



# College of menominee nation

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2019-2020**



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REPORTING ON 2019-2020

## CAMPUSES and CONTACTS

The College of Menominee Nation is located in Northeastern Wisconsin in the ancient homeland of the Menominee People. The College's flagship campus is in the community of Keshena on the Menominee Reservation. CMN also serves students from facilities 45-miles southeast of the main campus in metropolitan Green Bay.

The rural and urban locations share faculty and most programs. Students may elect to study at either or both locations.

### **In Keshena**

N172 Highway 47/55  
P.O. Box 1179  
Keshena, WI 54135

Phone: 715 799-5600  
Toll free: 800 567-2344

### **In Green Bay**

2733 S. Ridge Road  
Green Bay, WI 54304

Phone: 920 965-0070  
Toll free: 800 567-2344

### **Website**

[www.menominee.edu](http://www.menominee.edu)

### **E-mail**

[advancement@menominee.edu](mailto:advancement@menominee.edu)

### **Facebook**

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## Serving through LEADERSHIP



In a year of significant transitions the College community said farewell to retiring Trustee Chairwoman Virginia Nuske, and mourned the death of another long-time Board member and Chairwoman, Georgianna Ignace.

Ms. Nuske stepped back from her leadership role in early 2020 after 23 years on the Board and five at its

helm. Her tenure coincided with many milestone accomplishments. These included CMN becoming a baccalaureate-degree institution, reaching an alumni list of more than 1,000 names, and opening of the S. Verna Fowler Academic Library and CMN's Community Technology Center.

Pre-dating the College's existence, Ms. Nuske had a hand in hiring CMN's first President, Dr. Verna Fowler, and led the Board's national search for its second, Dr. Paul Trebian.

Vice Chairman Gary Frechette completed Ms. Nuske's spring 2020 term of office and Ms. Sara LaBarge joined the CMN Board to finish the term of her trusteeship. Continuing Board member Drew Lacefield moved to the Vice Chair role for the duration of the Board's year. Also leaving the Board in 2020 was 13-year member Lori Corn.

Ms. Ignace was appointed to the Board in 2000 and served as its Chairwoman in 2003-2004. She and her family founded the Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center in Milwaukee. She resided in the Milwaukee area until her death in December 2019.

### Trustees of the College ~ 2019-2020

*All CMN Trustees are enrolled members of the Menominee Indian Tribe*

Virginia Nuske, Chairwoman (until February)

Gary Frechette, Vice Chairman (until February)

and Chairman (beginning February)

Drew Lacefield, Vice Chairwoman (beginning February)

Shannon M. Chapman

Lori Corn

Michael Delabrué

Sara La Barge (beginning April)

Jesse Waukau

## Alumnus, SDI Director Named Interim President

Christopher Caldwell, a man who has seen the College from an array of perspectives, added a new vantage point in spring semester when he became CMN's Interim President.

A Menominee who grew up locally and began his higher education at the College chartered by his tribe, Caldwell graduated from CMN in 2002 with an Associate Degree in Sustainable Development. He went on to earn a Bachelor's in Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Master's in Environmental Science and Policy at UW-Green Bay. Eight years ago, he returned to the Keshena campus, serving most recently as Director of the Sustainable Development Institute.

Prior roles have included work with the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Products Laboratory, Menominee Tribal Enterprises, and U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs National Center for Cooperative Education in Natural Resources. From 2005 until his return to CMN in 2012, he served as the Menominee's Tribal Resources Director/Compliance and Enforcement Officer.

Interim President Caldwell is the fourth person to lead CMN since its inception, following President Verna Fowler (1992-2016), Interim President Diana Morris (2016-2018), and President Paul Trebian (2018-2020).



## Looking back on 2019-2020 and Turning to the Future

*A Message from Interim President Caldwell*

*Posoh mawaw new weyak is the Menominee way of saying "Greetings to all of you."*

*If you are already among the College of Menominee Nation's many stakeholders – including friends, neighbors, graduates, and students – then welcome to our most recent Annual Report. If you are just discovering CMN, I hope this snapshot of 2019-2020 inspires you to explore our College further.*

*CMN began its 27th year of service in January 2020. With the almost simultaneous arrival of COVID-19, our College and all around it entered an entirely new world that will continue to unfold. I cannot predict the future, but I can share why I am hopeful.*

