

**EUCHEE TRIBE OF INDIANS**



<b>Project Title:</b>	TahA Onk'a fA: We Carry the Euchee Language Further
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$380,902
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Language
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 4 jobs created
- 8 elders involved
- 40 youth involved
- \$137,436 in resources leveraged
- 10 individuals trained
- 10 partnerships formed
- 6 language teachers trained
- 1,076 native language classes held
- 50 youth increased their ability to speak a native language
- 22 adults increased their ability to speak a native language
- 5 people achieved fluency in a native language

**BACKGROUND**

With a population of approximately 2,400, the Euchee (Yuchi) Tribe of Indians resides predominantly in the greater Tulsa area of Oklahoma. In the early nineteenth century the tribe was relocated forcibly from its original homeland in Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama to the northeastern area of what is now Oklahoma. The Euchee Tribe

has maintained its language and culture over the years, but the number of Euchee speakers has declined in recent generations. Currently only six people still speak the language fluently, all of whom are tribal elders aged 80 and above.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this project was to preserve and revitalize the Euchee language, utilizing fluent elder speakers to teach young adult tribal members through immersion methods. Following their immersion training, these young adults would serve as ‘language bearers,’ teaching the language to younger tribal members. This approach was taken to involve tribal members predominantly in their twenties in the transfer of knowledge across a wide generational span, connecting Euchee children and young adults to the language of their heritage. Project staff served the additional purpose of providing ongoing native language exposure to the broader Euchee community.

The first objective of this project was to implement Master-Apprentice immersion language lessons, with fluent elders teaching Euchee to young adult language bearers. There were five elders and five language bearers involved in the lessons, which lasted

two hours each and took place five days per week over the project's entire two-year period. The content of the lessons was predominantly conversational Euchee, with an emphasis on practical, everyday topics. Elders monitored progress with input from an immersion linguist, who provided written evaluations for each language bearer on a bi-monthly basis.

The second objective was for the language bearers to take what they had learned from the lessons with elders and conduct immersion language lessons for tribal youth. These sessions were also two hours in duration and took place five days per week. There were 22 children and six to 10 teenagers present at each session. Again, the focus was on practical topics that could be used in everyday conversation. In order to keep the youth engaged, the language bearers created enjoyable activities to contextualize the immersion experience, such as games, cooking, sports, and scavenger hunts. Periodic oversight of these sessions was provided by the five elder speakers. This oversight gave the youth the opportunity to hear and learn directly from fluent Euchee speakers in an effort to ensure proper vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation were not lost or distorted in the transfer of knowledge.

The final project objective was to develop a set of 10 audio and 10 video recordings of oral presentations performed by the children, language bearers, and elder speakers. To accomplish this, project staff videotaped and made audio recordings on a bi-monthly basis, until a set of 10 had been produced. These were made available to the entire tribe, thereby providing opportunities for language exposure and cultural inspiration for the entire community. Additionally, an immersion linguist conducted focus groups every six months in order to provide

qualitative monitoring of progress in community awareness and engagement with language revitalization.

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

Five young adult Euchee language learners greatly expanded their ability to speak the language, and all were able to serve as language bearers passing the language to the younger generation. Teaching what they just had learned reinforced the knowledge base of these young adults, and the younger generations were in turn able to learn and profoundly increase their proficiency in Euchee. The immersion linguist provided written evaluations that documented significant progress in all respects.

A set of 10 audio and 10 video recordings of oral presentations performed by the children, language bearers, and elder speakers was created successfully. These recordings demonstrated the growth in speaker proficiency over the course of time, and provided significant exposure to the language for the greater Euchee community. Feedback from focus groups suggested the recordings were received very positively by community members.

The teenagers in the program won several trophies at the Oklahoma Native American Youth Language Fair. Additionally, project staff members were able to get one of the youth's audio recordings broadcast on a local radio station's language program. According to the project director, this project had the additional benefit of keeping youth out of trouble by providing structure, a positive, encouraging environment, and a strong sense of accomplishment. According to project staff, members of all generations involved in this project expressed a deep sense of pride and connection to their native language and culture.

