
MESCALERO APACHE TRIBE



Project Title:	Mescalero Apache Language Immersion School
Award Amount:	\$607,001
Type of Grant:	Native Languages
Project Period:	Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2012
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 9 Native American consultants hired
- 10 Elders involved
- 28 youth involved
- \$8,750 in resources leveraged
- 12 individuals trained
- 9 partnerships formed
- 4 language teachers trained
- 28 youth increased their ability to speak a Native language
- 45 adults increased their ability to speak a Native language
- 10 people achieved fluency in a Native language

BACKGROUND

Located in the foothills of the Sacramento Mountains in southern New Mexico, the Mescalero Apache Reservation is home to approximately 4,000 members of the Mescalero Apache Tribe, a federally-recognized Indian Tribe. Less than one-fourth of the population speaks or understands Apache; the majority of these

individuals are adults. In a 2006 study by the University of Arizona, the Mescalero Apache language was categorized as “severely in danger” as English becomes most commonly spoken on the reservation.

Concerned that most youth were no longer learning the language, Mescalero Apache School teachers, staff from Ndé Bizaa (the Tribal language program), several Elders, and other community members formed a language committee, which developed three goals: 1) Preserve the Apache language and culture, 2) Have children integrate Apache language and culture into their lives, and 3) Foster the Apache heritage.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to establish the Mescalero Apache Language Immersion School, with the mission of producing fluent young speakers who are knowledgeable about and make use of Apache culture.

The project’s first objective was to open and operate the immersion school, serving preschool-age children. Working with a linguist from New Mexico State University, staff developed an age-appropriate immersion curriculum that includes lesson plans, games, and other activities. Parents,

school staff, and other stakeholders also reviewed and provided feedback on the curriculum. The Tribe allocated space in its school for an Apache-only environment, and various Tribal departments donated supplies, equipment, and furniture. Ndé Bizaa staff recruited and hired a teacher, several assistants, and Apache language specialists. The school opened in January 2010.

The project's second objective was to produce 17 fluent speakers of Apache, ages 3-4. After the project began, staff chose to reduce the projected class size of 17 per year down to an average of 12 to maintain a good student-teacher ratio. In addition to conversational language, students learned Apache songs, words for special items, and traditional prayers. Elders came in to tell stories, play music, and lead cultural activities, which included dance performances, traditional songs, and lessons on traditional food and etiquette. Project staff noted that it was good to mix students of various levels, as the more advanced students helped other students learn.

The project's third objective was to involve parents, guardians, Elders, and other community members in Apache language revitalization activities. To do this, the Tribe held hour-long, weekly language classes for adults and hosted a language summit which attracted over 100 people. In addition, several parents volunteered in the immersion classroom.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The project made significant strides towards fulfilling its purpose. In total, 28 students increased their knowledge of the language, 10 of whom became conversationally fluent as measured by project staff. Parents reported that students are excited to use the language at home. The language lessons also instilled Apache values in the youth. All students now have traditional regalia,

and some students lead prayers or other parts of traditional ceremonies.

In addition, children developed more respect for Elders, and one parent remarked that during her grandfather's birthday, her daughter said a prayer for him in Apache. At other times, parents reported seeing children, unprompted, speaking the language with Elders. Parents and grandparents, many of whom never learned or have forgotten the Apache language, take great joy in seeing their children and grandchildren speaking it at home. Another parent remarked that her daughter's personality "has bloomed" as a result of her participation in the program.

By learning the language earlier in life in an immersion style, these children developed more accurate pronunciation and an understanding of the nuances of Apache that are harder to acquire at a later age, or to learn from taped recordings or hand-written materials. Project staff also reported that the Tribal school's overall performance has improved; students who graduated from the immersion program are now scoring higher on tests.

The benefits of the immersion program extend to the Mescalero Apache community as a whole. As a result of the youth learning Apache, community members are motivated to learn the language and to participate in cultural events. According to community members, values that were traditionally taught by grandparents have been lost, since extended families often do not live together. The Elders' participation in immersion school activities recreates this connection.

"To me, this program is a big asset to our people," said one community member. Another summarized the significance of the school, saying, "Who we are as a people is identified through the language."

