Turtle Mountain Community College’s (TMCC) Health Education Access through Rural Training (HEART) Project, funded by the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG), provides educational opportunities for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and other low-income individuals in healthcare fields that are in high demand. TMCC, located in Belcourt, North Dakota, was chartered by the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians Tribe in 1972. HEART Project participants can enroll in 11 certificate and associates degree programs in the healthcare field. Since 2016, the HEART Project has enrolled 557 participants. The purpose of this brief is to highlight key features of the HEART Project and outcomes from the first four years of program implementation.

The HEART Project works with an underserved population in their journey toward self-sufficiency.

- 83% with Dependent Children
- 88% Female
- 97% Alaska Native/American Indian
- 84% with Annual Income Below $10,000
- 66% Below 30 years old
- 77% Received public assistance at intake

“Coming to college is the best thing I’ve ever done. Before college I was barely scraping by, sometimes I only had $5. This is the first time I’ve felt secure. I used to be very introverted. I went from hiding from the world to wanting to be part of society.”

– HEART Participant

HEART participants are trained in a variety of fields to meet the healthcare workforce needs in North Dakota.

- HEART has enrolled over 500 participants in healthcare training
- Over 370 participants completed at least one healthcare training
- Over 160 participants obtained employment in healthcare

HEART participants are supported along four career pathways.

**Nursing**
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Certified Medication Aide
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

**Health and Fitness**
- Health and Fitness Technician
- Personal Trainer
- Prevention and Care of Athletic Injuries
- Sports Nutrition

**Laboratory**
- Medical Lab Technician
- Phlebotomy

**Administrative**
- Medical Administrative Assistant
- Patient Access Specialist
The HEART Project has established partnerships to provide referrals, training, and clinical practicums and internships.

The Turtle Mountain Tribal Employment and Training Office supports TANF clients with education or job placement and refers TANF clients interested in healthcare to the HEART Project.

Students can earn their GED with support from the HEART Project through a partnership with the Turtle Mountain Adult and Continuing Education Center.

CNA students can continue on to the LPN program through a partnership with Dakota College at Bottineau.

TMCC maintains affiliate agreements with 7 healthcare facilities in the region to offer clinical practicums and internships.

"The HEART Project has been fantastic for the community. The project is well coordinated. I have full cooperation with the administration.“

– HEART Partner

The HEART Project provides supportive services to reduce barriers to completing training and obtaining employment.

HEART Project staff work closely with each student to develop their academic plan and provide supportive services to meet their needs. Supportive services include:

- Financial assistance for tuition and books
- Transportation assistance
- Childcare assistance
- Academic advising and tutoring
- Job placement assistance

Transitional assistance – including childcare assistance and assistance with three months rent and security deposit – is available for participants who decide to move to other towns and cities for employment opportunities.

"They kind of take you under their wing and set you on the right path...Without them guiding me, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

– HEART Participant

"I think the opportunities that HEART gives students are outstanding. Support is key. Because I think without the support we wouldn’t have near as many students as we do have.”

– HEART Instructor

For more information about the HEART Project at Turtle Mountain Community College:
Call: 701-477-7862
Visit: www.tm.edu
Follow HEART Project on Facebook

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The purpose of this factsheet is to summarize the status of the HEART Project as of September 30, 2019. All results in this factsheet are descriptive and should not be interpreted as causal impacts. The data in this factsheet come from the HPOG 2.0 Participant Accomplishment and Grant Evaluation System (PAGES), a participant tracking and management system that includes data on participant characteristics, engagement in programs, and training and employment outcomes. PAGES also includes information on the activities and supports grantees offer. Grantee program staff enter data in PAGES.