

Serving South Dakota and the Tribal Communities Affiliated With the State

The University of South Dakota's Service Mission

American state universities like the University of South Dakota (USD) are publicly funded because they exist to serve the public good. Like most universities, USD's mission is threefold: To educate citizens of the state and sovereign tribal nations affiliated with the state (tribal communities), to create knowledge, discover solutions to problems, and communicate knowledge and discoveries; and to apply academic and professional knowledge and practice to improve the wellbeing of the state and the tribal communities. USD performs valuable service in all three parts of its mission.

When the University of (South) Dakota (USD) was established by the first Dakota Territorial Legislature in 1862, its declared purpose was to impart "moral and intellectual values" and to attract settlers by educating students in the liberal arts, law, and medicine and by training teachers and farmers. Although its program offerings have changed during its 158-year history, USD has consistently served as the state's flagship liberal-arts university and the home to several of the state's only professional schools. Service to South Dakota and the tribal communities is central to USD's founding mission, and this theme informs the work of USD at its main campus, its satellite campuses, and its service centers throughout the state. USD provides important service to the state in the areas of economic development (technology transfer and small business development), basic and applied research relating to human services, health care, the environment, education, government, arts and humanities; health and wellbeing services provided through clinics, legal aid, and educational services to pre-college youth through camps and other learning experiences.

The demographics of South Dakota and the affiliated tribal communities are changing. For example, over the next 13 years, state projections show the proportion of White high school students will decrease from 86% to 74%. The Sioux Falls school system has already seen a major increase in the percentage of non-white students to 39% of the student population. Meanwhile, the population of Native American youth is growing statewide. While our state is increasingly diverse, and while USD works to recruit a diverse student body, students of color are not graduating at the same rate as white students. Additionally, the perception of South Dakota as rural and white works against recruitment of diverse students.

While South Dakota is increasing in diversity, its under-resourced rural communities continue to experience decreasing populations, reflecting declining farm revenues. Currently, 45% of South Dakotans live in rural areas, more than twice the national average (19%). Problems associated with decreasing rural population include economic stagnation, a disproportionate number of elderly and poor residents, low health literacy, high rates of illness and other health problems, restricted access to professional healthcare and legal professionals and services, a disproportionate burden of chronic disease relative to the general public, insufficient health insurance coverage, low educational funding and resources, low educational attainment, poverty and unemployment, and social and cultural isolation. These challenges place South Dakota in fifth place nationally for necessary critical statewide improvements.

USD is broadening its outreach to both urban and rural, remote populations. Sioux Falls' proximity to Vermillion enables USD to provide instruction at the Community College for Sioux Falls. USD

serves Native American communities by providing culturally sensitive face-to-face instruction at the Indian University of North America in Crazy Horse, SD. Technology enables distance education to remote locations, affording rural students access to a USD education. Through its various programs, USD can effectively harness technology to provide services remotely, including legal and medical services that can be accessed worldwide. Providing education and essential services to both urban and rural populations enhances life in South Dakota and contributes to efforts to recruit new residents and retain established populations in our state.

This short document cannot do justice to the breadth of service provided by USD to the state and tribal communities. Instead, we provide impactful examples aligned with the following service themes: educating our citizens and members of tribal communities for professions and for citizenship, developing the state's workforce, contributing to the state's economic growth, contributing to knowledge and growth through research, and providing support services to underserved populations.

Education for Jobs & Civic Engagement

The liberal arts have consistently been the cornerstone of Western-style education because they represent the knowledge and skills necessary to be (come) responsible and active citizens. As such, liberal-arts education lays the groundwork for active social and political involvement that builds and strengthens communities. Civic engagement is encouraged by both coursework and extracurricular activities at USD. Coursework consistently provides students with opportunities to develop skills that are essential for effective citizenship, such as the ability to express themselves effectively in speech and writing, to find and critically use information, and to collaborate successfully on group projects. Incidentally, these are skills consistently sought by prospective employers in graduates of higher education. Additionally, USD offers students opportunities for civic engagement through 147 student organizations, mentored by faculty and staff that seek to better the university, community, and state. Finally, campus entities like the Center for Diversity & Community (CDC) perform an important educational function by supporting international and marginalized students, educating the student population about diverse groups and cultures, and encouraging cultural awareness, multicultural literacy, and sensitivity toward under-resourced groups.

