

November 2021

NASNTI awarded new Grant Program!

The Seminole State College NASNTI was recently awarded a 5-year grant. The SSC NASNTI Program will revitalize and expand its Computer Science Program to bring it up to date with industry standards while adding options in Security, Programming, and Esports.



*Left picture: Esports Gaming
Right picture: Hearing disability symbol
(Images from pixabay.com)*

The program will also initiate upgrades in IT infrastructure and establish necessary equipment in lap spaces to support updated and specialized computer science instruction. The program will develop seminars (face-to-face), videos/modules (online), and Talking Circles to address academic success skills, technology skills, civic/professional skills, cultural awareness, and wellbeing/resilience.

SSC NASNTI will strengthen support for online students with disabilities by appointing a disability services professional development leader to conduct two interactive training workshops in best practices for supporting students with disabilities in an online learning environment. In addition, target faculty each year will work closely with a contractual disability services expert to redesign foundational courses to align with principles for Universal Design. Updated courses will be supported by new assistive devices and online services to support accommodations for students with disabilities in online courses.

The establishment of an Access Lab on campus will provide flexible access to computers equipped with assistive devices and software for students with disabilities. Throughout the five-year period, the program will also develop and pilot new services, resources, and opportunities to promote holistic student development that will support students in persisting through college and prepare them for their next steps in higher education and ultimately in their careers.

SSC empowers people for academic success, personal development, and lifelong learning

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Talking Circles

“Yes there is a need for talking circles on the SSC campus. The stress of trying to find a harmonic way in which we can balance the emotional, physical, and mental and spiritual sides of our existence pleads with us to call upon one another to share our experiences with each other to strengthen the natural bonds of human connection.”

-SSC Student, 2021 Seminole Nation Tribal Member



Susan Stacy

MSW, C-PRSS, LMSW Candidate

Talking Circles Facilitator

Kickapoo Tribal Behavioral Health Center

WHAT IS A TALKING CIRCLE?

The talking circle has been used in all indigenous cultures in different forms. The talking circle symbolically represents a place where everyone is equal. It is a time to let go of feelings and thoughts that burden you and to do it in front of witnesses. It is a time to speak your own truth in a safe place. As it is said, *“The truth shall set you free.”*

Others in the circle are to simply listen without comment or judgment, knowing that we all carry emotional burdens and we all struggle and suffer in life. The benefit of a family Talking Circle is the comfort and comradery resulting from knowing that everyone there has some experience with the issue at hand.

It creates a non-judgmental atmosphere for people to be able to express their feelings and share their experiences with others who can relate.

In celebration of Native November, NASNTI is hosting the first Talking Circle on the Seminole State College campus! To learn more about Talking Circles, Talking Circles expert, Susan Stacy, from MSW, with the Kickapoo Tribal Behavioral Health Center, will post a video during the month of November. Susan Stacy, is a graduate from the University of Oklahoma with a Master of Social Work in Direct Practice. She is from the Kickapoo, Absentee Shawnee, Mvskoke Creek and Seminole Tribes. Susan is a Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist (C-PRSS) through Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

Susan has several years' of experience in the fields of child welfare, mental health, addictive disorders, and facilitating Talking Circles. Susan's employment is with the Kickapoo Tribal Behavioral Health and works with children, youth, young adults, and their families and participates on the KTHS Parenting and Policy Committee board for the Kickapoo Head Start. She currently holds monthly Talking Circles that are open to the community where she uses her positive attitude and energy to help with caregivers caring for their children/grandchildren or help for families to come together through family support network.