**KAW NATION**




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<b>Project Title:</b>	Protecting the Environment of Kaw Nation
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$93,698
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Environmental
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2009 – Dec. 2010
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

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**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 1 job created
- 1 Native American consultant hired
- 12 elders involved
- 37 youth involved
- \$3,540 in resources leveraged
- 1 individual trained
- 9 partnerships formed
- 1 strategic environmental plan developed

**BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the Kaw Nation had a population of 3,033 members, with 671 residing in its service area. The service area encompasses the entirety of Kay County in northern Oklahoma, which spans 987 square miles, including 919 square miles of land and 68 square miles of water.

Within the Kaw Nation jurisdiction is Kaw Lake, which serves as the main water source for 100,000 individuals living in Kaw City and the surrounding areas. Tribal leaders saw a need to protect this valuable resource and address food industry safety concerns. In 2007, the Kaw Nation Environmental Department developed three environmental codes to regulate solid waste management,

underground storage tanks, and food safety in Kay County. Developing these codes was an important step in ensuring the health and safety of the Kaw Nation community. In 2009, Kaw Nation leaders recognized the need to develop a plan for implementation and enforcement of the codes.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the project was to strengthen the Kaw Nation’s capacity to protect its land, water, and air by creating an environmental strategic plan and establishing an inter-agency framework for cooperating with state and federal agencies to implement and enforce environmental codes.

The project’s first and only objective was to create a five-year environmental strategic plan and provide outreach on environmental protection to the 671 tribal members residing in the service area. To develop the plan, the Kaw Nation Environmental Department’s project planners intended to hire a project coordinator and an outreach coordinator. These individuals were expected to gather and integrate input from community members, tribal directors, the environmental department staff, and the nation’s Environmental Commission; this

information would be used to formulate the strategic plan. Unfortunately, planners were unable to fill the two positions for the first four months of the project, significantly hindering progress and necessitating the positions be rolled into one.

Once hired, the new project coordinator worked with the environment department director to solicit significant input from Kaw Nation tribal departments, the Kaw Nation Environmental Commission, and the USDA regional office. Project staff met with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and eight different tribal departments to present and discuss the strategic plan. In the fourth quarter of the project, a draft strategic plan was completed and sent to EPA regional staff for feedback. To achieve the project goal of integrating community input into the plan, project staff conducted outreach to elders and youth, sent out a newsletter and brochure informing the 671 tribal members of the environmental strategic plan's development and progress, and featured the strategic plan in a local newspaper.

By the end of the initial project period, the environmental strategic plan was 75 percent complete. Project staff requested a three-month no-cost extension to complete project activities. By the end of the extended project period, project staff had succeeded in developing a comprehensive strategic environmental plan clearly outlining the steps needed for implementation and enforcement of the solid waste storage, underground storage tanks, and food safety codes.

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

Through this project, the Kaw Nation Environmental Department developed relationships with state and federal agencies, greatly enhancing the tribe's ability to work

with these agencies on air, water, and land protection efforts in the future. Additionally, by utilizing partnerships established by project staff, the Environmental Department identified how to incorporate an alternative energy source development strategy into the five-year environmental strategic plan.

Project staff stated that developing an action plan for enforcing and implementing environmental codes was critical in strengthening the Environmental Department's capacity. Through this project, the department has developed a clear strategy for protecting vital natural resources in the Kaw Nation's service area.



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project partners to put the texts into a uniform orthography, with similar spelling, punctuation, emphasis, symbols, and grammar rules. Project partners included Dr. Robert Rankin, a historical linguist who compiled a unique set of field recordings of the last fluent Kanza speaker in the 1970s, a Community Advisory Group (CAG), comprised of five tribal members, and other local language scholars and tribal members. To ensure appropriate translation and accurate annotation in the texts, Robert Rankin, project linguist, and Justin McBride, project director, traveled to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. to conduct historical research. This ensured that future users of the texts and graded readers would be furnished with accurate, useful tools for learning about the Kaw language and culture.