Civic engagement requires both individual and collective efforts to promote the betterment of society. USD prides itself on its efforts to elevate civic engagement, embedded in its tradition of liberal-arts education. Across each school within the university, students, faculty, and staff work to critically evaluate problems of public concern and creatively find ways to address these issues in innovative ways. From research in the Sanford School of Medicine to the creation of a legislatively-funded South Dakota Center for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment in the School of Health Sciences, USD looks to tackle problems of public concern in ground-breaking ways, while teaching students how to think critically and deeply about how they may continue to impact the world around them.

Workforce Development

USD serves the state and tribal communities by meeting their current and future workforce needs. The preparation of students to meet these needs entails educating future professionals to think critically, creatively, and with cultural sensitivity. Meeting the needs of the labor market involves active collaboration of USD faculty and staff with professionals throughout the state, who collaborate in teaching, assessment of student preparation, and mentoring. Graduates are prepared to work in the Arts, Business, Communications, Education, Health/Medicine, Journalism, Law, Sustainability/Environmental Sciences, and many other fields.

Housed within USD's seven schools and colleges are 305 undergraduate degree majors, minors, certificates, endorsements, and specializations, which produce graduates ready to join the workforce at the entry level of professional practice. Forty-eight of the majors also offer advanced preparation at the master's level with 25 offering doctoral degrees. Professional competence is ensured by USD's academic and professional programs' accreditation by disciplinary national professional associations. The hallmark of professional school accreditation is the assessment for practice of all graduates via standardized licensing examinations, a successful record of responding to workforce needs through the guidance from qualified advisory group members. USD demonstrates success through high passing rates on licensure and certification examinations in Addiction Counseling and Prevention, Audiology, Clinical Psychology, Dental Hygiene, Law, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant Studies, Social Work, and Speech/Language Pathology. In 2018 graduates of USD's Allied Health programs had a success rate of 89-100% on national licensure examinations, with Speech Pathology and Audiology, ACP, Dental Hygiene, and Occupational Therapy graduates enjoying a 100% pass rate on their certification/licensure examinations.

The active engagement of advisory groups and the professional internship requirements of the professional schools and colleges supports USD's close to 75% general job placement rate. (The job placement rate for USD's professional schools is 90%.) The opportunity for students to practice in their chosen fields alongside professional supervisors, many of whom are committed alumni and faculty; the standards for national professional accreditation, and the active participation of advisory group members, supports the quality of its graduates that has kept USD at the forefront of meeting the workforce needs of the state and tribal communities.

Economic Impact

In 2016, the South Dakota Board of Regents (SDBOR) published an economic-impact study of the SDBOR University System. The report highlighted USD's vital role in the state's economic growth and wellbeing. USD's economic effects include not only the direct impact of student, employee, and university expenditures, but also substantial secondary impacts as money spent circulates throughout the state's economy. The numbers below summarize USD's quantifiable impact, calculated using a dynamic regional economic model. They do not include less-tangible benefits of higher education such as more healthful lifestyles, lower healthcare costs, reduced crime rates, increased charitable giving, and higher rates of voter participation and civic engagement.

- USD generates approximately \$786 million in annual economic impact to South Dakota from a state investment of \$56.6 million.
- USD accounts for approximately 20,308 people who live in South Dakota because of the presence of USD and its accompanying economic activity.
- USD has acquired \$19 million in federal and private grants and contracts for research, development, and projects.
- USD directly supports 1,581.3 full-time jobs in South Dakota and 6,855 full-time jobs from the resulting economic activity.
- USD students have injected approximately \$56 million into South Dakota's economy through their day-to-day living expenses (this amount does not include tuition and fees).

Scholarship, Research, & Professional Development

From historic preservation and innovations in information dissemination to solving the mystery of dark matter, USD serves the region through scholarship, research, and professional development. Regardless of area, students and faculty work side by side to ensure the next generation is well-prepared to address the needs of the state and tribal communities today and tomorrow. The commitment to innovation and industry allows faculty and students to partner with service providers, artisans, historians, community-based researchers, and policymakers. USD is a vibrant setting teeming with opportunities for research and creative activity integrated into all disciplines. In addition to individual research by faculty and students, the university hosts multidisciplinary research centers that foster academic excellence, increase available knowledge, and spur economic growth. Significant areas of scholarly endeavor include: Biomedicine, Physics and Dark Matter Chemistry, Biology, Bioinformatics and Computation, Media Marketing, Humanities, Politics and Governance, and Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth. USD is home to 20 centers for scholarly investigation and innovation that serve the state in the areas of economic improvement, technology transfer, and medical, legal, and educational services, especially in under-resourced rural areas. Many USD scholars, artisans, and gifted trainers work with community partners, such as the State Departments of Health and Social Services to provide hundreds of professional development opportunities. Likewise, the South Dakota Council on Economic Education, housed at USD's campus, is responsible for facilitating and developing economics-based and financial literacy education for people of all ages across the entire state.

