
1854 AUTHORITY



Project Title:	1854 Authority Natural and Cultural Resource Specialist
Award Amount:	\$162,469
Type of Grant:	Environmental
Project Period:	9/30/2005 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 1 job created
- 60 elders involved
- 6 youth involved
- \$84,462 in resources leveraged
- 62 people trained
- 16 partnerships formed
- 28 products developed
- 2 environmental codes/regulations/ordinances developed

BACKGROUND

The 1854 Authority is an inter-tribal natural resource management agency whose purpose is to preserve and protect treaty rights in the 1854 Ceded Territory in Minnesota. The organization serves the Bois Forte Band and Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, both federally recognized tribes and members of the Minnesota Chippewa.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Project was to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources within the Ceded Territory and within the Bois Forte and Grand Portage reservations

by identifying, monitoring and cataloging the sites.

Objective 1 was to identify sites within the Territory and within the Bois Forte and Grand Portage reservations that are culturally and historically important to the bands. The 1854 Authority hired a cultural and natural resource specialist and formed a cultural/natural resources committee comprised of 32 individuals representing both reservations. The Project staff held five community workshops, with 168 total participants, on the reservations and in Duluth to garner support for the Project. In addition to proposed Project activities, staff gathered eight oral histories from tribal members and received \$25,000 from the Bureau of Land Management to monitor some of the identified sites.

Objective 2 was to develop a cultural resources database to be incorporated into the 1854 Authority geographic information system (GIS). Project staff developed the database format using ARC9 GIS software licensed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. By the close of the grant, the database contained information on 4,600 sites.

Objective 3 involved consulting and commenting on at least five proposed development projects in order to participate

in the preservation and protection of natural and cultural resources. The Specialist emailed a form letter to most federal, state and local agencies concerning protection of cultural and natural resources in the ceded area and on the targeted reservations. The Project staff consulted on 60 projects during the grant period, far exceeding the planned goal. An agreement with Lake Superior College led to a course on indigenous archaeology and fieldwork in the Territory.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The Project provides a space for the voices and opinions of the tribes regarding development projects in the Territory, and aides in the preservation of the Native culture. The Project staff succeeded in halting the construction of a major housing development on Lake Vermillion in the Territory, and a state park may be developed in its place due to meetings between the Bois Forte community, state agencies and developers. In addition, fieldwork necessary to identify the sites involved both tribal youth and elders, providing a multigenerational experience that instilled a sense of cultural pride.

The cultural resource database will be a valuable resource for future consultations with state, federal and local agencies concerning cultural and natural resources in the Ceded Territory and on the Bois Forte and Grand Portage reservations. In the final months of the Project, the 1854 Authority was already receiving requests for information from government agencies.

Implementation of this Project increased the organizational capacity of the 1854 Authority through the development of partnerships. The organization is well known for its positive work in the area, which increases its credibility, according to Project staff. The 1854 Authority successfully secured 67% of its operating

budget for the next two years, ensuring the Project's sustainability.

"It was a dream come true because finally we have a say over our cultural resource management and our own archaeology."

Shelly McEntire,
Grand Portage Tribal Member

AMERICAN INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (AIEDF)



Project Title:	Expansion into Three States
Award Amount:	\$125,000
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2006 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 14 jobs created
- 7 businesses created
- 2 Native American consultants hired
- 25 elders involved
- 2 youth involved
- \$764,548 in resources leveraged
- 72 people trained
- 44 partnerships formed
- 1 product developed

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1992, the American Indian Economic Development Fund's (AIEDF) mission is to act as a catalyst for American Indian entrepreneurial development and a financier for projects with positive economic potential. David Glass, AIEDF's Executive Director, is an American Indian small business owner who applies lessons learned to AIEDF's mission.

Located in St. Paul, Minnesota, AIEDF centers its activities on the belief that many American Indian entrepreneurs require specialized encouragement, mentoring and financial assistance within a culturally appropriate environment to be successful.

One of AIEDF's main methods for providing this assistance is the use of culturally relevant business development trainings and services.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Project was to expand AIEDF's services into three new regions: northern Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota. AIEDF planned to focus its service expansion on start-up and existing American Indian small businesses.