During the two-year project period, the project team transposed 31 histories and tales into formats useful for language learners and students of Kaw culture, organizing the texts into a cogent, user-friendly repository, and providing translations for each text. From these 31 texts, they selected 10, based on subject matter and accessibility to readers, for as-is-use in the graded reader. The CAG met quarterly to review the materials, edit content, test for comprehensibility, and gauge whether the materials succeeded in guiding users toward literacy in Kanza. In putting together the guided reader, the project team made efforts to ensure that prospective language learners could understand basic grammar, vocabulary, and plot for each text. Using the 10 texts selected for the reader, the project team also developed a CD recording of each text.

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

The project team converted 31 highly-valued histories and treasured stories into a form tribal members can use, in perpetuity,

to connect with their language and culture. The graded reader includes 10 texts, with 10 comprehensive exercises for Kaw language learners. According to project staff, the Kaw community contributed significantly to this project; in particular, the CAG ensured community ownership of the process and the final products.

The compilation of Kanza texts, and the knowledge they provide about Kaw cultural traditions, is now available to all members of the Kaw tribal community. Project staff intends to continue their efforts to preserve and perpetuate the language with the production of a Kaw language dictionary and other resources for the community.

**MIAMI TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA**




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<b>Project Title:</b>	Healthy Indoor Environments
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$106,696
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Environmental
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2010
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

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**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 1 job created
- 20 elders involved
- 125 youth involved
- \$54,390 in resources leveraged
- 1 individual trained
- 10 partnerships formed

**BACKGROUND**

The Miami Tribe of Oklahoma is a federally recognized tribe located in Ottawa County, Oklahoma. Within the past two years, an ice storm, flood, and tornado have struck the county, initiating three federal disaster declarations. These natural disasters have left a wake of building and property damage from which the area still has not recovered fully. As a result, many buildings in the area have substandard indoor air quality and/or insulation due to unrepaired walls, roofs, and floors. Water damage to structures exposes inhabitants to mold,

mildew, bacteria, and other harmful particles.

Additionally, many tribal homes are located dangerously close to the Tar Creek Superfund Site, from which winds carry lead dust contaminating the soil and air. Families with poorly ventilated homes are at risk of continually breathing toxic air until ventilation/pollutant assessments are conducted and remediation plans are developed. Prior to this project, the tribe did not have an environmental program in place to address these problems and ensure safe indoor air quality for its members.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this project was to create and conduct a sustainable environmental program to examine, monitor, and promote awareness of the environmental issues related to indoor air quality, and to reduce the associated health risks to tribal members.

The first objective of the project was to produce 10 policies and procedures relating to indoor air quality, and to create educational materials informing tribal members of potential environmental risks and ways of mitigating these risks. Project staff drafted, revised, and completed these policies and procedures, based largely on information presented at American Lung Association trainings. The policies and procedures provided guidance to tribal members on best practices for maintaining optimal indoor air quality in homes and other tribal facilities. After completing the policies and procedures, project staff submitted them to the Tribal Business Committee for formal approval.

Next, the project team developed three educational materials, including an adult brochure, a youth brochure, and an informational poster. Taken from pre-existing sources, such as EPA pamphlets, and adapted for cultural appropriateness, the resources contained information to educate tribal members about the possible risks of poor indoor air quality and steps to be taken to ameliorate its effects. Project staff printed and distributed 2,000 adult and 1,000 youth brochures, enough for every household in the community, and displayed 100 informational posters in prominent community settings.

The second objective was to conduct air quality assessments of five homes owned by tribal members, and to create a customized remediation plan for each. Project staff posted a public sign-up sheet in a community cafeteria and selected five homes deemed to have the most pressing needs for assessment. Each air quality assessment consisted of three phases: screening, testing, and remediation. The screening and testing phases involved taking

air samples and running diagnostic tests, including thermal imaging, blower-door tests for insulation, duct tests, and lead/radon measurements. The remediation phase involved analyzing the assessments and providing detailed instructions to homeowners regarding what steps they could take to promote safe indoor air quality in their homes.

### OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The educational materials have enhanced significantly tribal members' understanding of potential health hazards related to indoor air quality. The increased awareness was especially meaningful for tribal elders, many of whom are primary caretakers of youth. Prior to this project, many were unaware of potential health risks related to indoor air quality. Now, they are better able to provide healthy environments for themselves and the children for whom they care.