*I see the College as being well positioned to endure beyond this academic year of enormous change. Our current size is a strength, allowing us to be flexible and responsive. Our conservative business practices mean we have been and remain debt-free. And as a uniquely values-based institution, CMN approaches higher education as an instrument designed for helping our Native and non-Native students, our partners and neighbors, learn to work together to sort out world problems.*

*Our mission is reflective of the long history of the Menominee. The tribe's story is one of resilience and survival based in sustainability, not just of the environment but in all aspects of human interaction. The College's story blends these themes with a respect for ancient wisdom and a commitment to modern science and new ways of learning. We did not desire a supreme test for our sustainability, but we are ready for the challenge and invite you join us as we create our new world.*

*Christopher M. Caldwell*

*Christopher M. Caldwell, Interim President*

REPORTING ON 2019-2020

## Achieving Goals through SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

Student success is the College of Menominee Nation centerpiece. Instruction and student support services are the primary concerns of all at the College. The scholarly work of faculty members enhances these core commitments by creating new education resources and enriching classroom experiences for students.

### Read-Aloud Strategies for Native Children

**Dr. Lauren Waukau-Villagomez** of the CMN Education program brought a personal passion, professional expertise, and research findings to fruition in mid-2019 with publication of *Read Aloud Handbook for Native Children*, a book co-authored by Menominee Tribal School teacher Samantha Villagomez.

The volume draws on Dr. Villagomez's long career in teacher education and salutes the strong oral tradition and many notable orators of her tribe, the Menominee. "The best speakers were able to tell us stories as they spoke," she writes in the book. "Their voices and their verbalization and their prose were truly spellbinding."

Through story-teller leaders like these, children in tribal societies learn the genesis of their nations and the cultures of their people, she says. In turn, the book aims at helping teachers see the value of read aloud experiences with American Indian children as a strategy for developing language, vocabulary and reading skills.



*A new book on read-aloud strategies is authored by Dr. Lauren Waukau-Villagomez of CMN's teacher education program.*

CMN students from Dr. Villagomez's many courses on cultural images and children's literature receive a nod in the book, too. Developing lists of books for classroom libraries, presenting on favorite children's authors, and reading aloud during class were standard fare for her students. "I loved and enjoyed this so much," Dr. Villagomez says. "I learned so much from my students about children's authors and the newest and best books being published."



*With classmate Brandon Boyd providing technical support, spring semester history students lauched a reading-aloud archive.*

### Reading Aloud for 'The SID Project'

Kindred spirits to the read-aloud strategy surfaced in a spring semester History 121 class led by Instructor Jennifer Morris. After hearing classmate Sydney Mohawk describe how her family members read aloud at home, students decided to do their own storytelling project dubbed The SID Project (The Sharing of Indigenous Discourse).

Class member Brandon Boyd, who was simultaneously in a Digital Media program internship, helped with recording and organizing digital files for sharing among the group.



*Her professional reputation as a reflective, collaborative educator contributed to Dr. Kelli Chelberg's choice as CMN's American Indian College Fund Faculty Member of the Year in 2020*

## Scholarly Collaborations Increasingly Go Virtual

For **Dr. Kelli Chelberg**, recent scholarly work includes a Virtual Writing Group with faculty members from Purdue University and the universities of Houston and Illinois-Urbana Champaign. The small team grew from earlier engineering education research done by Dr. Chelberg of CMN's Education program, and Dr. Lisa Bosman, who formerly taught



*Professor Ryan Winn's selection for a 2020 Faculty Fellowship by the Conference on College Composition and Communication makes him the only tribal college educator twice named for the award.*

Engineering at CMN and is now a faculty member at Purdue.

Comprised of scholars sharing professional interests but employed in different locations, virtual groups support faculty who have limited access to peers at their home institutions for networking and feedback in shared research areas. The approach can give an important sense of community and spur scholarly activity among academics, especially those early in their careers.

Drs. Chelberg and Bosman and others in the group are fine-tuning their research skills by presenting and giving feedback on work such as grant proposals, project ideas, and journal manuscripts. A paper on the efficacy of virtual groups is one product of the auto-ethnographic reflections on each member's experiences kept during the 2019-2020 sessions. Originally accepted for the prestigious conference of the American Society for Engineering Education to be held June 2020 in Montreal, Quebec, the paper is now part of ASEE's virtual conference proceedings.

Collaboration with peers to enhance student learning is also a commitment of **Professor Ryan Winn** of CMN's English, Theater, and Communication faculty.