Objective 1 was to establish, stabilize or expand at least sixteen American Indian owned businesses by providing business development training to at least 60 native entrepreneurs. The objective was also designed to provide business development services to twelve existing small businesses in low-income American Indian communities (both rural and urban) in Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin. Project staff established training sites in the three designated expansion areas and trained 72 American Indian entrepreneurs through six 33-hour business development courses. To conduct the remote trainings, AIEDF hired and trained three community-based "circuit riders." AIEDF staff also assisted seven start-up businesses and twelve

existing businesses, exceeding its target number.

Objective 2 was to expand AIEDF's capacity to deliver quality business services by developing new organizational policies and creating key partnerships to sustain new services in the expansion areas. Project staff developed ten new policies, procedures and resources related to marketing, partnership development, loan policies and maintenance, training curriculum updates and organizational evaluation tools. Project staff also developed 44 new funding, training and economic development partnerships within the three expansion regions. Together, these new policies and partnerships created a solid footing in AIEDF's expansion regions on which it can continue to provide services.

Objective 2 was also intended to provide six gap-loans to American Indian businesses. During Project implementation, however, Project staff realized that many of AIEDF's small entrepreneurs were not ready to receive direct loans for business start-ups. AIEDF realized that most of its clients needed intensive business training in preparation for taking out a business loan. Therefore, of the six anticipated gap-loans it intended to distribute, AIEDF distributed one \$20,000 loan by the Project's end. Though this number is much lower than anticipated, Project staff reported this result has been very positive for its clients. Rather than distributing loans to unprepared clients who could experience payment defaults and closed businesses, AIEDF has concentrated on the long-term preparation of its clients to begin small businesses when they are fully able.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Many of the Project's training participants have reported increases in self-esteem and desire to work inter-dependently with other native entrepreneurs. AIEDF staff's

personal knowledge of business development ensures participants feel confident in the training they receive. The trainings also serve as opportunities for participants to network within the American Indian business community. Of the 72 entrepreneurs that attended AIEDF's trainings, 27 were new business owners.

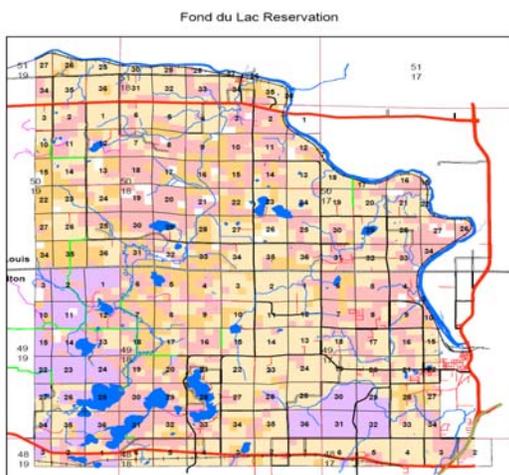
Project staff also reported an increase in Tribal leaders' appreciation for the benefits associated with grassroots economic development as they witnessed successful local business spring up around them. The seven new small businesses created with assistance from AIEDF included a pizza restaurant, flower shop, print shop, coffee shop and mini storage business. The businesses created nine full-time positions and seven part-time positions by the end of the one-year project period.

Project staff reported a noticeable increase in partnership development between corporate business, financial interests and the local rural communities serviced by AIEDF. In one example, IBM invested over \$150,000 in a Business Achievement Center on the Leech Lake Reservation, one of the Project's partners, to facilitate local business development opportunities. These successful partnerships are helping to ensure the Project's sustained impact in AIEDF's partner communities.

"It helped to have someone (AIEDF) who has walked the path before you offering his knowledge and experience".

Tonya DuRoche,
Participating Small Business Owner

FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA



Project Title:	Fond du Lac Zoning Development Project
Award Amount:	\$73,825
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2005 – 6/30/2007
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 1 job created
- \$9,167 in resources leveraged
- 1 person trained
- 4 partnerships formed
- 2 governance codes/ordinances developed

BACKGROUND

The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Indians was traditionally a nomadic people that fished, hunted, and gathered freely in the present day Great Lakes region. When the LaPointe Treaty was signed in 1854, a permanent reservation was established for the Tribe on land covering just over 100,000 acres.

Today, there are almost 3,900 enrolled members of the Tribe, 1,500 of these members live within the reservation boundaries. Many tribal members live in the surrounding cities of Duluth and Cloquet, Minnesota. Historically, the unemployment rate has been as high as 35 percent, but due to a recent economic boom, the Tribe estimates unemployment has fallen to just

over 9 percent. The Tribe is one of the county's largest employers with over 1,800 people on its annual payroll.

