



California State University, Sacramento
Division of Student Affairs
6000 J Street • Lassen Hall 3008 • Mail Stop 6062 • Sacramento, CA 95819
T (916) 278-6060

Sacramento State - Division of Student Affairs

Annual Report Template AY 2025 - 2026

Subdivision Information

- **Subdivision Name:** Student Success and Academic Excellence
- **AVP/Executive Director Name:** Dr. Chao Vang
- **Departments Included in the Report:**
 - Esak'tima Native Student Resource Center

Executive Summary (*1-2 pages max*)

- **Overview of Key Accomplishments:**
 - Moved from Lassen 1100 to Library 1010
 - Strengthened relations with community partners and Native-serving programs across campus and surrounding communities
 - Increased program offerings through the center rooted in Native cultures
- **Impact on Students & University Goals:**
 - Utilizing Dr. Shawn Secatero's American Indian Well Being Model in Higher Education ensures our work aligns with many of Sacramento State's values outlined in the Strategic Plan and are culturally relevant. This approach ensures that we are moving the university towards being Native student-ready, have programs and services that align with Native student needs, and ensure students feel they can be their authentic self.
 - This framework ensures we provide opportunities and support that impact Native students' wellbeing including social, physical, mental, and emotional.
 - **How these efforts align with Sac State's mission, divisional strategic priorities, and the systemwide strategic plan.**
 - As a Center that supports the academic and personal success of Native American and Alaska Native students, our work requires us to utilize frameworks that center Native knowledge systems. This includes ensuring students have access to services and support that acknowledge and nurture the strengths and cultural capital they bring to the university (1.1, 1.2. and 1.3).
 - Strengthening relations with Native Nations and community partners based on respect and reciprocity helps to build trust. This foundation allows us to learn more about the challenges facing Native communities and find ways that Sacramento State can be a partner in finding solutions (2.4 and 5.3).



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- **Major Challenges & Opportunities for Growth:**

- The move from Lassen to the Library caused confusion for many students. Furniture and technology from the old center had not been moved over largely until December 2025/January 2026, signage on the outside doors and windows was not complete until January 2026, and no formal announcement was made to the larger campus community. This not only caused frustration among students who had long found a home within the Multi-Cultural Center, but also students who were trying to find a community in the Esak'timá Center. While the move created opportunities for growth, including increased available space for the center and positioning it in a more accessible location, it also created challenges and barriers that our team continues to navigate. Through the support of Student Success & Academic Excellence, Office of Tribal Affairs, Wileety Native American College, and Native Faculty, we currently feel the center is in a great place. We are now excited for the upcoming academic year and a chance to connect with even more students.
- With the increase in space and refreshed furniture, painting, technology, and artwork, we feel like this is a center that Native students can take pride in. Our team is prepared to do aggressive outreach over the summer and throughout the academic year, so students know about the Esak'timá Center and the services they can access here.
- With the increase in staff, space, and new/renewed relationships, we are excited for opportunities to scale the work, increase visibility of Native students and cultures at Sacramento State, and create a campus where Native students feel supported.

Departmental Successes & Accomplishments

(Each department should provide a brief overview using the following format.)

Department Name: Esak'timá Native Student Resource Center

- **Mission Alignment: How the department's work supports student success and well-being.**
 - Our work supports student success and wellbeing by utilizing Indigenous frameworks and ways of knowing. By building upon Native scholarship, we can create pathways that are culturally relevant and address the unique needs of Native students. By utilizing a holistic framework, we ensure students can show up as their authentic self and utilize the cultural capital they bring with them to navigate the institution. This approach helps combat feelings of imposter syndrome, isolation, and affirms their Native identities.
- **Key Achievements:**



