



**UNITED TRIBES  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

## **COLLEGE RELATIONS OFFICE**

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### **United Tribes Powwow Canceled for 2020**

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BISMARCK – Out of concern for the safety of thousands of participants and spectators, the 2020 United Tribes Technical College International Powwow has been cancelled, as well as all events associated with “United Tribes Events Week,” scheduled for Sept. 8-13.

Members of the college’s events committees made the decision to protect the wellbeing of those who attend the annual cultural event at the end of summer.

Events effected by the decision are the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Powwow, Tribal Leaders Summit, Legends Softball Tournament, Golf Tournament, Thunderbird Run and Youth Basketball Tournament.

“As we continued planning through the spring, we kept a close watch on how the COVID-19 pandemic was progressing across the country and on the Great Plains,” said Leander R. McDonald, United Tribes Technical College President. “We concluded that our highest priority is to the health and safety of employees, students and the community.”

College planners took into consideration the “North Dakota Smart Restart” guidelines recommended by the State of North Dakota. The three-day powwow event alone attracts in excess of 10,000 participants and spectators from around the world.

“We felt it was our responsibility to model the kind of responsible behavior and leadership that would guide our relatives and friends safely past this unprecedented global threat,” said Jamie Azure, UTTC Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. Melissa Plenty Chief, the Powwow Committee chairperson, stated on behalf of the committee, “At this large a gathering, it would not have been possible to maintain the recommended social distancing and feel confident about avoiding the virus.”

All of North Dakota’s tribal locations have received an initial round of COVID-19 testing in partnership with the State of North Dakota and local public health agencies. At last report, the testing shows that none of the tribes have any more than a small number of positive cases and no deaths from the virus.

Cancelling the Powwow and associated events will have a significant effect on the college and the community. Based on data from previous years, Bismarck-Mandan receives a yearly estimated \$4.2 million-dollar economic boost from visitors to the area that attend the UTTC Events Week.

United Tribes uses the proceeds from Events Week to fund student scholarships. UTTC staff are appreciative that all donors were supportive of moving their gifts to the 2021 UTTC Events Week. Efforts to raise dollars to support student scholarships will continue on an ongoing basis to support UTTC Students.

The planned dates for the next years “Events Week” and United Tribes International Powwow are September 7-12, 2021.

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***Leadership begins here.***