The reservation has experienced a population growth spurt since the late 1980's due to the construction of a casino, gas station, golf course and grocery store. In ten years, the number of people living on the reservation has increased by 35 percent. Due to rapid growth, land has become a valuable commodity. The Tribe's Reservation Business Council has made purchasing land a top priority and uses its financial resources to purchase land as it becomes available.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Accompanying these land acquisitions, the Tribe recognized the need for regulatory actions and developed this Project to address the "growing pains" associated with the rapid land acquisition strategy. Specifically, the purpose of the Project was to create new zoning ordinances, update existing land use plans and develop a new land acquisition strategy for the Tribe.

The Project's first objective was to hire a zoning administrator and develop a zoning

code to enforce land use controls on the reservation. Staff hired the administrator six months behind schedule due to a change in the position's job description. To address the delay, ANA granted the Project a six-month extension. During the extended timeframe, staff developed drafts of a zoning ordinance and a land use ordinance. Tribal Council adopted the land use ordinance during the Project timeframe.

The second objective was designed to update two existing planning documents: the Economic Development Plan and the Land Use and Management Plan. Staff developed a draft of both plans and at the end of the Project timeframe they were in legal review. Project staff also created an eleven-member Land Use Committee with five staff representatives and six tribal member representatives.

The Project's final objective was to develop a Land Acquisition Plan to implement in conjunction with the Land Use Plan, zoning ordinance and integrated Resource and Management Plan. Staff completed a draft plan, but at the end of the Project timeframe, the document remained in legal review.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The identified beneficiaries of the Project are the tribal community, tribal staff and the surrounding communities. The Project's impact on targeted community members was minimal. The new and improved codes were developed near to the Project's end date and therefore only recently enforced. However, the Project successfully identified land for economic development and coordinated community planning efforts, which may boost cost efficiencies. With the adoption of the new regulations, new jobs will be created in business zones, new homes will be built in residential zones and hunting and gathering will be promoted in protected zones. One community member

commented, "Impacts from this project will benefit future generations to come. Our natural resources will be preserved and our ways of hunting and gathering will be sustained." Community members shared that they recognize the value of this Project for its potential to deliver positive benefits well into the future.

FOND DU LAC BAND OF LAKE SUPERIOR CHIPPEWA



Project Title:	Anokii'indig – Working Together Program
Award Amount:	\$168,600
Type of Grant:	Language
Project Period:	9/30/2005 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 2 jobs created
- 5 Native American consultants hired
- 60 elders involved
- 500 youth involved
- \$5,900 in resources leveraged
- 15 people trained
- 13 partnerships formed
- 2 products developed
- 772 Native language classes held
- 300 youth increased their ability to speak a Native language
- 30 adults increased their ability to speak a Native language
- 15 people achieved fluency in a Native language

BACKGROUND

The Fond du Lac Indian Reservation lies in northeastern Minnesota approximately 20 miles west of Duluth. The Treaty of 1854 established the reservation, which spans over 100,000 acres. Approximately 1,500 Indians reside within the boundaries of the

reservation, though there are roughly 3,900 band members.

The Ojibwe language began to diminish in use during the boarding school era of the 1850s through the 1950s. There are currently only four elders living on the reservation who speak fluent Ojibwe. The Fond du Lac Reservation began initial work on language preservation in 1997 by organizing language tables taught by volunteer teachers. However, the language table program had no means of tracking the status of the Ojibwe language. In 2001, the Fond du Lac Reservation conducted an assessment on the status of Ojibwe and determined a strong interest within the community for learning the language.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Project was to create a language program that would revive the use of the Ojibwe language on the Fond du Lac reservation through the development of a curriculum and a language repository.

Objective 1 of the Project's first year was to develop a curriculum for the "Working Together Program". The Project established the Fond du Lac Elder's Language Board, which met on a weekly basis to discuss and

help develop the curriculum. Due to an over-ambitious project scope, the staff was unable to complete the curriculum or proficiency standards within the first year.

Objective 2 was to hire five community language consultants to teach the language and to organize five trips to the Mille Lacs language immersion program in order to incorporate best practices into the curriculum. The teachers taught classes and managed language tables at the community centers on the reservation. The intension behind this objective was also to incorporate master/apprentice methodology into the teaching methods, but staff was unable to complete this activity during the first year.

