

MASHKISIBI BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB



Project Title:	Educational Excellence
Award Amount:	\$235,602
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 10 jobs created
- 3 Native American consultants hired
- 3 elders involved
- 123 youth involved
- \$52,569 in resources leveraged
- 9 individuals trained
- 9 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The Mashkisibi Boys and Girls Club is located on the Bad River Reservation in northern Wisconsin. Part of the national Boys and Girls Club network, the Mashkisibi branch was founded in 2000 to promote and enhance the development of young people by instilling in them a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, power and influence. The club hosts activities for over 160 school aged youth throughout the year.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to increase the levels of academic success among native youth on the Bad River Reservation. The Club designed the project to address a

perceived lack of appreciation among the youth for educational opportunities. The Club identified a lack of soft skills among the youth, such as task completion, working with others, regular attendance, punctuality, preparation, focus, loyalty, and a positive attitude toward work. The Club believes the lack of these skills could prevent the youth from experiencing success later in life.

The first objective of the project was to integrate six high-yield activities into the local Mashkisibi afterschool program. High-yield activities are defined by the Boys and Girls Club as those that have a significant effect on the academic success of students when conducted on a weekly basis. These activities include: four to five hours of discussions with knowledgeable adults; four to five hours of leisure reading; one to two hours of writing activities; five to six hours of homework help and study; two to three hours of helping others; and four to five hours of games that use cognitive skills.

Two project coordinators were hired to develop and oversee the integration and implementation of high-yield activities in the afterschool program. One coordinator worked with youth from kindergarten to fifth grade and the other coordinator worked

with students in sixth to twelfth grade. The coordinators also worked with youth, teachers, elders, and community members to modify the Boys and Girls Club of America high-yield activity curriculum. The curriculum was updated on a month-to-month basis based on availability of knowledgeable adults from the community. Examples of the activities include: a science fair, a book club, traditional stories and games, and life skills training. During the life skills activities, teenage youth met with people from local job centers to learn about the salaries for a variety of jobs and how to balance a checkbook. Other activities included partnering with the Minnesota Department of Indian Work to teach the youth about HIV and STD prevention and partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to learn about environmental careers.

The next objective of the project was to train five teenagers to become peer leaders. During the second year of the project, teenagers that successfully completed the first year high-yield activities were invited to apply to become peer leaders. The peer leaders became employees of the Boys and Girls Club, obtained work permits and were paid the Wisconsin minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour. Consequently, only students aged 15 and older were eligible to become peer leaders. Due to a budget miscalculation, the Club only had funds available to pay for three peer leaders. The three peer leaders worked after school from 4:30 – 7:30 pm. Initially, some of the peer leaders had difficulty adapting to their leadership role, but with the help of project staff, the peer leaders adjusted to leading the high-yield activities during the second year of the project. The three peer leaders completed online training provided by the Boys and Girls Club of America and received coaching from the project staff.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The project staff believes there was an increase in attendance at the Club and improved trust between the youth, parents, and Club due to this project. Elders also benefited through a service learning project that involved youth in helping elders with yard cleaning and blanket making. In addition, after the end of the project, two of the students leveraged their experience to attend a University of Wisconsin summer program in anticipation of attending the University of Wisconsin. Partners in the project included the Boys and Girls Club of America, which provided some funding to run the Club, and the local school district, which dropped students off at the Boys and Girls club after school. The materials developed during this project are available for continued use by the Mashkisibi Boys and Girls Club.

“The youth really benefited from speaking with the adults from the community organizations and businesses out there and learning what it is like in the ‘real world’ and what is needed for success.