NATIVE P.R.I.D.E.



Project Title:	The Good Road of Life: Responsible Fatherhood
Award Amount:	\$899,737
Type of Grant:	SEDS - Strengthening Families
Project Period:	Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2012
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 1 Native American consultant hired
- 139 Elders involved
- 118 youth involved
- \$119,675 in resources leveraged
- 1,139 individuals trained
- 56 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Corrales, New Mexico, Native Prevention, Research, Intervention, Development, and Education (P.R.I.D.E.) works throughout the U.S. “to develop and implement culture, strengths, and spiritual based programs for Native people that inspire leadership, healing, and wellness from colonization and multigenerational trauma.”

Young Native men have some of the highest risk factors in the country for substance abuse, violence, depression, and suicide. Native P.R.I.D.E. believes these issues stem from many Native men having “lost the sacred connection to their cultural identity and roles.” This breakdown of a positive

male presence is tearing Native families apart and threatening the well-being of Native children.

In 2008, with the support of a 1-year ANA planning grant, Native P.R.I.D.E. developed a unique, culturally-based fatherhood curriculum called “The Good Road of Life: Responsible Fatherhood.” The curriculum aims to provide Native men an opportunity to heal and “walk the road of wellness,” drawing upon sources of cultural strength to become better fathers, husbands, sons, and grandfathers.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The project’s purpose was to implement “The Good Road of Life” curriculum across the country.

The project’s first objective was to host 10 “The Good Road of Life” curriculum trainings in five tribal communities for 500 people. The training, hosted in a retreat setting, consists of two phases lasting 3 days each. The first part is solely for men to begin the healing process. The second phase occurs 4 weeks later; male participants bring their spouses and family members to work on strengthening family bonds and improving relationships.

Project staff divided participants into “clans” during the sessions, with a facilitator assisting each and monitoring progress. To make the program locally applicable, Native P.R.I.D.E. also recruited spiritual leaders, health professionals, and counselors from each area where trainings were held. These professionals provided further support to participants during the seminars, especially those dealing with substance abuse or domestic violence, and referred them for additional services as necessary.

The project’s second objective was to host four national Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions to implement the curriculum in other Native communities. Native P.R.I.D.E. certified 242 people through TOT workshops in Billings, Montana; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Portland, Oregon; and Rapid City, South Dakota. All trainees received curriculum materials and a DVD providing additional guidance in training techniques including energizers, team-building, and role-playing.

The third objective was to conduct a comprehensive public advertising campaign on strengthening families and responsible fatherhood. As part of this effort, Native P.R.I.D.E. presented at conferences for the National Indian Education Association and the New Mexico Counselors Association in Albuquerque, the National Congress of American Indians Conference in Portland, and the Lakota Nation Invitational in Rapid City. In addition, the organization assisted in replicating “Fatherhood is Sacred Day” activities at eight trainings in six states: Wyoming, Montana, Oregon, South Dakota, New Mexico, and Arizona. Conference attendees also received an informational “Fatherhood is Sacred” DVD.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Through this project, Native P.R.I.D.E. distributed “The Good Road of Life”

curriculum across the U.S., providing communities with a culturally-sensitive and effective roadmap for working with Native fathers. In addition, 242 trainees now have the ability to reach thousands of families with the curriculum.

Many of the Native communities that hosted the TOT sessions integrated the curriculum into their social programs and are hosting annual fatherhood events. Several tribal colleges are turning the curriculum into a course, and it is now being offered for continuing education certification by New Mexico State University. Several mental health programs throughout the country integrated the curriculum into their programs as well.

In total, 895 Native people, of which two-thirds were males, attended Native P.R.I.D.E. “The Good Road of Life” seminars. Pre- and post-evaluations of participants indicate the Native men who completed the program developed enlightened self-awareness of their relationships with their own fathers and families; they also learned “letting go,” communication skills, and forgiveness through reconnecting with their cultural identity. Men with substance abuse, domestic violence, or other issues were linked to counseling. Female participants learned improved communication and other healthy relationship skills.