Objective 3 of the first year was to develop a framework for the Fond du Lac Ojibwe language repository. Project staff determined the types of materials to be archived and developed guidelines for access. However, placement of the repository did not occur until the second year.

Objective 1 of the second year was to complete and implement the language curriculum. The staff completed the language proficiency standards and guidelines, and continued implementing language training sessions. The tribal school assisted in developing and incorporating the master/apprentice goals into the curriculum. Project staff also developed and implemented language immersion activities including the harvesting of maple sugar and wild rice, tracking, beading and snowshoeing.

Objective 2 of the Project's second year was to design a framework for the Fond du Lac Ojibwe language repository. The repository is currently in the Fond du Lac Cultural Center and Museum, and consists of computerized language programs for children and various reading materials.

The Project initially encountered difficulties involving youth participation. The staff overcame this challenge by offering language immersion activities during summer months and encouraging youth participation.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Through this Project, 300 tribal youth learned the language in the Fond du Lac school classrooms and during immersion activities held throughout the year. Four elders also increased their language skills via language tables held at the community centers on the reservation. By teaching the language at the tribal school and in the community, the Project managed to reach both the younger and older generations, reinforcing how important the native language is to the tribal community. Elders taught Native youth during intergenerational activities such as rice harvesting and bead working. One elder commented the Project "lit a fire under the community, and people are waking up to their language and culture."

The language repository will be a valuable resource for the tribal community in the future, as it houses language materials and resources developed under this Project. The Project will be sustained with funds provided by the Tribe and the Fond du Lac school.

GREATER MINNEAPOLIS COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – DIVISION OF INDIAN WORK



Project Title:	Strengthening Native Families
Award Amount:	\$506,422
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2004 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 4 jobs created
- 4 Native American consultants hired
- 15 elders involved
- 600 youth involved
- \$97,805 in resources leveraged
- 367 people trained
- 13 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

The Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC) has battled poverty in the Minneapolis area since 1905 by offering an array of social service programs. The Division of Indian Work (DIW) was initiated in 1952 by ecumenical church leaders, and operates as a nonprofit under GMCC. DIW offers parenting classes, family counseling, tutoring, foster care and cultural activities to Minneapolis-based Native American families.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Project's purpose was to increase the parenting skills of Native American mothers through culturally appropriate classes, home visits and community outreach.

The Project's first objective was to implement weekly parenting and prenatal classes to educate Native American parents in life skills, parenting skills and available support services. In preparation for the prenatal class, Project staff adapted the "Way to Grow" curriculum to be culturally appropriate. The Project's Arapaho midwife and Native American doula facilitated 128 prenatal classes during the three-year timeframe with a total of 360 participants. For the parenting classes, staff expanded the "Positive Parenting" curriculum into a sixteen-week course by adding life skills and child development lessons. To enrich the curriculum, staff utilized local Native American elders to reinforce traditional childrearing methods. Staff implemented a total of 132 parenting classes over the course of three years, reaching 367 participants. Both the prenatal and parenting classes met weekly for 2-hours sessions and included transportation, meals and childcare, thereby removing a significant barrier to participation.

The Project's second objective was to conduct regular home visits with Native American mothers to increase healthy births and parenting skills. To complete the objective, Project staff hired two Home

Visitors with counseling backgrounds. The Home Visitors provided parents with additional support and reinforced skills learned in the weekly classes. Home visits also offered a private opportunity to discuss any issues or challenges a client was encountering. Project staff formed partnerships with area social service providers to offer home visit services to court ordered cases of native clients. During the Project timeframe, staff coordinated home services for 361 clients, and conducted a total of 1,093 home visits. Of the 361 clients, 110 were child protection cases, 86 of whom retained or regained their children.

The third objective was to conduct community recruitment and education activities to raise awareness for the prenatal and parenting classes in Minneapolis' native community. Project staff had originally planned to hire an outreach worker to implement the objective, but instead hired a second Home Visitor as outreach activities occurred predominantly during the Project's first year. During the Project's second and third years, it was no longer necessary to conduct outreach as a separate job function, and staff members incorporated outreach and recruitment into their ongoing job activities.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Implementation of the Project created a culturally appropriate set of supportive services for the Native American community of Minneapolis. For all participants, the parenting classes and home visits "provided an opportunity to thrive instead of just survive," according to Carol Ladd, Project Director. Project staff also collaborated with other local support services to strengthen their clients' safety net and broaden the program's impact. Services included the referral of clients to

GED classes and assistance with local housing services. All class participants completed pre- and post-tests through the University of Minnesota, and 93% of clients exhibited an increase in parenting skills.

