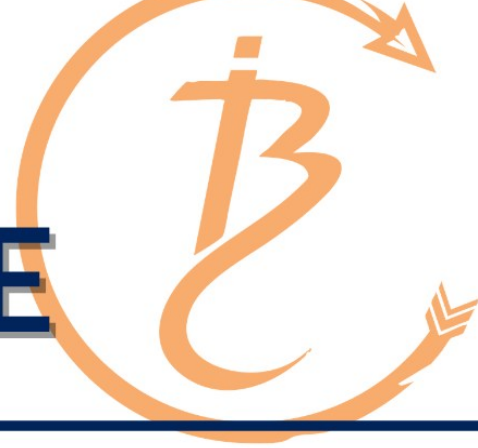
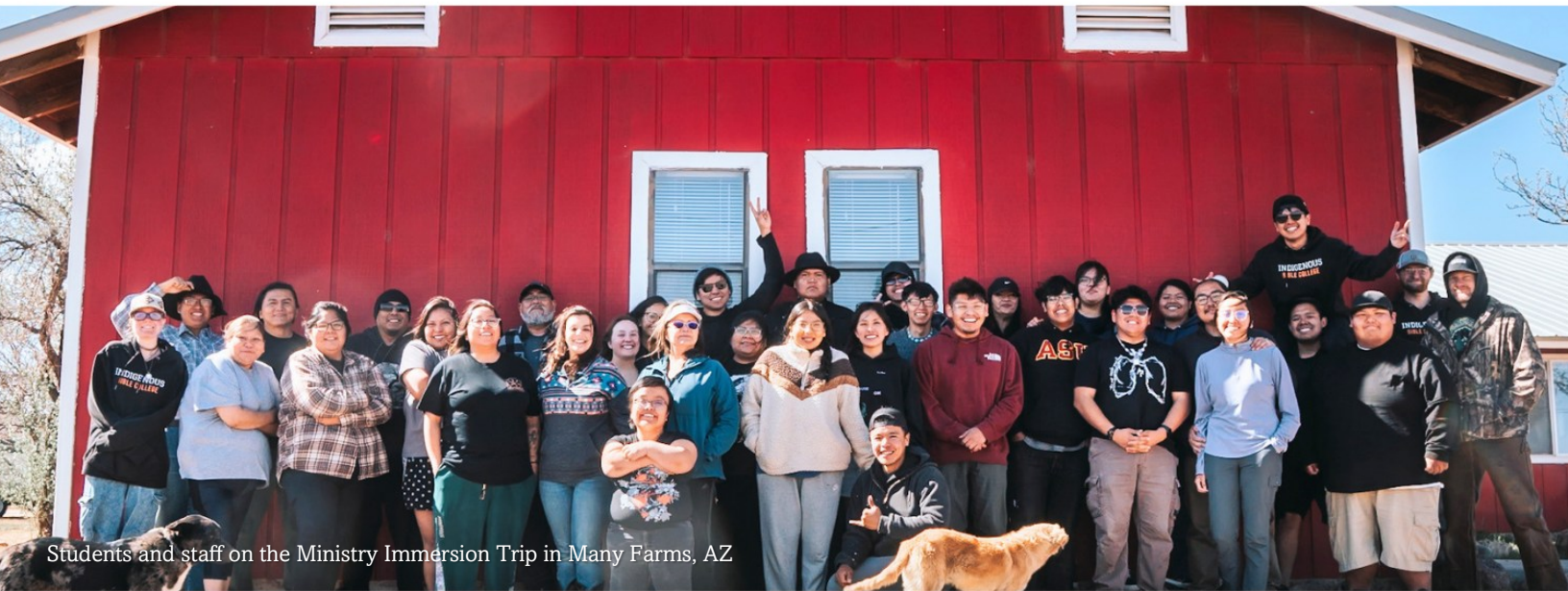


THE IBC EPISTLE



A newsletter published by Indigenous Bible College (*historically Indian Bible College*)



Students and staff on the Ministry Immersion Trip in Many Farms, AZ

Living Our Core Values

By Dr. Jason Koppen, President

The vision of Indigenous Bible College is to help Native America move from being a mission field to becoming a mission force. In 2011 the staff asked the question, “What will it take to see that vision come to pass?” We reverse-engineered from IBC’s vision statement to create five key Core Values that are all intensely biblical and practical for Native Americans. Since being approved by the board in 2013, IBC has worked to thoroughly implement these values in every way possible—from the classroom to the dorm room to the boardroom.