From the air quality assessments, project staff concluded that health challenges of several community members were directly attributable to poor indoor air quality. The five tribal households receiving assessments benefited significantly by gaining an understanding of potential air quality hazards in their homes. Project staff is optimistic that if these community members adhere to the remediation plans with which they have been provided, they are likely to experience notable improvements in personal health.

Lastly, project staff developed their capacity to understand the relationship between health challenges and the physical properties of building materials in houses and other tribal facilities. With this knowledge comes the ability to take proactive steps to circumvent these health challenges to a greater degree than ever before.

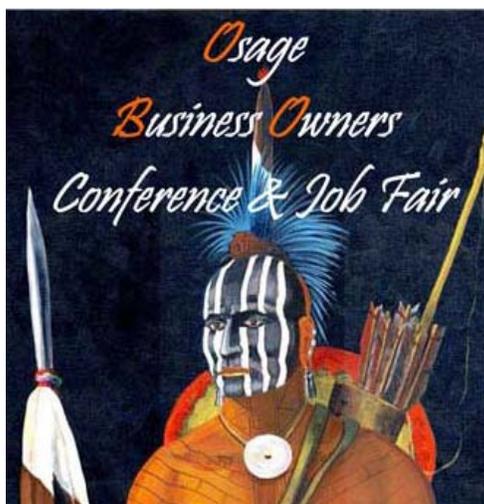
*"The tribe is now able to identify the correlation between building dynamics and personal health, and to take steps to mitigate the resulting health challenges of its community members."*

- Roger Nagl, Project Director

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## OSAGE NATION

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<b>Project Title:</b>	Creating a Self-Sufficient Economic and Business Environment
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$253,603
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Social and Economic Development Strategies
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2008 – Dec. 2010
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

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### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 jobs created
- 2 Native American consultants hired
- 73 youth involved
- \$9,600 in resources leveraged
- 89 individuals trained
- 10 partnerships formed
- 2 governance codes/ordinances developed

### BACKGROUND

The Osage Reservation, with 1.5 million acres, borders Osage County, the largest county in Oklahoma. Over 10,000 Native Americans live in the county, comprising 25 percent of its population. Many reside in isolated, rural areas with few employment opportunities, and must commute outside the county to Tulsa, Ponca City, or Bartlesville for employment.

With an eye on the long-term development of the reservation, the Osage Nation held a community strategy summit in 2007 to gather input on how to promote the economic and social well-being of the

reservation. In response to the community needs presented, the Osage Nation created a 25-year strategic plan for the reservation, highlighting six focus areas, including economic development.

### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to build a foundation for economic growth on the Osage Reservation by creating an infrastructure for economic prosperity and support for community members to become more self-sufficient.

The first objective was to develop a five-year economic development plan during the first year of the project. To create the plan, project staff intended to hire an economic development specialist, who would spearhead the effort. Unfortunately, the project team had difficulty hiring an appropriate person for this position. Nonetheless, project staff moved forward, producing a report assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the Osage Nation economy, and identifying which businesses were successful on the reservation and in tribal communities. To facilitate the business community's input in the plan,

project staff also began building an Advisory Committee by establishing partnerships with organizations and financial and business training schools. Staff also formed partnerships with the Osage Nation Tax Commission, Osage Nation LLC, and the Tri County Technology Center.

Due to delays in hiring the economic development specialist, the project team did not complete the entire plan by the end of the project period. Though the project received a no-cost extension to finish the task, a newly-elected tribal government opted to handle the task instead, addressing these community priorities outside of the ANA-funded project.

In addition to beginning the five-year plan, the tribe also held the successful Osage Business Owners Conference and Job Fair, attended by 300 Osage and non-Osage participants. The goal of the conference was to teach reservation businesses how to contract with Osage Nation and compete for the \$80 million that the tribe spends on products and services each year. Procurement representatives from Osage Nation facilitated dialogue with business owners at the conference on how to streamline the procurement process to make it easier for local businesses to contract with Osage Nation.