This high achievement is attributed to the dedication of DIW staff and clients alike. Carol Ladd expressed, "We have high expectations for our clients and we show them that we are willing to help them achieve their goals. Our clients respond to this and they have blossomed." Cathy Colbert, a social services worker in Hennepin County added, "This project is a safety net in a delicate web of severe challenges facing our clients. I make my clients come to this program because I have seen how native families blossom here. Native Americans just don't feel as comfortable in non-native programs, so this program is a needed one and I have been very impressed with the results."

At the conclusion of the Project's timeframe there was no articulated plan for continuing the program. DIW staff had not yet secured additional funding and is reluctant to charge for the services provided.

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE LAW CENTER



Project Title:	Indian Child Custody Project
Award Amount:	\$454,000
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2004 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 jobs created
- 4 Native American consultants hired
- 103 elders involved
- 305 youth involved
- \$313,950 in resources leveraged
- 2,445 people trained
- 25 partnerships formed
- 6 products developed

BACKGROUND

Native American children are removed from family homes at a higher rate than any other ethnic group in Minnesota. The Indian Child Welfare Law Center (ICWLC) was formed in Minneapolis in 1993 by Native American leaders and attorneys to preserve, strengthen and reunite Indian families. The ICWLC is a nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to parents, family members, Indian custodians and children who are involved in legal matters governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978. The ICWLC also serves as a community development resource for ICWA education, advocacy, and public policy.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Project was to create a formal advocacy component within ICWLC, allowing staff to work with Minnesota's counties, court system personnel, and associated service agencies to support the preservation of the Indian family.

The first objective was to increase the accountability and effectiveness of local child protection systems affecting custody of native children. Project staff formed a community collaborative with Hennepin County, Minneapolis American Indian Center and the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center to identify service gaps within the state's child welfare protection system and discuss corrective strategies. Project staff was also involved in the Minnesota Supreme Court Children's Justice Initiative to develop culturally appropriate court responses in ICWA cases. Finally, Project staff developed an ICWA bench book that was distributed to all Minnesota judges to ensure ICWA compliance.

The second objective was to raise awareness of unwarranted placement of Indian children in non-Indian homes through education and advocacy. Project staff developed a training manual titled "Relevant Statutes, Rules and

Regulations” which details the policies and procedures of ICWA. Staff attorneys utilized the manual to train 2,445 attorneys, judges, law students, social workers, child protection workers and social services staff. Project staff was also a key participant in eight regional working groups that engaged the Native American community and county child protective services administrators in resolving policy and process issues that impact the placement of Native American children.

The third objective was to promote policy change through community processes designed to improve outcomes for Indian children. Through its involvement with the various collaboratives and working groups stated above, ICWLC influenced positive policy changes that impact legal decisions affecting native youth. Policy changes include defining previously ambiguous concepts such as “existing family doctrine”³ and “expert cultural witness.” Furthermore, ICWLC attorneys successfully lobbied to receive ICWA case summary reports in a timeframe that allows for a comprehensive review process to occur, whereas previously the court distributed reports immediately prior to a case.

Objective 4 was to promote policy change through the appeal of local custody decisions. ICWLC attorneys formed a partnership with a local law firm and received training on the appeals process. Staff attorneys then set criteria for the selection of appeals cases, focusing on the potential impact of the case. Shannon Smith, Executive Director of ICWLC, shared, “ANA funding has allowed us to

select those cases that have the potential to set national precedents.” During the Project timeframe, staff attorneys were involved in the placement decisions of 305 native youth, 47% of whom remained with or were reunited with their families.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

Through the work of staff on this Project, the ICWLC established statewide recognition as a critical component of Minnesota’s child protection system. Their collaborations, workgroups and trainings place the ICWLC in a crucial position to lobby on behalf of native children and their families in all state ICWA cases. Hennepin County, which has the largest population of urban Indians in Minnesota, now routinely utilizes a team approach to resolve children’s protective service cases.