In John 20:21 Jesus said, “As the Father sent me, so I am also sending you.” We believe Jesus meant we are to embrace both His mission and His method—that the way He lived His life was to be a model for all of His future followers. IBC’s Core Values represent our commitment to emulating Jesus in every way.

As the “essential DNA” of our college, we are committed to not only teaching these five Core Values, but also practicing and living them out in every aspect of our ministry. Staff model the values not only because they believe in them, but also for the sake of students so they can go and live them out in their present and future ministries.

This newsletter highlights a few examples of how IBC is expressing these values in thorough and comprehensive ways—often at great cost and sacrifice. I hope this encourages you that IBC is indeed committed to exemplifying what we say is most important—living and ministering like Jesus (John 20:21)!

Dr. Jason Koppen,
IBC President



Core Value #1—Unity in Christian Community

Unity in Christian Community means we need to “play well with others in the sandbox of ministry”. Historically, Native ministries have been very isolated—even divided—from one another. As a college that is equipping students for ministry, we don’t exist for our own sake, but rather to train Native Christ-followers to lead and contribute to ministries outside our own. Therefore, we need to be partnering effectively with a wide variety of Christ-centered and theologically sound churches and organizations so that graduates have meaningful opportunities for ministry after their time at IBC.

IBC is constantly making new friendships and deepening existing friendships with other ministries. We also enjoy helping introduce like-minded ministries to one another (we have been doing a lot of this recently).

Here are just a few of the ways we have partnered with brothers and sisters in Christ in just the past few months:

- ⇒ The Ministry Immersion Trip to Many Farms, Arizona on the Navajo Nation to support a local Native-led church
- ⇒ Partnering with several other ministries to help launch a gap year program for young Native people in Cortez, Colorado
- ⇒ Hosting the Western Regional Conference for the Association of North American Missions on IBC’s campus
- ⇒ Equipping Native-led organizations and grassroots ministries across the United States and Canada with *Native Mending the Soul* materials and training
- ⇒ Sending staff and students to three distinct missions conferences between November and January

Written by Jason Koppen, President



Working Together for Debt-Free Graduates! Our generous family of financial contributors is helping IBC students start off on the right foot after graduation. Together, you have helped build an IBC Scholarship Fund of \$45,000, **\$30,000** of which was distributed to students in need of financial assistance this semester! Additionally, accreditation through the Association for Biblical Higher Education gave students access to **over \$135,000** in federal and tribal grants and scholarships this spring. All of these funds give students the opportunity to attend IBC without the need for student loans, and strengthen our efforts to graduate each student debt-free. Thank you for generously investing in our students’ futures!

Core Value #2—Relational Disciplemaking & Spiritual Mentoring

Relational Disciplemaking and Spiritual Mentoring are the processes that lead to true transformation in the life of a Christ-follower. Rather than teaching obedience from a distance or in a crowd, Core Value #2 asks us to enter into trusting and committed relationships with other believers to mutually pursue godliness and abundant life (John 10:10). Visit IBC and you’ll see this value expressed everywhere you look—from Spiritual Formation groups, to life coaching sessions, to discussion-based classroom instruction, to the Fifth Wind workshop, and recently, in *Native Mending the Soul* (NMTS) groups.

IBC staff and graduates are currently leading more than a dozen NMTS groups, walking alongside brothers and sisters across the United States and Canada in their journeys of healing from trauma and abuse, and equipping them to do the same within their communities (learn more at indianbible.org/nativemts). As NMTS facilitators, we strive to create a group dynamic that allows participants to live as spiritual brothers and sisters, sharing in each other’s struggles and heartaches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. NMTS groups are intentional spaces where vulnerability is protected and healing from trauma and abuse can begin.

Leading one of these groups has been a humbling experience for me. I have had the pleasure of walking through the NMTS curriculum with two men from Canada who will in turn take these principles back to their own communities and use the training materials as they see fit. Through my time with them, I have seen how Core Value #2 is beautifully exemplified when we simply participate and allow the Lord to use our stories and backgrounds to draw us closer to Himself. A wise man once told me, “Alone we go fast, but together we go far!”

Written by Josiah Butler, IBC graduate



Core Value #3—Incarnational Evangelism

In late March, IBC students and Student Life staff packed up for the Ministry Immersion Trip (MIT), which takes them to a different Native community each spring. In a fleet of 15-passenger vans, they made the three-hour journey to Many Farms, Arizona in the heart of the Navajo Nation. The MIT is a yearly practice in incarnational evangelism – leaving one’s comfort zone and stepping into the world of another in order to meaningfully connect with them and share the love of Christ through service and relationship.