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- Assistant Program Coordinator and Coordinator worked collaboratively to lead out a Native Women's Brunch that allowed students, staff, faculty, and community members to come together, learn about the contributions of Native women, build community, and foster relations between the university and Native Nations. This event brought attendees from the local Community Colleges and Tribal Leaders from surrounding Native Nations.
- Led by our Assistant Program Coordinator, the Esak'tima Center hosted a Native Resource Fair, in partnership with Wileety Native American College, which brought over 30 campus and community organizations to share resources, services, programs, and opportunities for students around health and wellness, financial aid, leadership opportunities, and much more.
- Established relations with the Shingle Springs TANF program, which will allow us to outreach to families and children regarding higher education and opportunities through Sacramento State.
- Our team continues to build upon the foundation laid by previous Native staff, faculty, and students, as well as strengthening our team and approach in supporting Native students at Sac State.
- Through our approach to Native student servingness, we have been able to foster key relationships that will help strengthen our programs and services. Partnering with Native Faculty allows students to build relationships outside of the classroom and begin to see faculty as support systems. Bridging the gap between the university and campus partners allows students to see visible community support and help foster a sense of belonging.
- **New or Improved Services/Programs:**
 - The Esak'tima Native Student Resource Center hosted a Native Women's Brunch, co-led by the Coordinator and Assistant Program Coordinator to create a space where Native students, faculty and staff, as well as community members could come together. This space fostered an opportunity for community building, helped strengthen relations across campus, and brought Tribal Leaders into the center, showing there is student support both on campus and off.
 - In the upcoming academic year, we will host Welcome Weeks. This series will be two weeks of programs and events at the Esak'tima Native Student Resource Center that will get students familiar with the space, foster opportunities to connect with other students, and increase the visibility of the center.
 - We are working towards a career readiness series that will bring in partners from Native entities to host workshops, information sessions, and similar programs that will give students the chance to hear directly from industry professionals. Areas of focus currently are Tribal Gaming, Healthcare, and Family programs.
- **Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Efforts:**
 - Our work strives to create a campus where Native students feel supported, are affirmed in their Native identities, and have access to programs and services that support their holistic wellbeing.
 - Often, Native students face unique obstacles to higher education attainment that require an approach that centers Native cultures and values.



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- One goal we have for future efforts is intentional collaborations across CARC's that allow Native students to build community but also provide space for students to coalition build across identity.
- **Partnerships & Collaborations:**
 - We have been working towards establishing stronger partnerships with Native Nations and programs that support Native students including Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, Running Strong for American Indian Youth, Native Forward Scholarship Program, and campus partners like Wileety Native American College, Office of Tribal Affairs, and Native American Studies. In the upcoming year, we are planning to host more collaborative events with the Cultural Academic Resource Centers, so students who have intersecting identities have opportunities to feel affirmed in their whole self, and we can help students build allyship across identities.
 - We are working with Tribal Entities on a career readiness series, so students will have opportunities to hear from industry professionals on what hiring managers are looking for, what experiences would strengthen their resumes and cv's, and provide space for workshops and training.
 - We have been applying for grant opportunities to help increase the scale and impact of events centered around Native cultures at Sacramento State. Future events include hosting an Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration, scaling Native American Heritage Month, introducing a Native Night Market, and finding ways to highlight Native foodways and bringing Native chefs to campus to talk about the importance of food reclamation.
 - Through organizations like Running Strong for American Indian Youth, we hope to establish a strong relationship where we can not only host programs and events centered around Native cultures and communities but also provide leadership opportunities for students through the non-profit.
 - All staff are part of the Sacramento Native American Higher Education Collaborative, creating opportunities to build relationships with Native-serving programs in the K-12 system and community colleges.
 - Staff are looking for ways to get involved in programs that will help strengthen and increase college-going knowledge, and foster relationships between the university and K-12 systems (ex. Working with Elk Grove Unified School District and involvement with the American Indian Education Program Parent Committee for the Sacramento City Unified School District).
 - Planned collaboration with Wilton Rancheria to bridge the gap between Native students and the Elders Program at Wilton.
- **Assessment & Data Highlights:**
 - In data collected during events rooted in cultures and community building opportunities, attendees have indicated high rates of feeling a sense of belonging on campus, and contributing to community building with other Native students, faculty, and staff.



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- During events rooted in cultures and community building, attendees verbally stated a need for more opportunities for events that incorporate Native cultures and bring people together, they like spaces where they can network and establish professional and personal connections, and programs that help them access Native cultures.

(Repeat the above for each department in the subdivision.)

Strategic Priorities & Future Goals

- **Short-Term Priorities (Next 1-2 years):**
 - Increase awareness and outreach to current, incoming, and prospective students and families during campus and community outreach events
 - Outreach to Native-serving programs and establish a career-readiness series that will bring industry professionals to campus and share what skills and experiences employers are looking for
 - Scale programs by size and number to reach more Native students on campus, and increase the visibility of Native communities at Sacramento State
 - Increase collaborations with other CARCS as well as Native-serving programs in the community to highlight Sacramento States commitment to Native student success, and elevate the visibility of the Esak'timá Center
 - Host a large-scale program that centers and highlights Native cultures and communities, increasing the visibility of Native students at Sac State, and provides learning opportunities for non-Native students and the campus community at large.
 - Working with Admissions on a booklet that highlights Native servingness across campus to prospective students and their families.
- **Long-Term Vision (3-5 years):**
 - Work with Native students, staff, Faculty, and Native Nations to create a strategic plan that will outline the Esak'timá Center's direction over the next 3-5 years.
 - Begin working towards the establishment of an experiential summer program that will bring prospective students to campus and center Native cultures, college preparedness, giving back to Native communities
 - Work with donors and find sources of funding to establish a scholarship that will help students with financial need
- **Resource Needs & Support Requests:**
 - An additional student staff would be helpful. Currently, we have large gaps in front desk coverage. While our full-time team rotates coverage, it can make it difficult when needing to attend mandatory meetings and trainings across campus. An additional student staff position might help fill the gaps.