The ICWLC also helped to change state policy through its participation in the creation of Minnesota’s 2007 Tribal – State Agreement (TSA). Tribal and state officials, native nonprofits and native community development organizations developed the TSA to provide a mechanism for maximizing the participation of tribes in judicial decisions regarding native children, especially in the prevention of foster placements in non-Indian homes and non-Indian adoptions of native children. The signing of the TSA represents a working relationship between all eleven Minnesota tribes and the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the delivery of child welfare services. The State agreed to apply the protections of the TSA to all native children in Minnesota who are covered by the Indian Child Welfare Act. The TSA protects the long term interests of Native American children and families by maintaining the integrity of the Native American family, extended family and tribal community ties.

³ “Existing family doctrine” addresses whether the statutes of ICWA can be applied for a youth in a particular case, and is based upon if he/she, or at least one parent, has a significant social, cultural or political affiliation with Indian life. The decision is based on factual determination by the court, but may eventually have to be decided by the United States Supreme Court.

LITTLE EARTH NEIGHBORHOOD EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Project Title:	Wicoie Language Immersion Project
Award Amount:	\$325,000
Type of Grant:	Language
Project Period:	9/30/2005 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 16 jobs created
- 31 Native American consultants hired
- 125 elders involved
- 150 youth involved
- \$824,613 in resources leveraged
- 44 people trained
- 23 partnerships formed
- 2 products developed
- 16 language teachers trained
- 1,415 Native language immersion classes held
- 72 youth increased their ability to speak a Native language
- 44 adults increased their ability to speak a Native language

BACKGROUND

Incorporated in 1998, the Little Earth Neighborhood Early Learning Center is a Minneapolis-based nonprofit. Its services complement those of its two partner organizations: Little Earth Residents Association and Little Earth of United Tribes Housing Corporation. The three programs combine efforts to improve the

social, economic and systemic issues within the mostly Dakota and Ojibwe native community living in the Minneapolis area.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Project's purpose was to create Dakota and Ojibwe immersion classrooms to strengthen native language competency and academic achievement among Native American youth in Minneapolis.

The Project's first objective was to develop and operate a Dakota and Ojibwe language immersion and community engagement program. To implement the objective, Project staff hired sixteen language teachers. Through partnerships procured prior to the Project, staff opened three Little Earth Child Care Center immersion classrooms and two immersion kindergarten classes. Language teachers translated the State of Minnesota's standard kindergarten and pre-kindergarten curriculum and added in cultural lessons to create two sets of culturally appropriate curriculum that taught all required subjects. Project Director Becky Beane shared, "We are not just a language class. We teach all the subjects through Ojibwe and Dakota." During the two-year timeframe, the language staff created language resources to support and enrich each set of curriculum,

including 110 books translated into Ojibwe and Dakota, 22 lesson plans and approximately 60 teaching aides. In most cases, each classroom was staffed by a fluent elder speaker, an apprentice speaker and a certified teacher. Overall, 72 students attended classes during the Project timeframe. Project staff also held Ojibwe and Dakota family lessons once a week at the five immersion sites, broadening the Project's benefits by including students' parents in language activities.

Project staff encountered a challenge in the implementation of the three Childcare Center immersion classrooms. Little Earth policies dictate that youth are only accepted into Little Earth childcare if their parents are receiving financial assistance. In the case of the immersion classrooms, if a student's parents experience an income spike due to a raise, that child becomes ineligible for childcare, and is removed from the immersion classroom. Upon the conclusion of the Project timeframe, staff will introduce a sliding scale of school fees to overcome this challenge.

The second objective was designed to implement Dakota and Ojibwe immersion pathways for the Project's students. Staff established a partnership with the local Anishinabe Academy School (K-12) and developed a plan to implement Dakota and Ojibwe immersion classes. The agreement immediately extends the timeline of current pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes into elementary school by establishing two 1st grade immersion classes at the Academy. Additionally, the partners agreed to extend this timeline on a yearly basis into middle school and high school classes.