We explored this concept in depth at our Fall Conference last November, looking to Jesus as the perfect model for this core value. By coming into the world as one of us and entering into the complex experience of being human, Jesus was able to reach people in ways that honored their humanity, addressed their deepest needs and desires, and made sense to them in their cultural and historical contexts. Always versatile and creative, Jesus offers us countless examples of what it looks like to meet people wherever they are and invite them into the story of the Good News. Check out the IBC Fall Conference 2025 video playlist at youtube.com/@indigenusbiblecollege/playlists to see the first two conference sessions. Video of the third session is available upon request by emailing info@indianbible.org.

Written by Irish Noble, Director of Communications



Core Value #4—Team Leadership

Teams are a beautiful gift from God. Teamwork reflects love, support, encouragement, and even healthy conflict. Team leadership is built into our DNA at Indigenous Bible College, as reflected in Core Value

#4. Scripture points repeatedly to this model: two are better than one (Eccles. 4:9–12), many parts form one body (1 Cor. 12:12–27), diverse individuals work together for a common purpose (Romans 12:4–5), and encouragement between believers is imperative (Hebrews 10:24–25).

IBC’s Administrative Team (or A-Team) is comprised of the President, the Deans of Students, the Academic Dean, and the Business Administrator. These leaders plan for the future and oversee all operations of the school. This team doesn’t function as a group of individuals, but as a unified front committed to leading together. The A-Team helps uphold accountability and integrity on behalf of IBC, ensuring that decisions are made wisely, collaboratively, and with the broader community in mind.

True servant leadership that exemplifies Christ-like character is committed to mutual respect for differing opinions, as well as a common goal. I’ve come to see that it’s not just one voice that matters—all of our voices matter. At the same time, having a voice in the decision-making process is not about status or position; it’s about grace, patience, humility, and a willingness to sacrifice for others. Leading as a team requires us to reflect the character of Jesus in how we listen, support, and care for one another. It means over-communicating, bearing each other’s burdens, and building trust.

If we want to see true community at IBC, it must begin with the leadership. The A-Team embraces this, demonstrating that team leadership is not just something we value—it’s something we model and practice daily.

Written by Coreen Esplin, Dean of Women

Core Value #5—Self-Sufficiency & Interdependency

This core value presents an apparent contradiction. How can someone be self-sufficient *and* interdependent at the same time? The Fifth Wind business venture at IBC is a unique expression of the harmony between these two concepts. Fifth Wind exists to empower Native students with practical skills in their journey toward economic development and livelihood. Creating artistically-driven products in a healthy work setting offers our employees a sense of purpose and stability (self-sufficiency), while working with a team allows discipleship to be interwoven throughout the entire creative process and opens doors for collaboration and servanthood (interdependency). In the reciprocal act of making unique contributions to the team and leaning on one another’s strengths, Fifth Wind employees also develop a strong reliance on and trust in the Lord.

In the past two years, Fifth Wind has expanded its retail base beyond Flagstaff and is now working with retail partners across Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico. We have also developed a wide variety of new products such as wood coasters and keychains, arrowhead necklaces, and new designs for our popular trail signs. Internally, we continue to focus on working unto the Lord, and not just for a paycheck. With discipleship as our aim, we invest in each employee as an individual, and emphasize the formation of their character over their productivity. You can learn more and see what our employees are creating at indianbible.org/fifth-wind.

Written by Tim Key, Fifth Wind Director

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A higher purpose.*



Praise & Prayer

- **Praise** God for faithfully, over the past thirteen years, forming IBC into greater Christlikeness through the Core Values. **Pray** that He would continue to show us how to “practice what we preach.”
- **Praise** God for the diverse group of churches, ministries, and organizations who have blessed us with their friendship. **Pray** for mutual blessing and strengthened trust in these partnerships.
- **Praise** God for the many individuals walking through the *Native Mending the Soul* material and finding freedom and healing! **Pray** for provision of people and financial resources for the NMTS program as it grows.
- **Praise** God for all He is doing in and through Fifth Wind! **Pray** for meaningful connections between Fifth Wind and Flagstaff’s small business community.

Celebration Weekend, May 22nd-23rd

- ⇒ May 22nd at 7 p.m.—**Student Ministry Showcase** in the IBC Student Center at 2229 E Cedar Ave, Flagstaff.
- ⇒ May 23rd at 2 p.m.—**Commencement** in the commons area between the buildings at 2918 N Aris St, Flagstaff.

You are welcome to attend the Showcase and/or Commencement in person (RSVP by emailing info@indianbible.org) or virtually at the following link: <http://bit.ly/3OyHZeq>