Assessment & Data-Driven Insights



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- **Student Engagement & Success Metrics:**
 - Assessment gathered during events and programs that were centered around cultures and community building had responses that indicated support with community building, sense of belonging, and requests for increased frequency.
 - When events centered on building community and incorporated Native cultures, turnout was higher than those that did not.
 - We will need to pivot timing, as some events overlapped with class schedules
 - Ex. Some students shared they wanted to come to the Spring Blessing, but couldn't because their class had just started around that time
- **Use of Assessment for Improvement:**
 - The SSAE Report on Student Needs & Experiences has provided key data points that will inform our work. Based on the data, we will provide opportunities for students to connect with one another and campus programs at the beginning of the semester. This also provides data that support increasing the frequency of program offerings, so students have more opportunities to connect with their peers and faculty/staff.
 - We are working with community partners to create a career readiness series where students will get an opportunity to hear directly from employers. Through this series, students can learn more about what employers are looking for, what experiences will help strengthen their resumes, and a chance to expand their professional networks.
 - Native students indicated high levels of being overwhelmed and feelings of depression. With this data, we will work to create spaces where students can destress, incorporate culturally rooted wellness activities, and create a partnership with Student Health & Wellness to ensure students know about counseling services.
 - As part of this, we are looking at what opportunities are present to host culturally rooted spaces where students can have an open dialogue about their experiences as students, connect with community elders, and destress.
- **Data Challenges & Needs:**
 - This year was the first time Esak'timá was collecting data throughout the year, including team members learning how to utilize software such as Qualtrics.
 - We are working towards assessment of programs more routine, but not too frequent that students feel over surveyed. This will help us ensure that we are collecting data to make decisions and help highlight areas of opportunity and growth.

Financial Overview (*Optional or as required*)

- **Budget Overview:**
 - Largely used the student service fees budget to support programs



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- We are looking at grant opportunities that allow us to scale programs and leverage community partnerships to increase impact
- **Major Financial Challenges & Sustainability Considerations:**
 - The first year of learning a new purchasing system created temporary obstacles. Now that we have a better grasp, we are ready to project this upcoming year.
 - Some of the new purchasing policies have created barriers to purchasing from Native-owned businesses. This makes it a little more challenging to purchase items needed for culturally rooted programs. We will continue to work with the business team to ensure we are able to secure items ahead of time.

Recommendations

- **Key Takeaways for Division Leadership:**
 - The past academic year was a time of growth for the Esak'tima Center. While we faced some obstacles, we continued to push forward and create programs that centered Native cultures and communities. Feedback during programs was largely positive, including many attendees asking for more spaces that bring Native communities together and allow them to strengthen relations.
 - Homesickness is not as large a factor for Native students at Sacramento State as is present at other institutions. This makes sense given that proximity to home is a factor in why many Native students chose Sac State. However, despite homesickness being a lower factor, Native students still largely experience feelings of isolation, lack feeling a sense of belonging, and struggle to connect with other students, programs, and faculty/staff.
 - Additionally, a large percentage of Native students have indicated having feelings of depression and being overwhelmed.
 - These points provide data that will guide our work in the upcoming academic year, including more opportunities for students to connect at the beginning of the semester, but increased frequency of program offerings as well.
 - Working with campus programs like Housing, Campus Life, and Admissions will be essential to ensure we are reaching Native students across campus who many not yet be connected with Esak'timá, Wileety, or Native American Studies.
 - We will begin hosting collaborative meetings with Wileety to find ways to increase our impact and maximize our outreach
- **Final Reflections from AVP/Executive Director:**
 - Over the past year, the team has worked to create a space that centers and supports Native students at Sacramento State. While we have faced obstacles, our team has been adaptable and resourceful. As we move into this next academic year, we are ready to utilize our first year experiences and collected data to increase programs and services that meet student needs. With the partnerships and relationships built over the past year, I believe that we are in a great position to



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increase outreach efforts, reach more students, and begin to make the new space a home away from home for Native American and Alaska Native students at Sacramento State.