The third objective was to develop a funding plan to sustain Project operations past the awarded timeframe. Project staff authored a funding plan and secured the necessary funds to sustain and, as described in the

previous objective, expand the Project. Through the partnerships, agreements and legislative policy changes made during this Project, staff attracted over \$800,000 in funding to continue the work this Project initiated. Staff also assisted in efforts to designate Dakota as a 'world language', thereby opening doors to future funding opportunities.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

To gauge their academic progress, all pre-kindergarten immersion students were tested against a control group of Minneapolis students using the Individual Growth and Development Indicators, an assessment system that evaluates the effectiveness of a program. A score of 26 is considered 'kindergarten-ready'. The immersion students scored an average of 25.6, while their control group counterparts averaged 14.5. The scores indicate that the immersion students were better prepared for academics and fared better in their overall development. Neil McKay, a Dakota language teacher at the University of Minnesota, expressed, "The great strength of this project is the model we have created. Everyone at every level of the family unit has been involved, and the language is now beginning to take care of us." An Ojibwe teacher at the Four Directions Family Center added, "These children are finding themselves. They are breaking the cycle of cultural loss."

To support the Project's sustainability plan, Minnesota lawmakers passed legislation to create an Ojibwe and Dakota immersion teacher training program at the University of Minnesota. Student-teachers will receive practicum training in the Little Earth immersion classrooms to meet certification requirements.

MIGIZI COMMUNICATION INC.



Project Title:	Running Wolf Family Education Center
Award Amount:	\$778,369
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2004 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 4 jobs created
- 500 elders involved
- 600 youth involved
- \$800 in revenue generated
- \$131,500 in resources leveraged
- 470 people trained
- 9 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

MIGIZI Communications, Inc. is an American Indian controlled nonprofit located in the urban Indian community within Hennepin County, Minnesota. Running Wolf Family Education Center (RW FEC) is a community center run and operated by MIGIZI for the benefit of the American Indian Community in the greater Minneapolis area. Of the slightly more than 1 million residents within the 45 communities that make up Hennepin County, 18,129 identify themselves as American Indian or American Indian plus another race. Forty-three percent of this population is comprised of children under age eighteen.

The American Indian population is more highly represented in negative health indicators than any other ethnic group in Hennepin County. Amongst the area's adults, the diabetes rate for American Indians is four times higher than the rate for the county as a whole and one-third of the population is obese. Additionally, American Indian students have the lowest rates of educational attainment of all students in the county.

GRANT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Project was to reconnect American Indian Families in Hennepin County with traditional cultural assets and values by providing healthy, family-based activities. By doing so, MIGIZI staff hoped to strengthen the native community and help it reverse negative health and educational trends.

Objective 1 was to deliver culturally-based health and wellness activities to prevent and control diabetes for 225 native families. To accomplish the objective, Project staff conducted health assessments of all participants and provided them with a tailored weekly fitness schedule. RW FEC staff also sponsored monthly culturally-based health seminars for participating

families and conducted weekly diabetes support groups. By the end of the three-year Project, 295 families participated in health and wellness activities and 116 families received diabetes management and control services.

Objective 2 was to implement fall, winter, spring and summer seasonal camps based on culturally relevant activities. Camp themes included berry picking in the summer and wild rice harvesting in the fall; they were designed to provide Indian and non-Indian families with shared experiences and cross-generational learning opportunities. The “Sugarbush,” or maple syrup, camp held annually in the spring attracted between 400-500 participants. The three other camps regularly received participation from between 200-250 community members. RWFEC utilized its community partnerships throughout the implementation of the camps to assure their effectiveness and sustainability. For example, the Sugarbrush camp leveraged transportation and food as an additional resource and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe provided staff and fluent native language speakers during the summer “Berry Picking” camp. In addition to the camps, staff implemented monthly family nights and cultural activities.

Objective 3 was to provide positive educational experiences and activities to the area’s American Indian youth to contribute to an improved sense of self, family and community. The main component was the creation of personal development plans and portfolios for native youth. This component utilized 5-10 minute video storytelling clips of the participants sharing their stories and individual future goals.

Out of the activities planned for each of the Project’s three main objectives only the evaluation of activities through pre- and post-interviews remained incomplete. This was due to the realization that participants

did not want to complete formal surveys during family nights and cultural events. In lieu of formal surveys, Project staff gathered community feedback in an ongoing manner throughout the Project’s implementation.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

For limited income families, the fitness center provided a place to participate in activities together at affordable prices. One participant was diagnosed with diabetes ten years earlier but was never involved in fitness activities prior to this Project because he could not afford it. Another participant expressed that weight loss had “Helped me with stress. I see major changes in myself and feel better.”

For the community’s families, bonding program activities allowed them to engage in fun events that are a positive means of exchanging traditional knowledge, thereby helping to build stronger family units. In all, 531 separate families were served through these programs.