The second objective, to be carried out in year two, was to provide financial literacy training to 60 tribal members, including youth, elders, young parents, and individuals with disabilities. Project staff partnered with Osage Nation Education Department staff to provide financial literacy training to 73 young tribal members in two workshops. The project staff was not able to provide training to elders, young parents, and individuals with disabilities during the project period, but reached out to these

groups through advertisements and other recruitment efforts for future training sessions.

The third project objective was to provide entrepreneurship training to 15 tribal members interested in starting their own businesses. To complete this objective, Osage Nation entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Tri-County Technology center to provide industry-based entrepreneurship training to 15 tribal members for an “Osage Nation Entrepreneurs Boot Camp.” All 15 members completed the boot camp, which provided training on how to create a detailed start-up business plan, including an outline for the first year of operations, estimated revenue, competitive analysis, and marketing strategy.

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

Though the project team was unable to complete a five-year strategic plan, the project aided the Osage Nation in making significant progress in establishing a foundation for economic growth on the reservation. By providing outreach to local businesses, the project team helped facilitate the growth of private enterprise and self-sufficiency in the community. In addition, the project team succeeded in identifying potential grant-based funding sources for economic development projects on the reservation.

By providing financial literacy workshops, entrepreneurship training, and networking opportunities, project staff also developed the entrepreneurial, financial, and management capacity of community members. Through this training, strategic planning, and formation of partnerships, the Osage Nation has taken a proactive approach to stimulating growth in the reservation’s economy.

**OTOE-MISSOURIA TRIBE OF INDIANS**



<b>Project Title:</b>	Otoe-Missouria Tribal Information Office Start-up
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$161,290
<b>Type of Grant:</b>	Social and Economic Development Strategies
<b>Project Period:</b>	Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010
<b>Grantee Type:</b>	Tribe

**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 1 job created
- 1 Native American consultant hired
- \$58,850 in resources leveraged
- 15 partnerships formed

**BACKGROUND**

The Otoe-Missouria Tribe is a federally recognized tribe with 1,392 enrolled members in north central Oklahoma. Currently, only 44 percent of the tribe lives in the tribe’s service area, and the other 56 percent live elsewhere.

The tribe is represented by a seven-member Tribal Council, established in 1984 to transact business and represent the tribe in all political, economic, and social matters. In recent years, the Tribal Council has sought to enhance the delivery of services to tribal members, expand business opportunities, develop codes to lower the required blood quantum levels required for tribal membership, and develop a Domestic Violence code.

In a community needs assessment from January, 2008, tribal members identified insufficient communication between the Council and members as a matter of

concern. From this, the council recognized the importance of receiving input from the local and broader tribal communities as a top priority, hoping to ensure all members of the community have a chance to provide input before council decisions are made. • 5 Native American

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The project’s purpose was to establish a public information office to increase communication between the tribal government and tribal community, strengthening the ability of the council and tribal leaders to govern.

The first objective was to open a public information office, and to provide tribal members access to tribe-wide discussions facilitated by the new office on proposed changes in enrollment rules. To accomplish this, the tribe’s human resource director hired an information officer and purchased IT equipment and supplies needed for the new office. Once the public information office was running, the information officer conducted a focus group, held community meetings, and distributed surveys to assess community sentiment towards the proposed changes in enrollment rules. In addition, the Tribal Council Secretary and public information officer distributed mailings to

tribal members and established a website, providing further information on proposed amendments. These communication methods proved effective in reaching over 1,850 tribal members.

The second objective was to expand public information office outreach to all community members on a routine basis. To achieve this objective, project staff worked with an independent design firm to upgrade the website to include necessary forms, event invitations, important dates, and access to video footage of Tribal Council meetings. By the end of the project period, the site had received over 15,000 visits. To further increase the public information office's outreach, the project team established a mailing contact list and began quarterly production and distribution of newsletters.

The third objective was to make 51 percent of the tribal membership aware of the processes for providing input to the Tribal Council and how to access tribal programs. To meet this objective, project staff established the role of ombudsman, the primary communication conduit between the Tribal Council and tribal members, within the public information office. Through flyers, newsletters, mailings, and the tribe's website, the public information office informed tribal members of the ombudsman's contact information. During the second year of the project, 351 people contacted the ombudsman to communicate their complaints, issues, questions, and compliments, indicating an awareness of the process for community input. In addition to the ombudsman, the website effectively informed tribal members how to provide input; by the end of the project period, according to project staff, at least half of the

tribal community was accessing needed information from the tribe's website.