Kristi Broenanam, Project Director

GREAT LAKES INDIAN FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION



Project Title: Anishinaabe Inaadiziwin:
Anishinaabe Way of Life
Language Preservation
Project

Award Amount: \$304,294

Type of Grant: Language

Project Period: Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010

Grantee Type: Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 jobs created
- 63 elders involved
- 22 youth involved
- \$21,578 in resources leveraged
- 6 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) represents 11 tribal governments that reserved hunting, fishing, and gathering rights in 1837, 1842, and 1854 treaties with the U.S. government. The 11 sovereign tribal governments are Fond du Lac, Mille Lacs, St. Croix, Lac Courte Oreilles, Red Cliff, Bad River, Lac du Flambeau, Sakagon, Lac Vieux Desert, Keweenaw Bay, and Bay Mills. GLIFWC provides natural resource management expertise, conservation enforcement, legal and policy analysis, and public information services. GLIFWC strives to promote cultural awareness by infusing Anishinaabe values, traditions, and language into its endeavors. Anishinaabe, commonly known

as Ojibwe, is a living language with programs taught at tribal colleges, schools, and community centers. While the Anishinaabe people still are involved actively in subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering in ways that were taught to them by their parents and grandparents, the language of those activities is being lost as elders pass away.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project was to develop Anishinaabe language material specific to hunting, fishing, and gathering.

The objective of the project was to create an interactive DVD with words and phrases for eight traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. The eight activities are: Akwa'waawin (ice fishing harvest), Iskigamizige (maple syrup making), Manoominike (wild rice harvesting and processing), Aggodwaagan (snaring animals), Asemaakewin (traditional tobacco use), Bagida'waa miinawaa Waswaagaanige (spring spearing and gill net fishing), Giiwose (traditional hunting), and Wanii'ige (trapping).

To create the interactive DVD, project staff began with a storyboard of each activity. Storyboards are a set of illustrations displayed in a sequence that helps audiences pre-visualize and understand the photographs and videos that would be placed on the DVD. The storyboard was created by speaking with experienced community members about the process of traditional activities. Project staff worked with member tribes to identify experts in traditional harvesting and gathering activity.

Once the storyboard was finalized, project staff photographed and videotaped each activity. In tandem with recording the activity, project staff worked with the GLIFWC language committee to create activity scripts. The GLIFWC language committee is made up of 11 elders and Ojibwe speakers from each of the GLIFWC member tribes. While all the GLIFWC member tribes are traditionally Ojibwe speakers, there are 15 different dialects. For example, in one community “house” is translated as “waakaa’igan,” in another community it is “waakaaygan,” and in the third community it is “wiigwaam.” To help mitigate this challenge, the DVD features five dialects chosen based on the dialect of the tribal member recorded.

After the activity was photographed and the language recorded, project staff created the DVD. The DVD is interactive; for example, a user hovering over a turtle icon hears an Ojibwe sentence; left clicking on the turtle allows the user to read the sentence in Ojibwe; and right clicking on the icon gives the English translation.

Prior to completing the DVD, the project staff presented it to teachers and speakers for feedback. Language students went through the DVD to determine appropriate timing, the ease of use of the DVD, and structure. Project staff used this information

to identify problems with the DVD and how to improve the lesson format.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Through this project, students studying Ojibwe not only learned new words, but also learned how to undertake traditional activities. Language instructors have an additional tool to teach the language, and tribal members have a record of how their elders and neighbors undertake traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. In addition, the general public, by going through this DVD, can learn Ojibwe vocabulary and about the cultural element of the traditional harvest. Furthermore, an unanticipated benefit of this project was the identification of words and terms that were not part of the Ojibwe dictionaries and current lexicon. For example, the Ojibwe term for ice fishing, Akwa’waawin, was not well known. The DVD re-introduces these words and terms into the current lexicon and preserves them for future generations of Ojibwe learners.

Demonstrating GLIFWC’s commitment to the preservation and sharing of the Ojibwe language, the organization leveraged internal funds to produce 8,000 DVDs for distribution to the member tribes and for sale at the GLIFWC Public Information Office.

“The words and sentences on the DVD are not used everyday so they are in danger of being lost. By doing this project, the language speakers are thinking about these words again.”

Jim St Arnold, Project Director