Native P.R.I.D.E. predicts that, over time, Native communities implementing the curriculum will see a reduction of referrals to social services, counseling services, substance abuse programs, and incarceration due to domestic violence. As a result of their efforts, Native families have more involved spouses, fathers, sons, and brothers, who can draw on sources of cultural strength to be positive male role models.

PUEBLO DE SAN ILDEFONSO



Project Title:	Poh Woh Ge Tewa Hee
Award Amount:	\$219,613
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2012
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 42 Elders involved
- 60 youth involved
- \$3,000 in revenue generated
- \$132,400 in resources leveraged
- 41 individuals trained
- 19 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The Pueblo de San Ildefonso is located 23 miles northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico and is home to just over 650 people. The Pueblo is well-known for its famous black-on-black pottery, popularized by Maria and Julian Martinez in the early 20th century.

The Pueblo deals with a myriad of challenges, including limited employment opportunities, loss of language, and poor access to healthy food sources. In recent years, the Tribe has been working to become more self-sufficient and to protect its physical assets, culture, and traditions.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the “Poh Woh Ge Tewa Hee” project was multifold, combining the revitalization of the Tribe’s Tewa language

with reviving traditional agricultural practices. The project strove to create a local source of fruits and vegetables for the Pueblo, and provide training and employment for its youth.

The project’s first objective was to involve youth and Elders in creating traditional waffle and row gardens. Project staff and volunteers were enthusiastic to begin; however, the community had not farmed in many years. To overcome this challenge, project staff consulted with Elders to re-create the Pueblo’s time-honored farming calendar and learn traditional methods of fertilization, production, and storage. With training from New Mexico State University, youth participants kept a “garden journal” to detail daily activities, including what they planted, plant growth, watering efforts, problems encountered, and harvesting.

Using donated land, the farm produced chili peppers, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, and the “three sisters:” corn, beans, and squash. In addition, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation donated and helped plant 200 trees throughout the community. To protect crops from grazing animals, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provided fencing materials and the Pueblo passed a livestock ordinance.

Project staff and volunteers also constructed traditional hoop houses and a green house for growing produce year-round. Youth learned traditional skills from Elders and farm mentors in harvesting, canning, and preparing traditional foods. Youth also learned about gathering traditional plants and making special gourds, paint brushes, and other items. In total, 41 youth participants received training in agricultural methods and marketing. Though some in the community had been skeptical of farming, the project director indicated opinions changed; she stated, “When the community saw this barren field come alive with the mentors and a bunch of kids, they went, ‘Whoa.’ ”

The project’s second objective was for 75 percent of participating youth to learn Tewa language relating to traditional agriculture and native plants. The project exceeded the second objective goal by 14 percentage points. Youth prepared displays of native plants and grasses with signs indicating the Tewa, English, and scientific names of each, and project staff produced vocabulary lists of related Tewa words.

Project staff also recorded about 50 hours of Elders often speaking in the Tewa Language about their experiences farming when they were children. In addition, farm mentors who spoke the language held formal and informal experiential lessons with youth, taking nature walks and describing the animals, birds, and other objects seen.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Over the 3 years of the project, 60 youth assisted and learned Tewa on the farm. By the end of the project period, the community created four waffle gardens and 17 fields. In addition, 19 community members became new farmers, and planted 12 kitchen gardens. In total, the farms produced over 2,500 pounds of food, most of which was given or sold to community members at a

discounted price. On top of this, the pumpkins and squash produced by the farm won first place at the state fair, and the chili won third place. The \$3,000 generated by the farm supported field trips and supplies.

The project also made positive steps towards revitalizing the language. All 60 youth who participated in the project improved their knowledge of Tewa, and now present themselves in Tewa at community events. The 50 hours of recorded Tewa also will assist in future efforts to revitalize the language.

The impact on youth participants goes beyond learning to grow food and speak Tewa. According to one of the adult farming mentors, “When the young kids came on the farm, they had never experienced work ethics in terms of getting there on time and working hard.” Now, he said, “they really accept responsibilities.” Furthermore, these youth gained an appreciation for their heritage, culture, and traditions. In the past 2 years, every senior who participated in the project graduated from high school. Project staff also report that all youth participants are doing better in school and demonstrating improved behavior. Youth earned stipends for participation, and many put these towards paying for college or purchasing a car.