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

Currently, 100 percent of tribal programs receive and disseminate information through the public information office, effectively utilizing various tools of the office to communicate with the public. All tribal programs have provided information to the quarterly newsletters, and several tribal programs have disseminated surveys through the public information office to gauge interest in their programs, with the response rate reaching 50 percent for some surveys.

The public information office has improved immensely the communication between tribal members and the tribal government, as well as communication between the various tribally-run programs. A lasting impact of this project is the establishment of monthly meetings between the ombudsman and the directors of tribal programs. At these meetings, directors discuss how they can address community concerns brought forth by the ombudsman. This has led to new policies and procedures, improving internal communication, and increasing interdepartmental collaboration. According to project staff, the streamlining of efforts and enhanced communication already has done much to improve the quality of services provided by the tribe to its members.

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**UNITED KEETOOWAH BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS IN OKLAHOMA**




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**Project Title:** UKB Mentoring Emerging Leaders Destiny

**Award Amount:** \$315,886

**Type of Grant:** Social and Economic Development Strategies

**Project Period:** Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010

**Grantee Type:** Tribe

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**PROJECT SNAPSHOT**

- 2 jobs created
- 6 Native American consultants hired
- \$32,046 in resources leveraged
- 83 individuals trained
- 10 partnerships formed

**BACKGROUND**

The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma (UKB) is based in Tahlequah, and its 12,526 members are dispersed through nine districts in a 14 county area in northeastern Oklahoma. In comparison to the general population in that area, a disproportionate percentage of tribal members are economically distressed due to unemployment or underemployment. Prior to the project, the tribe had no program in place to address the lack of professional development opportunities and low employment status of its members. Tribal leaders therefore felt a pressing need to increase vocational, business, leadership, and professional opportunities.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this project was to address tribal employment and professional

development needs by creating the Mentoring Emerging Leaders Destiny (MELD) program, in which tribal members could develop leadership and professional skill sets under the tutelage of tribal members already employed by the tribe. This statement of purpose doubled as the project’s lone objective, which was to be completed over a two-year period.

Project staff publicized the program via the tribe’s newspaper, website, and word of mouth. Once publicized, project staff utilized a competitive placement process through which all interested tribal members were welcome and encouraged to apply.

Project staff selected 33 total participants for the MELD program, with 18 matriculating in year one and 15 in year two. Sixteen participants completed all modules in their entirety, with nine participants finishing in year one and seven concluding in year two.

Although the project had a two-year duration, project staff divided the MELD program into two separate one-year segments. Each year consisted of rotating internship modules in which participants were placed at job sites for six weeks at a time, 40 hours per week. Each office only had one intern at a time, thus maximizing

each participant’s professional development. The tribal departments that hosted interns included the offices of accounting, education, library, family services and domestic violence counseling, gaming commission, grants management, housing administration, language and culture, human services, tribal casino, information technology, and elderly care. In addition to the internship modules, project staff members hosted and/or partnered with external agencies to provide nine specialized professional development workshops and trainings throughout each project period.

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

The project director stated that all participants who completed the program felt the project had lasting value and many participants developed or enhanced diverse professional skill sets. Examples of the types of skills gained in the program include, but were not limited to, counseling, teaching, carpentry, and administrative duties.

One program participant was able to successfully start her own nonprofit organization. This had been a lifelong dream of hers, and she stated that it never would have been possible without the guidance, support, and skills she received from this program. Her organization is now a registered 501(c)(3) called ‘Native Disparities No More.’

Of the nine individuals who completed the MELD program in year one, six gained employment, two enrolled in school full-time, and one went to a vocational technical program. Of the seven individuals who completed the program in year two, five gained employment and two enrolled in school full-time. All jobs secured by participants required skills gained from the program, and three of the participants were hired into a tribal department in which they

interned. None of these 16 individuals were employed when the program began, and only one had a degree.

*“None of this would have been possible without having gone through the MELD program.”*

Winona Johnson, MELD participant and founder of the nonprofit ‘Native Disparities No More’