



PROMISING PRACTICE

Training and Supportive Services

Healthcare-UTE (HCUTE) at Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Towaoc, CO

Family is your first teacher.



Healthcare-UTE (HCUTE) uses math and science to promote lifelong learning in Colorado. The program set out to boost enrollment rates, but the ultimate results were much more rewarding.

Creating excitement about math and science can be difficult. Generating interest in a career involving both can be even harder. HCUTE sought to boost program entries in 2016 and 2017 for secondary-level Native learners by doing both. They introduced an innovative way to showcase job opportunities in healthcare for adults earning their high school credentials.

HCUTE's original focus was on adults enrolled in the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) courses in Tawaoc, Colorado. Hands-on medical-related science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) modules were built into HiSET courses to promote interest in HCUTE. Examples of these activities included pulse-rate calculation and sterile procedures. By engaging UTE Mountain tribal members in STEM actions, HCUTE was able to show real-world, practical application of difficult subjects.

Initially, the STEM focus with HiSET students was only somewhat successful. Classroom achievements were limited due to a lack of staff, a curriculum model that was not tailored to at-risk Native American adults, and a shortage of space. Then, something unexpected happened.

Introducing HPOG to at-risk Native American adults through HiSet was a surprising success. It turns out, students were spreading the word through family networks. Though only a few HiSET students began the HPOG application process, HCUTE noticed associated family members began applying instead. This wonderful outcome led HCUTE to change their approach to include the whole family.

Knowing that family networks were critical to sustaining at-risk secondary learners, the focus soon shifted from adults to a 2Gen training model, which focuses on educating both parents and children at the same time. Capitalizing on this method, HCUTE began promoting training opportunities at Tribal Head Start, a program that assists with early childhood education, health, and family wellbeing through supportive services. They also held formal luncheons for students with children.

Looking forward, HCUTE also wants to support families learning together with a stand-alone STEM lab. The lab will support entry-level Certified Nurse Assistant and Emergency Medical Services students as they practice clinical skills. It will also provide a venue for recurring Introduction to Healthcare Careers seminars. After-school lab activities will expose Tribal K-12 children to STEM at an early age.

HCUTE's STEM model aims to help students gain knowledge and to increase recruitment for and the credibility of healthcare careers in Ute Mountain.

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