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## FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY HEALTH SOURCE



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<b>Project Title:</b>	All My Relations Project
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$307,223
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Social and Economic Development Strategies – Family Preservation
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2004 – Sept. 2008
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Native Nonprofit

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### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 jobs created
- 3 Native American consultants hired
- 2 elders involved
- 23 youth involved
- \$300,000 in resources leveraged
- 68 individuals trained
- 18 partnerships formed

### BACKGROUND

First Nations Community Health Source (FNCH) is a nonprofit health and human services organization based in Albuquerque. Established in 1972, FNCH provides free health services that integrate traditional values to enhance the wellbeing of the approximately 18,000 Native Americans residing in the Albuquerque area. The city's population of Native Americans moved from their reservations to find jobs to support their families and come from a wide cross-section of tribal affiliations.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to provide healthy relationship education activities to

Native American adults and youth and to offer traditional healing and peacemaking assistance to Native American couples.

The project's first objective was to involve 30 adults and 30 youth in healthy relationship training activities. To complete the objective, thirteen members of FNCH staff attended trainings and received certification in the Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills (PAIRS) and the Practical Exercises Enriching Relationship Skills (PEERS) curricula. Staff modified portions of both curricula to ensure the content was culturally appropriate for Native Americans. Staff then organized an advisory board, which consisted of thirteen community partners that provided guidance for project implementation and recruited community participants for the healthy relationship workshops. Project staff offered a ten-week PAIRS training for Native American adults, with sixteen couples completing the workshop during the project timeframe. Project staff presented a 6-week PEERS training for Native American youth, and 23 participants completed the workshop during the project timeframe. The programs included

classroom-based sessions, such as conflict resolution and effective communication techniques, while also offering social activities such as dinners.

The project's second objective was to utilize traditional healing techniques and peacemaking activities to assist relationships and restore family stability. To complete the objective, project staff contracted with a male and female Navajo healer. The healers attended each program session and were available to participants upon request.

The project's third objective was to conduct an evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the healthy relationship program. All program participants completed a pre-test to establish baseline data for the program. Project staff conducted follow-up tests in the third, sixth, and ninth month after participants completed the program to assess content retention and impact. Of the sixteen couples who completed the program, four completed all three evaluations. All 23 youth completed the evaluation process.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

For the 55 workshop participants, attendance signified a commitment to work with family members and friends to improve and advance their relationships. Community members gained the tools to make healthy relationship choices and to better communicate with loved ones.

Evaluations from Native American couples disclosed that their participation in project activities had created a healthier family situation at home. Robert Macias shared, "It's easy to communicate with my wife now. Honestly, this project changed my life." Couples also shared the importance of meeting and networking with other Native American couples. Melissa Firecloud expressed, "Through this project, we realized that we were not alone. We had a place to share." Barney Botone added, "It is

significant for American Indians to have a place to be themselves and to not have their spirituality negated."

The 23 Native American youth involved in project activities also described the benefits of meeting and learning with their peers. Evaluations from the youth indicated that they had made new friendships that were based on a positive foundation. Dominic Goodmoney stated, "The program made me more comfortable with myself. I've become a more open person."

To ensure the sustainability of the project's efforts, staff secured a \$300,000 grant from the Office of Family Assistance within the Department of Health and Human Services to continue to offer healthy relationship trainings. Staff also signed thirteen Memoranda of Agreement with community partnerships created during the project timeframe, and will continue to utilize their resources to enrich program activities.

"If this had not been a Native-focused program, I wouldn't have participated, and I'd still be having the communication problems I had before I found this project."

Andrew Elk Shoulder,  
PAIRS participant

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**INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE INSTITUTE**


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<b>Project Title:</b>	Language Materials Development Center
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$469,112
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Language
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2005 – Sept. 2008
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Native Nonprofit

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**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 3 jobs created
- 2 Native American consultants hired
- 91 elders involved
- 57 youth involved
- \$78,700 in revenue generated
- \$105,774 in resources leveraged
- 308 individuals trained
- 17 partnerships formed

**BACKGROUND**

The Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) was established in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1992 as the Institute for the Preservation of Original Languages of the Americas. ILI is dedicated to indigenous language learning research, the development of language materials, and the dissemination of effective language learning methods.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this project was to establish a Language Materials Development Center (LMDC) to provide multimedia technology and expertise to tribes and individuals interested in developing materials for language instruction and preservation.

The project's first objective was to establish the LMDC's infrastructure. ILI hired new staff to develop policies and procedures, purchase database software, update the website, develop prototype language learning materials, and deliver technology workshops and digital storytelling trainings. All of LMDC's efforts supported capacity building amongst native language teachers and learners throughout the U.S. Staff designed the prototype materials to be easily replicable using standard software available on most computer operating systems. Template materials included a storybook, flash cards, brochures, fliers, newsletters and a calendar.

