



SINTE GLESKA UNIVERSITY

*Located on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation
Homelands of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate and Chief Spotted Tail's Band
Chartered by the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in 1970
Founding Member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1983*

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WOWAKSAP-WISDOM, WOVACINTANKA-FORTITUDE, WOCHITIKA-BRAVERY, WACANTOGHAKA-GENEROSITY

Sinte Gleska University was founded in 1970 to preserve and teach tribal culture, history, and language and to seek innovative and effective strategies to address social and economic concerns confronting the Sicangu (Burnt Thigh) Lakota Oyate.

The University is “owned” by the people it serves; namely, the Sicangu Lakota Oyate. The people exercise their voice through the tribal charter, the corporate body and representation on the Sinte Gleska University Board of Regents.

The Sicangu Lakota Oyate view Sinte Gleska University as a vehicle for advancement and for confronting problems and challenges. Tribal members and tribal communities seek culturally appropriate educational delivery that serves to preserve and promote the Lakota language and history, that addresses issues such as land and economic development, and that meets tribal needs and priorities.

Sinte Gleska University students seek degree programs that provide job and career skills while prospective employers seek graduates to augment local work force capabilities. Typically, over 200 courses are delivered each semester from the following academic departments: Art, Arts and Science, Business, Education, Graduate Studies, Human Services, Lakota Studies, Student Support Services, and Vocational Education. SGU offers 23 Bachelor Degree programs, 25 Associate Degree Programs, 12 Certificate Programs, and 2 Master Degree Programs (Education and Human Services). The academic programs are accredited through the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. ✧

Damon P. Leader Charge awarded Udall Scholarship

Damon P. Leader Charge was at a crossroads. He was living a life without dedication or determination and filling it instead with drugs and alcohol. So how did The University of South Dakota junior become a 2008 recipient of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship?

“I used to live a crazy life,” admitted Leader Charge, the first USD Native American student to win an undergraduate Udall award. “Drugs and alcohol were affecting my life. I wasn’t going anywhere.”

Leader Charge, a Sicangu Oglala Lakota and member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe of western South Dakota, had enrolled at USD as a freshman in 1993 looking to earn his college degree, return home and serve as a role model to the troubled youths who had no direction, no desire to leave the poverty of the reservation behind. He stayed at USD for three-and-a-half years, but self-admittedly was “treading water without a support group” and, in 1997, he took a leave of absence.

“My dedication and determination wasn’t there,” he explained. “I planned to stay out and looked into a couple of community colleges, the Oglala Lakota College and the Sinte Gleska University in Rosebud, to continue my education, but that never came about.” Instead, Leader Charge focused more on getting into trouble than getting an education. Ultimately, he was scared straight, first by the law and then by the notion that he was letting his life waste away. Realizing his credits had originated at USD and he was familiar with the success of the University’s American Indian Studies program, he made his way back to campus – not to tread water but grow wings.

As one of 80 Udall Scholarship winners nationwide, including just 11 Native American students, Leader Charge received a \$5,000

scholarship toward his undergraduate degree at The University of South Dakota.

His desire to learn more about tribal healthcare and tribal government is crucial to Leader Charge’s future. His short-term goal is to bring something back to his tribe and serve as a role model to the underprivileged youths. Long-term he would like to be tribal chairman, and share the traditions and history of his people with younger generations in his tribe. Considering he’s not afraid to lead by example, those who know him believe Leader Charge is destined to make a difference.

Without hesitation, Leader Charge can name the positive influences that shaped his life on the USD campus. But it’s his mother, Shirley Big Eagle, he credits the most. Despite his ups and downs, she was always there to support him.

“She’s such a strong influence in his life,” Baron said of Big Eagle, an Indian Child Welfare Specialist with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. “It’s easy to see where he gets his drive to be successful.”

While family is important to Leader Charge, responsibility is paramount. He believes in sharing his responsibility with his entire family, which includes his tribal family – not just his extended family. Leader Charge admits that as a “product of countless strong, beautiful men and women,” giving back to them is his ambition once he has completed his educational aspirations.

“All in all, it’s a chance to take the torch and carry out the teachings I’ve learned for the sake of The Next Seven Generations,” said Leader Charge. ✧

