



WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE

A Sovereign Tribal Nation

(Urging Amendment to ARS 15-1643 (B) to Authorize the Creation of an Area Health Education Center That Focuses on the Indian Health System)

- WHEREAS,** The Constitution of the White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation provides, at Article IV, Section 1(a) that the Tribal Council (“Council”) shall exercise the powers “To represent the tribe and act in all matters that concern the welfare of the Tribe...”; and
- WHEREAS,** The United States Health Resources & Services Administration classifies all tribal lands in Arizona as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA’s), which is a designation that indicates healthcare provider shortages which result in tribal members experiencing limited access to care; and
- WHEREAS,** American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) representation in the health care field is disproportionately low when compared to other race/ethnicity populations; and
- WHEREAS,** In 2012, AI/AN comprised 5% of the Arizona population, but only 1.1% of registered nurses (RNs), 2.1% of licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and 1.0% of medical students; and
- WHEREAS,** Just to achieve parity in the AI/AN population percentage, there needs to be a 445% increase in RNs, 238% increase in LPNs, and a 500% increase in medical student enrollment in Arizona; and
- WHEREAS,** In 2015, the State of Arizona’s overall high school graduation rate was 77% while the AI/AN graduation rate was 63%; and
- WHEREAS,** Studies show the minority students who attain professional degrees are more likely to practice in underserved or rural areas;
- WHEREAS,** In 1971, Congress created the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program with the purpose of enhancing access to high quality, culturally competent health care through academic-community partnerships to improve the distribution, diversity, and supply of the primary care health professions workforce who service in rural and underserved health care delivery sites; and
- WHEREAS,** Through A.R.S 15-1643, the Arizona State Legislature created the Arizona AHEC program; and

Resolution No. 05-2019-93

WHEREAS, Since 1984, five regional centers have been established, located in Nogales, Flagstaff, Globe, Phoenix, and Somerton; and

WHEREAS, The White Mountain Apache Tribe Leadership finds that there exists the need for the creation of an Area Health Education Center (AHEC) which focuses on AI/AN students to address the health professional shortage in Arizona's tribal communities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby urges action from the Arizona legislature and the Governor to amend ARS 15-1643 (B) by adding an AHEC that focuses on the Indian Health System.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby directs that in the event this Resolution directly conflicts with the Tribal Constitution, Tribal Ordinances, or any material facts concerning the issues presented are later found to be false, this Resolution shall be deemed null and void and have no legal effect.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that it hereby directs that in the event that this Resolution conflicts with a prior Resolution or Policy, this Resolution shall supersede and govern over the conflicting subject matter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe that the Chairwoman, or in her absence, the Vice-Chairman, is hereby authorized to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the intent of this Resolution.

The foregoing resolution was on MAY 1, 2019 duly adopted by a vote of TEN for, ZERO against, and ONE abstentions by the Tribal Council of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, pursuant to authority vested in it under the enumerated powers listed in Article IV, Section 1 of the WMAT Constitution, so ratified on September 30, 1993, and federally recognized pursuant to Section 16 of the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984).

 5/6/19

Gwendena Lee-Gatewood, Chairwoman Date

 5/6/2019

Doreen T. Numkena, Tribal Secretary Date