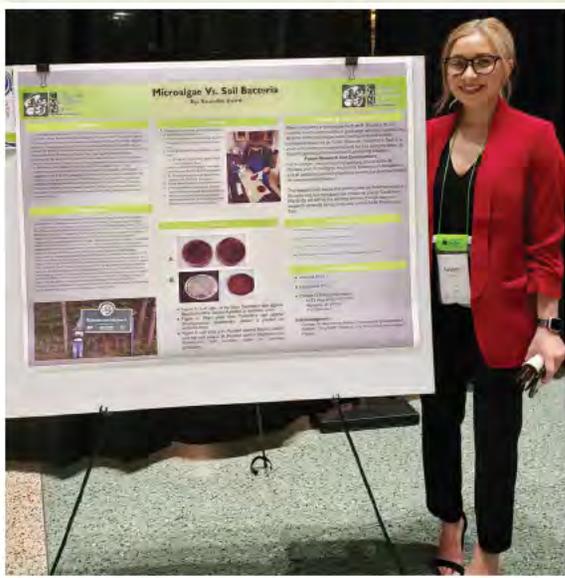
In late 2019, Prof. Winn was chosen as recipient of a Tribal College Faculty Fellowship for the 2020 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), a constituent organization of the National Council of Teachers of English. It is an award he also received in 2009. In response to COVID-19 concerns, the spring conference moved online, still delivering content from many of the more than 500 sessions originally planned, but curtailing personal networking.

Events have interrupted, but not changed Winn's plans for networking with other Native scholars.

"Building a community of peers in the Communication field for doing research and creating products would be a great benefit for faculty here and at other tribal colleges where there may be only one or two instructors in the field," Winn says. "When we do research together, share insights, and encourage each other, we can bring our students more robust and meaningful classroom experiences. It keeps us on our toes and makes what we teach more relevant and exciting for our students."



*Symposium participant and speaker Kayla Cleveland completed her Biological and Physical Sciences Associate Degree in May 2020.*



*Access to microalgae from the International Space Station gave Keandra Baird's project unique standing among symposium entries.*

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## Students Personifying EXCELLENCE

### Trio Take CMN Research to Lambeau

Several hundred attendees at the December 2019 "Tiny Earth in Tittletown Symposium" in Green Bay saw and heard about CMN student research and a unique NASA connection.

Research posters by Kayla Cleveland, Kendra Baird and Michelle Powers were on display in the Green Bay Packers Lambeau Atrium along with posters by 107 other Wisconsin collegians. The work represented research being done at CMN and more than a



*Assessing bacterial differences in soil samples from high traffic areas as compared to low-traffic areas was Michelle Power's project.*

dozen other public and private colleges and universities. Stage time, however, was reserved for only a few presenters, with one of them being Cleveland, who was chosen as the Native student voice. Her remarks, titled "The Land on Which We Stand," honored the American Indian tribes of Wisconsin. Also at the lectern for the event was Christopher Caldwell, representing CMN's Sustainable Development Institute with insights on student engagement in research.

The symposium poster by Michelle Powers focused on her research to identify a direct comparison of the microbial landscape between high-traffic soil and low-traffic soil.

With a NASA connection, Keandra Baird's research was unique among projects on display. Through Biology Professor Lucy Fenzl's efforts, Baird was able to acquire a sample of *Haematococcus pluvialis*, a microalgae that had been sent to the International Space Station. When stressed, this particular microalgae has the ability to produce Astaxanthin, a super antioxidant used in cellular repair. Baird's research focused on a possible comparison between local soil microbes and *H. pluvialis*.

Research presented at the symposium by Cleveland had distinctly cultural aspects with its focus on identifying microbial landscapes at the sites of traditional medicinal plants. As a spring 2020 intern with Dr. Fenzl, Cleveland worked to extend the project by developing a research proposal for submission to NASA's Student Payload Opportunity with Citizen Science (SPOCS) program.

Dr. Fenzl says that long range, the project has potential use for outreach programming with area high school science students.

The science work of these and other CMN students is making them part of an initiative known as Tiny Earth, a global network of educators and students who do research aimed at discovering new antibiotics. It is a community that currently spans 45 states and 15 countries. Under Dr. Fenzl's direction,

the Tiny Earth lab protocols and program are used in CMN biology classes to give students real world application techniques in microbiology and more specifically soil microbiology. During fall semester,

Powers, Baird, Cleveland and other microbiology students participated in several experiments aimed at isolating soil bacteria that possess antibiotic capability.



