-to-date information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Social media presence</td>
<td>01/31/2017</td>
<td>At least 2 social media posts will be done weekly to assist in reaching the broader community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Direct Mail</td>
<td>03/31/2017</td>
<td>Two direct mail pieces will be done by 12/31/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07/31/2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Logo’d items</td>
<td>01/31/2017</td>
<td>Logo’d items will be available for sale to the public via the bookstore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARKETING GOALS

Our goal will be to create awareness of WETCC and dispel myths to attract attention and create an interest in WETCC by advertising WHY we are an excellent postsecondary option for the broader community. We will also expand upon the key message “Your Community, Your College, Your Future” which has only been displayed on billboards now. This will be accomplished by creating a presence and increasing visibility throughout the community with the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20th Anniversary</td>
<td>2017 marks the 20th anniversary for WETCC, throughout the summer months WETCC will be active in the community announcing the 20th year, in the fall before the new semester starts a community event will be held. The 20th anniversary will be highlighted beginning April, 2017 and go through August, 2017. We will attend community events throughout the summer with Anniversary Cake featured and use “20th Anniversary” on advertising materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television Ads</td>
<td>In conjunction with Leighton Broadcasting, short (approximately 2-min) videos will be broadcasted on cable channel 3 through the months of March, April and May, 2017. Videos will feature staff and students telling their stories about their journeys at WETCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Ads</td>
<td>Six front page articles will be featured in the Anishinaabeg Today. In addition, pictures and short articles will appear monthly. Press releases will be sent to area news outlets announcing current events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promo Items</td>
<td>New promotional items will be ordered for recruitment and advertising, primarily booths at local events, job fairs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed Materials</td>
<td>Recruitment materials will be reformatted and reprinted in a professional looking image including brochures, flyers, posters and handouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboards</td>
<td>The -Your Community -Your College -Your Future billboards will continue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Ads</td>
<td>Leighton Broadcasting will be used to create some professional radio ads that can be aired on the local radio stations. Press releases will also be sent to area radio outlets announcing current events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Social media is broadly used in our community; this is an excellent opportunity for us to engage people by providing information and creating excitement about WETCC. Social media posts will be frequent to keep us at the forefront of considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Continue presentations with area employers, trade shows, and local job fairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Student Services will continue outreach and recruitment efforts with area employers and attend local tradeshows, job fairs and community events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUDGET

The marketing budget originally included a part-time employee who was paid to work 20 hours per week. When the employee left (March 10, 2017), this offered an opportunity to evaluate the need for a regular employee. We are currently contracting with an individual for creative design. This will be evaluated by the end of FY17 to determine best options.

The marketing budget was established during the summer of 2016 for the fiscal year 2017 and includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing &amp; Binding</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Budget: $32,600 plus the salary and benefit expenses

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Consistent with the Student Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP), this marketing plan is to increase full-time student enrollment by 5% for academic year 2017-2018 and an additional 5% for academic year 2018-2019. Baseline number is the new enrollment of 2016-2017 academic year = 99.

Academic rigor is critical to the growth and success of White Earth Tribal and Community College. If our graduating students go out into the workforce and are perceived as having the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their jobs and practice our Anishinaabe culture, values, and traditions in the community then we have accomplished our mission. While Faculty and Student Services focus on academics and student retention, Marketing will focus on recruitment efforts through community awareness and advertising.

Effectiveness of marketing efforts will be measured primarily by new students entering college, a survey will be developed to determine what attracted them to WETCC and what advertising methods were effective such as:

[ ] Radio
[ ] Television
[ ] Newspaper _____ (name)
[ ] Social Media
[ ] Referral from ________ (current students, alumni, family)
Additionally we will monitor the number of advertisements in newspapers, radio stations and television ads to see if we can meet our
Track website traffic & social media
Track newspaper clippings
Logging correspondence with stakeholders
Logging events attended

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the WETCC Marketing Plan is to support the college mission by enhancing public awareness of WETCC and advertising for recruitment of the College’s programs. This plan is designed to work in conjunction with the Strategic Management Plan to ultimately increase enrollment. The plan seeks to increase awareness of WETCC and overall visibility of the College as we reinforce branding and image.

The success of any marketing plan depends upon many factors, so flexibility, innovation, and adaptability will also be key factors of the Marketing Plan. Adjustments will be made as needed whether it be due to internal or external factors.

White Earth Tribal and Community College is “Your Community, Your College, and Your Future,” by utilizing strategic marketing communications, we will build awareness about the important role we play within the community and expand our student enrollment to be able to continue to expand programs and increase overall financial stability of the WETCC.