USD hosts conferences, performances, and professional trainings across the state and tribal communities to share knowledge, innovation, and creative activity. Many departments and programs sponsor undergraduate- and graduate-student on-campus conferences such as IdeaFest, the Undergraduate Language Research Conference, and the Student History Conference. Student participation in regional and national conferences is supported by faculty teaching and mentoring and university resources in the form of research space, library resources, and travel funding. USD departments and programs sponsor on-campus conferences that attract scholars and students to disseminate the fruits of scholarly research, and to support learning and professional development. For example, USD's biennial Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Research Conference draws international, national, and regional scholars, faculty, and students to Vermillion, where these visitors experience South Dakota's flagship liberal-arts university and enjoy the state while they partake of its culture and contribute to its economy.

Serving the Underserved

A significant aspect of USD's mission to serve South Dakota is providing vital services to our most vulnerable populations, including those challenged by financial and legal circumstances, place of residence, age, ability to communicate, functional or development status, and chronic illness or disability. From our farm-support and rural medicine programs to our community-based campus clinics, USD takes seriously the mission to ensure we are caring for and serving residents who need us most. For example, 47 of the 66 South Dakota counties are considered medically underserved. Through USD's Frontier and Rural Medicine (FARM) program at the Sanford School of Medicine, students are matched with critical-need positions across the state and within tribal communities to fill positions needed in these significantly underserved locations. Beyond campus, student clinicians reach out to vulnerable populations through mobile dental-hygiene clinics, medical and legal outreach services, practicum and internship experiences within critical need locations, as well as field experiences that help address the significant service gaps in our state while providing students with valuable professional experiences.

Vermillion-based campus clinics include mental-health services, psychological services, dental-hygiene services, speech and language services, and audiological services. These can be accessed by both students and community members. USD sponsors 147 student organizations, many of which serve the community and underserved, marginalized, or even endangered groups. Further, USD students, faculty, and staff continually find ways to serve the local communities through food drives, translation services, and other community-service projects, as well as a plethora of volunteer efforts performed by students, faculty, and staff combined. These efforts distinguish USD as a leader in service to those less fortunate in our state and tribal communities. For instance, in USD's ICare program students, faculty, and staff collaborate with community partners to work toward prevention of sexual violence through education and response programs.

Strategic Themes: Lessons Learned

Publicly funded universities exist to serve the public good. USD serves South Dakota and the tribal nations affiliated with the state by teaching, performing and disseminating research, and applying academic and professional knowledge and practice to improve the wellbeing of the state and the tribal communities. Specifically, USD provides important service in the areas of economic development (technology transfer and small business development), basic and applied research relating to human services, health care, the environment, education, government, arts and humanities; health and wellbeing services provided through clinics, legal aid, and educational services to youth and under-resourced groups. This paper describes USD's significant service to the state through impactful examples aligned with the five service themes: educating our citizens and members of tribal communities for professions and for citizenship, developing the state's workforce, contributing to the state's economic growth, contributing to knowledge and growth through research, and providing support services to underserved populations. Two additional, related themes have emerged in the writing of this paper: service to rural populations and recruitment and retention of residents. USD fulfills its mission to work for the public good through its educational programs, its creation and dissemination of knowledge, and its application of

knowledge and innovations to solve statewide problems, especially those experienced by the state's declining rural population. Recruitment of residents to South Dakota was a declared purpose in the founding of USD in 1862, and both recruitment and retention are a focus – and an intended result – of much of the service performed by the University. The future of our state is dependent upon recruiting and retaining residents, especially in the rural communities that support our agricultural economy. USD will continue to play a vital role in providing service to South Dakota by recruiting and retaining residents and leading in making the state a desirable place to live and work.