*For several years, students like those of Professor Ann Walenski and other CMN faculty have used the College's high-definition telepresence systems to take courses simultaneously offered on the Keshena and Green Bay campuses. Challenging as the pandemic closing was, high numbers rallied to adapt to the new circumstances and successfully complete spring coursework.*



## Christa Lyons, Student of the Year

The first step for Christa Lyons after graduating from high school was training as a wild-land firefighter for

Menominee Tribal Enterprises. Her path then led to CMN and academic honors, awards in national

competitions for business students, leadership positions in Student Government, a Business Office Technician Diploma, and in spring 2020 being named CMN's Student of the Year. Capping the journey in May was graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

Along the way, Lyons gained hands-on experience working in CMN's Business Office and offered a help-



## Evelyynn Grignon, Writing Award Winner

Each year students from tribal colleges across Indian Country submit original work for Tribal College Journal's juried creative writing competition. Chosen as one of the top three nonfiction entries for 2020 was "Fyre," by CMN's Evelyynn Waqcecewan Grignon.

Grignon's year included a course in creative writing with Professor Ryan Winn and a Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) internship to study immediate and long-term effects of a 2007 tornado in the Menominee Forest and Nicolet National Forest. The study was part of SDI's continuing Visualizing Forest Futures project. She graduated in May with an Associate Degree in Business Administration.

Grignon's writing will be published in *Tribal College Journal's* Fall 2020 edition of *TCJStudent* ([tcjstudent.org](http://tcjstudent.org)).

ing hand as a volunteer at the community Boys and Girls Club and for area homeless shelters. As a parent, she knows her education "will open many doors so I am able to provide for my daughter." And with her B.S. in business, Lyons hopes for an accounting or banking career, and opportunities "to help my Native American people, as well as others, to become successful, no matter what their financial background is."



*Jasmine Neosh is CMN's first Holly Youngbear-Tibbets Fellow.*

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## Fostering INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Institutional development is everyone's job at the College of Menominee Nation. Faculty and staff build programs, services, and resources. In CMN's hands-on educational environment, students are involved, too, through courses, internships, and volunteer service

### Young Scholar Named Youngbear-Tibbets Fellow

Fellowships are highly prized recognition of the ability of students to undertake independent academic work. Being the first ever chosen for CMN's new Holly Youngbear-Tibbets Fellowship adds to the honor for Jasmine Neosh.

Dr. Dennis Vickers of the CMN Liberal Studies faculty recommended Neosh as "a thoughtful and articulate young scholar" well prepared to contribute to CMN's institutional development. Neosh is demonstrating his assessment by creating new materials promoting use of the Menominee Theoretical Model of Sustainability on campus and in the community. The project, which advances work of the College's Sustainability Committee, relates to Neosh's degree program, the Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, and career interests in environmental and social sustainability in tribal communities.

An international aspect has been added through Neosh's contributions on the Menominee model for a booklet of the German NGO, Institute for Ecology and Action-Ethnology. The project, relating to United Nations sustainability goals, is looking at Indigenous experiences, initiatives, and strategies for sustainable development based on traditional knowledge, cultural practices and resilience.

The award is supported by the American Indian College Fund and named for the late Dr. Youngbear-Tibbets, first Director of the Sustainable Development Institute and CMN's long-time Dean for External Relations.

### Cultivating Leadership Is Partnership's Goal

Institutional development can aim internally at strengthening a college and building greater capacity for delivering its mission. Likewise, it can focus externally on engaging a broader audience in efforts to advance ideas or causes.

A decade-long partnership between CMN's Christopher Caldwell and Michigan State University's Kyle Powys Whyte has been accomplishing both. In mid-2019-2020, their collaboration was recognized with MSU's Community Engagement Scholarship Award and Distinguished Partnership Award for Community Engaged Research.

Interim President Caldwell, who was then Director of CMN's Sustainable Development Institute, and Dr. Whyte, a MSU faculty member, were cited for creating educational, research and outreach projects on climate change preparedness. With the goal of empowering sovereign nation leadership on sustainability issues, their work drew on environmental values found among Indigenous peoples and on the philosophical and practical approach to sustainability historically modeled by the Menominee Tribe.