The revitalization of traditional farming sparked interest from other Tribes facing similar problems. Project staff made a presentation to the National Conference of American Indians on traditional farming, and some of the nearby Pueblos now are sharing information on farming practices and experiences. Now that there is a strong contingent of trained workers and volunteers, farm staff will focus on increasing the farm’s production and marketing efforts in order to generate enough revenue to grow and sustain the project.

PUEBLO OF POJOAQUE



Project Title:	Tewa Language Planning Project
Award Amount:	\$91,477
Type of Grant:	Native Languages
Project Period:	Sept. 2011 – Mar. 2012
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 full-time equivalent jobs created
- 8 Elders involved
- 6 youth involved
- \$21,200 in resources leveraged
- 44 individuals trained
- 7 partnerships formed
- 3 language teachers trained
- 30 adults increased their ability to speak a Native language

BACKGROUND

Located 15 miles north of Santa Fe in the Pojoaque Valley, the Pueblo of Pojoaque consists of over 400 members, half of whom live on the reservation. In response to the decline of the Pueblo's language, Tewa, the Pueblo's Governor established the first Tewa language program at the Pojoaque Early Childhood Center in 1998. Since then, Tribal leadership passed a series of resolutions and provided funding in support of cross-departmental language programming.

Despite these efforts, the use of Tewa was continuing to decline, prompting the Tribal

Council to re-examine its approach to language revitalization.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose and sole objective of the project was to create a Tewa language master plan to expand language learning opportunities in the Pueblo.

The project director formed a language committee to steer the development of the plan, composed of four Elders who speak Tewa, two youth students, a language coordinator, the director and teachers from the Early Childhood Center, and the Lieutenant Governor of the Pueblo.

To gather ideas for the plan, committee members visited neighboring Tribes' language programs, including the Taos Day School and Preschool, and Cochiti Language Program. Committee members also attended seven trainings on Native language pedagogy, immersion, and best practices, including the New Mexico Tribal Language Summit, the Stabilizing Languages Symposium, and the Language Death, Endangerment, Revitalization, and Documentation Conference. In addition, the project team hosted a Tewa Language Community Workshop, attended by 33 Tribal members, where community

members and practitioners shared best practices in language immersion pedagogy and planning. Through this exchange of ideas, the project team realized an immersion program at the Early Childhood Center would be the most effective way to revitalize Tewa in the Pueblo, and began drafting a plan to establish such a program.

Delays in hiring the language coordinator at the beginning of the project slowed progress on the plan; therefore, the Pueblo requested and received a 6-month no-cost extension period to finish it. With the assistance of the Indigenous Language Institute in Santa Fe, the plan was completed and approved by Tribal Council in February, 2012. The plan outlines steps for launching an immersion program at the Early Childhood Center.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The project director already has implemented the first steps of the plan. By December 2012, she hired four new language teachers to work at the center. The teachers are awaiting training and appreciate the opportunity to build their professional skills and language ability.

Through outreach and advocacy, the project team opened Tribal members' eyes to the status of the language, the immediate need to teach it to younger generations, and the inspiring language work of other Tribes. As a result, a committed group of parents, teachers, and Tribal members now is dedicated to maintaining the language and culture of the Pueblo. Parents expressed a sense of pride witnessing the re-emergence of Tewa culture in their children, and they are committed to incorporating Tewa lessons at home.

Incorporating plan recommendations, project staff intend to start a partial immersion program at the center for children aged two months to five years. The program is planned to transition to full day

immersion, once the center has the teaching capacity in place. Tewa teachers at the Early Childhood Center will receive training during the partial immersion phase, and move to full immersion once language and pedagogy skills are strengthened.

Through the hard work and consensus-building of the project team, the dream of a full day Tewa immersion school is now within the Pueblo's grasp.

“Language sprouts need energy from the sun to bloom; our little voices need the energy of collective prayers. Together with the forces of nature our little ones di ‘Tewa tuni’ (will speak Tewa)!”

Excerpt from the Tewa
Language Master Plan