

The Montana American Indian Math and Science (MT-AIMS) program looks to engage Native American youth, the targeted *high need* demographic, in pursuing science, math, and engineering disciplines. The project aims to increase social and academic preparedness among Native students, advance collaboration with Tribal communities, and improve recruitment and retention of Native students at the University level. MT-AIMS is geared for Montana Native American students and is based on longitudinal out-of-school programming, establishment of learning communities, infusion of indigenous content into activities, and experiential learning. MT-AIMS is a joint project between the North American Native Research and Education Foundation and the University of Montana and will address *Absolute Priorities 1 and 2* as it builds on documented successes and best-practices in the field by modeling after the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program and creating a unique Montana program with the potential to transform the level of participation of Native Americans in STEM. The objectives of the MT-AIMS project include: (1) development of a program component that provides academic-year follow up to participants, connecting out-of-school learning experiences to their home community and across contexts, (2) development of content that is tailored to the cultural values of Montana's Native American tribes and is place-based to Montana's Native communities, (3) research on the effectiveness of project components to inform program development and the STEM educational community, and (4) incorporating all aspects into a model that is transferrable to other Native American populations.

The MT-AIMS *Early Phase* project will deliver STEM content to over 280 unique Native American students in 6th to 10th grade through consecutive programs – *Gatherings*, *Journeys*, and *Pathways* – in creating a community of MT-AIMS students, and building pathways for academic opportunity and success in STEM.