The partnership has generated over \$1 million in grants since 2011 for programs and projects, and engaged participation from nearly 20 Great Lakes region tribes. Among the more than 100 Native and non-Native student who have taken part in the partnership initiatives, a number now hold or are pursuing degrees in environmental studies, sustainability and related fields.

### Agriculture Grants Boost Planning and New Initiatives

Food sovereignty and the sustainability of food systems have long been concerns of academic, outreach and student life endeavors at CMN. To help develop focused academic programming on the subjects, the College welcomed agriculture specialist Dr. Frank Kutka to the faculty in fall 2019.

Dr. Kutka, Continuing Education Dean Brian Kowalkowski, and others, secured new grants during the year from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute for Food and Agriculture and Native American Agriculture Fund, a charitable trust which supports Native American farming and ranching efforts. Work also moved on community assessments

of additional degree programs and planning for scholarships for students interested in sustainable agriculture, a hemp-crop feasibility study, and programming to introduce students to aquaponics.



*Dr. Frank Kutka of the CMN faculty tours a campus garden with SDI's Acting Director, Rebecca Edler, students Kaleigh Smiths and Diana White, and CMN instructor Sarah Vande Corput.*



Gathering in CMN's Woodhenge outdoor classroom on the Keshena campus are participants in the October 2019 Climate Change Adaptation Workshop for Tribes and Tribal Partners. With the goal of integrating tribal and traditional values with climate adaptation planning, attendees planned for applying indigenous perspectives and engaging tribal communities in natural resource adaptations to address climate change. The event was among more than a dozen workshops, camps, and projects for adults and youth coordinated by CMN's Sustainable Development Institute during the year.

## Infrastructure Advances Will Culminate in Business and Learning Efficiencies

More than a year of planning by operational units and teams yielded results in 2019-2020 for CMN in business systems and physical plant upgrades, with teacher/student communication resources coming for fall 2020.

Heading the list for all employees was the launch of a Paychex Flex online timesheet/payroll system based in CMN's Finance Office. The most visible benefit is less record-keeping on paper and more time saved for employees and supervisors. The greatest efficiency being realized is managing,

calculating, and reporting CMN's many and varied grant funds related to payrolls.

When the College reopens for the 2020-2021 academic year, visible upgrades seen by students and visitors will be new flooring and décor in Keshena campus classroom buildings and extended public health sanitation services throughout all facilities. For faculty and students, the most welcome upgrade is likely to be the College's newly acquired learning management system, or LMS.

"We had already been studying the idea of a unified LMS for the College," says Interim Chief Academic Officer Geraldine Sanapaw. "When the pandemic brought a rush to go entirely online, our faculty members pulled in as many resources as they could to keep our courses going and students on track.

What we learned from talking with students as the semester went along was that switching from one online learning system to another – between Zoom and Google Meet, for example – was confusing and time consuming."

In response to student concerns, CMN purchased the Canvas LMS and will begin faculty and staff training in summer. By fall 2020, whether teaching is in person, online, or in a hybrid mode, CMN students and faculty will have a single, centralized, all-inclusive software platform for instruction, class discussions, group projects, sharing information, submitting and documenting assignments, and tracking grades.



CMN alumna Linda Delgado posed with a happy fist-pump at the December reception for mid-year graduates. A certified Menominee language teacher, she earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood/Middle Childhood Education.

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# Being RESILIENT

Change is a constant for colleges. New freshmen arrive; new alumni say farewell; and classes, majors, and services evolve to meet community needs.

Fall semester 2019 held to the familiar pattern. Notable “firsts” included inauguration of a new celebration for December graduates and other milestones reported in these pages.

Then came spring semester 2020.

COVID-19 precautions closed CMN campuses in March, changed operations to fully online instruction and off-site management, and led to cancellation of May commencement ceremonies. Nevertheless, work of the College continued toward a successful – if unprecedented and anomalous – year’s end for students, faculty, staff and projects.

## Saluting the Class of 2020

With distancing protocols in place, the year’s 43 candidates could only be celebrated online with video greetings and a class photo gallery posted in June, and the announcement of plans for awarding of diplomas in August.