For participating youth, Project activities provided an alternative to potentially negative behaviors. Youth also had the opportunity to learn drumming and native dancing that eventually led to public performances, promoting self confidence along the way. The after school program computer lab created a place for students to use computers and receive additional assistance with homework.

By the Project’s end, funding was secured to maintain and expand all three of the Project’s main components, ensuring its sustainability and future positive impacts in the community.

MINNEAPOLIS AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER (MAIC)



Project Title:	Indian Child Welfare Act Compliance Project Phase II
Award Amount:	\$450,000
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	9/30/2005 – 9/29/2007
Grantee Type:	Native Nonprofit

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 5 jobs created
- 20 elders involved
- \$5,525 in revenue generated
- \$382,191 in resources leveraged
- 123 people trained
- 14 partnerships formed
- 1 product developed

BACKGROUND

Since 1960, the Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) has provided social services, educational programming and cultural art activities for over 36,000 American Indians living in the Seven Counties Twin Cities metropolitan area in Minnesota. MAIC annually serves more than 20,000 people through its seven funded programs and community events held at the center, including programs for elders, chemical dependency, youth and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

Under a previous project from ANA, MAIC upgraded an internet-based, case management / ICWA compliance tool called QUICWA. Among its uses, QUICWA allows users to track child placement histories; monitor ICWA compliance; track

notice requirements and the provision of qualified expert testimony; record tribal recommendations, case plan updates, and hearing notes.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Project was to build upon achievements from the previous project and further MAIC's ultimate goal of reducing ICWA non-compliance through the use of QUICWA. Specifically, staff aimed to have this Project as a test-pilot to demonstrate how QUICWA can be used by tribes and other stakeholders involved in the ICWA process.

The Project's single two-year objective was to conduct a compliance study of existing ICWA cases from county and state agencies in North and South Dakota. Due to county and state agency concerns over case confidentiality, MAIC was unable to secure the use of data from their existing ICWA cases as sources for its baseline data information. As an alternative, MAIC eventually secured data compiled by participating tribes on active cases from the Project's first year.

In addition to the baseline study, MAIC tribal liasons attended over 500 ICWA hearings and provided over 400 ICWA

recommendations to the different state court systems. MAIC tribal liasons entered case data into the QUICWA database and its technical staff assisted test-users to identify and resolve any software “bugs” they encountered. Project staff also helped tribes use the software to create ICWA compliance “report cards” for targeted counties. Finally, staff conducted a process and impact evaluation of the software in order to improve and monitor compliance and make recommendations for changes. The evaluation includes a review of the perceived usefulness of the upgraded QUICWA system and the extent to which it is being used in partner tribes. All respondents agreed the QUICWA system is a very useful tool for ICWA case monitoring. Four of the six participating tribes either fully support QUICWA or are already using it consistently.

A challenge arose during implementation as some of MAIC’s partnering tribal organizations lacked the computers, staff and technical knowledge necessary to utilize QUICWA software. In response, MAIC Project staff conducted on-site technical trainings and brought pre-loaded software packets to load onto partner computers.

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The major achievement was the successful demonstration of QUICWA’s usefulness as a compliance and monitoring tool for ICWA cases. Project staff hope this success will soon be followed by orders for QUICWA software and its increased use throughout the U.S.

Tribes participating in the Project enhanced their capability to quickly identify tribal member families that become engaged in the judicial system. Using QUICWA software, tribal liasons are able to record and report to courts on positive domestic environments, answer questions for families more quickly,

and assist social service agencies to find necessary case contact information. This knowledge has given the tribes the ability to help ensure ICWA compliance for families living across county and state lines.

Project staff report that QUICWA is improving county and court compliance with ICWA regulations through consistent tracking and documentation. Therefore, Indian families involved in family and youth court proceedings are more likely to be protected by the appropriate provisions of ICWA. As a result, fewer families are permanently separated and, when they are, children are placed with Indian families whenever possible.

Project staff also report that QUICWA is facilitating improved outcomes for American Indian families by increasing the impact of the tribal voice, or tribal court system, in the ICWA process. As Indian families move outside of their traditional communities they are more likely to move into urban or other rural communities that are not familiar with ICWA. QUICWA greatly improves the ability of tribes to ensure judicial systems and social service organizations are informed of ICWA when engaged with these relocated tribal families.

“By keeping our children with Indian families, we maintain the circle of culture.”

Sheri Riemers – Program Director