Staff delivered technology workshops to 252 individuals and digital storytelling trainings to 56 people between the ages of 19 and 87. The workshops were designed for all levels of computer literacy and focused on developing the skills set necessary to create new language materials without further assistance. The workshops were also product-driven, and focused on the language material content, thereby creating tangible goals for participants to achieve by the end of the trainings. The digital storytelling trainings taught methods for recording

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traditional stories and enhancing them with basic cinematography and art.

The LMDC facility in New Mexico also offered use of its digital recording and computer resources to interested language instructors. The center is furnished with several computers donated by the IBM Corporation and an equipped digital recording studio. Twenty language instructors utilized the facility during the project.

The project's second objective was to ensure LMDC's financial sustainability by securing new funding. The LMDC successfully secured six new language technical assistance contracts with tribes and a renowned national magazine, which partially fund operating costs. In addition, the center charges \$300 per participant for its three-day workshops, which covers training and materials costs.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

Many of the workshop participants were language instructors from isolated rural communities. The trainings enhanced their knowledge of computer programs and language material development, enabling them to create their own language curriculum without outside assistance. Furthermore, since the trainings focused on cost-saving methods for material development, participants can avoid expensive new software programs and hardware. As part of the training, participants brought deteriorating language materials from their childhood and updated them with the new and exciting formats, thereby creating a continuum between their past and today's youth.

After returning to their communities, the language instructors disseminate their newfound skills to other instructors and

youth. This process enabled LMDC to affect a much wider population than the direct workshop participants.

Since its establishment, the LMDC has become an integral component of ILI programming. The ILI is now developing expansion plans and hopes to replicate LMDC in satellite offices.

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“This project made the Language Materials Development Center’s vision a reality.”

Inée Slaughter, Executive Director  
Language Material  
Development Center

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**MESCALERO APACHE TRIBE**



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<b>Project Title:</b>	Apache Language Preservation & Revitalization on the Mescalero Apache Reservation
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$512,592
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Language
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2005 – Sept. 2008
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

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**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 7 jobs created
- 30 elders involved
- 75 youth involved
- 12 individuals trained
- 11 partnerships formed
- 6 language teachers trained
- 3 youth increased their ability to speak a native language
- 12 adults increased their ability to speak a native language
- 8 people achieved fluency in a native language

**BACKGROUND**

The Mescalero Apache Reservation is located in south central New Mexico and encompasses approximately 720 square miles. There are currently over 4,000 enrolled tribal members, most of whom live on the reservation. The Tribe is comprised of three sub-bands: the Mescalero Apache, the Chiricahua Apache, and the Lipan Apache.

The Mescalero, Chiricahua, and Lipan Apache languages were all spoken on the reservation, however the languages spoken today are not identical to those spoken in earlier times, and Mescalero has become the primary language. Researchers determined Lipan to be extinct, although there are a few elders who still speak it, and Chiricahua is not commonly spoken.

Approximately 22% of the reservation residents speak Apache, and more than 80% of these speakers are over 36. There is a strong shift on the reservation away from Apache and toward English, despite the Tribe's efforts to revitalize the three traditional languages.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the project was to promote increased use of Apache in a larger number of contexts in order to support the documentation, preservation, and revitalization of the languages.

The project's first objective was to implement a master-apprentice program. The language board selected ten masters and ten apprentices who met on a weekly basis.

Each pair focused on different aspects of the language, catering to the individual apprentice by emphasizing the situations in which they were most likely to use Apache. For example, a master teaching a mother raising small children would focus on language to accompany parenting and the household. This technique facilitated the apprentices using the language in varying contexts such as at home, work, or during cultural events. The program taught all three dialects, and focused on conversation rather than memorization techniques. As a result, several non-speakers became adept speakers and some apprentices became masters by the end of the project.

The project's second objective was to develop educational language materials and establish an Apache language archive. In addition to the master-apprentice program, the Tribe also offers regular language classes to tribal members. Project staff developed CDs and DVDs to distribute to language class students. One staff member also created digital animated materials to accompany language learning. Over the course of the project, staff members and the masters and apprentices transcribed approximately 530 basic Apache phrases, created 270 pages of Apache language texts, and developed a lexical database consisting of over 10,435 words. Project staff also archived all of these new materials.

The project's third objective was to develop and improve the Apache language classes and workshops. The average language class size was twenty, with fifteen core learners attending every session throughout the project. Project staff offered an immersion class for toddlers and summer language classes for tribal youth.