Earning their place in CMN annals are the following 2020 candidates listed by academic degree and technical diploma programs of study:

\*\* signifies high honors; \* signifies honors

### Bachelor of Arts Degree:

- Education – Debra McPherson

### Bachelor of Science Degree:

- Business Administration – Kayla Diamond\*, Linda Kaquatosh, Monica Pamaska, Adam Schulz\* (also Associate of Arts and Sciences in Public Administration), David Skenandore, and Cristalee Waupoose\*
- Early Childhood/Middle Childhood Education – Helena Nino De Guzman\*\*, Linda Delgado, Jennifer Kuhn\*\*, Matilda Peters, and Bernadette Tourtillott
- Public Administration – Christa Lyons (also Associate of Arts and Sciences in Public Administration).

### Associate of Arts and Sciences Degree:

- Biological and Physical Sciences – Kayla Cleveland and Darian Isaac
- Business Administration – Rachel Corn\*, Heather Denny, Daynell Grignon, Evelyn Grignon, Jessica Jacobson, Earl Jordan, Kimberly Oshkeshequoam, and Ashley Rose-Clare Peters
- Early Childhood Education – Sara Esch, Desiray Draghi, Chantelle Kuchta\*, Jennifer Meyer\*\*, Cassie Russell, and April Tucker
- Liberal Studies Humanities – Lexxus Liebe
- Liberal Studies Social Sciences – Brooke Caldwell, Corinna Charles, Morgan Fregien\*, Kelly Greengrass\*, Barbara Sehres, Emily Smith, and Megan Smith
- Natural Resources – Brandon Boyd
- Public Administration – Rita Reiter.

### Technical Diploma:

- Business Office Technician – TaSheena Newton
- Computer Numeric Control (CNC) Machinist – Benjamin Page
- Welding – James Cox and Zachery Marconie\*\*

Eighty percent of this year’s candidates for graduation belong to American Indian tribes. They represent Forest County Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Navajo, Oneida, Stockbridge-Munsee,

and Tachi-Yokut tribes and bring the number of CMN alumni to 1,238.

## Persistence Reigned

With work dispersed to home offices or kitchen tables, employees and students mobilized to continue the semester.

Faculty moved courses on line, developed alternative assignments to fit their new online delivery, and provide videos and links to enrich course content. Staff corralled and distributed laptop and mobile internet connection resources to those in need, helped resolve concerns, and restructured services to bridge to coming semesters. And among students, knowledge of Zoom, Google, and other technical supports was quickly elevated from acquaintance to close familiarity with online aid from faculty, staff, student tutors, and helpful classmates.

When surveyed in late spring, students listed communication from instructors via email, text, phone and other modes to be one of the most helpful experiences of the transition to online learning. The greatest disappointment reported was isolation from classmates outside of scheduled online meetings.

Despite disorienting change and major learning curves, nearly the entire cohort of spring semester students successfully finished their coursework. Drop rates were, in fact, lower than in most typical spring semesters, a result credited to the additional support and encouragement provided by faculty and staff, and the resilience and persistence of CMN students who kept their eyes on the goal.

## Learn more...

Highlights appear in this *2019-2020 Annual Report*. Discover more about resourceful, resilient CMN by visiting on Facebook or [www.menominee.edu](http://www.menominee.edu). For tours when travel plans allow, or to learn how you can become a CMN supporter, email [advancement@menominee.edu](mailto:advancement@menominee.edu).

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## DEGREES and DIPLOMAS

For more on programs see College Catalog at [www.menominee.edu](http://www.menominee.edu).

### **Bachelor of Arts Degrees**

Education

Public Administration

### **Bachelor of Science Degrees**

Business Administration

Early Childhood/Middle Childhood Education

### **Associate of Arts and Sciences Degrees**

Biological and Physical Sciences

Business Administration

Digital Media

Early Childhood Education

Liberal Studies

Natural Resources

Pre-Engineering

Public Administration

### **Associate of Applied Science Degree**

Pre-Engineering Technology

Substance Abuse Counselor

### **Technical Diplomas**

Business Office Technician

Computer Numeric Control (CNC) Machinist

Electricity

Welding

## **CMN PROFILES**

*For a brief history of CMN and current profiles on the following see 'Quick Facts' at [www.menominee.edu/quickfacts](http://www.menominee.edu/quickfacts).*

**Alumni**

**Students**

**Faculty and Staff**

**Facilities of the College**



Participants send up a greeting from the 7th annual Indigenous Planning Institute held at the College of Menominee Nation in summer 2019. The week-long gathering draws together students from CMN and other colleges and universities, community elders, faculty, and staff to study planning methodologies that are based on indigenous knowledge. Partner institutions with CMN's Sustainable Development Institute are Michigan State University and the University of New Mexico.