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Honorable Senator James Lankford  
Washington D.C.

Subject: United States Indian Affairs Committee, Field Hearing, May 27, 2015  
Testimony Topic: Education and Workforce Development

Honorable Senator Lankford,

I am honored to have the opportunity to address the United States Senate Indian Affairs Committee in this field hearing session today. I am a native Oklahoman and have lived here nearly my entire life.

Experience and credentials:

I currently serve as Superintendent/CEO of Caddo Kiowa Technology Center (CKTC) in Fort Cobb, Oklahoma. CKTC was the second of 29 Vocational schools created in Oklahoma. Our district encompasses 1954 square miles here in Southwest Oklahoma and we partner with 13 sending schools within our district one of those being Riverside Indian School in Anadarko. We also work directly with 13 tribes in our area. I serve on the Washita Valley Regional Partnership board and am a past trustee of the Ponca City Development Authority board. I have led several groups over the course of my career and am a graduate of the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.

Education and Workforce Development Observations:

CKTC and our partner schools all strive to help our students find a path to a better life. Many of our students have difficult situations they must work around in order to find that path. Three years ago our board made the decision to help us start a regional Economic Development Partnership which Mr. Southard will address. The rationale for that was to try and create quality

jobs for the great, skilled students we help produce. We are well on our way to helping that dream become reality.

At CKTC our fulltime students have training opportunities in the following areas:

Construction Technology  
Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning  
Digital Imaging and Printing Technology  
Business Management and Administration  
Business Financial Management  
Health Careers  
Licensed Practical Nursing (Adult Students Only)  
Occupational Therapy Assistant (Adult Students Only)  
Physical Therapist Assistant (Adult Students Only)  
Culinary Arts  
Early Care and Education  
Cosmetology  
Web and Digital Communications  
Welding  
Pre-Engineering (High School Students Only)  
Biomedical Sciences (High School Students Only)  
Collision Repair  
Automotive Service Technology  
Diesel Service Technology

Our Business and Industry Services division provides a number of services to our taxpayers as well.

Volunteer Firefighter Training – Volunteer Firefighter Training has been available at no cost because of a grant made available thru the Oklahoma Legislature. CKTC has 14 Volunteer Fire Departments within its district.

Healthcare Training The health care industry is in desperate need of a qualified workforce with specifically aimed skills at enhancing and increasing the retention for workers in nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities. In the area of CNA, CMA, LPN and Home Health. CKTC has trained professionals in these areas with short term training and full time training.

Short Term Adult and Career Development Training CKTC brings professional instructors and speakers to their businesses as well as sending employees to the campus. Some of the topic areas include specific items such as time management, professional etiquette training to specific industry training. Cooking classes have been customized for students of the Riverside Indian School, Computer training, basic website classes and photography are available and again, this type of training is not limited to the borders of the campus but can be taught in the district.

Safety Training is requested by many Business and Industry clients to stay OSHA compliant. Safety topic training areas include but not limited to consist of basic safety, fork lift safety and

operation, Fire safety, lock out tag out, OSHA training and CPR. Many of our tribes utilize this service because of the child care facilities they run.

Business and Entrepreneurial Services and Caddo Kiowa Business Development Center BES offers confidential counseling and one on one assistance to businesses within the district. The assistance consists but is not limited to helping with business plan development, funding sources, income tax, marketing, cash flow analysis and business sales projections.

Oklahoma Bid Assistance Network (OBAN) provides marketing and technical assistance to Oklahoma businesses interested in selling products and services to federal, state, local and tribal governments. CKTC is privileged to house on campus one OBAN coordinator which has helped numerous businesses and Native American Tribes within the district with government contracts. Specific tribes include the Delaware Nation and the Wichita Tribe of Oklahoma.

Truck Driver Training –Truck Driver Training is offered on the campus of CKTC. This short term program area is designed to train individuals to become professional truck drivers. Within this program area is the *bus driver training program* that has been beneficial to many of our partner schools including Riverside Indian School located in Anadarko Oklahoma.

Business Incubator- Caddo Kiowa Business Development Center (CKBDC) is the perfect opportunity for small multi use companies. The CKBDC Business Incubator gives entrepreneurs and start up business owners the skills and guidance they need to succeed. Some of the benefits to being a tenant in the business incubator include graduated rent, one on one coaching, access to funding sources and business and technical support services from the entire BIS staff. Currently the CKBDC Business Incubator houses four businesses or entities. The Delaware Nation Economic Development Authority, Unami Lighting Company, Create IT, and Washita Valley Regional Partnership. Three of the four business are Native American owned and operated.

Customized training – When a company is need of upgrading its workforce Caddo Kiowa Technology Center is where they turn. The technology center is capable of providing training with a short turnaround time. Many industries require specialized training that is specific to their industry and career tech is able to provide it. Flexibility is the key to meeting the needs of the client. Caddo Kiowa Technology Center has employees on staff that can do safety analysis of a business and recommend a solution to safety problems with specialized training. CKTC also offers pre-employment training for existing companies or companies moving into the area.

Job Fairs – CKTC provides job fair services to expanding and new companies needing to fill the workforce requirement. CKTC helps potential employees with resume' development, interview skills and general employability skills.

Ag Business Management- We provide expertise in best farming practices as well as the financial side of the agriculture industry.

As you can see we try to help people and companies to be successful in Southwest Oklahoma.

Observations and recommendations:

We are extremely proud of our students. That said, sometimes when students complete their studies here at CKTC they return to the same environment they left. 86% of our students complete their training at CKTC and 89% of those get jobs in the area they trained for. I believe that with stronger support after they leave us we can continue to help reverse the trend of not feeling the need to work. One recommendation would be to establish Placement/Job Retention Coordinators at the tribal level. People which could work directly with us, our students and

businesses, perhaps even office at our facility to work with our tribal students and businesses in the area. It's a small step which could have a big impact. The other recommendation I would have is to work to get more push from the tribal side to encourage their members to get an education and a job so they can continue to build on the image of being a highly sought after workforce.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results. We are changing the way we do things here at CKTC. Education is alive and well here in Southwest Oklahoma. I believe we are headed in the right direction and am excited to see what the future brings.

Respectfully,

Dennis Ruttman