

PINE

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Award for Indigenous community educators

As part of NAU's commitment to becoming the leading university serving Native Americans, the university has focused on the professional development of K-12 teachers in tribal communities—the people who can help prepare their students to thrive in higher education. Those efforts recently received a strong endorsement from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), which awarded NAU's Institute for Native-serving Educators (INE) \$1 million to expand its work with teachers to more communities. The award advances ADE's support for statewide priorities in education.

"This award is a game changer for us and for the Indigenous

communities with whom we partner," said Angelina Castagno, director of INE and planning director of DINÉ (Diné Institute for Navajo Nation Educators). "I feel incredibly honored to get to do this work with K-12 teacher leaders, tribal partners, and the NAU community."

By developing and supporting high-quality, culturally responsive pre-K-12 educators in Native-serving schools, INE addresses years of educational neglect, said Ann Marie Chischilly, interim vice president for Native American Initiatives and director of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals. "The younger we can reach our youth, the more they will be prepared and excited to attend college."