The project experienced some challenges regarding scheduling and transportation for the master-apprentice program. Rising fuel costs resulted in an unwillingness to travel

long distances for one-hour sessions, causing high turnover amongst the masters and apprentices. Additionally, as the area thrives on seasonal work, it was difficult for people to commit to an entire year's worth of classes. Project staff overcame this challenge by offering language classes at night.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

There are now more tribal members fluent in Apache, which increases the use of the language on the reservation. An increase in language classes and materials also strengthens the Tribe's capability to teach the language to future learners. Project staff noted that tribal members feel more comfortable using the language on an everyday basis. In a reversal of situation, people now encourage each other to refrain from speaking English rather than Apache.

Both the masters and apprentices improved their language skills during the project. There is now increased awareness amongst project participants regarding the importance of learning and speaking Apache.

Tribal youth began taking language materials home with them to share with their families. Many of the language classes are targeted at youth, so their vocabulary is now conversational rather than word-specific.

The language department hopes to bring the newly developed classes and materials to the schools in order to begin teaching the newest generation of Apache speakers.

"I learned that it is important to take the language home."

Ruby Morgan, Apprentice

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## RAMAH NAVAJO SCHOOL BOARD, INC.

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<b>Project Title:</b>	Ramah Navajo Foster Family Project
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$358,268
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Social and Economic Development Strategies – Family Preservation
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2005 – Sept. 2008
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Native Nonprofit

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### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 jobs created
- 40 elders involved
- 60 youth involved
- \$1,500 in resources leveraged
- 31 individuals trained
- 39 partnerships formed

### BACKGROUND

Approximately 4,000 Ramah Navajos live in the Ramah Navajo community in eastern New Mexico, geographically separated from the Navajo Nation by roughly 100 miles. The community is split between two small sub-communities, Pine Hill and Mountain View, located 22 miles southeast of the village of Ramah, New Mexico, 140 miles west of Albuquerque and 65 miles southeast of Gallup.

The Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. (RNSB) operates several health and education programs in Pine Hill, including: K-12 schools, early intervention, Head Start, continuing education, higher education programming, and health and wellness centers, amongst others.

Prior to this project, however, RNSB did not have a foster care program. Due to a lack of local Navajo foster homes, many Ramah Navajo children are placed in off-reservation homes or residential settings, the closest being 65 miles away, which increases the placement processing cost and limits opportunities for the youth to visit with their biological parents.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to establish a new foster family program within Ramah Navajo Social Services to prevent family breakups, reunite families when possible and follow all legal standards when children must be placed outside their families of origin.

The project's first objective was to establish the foster care program's internal infrastructure. Two project staff were hired and immediately began completing the office's policies and procedures manual, which staff completed by July, 2006. Staff then developed a training manual for foster parents that included lesson plans on CPR, life skills, first aid and child passenger safety. The curriculum parallels the Child Welfare League of America's PRIDE

Training curriculum but includes culturally appropriate activities and stories to improve its relevance to the Ramah Navajo community. To ensure compliance with national foster parent standards, the curriculum also includes forms for emergency numbers, incidental costs, behavior records, family visitation records, incident reports, clothing records and a family vacation packet.

The second objective was to license seven foster parents from the community. Staff raised awareness of the program's existence by delivering three pre-training presentations to twenty community members. Staff then trained and licensed twelve foster families, seven of which continued as foster parents after the project ended. The newly licensed families include one emergency placement home and one special needs home.

The third objective was to place two to eight Ramah Navajo children in licensed Ramah Navajo foster homes. Using the newly developed protocols, staff successfully placed eighteen youth with long or short-term foster parents from the community.

The project's final objective was to deliver family rehabilitation training with the placed youths' families of origin. Staff delivered rehabilitation sessions every two weeks for two hours to thirteen individuals from participating families. The trainer developed visitation agreements and established regimented calendars with the parents. The sessions addressed concepts such as relationships, clanship, active listening, effective communication and family trees. The goal of these sessions is to strengthen the relationship of the biological family members.

Staff faced significant challenges while implementing the project. Recruitment was a continuous challenge, as several certified families left the program and new families

had to be recruited. Further, the family background security check process was lengthy as the program sought information from sixteen different county, state and federal agencies.

#### **OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT**

The eighteen children placed within the Ramah community benefit emotionally as they retain physical contact with their family and existing support system. Their ability to remain in the community also strengthens their sense of place and cultural identity. Further, staff reported that children placed within the community have a higher incidence of reunification with their biological parents. The children's biological families benefit from the rehabilitation sessions, the ability to visit their children more frequently and have more input on where to place their child and how to handle their cultural rites of passage.

The Ramah Department of Social Services benefits through cost savings due to the close proximity of the placements, which reduces travel and other costs. In addition, the department can now offer more services to the community.

To maintain the program, RNSB incorporated the foster care services into the Department of Social Services.

“This program helps biological parents gain an understanding of themselves and improve their family relationships.”

Sherry Henio  
Family Rehabilitation Worker